Irish Memories of American Slavery, 1840-1916: Navigating a Multidirectional Moment

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Introduction: ''Every true and liberal heart beats firmly with ours"[1]

On his visit to Ireland in 2011, US President Barack Obama gave a speech recounting some known and lesser-known moments of shared history between Ireland and the US. In those, he included the following:

> When we strove to blot out the stain of slavery and advance the rights of man, we found common cause with your struggles against oppression. Frederick Douglass, an escaped slave and our great abolitionist, forged an unlikely friendship right here in Dublin with your great liberator, Daniel O'Connell. (Applause.) His time here, Frederick Douglass said, defined him not as a color but as a man. And it strengthened the non-violent campaign he would return home to wage. (n.p.)

The brief chapter of Irish antislavery history, especially when spoken by the self-proclaimed "Irish" African-American president, serves to foreground an image of Ireland as sympathetic to the underdog: an image utilized by Irish nationalists from Daniel O'Connell, the famous 'Liberator' who achieved Catholic Emancipation in 1829 through popular agitation, to the modern IRA. The year after Obama's visit, Irish President Michael D. Higgins used the occasion of receiving the John Boyle O'Reilly Award for literature to expound on the life of the award's namesake, particularly stressing the Irish journalist's role in fighting for civil rights for African Americans, and using his example, remarkably, to set out lessons for Irish modern society:

> O'Reilly was a poet and a prophet who yearned for and worked for a new kind of Boston where equality and dignity would prevail. His life and vision have deep contemporary resonance for us as we struggle today to create an inclusive society based on participation, equality, respect for all and the flowering of creativity in all its forms. We, no more [*sic*] than O'Reilly and his contemporaries, are called to combat the social exclusion of the poor and vulnerable populations […] (n.p.)

Higgins rhetorically underlines his message by stressing O'Reilly's "Irishness," which his contemporaries extolled – "through his life and in his spirit he kept the green-flag waving beside the stars and stripes" (Thomas Wentworth Higginson qtd. in Higgins). This identity is presented

[1] Title gleaned from line in letter by famous abolitionist poet John Greenleaf Whittier, describing the globalization of abolition (627).

as a fertile sowing ground for the compassion that Higgins asks the Irish to display now.

Where politicians have pointed out the mutual history of empathy between Ireland and African America, social activists have, over the past two centuries, often preferred to mobilize a trend of comparison between the burdened histories of the two nations. It seems that Roddy Doyle's famous phrase, "the Irish are the niggers of Europe, lads" (13), uttered by Jimmy in *The Commitments* (1987), epitomizes that trend. Doyle's Jimmy seems unaware that he is in fact rephrasing a statement Frederick Douglass made on the suffering he saw when touring Ireland during the Great Irish Famine in 1845: "these people lacked only a black skin and woolly hair to complete their likeness to the plantation negro" ("Claims" 80). Douglass employs a strategy of using comparison to succinctly explain a less popularly considered situation using a more well-known one. Daniel O'Connell did the same when he proclaimed to his Dublin audience that Douglass was "the black O'Connell of the United States" (qtd. in Black 18). Both statements show that Doyle, in his well-known phrase, mobilizes a comparison with significant historical and cultural precedent and deeply important political ramifications.

This thesis aims to trace the tradition of this experienced link between African-American and Irish struggles to its source in the nineteenth century. Specifically, it explores the effects that antislavery agents' fight for the hearts and minds of the Irish had on Irish culture of the nineteenth century, as a cultural dynamic resulting from what Christopher Cusack has called "the rhetorical mayhem, convergences and confrontations arising from encounters between Irish and Africans in the Atlantic world" (281). It argues that, although considered by most scholars to have "failed" in its political goals (see Black), Irish antislavery activity left considerable traces in the Irish self-image of the nineteenth century. It then traces frequently encountered nineteenth-century textual imagery of slavery employed to represent Irish hardships to the abundant vestiges of antislavery propaganda in Irish society, and reads the trope in terms of the opportunities it offered writers for the Irish cause, for reaching international audiences and expressing in more visceral terms more abstract constructions of oppression in Ireland. The comparison was not primarily motivated by writers' desires for self-understanding, but to effect political change.

Tracing transatlantic relations: overview of previous studies

Recently, there have been several scholars who have devoted attention to the ties between Irish and African-American and abolitionist activities, and, as Chrisopher Cusack has suggested in his

survey article, this transatlantic focus "can no longer be described as merely nascent" (386). The cultural dimension of these encounters, however, has until recently been ranked of secondary importance to the study of economic and socio-political pressures on both groups.[2] It has been well-documented that as the Irish in several waves of mass-emigration became a substantial minority in the United States over the course of the nineteenth century, they entered into grim competition with African Americans. Anthony Hale, recalling Carl Wittke, calls this enmity the "conventional view" of understanding Irish/African-American social relations (200). The, arguably, most famous analyses of Irish identity formation in the United States, David Roediger's *Wages of Whiteness* (1999) and Noel Ignatiev's *How the Irish Became White* (1995), use the figure of the Irish immigrant to explain the constructed nature of 'whiteness' and the politico-economic gains that structural racism brought to those considered 'white' (see also Samito for an analysis of the role of American Civil War in Irish-American formation of citizenship). Their analyses, however, can be complicated in two ways. Firstly, by taking the Irish cultural heritage of the emigrants, and their pre-existent conceptions of African Americans as a serious, non-negligible factor in their American existence, and secondly, by examining the way in which their self-identification was influenced by exposure to narratives of the oppression of African Americans.

Catherine Eagan, in attempting to bridge the schism between Irish and Irish American identity that these scholars set up, highlights the role of "whiteness" in Irish literary culture, arguing that Ignatiev's hypothesis that the Irish "became white" in America, having before been viewed as racially inferior in British and American discourses, is undermined by the existence of clear 'white' self-identification evident in Irish and Irish-American fiction. Her analysis' assumption of whiteness as a stable category and strong-voiced binary opposition between solidarity and racism, however, leaves underappreciated certain culturally specific interplays between the discourses of Irish nationalism and transatlantic abolitionism. Serious attention to the intricate entanglements between those political discourses sheds light on the role the abolition debate played in the constitution of Irish nationalism, without reading this transatlantic dialogue as an uncomplicated "sense of affinity across the color line" that was "destined" to suffer under social pressures (Nelson 285, 184). This approach also avoids the pitfall of the "somewhat

[2] Peter O'Neill and David Lloyd's collection of essays, *The Black and Green Atlantic: Cross-Currents of the African and Irish Diasporas* (2009) is a notable exception to this.

sentimental framework, one shaped by the weak ethical desire that the Irish should have identified with another people who were undergoing dispossession, exploitation and racism" (O'Neill and Lloyd xvii).

In current research of abolitionism in Ireland, the fabled names involved in Hibernian antislavery activities have tended to obfuscate the roles played by more minor figures to promote antislavery as a sustained moral cause in Ireland. Daniel O'Connell and Frederick Douglass form the nexus of the corpus of historiography and critical analysis of this issue (see Nelson). A main contribution to that corpus is Christine Kinealy's 2011 monograph, *Daniel O'Connell and the Anti-Slavery Movement: "The Saddest People the Sun Sees"* (see also Kinealy "Antislavery," Riach "O'Connell" and Murphy "O'Connell"). Her book's ulterior motive, Kinealy writes, is to "contribute to seeing the Liberator outside the confines of Irish politics, and recognizing him as a politician who championed human rights throughout the world [which is where] O'Connell's true greatness lies" (viii). Fionnghuala Sweeney, in *Frederick Douglass and the Atlantic World* (2007), takes a topic-based approach for her inquiry into different elements of Douglass' visit to Ireland in 1845-46, which discusses the "effects of Douglass's overseas experience on his political and literary profile" (4, see also Ferreira, Jenkins, Fenton, MacLear). Kathleen Gough has called Douglass the "surrogate" figure to reinscribe in Irish culture "the loss of Atlantic historical memory, and Irish anti-racism" (3), and the general cultural celebration of Douglass, from a Belfast mural to Donal O'Kelly's recent portrayal of the orator in his celebrated play *The Cambria* (2011), certainly buttresses her statement.

Angela F. Murphy 's *American Slavery, Irish Freedom: Abolition, Immigrant Citizenship, and the Transatlantic Movement for Irish Repeal* (2010) studies the intersections of abolition and American Repeal movements, which one reviewer referred to as a "transnational ballet" (O'Neill "Citizenship" n.p.). Like Gilbert Osofsky ("Abolitionists"), she investigates why antislavery failed in the Irish diaspora. Where Murphy focuses mostly on Irish America, Douglas C. Riach's copiously-sourced thesis *Ireland and the Campaign against American Slavery, 1830-1860* (1975) traces comprehensively the rise and impact of antislavery agents in Ireland. One of the main sources he uses to come to an understanding of the dynamics of the period is private correspondence between notable public figures, a strategy which steers his reading in such a way that it arguably leaves some of the larger cultural factors on the debate underdeveloped.

Nini Rodgers' *Ireland, Slavery and Anti-Slavery 1612-1865* (2007) is so far the most

thorough and comprehensive account of Ireland's involvement with slavery, the slave trade, and abolitionism. Her work is rich with historical facts, and she also devotes substantial attention to the cultural and imaginative facets of Ireland's relation to slavery, offering readings of a variety of literary works to come to a further understanding of how artistic discourse informed Irish notions of, for instance, blackness, African identity and the morality of slavery. Rodgers constructs her chapters around the central thesis that Ireland, despite the popular myth of Ireland as a "lover of the oppressed" (332), was part of the Black Atlantic, formulating a revisionist stance as she lays bare the hidden economic benefits of slavery for the Irish economy.[3] She gleans the notion of the Black Atlantic, as she mentions early on in the introduction, from Paul Gilroy's well-known *Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993) and James Walvin's *Making the Black Atlantic: Britain and the African Diaspora* (2000), and by doing so adds her book to a corpus that stages interventions in solidified Eurocentric notions of cultural transfer which have 'whitewashed' transatlantic relations of the disgrace of slave trade. Like Walvin she adopts a wide scope, starting her discussion with evidence of slaveholding in prehistoric Ireland. This thesis may add to her project by complementing her analysis of slavery's hidden role in the Irish economy with a further understanding of the hidden role of its cultural image in nineteenth-century Irish identity formation. No analysis of the effects of abolitionism on broader Irish life has so far been made.

Outline

Over the course of four chapters, the thesis lays bare a certain 'comparative moment' that existed in Ireland in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Its beginnings can be traced back to 1841, the year in which certain popular newspapers started a massive campaign to dissuade Irish emigration to Jamaica by introducing the figure of the 'white Irish slave' into Irish parlance. The first chapter will examine the ways in which the seeds for this cultural comparison were sown in Irish society. It explains why American abolitionists were eager to obtain Irish support, after the London Anti-Slavery convention of 1840, and describes their strategies for winning it. It argues that newspaper coverage, which has so far been overlooked in critical studies of the phenomenon, played a fundamental role in popularizing knowledge of American slavery in Irish society as it weaved abolitionists' physical performances and textual output into a single complex whole. In

[3] For Irish revisionism, see Boyce and O'Day, Whelan.

light of this, Irish interest in the antislavery movement can be seen as more widespread than has traditionally been suggested. The second chapter examines the entanglements of the reception of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Ireland in 1853 with the aftermath of the Famine. It examines the circum-Atlantic occurrence of comparison between American slaves and starving Irish peasants, which had varying political motivations. It also reads an 1853 Irish appropriation of Stowe, *Poor Paddy's Cabin.* The chapter eventually shows how Stowe's narrative facilitated the creation of an image of Irish starvation with an appeal for foreign interest, aid and reform, and in the process, emphasized the pathos of the image of both the American slave and the Irish peasant. Chapter Three engages with the role the slavery debate played in the formation of a new, post-O'Connell nationalism, which replaced O'Connell's constitutionalism and non-violence with a revolutionary impetus. It analyses how the antislavery debate became a stake in a newspaper war between Young Ireland's *The Nation* and the traditional *Freeman's Journal.* Factions like Young Ireland, who represented new nationalism, used competitive comparison to aggressively distance Irish concern and empathy from slavery. In this light, the chapter reads William Upton's 1882 adaptation of Stowe's novel, *Uncle Pat's Cabin*. Upton's novel replaces Stowe's paternalism with a focus on the abject suffering of the Irish as a catalyst for social revolution, and can be seen to combine both 'old' and 'new' Irish nationalism, showcasing both compassion and competition with African-American slaves. Finally, Chapter Four examines two texts published in the twentieth century which herald the end of the comparative moment. First, it reads nationalist leader Patrick Pearse's essay "The Murder Machine," which he published on the eve of the revolution in 1916, and in which a clear effacement of ties to African America is visible. The chapter ends with a reading of the second edition of *Uncle Pat's Cabin*, which Upton published in New York after having lived in the US for over a decade. This version is startlingly different from the first, offering a glimpse into an altered Irish self-perception, and occasioning a discussion of the erasure of the Irish/African-American comparison.

Matters of methodology: reconsidering multidirectionality

In elucidating the ways in which American slavery gained a significant cultural presence in Ireland, this thesis enters into a sustained methodological engagement with the material aspects of its cultural transfer. Looking at the intra- and transcultural trajectories of events, stories and cultural matrices before the age of mass media, it is essential to consider the physical realities of

these transmissions beyond intertextual echoes. Whereas noticing intertextual elements or adherence to imported genre conventions or "schemata" in literary works is the starting point of tracing transfers (Erll "District" 32), thinking about the extra-textual conditions of politics and production that influence which stories a particular culture embraces is a significant factor this thesis aims to take into account.

In her discussion of the workings of memory schemata, Erll notes that "schemata are always culture-specific […] and emerge from socially shared knowledge systems" (32). Cultural memories are often conceptualized as travelling with a diaspora, as the stories told in a defined origin culture, that then spread and are modified or diluted in a 'host' culture. Many stories, however, travel beyond the members of the community in which they originate; this was the case with stories of slavery in the nineteenth century, which had a carefully crafted affective power efficient enough to mobilized people across Europe to join antislavery societies and make financial contributions.

Understanding of the concept of schema as a narrative frame can be enriched by considering the way they function outside of the community in which they start their existence. The discussion of the internationalization of certain memories calls to mind Daniel Levy and Natan Sznaider's discussion of the Holocaust as a cosmopolitan collective memory in *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age.* However, although American slavery could be argued to act as a similar ethical lens for global affairs, this thesis will not engage with a totalizing "extraterritorial quality" of slavery (5), as it aims to stay more true to the specific nature of the narrative as it was told in nineteenth-century Ireland. Studying cultural narratives in their often haphazard transnational itineraries allows for a reconceptualization of cultural production, allowing, in the words of Chiara de Cesari and Ann Rigney, memory and hence group identities "to be visualized differently: not as a horizontal spread or as points or regions on a map, but as a dynamic operating at multiple, interlocking scales and involving conduits, intersections, circuits and articulations" (5). This reconceptualization contributes to the move beyond "methodological nationalism" in cultural memory studies, an ambition which also underpins Michael Rothberg's insistence on the mutual formation of memory narratives (Cesari and Rigney 1, see also Erll "Travelling"). In his *Multidirectional Memory*, Rothberg takes the two pronouncedly hostile memories of colonial atrocities and the Holocaust to showcase and problematize the 'zero-sum logic' that usually accompanies discussions of public memorialization. According to this logic, as

if describing a scarce resource, the mnemonic attention for the memory of one ethnic community has an inversely proportional negative effect on that for another. Rothberg considers this a harmful, artificial paradigm both politically and theoretically, and suggests a reconceptualization of the process of coming to collective memories as multidirectional, an "ongoing negotiation, cross-referencing, and borrowing" (3). Memory discourses are always "productive and not privative" (idem.), and even "the result of memory conflict is not less memory, but more ("Gaza" 523). The structural question of how it came about that artists, in giving voice to these competitive remembrances, were in fact looking to each other, and through which pathways texts of both camps reached each other, however, does not form a significant part of his research. The notion of antislavery as a pressing and globally relevant matter was deftly inserted into Irish public discourse by American abolitionists, and the ways in which Irish writers then remediated stories of slavery was influenced by the language of the transatlantic abolitionist campaign (for the term 'remediation' see Erll and Rigney, and Bolter and Grusin).

To capture the meaning of a trope as it is created not in a single artistic work, but in its "transmigration" across a tradition of reference that incorporates a wider *hyphos* of texts (Greenblatt 112, Barthes 101), as well as its remediation and performance by social agents, requires an integrated approach to literature that looks beyond the boundaries of the artistic text. Remodeling Greenblatt's conception of *energia*, Ann Rigney has referred to this remediation as the "social life" of texts, which highlights the cultural importance of certain texts as catalysts, rather than their intrinsic value as discrete artefacts (12). Looking at what are traditionally deemed 'extra-textual' factors such as agents and social relevance is a once-again informative component not just to the study of the mechanics behind, but of meaning as it is created in literary culture.

Paying attention to material connections, as Meredith McGill has noted, is intricately bound up with a less author-centered approach to the study of literature and literary cultures. McGill remarks astutely that the decentralization of the author is crucial to appreciating the significance of the political dimensions of what has been termed the 'reprinting culture' that flourished because of the lack of copyright regulations in the nineteenth century. Traditional methodology is structurally unable to grasp the full significance of material and cultural factors on the production of texts, and their role in the creation of meaning, as "the author-centered approach ultimately contains the threat to authorial agency posted by the culture of reprinting"

(16). This same attention to the full implications of material production also allows an extension of Rothberg's theory of multidirectionality into a more directly political sphere, with a larger emphasis on social dynamics. This is not to say that Rothberg's analysis is not political in its implications, but it does not take as its starting point the logic of a *polis*, a body of citizens that requires political and aesthetic representation, but rather that of the individual artist that seeks to express his inner and unique self. The case-study structure Rothberg adopts in *Multidirectional Memory* serves his purposes of showcasing the structural significance of supposedly marginal works, adopting a similarly powerful method of developing a structural logic from a margin that is only ostensibly so, like Giorgio Agamben's "camp as the nomos of the modern" (Agamben 106), and allows him to survey not one, but two vast mnemonic fields. A drawback of his method is, however, that it methodologically grounds the conceptualization of cultural memory as individual memory.

Rothberg's starting point, the Freudian concept of screen memory [*Deckerinnerung*], which he uses to explain the politics and structural importance of transcultural and intersectional story-telling, implies the psychoanalytical assumption that the intelligent narration of traumas leads to coming to terms with them. The screen memory is an ostensibly banal memory that is nevertheless recalled, because it "owes its value as a memory not to its intrinsic content, but to the relation obtaining between this content and some other, which has been suppressed" (13). This metaphorical extension of individual to community allows a radical transcultural and postnational approach that is nevertheless rooted in the methods of traditional literary studies; Rothberg reads individual authors' self-expression grasping, like the psychoanalyst, occasionally more fully than the authors themselves, the significance of other narratives to their construction of identity. This becomes clear, for instance, when he, in discussing William Gardener Smith's *The Stone Face* directs his reading not to the political effects that the comparisons of French Algerians to African Americans are intended to have on a public of social activist readers, but instead redirects his comments to return to the textual dimension of understanding the main character: "While once he had translated French social conditions and history into American terminology, Simeon's political maturity is marked by his final translation of American vocabulary into the terms of the French-Algerian War" (261). The psychoanalytical assumption of the value of narration in and of itself also underlines Rothberg's contention that proper memory work contributes to a "utopian moment" that is the "unspeakable acknowledgement that

'enemy' peoples share a common, if unequal, history" (313).

Foregrounding material connections assists in decentralizing the author as the center of novel expression and reading her instead as partaking in a communal hermeneutic *poiesis*, of which the self-articulation is not just aimed at self-understanding but serves to provide the community with the defensible bastion that is a coherent communal sense of self. Where Rothberg unpacks a logic that links individual and community, this thesis extends the concept of multidirectionality into a non-Freudian sphere, which has the benefit of highlighting the identity politics involved in artistic creation. It will thus not just take multidirectionality as an interpretative paradigm for scholarly research, although it clearly takes its cue from Rothberg's timely call, but also look more closely at the implications of multidirectionality as a creative strategy and a specific mode of political appeal. In addition, its subject matter demands to take seriously Erll and Rigney's call for attention to the mediated nature of memory. For understanding the Irish stories of slavery one needs to look not to the phenomenon of American slavery itself, but to the discourses that carried knowledge of it to Ireland, e.g. the writings of the abolitionist movement. This attention to the different media that spread stories of slavery also entails thinking about the ways in which these media interacted in the form of "plurimedial constellations" (Erll "District" 37), and were performed for political ends, to create a unified image. Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Frederick Douglass' visit in 1845-6 form "nodal points" in this constellation (Erll "District" 40), iconizing particular images of suffering (for a discussion on visual iconization, see also Leggewie), and black heroism.

Spawning from the frequent Irish references to their conditions as akin to slavery, and prolonged investigations into transatlantic mirror images of oppression, the thesis develops a conceptualization of multidirectional reference as a metaphorical operation. In doing this, it modifies both Rothberg's notion of screen memory and Erll's concept of schema as cross-cultural templates for memory practices, to accommodate an understanding of the reciprocity of the effects of multidirectional reference, affecting the representation of both histories. The metaphor, as a conscious poetic construction, actively selects the specifics of its tenor and vehicle. The cross-discursive comparison it creates is not taken to develop organically from experienced reality, but acts as a tool that brings specific benefits to the memory agent. Conceptualizing comparative impulses as adhering to the logic of metaphor hence foregrounds a purposeful principle of selection, and by extension, it allows fruitful analysis of the omissions and distortions

that feature in Irish appropriations of slavery discourse from the viewpoint of the self-conscious political dimension that adopting certain other narratives entails.

Certainly, genuine conviction of Irish nationalists that the two systems produced equal suffering motivated a significant section of the talk of 'Irish slavery'. The comparison, however, has additional functions. The structure of slavery also produced a clearer, more concrete image of the systematic degradation caused by complex political systems like the Irish land system for an outside audience. Comparison with an icon of oppression like slavery allowed Irish activists to address a wider audience beyond their own national boundaries, or even beyond their own individual factions, concretizing and making 'legible' complicated situations along better known pathways. The thesis examines the ways in which metaphorical comparison facilitates the construction of politically motivated logics, and the benefits that metaphorical comparison has for concretizing structures of oppression and thus increasing the appeal that they exert. In the end, the thesis also examines the effects of the later loss of that utility, which heralded the end of the comparative moment, uncovering the temporal limits of multidirectionality.

Studying the Irish interactions with the issue of slavery and abolitionist discourse lays bare a marginalized cultural reservoir that nevertheless is available to be mobilized on specific occasions, and is as such certainly a memory narrative. However, in studying the creation of that memory the thesis examines a discursive formation that was not past, but part of the then ongoing struggle of drawing empathy, respect and financial support for Irish social causes. Erll and Rigney write that "the ongoing production of cultural memory in and through the media is mixed up with the political and social forces which orchestrate memories. What we call the 'dynamics of cultural memory' thus refers to a multimedial process, which involves complex interactions between medial, social (and ultimately also cognitive) phenomena" (10). The Irish case helps illuminate those forces at play in identity formation that extend beyond the formation of memories to include issues of contemporary politics, but the insights it offers ultimately reflect back on memory theory.

Chapter I Lines of Communication: Bringing American Slavery to Irish Households

In the introduction to her book, Christine Kinealy wonders whether "Irish support for abolition was informed by their own experiences as a colonized people"(3), noting that the Irish shared with African Americans subjection to racial pseudo-theories and popular claims of racial inferiority (see also Lebow, de Nie, Nelson, Ignatiev), as well as abject impoverished living conditions. She writes that these issues "led" to the comparison between the Catholic Irish and slaves (4). This comparison was indeed widespread; it was used in American anti-Catholic parlance and British racist slurs,[4] but also in Irish political and politicizing discourses to emphasize English tyranny, the trope of the slave being "commonplace in eighteenth-century political discourse" (Leask 49).

Kinealy's choice of the verb "led" implies an intuitive causal relation which obfuscates the significant cultural forces underlying the Irish use of the trope of slavery. Rather than whether or not the Irish felt their situation to be similar, the primary question concerns which factors enabled the perception of such a comparison to be meaningful at all. How did the Irish attain any real awareness of slavery in the first place, let alone one that could inspire an emotional response? Nigel Leask and Murray Pittock have made some forays into ways that British agitation for the abolition of the slave trade and emancipation influenced the Scottish and Irish usage of the slave metaphor. The cultural influence of the American abolitionists on Irish discourse in the nineteenth century, however, has also been significant, overtaking British antislavery impulses after the British Slavery Abolition Act of 1833. This chapter will outline the ways in which antislavery movements, particularly the abolitionists, and Irish social reform movements intersected, and explain how slavery became a significant presence in Irish cultural life. First charting the ways in which Irish audiences and readership came into contact with American antislavery, it will then suggest that even though there were only a limited number of figureheads involved in the movement, the textual and, more broadly speaking, artistic dissemination of abolitionist voices gave the cause an initial prominence that exceeds expectation. Although scholars have often focused on charismatic figures and their performances (see also Gough), less attention has been paid to the further textual dissemination of these

[4] For examples of both of these, see Pittock.

performances. To showcase this, the chapter will look in particular at the reception of Frederick Douglass during his tour of the country. The modes of address antislavery agents adopted when speaking to Irish audiences were specific to the context of the country; they cannot be subsumed under any general 'British' antislavery production and therefore are deserving of their own focused study. The initial influences of abolitionism on Irish self-identification can be seen in the case of the concentrated newspaper campaign against Irish "slave transports" to Jamaica, and a discussion of the flurry of comparison that was part of this campaign will form the ending of the chapter.

1. *Abolitionists and antislavery*

Talking about the influence of abolitionism on Irish texts is not just talking about a particular social reformatory interest, but also a way of engaging with a specific discourse. Abolitionism goes beyond antislavery, the general moral opposition to slavery, in its condensation into organizations all over the circum-Atlantic world in the 1830s, as well as in its uncompromising attitude.[5] Abolitionists, who were generally considered radical in the United States and, later, also by Irish nationalists, demanded immediate emancipation without remuneration of slave owners and, drawing on religion, considered slavery to be a mortal sin.[6] Ernest Bormann explains the rhetorical features that accompany this distinction:

> [the] abolitionist movement in the 1830's was, in some respects, a continuation of the antislavery sentiment of the earlier times. The antislavery efforts of the abolitionists, however, blazed forth with such zeal and intensity that in a few years the movement established itself as one of the great reform efforts of our history. […] The antislavery movement of the 1830's was different enough in activity, clarity of purpose, and in rhetoric to justify setting it aside as a unique rhetorical movement. (2)

The American Anti-Slavery Society (AASS), which was the main body of abolitionist activity for decades, had been founded in 1833 by Arthur Tappan and William Lloyd Garrison, who was arguably the most well-known and outspoken of the white abolitionists in America. Garrison's name soon turned into an epithet, 'Garrisonians" being those abolitionists loyal to his radically

[5] This general distinction has been popularized by James M. MacPherson in his 1995 study.
[6] For a discussion of the Quaker origins and general Protestant character of the movement, see Carey.

progressive ideals. Garrisonian abolitionists pursued moral suasion instead of violent means or political action. Moreover, they aspired to greater social reform beyond civil rights for African Americans, which made the movement particularly attractive to women, who were often able, uncharacteristically for the time, to play a public role in it. The refusal to act on the constitutional level and preference for moral suasion, combined with the absolutist principled attitude represented in their catch-phrase "No Union with Slaveholders!," meant that they could not attain effective political clout (cf. Kantrowitz, esp. 99-101).

British abolitionist Julia Griffiths printed a 'gift book', a publication to raise money for the antislavery cause, in 1854, which was also available in Ireland. Her *Autographs for Freedom* consisted of an anthology of various abolitionist texts, which includes the following definition of abolitionism by Rev. Charles Reason:

> The abolitionist of today is the Iconoclast of the age, and his mission is to break the idolatrous images set up by a hypocritical Church, a Sham Democracy, or a corrupt public sentiment and to substitute in their stead the simple and beautiful doctrine of a common brotherhood. He would elevate every creature by abolishing the hindrances and checks imposed upon him, whether these be social or legal. (11, 12)

The style of this section showcases what Bormann calls the "rhetoric of agitation" of the abolitionists (5). Their imagery was often hyperbolic and their style prone to paradox and oxymoron, designed to sting listeners into conviction. Moreover, the description of the abolitionist as an "iconoclast" underscores the religious and non-political foundations of the abolitionist belief.

2. *Spreading ideas: newspapers and* energia

Charles Benson and Siobhán Fitzpatrick note that by the 1830s, publishers were becoming convinced that newspapers were quickly replacing the demand for pamphlets, which had been a vital part of political and literary life for a period of roughly three centuries up to then (140). Newspaper journalism had taken over the role of "vehicle for conveying ideas" (idem.), as it had become technologically more feasible to mass produce and syncretize different journalists' pieces and more international news.

The intertwinement of information, entertainment and politics did not confine itself to

newspapers, and was also observable in literary fiction. In *The Novel of Purpose*, Amanda Claybaugh argues that "nineteenth-century novelists and reformist writers not only shared a representational project but also borrowed one another's formal techniques. The novel's plots and, even more, its methods of characterization were powerful tools of evoking sympathy" (7), and literature was one format in an array of media that offered social reformers opportunities to send forth representations of the issues they concerned themselves with (2), which then crucially became part of an Anglo-American "transatlantic circulation of texts" (3). Brycchan Carey's study of the "rhetoric of sensibility" as a distinct mode of British abolitionism across different genres and media illustrates the same genre-transcendent nature of the discourse of reform.

The overlap of discursive strategies across the different media, however, is only one part of the extensive sharing and hybridization between media. Meredith McGill explains the significance of reprinting for literary life succinctly: "[r]eprinting is a form of textual production that is inseparable from distribution and reception… [it] makes publication distinctly legible as an independently signifying act" (5). Reprinting was a major way for newspapers to publish political material and promote certain causes. Similarly, independently published texts such as novels published journalists' reviews as paratextual material, and were thus able to align themselves politically with the newspapers they appeared in. This layering could be seen as another instance of what Stephen Greenblatt has called the "cultural mobility" of stories ("Culture" 230), which establishes the culturally coherent extension made by any given story and marks its relations to broader cultural trends. It stands to reason that the interpretation of texts produced in the context of a political struggle like antislavery is particularly dependent on the identification of their relation with other discourses. As McGill has aptly noted, however, there is a methodological hiatus when it comes to theorizing the material aspects of this contextualization: "the centrality of the concept of discourse to the critical practice of New Historicism has placed a premium on charting the intersection of literary and non-literary discourses. And yet re-imagining literary texts as sites in which a range of discourses contend with one another renders the material conditions of their production oddly transparent" (6, 7).

In the context of the struggle of promoting abolitionism, material circulation is of vital importance. Circulation was not only an organic feature of cultural life, but also actively promoted as a means of reaching wider audiences and, as slavery was a debate particularly prone to allegations of willful misrepresentation, as a strategy of authentication by constant re-

authorization. Since the brunt of the task of gaining new support rested on the shoulders of a limited number of highly publicized and to some extent mythologized public figures,[7] these figures and the stories surrounding them were constantly retold in different media. The importance of circulation to the discourse of antislavery may become apparent from Bormann's remark:

> Examples of cruelty were told again and again by the antislavery speakers and recounted in antislavery newspapers and tracts. The violence of the system was catalogued with the same sensationalism that characterizes today's television fare. The brutality of owners and overseers was documented in speech after speech. Simon Legree was a favorite character in antislavery lectures long before Harriet Beecher Stowe gave him a name and put him in a novel. (24)

Abolitionists spread a succinct inventory of examples of cruelty as well as legal arguments, touring the country with rehearsed speeches and writing in to one another's newspapers, constantly retelling and adapting the same narratives. These tendencies in American abolitionism were mirrored in Irish abolitionism.

As shown by these different examples of remediation, an important trait of what has been termed the discourse of abolition, is the lack of an identifiable privileged center from which the cultural layering flows. Some scholars have preferred to refer to the oral tradition and public events, which style was often identified as coming from Protestant sermons of different denominations, as the origin of the abolitionists' main stylistic features (Bormann, O'Meally). Others, however, have traced antislavery, together with other reform movements, back to literary origins, rather than communal gatherings (Rodgers "Two" 139, *Ireland* 231, Claybaugh). They take pamphlets of the eighteenth century as their starting point and point to the fact that speeches were generally designed as an address beyond the direct attendance at abolitionist gatherings, which means that they always contained a significant component geared towards textual mass circulation among an extended audience. Importantly, because of the dramatically higher numbers of readers than listeners (Bormann 93), [8] this element was not only present but also

[7] Marie-Celeste Bernier discusses elements of Frederick Douglass' strategic self-mythologization in *Characters of Blood*, see esp. Ch. 5.

[8] One of the main lecture halls used for abolitionist purposes was Boston's Faneuil Hall, which could house an audience of up to 4,000 people. Speeches by prominent members could be reproduced in several newspapers

highly significant. Moreover, the speeches were intertextual in nature, referencing not only religious texts like the Bible, but also gaining authority from quoting other abolitionist voices. Many meetings would be closed with singing hymns, and outspokenly abolitionist poets such as John Greenleaf Whittier enjoyed national fame, which they would use to promote political ideas. In the context of understanding the cultural influence of antislavery in Ireland, the interrelations of public performance and print is of fundamental importance. It begins to explain how even beyond public events in urban centers the vague knowledge of American slavery was able to coalesce into a cultural image with affective appeal.

3. *Irish images of slavery before 1840*

The general British antislavery activity had had its impact on the Irish imaginary. With William Wilberforce as its most well-known figure, British organizations had successfully campaigned to ban the slave trade with the Slave Trade Act (1807) and to abolish slavery in the British Empire with the Slavery Abolition Act (1833), replacing it with a questionable system of apprenticeship. In this early stage too, the question of slavery became intertwined with nationalism, as the Irish nationalist United Irishmen generally aligned themselves with the pursuit of abolition, and main figures of the movement actively advocated abolitionism, such as revolutionary Thomas Russell, historian R.R. Madden and poet James Orr (see Rodgers "Green").[9]

Slavery, which had been a popular political metaphor for decades (see Nyquist), became a way for Irish writers to think about legitimate governance. Maria Edgeworth's "The Grateful Negro" (1804), which tells of a slave revolt in Jamaica that is averted by the gratitude of one slave for his benevolent master, is but one example of literature that, aside from showcasing a general Irish interest in scenes of West India, displays this feature.[10] Thomas Moore regularly described British modes of industrial and colonial oppression in terms of antislavery themes. Two evocative examples of this aspect of his work are "If and Perhaps" (1828) and "Epistle of Condolence, from A Slave-Lord to a Cotton-Lord" (1833) (see also Pittock, esp. 25-6).[11] James

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worldwide, potentially reaching ten thousands. Perhaps the greatest public speaker, drawing the largest crowds was "golden trumpet" Wendell Phillips, who regularly drew crowds of thousands.

[9] Nini Rodgers dates Irish contact with antislavery to the 1760s, attributing its initial spread to Cork and Kilkenny Quakers ("Green" 45).

[10] For a discussion of the relation of Maria Edgeworth's story to antislavery, see Boulukos.

[11] Moore's work was in turn popular with abolitionists; his hymn "Deliverance of Israel" was sung to celebrate the Emancipation Proclamation in Boston in 1863 (Coffey 173), and Frederick Douglass used an excerpt of Moore as a motto to part IV of his novella, *The Heroic Slave.*

Orr's "Toussaint's farewell to St. Domingo" (1805) describes Toussaint's anger at social injustice, and is "full of Irish resonance" (Whelan "Green" 234), indicating a sense of transatlantic solidarity.[12]

Despite this early cultural presence, 1840 marks a new epoch in Irish engagement with abolitionism. In 1839, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society (BFASS) was formed in London to pursue the end of slavery in other countries, mainly through exerting economic pressure with boycotts, and parliamentary action. Several Irish cities had small but dedicated antislavery associations, but the most pertinent to this thesis is the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society, founded in 1837 in Dublin by James Haughton, Richard D. Webb and Richard Allen. Whereas the societies in Cork and Belfast remained mostly loyal to the BFASS in London, which was hostile to Garrison's radicalism (Riach iiv-iv), in 1840 the HASS distanced itself from the BFASS and turned towards American abolitionism and Garrison, under the leadership of James Haughton. Richard Webb had intimate correspondence with the "'Boston clique' of Garrisonians" (Riach 336), and Haughton conceived of antislavery as a moral sentiment, linked to temperance, which would elevate the lower classes. Douglass Riach notes that the HASS "accepted it as a compliment" when the conservative *Dublin Evening Mail* referred to them as "Antieverythingarians" (idem.). The HASS refused the BFASS' invitation to join their convention of 1843 on grounds of disagreement with the BFASS' principled exclusion of women from the 1840 convention (Riach 343), which was perhaps their most staunch expression of Garrisonianism. This close relationship with the US meant an influx of images of specifically American slavery into Irish culture, as well as close kinship with the Garrisonian style of argument.

4. American abolitionists abroad: adopting an Irish tone

It appears that the most significant transatlantic moment in Irish antislavery was 1845-46, when Frederick Douglass toured Ireland and Great Britain. The HASS normally had a dedicated, but small lower class audience (Riach 340), and depended on the novelty of foreign speakers to attract larger audiences and intellectual interest, as well as the interest of classes with more clout who would be capable of making financial contributions. One of the main ways in which the Irish

[12] Andrew Carpenter notes that Irish poetry of the eighteenth century is remarkably political, with many political figures writing verse and political affairs looming large in poetic works (312, 313).

could contribute to the cause financially was by sending articles to be sold in the annual fundraising Boston Bazaar, organized by the AASS. Members of the public could also boycott certain products such as tobacco and cotton, which was the way in which Haughton asked his audience to show "some real practical proof of their anxiety to procure liberty for the black man" in 1845 ("Slavery"). Douglass' visit was reported across the country, and his charisma had such success in Ireland that, against all expectations on both sides of the Atlantic, the contributions made to the Boston Bazaar in 1847, during the height of the Famine, were in fact more substantial than those of the year before (Riach 375). Perplexed abolitionists concluded this had to be attributed to Douglass' efforts (idem.). Douglass had also caused new pockets of anti-slavery activity across Ireland (379).

Scholars have come to varying conclusions regarding why abolitionists considered Ireland, then a constituent of the United Kingdom, and with considerably less political clout or financial means than Great Britain, a significant ally in their efforts. The Irish had never partaken in the slave trade directly, as they had been officially excluded from it by British decree (cf. Rodgers 95, 96).[13] There was a sense that Ireland provided an untapped source of support as Irish public sentiment was generally considered to be antislavery. This idea was actively promoted by, among others, Daniel O'Connell and his son John.[14] Irish audiences took pride in the notion that their antipathy towards the institution had been a considerable factor in Great Britain's abolition of the slave trade in 1807, as the Act of Union of 1800 caused the influx of 100 Irish MPs into the British parliament, most of whom supported abolition (see, for instance, Gibson 40; Rodgers 260-262).[15] Riach notes that the AASS considered Dublin the British bulwark of Garrisonianism (343), which also explains their particular interest in the island.

Another important political motivation to visit the Isle was the struggle the American

[13] Nini Rodgers points out that many Irish then came to Liverpool to work in the trade, and that Ireland still benefited from it.

[14] In a speech in 1853, John O'Connell said that he "wished to acquaintance the citizens of Dublin with the fact that this city was the first place in the United Kingdom which raised the voice of indignant and outraged humanity against the practices of the slave trade (cheers). In this very city of Dublin, 125 years ago, the voice of Ireland was raised in condemnation of slavery, and it was not until nearly 50 years later that a similar movement was set on foot in England and Scotland (applause)" ("Anti-Slavery Society")

[15] Nini Rodgers argues that historians have overestimated the extent of the Irish MPs'influence over the Act of 1807, but her argument does not alter the fact that those MPs, to the concern of many interested parties, considered themselves antislavery. This is not only apparent from O´Connell´s multiple references to Ireland´s time-honored ´lovers of liberty´ (Kinealy 3), but also from the fact that William Wilberforce thought it wise to postpone the submission of his abolition bill until the Irish MPs took their seat (Rodgers 259). Moreover, O'Connell referenced the role of Irish MPs on several occasions (Kinealy 5).

abolitionists had to make Irish immigrants sympathetic to their cause: a feat which, had they managed to accomplish it, would have garnered them considerable political rewards. In 1853, Webb addressed this issue at one of the meetings:

> It would naturally be said: 'What was the necessity for any appeal from this country, with the view of having slavery abolished in other parts?' Well, above all countries in which slavery did not exist, there was none in which there was a greater necessity for an anti-slavery than in Ireland: because there was no country from which emigration to America was greater; it was yearly increasing (hear), and therefore the personal interest, to say nothing further, of every individual who left these shores was deeply concerned in the institution of slavery in America. ("Anti-Slavery Society")

Irish immigrants, like other minorities in the US, realized the advantages of behaving as a political bloc, and their votes carried weight.[16] Eileen Sullivan argues that Irish Catholic printing houses played a crucial role in the construction of an Irish American community between the 1840s and the 1880s, during which time approximately three million Irish immigrants arrived on American shores (42). These immigrants, she claims "did not come with a ready-made sense of identity either as Catholics or as Irish" (44), but instead only acquired a sense that those markers were foundational to a common community by reading these publications. This self-identification was paired with a notion of traditionalism in social affairs and a consciously nurtured distrust, promoted by authors like Mary Ann Sadlier, of supposedly corrupt non-Catholic influences, among which was abolitionism. These Irish immigrants had a deep respect for O'Connell, and American abolitionists realized that for this group, his and other 'old world' influences could be pivotal. Again, O'Connell proves the most valuable piece in this transatlantic mobilization. In 1840, James Haughton wrote to O'Connell:

> the Irishmen in that country [the US] […] are such a powerful and influential body that they exercise a paramount influence in the election of the president, and in the elections of the bodies of the various legislatures there; but most unfortunately that influence has been given heretofore in favour of slavery […] Now with regard to our countrymen in

[16] Stephen Kantrowitz claims that "No place absorbed as many of these exiles, per capita, as Greater Boston. In 1830 New England's white population was overwhelmingly Protestant and native born; by 1855 nearly a quarter were of foreign birth, mainly Irish Catholics" (164).

> America, the fact stated is most lamentable, your influence over their minds is very great, would you think it wise to address them on this subject in one of your powerful appeals? (qtd. in Ignatiev 9)

The HASS realized the opportunities that tapping into this Irish transatlantic awareness offered. Riach notes that they, especially Webb, included "broader analysis of American life and immigration, and indeed presented a range of facts on climate conditions and employment options, which would have been of immense value to the prospective or potential emigrant" (341). In 1852, new antislavery recruits also prompted the HASS to issue leaflets to emigrants at various ports (idem.).

Frederick Douglass' personal interest in Ireland may well have stemmed from an unlikely source; in his *Narrative*, he describes having practiced his reading with a copy of renowned pedagogue Caleb Bingham's widely distributed schoolbook, *The Columbian Orator* (1797). The book, containing excerpts of a variety of famous speeches throughout history, was used across both the Northern and Southern states to educate children not just in the techniques of rhetoric and public speaking, but also in the subject matter of these famous addresses. According to David Blight "[b]y the first two decades of the nineteenth century, in vast stretches of rural America, including the South, Bingham's readers joined the Bible and an occasional almanac as the only books in many homesteads" (v). Douglas notes as especially impressive to his younger self John Aiken's "Dialogue between a Slave and his Master," and "one of Sheridan's mighty speeches on and in behalf of Catholic emancipation" (*Narrative*). He continues: "These were choice documents to me. I read them over and over again with unabated interest. They gave tongue to interesting thoughts of my own soul [...] What I got from Sheridan was a bold denunciation of slavery, and a powerful vindication of human rights" (idem.).[17]

The topic of Catholic Emancipation, a problem particular to Irish Catholics, thus captured Douglass' attention early on in life, presumably along with that of a generation of American schoolchildren. Another internationally acclaimed Irish orator who influenced Douglass' literary mind was the lawyer John Philpot Curran, who served the defense on high profile court cases for Irish nationalists, and defended James Somerset, a Jamaican slave who had pronounced his freedom upon reaching British soil. The case was famous for establishing chattel slavery as

[17] It is likely that Douglass is referring not to Sheridan's excerpt, but to one attributed to O'Connor which is printed later in the collection.

unconstitutional in areas of Great Britain, and Curran's speech, which coined the phrase "the genius of universal emancipation" was widely-known and quoted in notable abolitionist texts, among which Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

While a schoolbook on the art of rhetoric that a young Douglass was stealthily perusing during his free time might seem an idiosyncratic source for his knowledge of Irish affairs, it speaks to a more general awareness in the United States of those issues. Abolitionists' interest in Ireland, which was substantial, then, did not only come from political motivations, but also because it could serve as a potential ideological model. Bruce Nelson notes that the international view of O'Connell considered him "the unrivaled symbol of Irishness and Irish aspirations" (58), which identity would have loomed large when admiring audiences, whom he addressed with particularly persuasive skill, heard him speak for the cause of abolition. Garrison deemed his speech at the 1840 World Anti-Slavery Convention in London a "spectacle […] sublime and heart-stirring beyond all power of description on my part" (qtd. in Nelson 57). Gilbert Osofsky considers O'Connell a main reason abolitionists looked towards Ireland (894), and Douglass Riach suggests:

> it may arguably be that the abolitionists' fascination with O'Connell and O'Connell's Ireland, with the attendant themes of an oppressed European peasantry, Catholicism and immigration, challenged the abolitionists' fundamental beliefs about the nature of social order and human equality. O'Connell then may have served to provide a working metaphor by which the abolitionists could confront and evaluate their own premises, and to provide illustration, for example, through his career, of whether or not moral force abolitionism was essentially cohesive or anarchic in its operation and impact. This perhaps explains why Ireland and O'Connell bulk so large in abolitionist writings […] ("O'Connell" 24, 25)

Riach has also suggested that O'Connell's conduct had provided the American abolitionists with "their first lessons in non-violent agitation" (528). W. Caleb McDaniel, in "Repealing Unions," argues that Garrisonian disunionism, the desire for the Northern US to be separated politically form the slaveholding Southern states, a goal contentious among many abolitionist including Frederick Douglass, was modeled directly after Irish Repeal, which Garrisonians considered an

"analogous" movement (2).

Addressing Irishmen (and women)

In one of his Dublin speeches, Frederick Douglass stated his interest in touring Ireland as follows:

> Public opinion in America boasts that it is almost omnipotent, and to a great extent this is true […] our people claim [their customs] to be the most enlightened and the most civilized, and the freest upon the earth; and while they are vain of their institutions, they are sensitive in the extreme of the opinions entertained of them in Europe's countries, particularly in England, Scotland and Ireland. Friends of the poor slave, be therefore firm and faithful in your remonstrations with Americans – let your press teem with denunciations […] I implore you to bring the weight of that powerful public opinion which you can make so effective to bear on the hearts and consciences of the slaveholders of my country. Tell them they must give up their vile practices or continue to be held in contempt by the whole civilized world. ("Irish Christians")

At first sight, the stated purpose of Douglass' tour seems to concern raising awareness in Ireland and Great Britain as an undifferentiated whole. Douglass' mention of the power of their public opinion might also specifically refer, however, to O'Connell's famous mass agitations or 'monster meetings' of the 1820s and 1840s, for his campaigns for Catholic Emancipation in 1829, and Repeal of the Union respectively. Donal McCartney has called these gatherings the "first mass movement of organized democracy in Europe" (7).

This specificity becomes more likely when his statement is compared to newspaper reports of other meetings he spoke at, which affirm that audiences' Irishness was stressed and invoked as a ground for antislavery interest. Dublin's popular *Freeman's Journal* reported ardently favorable accounts of the HASS meetings and the people conducting them, which is indicative that the tone of the gatherings suited the nationalist ideals of the newspaper. It reports that Richard Webb, at one of the first meetings, "made a beautiful and solemn appeal to his auditors as Irishmen, as patriots, and as true lovers of liberty, to be consistent advocates of freedom, and to spurn with contempt the sympathy of the guilty slaveholder" ("Slavery"). A

week later, the paper wrote that Douglass "spoke of Irish sympathy and Irish agitation on the subject [immediate emancipation] with warm and grateful feelings, and said that they were of incalculable value to the cause of freedom in his country" ("Anti-Slavery Meeting"). Interestingly, this contrasts with the ways Douglass addressed his listeners in Belfast, to whom, according to the *Belfast Newsletter*, he emphasized the supposedly British nature of antislavery zeal. Before quoting the Irish nationalist lawyer John Philpot Curran without any mention of his Dublin origins, he exclaims "O! I thank God that I stand on British soil!" ("Lecture").

In 1840 there was a peculiar precedent to Douglass' attention to Irishness which, however, took a very different approach to mobilizing the sentiment. In a speech to a Dublin audience, American abolitionist James Birney, discussing the practice of supposed "owners" attempting to unlawfully claim people, recounts an incident involving a young Irish girl to bolster his appeal:

> Another instance was that of a fair-haired young woman, named Sarah Dessert, who was also brought before the magistrate, and claimed as a slave, but after a long examination it was discovered she was the orphan daughter of poor Irish parents, and she, on that account, narrowly escaped being led into captivity. That single fact ought to excite indignation in the heart of every Irish heart for the outrage thus offered to a child of their own countrywomen. ("Hibernian")

Again, this particular incident initially seems only tangentially related to Irish affairs, but upon closer reflection it encapsulates many specifically Irish anxieties. As there was much emigration to the United States among the lower Irish classes, this situation would have been particularly threatening to an Irish audience, and the scene takes on significance beyond being a mere singular case. The epithet "fair-haired" betrays a presence of mute racialist anxieties, as the speaker feels it necessary to specify Sarah does not bear any perceptible African features. The possibility of Sarah's capture depended on her destitute Irish origins. Most Irish immigrants into the US would run the risk of becoming part of her social caste of destitute outcasts, and thus her risk was also theirs. Birney has explained earlier that physicians conducted an examination to ascertain whether the accused "had a single drop of black blood in [her] veins," and the controversial 'racial' status of the Irish would have made the example the more poignant, playing up societal fears of Irish immigrants in the United States to be treated with similar disregard as

African Americans and, as such, of being at risk of, for example, being coerced into similar physical degradations (see Ignatiev, Roediger).

Ireland offered an enthusiastic audience for black abolitionist visitors. The most striking example of this is the response to Douglass' visit, but the nation had also been roused by Equiano Olaudah, a Nigerian former slave, when he visited the country in 1791, and by Charles Remond in 1841 and William Wells Brown in 1849. When the *Freeman's Journal* refers to Douglass as "the great attraction of the evening" ("Slavery"), the newspaper's language seems to betray a certain entertainment aspect to the humanitarian gathering (on this facet of the interest in African-American speakers, see also Rodgers, Sweeney).

Forming an international community of abolitionists fitted with global reform aspirations of Garrisonianism, and the readily available network established by Ireland's recent outpouring of English language political texts intended for mass audiences, a strategy of both the United Irishmen of the 1790s and of O'Connell (cf. Ó Ciosáin), made Ireland an appealing ally. There was an active pursuit of a transnational imagined community of common ideals, which corresponds with the one O'Connell envisioned when he said in one of his speeches of 1845:

> My sympathy with distress is not confined within the narrow bounds of my own green island. No – it extends itself to every corner of the earth. My heart walks abroad, and wherever the miserable are to be succoured, and the slave to be set free, there my spirit is at home, and I delight to dwell. (qtd. in Douglass "Letter")

Giving a speech in Belfast in 1846, O'Connell also interpellated the audience as members of a transatlantic community, in typical Garrisonian abolitionist terms. The *Belfast Newsletter* reports:

> He then said he was present, on this occasion, to confront and unmask those persons who, on this side of the Atlantic, just as those did who were the friends of slavery in *Georgiar* or *Alabamar*, stole the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil. It had been said that St. Patrick drove the venomous reptiles out of Ireland, but he would have made cleaner work of it, had he driven out likewise the hypocrites and calumniators. Marvelous as his works were, he, however, could not do that, and, therefore, there were as bad men in Ireland as in America. ("Anti-Slavery")

O'Connell does not recognize Ireland as a mere spectator, but interpellates its inhabitants as an active participant potentially as complicit as American churches in the practice of slavery, even when he was not speaking of potential emigrants. This belief corresponds to the utopian ideals of moral suasion, by which knowledge and conviction alone have the power to reshape political systems. By conceptualizing the slaveholding power as transatlantic, he includes his sympathetic audience as equal part of an antislavery faction.

5. *Writing texts, winning minds*

Historians describing the American and Irish abolitionists generally use, for their accounts of given speeches, contemporary news articles without paying attention to what the role of these articles was, not as historical documents, but as contributors to living culture. The *Freeman's Journal* was the "foremost nationalist paper in Ireland" and reached audiences both in the city and countryside (Larkin 44). John Gray, the newspaper's main editor, was a good friend and staunch supporter of Daniel O'Connell, so it is perhaps unsurprising that the paper took a positive interest in antislavery. It can be counted as an agent in spreading the abolitionist message for the attention it paid to conveying not only the facts but also the spirit of Irish abolitionism. For instance, the *Freeman's Journal*'s report on the public talk the American clergyman James Birney gave at a "highly respectable" HASS meeting in 1840 is very detailed, and carries the same emotive language as the speaker presumably used when describing the "horrible system":

> Those ladies and gentlemen who heard him might well suppose that the laws of the country might offer, at least, some protection to the poor slave; but such was not the case, for no matter how he was kicked and cuffed about, either by his master or by others, he had no redress […] so degraded was the slave – so wretched was he while he groaned in slavery […]("Hibernian")

This passage, reported in free indirect discourse to suggest the merging of the *Freeman's Journal* and speaker's points of view, includes the speaker's rhetorical devices: the pathetic appeals, the proleptic mention of the gathering's moral ethos and the scene setting of mentioning the Dublin audiences that heard the speaker. Birney's remarks on the legal status of slaves in the United States are given unabridged, informing readers as fully as if they had been at the speech. The speech of a Mr. Stanton, in the same article, similarly ensures that the reader is acquainted with

hyperbolic abolitionist rhetoric. Stanton explains that by breaking their own constitution, the United States are "a perverted engine of oppression," a criticism exemplary of Garrisonian abolitionism in its Manichean denunciations of hypocrisy in America. Stanton also read to the audience from American newspaper advertisements for slaves, two of which the *Journal* quotes.

The coverage Belfast's *Newsletter* and Dublin's *Freeman's Journal* gave of Frederick Douglass' performances is strikingly narrative. They go beyond reporting facts, rehearsing the rhetorical devices the speakers employed to include the reader in the abolitionist audience. For instance, the *Newsletter* opens its article on Douglass' second speech in Belfast with a detailed account of Douglass' life, which he had narrated at the meeting before. It emphasizes Douglass' modesty by stating that this was "merely a simple narrative" and reporting that Douglass, when taking the pulpit, apologized "for his inability to address so large and respectable a meeting" ("Lecture"). In doing this, the *Newsletter* repeats Douglass' *captatio benevolentiae*, a strategy of understating his abilities to make his actual performance the more impressive and reminding audiences that he started his life as a slave, which he very commonly employed in his early speeches.

At the opening of the second Belfast meeting in 1845, Douglass is performing the role of humble supplicant, and the *Newsletter* captures it for a wider audience. Over the course of the speech, however, he assumes his full, commanding oratorical presence. The press coverage captures this when it shifts from third person narration to first, in relating what injustices befell Douglass on his journey across the Atlantic, during a lecture he had been asked to give:

> A hymn having been sung by an abolitionist family, he [Douglass] proceeded to deliver his lecture, but he had not uttered five words, when a slaveholder came forward, and shaking his fist in his face, said "That's a lie." I proceeded (continued the lecturer [Douglass]), notwithstanding his [the slaveholder's] conduct, but was again interrupted in the same manner. I then said, as all I have told you [the audience of fellow passengers of the *Cambria*] has been pronounced a lie, I will read your own laws on the relationship that exists between a slave and his master. I then read the following […] ("Lecture")

The shift in narration occurs at the moment that Douglass shows defiance to the slaveholder, and rhetorically underscores Douglass' transformation from subaltern slave to commanding, rational orator. Whether or not the newspaper was conscious of rhetorically reinforcing Douglass' speech

(perhaps the journalist had a penchant for stylistic flourish and unconsciously picked up on Douglass' own stylization) is not the issue; the reports were of such detail and stylization that they served to make the abolitionists resonate beyond their direct surroundings not just in words, but also in performance. [18] The journalistic report is both a source of information and an ideological tool; it spread not just the knowledge but also the style of abolition to a wide readership.

Irish antislavery publications

In 1840, John O'Connell expressed his hope for Dublin publications showcasing the horrors of slavery ("Hibernian"). His remarks are illustrative of a belief in the power of literature for moral suasion which pervaded abolitionist efforts. Aside from newspaper coverage, the main way in which the broader Irish readership came into touch with the texts written under abolitionism's banner was when those texts travelled with the speakers themselves. Perhaps the earliest significant example of this stems from 1791, when the first known slave narrative by a British African abolitionist, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (1789), was printed in its fourth edition in Dublin. At the close of the first month of his 9-month stay, Vincent Carretta tells us Equiano had "collected enough subscribers to justify" an Irish publication of his book (334), which with 1,900 copies sold was a big success.

Richard Webb disseminated Irish antislavery works, such as James Haughton's pamphlet "Slavery Immoral" (1847) and his own collection of letters by John Brown (1861), a radical American abolitionist who attempted to instigate violent slave revolt and was hanged in 1859. The HASS also promoted Theodor Weld's collection of documentation on the horrors of slavery, *American Slavery as It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses* (Riach "Ireland" 442). Griffith's *Autographs for Freedom*, which featured contributions by Stowe and Douglass, was also available in Dublin ("New Story"), as well as Stowe's novel *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp* (1856) and her *Key to Uncle Tom* (1854). Richard Hildreth's *The White Slave* was

[18] In contrast to the *Journal,* the *Newsletter* became more ambivalent towards Douglass and the abolitionists, as it was critical of O'Connell and other politicians it considered radical. When, for instance, they reported on an issue of the London serial *the People's Journal* that carried Mary Howitt's "Memoir of Frederick Douglass" they noted that it was in the company of "a great deal… of writing, which, if it cannot be positively classed with the effusions of the infidel and revolutionary writers of the day, looks so *like* them as to make it dangerous, and the more so that the *People's Journal* has now taken so secure a hold over the minds of the intelligent population of the island" and commented on the piece only that it made "our sable [dark-coloured] acquaintance [figure] to considerable advantage" ("People's"), a terse comment that contrasts with earlier jubilant reports.

published in 1852 to enjoy some modicum of Stowe's success ("The Women"). There was also other Irish fiction on slavery, such as Mayne Reid's adventure tales *The Quadroon; or a Lover's Adventure in Louisiana* (1856) and *The Maroon* (1862) (see Rodgers "Green" 40-43).

Before the appearance of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Ireland in 1853, Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (1845) was arguably the most important antislavery text, in part because of its connections to his popular figure. Two thousand copies of *Narrative* had been published in Dublin by Webb so that Douglass, upon his arrival in Ireland, could finance his stay with the proceeds, selling most of them at the occasions at which he spoke (Ferreira). This facet of the book's publication showcases one of the important ways in which, like in the US, Irish engagement with the literary work was not an insular reading event, but part of larger matrices of abolitionist activity, as their purchase contributed directly to the abolitionist campaign. The books sold "at one blow" (Douglass qtd. in Ferreira 58), and his work's success encouraged Douglass to publish a special Dublin edition of his book in 1846. In fact, that Douglass himself experienced the link between his physical performances and the published work is attested to by the sense of urgency he felt with regards to the appearance of the portrait this second edition was to have as its frontispiece (Ferreira 59). He communicated to the printer that he was unhappy with the engraving used, which shows that Douglass attached importance to his audience having a certain mental image of him when reading his narrative. According to Houston Baker, the presence of a fugitive was the centerpiece of any abolitionist meeting, and the speeches they gave at meetings showcased mental traumas, in the same way that they were often asked to show the scars on their backs as proof of physical trauma (10, see also Douglass *Life* 662-4). The preoccupation that Douglass shows with the way his likeness appears in the book, when in Ireland he has more control over the printing process, is indicative of the importance of this paratextual element to the reading experience.

The Dublin edition of Douglass' *Narrative* has received little scholarly attention (see Sweeney and Ferreira), but includes a new preface and appendix, as well as textual revisions. The Dublin edition well captures the entanglement of texts published as books with other literary media and extraliterary events. It opens with a resolution of the Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society commending Frederick Douglass' character, signed by James Haughton and Richard Webb, which is followed by a Preface that quotes in full a notice of a meeting held in Lynn, Massachusetts. The narrative is followed by an Appendix in which Douglass answers to a letter

published by one of his adversaries in the *Delaware Republican*, which he quotes in full, and a section of 'Critical Notices' from American and British newspapers and Belfast-based ministers. Significantly, at the close Douglass includes a direct address to his readers to inform them that there are several regular publications by abolition societies, as well as an appeal to contribute to the Boston Bazaar fundraiser. Much has been written about the framing devices of white abolitionists that accompanied slave narratives to 'authorize' them, and the negative implications this has on the authorship status of the ex-bondsman's text. This edition, and Douglass' appeal in particular, however, also highlights the ways in which the white abolitionists not only claimed, with a benevolent intent which was nevertheless usually informed by racialism, a certain custodianship over African-American texts, but also the way in which such plurivocal paratexts functioned to ensure a reader response that was securely framed within the context of the abolitionist struggle. Douglass asks anyone who "may have been moved by the perusal of the foregoing pages" to become active for the movement (cxxxiii), an address that in the first edition was implicit in the fact that the narrative was prefaced by the most publically active "Agitator" of American abolition, William Lloyd Garrison. The narrative does not merely invite sympathy, but from the onset demands that this sympathy be met by becoming active in the struggle, which is done first and foremost by staying abreast of abolitionist activities. The reading experience is both prompted by, and results in, broader political debate, and cannot be properly understood in isolation.

6. *Opening a comparative moment: the Jamaica campaign, 1841*

The first distinct trend of politically motivated comparison as a result of the cultural influences mentioned above occurred in 1841.[19] Although generally emphatically against the comparison of chattel slavery with local social issues for fear of normalization, the HASS made an exception on the occasion of discussing misleading advertisements to lure Irish laborers to Jamaica, which were "deluding and kidnapping our poor peasantry" ("Hibernian"). Discussing the way in which these advertisements presented emigration as if it was recommended by the Catholic clergy, one speaker said:

[19] Margaret Kelleher traces the first isolated occurrence of comparison between Irish poverty and the condition of African slaves to a remark by French author Gustave de Beaumont in his *L'irlande sociale, politique et religieuse*, published in 1839 (462).

> the baleful villains interested in the Robert Kerr[20] slave ship, and the trade in Irish white niggers […] want to make [the priest] the foundation of a diffusive system of Irish slavery, under the disguise, the masquerading of emigration (hear and cheers). But this cannot be while the Association [HASS] possesses such a member as O'Connell to send forth his voice over Ireland […] Now, the use made of the name of the name "Catholic clergyman" on the placards, hand-bills, and advertisements, by those concerned in the Robert Kerr, was far worse than the ethereal purity of the ruffianism of Texian slavery, or even of the mountebank ruffianism of the noisome Yankee slave breeders, vaunting about liberty and the rights of man; for it was an attempt to make God himself, through the use of the name of the function of one of his ministers of religion, appear to our peasantry to be an accomplice of the ghastly iniquity of the Belfast and Limerick kidnappers (tremendous applause). (idem.)

The speaker, Mr. Steele, moves the purpose of the HASS beyond its origins, extending its activism to a conception of global slavery of which he makes Jamaican practices a part, when he implies O'Connell's antislavery activities to be of reference to Irish "emigration" as well. This breech of the HASS' policy, to suddenly condone the comparison of other social injustices to slavery, can be explained by the circumstance of a more or less organized campaign to warn the Irish poor against boarding the "slave ships" (cf. McGarrity 42-44), in which the *Freeman's Journal* was a key player, and which was so successful that eventually the *Robert Kerr* came to be hated enough to require police protection (McGarrity 44). [1] In an article of December 4, 1840, the *Freeman's Journal* wrote "Now that negro slavery is abolished […] and that the black workers are found to be a little stubborn in the hands of their old task masters, it appears that an ingenious contrivance has been resorted to […] They [the plantation owners] supposed the Irish peasantry were, as of old, beyond the pale of humanity, and probably not much thought of in the English parliament" (qtd. in McGarrity 43). Three days later they published an article entitled "Emigration to Jamaica, is Ireland to be Made a Slave Market" (44). The *Freeman's Journal* published on the same subject on December 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 15, 18, 19 and 26, on the first or second pages of its publication, as did other newspapers. Irish abolitionist Richard Allen sent in a report to the *Nenagh Journal* of October 9, 1841, detailing Irish and Scots' ill fates in Jamaica, and citing, in racially stereotyped terms, the compassion of local workers of African descent as

[20] An emigrant ship.

the ultimate proof of the misery of a Scottish family's fate: "Perhaps a more appropriate illustration of the misery which awaits European emigrants could hardly be quoted, than the lamentation of a compassionate poor negro in bewailing the fate of a poor Scotch family […] 'It is past cruel to take these poor Buckras [whites] from their own country and kill them here – them don't be able to stand this Jamaica sun' […] They could not have manifested more feeling had he (the poor Scotchman) been their own relative, and at his death the big tears told how much they felt for his desolate widow and fatherless child" ("Jamaica").

The *Freeman's Journal* also issued a direct appeal to antislavery associations in January 1841: "will those in Belfast and Glasgow, who worked so vigorously for the emancipation of the coloured bondsmen, *not* do their part when their countrymen are being enslaved? […] If the Belfast and Scotch Anti-Slavery Societies do not, like those of Dublin and Limerick, come boldly forward, we say *shame on them!*" ("Scheme").

This sudden irruption of comparison onto the Irish stage highlights features that will come to play a role in the following chapters, such as the constructed shock value of 'white' slavery, the adoption of 'zero-sum logic' and anxiety about racialization. The limited number of antislavery agents in Ireland could, with news media on their side, reach a wide audience, and lay seeds that would result in a politically significant comparative trend in Irish discourses for the next five decades. Newspapers had transmitted the idea of slavery as burning injustice to the Irish public; now, they foregrounded the thought that Irish people, too, could be slaves. This moment would prove the start of a long tradition of comparison in Irish cultural life, of which the next significant stage would be the Famine.

Chapter II "Cabin Fever":[21] the Great Irish Famine, Uncle Tom, and Humanitarian Representation

This chapter examines the way in which the representation of the Famine and the condition of the Irish interacted with the discourse of slavery. It first briefly examines how Asenath Nicholson brought together the two issues in order to make her text relatable for American audiences, before moving on to examine the reception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Ireland. It looks at how Stowe's text acted as a catalyst for Famine remembrance, and how Irish writers tried to make use of the audience Stowe created to ask attention for their humanitarian crisis. Finally, it discusses *Poor Paddy's Cabin*'s engagement with Stowe's text. In doing this, the chapter unfolds the significance of the metaphorical operation that multidirectionality asks of the reader, which is highlighted in the intertextuality of *Poor Paddy's Cabin*.

1. Representing the Famine for a transatlantic audience

The Irish Famine, or Great Hunger (*an Gorta Mór* 1845-1851), caused by a recurrent potato blight, led to the deaths of over a million people from starvation and disease and triggered massive emigration, drastically changing the socio-economical system of Ireland. At the end of the Famine, American society had changed drastically, too; with forty percent of the non-native Americans now being comprised of Irish immigrants, they formed the biggest immigrant population, and the Catholicism they brought became the single largest denomination of the US. The repercussions of the Famine were truly global in scale, as it was the biggest factor in the formation of the transatlantic Irish diaspora both physically and culturally, the Famine providing a traumatic backdrop still felt today through the widespread Irish Famine Memorials to be found across the US and Canada. Once in the United States, the pauperism of the Irish immigrants that arrived, widespread anxiety caused by their sheer numbers, and the American tradition of anti-Catholicism resulted in massive social distrust and lack of empathy with the Irish in America.

Humanitarians striving to increase societal empathy with the Irish to reduce prejudice and secure relief had an important representational task to fulfill. As humanitarians and reformers in the nineteenth century often viewed their efforts as part of a bigger project of human perfectibility and were generally part of several benevolent societies at once, the different reform discourses of temperance, antislavery and relief became entangled. The writings of New York-

[21] Title gleaned from Henry Louis Gates Jr.'s article of the same name in the *New York Times* (2006).

based reformer Asenath Nicholson, an abolitionist who spent time in Ireland as a protestant missionary and ran a soup kitchen in Dublin at one time, are a locus of such entanglement. Nicholson took it upon herself to offer sympathetic representation for and of the Irish to American publics, writing to newspapers such as the abolitionist *Emancipator* as well as chronicling her Irish travels in two published works: *Ireland's Welcome to the Stranger* (1847), which takes the form of a travelogue, and *Lights and Shades of Ireland* (London, 1850), a history of Ireland which was republished in the US in an abridged version focusing only on the Famine under the title *Annals of the Famine* (1851).

Nicholson's work occasions some more thought on Rothberg's memory ethics, which he theorizes in "From Gaza to Warsaw." Rothberg explains the need for an ethics of comparison as follows:

> it is clear that the articulation of almost any political position may come in multidirectional form. […] In response to the high stakes of proliferating memory discourses, it becomes imperative to develop an ethics of comparison that can distinguish politically productive forms of memory from those that lead to competition, appropriation, or trivialization. (524, 25)

Rothberg conceives of this era of proliferation as largely postcolonial, post-World War II, but such proliferation of comparison also surrounded many articulations of the Irish laborers' position in the nineteenth century. The reach of the stories of Irish suffering is indicated by the fact that Harriet Jacobs uses it as a reference to express the hardships of slavery in her slave narrative, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861). She asserts: "I would ten thousand times rather that my children should be the half-starved paupers of Ireland than to be the most pampered among the slaves of America" (38). Jacobs' statement complicates one of the main features of Rothberg's ethics: that of solidarity as a "tonality" or "charge" to a particular work (534, 5), which constitutes an "affective transfer" from one cause to another (535). She acknowledges Irish suffering with affective language, which would indicate the potential for solidarity, but the hyperbolic comparison at the same time negates the dire nature of Irish problems. In her mention, the limits of reading for 'tonality' become apparent, and Nicholson's work further complicates the matter.

Nicholson's biography showcases that she was highly active in fighting the oppression of

both the Irish and African Americans. In her usage of slavery to represent Irish problems, however, she at times ostensibly instrumentalizes the institution. In her letter to the *Cleveland Herald* in 1847, she uses slavery as the epitome of injustice and degradation to explain the fate of Irish laborers. She writes: "The bare-faced, heaven-daring oppression of the peasantry of Ireland, can only find a parallel in American slavery; and even in that, there are some loopholes which a poor Irishman has not. The slave, if he can run, has not an ocean to cross before he has some hope of safety; but the poor Irishman, fly where he may, unless he swims the ocean finds nothing but oppression still" ("Ireland"). In attempting to move people to compassion and monetary support for Ireland, she mobilizes slavery to evoke the "bare-faced" gross injustice of the situation, at the same time as she trivializes the experience of escape from slavery. These tensions indicate that Rothberg's criterion of creating solidarity, is not to be found in the intent with which multidirectional references are made, but in the inevitable selection and emphasis that any multidirectional reference creates, and the effect this has on the representation of both situations.

The introduction to the *Annals* stipulates that *Ireland's Welcome to the Stranger* "should be read by the whole American people; it will have a salutary effect upon their minds, to appreciate more fully the depth of oppression and wretchedness from which the Irish poor escape in coming to this land of plenty" (iv). The two most prolonged comments on the Irish condition relative to slavery that Nicholson gives in *Ireland's Welcome* frame her experience in the country. The first is in the second chapter, occasioned by an observation she makes on the deck of the ship that is taking her to Tullamore, and the other in the final pages of her narrative. This placing serves to frame American audience response. In the first, Nicholson remarks:

> I was packed as tight as live stock could be in any but a slave ship. Here I found a company of would-be intelligent Irish and English aristocrats, who, on "both sides of the house," were professed enemies to the poor Irish, calling them a company of low, vulgar, lazy wretches, who prefer beggary to work, and filth to cleanliness. How much of this may be true I pretend not to decide, but this may be safely hazarded, that it is an established law of our nature to hate those we oppress. The American slaveholder, while he keeps his foot upon the slave, despises him for his degradation, and while he withholds a knowledge of letters, and closes the Bible against him, hates him because he is ignorant and a heathen. (40)

Nicholson uses the figure of the slaveholder to create a sphere of universal morality, in which historical oppressions correspond to similar structures and invite an identical moral response. Appealing to an American audience that condemns slaveholders, so as to condemn powers in Ireland, she recalls an image of viscerally repugnant immoral behavior of the slaveholder. In contrast to her earlier comment, this mention highlights the evils of slavery, the affect of which rubs off on the Irish situation.

The final reference showcases a careful system Nicholson devises, to explain the relation between Irish and American systems of oppression without constructing competition:

> I have often been tauntingly asked, "Why do you not labor for the slaves in your own country?" I answer, "I have done so, and it was a strong inducement to bring me to Ireland. I saw that most of your nation who land upon our shores are not only destitute, but ignorant of letters, and crouching and servile till they get power, and in all these lineaments bear a good comparison with our slaves." And I could not but ask, What but oppression could produce this similitude? And painful as is the fact, yet it must be told of the Irish in America, too many […] help him to bind the chains tighter about the poor black man; and I came to entreat you to show your people a better way. I came to beg you to help us knock off our fetters, by sending a more enlightened and free people among us, who cannot be bribed by flattery or money. But who shall teach them these noble lessons? […] I have seen the same jealousy, the same Jesuitical caution, and a greater unkindness in many cases exercised towards me by masters in Ireland, than by slaveholders in the American Slave States […] (454)

Again assuming that allegiance to the one cause entails that to another, Nicholson goes even further by suggesting that oppression in one part of the world reinforces that in another. She suggests that solving either of them is never a competitive act as they contribute to each other. Moreover, extending the imagery of slavery not only to the Irish, but even to the unenlightened US to express the ways in which they are bound by an immoral system, she makes available her exemplar of oppression to benefit other causes.

Where in *Ireland's Welcome* Nicholson mainly uses slavery to impress on American readers that Irish degradation was a result of their circumstances, the references in *Annals* serve

to elucidate the evils of the hired overseers. The most prolonged discussion resembles in structure the first; Nicholson uses the slavery narrative to express her severest indignation:

> the driver, like a slave one, ever faithful to his master's interest and good name, tells the starving cabiner if he will not ascend the roof of his hut and unthatch it, and tumble down the stones with his own hand, that he shall neither have the pound of meal or black bread. Then this driver screens himself behind the flimsy covering that the cabiner did it with his own hands, and the landlord gravely tells you that it was done without his orders, and probably without his knowledge. Slave-owners do [*sic*] precisely in the same way. They employ a faithful driver, pay him bountifully, and his duty is to get the most work done in the least time, and in the best way. If a delinquent be flogged to death, the owner is always away from home or somehow engaged – entirely ignorant of the matter. But mark! however often these cruelties may be repeated, the driver maintains his post and his salary. Are the public to be so duped in either case, that the slaveholder and landlord are not satisfied with this flogging and this pulling down of houses: Why, then, are they ever repeated? (177)

Here the implications that are mapped from the situation of slavery onto landlordism are that the overseer is recompensed well for unlawful cruelty, as well as that the driver is an utter brute capable of flogging someone to death. It may be noted that in espousing this comparison, the text not only concretizes the Irish situation along "a ready channel of public discourse" of slavery (Rothberg "Gaza" 534), but also suggests that the implications of the parallel are that "the public" must refuse to be "duped" or accept such constructions. The yoking together of the two oppressions interpellates the moral audience as having stakes in ending both. The information transferred onto the description of landlordism in this case is arguably not unlikely or misleading, but as will be seen in the discussion of *Poor Paddy's Cabin* below, the comparative created by multidirectional reference has a potential to construe misleading representations.

2. <u>The global *Uncle Tom* phenomenon and Ireland</u>

Uncle Tom's Cabin's rise to international bestseller status has been one of the most impressive in literary history. After the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's serial in book form, it became

the most popular story of the century both in the US and in Great Britain, where it outsold Dickens. American readership of the novel dwindled sharply after the Civil War, and the novel was not reprinted until 1948 (Gates xliv), but this decline did not occur in Europe (see Wilson, esp. 4-5). Amanda Claybaugh describes *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as being at the cradle of "a new era in which the literary marketplaces of the United States and Britain were more or less symmetrical, with publishers on both sides of the Atlantic printing works by authors from their own nation and reprinting works by authors of the other" (19).

It is estimated that in the US more audiences were introduced to the characters of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* through stage adaptations than the bestselling book itself.[22] This appears to be equally true for France. A contemporary commentator, in describing French audience response to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* seamlessly transfers from discussing the novel to discussing its theatrical adaptations:

> They [the French] had been accustomed so long to see white phantoms moving about on the chequer-board of life, that it was a change, a novelty, to see black men introduced in the drama […] Paris was hung in black, the boards of the theatre and the streets of the city resounded with praise of Uncle Tom's Cabin, and in their desire to gratify the public taste by representations of black characters on the stage, they did not adhere to the picture as pourtrayed [*sic*] in the romance itself, they painted others, gave ten different versions of the story, and [were not always] content with Mrs. Stowe's delineation of the black race (Hart 7,8)

The lack of political activation from seeing dramatic adaptations of the story is a well-known facet of the reception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* "Tommers" were more associated with theatrical pyrotechnics and melodrama than with reform activity. With the exception of the first adaptation by John Aiken, the performances were generally not aimed at promoting abolitionism. Performances tended to be more politically ambivalent, and sometimes even pro-slavery in outlook, often aimed at humoring crowds of different persuasions with farce and exoticism.[23]

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[22] The theatrical Tom phenomenon, singular in its instant mass mobilization and varying political significance, has attracted considerable critical attention: see, for instance, Meer, Frick, Drummond and Moody.

[23] Perhaps the radical potential of theatre can also explain why Stowe's original message was structurally diluted. In a piece on a staged *Uncle Tom* in New York, Garrison commented: "it was a sight worth seeing, those ragged, coatless men and boys in the pit (the very material of which mobs are made) cheering the strongest and the sublimest anti-slavery sentiment. […] I wish every abolitionist in this country could see this play as I saw it, and exult

Claire Parfait's remark that as "*Uncle Tom's Cabin* [is] no longer 'just' the novel which bears this name, but the product of countless stage and movie adaptations, reviews, and scholarly works […] an 'innocent' approach to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has become utterly impossible" became true within a year of its first publication (2).

When looking at the novel's reception in Ireland, then, it is important to consider whether the heavily remediated story was traveling in its novelistic form, as a cultural reference or in the form of dramatic adaptations. [24] The earliest Irish advertisement for the sale of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* appears to be in the *Belfast Newsletter* of August 30, 1852, five months after its appearance in book form in the US. Its change of context is reflected in the changed title under which the book is announced. British publisher Clark decided to replace the deliberately universalist subtitle "or, Life among the Lowly" by one that emphasizes geographical distance: "or, Negro Life in the Slave States of America."[25] As in France and Great Britain, however, public knowledge of the Uncle Tom phenomenon preceded the availability of the book for Irish audiences. The *Freeman's Journal* reported in 1852: "A very curious fact about the unprecedented sale of a novel illustrating slavery came out at this meeting. It is called 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' and written by Mrs Harriett [*sic*] Beecher Stowe. 50,000 copies have sold in eight weeks, or 1,000 per day, at a dollar-and-a half a copy […] The success of this book far exceeds any of Dickens's" ("America"). Much like in France and England, the novel soon became an excuse for a string of minstrel shows, which had already been popular; Douglas Riach describes at least fifteen troupes performing in Ireland between 1830 and 1860 ("Blacks and Blackface").

These performances were not always outright racial farce, but certainly a large amount of their interest was generated by factors of the 'exotic'. In 1879, the *Belfast Newsletter* advertised the performance of "Grover and Slaughter's *Uncle Tom's Cabin Combination Company*" which reserves small lettering to describe a performance that will highlight a "Great Dramatisation of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe's powerful Novel" but advertises in big lettering, "a host of REAL NEGROES, Freed slaves, Male and Female, Comprising Negroes, Mulattos and Octoroons, direct from the Southern Plantations. GRAND PLANTATION FESTIVITIES, Jubilees, Songs and Negro characteristics!" ("Amusements"). Nevertheless, the Tom phenomenon managed to

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as I did that, when haughty Pharisees will not testify against slavery, the very *stones* are crying out!" (qtd. in Fessenden 127)

[24] See Meer for further discussion of the effect of various dramatizations on the transatlantic reception of *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

[25] For more strategies of emphasizing cultural distance in British editions, see Thomas (esp. 37-45).

make the slavery debate hit the front pages of Irish news on several occasions following its publication (e.g. "Slavery in the United States" in the *Belfast Newsletter* of 28 March 1853), and thus arguably contributed to the novel's goal of publicizing the issue of slavery.

Entangling famine and slavery[26]

As 'Tom mania' was enveloping the circum-Atlantic world, Stowe's story started to attract comparison with the Irish situation.[27] For instance, racialist comparisons, fanned to fire by stage and stereotypes of Irish and Africans, occurred in discussions of the novel; one English review that pondered the similarities between the 'Negro' and the Irish, contending that they share "the same strong and kindly feelings, the same love of ease and comfort, the same lively apprehension of the humorous" (*English Review* October 1852, qtd. in Thomas 51). There were also numerous Irish variations of Uncle Tom on American stages, in which stock African-American characters were swapped with stock Irish characters. For instance, H.J. Conway, who had also authored a stage adaptation of Uncle Tom, wrote an "Uncle Pat's Cabin; or, Lights and Shades of Irish Life" for well-known Irish stage artists Barney Williams and his wife,[28] which they performed on various American stages as part of a comic repertoire in the 1853-54 season (Davis 106).[29] There was also an "Uncle Mike's Cabin; or, The Irishman's Home" performed by William J. Florence and his spouse (Lott 222, Eagan 314).

Pro-slavery writers in the US also pounced on the maligned situation of the Irish to counter British support for the novel. For instance, a Southern satirist composed a song "to be

[26] The *Loeber's Guide to Irish Fiction*, and the online archives *Uncle Tom's Cabin and American Culture* and, to a lesser extent, *Documenting the American South* have been major resources in tracing the texts that feature in this discussion.

[27] Tracy Fessenden describes how, as part of anti-Catholic rhetoric, Catholic Irish were not only often compared to black slaves, but also, paradoxically, to Southern Confederates (128-129). In addition to the Northern Protestant myth that slavery was an extension of Roman Catholicism to win support for abolitionism, implicating the Irish in the perpetuation of the peculiar institution was also a means of winning British support for the Union during the Civil War (Fessenden 129).

[28] It seems likely that the title of this play refers to Asenath Nicholson's book.

[29] The scarce mention of this play in secondary literature, such as Lott's, usually characterize it as an Irish parody. However, reviews like the one published in *The Sun* throw doubt on whether the play was in fact merely a spoof. The *New York Daily* Tribune called it a "pathetic Irish drama" (qtd. in Rohs 77), and *The Sun* reports: "The new drama, written for Mr. And Mrs. B. Williams, entitled 'Uncle Pat's Cabin', which has been performed in Philadelphia and New York to crowded houses, will be produced this evening. Mr. Williams performs the part of Micky Malone, and Mrs. Williams that of widow Casey. It portrays, in a vivid manner, the wrongs and misfortunes endured by the people of that beautiful but misgoverned country [Ireland] and is replete with thrilling interest…" (qtd. in Parker, n.p.). These comments hint at more dramatic potential in the play than just a spoof, but it appears that there is as yet no known copy of the play from which its nature can be determined.

sung in chorus by the aristocratic guests at Stafford House, London"[30] which included, along with reference to English industrial poor, the reference ("The Lantern"):

> Though Irishmen rot in the fever and famine,
> Which we have created – we speak it with pride –
> That, if you will calmly and fairly examine,
> You'll find they were perfectly free – when they died;
> We only "asserted our right," and the hovels
> Wherein lay the sick, we tore down without ruth;
> But no one would think of admiring the novels,
> That told such domestic, detestable truth!

The quip serves to point out to a British audience 'their own' social injustices as an argument for their disengagement with the slavery issue, rather than raise awareness for Irish affairs. In the anti-Tom work *The Planter, or Thirteen years in the South* (1853), published anonymously initially but now taken to be the work of a David Brown from the Northern States, Irish reference is abundant for the same reason. The book consists of a prolonged series of rebuttals of Stowe's arguments, organized under headings such as "Slavery not inconsistent with God's word," "Comforts of slaves" and "Slave families not so often as free families broken up," and seems to be addressed to "Stowites" in the United States, but most often challenges British antislavery sentiment. As the book was never published in Britain, it seems likely that this discrediting of European responses was designed to persuade American audiences. There is reference to Irish poverty and its similarities to particular sufferings attributed to slavery, such as the permanent separation from family, throughout. These excursions are linked to the frame narrative by the inclusion of the character of the planter's fair Irish kitchen maid, whom he keeps "neat handed and newly and warmly clad" (9), a detail which underlines his morality. Lucien B. Chase's anti-Tom *English Serfdom and American Slavery* (1854) also cites the state of Ireland as an argument for British hypocrisy, and J. W. Page's *Uncle Robin in his Cabin in Virginia, and Tom Without one in Boston* is another anti-Tom work that cites the example of the Irish, but this time to suggest that they would be better off under similar 'benevolent' paternalism as African

[30] Stafford House refers to the controversial "Stafford House Address," a petition sent by English ladies to their American counterparts to condemn slavery.

Americans (see also Eagan 313, 314).

Brown offers a specific discussion of Irish affairs in the chapter entitled "The Earl of Carlisle" (154), in which he alludes to an "Uncle Pat" being driven from his "cabin," and even brings up official reports, such as an 1830 "Report of the Evidence taken before the Committee on the State of the Poor in Ireland" (155), as proof of injustices in Ireland in the same fashion abolitionists would cite eyewitness accounts, commenting that since the Famine the situation has only turned worse (156). Brown actively harnesses zero-sum logic, bringing up an unrelated, alternate cause in order to argue the lesser importance of the initial cause. This becomes overt, for instance, when he writes: "Poor unhappy Ireland! O that thy oppressors, by whom thy wisest sons have been maddened, would withdraw their pseudo-sympathies from our happy negro-slaves and extend to thee a true and efficient Christian sympathy, that should elevate thy children to the condition of happy freemen!" (158). In the argument, it is impossible to extend sympathy to Ireland without diminishing sympathy for slaves, and *vice versa*, and perceived filiation between Irish and English makes Ireland a more important cause.

The complications that espousing this logic causes can be seen when the narrator asks: "Is it true that emigrants and paupers, from Great Britain and Ireland, have been packed in emigrant ships, somewhat after the manner of the African slaves, and that, in this way the ship fever was originated, which had destroyed them by the tens of thousands […]?" (159). The author uses the comparison to the Middle Passage to suggest that the Irish are not just suffering from natural disaster and poverty, but that there is also injustice in the treatment of emigrants, as white Europeans are being treated like Africans. The misleading passive "been packed" which is seemingly authorized by British officials rather than commercial enterprises, may be considered an additional reference to the slave trade. Brown needs to awkwardly add a 'somewhat', however, to prevent the comparison from backfiring and imply the kidnap and mass murder of Africans.

The HASS publically addressed these kinds of pro-slavery comparisons in one of their meetings in 1853, with a resolution that stipulated:

> One fallacy which the proslavery advocates were very fond of putting forward was, that slavery as it now existed in the States was but another form of what had existed in the old European countries, where the poor were oppressed by the rich, and where the miserable state in which the poor were placed naturally engendered crime. But that argument was

> perfectly fallacious, one state being in a degree the unavoidable and inscrutable degree of Providence, and the other having its origins in the lowest degree of selfishness of man (hear.)"("Anti-Slavery Society").

This suggests that these arguments raging in the United States found their way to the Irish public as well. Richard Allen proceeds to stress the generosity of the United States during the Famine, and argues that by attacking slavery they were paying a "debt" they owed to Americans, slavery being a sin that would eventually bring its own punishment. These discussions signal emergent anxieties in Ireland, namely that antislavery was ungrateful towards the United States, and that the Famine had put Ireland in a position from which its criticism of foreign affairs rang hollow. Antislavery activists in Ireland felt it necessary to respond to these popular sentiments and counter zero-sum arguments by conceptualizing antislavery as a positive influence.

At other times, however, American criticism of Stowe was in fact aimed at genuinely addressing and publicizing Irish issues. In the article "Mrs. Stowe in Cork" by an "Irish-American," criticism of the enthusiastic reception that awaited Stowe when she visited Ireland is a pretext for graphically describing the ravages left by the Famine and denouncing the British upper classes. Published in a Southern newspaper, it plays on the popular dislike that Stowe's success had engendered among proslavery factions to gain attention for its own agenda. The text pays more narrative attention to Irish scenes than to slavery, and offers Irish sympathy as a moral cause that, again in zero-sum logic, can be rallied behind to counter Stowe: "Uncle Tom's cabin! Father Pat's Hut [*sic*]! Uncle Tom well fed, well clothed […] Father Pat lying in a ditch, after being thrown out of his birth spot – raging in a spotted fever – without a drop of water to cool his burning tongue […] rotting away from existence" ("Stowe"). The writer appeals to filial obligations when he exclaims:

> Aye, take Uncle Tom's historian to Father Pat's grave – that spot of red damnation […] and ask her should you intermeddle for the black while you have the *white* slaves by the millions, whose condition you have done nothing – you do nothing to alleviate! […] contribute to free your own white slave – (called, by a mockery, a delusion and snare, a free man) – and then you may fete Mrs. Stowe, Lucy Stone or Abby Folsom,[31] and

[31] Two American abolitionists and feminists.

> sympathize with American bondsmen, whom you propagate by purchasing that cotton which they, and they only, can produce.

He accuses Stowe's sympathizers of hypocrisy, using slavery to occlude other issues of limited freedom. Moreover, as abolitionism pertains to "the black" it is an immoral lapse to fight against this oppression, rather than one of "white slaves." In his account, the adjective 'free' is meaningless, merely a pretext to effectively outlaw its subject and exclude him from philanthropic feeling. The writer accuses abolitionists of paying only lip-service to principles, as they still purchase the cotton which keeps the system of slavery afloat. In this fragment there is also an implicit gendering of sentimental appeal, by the enumeration of female abolitionists, rather than their much more well-known male counterparts.

3. Metaphorizing Stowe in *Poor Paddy's Cabin*

This background of international comparison perhaps explains why *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sparked several Irish novelistic adaptations, which are the only known overt English-language ethnic spin-offs of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Jason King and Marguérite Corporaal note that at least two novelizations of Famine memory, Thomas O'Neill Russell's *The Struggles of Dick Massey* (1860) and Dillon O'Brien's *The Dalys of Dalystown* (1866) contain allusions to Stowe, even though they were written years later (310, 11, see also Corporaal). It was only a couple of months, however, before the first Irish novelistic appropriation of Stowe's text appeared, *Poor Paddy's Cabin*, which was published both in Dublin and London. There was another manuscript that envisioned the same plan, by a W.J. Battersby, however, that was never published, perhaps having been beaten to the chase by *Poor Paddy*. After seeing the advertisement for *Poor Paddy's Cabin*, Battersby felt compelled to send in a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, in which he distanced himself from the published novel: "I thus publically state that I have 'neither hand, act, or part' in this vile caricature of principles and characters" ("Uncle"). He explains that he had only days earlier sent a manuscript himself to the Dublin publisher himself, entitled 'Uncle Pat's Cabin: or, Slavery in Ireland' which was "based not on fancy or on falsehood, but upon stubborn fact, standard evidence and undoubted records, showing the social, civil and political misery to which *Pat* has been reduced by foreign robbery, domestic treachery, and vile misrule" but was rejected for being "too strong for Scotch or English stomachs to digest" (idem.). *Poor Paddy's Cabin* was "in every sense the opposite of mine, presenting a series of gross slanders on the faith,

clergy, and people of Ireland, couched in the lowest slang." Having never been published, the content of his work is lost, but it seems clear from Batterby's letter that his account of 'Irish slavery' was Catholic and anti-English in outlook. Ireland proved soil rich enough to spring two different offshoots of opposite nature.

In reading the texts that link themselves to Stowe's project, a main question to be answered is whether they intertextually engaged with her work, employed her techniques, or just intended to profit from her publicity. Another is whether they align themselves with her project as they are trying to benefit from the community of readers her text aggregated, or whether they set up theirs as competing with her cause; in other words, whether they are symbiotic or parasitical. As the next section will show, Stowe mastered novelistic techniques to reach wide audiences and integrate fact and fiction, which other writers sought to imitate.

Stowe's structural innovation: deradicalizing antislavery and remodeling transnational reform

One of the most impressive features of Stowe's work is the vast and varied cast of characters that are fleshed out in the novel. It seems reductive to characterize the book as 'just' a social or problem novel, as those terms leave undeveloped the comprehensive aesthetic strategies Stowe employed to appeal to such a wide audience. Moreover, the novel cannot be said to describe just the situation of a single class, but sketches many different figures representing different classes, including Southern planters (Legree), Southern gentlemen (St. Clare), slavecatchers (Tom Loker), traders (Haley), politicians (Mr. Bird) a Northern housekeeper (Miss Ophelia) as well as different slaves from different backgrounds and with different occupations. The characters' religions vary too; St. Clare is a Catholic of French-descent;[32] there are multiple philanthropic Quaker characters or "Friends;" and Tom and Miss Ophelia belong to Protestant traditions. The latter is the religious perspective the novel ultimately validates.[33] Jane Tompkins has suggested that the novel's incredible impact relied on Stowe's remarkable ability "to combine so many of

[32] Although the narrative does not make his religion explicit, there are many strong textual indications that this is the case. Tracy Fessenden discusses the St. Clare's discursive "Catholicization" (123), and the significance of St. Clare's New Orleans origins in "From Romanism to Race."

[33] The text's religious open-mindedness, and surprising lack of denominational proselytizing for its origins in an age famously fraught with religious tensions, might be explained by the following section in *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, in which Stowe describes her envisioned strategy as follows: "What is to be done […] is that the whole American church, of all denominations, should unitedly come up, not *in form*, but *in fact*, to the noble purpose avowed by the Presbyterian assembly of 1818, to seek the ENTIRE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY THROUGHOUT AMERICA AND THROUGHOUT CHRISTENDOM" (250).

the culture's central concerns in a narrative that is immediately accessible to the general population" (Tompkins 135, qtd. in Helminski 175), combining all in a single 'eschatological' religious plot of redemption. In her comment, Tompkins is referring to the different plotlines followed in the novel, but she could equally have been reflecting on the variety of characters that readers could recognize, as well as criticize or appreciate.

The cultural iconization of several almost allegorical characters – Legree, Eva, Tom – has served to obfuscate the fact that most characters that appear are in fact morally ambivalent. St. Clare is written as a likeable rogue, but is amoral and ineffective, his apathy causing his slaves' eventual auction; Miss Ophelia, characterized primly as "the absolute bond-slave of the '*ought*'" (148), is properly appalled by the peculiar institution, but deeply prejudiced against anyone of African descent and cruel to Topsy, the child in her care; and Cassy, Legree's heroic mixed-race slave, would have murdered Legree if not for Tom's intervention, and has killed her own child fearing Legree would sell it (340). These characters are not two-dimensional caricatures but fleshed out individuals.

Although generally read as a relatively straight-forward moral tale, Stowe in fact intended her novel to be a comprehensive catalogue of different aspects of the practice of slavery and of arguments from both sides of the debate surrounding abolition. In *A Key to Uncle Tom*, published in 1853, Stowe prints extensive proofs that what she detailed in her novel a year earlier is accurate. In the first chapter of that volume Stowe makes clear that the relationship of her narrative to the facts is that of a framing device, not of distortive dramatization, or emotive allegorization. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was, she writes:

> more, perhaps, than any other work of fiction that ever was written, [..] a collection and arrangement of real incidents – of actions really performed, of words and expressions really uttered, – grouped together with reference to a general result […] a mosaic of facts […] the book had a purpose entirely transcending the artistic one, and accordingly encounters, at the hands of the public, demands not usually made on fictitious work […] The writer acknowledges that the book is a very inadequate representation of slavery; and it is so, necessarily, for this reason, – that slavery, in some of its workings, is too dreadful for the purposes of art. (5)

To the extent that Stowe combines a commitment to proving that her story is grounded in fact with an effort to maintain a strong narrative interest and elements of the sentimental, her work was unparalleled. The subplots surrounding the three main narrative strands, of Tom, George and Eliza, the first often taken to be the 'Southern' plotline and the latter two combining into the 'Northern' one, are carefully constructed to showcase an approximation of a totality of different facets of slaves' experiences, such as their separation from family, the experience of auction, physical abuse, genderbased violence, as well as different complications in European- and African-American relations.

Notably, the narrative of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* does not contain any white abolitionist moral hero; antislavery sentiment is represented as a natural sentiment connected to innocence and innate morality. Stowe explained her inspiration for *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by saying that when "the fugitive slave law came out, her pillow was wet every night, with her tears, and if any book was ever written from the effect of prayer, it was that book" ("Foreign"). This feminine-styled sentimentalization can be read as a strategy to disassociate antislavery from the publically disliked radicalism of the fire and brimstone Garrisonian abolitionists. If her "success – unexampled as it was – proved the depth and the breadth of the anti-slavery feeling in this country" (idem.), she accomplished this by making reading about slavery palatable to the general public. Where abolitionists emphasized the violence they described, Stowe toned it down; the countless instances of violence in her text are present, but subdued by other textual elements. The treatment of Topsy is the prime example of this, as the humorous scenes surrounding the character distract from the fact she is orphaned and routinely physically abused. The minor character Prue, whom the loss of her children has turned to alcohol abuse and insanity, is arguably the starkest example of abject violence in Stowe's text.

Despite its phenomenal popular influence, surprisingly little investigation has been conducted into the literary influence *Uncle Tom's Cabin* exerted.[34] Literary criticism varies between deeming it merely a "very bad novel" as James Baldwin contemptuously called it (1654), or awarding it Orwell's epithet "best bad book of the age" (21). The book is notable in the degree to which it reworks existing themes, which might explain its huge popular appeal despite its subversive message. This may be observed in its deployment of popular platitudes for

[34] One recent scholarly work that forays into the cultural influence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is David Reynold's *Mightier than the Sword:* Uncle Tom's Cabin *and the Battle for America* (2011).

the antislavery cause; its recombination of sentimental motifs, such as the death of the "loveliest" innocent child (252) and the two twin brothers St. Clare, opposite in every way (208); its use of racial stereotype in Topsy's speech and acrobatics (195); and its thrilling melodramatic feats of implausible heroics, such as Eliza's escape over the ice (59) and Emmeline and Cassy's staged haunting of Legree (391).

The scene in which Tom, and Haley's other 'merchandise' are being transported South by steamer may serve as an example of how Stowe combines different perspectives, creating a polyphony to wash away the appearance of abolitionist partiality (see also Carabine). In the passage, their situation below deck is contrasted with the conversations of travelers on deck that display a variety of standpoints on slavery. Stowe opens the scene with picturesque descriptions of a "brilliant sky, the stripes and stars of free America waving and fluttering overhead; the guards crowded with well-dressed ladies and gentlemen" which contrast with "Haley's gang, who were stored, with other freight, on the lower deck, and who […] sat in a knot, talking to each other in low tones" (114). Below deck the characters mourn their separation from their families, while Stowe emphasizes the intimacy of family life on the upper deck. The characters engaging in discussion on the deck are: a mother instructing her son that slavery is immoral; a woman commenting that slaves are better off in bondage and that cruelties are rare; a clergyman suggesting that slavery is biblically licensed, quoting Genesis 9:25's Curse of Ham, a favorite argument of the pro-slavery camp; which is countered with a scriptural "all things whatsoever ye would that men do unto you, do ye even so unto them" by another passenger; and a "tall man" mocking the clergyman to Haley, who responds simply that he trades for monetary reasons, none other. Naturally the antislavery arguments are more convincing than those of the pro-slavery passengers, but the righteousness of the former position is shown by the effect of sentimental appeal which is created when the wife of one of Haley's captives bursts onto the ship crying for her husband, rather than narratorial comment (116). The pathos of the scene gainsays proslavery arguments. The narrator refers to his charge as "article" and "merchandise" (113, 116), which contrasts with the emotional charge of their situation. By highlighting the absence of the slaves' voices from the public debate crystallized in the scene, the narrative stresses the urgency of the issue, deflating quasi-intellectual discussion, and thus showing the debate itself to be a form of inaction. *Poor Paddy's Cabin* attempts to imitate some of Stowe's techniques.

Poor Paddy's Cabin

Poor Paddy's Cabin: or, Slavery in Ireland did not gather much publicity in Ireland beyond the advertisements for the first and second editions, but in England, where it was printed simultaneously, it received ample attention in the Protestant press. This indicates that in linking itself to Stowe's unexpected transatlanticism, the novel directly appealed to a transnational audience. The C*hurch Warder and Domestic Magazine*, for instance, called the novel "a lively and correct picture of the slavery to which Romanism has reduced the native Irish" (qtd. in *Recollecting Hunger* 98). The *New London Magazine* judges it by the same standards of authenticity as it applied to Stowe's work, writing that "the narrative might easily be understood as a record – very little embellished – of events which actually occurred in the order in which they are related" (234). Articles like that of the *New London Magazine* were able to use the book reviews as a pretext to print their own denunciations of Catholicism and the 1829 Emancipation. The novel was printed anonymously, by "An Irishman," but the author goes to lengths to prove his Irish identity, publishing in the work two original *keens*, both in phonetic Gaelic and English translation, and representing Irish speech patterns and Gaelic sayings.

Printed in 1853,[35] at the height of 'Tom mania', it is likely that the book's explicitly referential title was chosen to draw on an audience, an imagined community that was abolition-minded and had in fact read Stowe. This explains the concern both in the novel and surrounding press, with 'factuality' as a marker of value. Where Stowe argued for the abolition of slavery, the "Irishman" argues for legislation to counter the influence of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Like *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the novel is addressed to the wider community of Protestants, not the supposedly incapable unenlightened Irish Catholics: the narrator, voiced in the minister, Mr. Warren, says "Let us not leave the great and noble work of rendering Ireland 'Great, glorious, and free,' entirely in the hands of such worthy, but helpless peasants as poor Paddy; but share with them in the burden and heat of the day" (100).

The novel tells the story of an Irish family that convert to Protestantism in the Irish countryside during the Famine. It describes at length what it deems to be the evils of the Catholic Church and press, on which it blames all the evils of the Famine: the blight is a punishment by God; the resulting starvation is caused by cultivated ignorance, misgoverning and tyranny;

[35] This reading of the novel uses the second edition of the text, which was published within a year of the first. It boasts "additional facts and anecdotes" (243).

laborers' massive emigration is categorized as disloyal absenteeism due to Catholic scaremongering; and lack of economic development is blamed on Catholic nepotism that shelters Catholic "worthless tenants" from eviction (102).

In the introduction, the "Irishman" explains the relationship of his text to Stowe's: "the author need scarcely say that its plan and general *character* have been suggested by Mrs. Stowe's very popular work, as its title indicates" (v), interweaving "a representation of *facts* and *characters*" into a fictional account (idem., original emphasis). He does not make further explicit reference to Stowe here, but the two facets of his story that he highlights in the introduction also echo her novel. Firstly, he emphatically directs his attention to denouncing a system, rather than individual people: "all his censures are directed against *systems* and *principles*, – not against persons" (idem.). The efforts made to avoid vilifying characters, though in the "Irishman's" text, which sports menacing manipulative priests who are willing to physically attack members of their flock to keep them away from schools and Bible readings,[36] much less credible than in Stowe, aims to maximize the audience and avail of the legitimizing strategy of the reasonable and benevolent author.

Secondly, the "Irishman" announces that "along with a matter-of-fact representation of the real state of things in Ireland, his aim has been to exhibit in a parable (taking that of the Prodigal Son for his general pattern), a just and true view of what the gracious dealings of the Almighty always are" (vii). The writer explains his motivation as deriving from the perceptible power of Stowe's adoption of the format: "The amiable and talented American Authoress seems to be the most successful imitator of Scripture parable [i.e. Uncle Tom's self-sacrifice] that has yet appeared; and God has owned and blessed her work for the good of mankind to a vast extent. Her book has suggested to the Author, a similar attempt as to mental slavery" (x).[37] The 'prodigal son' refers to Tom Sheehan, son of the 'landgrabbers' who render Paddy's family homeless. Tom, after having been rejected by Paddy's virtuous daughter Maureen for his Catholicism, flees

[36] A memorable example of this invective is the following passage from the chapter "The Whipping:" "the priest had been on the spot—[…] he had a large whip, and was attended by two men with bludgeons, and […] had chased away several men, women and children, and had caught and flogged a few of the latter and sent them home crying. He had not ventured close to the school-house, but, by a sort of light infantry movement, had scoured the hedges and passages all around. He was now, however, nowhere to be found; the rector looked about for him in vain, intending to invite him to a friendly discussion on the people's right to read the Scriptures, but both he and his myrmidons seemed to have vanished. It came out afterwards that the whole aggressive party had retired behind a lime-kiln, from which they did not emerge till the rector and his party had gone away" (42).

[37] On accusations levelled against Stowe's supposedly anti-Catholic bias, see Riach 433-435.

to America, where he is later reunited with his family, whom he converts to Protestantism having seen the light in America. Where in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* George decides to leave for Liberia with his family where he may build his "own nation" for his own race (401, 402), in contrast to their continuous oppression in America, in *Poor Paddy's Cabin*, America is a space where Protestantism is allowed to develop freely, to contrast with Ireland: "poor Ireland seems to be the centre of this darkness, for it is a fact that when our people go to America, very many of them come forth into Gospel light and liberty; so that a priest lately wrote to his brethren in Ireland, begging of them to keep their people from emigrating, as such numbers were leaving the true and ancient faith there" (196).

Like Stowe's novel, *Poor Paddy's Cabin* also displays a use of racialized and stereotypical cultural characterizations to illuminate the narrative. For instance, where Stowe describes the superstitions of slaves, and, more generally, of the South, the "Irishman" refers to a peculiarly Irish belief in curses and fairies, and even includes the murder of a baby as the result of a Catholic-tolerated belief in fairy children. It also distinguishes between Scots-Irish and Gaelic Irish races, and spends narrative attention on their phenotypes and relative attractions. Another of Stowe's echoes can be found in the attempts the "Irishman" makes at polyphony. There is an abundance of major and minor characters, and the steamer-conversation scene described earlier finds a counterpart of sorts in a scene describing a gathering in the benevolent landlord Rockdale's parlor, where different gentlemen are discussing matters like the influence of Maynooth, a main center of Irish Catholic authority, over the populace and education (98). Rockdale explains his lack of political power to oppose any of the Catholic-benefitting measures taken by the authorities; some 'Orangemen' present argue heatedly for hanging the priests; and a reverend Mr. Warner then interposes to voice the 'moderate' standpoint, reminding the Orangemen that although there "is too much ground, I admit, for abhorring their tyranny; but let us remember they are but men like ourselves" (99). Warner declares the authorial point of view: "I blame those most who have enslaved our country to men who are themselves the slaves of our beloved Queen's deadly enemy the Pope" (100), and three more gentlemen voice their agreement with Warren, and add additional anecdotes, even quoting a newspaper as evidence of a Catholic cursing of the crops. In this example, however, although the form of Stowe's polyphonic conversations is mimicked, the speakers merely voice different shades of the same side of the debate.

Redrawing the color line: relating to Stowe's audiences

Poor Paddy's Cabin uses some of the same motifs and characters, such as the innate wisdom of the innocent child displayed in Maureen, and the martyrdom, in this case averted, of Tom Dowling, a minor figure in the story who is able to convert even a constable who arrests him to his faith by reading to him from the Irish Bible (55). Another significant echo of Stowe's text may be found in the pervasive reference to the Protestant theme of reading as a means of liberation, which starts Paddy's conversion, and is referred to explicitly for instance when the reader is told that "Paddy's two boys, Johnny and David, expressed a great wish to be trained as Scripture-readers, to assist in the glorious work for the abolition of Irish slavery" (225).

Poor Paddy's Cabin's relation to Africans is a crucial theme to understanding its relation to Stowe's project. Tom Sheehan meets a Protestant black woman, "black Ellen," on his transatlantic voyage, who is described sympathetically and even occasions Tom's conversion. Tom recounts how her steadfast faith calms the passengers on the ship during a storm:

> With that, the poor black woman, who seemed as quiet and as asy [*sic*, phonetic] in her mind as if she was safe on land, said, "Oh, missee, shame to be so afeerd. Look to Jesus, missee; He de rock – no *shiprack* on dat rock, missee." "Oh, Ellen," says the lady, "if ever God spares me I'll try to love and serve Jesus, as you do, and then I won't be afeerd to die, as now I am." Oh, that's Maureen for all the world, only being black, says I to myself; and if God spares me too, I'll be of Maureen's religion, to love the Saviour, and to trust Him alone. Well, at that moment the wind changed, and blew us out from the big rock, and we war safe, only the sails and the ship bein all tattered and torn… Ob, that's Maureen again, says I, only she bein as fair as a lily, and poor Ellen as black as the coal; but I think both of 'em will be white when the angel will say, 'These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' From that out I said I'd be of no religion but Maureen's and poor black Ellen's, and to love the dear Saviour, and put my trust in Him only, as they do. (172, 73)

In the explicit equation of Ellen and Maureen, juxtaposing them much like popular images of Topsy and Eva, the "Irishman" at the same time redefines the border between communities from racial to religious, and demonstrates explicitly his membership of the non-racist community that presumably forms the ideal readership of Stowe. By positioning himself thus, he aligns his own

project with Stowe's, as an extension of the same Protestant morality. He constructs his readership as a Protestant, antislavery community of reformers.[38] Moreover, he implies that the laudable cause of abolition is naturally grounded in Protestantism, which further reinforces the cohesion of the constructed community of Protestant readers.

However, in a section discussing *Uncle Tom's Cabin* he also, incredibly, rates the Catholic spiritual condition more dire than the condition of slavery:

> I think that good lady, Mrs. Stowe, gave American slavery a pat on the cheek with her soft hand that will make it blush itself out of the world in due time. But, pardon me for saying, Irish slavery is far worse. Sure, your honour poor Uncle Tom and George Harris had fine free souls – as free as the breezes of heaven, though having the chains of slavery on the poor body – and sign is by it, poor George got free to British ground, and poor Uncle Tom got free to heaven, with many a fine free soul along with him that he convarted [*sic*, phonetic] to the truth. But who'll show me the man or the woman, having the chains of Popery and the dread of the priest on their poor heart and their poor soul, that have their bodily freedom? […] And, sure, your honour knows that, if the poor soul is lashed out of spiritual life, as 'tis plain many are, 'tis worse than what poor Uncle Tom suffered itself, when his body was lashed to death. (210, 11)

As the logic of his narrative dictates that making the 'right choice' of conversion yields a happy ending, the "Irishman" turns this around to imply that what he considers to be the happy ending of Stowe's protagonists equals the lesser degree of their suffering. This logic is, however, emphatically not present in Stowe, who presents numerous cases of innocent suffering and death. This combination of equation and hierarchization lays bare a complicated effort to work Stowe's audience. The way *Poor Paddy's Cabin* highlights the Protestant outlook of Stowe's narrative which she herself actively tried to subdue, can also be seen as one of those distortions, the workings of which merits closer examination, and can be understood in terms of the metaphorical operation of multidirectionality.

[38] The equation of Tom, who is speaking the passage, and the authorial opinion here is simplistic, but seeing the stated purpose of the book it seems licensed.

Multidirectionality's metaphorical operation

After Max Black's classic paper, "Metaphor" (1954), there was a resurgence in scholarly interest in metaphor, reconceptualizing it as a cognitive operation at the level of semantics, rather than a textual flourish to flatter the author's, and reader's, artistic sensibilities. Black describes an "interaction view" of metaphor, in which the text asks the reader to imagine simultaneously two different lexical domains. In this parallel imagining, the metaphor does not just express, but creates similarity by working both on the tenor domain and the vehicle domain.[39] Black calls such domains "systems of associated commonplaces" (287), which are culturally shared sets of implied knowledge of a concept that accompany each lexical item. He explains that in metaphorical expression a selective process highlights specific features both of the tenor and the vehicle, and leaves both altered, having taken on new meaning; "[t]he metaphor selects, emphasizes, suppresses and organizes features of the principal [tenor] by *implying* statements that normally apply to the subsidiary [vehicle] [which] involves shifts in meaning of words belonging to the same family or system as the metaphorical expression" (291, 92). In forging a *tertium comparationis*, then, the metaphor rearranges and shifts the knowledge domains of both concepts.

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have since further theorized the 'black box' at the heart of the metaphorical operation, i.e. the neurological processes that underlie it. Their theory of "conceptual metaphor" posits that human understanding of reality beyond the embodied is based on intricate metaphorical systems, as embodied knowledge is "mapped" onto more abstract situations according to logical systems of implications. Looking at patterns of remembrance from the viewpoint of this neurological operation of "metaphorical extension" is (72), though fascinating, wholly beyond the purposes of this discussion. Nevertheless, Lakoff and Johnson's conclusions can give some insight into the peculiar power of political analogy, as they explain at least three factors of its appeal: firstly, that such comparison is, as a natural learning mechanism, a predisposition of the human brain; that developing from certain terms of the comparison extensions into different metaphorical domains is a 'hard-wired' physiological process; and that being mostly unconscious, this process happens faster and less critically than conscious rational

[39] The terminology here is not Black's; it takes 'vehicle' and 'tenor' from I.A. Richards and the use of the neurolinguistics terminology of 'domain' from Lakoff and Johnson.

comparison.[40]

In this definition, the conceptual operation of metaphor may illuminate a new facet of multidirectionality. Where Rothberg's 'screen' emphasizes the way in which one remembrance occasions another, and Erll's 'schema' has a temporally linear focus of tracing representational histories as dependent on previous mediations, conceptualizing multidirectional reference as triggering a metaphorical operation highlights both the mutual influence of multidirectional reference on the meaning of both domains, and the ideological dimension that this necessarily selective "creation of similarity" intrinsically has. The knowledge that this intrinsic selection affects the vehicle domain as well, giving multidirectional works a dual representational responsibility, underlines Rothberg's appeal that "multidirectional sensibility" needs be accompanied by an ethics ("Gaza" 528). Attention to the metaphorical operation that multidirectional reference triggers, unmasks the fact that a representation of any particular memory narrative as an uncomplicated "ready channel" is created in the multidirectional instance itself (534), by the workings of the particularly created analogy and its specific mobilization of implications. Solidarity can hence be reconceptualized as not a "tonality" of the artistic work, but as the extent to which the author fulfills its representational duty to the narrative she uses as a vehicle.

Popish slavery: metaphorical logic at work

Throughout *Poor Paddy's Cabin*, there is abundant reference to slavery: in adjectives, as in "slavish tool" (108), "slavish dread" (193), "slavish system"(117); in comparisons of priests to slaveholders sporting whips and administering spiritual 'floggings'; and in references to priests who are in turn "slaves" to the Pope (100). Catholic hierarchy is described as having the same mechanisms as slavery, for instance when the narrative seeks to show that what it perceives as Irish degradation is independent of their "race" but wholly attributable to the "hideous system" of Catholicism (47): "the great mistake a part of the public press has fallen into, [is] in ascribing the intractable degradation of the Irish peasantry to their Celtic origin, instead of to the bondage of their spiritual task-masters" (156), which is "nothing less than a conspiracy, even to the death, against the rights of conscience and the liberties of mankind: it is this that turns the best-hearted

[40] On the potentially dangerous aspects of unconscious elements of communicative memory, see also Welzer 294,95.

men into mere machines of mischief, tyranny, and oppression" (47). Mr. Wilkins argues, echoing Stowe's reproach of the passivity of the Northern states:

> but I regret to say there are educated Protestants, both in England and Ireland, who also speak of poor Paddy and his concerns as a bad job; and because their own mere worldly expedients have failed to raise him from his degradation, say they are sick of hearing at all about him, and regard the plans of those who would effect this by spiritual and moral means as the Utopian dreams of fanaticism. (196)

The reference to fanaticism seems more informed by the metaphor's vehicle, the widespread perception of abolitionists as Utopian extremists, than by any corresponding zeal in the actual current topic of conversation with regards to Protestant proselytizers.

Considering the metaphorical operation of multidirectional memory, it becomes clear how these well-publicized images of slavery were used to actively shape, or manipulate, understanding of the Irish situation. Many skewered representations of facts can be discerned in this heavily propagandistic book. The main ones are, arguably, that Catholics, who usually comprised the majority of the Irish countryside, were compelled by force to keep to that religion instead of follow their 'natural instincts' to the Protestant faith, and that not supporting restrictive legislative measures against Catholics equals enabling their bondage, rather than grant them intellectual freedom. Both of these arguments, when articulated explicitly, appear unconvincing; they are, however, conclusions enforced by the syllogism developing from the cultural comparison to slavery that runs through the narrative, and even beyond, starting with its title.

In the passage describing the goal of Protestant proselytizing relief organizations, the workings of the various metaphors are clearly visible. The "Irishman" writes that they aim to exert "a moral influence over an intensely hostile population, which has been, and with God's blessing will be, turned to the best of purposes – that of emancipating our warm-hearted, but misled and misguided peasantry, from spiritual bondage, and enabling them to understand and assert their rights as men, and as British Christians" (82). "Emancipation," a word for the general public associated with slavery, or even Catholic rights, is now appropriated for Protestant goals; the Roman Catholic faith equals bondage; and, uttered with the blatant condescending paternalism also encountered in abolitionist discourse, converting Irish Catholics will allow them, like Stowe's slaves, to "understand and assert" their rights and to grow into men of potential.

The Famine caused an upsurge of comparison between the degradation of American slaves and that caused by the Famine in Ireland, both as part of the representational project to raise humanitarian efforts, and as part of later memorialization, which coincided with the appearance of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* To grasp the complexity of this transatlantic multidirectionality, it is important to identify the intrinsic distortive effects of the metaphorical operation of multidirectional comparison. This explains why there can be a dangerous occasion for "competition, appropriation or trivialization" even in works that intend to evoke solidarity, like Asenath Nicholson's texts ("Gaza" 525). Moreover, in *Poor Paddy's Cabin* the system of implications of slavery that is mapped onto Catholicism is used to propose certain ideological conclusions that are not upheld by evidence. The global success of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* occasioned more interest for the issue of American slavery in Ireland, but also started a comparative tendency in representations of the Famine. As the next chapters will show, both of these effects would cause a backlash in the decennia to come.

Chapter III From Famine to the Fenians: Newspaper Feuds, Uncle Pat and Revolutionary Zeal

This chapter seeks to explain the resurgence of the comparison with American slavery in representations of Irish social issues in the 1880s in terms of the entanglement of the issue with the formation of a new direction in Irish nationalism. It explains how, even though Young Irelanders advocated non-engagement with the issue of slavery partly as a way of distancing themselves from the brand of nationalism that O'Connell stood for, slavery gained a disproportionate presence in their writing. It examines these tensions between 'Old' and 'Young' Ireland through two main newspapers, the *Freeman's Journal* and *The Nation.* It then briefly indicates an often-overlooked trend in Irish/African-American relations, by discussing three influential (Irish-)American journalists who, after the Civil War ended in 1865, yoked together Irish and African-American concerns. Finally, it contextualizes William Upton's novel *Uncle Pat's Cabin* (1882) in these debates, reading his mobilization of Stowe's novel as a device to represent abject oppression, which had an understated presence in her narrative, as a motor of revolution.

1. A divisive issue: the nationalists' newspaper war

The influence of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* on the image of slavery abroad, and its links to the Civil War, which held particular sway over the Irish as many of their emigrants enlisted in the armies of both the North and South when reaching the US, were experienced so intensely that on the occasion of Lincoln's assassination, the book was the cause of controversy at a memorial meeting at the Mansion House in Dublin. A Reverend Tresham Gregg, who was addressing the congregation, started to eulogize Harriet Beecher Stowe but was interrupted as this was thought to disturb the neutral purpose of expressing Irish sympathy for the United States. There was not only commotion in the congregated audience, but this was also carried to the general public by the *Nation* and the *Freeman's Journal*. According to the latter, Gregg attributed to Stowe "a prophet voice" and amid the audience's confusion declared that "[t]he movement in America was anteceded by the tears of Europe. God raised up a prophetess as great as Deborah. Had they not all wept at the wrongs of the slave as they were depicted by that inspired woman Harriet Beecher Stowe?" ("Meeting"). At that point he was interrupted, and the Lord Mayor interjected: "We are assembled here today, gentlemen, to act unanimously (hear, hear). Do not let Irishmen disgrace

themselves (hear, hear) by a dispute on such a point" (idem.).

By referring to Stowe, as well as to John Brown, Gregg attempted to attain a universal condemnation of American slavery, overtly speaking for Ireland as a whole: a claim which the *Freeman's Journal*'s report, though it registered some dissent, left uncontested. The *Nation*'s reporting on the same event, however, adopted a radically different tone:

> We have no words to reprobate sufficiently the wretched fanaticism and narrow-minded faction that can see in so solemn an occasion only an opportunity for unfurling its banner, ringing its tocsin, and shouting its shibboleth! […] Seizing advantage of the powerfully excited feelings created by the mournful death of the American President, a little knot of Quaker Abolitionists [congregated] on the ostensible and unobjectionable ground of sympathy with America […] Only one Catholic was allowed to have a part in the proceedings [all others were] officials of all possible branch institutions for ameliorating the black man, and never minding the white one; and it is only to be wondered that their arrangements for the meeting did not include Ethiopian minstrels to chant "John Brown" with a full chorus of "Glory, Halleluiah"[41] when Rev. TRASH GREGG [*sic*] "gave out" the text. […] Not a word was interposed by chairman or secretaries to check this idiotic and mischievous raving […] ("Westward")

The *Nation*'s treatment of the tradition of Irish abolitionism as a sectarian view, and even more incredible representation of Irish abolitionists as rabid Protestant fanatics, a revolutionary zeal that for all their stringent rhetoric their meetings did not live up to, can be explained by looking at the larger political debate around how Irish national interests were to be defined that surrounded the two newspapers.[42]

Freeman's Journal and the Nation, Daniel O'Connell and Young Ireland

The *Freeman's Journal* had been a mouthpiece of Daniel O'Connell for many years, especially since it had come under the editorial control of "valuable but overzealous advocate of repeal of the Act of Union" Patrick Lavelle (Larkin "Freeman's" n.p.). Coming into the hands of the Gray

[41] The writer is likely referring to earlier controversies springing from American minstrel troupes like the Christy Minstrels including divisive Civil War songs in their repertoire for Irish performances. As Irish abolitionists disapproved of minstrel shows both for their harmful racial stereotyping and general (lack of) status as vulgar entertainment, this reference packed an additional ridiculing punch. See Riach "Blacks and Blackface", esp. 241.
[42] For further reading on the general Irish association of abolition with Protestantism, see Riach *Ireland* 435-38.

family in 1841, it remained a paper that was in line with O'Connell's ideals of constitutional nationalism, growing to an important market share of forty percent in the 1880s (idem.). Not only did the *Freeman's Journal* consistently back O'Connell, they paid much attention to his abolitionism, reporting many HASS meetings in detail.

A peculiar invocation of O'Connell as early as 1841 seems to suggest that even then, before criticisms of his alleged refusals to accept American donations from Southern states intensified during the Famine, O'Connell's antislavery sentiments were divisive. When speaking on O'Connell's behalf at a HASS meeting, the speaker, Mr. Steele, lengthily introduces his statement:

> Be certain as you are that you live, that no word, or emphasis, or intonation of mine shall jar with the spirit which should pervade this meeting. To make allusion to politics, or polemics, would be deadly criminality; we have met for a sanctified object, and it would be traitorism to that object were I to disturb that unison of feeling which on an occasion like the present should prevail on our souls (great applause). There is mighty [*sic*] man whose name I must use – […] that man is O'Connell. But I speak of him now, not as O'Connell the politician, but as O'Connell, a member of the Irish Anti Slavery Association (cheers). In the resolution he has ordered me to propose I think you will admit there is no sectarianism. ("Hibernian" 4)

The separation of O'Connell's activities into two distinct political functions, which was at odds with the way in which O'Connell viewed Irish nationalist identity as tied with abolitionist sentiment, betrays the increasing frictions that his international philanthropic aspirations had started to incur. The passage also showcases that the HASS was as far removed from the sphere of direct politics, or aspired to be, as the other major cause of Irish reformers, the temperance movement. The HASS, portrayed as a benevolent congregation of "sanctified object," O'Connell's pacifism, and the *Freeman's Journal*'s exalted tones were getting increasingly out of touch with Irish political realities and grassroots revolutionary sentiments.

Catherine Eagan portrays Irish hostilities to abolitionism as foundational to the nationalism that came into vogue after O'Connell, when she writes that "[t]hose Irish who were not concerned with the enslavement of Africans or who were more isolationist in their politics might have joined a new splinter group called 'Young Ireland,' who opposed many of

O'Connell's policies, and believed that O'Connell needed to focus on Repeal and set aside his interest in the abolition of slavery" (127). This conflict over whether or not to support abolition, however, might be better read the other way around; Young Ireland, and more specifically their members who supported violent social revolution like John Mitchel (Lyons 109), used vocal opposition to abolition and racism as a method of distancing themselves from O'Connell's brand of activism. Similarly, where the *Freeman's Journal*, both in subject and tone, traditionally backed O'Connell's constitutionalist approach of parliamentary action and peaceful agitation, *The Nation*, mouthpiece of the Young Irelanders who founded and wrote for it, employed an anti-abolitionist bias as one of the strategies to distinguish its style from the moderate *Freeman's Journal*. Bruce Nelson writes:

> Speaking through the pages of the *Nation*, the men and women of Young Ireland went much further than any of the Repeal newspapers in developing a thoroughgoing critique of the Liberator's [O'Connell] politics. They chafed at his allegiance to the agenda of the Irish Catholic hierarchy. They became increasingly restive in the face of his stubborn reliance on moral force as the only legitimate means to win his objectives […]. However, their criticism on O'Connell's stance on American slavery and its relationship to Irish nationalism was essentially narrow, opportunistic, and conspicuously amoral. (82)

This adopted stance of 'amorality' and particularism was aimed to rebuke O'Connell's well-publicized standpoint that the Irish had, in the words of the *Nation*, a "Quixotic mission to address all the wrongs of humanity" (qtd. in Nelson 82). [43]

The question of slavery occasioned heated polemics. Father John Kenyon and John Mitchel, an influential author whose writings have been estimated the "most frequently read and most influential interpretations" of the condition of Ireland in the late nineteenth century (Kelleher 463), represented a minority within Young Ireland who did not just advocate disengagement with non-Irish affairs, but were vocally pro-slavery and racist. Kenyon's raging criticisms of O'Connell and his non-violence, his wording often causing embarrassment to the faction at large, was in large part calculated to win the Catholic Irish over to the Young Irelanders and painted in particular O'Connell's abolitionism as Protestant fanaticism. Denouncing abolitionism allowed Kenyon to crystallize his criticism of O'Connell, his defense of violence

[43] For Young Ireland's non-universalism as a philosophical stance, see Dwan esp. 36

and his specific appeal to an audience of Catholics all at once. He also, like many of the *Nation*'s writers, availed of competitive comparison with American slaves:

> If it is true that they [slave holders] maltreat their negroes half as much as our poor Irish slaves are maltreated by their English masters, may God forgive them. For their transgressions, at the worse, shall no more convince the slavery system of evil, than the cruelty of exterminating landlords shall prove that the condition of tenant farming is unchristian, or profligacy in family relations, that the marriage state is unholy. […] flinging back bags of dollars over the Atlantic ocean into the pockets of these slaveholders, enriching them at our expense, is such a Utopian remedy for the supposed evil as only homoeopathists could countenance. (*Tipperary Vindicator* 1847, qtd. in Boland 103)

Taking a stance against abolition and devoting piece after piece to it offered ample textual opportunities to highlight Irish suffering, which was an important feature of both Kenyon and John Mitchel's prolific writing on slavery.

Mitchel's close personal friendship with Thomas Carlyle, author of the infamous polemic piece "Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question" published in 1849, might illuminate Mitchel's additional motive of search for controversy, or "gleeful defiance" (Hale 198). His statement that "We deny that it is a crime, or a wrong, or even a peccadillo to hold slaves, to buy slaves, to keep slaves to their work by flogging or other needful correction. […] We, for our part, wish we had a good plantation well-stocked with healthy negroes in Alabama" (*The Citizen* 1854, qtd. in McGovern 131) was instantly infamous and caused Richard Webb to remark in the English *Spectator* that even American proslavery factions did not appreciate Mitchel, and that he could remember "no instance of any public man, native or foreigner, making a byword of his own reputation so effectually, by one single act, as John Mitchel has done by these declarations, at once so extravagant and so gratuitous" ("Mitchel").[44] Although Mitchel was less overtly anti-O'Connell than Kenyon, he aggressively rejected abolitionism as a part of "British" values.[45] F.S.L. Lyons notes that Mitchel's attraction for the generation that had grown up under

[44] Peter O'Neill makes the intriguing argument that whatever Mitchel's racist reservations, his *Jail Journal* (1854) appropriated tropes typical of slave narratives.

[45] There is evidence to suggest that American proslavery agents also propagated this classification. A piece in the *Daily Dispatch* of Richmond, VA expresses the opinion that any Irish antislavery sentiment must be a conceited English influence ("Ireland").

O'Connell lay particularly in the tone his aggressive style struck with a "dispirited and famished Ireland" (110): "what especially distinguished Mitchel in this revolutionary progression was the violence of the hatred he managed to convey in his Carlylean prose […] a hatred of that generalised concept of oppression to which he gave the name England" (111).[46]

Although he conducted most of his explicit proslavery opining in America, Mitchel still often directed it at Irish and British abolitionists. For instance, he concluded his infamous remark mentioned above by saying "There, now, is Mr. Haughton content?" (qtd. in McGovern 131). Calling his standpoint "a little plain English" (idem.), he positioned his voice as a marginalized one, which bluntly took up arms against pompous Protestant reformers that did not genuinely represent the voice of the Irish. In this context, his assertions that he had not abandoned the Irish cause in his proslavery activity become understandable (Lynch 95); he was still actively embodying a counter-stance to moderate constitutionalists. Even though it had traditionally always been the abolitionists that were denounced as radical and areligious,[47] after Stowe's general sentimentalization of antislavery, rejecting the movement could signify an assertion of masculine readiness for violent revolution for Mitchel and his followers.[48]

2. Transatlantic journalism and entangled ethics

The corpus that Young Ireland produced on what they ostensibly considered the "minor and external subject" of slavery is perhaps an epitomical example of Rothberg's claim that memory conflict only works productively (*Nation* qtd. in Nelson 82, "Gaza" 523). Another factor on the presence of slavery in Irish public discourse was a number of powerful Irish and American public voices, mainly the three important newspaper men James Redpath, Patrick Ford and John Boyle O'Reilly.

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[46] See Lynch for Mitchel's proslavery and anti-imperialist philosophy. He writes: "Crucially, Mitchel considered Britain's occupation of Ireland and the Northern state's insistence on implementing free labor in the South as twin manifestations of the same ideology. In order to understand fully his objections to empire then, it is useful to put in context his defense of the American South" (95).

[47] There are many indications that these fears of radicalism had worn off. American essayist Margaret Fuller, in "Things and Thoughts in Europe" captures perfectly how even radicalism can become old hat: "I listen to the same arguments against the emancipation of Italy, that are used against the emancipation of our blacks; the same arguments in favor of the spoliation of Poland as for the conquest of Mexico. I find the cause of tyranny and wrong everywhere the same […] How it pleases me here to think of the Abolitionists! I could never endure […] them at home, they were so tedious, often so narrow, always so rabid and exaggerated in their tone. But after all, they had a high motive […]" (XVIII, 1847, qtd. in Fuller 409)

[48] See also Howes for Young Ireland's rejection of Stowe's "feminine brand of reform" (211).

After the end of the Civil War and general emancipation in 1865, the Irish cause saw an increase in transatlantic involvement, as reformers reoriented their abolitionist zeal to the Irish cause. Where Asenath Nicholson was a transatlantic figure to embody pathos, James Redpath can perhaps be read as her revolutionary counterpart for the second half of the nineteenth century. Redpath had written and published widely in the pursuit of abolition and was especially important in publicizing John Brown. In the 1870s Redpath came to Ireland and became a member of the Irish Land League. He publicized "blistering" reports on Irish conditions (McKivigan 155), using a talent for impassioned political writing which he had honed in the battle against slavery to the benefit of Irish nationalist goals. Redpath employed comparisons with African-American issues to drive home the injustices of Ireland, for instance when he claimed that "Irish landlord power is the exact counterpart of American Klu-Kluxism – only it is Klu-Kluxism codified and sanctified by law, and enforced, not by disguised bands of midnight marauders, but by disciplined detachments of the Royal Constabulary" (McKivigan 159). He also referred to Michael Davitt as the "William Lloyd Garrison of Ireland" (qtd. in Foner 182). As part of his attempts to move his antislavery readership to solidarity with the Irish Land War, he mobilized his own former activities for the cause, when he claimed that "Americans who laud John Brown's career and purity of motives are hypocrites or cowards if they deny the same laudation or apology to the Irish Invincibles[49]" (McKivigan 164).

Like James Redpath, Patrick Ford, who ran the most influential Irish-American newspaper, the *Irish World*, started his activist career with the abolitionists. He was introduced to the printing trade working as an assistant at the press for William Lloyd Garrison's *The Liberator*. Ford sought to invoke the "kindliest sympathy for the oppressed of all nations and colors" in his readership (qtd. in Foner 184), and the *Irish World*, as the most widely read newspaper in Irish America and a household name in Ireland (Foner 161), was instrumental in raising funds for Fenian activities.

John Boyle O'Reilly's *Boston Pilot* reached fewer readers than the *Irish World* but has perhaps become more famous, as Irish-born O'Reilly became a significant American public voice speaking out against different forms of oppression. Lauren Onkey and Catherine Eagan argue that O'Reilly's notable activism for African-American civil rights, which he addressed in speeches, poetry, and pieces in the *Pilot*, is best read as part of a project to construct an Irish identity

[49] Radical splinter group of the Fenians.

equipped for participation in American society, and escape the racist reputation the Irish had acquired in the US.

"[F]or their part," Eric Foner suggests, "Irish and Irish American Land Leaguers adopted the language and idealism of the abolitionist tradition, and, in a sense, redressed retroactively their past hostility toward Protestant reform" (183). Eventually, however, factions that opposed a universalist conceptualization of revolutionary reform gained the upper hand. For both Young Ireland and the Fenians, comparing oppressed Ireland to an idealized free America was an important trope, and pointing out flaws in American society undermined its power. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that the Fenian heads of the two main Irish American newspapers advocated solidarity, regardless of their motivation. This is generally overlooked in studies of Irish/African American relations in the nineteenth century, but had significant effects on the Irish literary landscape, as slavery continued to be publically addressed and invoked as a counterpoint to Irish social problems. Moreover, this connection between Irish journalism and the abolitionist press could perhaps be said to display a certain multidirectionality that was not just thematic, but took the shape of structural co-development in the journalistic coverage of both humanitarian crises.

3. 1880s: specters of slavery

In 1879, there was a brief return of the potato blight, which dug up shallow-buried memories of the Famine. The intensified relation to American slavery during the Famine, combined with its afterlife in the Irish nationalist press, goes some way to explain why in the 1880s, there was a resurgence of slavery in public discourse on the state of Irish laborers, during the Irish 'Land War' under Michael Davitt's Land League (1879-1882) and its aftermath. During this period, a wave of grassroots agitation to better the position of tenant farmers and redistribute farming land travelled through rural Ireland. The decade was also the worst for Irish outflow to the US; Lyons estimates that around 600,000 Irish emigrated to America in that period (45). In 1880, the *Dundalk Democrat*, in describing a meeting at Louth, called the Land League "the great national movement for the emancipation of the 'White Slaves' of Ireland" ("Louth"). It was also in 1880 that Charles Stewart Parnell told his audience: "I speak without exaggeration […] when I say that the condition of the negro slave of the South was far better than that which has been the constant

condition of the tenant farmers, or, at all events, the majority of the tenant farmers of Ireland" (qtd. in Kennedy 103).

This sentiment is also present in William C. Upton's *Uncle Pat's Cabin: Or, Life Among the Agricultural Labourers of Ireland*, published in 1882 and dedicated to Michael Davitt. William C. Upton was an ardent Fenian from age seventeen, and was also briefly incarcerated for revolutionary activity, after which he left to live in America for three years. He wrote this book following a diplomatic visit to London concerning the fate of Irish tenancy laws.[50]

Pathetic packs a punch

Uncle Pat's Cabin tells the story of the family of Davey McMahon, who are evicted from their farm by their landlord, Lord Pakenham, in 1861. Their eviction is the result of the scheming of their neighbors, the Cassidys. Tom Cassidy manages to incite Pakenham against Davey by accusing him of, among other things, reading Fenian papers (14). After Pakenham evicts Davey and his family, Cassidy, a 'landgrabber' who preys on the misfortune of the families around him to gather more valuable farming land, is able to obtain the farm that used to be theirs.[51] Davey leaves to try make his fortune in America, and puts his family under the care of his brother Pat, who, trying his best to raise his brother's children, eventually succumbs to starvation (271). Except for two letters his family receives from him, Davey disappears from the narrative. It becomes known, however, that he has perished fighting on the Union side in the Civil War, having joined the army after failing to find other employment. Eventually, his daughter Kathleen visits his grave and marries an American. When she returns to Ireland with him, she not only discovers her uncle Pat's death, but, to drive home the novel's rather bleak point, she also finds that Cassidy has already levelled his cabin:

> Coming within view of the place, she scans the horizon where the line of the tall whitethorns cuts the sky; she catches a glimpse of the tall black chimney, and her heart

[50] This information is gleaned from the entry on his life in the *Upton Family Records* (379, 380).

[51] Marguerite Corporaal e.a. note in their introduction to Upton that the *Uncle Pat's Cabin* cannot be simply categorized as an example of "land-war fiction" because it does not, as was customary, focus on the Irish tenant farmer, but on the agricultural laborer (183). In addition, they note, the novel deviates from the genre in advocating emigration to America. The latter argument is clear-cut for the 1914 edition; however, it is dubious whether this is also the case in the 1882 edition. The quote discussed below, on the fate of Irish women travelling to America being better than those staying in Ireland, can hardly be taken as an appealing description of what awaits emigrants.

> leaps within her. Oh! What a bound would the myriad hearts give who are mourning to-day in foreign lands, were one glance of some old memorial afforded to the exile's eye! […] "But where's the body of the cabin, doctor?" Kathleen hastily inquires. […] "I am almost ashamed to tell you. Scarcely was your dear uncle buried, when Nicholas Cassidy […] came to the rere [*sic*] of the cabin and pulled away the uprights, causing the roof to fall in, and the next day knocked it down altogether […] as you now see it, leaving the old gable standing, as accommodation for his cattle" (281).

The text drew considerable attention, in the form of several long, positive reviews in the *Nation*, *Dundalk Democrat*, *Irish Examiner* and *The Academy*, all of which were more political evaluations than aesthetic ones. Henry Fagan's remark in the *Academy* review, that "[t]he time is past for caricature, inasmuch as things in Ireland are at a crisis which demands from all who care for the joint empire the most careful study. We want no more 'sops for Ireland'. We want justice to all classes, and not least the labourer […] 'the Lazarus of the world'" (158), well encapsulates the grim tone of the book, which, unlike Stowe's text, is hardly aired by humorous passages. In the preface to its 1914 edition, Upton hints that the book may have contributed to bringing in a better poor law in 1883, a claim which the report in the *Kerry Independent*, that the book was being read by "one of the deputationists on behalf of the body to the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary at London," makes more likely ("Pat's"). Upton's obituary in the *Limerick Leader* in 1925 mentions that the book "drew the attention of many enlightened English people to the sufferings of the Irish peasantry under the worst land system in Europe" ("Fenian"). The book inspired Philip Bagenal's 1882 article of the same name, which serves as an interesting counterpoint to Stowe's *A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin* in its aim to complement a piece of fiction with factual evidence.

Uncle Pat's Cabin strings together the recent histories of displacement and the starvation of the Famine and different years of potato blight to form a larger narrative that emphasizes the suffering of the lowest societal rung, the laborers. The novel gives a comprehensive list of crimes committed against laborers, including: the farmers' practice of using all milk produced for making butter and feeding their pigs, rather than giving it to the malnourished laborers (43); the landowners' callous disdain of the plight of those under their care (e.g. 70); the deliberate temptation of Fenians into alcoholism (122); and the poisoning of the internees of poorhouses with soda in the 'stirabout' to incur cholera (80). These incidents are carefully distributed

throughout the narrative; and, much like in Stowe, many characters from different classes figure in the story, showcasing different societal elements and their respective motivations. One example of this is the recurrent *leitmotif* of philosophical and political discussion on the part of two philanthropic "zealous advocates of the poor" (162), Doctor O'Leary and Father O'Mahoney, whose commentary integrates the different facets of the story into an ideologically coherent image.

In the introduction, Upton sets out the international relevance of the suffering of Irish laborers by linking it to a global system of oppression that also includes slavery. He writes:

> When one considers the stern realities of everyday life, and the ferocity of our common nature, whether illustrated in the pages of 'Uncle Pat's Cabin' or in the pages of more pretentious works, the reader can arrive at no other conclusion than that the exhibitions of life are all the same, and that nature's ferocity is as irreclaimable as ever. Since the earliest ages man has oppressed his fellow-man. He has loaded his brother's limbs with iron and pierced his flesh with steel. He has drugged the cup of friendship with poison […] Such is he who stands on the frontispiece of progress today, and such is his brother, who in every land bends, nay reels, under difficulties cunningly devised for his destruction. (v)

Where the "Irishman" constructed an audience of benevolent Protestants for his appeal, Upton's grim description addresses the world's oppressors as a homogeneous whole, and equally implicates all peoples. In doing so he uses the striking icon of the shackled slave, who epitomizes that oppression. His scathing remark on the "frontispiece of progress" most readily evokes the claims of superiority by colonial powers in its reference to textual and cultural hegemony, and suggests that oppression inevitably accompanies assertions of cultural superiority. In taking this as his point of departure, Upton denies the possibility of benevolent paternalism that Stowe became associated with, and showcases a revolutionary radicalism at grassroots level.

There are several corresponding characters in Upton and Stowe's work, for instance: Mick Fitzpatrick, a farmer who works his laborers heartlessly and does not provide them with shelter, in part because Pakenham does not allow him to set up cabins for them (43), mirrors in the degree of his cruelty Stowe's Legree; the American Mr. Harmon is a less fleshed out version of the outsider's perspective embodied in Miss Ophelia; Kathleen's innocence mirrors Eva's; and

Pat, in his quiet endurance, is a more pathetic version of Tom, though lacking the mystical spiritual power the latter possesses. In Upton's narrative, however, Uncle Pat has Tom Hartnett, a version of Stowe's George, who voices discontent at Pat's quietude. In the end, Tom Hartnett's revolutionary attitude seems more validated by the narrative than Pat's meekness.

A particularly interesting echo of an understated feature of Stowe's text, is one made by the character Cracked Henry. This character displays an abject degradation that is also present in one of Stowe's minor characters, the little discussed Prue. The loss of her baby has driven her to drink which (202), in combination with heavy beatings that take a physical toll, earns her the scorn of all characters but Tom. Deemed a "disgusting old beast" and uttering little more than "I wish I's dead" (199), she allows a direct glimpse into the ugly abyss "too dreadful for the purposes of art" that Stowe's text generally only indirectly touches on (*Key* 5). Cracked Henry is a homeless man, the ruin of whose family has left him insane, roaming the countryside unwashed (56). Living off the charity of the likes of the McMahons, at whose house he is often allowed to sleep, he does not speak beyond phrases like "we haven't house nor home on account of 'em" (idem.).

The abject subjection that looms in the back of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is made much more overt in *Uncle Pat's Cabin.* It can for instance be seen in the miserable state of Pat's hut, which is always damp because the cows eat the straw off his roof, and in the final description of his dead body:

> [R]egret was of little avail on the face of the terrible result. Stiff, stark, and emaciated lies all that remains now of Uncle Pat. The bark is wrecked at last. The third great sea swept away the mast, tore the rigging, and flung the brave mariner on the shores of eternity, safe at last from the cruelties of a selfish world. There he lies yet. His old drain clothes are on him, heavy with moisture and mud, and clinging to his cold, clammy limbs. Poor labourer! (273-4)

Upton's stark description contrasts with Stowe's sentimentalization of, for instance, Tom's death, and his tone gains in effect from this contrast.

Upton's characters also resist sentimentalization, being conspicuously practical; for instance, Tom Hartnett, to help Pat work his land, has to break the Sabbath under the motto "God

helps those who help themselves" (101); a disregard for religion that is unimaginable in Stowe. It can also be observed in the pragmatic approach of one of Pat's neighbors when he says:

> if Davey M'Mahon saw how girls – I mane servant girls – are situated at home in some implyers' houses, he would say very little of the dangers attending faymales going to Amerikay. I say servant girls shleeping in settle-beds in peoples' kitchens are more exposed to dangers jesht as frightful as those belonging to shteamers… and, I say agin, if a poor girl, afther laving her father's and mother's house, is to rishk her virtue at all, it is better to rishk it going to Amerikay than shtop at home…And, boys, if she stops at home and gets married, who does she marry but some labouring boy, who will be continually ground down as the shlaves are in the States; 'tis well we know how the labourer is thrated in Ireland." (60, 61)

The implication that the loss of virtue can in some instances be preferable to marriage is, again, unthinkable in Stowe's text. The significant part played by abject subjection in creating the urgency of *Uncle Pat's Cabin*'s appeal, and which makes it closer to an eye-witness account than the stylized representation of a debate, marks a significant difference from *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* A closer look at the multidirectional engagement of the text with slavery, an institution which had now been abolished for almost twenty years, allows understanding of the way in which Upton's narrative creates a logic in which the pathos of Irish suffering is harnessed as a revolutionary force.

Compassion and comparison?

Like *Poor Paddy's Cabin*, Upton's novel's references to slavery create implications that contribute to a certain logic of Irish oppression. The work's subtitle, "life among the agricultural labourers of Ireland" references *Uncle Tom's Cabin*'s original American subtitle, "life among the lowly," and the metaphorical function of the reference drives home the equation of "agricultural labourers" with "lowly." The reference to slavery serves not only to contextualize Irish laborers' conditions internationally, but, as it was an abolished practice that had now become generally condemned, it also maps onto it implications of archaic barbarity. The multidirectional reference enables Upton to cast the pathos of abject suffering as an inherent catalyst for political change, as he uses the institution of slavery to exemplify that revolution is an inevitable response to

oppression. His specific reference to Stowe's work, which was widely seen as having contributed to the institution's abolition, contributes to this conceptualization.

References to slavery are dispersed throughout the narrative. The most prolonged discussion of American slavery occurs in a conversation between O'Leary and O'Mahoney:

> There are societies formed for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Even there were laws made for the proper keeping of the negro slaves of America, but I have never seen anything like this before […] did you ever attempt to fathom the depth of human depravity as far as this illustration [i.e. a scene they just witnessed] takes you? As for my knowledge of the cruelty of men, I have seen the negro slave in the Southern States of America whipped at the post; I have seen him chained like a wild beast; I have seen him guarded like a criminal; I have seen him hunted down with bloodhounds, but I fearlessly assert, from all I have studied of the treatment the Irish agricultural labourers are subjected to, that they are in as hapless a state as were the slaves of America […] we have not the chain here for the labourers' limbs, the scourge here for his back, but there is a chain here as galling as the iron, and that is the chain of circumstances, which is as carefully and cunningly devised; and, flung around the unfortunate victim's limbs, that binds him as securely as the iron ever bound the negro. (156-58)

The vividness of Upton's descriptions of cruelties perpetrated by slaveholders reflects on the less tangible implied culpability for Irish suffering, on which he spends less narrative attention in this section. Moreover, by describing the American situation as grossly unjust, Upton stresses the dire nature of the Irish situation. Besides descriptive references, there are also slavery-invoking mottos to the chapters, and it is a theme in many of the songs that the characters sing. For instance, the refrain of the "Labourer's Morning Call" runs "'tis morn, 'tis morn, ye slaves/the returning hour has come/ Work on, work on, the whole day long/ your life's eternal sum" (137), and in "The Voice of Labour," the characters sing "'Tis said that the toiler's brand/ is like to the brand of Cain/'Tis said that the welted hand/was formed for the iron chain" (134). These references are not particularly geared towards the Southern institution, but are linked to it by the narrative's intertextual relation to Stowe.

Upton repeatedly references American slavery competitively, and emphasizes his conviction that the Irish land system is "the most tyrannical and barbarous that ever disgraced the

annals of modern civilisation" (46). Nevertheless, the text does not simply trivialize the horrors of slavery, and could be said in this respect to fulfil a representational debit to the vehicle. Both Ireland and the Southern States are demarcated as savage spaces, where cruelties are allowed to happen. This becomes especially clear when Mrs. Pakenham exasperatedly tells her husband: "How in the name of our common humanity, can these [laborers] be expected to be honest, in any sense of the word, when they are treated in a fashion that might not be tolerated in Virginia, in the United States, where white men are to-day wasting their lives,[52] that the black slave might be free, but it would not be tolerated in any other white man's country but in Ireland" (108).

One of the main strategies by which *Uncle Pat's Cabin* makes its plea for legal reform on the part of British and Irish authorities is by suggesting that the present situation of Irish workers is untenable and will inevitably lead to violence. Ominous references to the Irish condition as slavery bolster this claim, like one made in a rousing speech by Fenian organizer Henry Irving: "And must the lot of these poor men […] who dig and delve, from morning til night on your grounds remain the same? Are they to be still calculated among your goods and chattels as American slaves used to be? […] you must not reckon on the continual degradation of these men" (133).

Slavery is represented as a condition that can be fought off, a notion which is reinforced by the instances in which the narrative makes use of "slave" as a derogatory term. This usage of the word suggests that it is a condition that strong individuals fight against and overcome, which further bolsters the image of slavery as an outrageous abstract institution that incurred its own destruction. This logic, which has been culturally cultivated as a poetic trope in Anglo-American literature, [53] rather than a reality, is in turn mapped onto the situation of the Irish laborer. Tom Cassidy's maid says she no longer wants to "shlave" for him (130); Tom Cassidy is characterized as "a spiritless slave" (14); and Chapter Nineteen, "The Fenian Organiser," opens with these lines by Robert Burns:

> Wha' will be a traitor knave?
> Wha' can fill a coward's grave?
> Wha' sae base as be a slave?

[52] In context of the rest of the narrative, it seems likely that "wasting" is intended here in its usual collocation with lives lost in battle, not as an outright dismissal of the abolitionist cause.

[53] On the complicated relationship between the trope of the slave as culpable for his own condition and that of the slave as a hapless victim in Scottish and Irish poetry and beyond, see Pittock, esp. 22.

Let him turn an' flee.
By oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free. (131)

These lines by Burns suggest that there is a difference between the behavior of an inherently 'slavish' person under slavery, and that of a proud, strong individual (see also Pittock 22). In the context of the Fenian meeting which it introduces, the quote rhetorically underscores that the oppression of slavery will not be indefinitely endured. The function that reference to slavery has in the text necessitates the representation of slavery as a past evil from which a clean deliverance is possible. Upton remains mute on the ongoing oppression of African Americans, and their struggle for civil rights. In doing so, the novel's vision distorts the image of American slavery as it separates it cleanly from the other forms of oppression of African Americans to which the institution was inextricably tied.

The re-adoption of the slavery metaphor as a trend in Irish political discourse of the 1880s may explain some of the drive behind Upton's reengagement with the iconic text of thirty years before, as it was arguably the single most internationally famous representation of American slavery. Tom Hartnett's comment in the text, bemoaning the lack of franchise for Irish laborers, also goes some way to suggest the benefits that Upton's reference to Stowe brought the author. He sighs: "Ah! […] I'm indhread [*sic*] that [Franchise] will never come for us; – shure there's no wan interested enough standing up for us" (122). Tom's cry is an appeal to the wider world to take an interest in the Irish situation not in the form of philanthropy, as in the Famine, to send relief, but to effect political change, like the abolitionists eventually did. Though an icon, however, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was no longer a catalyst for public activism and the aggregation of new readerships, as it had been when *Poor Paddy's Cabin* was published. An obit for Stowe in 1896 by a minor Irish paper, the *Southern Star*, called *Uncle Tom's Cabin "* once famous, though now, we think, little read"("Mrs."). Still, Stowe's novel had become a shorthand for a transatlantic, and even pan-national scope of agitation for reform, which Upton, who had affinities with American Fenianism and tried to persuade British figures of political authority to read his book, also sought after. As the Mansion House meeting discussed at the opening of this chapter also suggests, the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was considered a significant event

leading up to the Civil War. Referring to Stowe's influential work, Upton reminded audiences that the blunt representation of abject circumstances could lead to the revolutionary struggle for their abolition, as it had for slavery.

Even though it engages with the same text as *Poor Paddy's Cabin*, the image of slavery that *Uncle Pat's Cabin*'s multidirectional reference creates is radically different. Slavery is represented as a past system of which the cruel excesses have led to its inevitable downfall. This representation makes it functional as a comparative point for Upton's ideological conceptualization of the Irish system. Upton's reference to Stowe's text, which was deemed remarkably politically effective, in the title of his work, maps onto his text the same function of political appeal as her book exerted. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and Ireland's interest in the Civil War ensured that slavery remained a contentious point of reference even after its abolition. Moreover, O'Connell's outspoken interest in antislavery caused it to become a stage on which Young Ireland could show its dissension from Old Ireland, printing volatile pieces on the issue in *The Nation*. Kenyon and Mitchel represent the thrust of this move. After the Civil War and emancipation, both Irish and American journalists of significant public status like Redpath, O'Reilly and Ford, who had honed their writing skills with the abolitionists, for various reasons emphasized affinities between African American and Irish oppression. The multidirectional trend reached a peak during the Irish Land War in the 1880s, when the fear of a new Famine awoke memories of the first. Upton's engagement with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* becomes legible in this context as a strategy to tap into a tradition of Irish self-conceptualization and mobilize this as a revolutionary force. This self-conceptualization, however, would soon become unpopular both in Ireland and the US.

Chapter IV End of a Transatlantic Multidirectionality, or a Coda

The diasporic nature of Irish nationalist efforts in the nineteenth century, and the heated discussions these incurred, resulted both in utterances of cosmopolitan solidarity and intense competition with African Americans. As the century drew to a close, however, pride in Irish identity became more focused on Gaelic roots, culminating in the 'Gaelic Revival', and particularism in Irish nationalist politics. The well-documented 'becoming white' of the Irish in the US (Ignatiev, Roediger), combined with the worsening social position of, and increasing animosity against the African-American community during the Reconstruction Era (see Kantrowitz, Blight *Race*), encouraged a similar trend in Irish America. These developments meant the end, and even erasure, of the tradition of Irish engagement with African-American issues, both in solidarity and competition, which becomes evident in the early twentieth century. Rigney has suggested that "[a]fter decades of research in the field of cultural memory, it has become apparent that the key issue is not really how societies remember but how societies (learn to) forget" (*Afterlives* 221). By way of concluding the analysis of the 'multidirectional moment', this chapter examines the traces left by the effacement of the transatlantic connection in Patrick Pearse's 1916 canonical nationalist essay "The Murder Machine" and the 1914 edition of Upton's *Uncle Pat's Cabin.*

1. *Over-reading an absence: addressing twentieth-century Ireland*

As America recovered from its brutal civil war, Ireland saw several failed attempts to secure Home Rule, an independent government for Ireland within the British Empire. Young Ireland matured and began to imbed itself in the popular movements that sprang up after the failed efforts at Home Rule. The Gaelic revival was a cultural revolution in Ireland that saw the formation of Gaelic culture organizations, such as the Gaelic League, an organization founded by scholar Eoin MacNeill, to foster the Irish language. These groups contributed to a nationalism rooted in identity politics, and were also the ranks from which the Fenians, now known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood, would seek their new following. At this time, articulations of Irish exceptionalism were frequent and had important political ramifications. A new generation of Irish Republicans sought to erect a politically beneficial concept of Irishness, based on the writings of men like Mitchel.

Perhaps the clearest illustration of the unease that was now felt with the African

American-and-Irish comparative trend may be read in Fenian revolutionary leader Patrick Pearse's famous 1916 essay, "The Murder Machine." An educator and important member of the IRB, in this essay he emphasizes the importance of an ethnic identity to Irish society. In discussing what he considered the intentionally numbing effects of the English education of Irish youth, he makes abundant use of the word 'slave':

> The education system here was designed by our [British] masters in order to make us willing or at least manageable slaves. It has made of some Irishmen not slaves merely, but very eunuchs, with the indifference and cruelty of eunuchs; kinless being, who serve for pay a master that they neither love nor hate. […] Certain of the slaves among us are appointed jailors over the common herd of slaves. And they are trained from their youth for this degrading office. The ordinary slaves are trained for their lowly tasks in dingy places called schools; the buildings in which the higher slaves are trained are called colleges and universities. If one may regard Ireland as a nation in penal servitude, the schools and colleges and universities may be looked upon as the symbol of her penal servitude. They are, so to speak, the broad-arrow upon the back of Ireland. (4)

In Pearse's usage of the concept of slavery to understand Irish education, there is no mention of American slavery, despite the fact that some of the dynamics he describes, like the system of internal appointment of overseers, and the malignant cultivation of character flaws in the people by persons in power were well-known tropes of abolition discourse. In his mention of the 'broad arrow', the marker of British property that was stamped on government objects, as stamped on the back of a personified Ireland, Pearse extends his initial reference to European serfdom, which he made to further crystallize a comparison made by Eoin MacNeill, into an argument of violent objectification that was more conventionally made in connection to American slavery.

In the next passage, this implicit move to the discourse of American slavery becomes clearer:

> It is because the English education system in Ireland has deliberately eliminated the national factor that it has so terrifically succeeded. […] it has succeeded so well that we no longer realise that we are slaves. Some of us even think our chains ornamental, and are a little doubtful as to whether we shall be quite as comfortable and quite as respectable when they are hacked off. (19)

Chains, used for the transportation of slaves as chattel, are a fundamental part of the imagery of abolitionism, both in poetic representation and as a shocking emblem for the physical realities of the institution, being for instance one of the items of evidence Frederick Douglass brought with him to his talks (see also Pittock).

Pearse, however, does not acknowledge this connection. The most obvious indication that the lack of mention of American slavery in Pearse's text was not unconscious, but a deliberate elision of blackness from the image of the slave can be found when he writes: "The thing [school system] has damned more souls than the [American] Drink Traffic or the White Slave Traffic" (23). The adjective 'white' indicates Pearse's resolve to not invoke African Americans in his account of Irish identity, nor to include the nineteenth-century articulations of kinship between the peoples in the tradition of Irish nationalism.

The avoidance of referring to African-American oppression, while at the same time speaking its language, is licensed partly because he announces that his comparison is based on one made by MacNeill. Although he acknowledges MacNeill, however, Pearse's conceptualization of slavery as the shorthand for unnatural, and denaturalizing subordination of a people is also, and perhaps more directly, a descendant from the "Irish slavery" of Mitchel's *Jail Journal*. Mitchel also expresses the idea that this oppression is tied closely to education:

> Nature has its laws: because the Irish have been taught peaceful agitation in their slavery, therefore they have been swept by a plague of hunger worse than many years of bloody fighting […] so they might learn at last how deadly a sin is patience and perseverance under a stranger's yoke. (Mitchel 107)

In view of this lineage, it becomes clear how Pearse's reasoning seems to mirror Mitchel's example, and how the insertion of the adjective "white" echoes Mitchel's conceptualization of the presumed monstrosity of 'Irish slavery' as complemented by a premise that slavery was organically linked to and made ethical by blackness. The connection to Mitchel inadvertently makes American slavery a latent presence in Pearse's text, and where Pearse sought to emphasize the unique nature of Irish suffering, his anxiety over the invocation suggests an uncomfortable relation to what was still a collectively remembered cultural tie. He attempts to preserve the discourse of slavery exclusively for the Irish by distancing African-American blackness from the term.

Pearse's pamphlet embodies the isolationist conception of Irish oppression that was associated with the revolution beginning in 1916 and the eventual foundation of the Irish Free State in 1921. The marks of a transatlantic connection with African America left in this canonical text of the Irish revolution speak to the structural importance antislavery had on the discourse of Irish nationalism. The denial of this link, far from being merely generational, would even affect those who had previously expressed quite different opinions on Irish identity, including the author of the outward looking novel *Uncle Pat's Cabin,* William Upton.

2. *1914: Addressing Twentieth-Century Irish-America*

In 1914, now living in the US, Upton decided to republish his *Uncle Pat's Cabin*, self-financed, with P.J. Kenedy, the oldest Catholic publisher in America (*Lucile*). This seems to indicate he intended members of the local Irish Catholic community as his main audience, especially as it is difficult to find evidence that he placed any advertisements in newspapers. There is a world of difference between the 1914 American edition of the novel and its original. The text is no longer intended to raise a wide political response, but to cement a specific fiction of homeland that suited Irish Americans, and potentially to encourage their involvement in Ireland's revolutionary agitation through the Fenians. The first indication of the changed outlook of the American edition is in the changed subtitle; it has become the generic "Uncle Pat's Cabin: A Story of Irish Life," no longer invoking Stowe's "lowly." It furthermore announces in the new preface that "all the local features that made the original, characteristically written for a special purpose, are eliminated" (5). Where the first edition warned that "readers of sensational literature and the students of the romantic character may feel somewhat disappointed" (v), the second edition attempts a "more entertaining form" (6). Upton replaces the abject degradation of the first edition with humor, melodrama and quaint Irishness, de-radicalizing his book for (Irish-)American audiences. He also removes all reference to African Americans, heralding the closure of an era of comparison which was no longer of use to Ireland on the eve of its national revolution, nor to the construction an Irish-American identity.

Upton adds a significant cast of characters, main ones being Frances Pakenham the landlord's daughter, Mr. Chapman, the American Northern diplomat staying on the Pakenham

estate, and charismatic Sir Edward 'the Geraldine'.[54] He also replaces Limerick Fenian organizer Henry Irving with an ex-Confederate officer, John Ryan, Cracked Henry's long-lost brother, who starts Fenian conspiracies in Ireland under the false name of Henry Irving. The plot becomes one of redemption; Kathleen marries a rich American banker, and Pat does not starve in this edition. Pakenham's daughter marries rich Mr. Chapman and leads a fulfilling new life in America. Repentant of her father's misconduct, in a subsequent visit to Ireland she corrects all Pakenham's wrongs, giving out monetary compensations and returning houses to their evicted former tenants.

Upton includes many instances of humor, fantastical plots and exoticizing descriptions of Ireland, and he renders Pakenham more bumbling than menacing. Pakenham wears chainmail under his shirt, for instance, so he can pretend not to be afraid of his tenants. Upton includes plots involving hypnotism (267) and several dramatic recognitions, as well as supernatural prophetic dreaming. Ireland is given local color in the inclusion of local legends like that of Rory of the Hill (194), accounts of the banshee (161), and customs like the unlikely "unwritten law" that if a woman says a particular promise and cannot live up to it, it is a veiled betrothal (212).

In the narrative, the poverty-born ignorance of Irish laborers is replaced by insistence on their proud traditions, and their starvation with physical prowess. A schoolmaster expounds on Irish reasons to be proud: "All of us Irishmen possess the divine gift of poetry, and ought to remember how those from whom we are descended, excelled all others in the world in all its best attributes. […] perhaps it was an ancestor of yours that was Bard to the high King of Ireland at Tara, the day Saint Patrick converted him" (105). Johnny MacMahon "was the semblance of the bright-eyed, clean featured youth that any day can be seen coming out of a country home in Ireland; and […] his manly attitude told for him" (251). His father Davey, even when at his lowest, having been enlisted against his will in the Union army "preserved an aspect of manly and respectful calmness. His more than six feet of muscular humanity towering high above his observers, and filling up a large space in their perspective, must have been an object of intense sympathy to the minds of the American soldiers around him" (98, see also 155, 251).

Emphasizing cultural and physical Irishness is part of a general reorientation of the impetus the narrative advocates from rebellion against the land system and 'landgrabbers', to

[54] "The Geraldine" refers to his belonging to the FitzGeralds, a long-lived ruling dynasty in Ireland that embodied the tradition of Irish nationalism and Gaelic culture.

rebellion against British rule. When someone offers Davey a way out of the army by appealing to the British foreign ambassador, he

> broke forth in frenzied anger. "Me a British subject? I deny it, your honour, […] I owe no allegiance to Britain. British laws and British bayonets empowered my landlord to come with a battering-ram, and break down the door of my home in Ireland, and as far as laid in his power to exterminate both me and my family. Me a British subject? No, by Heavens! while my children's cries still ring in my ears. (99)

Upton mobilizes a different image of the population, presenting the Irish laboring class instead of as a chronically trampled people, as the image of resilience. Where in the 1882 edition Upton characterized the Irish Fenians' lack of revolutionary potential as owing to alcoholism encouraged by the authorities, much like Frederick Douglass famously described the practice of encouraging drinking among slaves on their free days of the year in his *Narrative*, the Irishmen that Upton presents in 1914 come fully equipped to partake in the American dream of exceptionalism, and are on the verge of winning back their country. Irish Americans being nearly all Fenians in his account (142), their manliness is intertwined with their nationalism.

As a part of this representational project, the parallels with slavery of the original are carefully removed; there is no discussion of African American issues, and the narrative's original engagement with slavery is only preserved in passing references. The most overt one is arguably when Ryan addresses his audience at a Fenian meeting with the words that "The best and only answer you can give is your attitude tonight; an attitude which is a dedication of your young lives to the freedom of your native land, and a living protest to the enslavement of any other" (274). The objection to the "enslavement" of a land is at a remove, however, from empathy with enslavement of people.

The South is no longer the savage space it appears as in the 1882 edition; seventy years after general Emancipation, Upton describes the Civil War as it had become popularly considered, as a 'war between brothers'. He places special narrative emphasis on the Civil War as a tragedy for the many courageous Irish soldiers employed on both sides, whose graves will not be forgotten as they were there where the "danger was thickest" (297). The Civil War is represented as lacking a real cause when Frances says of Sir Edward: "I do believe that if that Kildare cousin of mine were in America he could have prevented the late war […] [for he]

possesses the quaint Irish power, call it blarney if you like,[55] of reconciling extremes to harmony, that really I think if he were in the United States there would not be a shot fired" (262).[56] Potentially Upton's allegiance has even shifted towards the South, as John Ryan, from the South, tells his dear friend Tom Hartnett in a conversation between "the Fenian ex-soldiers of two Lost Causes" (232), that "our position here is as bad as the trenches on the Potomac […]" (232): a parallelism that casts Ireland as the South.

The clearest example of careful elision can be seen in the reluctance with which Upton uses the word "cabin," which is frequent in the 1882 version, in this edition. He avoids it, for its connotations with poverty and, indeed, slaves' cabins as publicized in Stowe, and when he does employ the word, he undermines it with its textual context. In its first appearance he styles Pat's abode as "the domicile or cabin, which gave the evicted family shelter" and in the second mention, briefly after, puts it in inverted commas: "the 'cabin'" (31, 33). He indicates that it is an artificial label, and one which does not indicate degradation, when he says "this remnant of a home – euphoniously styled 'cabin'" (184), and gives it the status of title rather than descriptive noun when he capitalizes it, saying "Pat MacMahons Cabin" (219).

In her description of Uncle Tom's cabin, Stowe emphasized its homeliness and order to showcase African American domestic virtue, but preserves, for all its cheerful coziness, its one-room proportion and markers of worn-down furniture to indicate the family's poverty; the cabin is not a house, but a "small log building, close adjoining to 'the house', as the negro *par excellence* designates his master's dwelling" (20). In Upton's 1882 edition, Pat's squalor extended to his miserable cabin, which, being continually eaten at by cattle and eventually unceremoniously torn down, he could not even personalize. The cabin foregrounded the facelessness of the thousands of deaths that occurred in the Famine. In 1914, however, Upton mobilizes the 'Cabin' to embody Irish identity and its rich past. Pat prefaces the story of how he lost his home and family in the Famine, which is, like in the 1882 edition, the main scene for establishing the haunting specter of 1845's blackening potatoes, by stressing that he was not always poor. "'My father – God rest his sowl – held this house an' fourteen acres of land, which was better then than 'tis now, an' so was the house. Where we are sitting now there was once our

[55] Blarney refers to an Irish legend concerning a certain stone kept in Blarney Castle, Cork, that, if kissed, would bestow upon the subject the "gift of the gab," or the skill of negotiation and speech.

[56] For the way in which African-American perspectives were cut out of American memorialization of the Civil War as part of Reconstruction politics, which included the trivialization of slavery as a fundamental cause of the conflict, see Blight (*Race*).

kitchen, but we had a room down there an one down there,' and Pat McMahon, as he said so, pointed his hand to either end of the old kitchen" (77). Davey McMahon's house is initially characterized as a "comfortable farmhouse" with a "spacious kitchen" where the children play (19, 17), whereas in the 1882 edition the narrator only mentions the "ruin and desolation which reign the interior of his abode" (6, 4). Pat's home becomes a locus not just of a broken family, but of a broken tradition of Irish landownership.[57] It has fallen into decrepitude, but is no longer the hut of the first edition. Where in the first book it is demolished, here the picturesque 'cabin' is immortalized in a painting in the conclusion of the novel, to signify its domestic symbolic nature for Irish values, and Irish-American nostalgia: "it may be told as characteristic of those most concerned in this story, there hangs today in Mrs. Harmon's palatial parlour – she who was Kathleen McMahon – a picture doubly framed, and doubly glazed, painted from memory by Mrs. Chapman [Frances] – the picture of UNCLE PAT'S CABIN" (320). In the 1914 edition, Irish memories of home, and the ardent revolutionary zeal they conjure, are not of suffering starvation and degradation, but of a Utopianized pastoral past and proud Irish traditions.

Upton still uses Stowe to globalize Ireland as a canonical case in the history of global oppression, but not now as a call to solidarity with the oppressed peoples of the world as symbolized in the American slave, but as a triumphant story of America. The title of his 1914 narrative still recalls Stowe's book, but not to establish a kinship with African American issues. Instead, it displays specifically Irish pride and triumphalism, suggesting that despite their adversity, in the US they became part of the upper echelons, rather than the oppressed classes to which African America belonged. This radical turn from the 1882 edition, and blunt erasure of the comparison that occasioned its genesis, makes visible the ending of a unique moment and neutralization of the power generated by a multidirectional tradition capable of binding the struggles of Irish nationalists and African Americans together. The particular power of the original work relied on its universalist claim, reaching past race, ethnicity and creed to express something common in the struggles of different peoples, whose oppression fans to fire their revolutionary zeal. This edition, however, looks to a specifically Irish pride, and a suffering exclusive to a racially spectacular Irish nation, to be the cause of Irish nationalism; a tame claim which could operate along the conservative and racist matrices that governed American social

[57] The 1882 edition also makes reference to the family attachment to Davey's home, but it is far from pastoral, attributing Davey's attachment to his land to its being "where his father and grandfather lived, and made doubly sacred by their industry and sweat" in reclaiming their "farum […] from the wild, naked mountain" (4, 1).

life.

Pearse's canonical text shows that antislavery activity in Ireland, though arguably having not been of political influence, cannot be considered just inconsequential sentimentalism. It had an impact on Irish nationalism that was felt well into the twentieth century, showing its head even in canonical nationalist texts. The multidirectionality that had become quite common in expressing Irish and African American social issues had formed a significant corpus, which the wholesale revision Upton made of his story suggests was not just no longer welcome in Irish nationalism, but equally nettling for the Irish diasporic community in the US. When viewed in the broader context, the visible hiatus left in Pearse and Upton's texts affirm Rothberg's insight that "public memory is *structurally multidirectional*" ("Gaza" 524, original emphasis); the discourses had become intertwined, and the decoupling and forgetting of the transatlantic connection was a process, not an overnight change of heart.

Conclusion

In recent history, Irish nationalists have taken pride in what they regarded to be the universalist tradition of their nationalism. Some politicians and writers have also pointed out that in certain aspects, such as discrimination, structural oppression and the involuntary formation of a global diaspora, Irish history can be compared to that of the Black Atlantic. Heated scholarly debate surrounding these controversial claims, however, has foreclosed a closer view to the genesis of this multidirectional engagement, which can be traced back to the nineteenth century.

In a way, the argument of this thesis may be read as a navigation of the changing relations Irish audiences had to the issue of slavery and African America more generally, until their final ending of that relation at the turn of the century, which was not to renew itself until the civil struggles of the 1960s. To come to an understanding of this complex issue, the thesis has taken a holistic approach to understand cultural life. It reads public speeches, literary and other art works and journalism as part of the same continuum to create a certain public discourse. Newspaper articles, as indicative of this discourse, having the widest readership and cementing together various textual domains in their pages, have taken special prominence in the analysis. Reading newspaper articles not just for their value as historical sources, but as containing powerful textual agency in their reporting is crucial to understanding cultural dynamics, in this case how slavery could have become a living household issue in Ireland that had enough visceral reality to the general public for nationalists to use the comparison of Irish and African Americans to rouse their audiences for different goals.

In the 1840s, there was an irruption of the slavery debate into general Irish society, which can be dated roughly to the London Anti-Slavery Convention of that year. As in other parts of the world, this debate did not take the form of parlor exercises in ethical reasoning but was actively brought to the people. Daniel O'Connell represented abolitionism as a sentiment flowing naturally from the Irish nationalism which he long dominated, and newspapers like the *Freeman's Journal* carried the sensationalism of many heated abolitionist meetings and their dramatic rhetoric far beyond the meetings that were held in Ireland's urban centers. Frederick Douglass captured the public imagination more than other African American visitors, earning special mention in the monster meetings of O'Connell. Previous scholarship has tended to describe Irish abolitionist activities as condensed in isolated incidents (Rodgers) and a couple of visionaries (Kinealy, Sweeny), but a wider view, beyond the fabled orators, reveals that the seeds

they sowed flowered in newspaper coverage, and produced fruit in a larger cultural awareness and remediation of the issue. American abolitionists followed O'Connell's suit, stressing the importance of their Irish inspirations like John Philpot Curran, as they sought to persuade Irish Americans to join their cause by linking Irish identity to an innate abolitionism. These activities contradict the general theoretical assumption in studies of Irish-American racialization that Irish immigrants into the US came without any preconceived notions about, or awareness of, African-American social issues, or even without a sense of racial identity (Ignatiev, Roediger). O'Connell's vocal associations with the movement caused it to be a highly discussed topic even in circles that expressly did not want to burden Ireland with an opinion on the matter, as condoning slavery became a formative part of the rearticulation of Irish nationalist identity.

Within this political gravitational field, a remarkable proliferation of Irish/African-American slave comparison was produced. The first political use can be traced to the newspaper campaign warning people not to trust the Jamaica transports of 1841. When Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* came to Ireland, with all the aplomb it had in London, it not only further solidified an emotive image of slavery among Irish audiences but also offered a productive schema by which Irish Famine memories and their political significance could be forcefully asserted both in Ireland and for Anglo-American audiences. Two reworkings of Stowe's novel, the "Irishman's" *Poor Paddy's Cabin* and William Upton's *Uncle Pat's Cabin*, sought to benefit from the international audience she had aggregated and the transnational movement for reform she embodied. The novels developed two mostly latent strands in Stowe; those of the privileges of belonging to a benevolent Protestant community like Stowe and her Tom, and of abject subjection as a catalyst for revolution. The different engagements of these texts with Stowe, as well as with American slavery, highlight the way in which multidirectional reference works along the logic of metaphor, as it not only selectively projects a certain image of the tenor, but also, inherently, of the vehicle. Understanding this metaphorical operation allows for a more nuanced understanding of Rothberg's concept of multidirectionality, and suggests a reading strategy for multidirectional works.

The abolitionist campaign in Ireland consisted of a tightly-knit network of antislavery agents which linked the books, meetings, and foreign speakers into a coherent whole. The long-developed construct of their standpoint as a majority force of reason, frustrated the impoverished generation that followed O'Connell's. Slavery gained a disproportionate presence in the process

of moving beyond O'Connell, but then, as the transatlantic community of Fenians became a prominent voice of Irish nationalism, the trend of Irish/African American comparison was swiftly dropped, and soon forgotten. This act of forgetting can be observed in Pearse's "The Murder Machine" and Upton's 1914 revised edition of his novel. Now, as Obama's speech, Roddy Doyle's phrase and Donal O'Kelly's play show, this transnational memory survives only in momentary glimpses of solidarity, recollected yet again to promote political agendas.

In reconstructing this particular 'multidirectional moment', the study has shown the need for further conceptual tools to study transnational and transcultural memories. Taking its cue from Michael Rothberg's call for a multidirectional lens, it also further develops his notion of multidirectionality as an analytical tool, rather than interpretative paradigm. Taking the concept beyond the boundaries of high art to understand societal dynamics and political representation and, including factors of pre- and remediation that are fundamental to grasping the significance or even deeper meaning of multidirectionality in texts, nuances readings of multidirectional works. Moreover, taking seriously the material and economic realities of the circulation of texts and ideas, of which understanding is especially important with regards to nineteenth-century texts, adds to the understanding of the *poiesis* of multidirectionality.

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