

Uncle Tom's Cabins

*The Transnational History of
America's Most Mutable Book*

Edited by Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova

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Tracy C. Davis and Stefka Mihaylova

Introduction

LOCAL READINGS

From its earliest origins as a serialized story in the *National Era* and then a two-volume novel,¹ *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has been subject to localized readings. The first edition sold ten thousand copies in two weeks, prompting the editor of the *National Era* to proclaim it "THE STORY OF THE AGE!" By early 1853, the book had sold one million copies in U.S. and English editions.² Initial press reviews were polarized in accordance with the geography of American slavery. In Boston, the *Congregationalist and Christian Times* enthused that it "has done more to diffuse real knowledge of the facts and workings of American Slavery, and to arouse the sluggish nation to shake off the curse, and abate the wrong, than has been accomplished by all the orations, and anniversaries, and arguments, and documents, which the last ten years have been the witness of."³ But as the subsequent printings made their way to the Southern states, these claims to persuasiveness and truth were vehemently refuted. A reviewer in Richmond admitted confusion as to "how Southern men and women can reconcile it with their notions of self-respect to purchase, or to read with any other emotion than disgust, a volume reeking with the vilest misrepresentation of themselves and their social institutions."⁴ In Charleston, the book was referred to as mischief that, "like mushrooms from dunghills," will make "converts to the abolition cause" and lead "to the amalgamation of the white and black races on this continent"—an allusion to the profound fear of miscegenation, one manifestation of racism.⁵

As *Uncle Tom's Cabin* draws to its conclusion, Stowe sets aside the omniscient third-person narrator used in the rest of the book and addresses readers in an authorial voice. She invokes the "Men and women of America," "Farmers of Massachusetts, of New Hampshire, of Vermont, of Connecticut," "strong-hearted generous sailors and ship-owners of Maine," "Brave and generous men of New York, farmers of rich and joyous Ohio, and ye of the wide prairie states," and the "mothers of America," to break silence on the slave trade, cease their collaboration with the South, recognize the evil in their own actions, and do what is right (451).⁶ Collectivizing readers as men and women of the North, she beseeches them to act on their Christian morality and give refuge to those seeking "education, knowledge, Christianity," so African Americans can avail themselves of the "advantages of Christian republican society and schools" (453). In the novel's example of George and Eliza Harris, however, these advantages are put to service in equipping ex-slaves to lead a foreign nation. This objective, rather than the passivity of Uncle Tom or the racialized "wicked drollery" of Topsy (246), caused abolitionists to divide over the novel. The American anti-slavery movement factionalized over ideological and tactical differences in the 1830s and 1840s, never to reunify. The serialized novel harmonized with the politics of the *National Era*: its editor Gamaliel Bailey was associated with the Free-Soil Movement (opposing extension of slavery to newly accessioned states), and its associate editor John Greenleaf Whittier, a founder of the Liberty Party, advocated a gradualist approach to abolition, combining a political solution with moral principles. William Lloyd Garrison's newspaper praised Stowe's book in general terms, yet his followers never embraced it, for they advocated immediate and total abolition.⁷ Frederick Douglass regarded the movement to resettle freed blacks in Africa as a conspiracy to remove from the United States those most able to advocate for change, so the Harris family's ultimate move to Liberia in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was profoundly misaligned with Douglass's principles. Though the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society endorsed how the novel promoted readers to weep and pray first and then work for the cause of abolition, even these gradualists could not universally endorse the flight to Canada, let alone resettlement in Africa, arguing, "We will ever discountenance and oppose all schemes, whether devised by State or National Governments or Colonization societies, of coercive expatriation, and all efforts to place the people of color in such positions that, as a choice of evils, they will consent to leave the land of their birth and their chosen residence."⁸ So, even if the

novel's sympathetic devices and emplotments reflected abolitionists' observations of slavery, abhorrence of the Fugitive Slave Act, and personal actions to assist and abate the pernicious effects of bondage, abolitionists did not necessarily agree with or endorse the book's total or final directions.⁹

Thus, not only did opinion in the United States divide on the book's veracity; among pro- and anti-slavery advocates alike, its politics were challenged. Unsurprisingly, in other places in the world, different things about the novel mattered, were allied to local concerns, and became emphasized in adaptations and codified as resonant meanings. The text prompted readers to contemplate their subject positions and alignments. For example, when Simon Legree turns from Tom for the last time, an inner voice arises, saying, "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?—art thou come to torment us before the time?" (402). This was Stowe's attempt to give even the most dissolute Louisiana slave master a chance at Christian redemption. But what would a foreign slave owner, an ex-slave, or a Communist have made of that? Likewise, in his moment of death and salvation, Tom's countenance bears the expression of a conqueror, and he says, "Who,—who,—who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" As George Shelby looks over him "fixed with solemn awe," he closes Tom's eyes, rises, and expresses his old friend's words "What a thing it is to be a Christian!" (427). What would a Muslim, a Buddhist, or an atheist have made of that? In George Harris's letter expressing his intention to go to Liberia, he describes his desire to "form part of a nation, which shall have a voice in the councils of nations," because "a nation has a right to argue, remonstrate, implore, and present the cause of its race,—which an individual has not" (441). What would a veteran of France's 1848 revolution, a supporter of Hungarian independence fighter Louis Kossuth, or (later) a Zionist or Palestinian have made of that? George Harris explains that America's blight will be removed not through its own actions but by example of an African nation (Liberia) to Europe, "if, there, serfdom, and all unjust and oppressive social inequalities, are done away with" (441). This is the internationalism of civil rights, as well as socialist nation building, that resonated in the nineteenth century, found full expression in postcolonial nations in the twentieth century, and continues to resonate from nations of the global south in the twenty-first century. Yet even when ideological influences are held in common, local exigencies result in unique understanding and challenges to liberation, reconciliation, and equalization.

Regional and religious identities are integral to *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and

Stowe took pains to demonstrate historical authenticity and biographical antecedents.¹⁰ In a reception history, however, facts may be interesting but nonbinding to interpreters; characters may have cultural specificity yet are subject to remodeling to serve local legibility; the text is a “thing” but also an interweaving of stories that can be selectively emphasized, rerouted, and interpolated across time in “a chain of constant impression, evaluation, and imitation [. . .] establishing new foundations.”¹¹ *Uncle Tom's Cabin* therefore refracts a plethora of ideological positions, historical circumstances, and emplotments beyond those known in the United States of the 1850s. Within the novel, St. Clare puts the case well, in debate with his cousin Miss Ophelia: though the English laborer cannot be “sold, traded, parted from his family, whipped,” he nevertheless “is as much at the will of his employer as if he were sold to him. The slave-owner can whip his refractory slave to death,—the capitalist can starve him to death. As to family security, it is hard to say which is the worst,—to have one's children sold, or see them starve to death at home” (237). Augustine St. Clare probes for comparison: which is the better or more heinous despot, the one who owns other human beings or the one who keeps them in thrall as wage slaves? What sets the plantation owner apart from the British capitalist is that the master in the United States lives among those whom he degrades. St. Clare sounds like Karl Marx when he forecasts, “One thing is certain,—that there is a mustering among the masses, the world over; and there is a *dies irae* coming on, sooner or later. The same thing is working in Europe, in England, and in this country” (240). While St. Clare links the unrest with the day of God's reckoning, the specificity of class and racial upheaval is significant. Nations might voluntarily manumit, as St. Clare points out to Ophelia, “The Hungarian nobles set free millions of serfs, at an immense pecuniary loss; and, perhaps, among us may be found generous spirits, who do not estimate honor and justice by dollars and cents” (322). Yet the process of making people free does not end with manumission. Whereas race continues to attach to social inequity in the United States, minoritarian ethnicities elsewhere (from Eastern Europe to West Africa, Australia to Guatemala, and Armenia to Cambodia) continue to demarcate cultural difference, social schism, and the fault lines that can erupt in exodus, human trafficking, or genocide.

Uncle Tom's Cabin was a runaway hit in the United States and Great Britain: those nations not only share a dominant language but also hosted each other's abolitionists to lecture, perform, and otherwise sway public opinion. There is extensive scholarship about this circulation and reception history. However, the book (and stage adaptations) quickly gained circula-

tion beyond the British-American vector, achieving near-global exposure, and it has continued to be read, seen, and reinterpreted around the world ever since the mid-nineteenth century. In some cases, ideology or faith enables *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to take on different referential contexts. Often, local concerns lead to excision, revision, or substitution of referential elements (with or without imposition of censorship). Sometimes, the exigencies of genre—as in the adaptation of the novel for cinematic presentation—necessitate concision, facilitate selective emphasis, and direct attention to particular facets (e.g., spectacle or music) to enhance effects. Even when the genre is consistent and the book is perceived as translation rather than adaptation, the translation can significantly alter meaning, invite different intertextual combinations, and cause referential substitutions.¹²

According to Lawrence Venuti, translation or adaptation are inevitably a process of domestication, reflecting the translator's or adaptor's task of making a text legible to a community of readers for whom it was not originally written. Any ethical considerations that arise in the process of translation are typically resolved in favor of the translator's, rather than the original author's, target audience.¹³ By building a bridge between an original text and a translation's targeted local readerships, the translator also envisions a utopian transcultural community of readers who can communicate across differences.¹⁴ As with translation, so goes adaptation, as a more explicitly intentional set of changes, including the transposition to other media. These processes are made especially obvious in the circulation history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. When a reception community is not American or Christian or capitalist, experiences the story as theater or film or television or dance, and is presented with linguistic and cultural approximations, substitutions, and incompatibilities, the permutations of understanding become exponential across remakes, "willful 'misreadings,'" "interracial witnessing," or "fantasy scenes of national feeling."¹⁵ At the same time, the transnational audiences who accessed and sympathized with the story in various formats remained unified around a utopian vision of social equality that defied cultural differences even as it manifested in culturally specific variants. This is precisely the history that the present study seeks to uncover.

RACE AND ITS AFFECTIVE RESONANCES

For an American reading and viewing public, race is the underlying logic of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The terms *mulatto* and *quadroon*—which describe George and Eliza Harris; St. Clare's servants Adolph and Mammy; his

nephew's servant Dodo; Susan and Emmeline, who are sold in New Orleans along with Tom; Lucy, who is bought along with Tom by Simon Legree; and Cassy, Legree's housekeeper and Eliza's mother—represented not only the history of racial intermixing in the American South but also the sexual violence perpetrated on enslaved women and the ongoing moral crime of rending apart genetically related families. Stowe writes of George, “We remark, *en passant*, that George was, by his father's side, of white descent. His mother was one of those unfortunates of her race, marked out by personal beauty to be the slave of the passions of her possessor, and the mother of children who may never know a father” (114). This produced what Stowe describes as physical beauty (as well as spiritual grace) in the characters she marks in this way. In addition, there is a political facet to this identity and signification. Alfred St. Clare references Haitian slaves' slaughter of whites in San Domingo during the revolution of 1804 as justification for subjugating all mixed-race persons. His brother Augustine replies,

Well, there is a pretty fair infusion of Anglo Saxon blood among our slaves, now. [. . .] There are plenty among them who have only enough of the African to give a sort of tropical warmth and fervor to our calculating firmness and foresight. If ever the San Domingo hour comes [i.e., an event like the Haitian Revolution of 1791–1803], Anglo Saxon blood will lead on the day. Sons of white fathers, with all our haughty feelings burning in their veins, will not always be bought and sold and traded. They will rise, and raise with them their mother's race. (277)

In other words, the current social order will not persist indefinitely, and by this racial logic, the *mulattos* and *quadroons* will feel the righteous fervor that has brought Europe to foment since the French Revolution of 1789 and will lead all black people to liberty.

As David C. Wall stipulates, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* may be “intended to revolve centripetally around the gravitational center of whiteness,” offering readers in the United States and Great Britain “a narrative that constructed and validated a white identity predicated on the authority both to control and to represent the black body.”¹⁶ This patterning of “negative others,”¹⁷ however, was not consistently applied in all cultures' reading of the novel. As a socially defined construction, race is neither a universal label nor a stable legible delimiter. We asked the contributors to this book how the American terms for race were translated for other reading publics. French

adaptations utilize three categories—*blanc*, *nègre*, and *mulâtre*—preserving the connotations of the English terms *white*, *black*, and *mulatto*. One French text circulated in Brazil, where the terms were also legible. But in Cuba, where *quadroon* and *mulatto* were translated as *cuarterón* and *mulato*, *nigger* was translated as *negro*, which loses the vicious and demeaning English connotations. In Romanian translations of 1853, both based on French versions, *quadroon* is translated as *carteron*; Theodor Codrescu's translation glosses it as "someone born from a mulatto [man] and a European woman, or from a European man and a mulatta,"¹⁸ whereas Dimitrie Pop's translation defines it as "the child born from a Negro woman and a European man, or from a European woman and a Negro man."¹⁹ Considering the complex significance of parental lineage and the history of gendered trafficking in the Ottoman principalities along the Black Sea, these permutations could be extremely important to the sense of the text. Another fascinating instance of the translator's creolization in a Cuban edition is the rendering of "boy or gal"—in "Well, haven't you a boy or gal that you could throw in with Tom?" (8)—as *criollito o criollita*, which means Cuban-born. Mid-twentieth-century Polish translations render *mulatto* and *quadroon* as *mulat* and *kwarteron*, remote enough from everyday parlance that all three translators glossed the terms for young readers. Polish counterparts to *Jim Crow* and *nigger* are replaced by equivalents: *czarnuszek* (little blacky) and *smoluch* (tar-stained). The specific choices each translator makes reveal how race is constructed and naturalized in the translator's culture.

How the American logic of race was conveyed in all these different contexts depended on local racial and ethnic distinctions and also on the medium through which the story of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* reached specific readers and/or spectators. Reading novels has not always been considered morally safe or elevating.²⁰ Nonetheless, the printed text enjoyed prestige unrivaled by performance (the other major medium of the century) in the West and beyond. In locales where literacy was not widespread and/or where printed texts, including novels, were expensive, the prestige of print endorsed the political standing of the social strata capable of buying and reading books. According to our authors Marcy Dinius and mêLe yamomo, this was the case in nineteenth-century Liberia and Southeast Asia, where the educated minorities used the novel to formulate or perpetuate existing racial policies and class distinctions, reinforcing their political domination. In both contexts, the novel's racial logic was understood in terms of local perceptions of class and race. At the same time, for readers who had had limited encoun-

ters with people of African descent and whose first significant introduction to blackness was the novel itself, print could deemphasize the significance of race, foregrounding gender and religion instead. In her essay herein, Stefka Mihaylova writes that this seems to have been the case with nineteenth-century Bulgarian readers of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In contrast, according to Bettina Hofmann's examination of translations for juvenile German readers, a pro-imperialist translation from 1911 emphasizes the importance of freedom, even renaming chapter 9, where George meets Mr. Wilson in the tavern, from "In Which Property Gets into an Improper State of Mind" to "Ein Kapitel über Menschenrechte" (A chapter on human rights). Like other German editions, that one reduces the incidence of references to God and the Bible, and the importance of literacy is limited in the scene of Eva's death, to being able to keep in contact with family members.²¹

For those first exposed to Stowe's story through one of many stage adaptations—as well as for readers of the novel whose racial taxonomies may have been shaped by watching performances—the minstrelized grotesquerie of blackface could overwrite race as overdetermined racism. The visual, musical, and gestural vocabulary of blackface minstrelsy emanated from the United States, and during the decades preceding and following the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, it was a highly successful and pervasive American export, with American companies (and spin-offs) touring not only Britain and continental Europe but as far afield as South Africa, Australia, East Asia, and South America. It is impossible to count the variants: traveling companies' versions do not attribute authorship, and local versions are largely untraceable. What matters is the mutability of tropes amid legible conventions. By the later nineteenth century, minstrelsy was ubiquitous wherever there was popular music; after 1929, *The Jazz Singer*, featuring Al Jolson, took the minstrel aesthetic to an even wider public. Cinematic adaptations of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* perpetuated minstrel stereotypes through Topsy, even the otherwise sensitive interpretation in the 1914 American film with Sam Lucas (circulating in Latin America as *La cabaña del tío Tom*). As demonstrated by Catherine Cole,²² the formalism of minstrelsy could be adopted elsewhere without its significations, yet the essays collected here renew the idea that in texts about subjugation, racialization, and self-determination, skin color (whether natural, artificial, or exaggerated) was a significant aspect of casting (unless, of course, it was ignored entirely, with the story transposed to a mono-ethnic context).

As world literature, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* epitomizes the complexity of in-

ternational exchange, patterns of critical paradigms, and other “transnational features of literary history” that go along with globalized circulation since the nineteenth century.²³ Yet the wide circulation of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* is illegible without understanding how, at particular landing points, it assumed singularities within what Kevin Riordan calls the “intricate mechanics of [. . .] circulation.”²⁴ For Una Chaudhuri, the distinctions “between here and there” convey the felt experience of pathos.²⁵ For this reason, Senator Bird is an intriguing figure to trace in the transnational history of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*: in him, Stowe condenses the paradigmatic stages of persuasion experienced by converts to the abolitionist cause. Whether or not this is taken up can help reveal how Stowe’s emplotments matter.

In chapter 9 of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, John Bird (senator for Ohio) hospitably receives the ragged and half-frozen Eliza and Harry, who have just crossed an icy river to escape slave catchers. Hitherto, Senator Bird’s idea of a fugitive was abstract, merely advertisements in newspapers, but in the presence of a distressed mother and child—especially ones just reequipped in the clothes of his wife and deceased son—his heart is awakened (94). Bird’s servants warm Eliza and Henry, then Bird conveys them seven miles along a muddy road in the dead of night, into the safe hands of John Van Trompe. Bird begins the chapter as a politician and husband, is altered by contact with vulnerable runaways, abets Eliza and Harry’s delivery to their first stop on the Underground Railroad, and is not mentioned again in the novel. It is clear, however, that readers are to envision that he will return to Washington as an abolitionist. In all three French stage adaptations, Bird’s adherence to the law of property creates an acute dilemma. In the Duma noir and Dennery adaptation, Bird (renamed Kentucki) even authored the Fugitive Slave Act, prior to his encounter with Eliza (renamed Elisa). Instead of being a contented man with a doting wife, he lusts after Elisa, and the possibility of a sexual liaison hangs over the play. To save the life of Henry (renamed Henri) and Elisa’s honor, Kentucki challenges her master (renamed Harris) to a duel. At the crucial moment, Elisa’s husband steps in and fights the duel, and Bird closes the play by explaining that he shall amend his law. On a metalevel, Kentucki is allegorical for the United States, a less evolved version of France (which abolished slavery in 1848).

As Gay Gibson Cima reveals, the paradigmatic stages of conversion to abolitionism were recognizable by the 1830s: they involved imagining the pains of separation from family and home, the violence inflicted on slaves and the terrors of auction, slaves’ unceasing toil while exposed to the ele-

ments, then the ultimate challenge to faith when slaves found themselves homeless and friendless. This pattern repeats across abolitionist fiction as well as slave narratives and is a mainstay in Stowe's story. For evangelicals, the kinesthetic effects of empathy awoke powerful conviction.²⁶ For nineteenth-century readers and theatergoers in general, there was a growing ability to feel the horrors of slavery not only psychically but also through physical manifestations of empathy.²⁷

The abolitionist strategies of persuasion were integral to eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sentimental discourse. In addition to U.S. abolitionism, many other nineteenth-century liberal projects, including the abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861 and the nationalist movements against the Ottoman Empire and the Austrian Empire, articulated their objectives in sentimental terms. Sentimental rhetoric—as developed in both sentimental novels and theatrical melodramas—served those projects so well because it addressed the post-Enlightenment conflict between the individual's freedom to act in his or her best private interest and the equal right to freedom of his or her fellow citizens. In sentimental novels, the resolution of this conflict favors the public good: sacrificing one's private interest for the good of one's family, community, nation, and humanity defines sentimental virtue.²⁸ *Uncle Tom's Cabin* contains numerous examples of such virtue: to protect his fellow slaves from being sold, Tom refuses to run away to Canada; he declines to inflict violence on Legree's other slaves; and George Shelby, moved by Tom's self-sacrifice, frees his own slaves. In these cases, individuals act against their private interests and in favor of the others' good. This qualifies their sentimental conflicts as tragic. By contrast, Eliza's escape with Harry is detrimental to Haley's economic interest and is an example of a melodramatic sentimental conflict whereby the individual acting in his own private interest (Haley) is classified as a villain, while his opponent who acts to protect the public good (in this case Eliza, protecting Harry's opportunity to grow up under his mother's care and thus the sanctity of the Christian family) is classified as a hero.²⁹ Mid-nineteenth-century emancipation projects drew specifically on melodramatic sentimentality, framing their struggles as conflicts between the public good, which entailed the freedom of an oppressed group, and the private interest of the unjust oppressor.³⁰

Uncle Tom's Cabin also bears strong affinity to the realist novel of social awareness forged by Honoré de Balzac; given national expression by Jane Austen, Thomas Mann, and Maxim Gorky; and broadened to seemingly comprehensive social scrutiny by Charles Dickens. Stowe makes a typical

realist claim to truth by basing her narrative in testimonies, eyewitness accounts, journalism, and her own firsthand observations of slavery.³¹ Like realist novels, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is exceptionally rich in details of setting and characterization. Moreover, in his discussion with Miss Ophelia about the moral justification (or lack thereof) of slavery, St. Clare evokes the major philosophical difference between sentimentality and realism. In contrast to the sentimental conflict of opposing ideals, realist conflict is triggered by an elemental struggle for power, even though realist antagonists may try to disguise their true motivation as virtue. Augustine St. Clare calls for realism when he rhetorically asks,

This cursed business [i.e., slavery] accursed of God and man, what is it? Strip it of all its ornament, run it down to the root and nucleus of the whole, and what is it? Why, because my brother Quashy is ignorant and weak, and I am intelligent and strong,—because I know how, and *can* do it,—therefore I may steal all he has, keep it, and give him only such and so much as suits my fancy. Whatever is too hard, too dirty, too disagreeable, for me, I may set Quashy to doing. (230)

Further in the discussion, St. Clare even declares virtue, which the sentimental Miss Ophelia considers absolute, to be merely the effect of historical circumstance and biological predisposition.

What poor, mean trash this whole business of human virtue is! A mere matter, for the most part, of latitude and longitude, and geographical position, acting with natural temperament. The greater part is nothing but an accident! Your father . . . settles in Vermont, in a town where all are, in fact, free and equal . . . and in due time joins an Abolition society. . . . The fact is, though he has . . . embraced a democratic theory, he is to the heart an aristocrat, as much as my father, who ruled over five or six hundred slaves. (234–35)

But despite these strong gestures toward realism, the novel is sentimentally resolved. In Tom's sublime death, in George Shelby's act of freeing his slaves, and in George Harris's decision to go build a Christian nation in Liberia, sentimental virtue reigns supreme.

In addition to providing emancipation movements with an efficacious representation of the conflict between slavery and freedom as one that

strikes at the very basis of Christian civilization, sentimentality also provided anti-slavery readers and spectators with an image after which they could model themselves as a transnational public. According to Margaret Cohen, sentimental novels construct communities of “sympathy” (the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century term for what we now call “empathy”) by trying to position their readers as spectators of spectacular scenes of suffering. These scenes, Cohen writes, demonstrate how much “sentimental communities owe . . . to notions of theatrical spectatorship.”³² One such scene is Eva’s death. As she struggles to breathe, everyone present—Augustine St. Clare (her father), Tom, Miss Ophelia, a doctor, and eventually the entire household, including St. Clare’s slaves—become a community of spectators whose differences of race and rank dissolve in their shared sympathy for Eva.³³ Importantly, around the time we first learn that Eva is ill, she unsuccessfully pleads with her mother, Marie, to make the slaves literate so they may read the scriptures and write letters to family members from whom they are separated. Eva’s wish to teach the slaves to read, so that they may be true Christians, comes up again as she takes leave from them shortly before she dies.³⁴ Thus, the slaves and white people attending her death are united not just as Christians witnessing the passing of another Christian but also as (potential) readers. In other words, the scene suggests the possibility that literate white and black people can belong to the same community of sentimental readers (and writers), which, in the understanding of the time, was equivalent to a community of liberal subjects.

GLOBAL MARKETS, TRANSNATIONAL HISTORIES

Cohen and Dever propose that English and French sentimental literature was addressed, from its very emergence, to a transnational English and French readership, enabled by an established market for literary and other cultural commodities between the two countries.³⁵ By the mid-nineteenth century, the sentimental novel and its readers had spread across Europe and the Americas, and so had melodrama and its spectators.³⁶ These readers and spectators, who also included abolitionist activists and sympathizers, enabled the fast global spread of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. The exact number of the novel’s translations across the globe is unknown. On its website, the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center claims that the novel has been translated into more than sixty languages across the Americas, Europe, and Asia.³⁷ In his monograph *Mightier than the Sword: Uncle Tom’s Cabin and the Battle for*

America, David S. Reynolds claimed that the book had been translated into sixty-eight languages by 1995.³⁸ In its special collections, the Providence Public Library holds fifty-one foreign-language editions in twelve languages. These data are at best approximations: neither the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center nor Reynolds corroborates their own numbers, and the Providence Public Library's list incorrectly designates a Slovenian translation of 1853 as Bulgarian. Fixing a definitive number or sequence to translations is not viable, short of examining every edition in every library around the world. Nonetheless, as the present collection also demonstrates, Stowe's novel is, beyond doubt, a global phenomenon. Our focus on international, transcultural, and transnational aspects of the translation and adaptation history of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* emphasizes distribution and, in some cases, influence, though influence implies an Americanocentric bias. More specifically, this collection's essays trace temporal, ethnic, linguistic, and political patterns that reveal cross-cultural dynamics and also cultures of difference faithful to the hybridity, creolization, and interculturalism characteristic of cultures effected by globalization.³⁹

In his insightful discussion of the intellectual genealogy of transnationalism in literary and cultural studies, Donald E. Pease defines transnationalism as an interpretive framework that "embraces expert and subaltern knowledges"; accounts for the global political, cultural, and economic processes underlying such knowledges; and is particularly attentive to social formations in crisis and transition. In the course of such transition, social formations (e.g., nations) that have once been perceived as stable are "confront[ed] [. . .] with [their] own internal differences."⁴⁰ This transnational perspective is integral to Stowe's novel. As Augustine St. Clare compares Southern slave owners to English capitalists—and as the novel follows George Harris's family to Canada and then France (where George attends university) and finally charts their future in Liberia—U.S. readers are invited to confront, in a transnational context, the contradiction between their country's foundational ideology of liberal freedom and the fact of slavery (or, to use Pease's term, the major "internal difference" within the nineteenth-century U.S. national imaginary). As George imagines the future of Liberia as a modern Christian nation and as Topsy goes to an unspecified place in Africa as a missionary and teacher, the novel also indirectly poses the question of how the places where former slaves relocate become transformed both ideologically and materially, for, as Pease points out, "the transnational differs from the international in that it forecloses the

possibility that either nation in the transaction will remain self-enclosed and unitary.”⁴¹

The first two essays in our collection engage with this question about the “destination points” for runaways and free blacks. In the opening essay, Tracy C. Davis compares the idealized image of Canada, as the Canaan that slaves hoped to reach, with the material realities of absorbing the fugitives in Canadian society. For Canadians, she argues, the success or failure of this absorption was an ongoing transnational issue, and the abolitionists working in Canada knew themselves to be networked across national and transcontinental borders. In the second essay, Marcy J. Dinius analyzes how the Liberian political elite used the novel to mediate the country’s international image, and she compares the hopefulness of Stowe’s recolonization vision, as expressed in George Harris’s letter in chapter 43 of the novel, with the social realities of the segregated nineteenth-century Liberian society.

The opening essays by Davis and Dinius reflect the specific approach to reception that organizes this collection. Research in book history focuses on material production and circulation of printed texts; in this study, in contrast, we are interested primarily in the political effects that *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* and works produced in its name have had across the globe—that is, in the story’s performativity within and beyond print culture. The concept of reception with which we work exceeds the more widespread notion of reception as the local interpretations evidenced by the formal choices made by translators and adaptors and/or by critical discussions of those formal choices in specific periods and places. One way in which artworks (and cultural products more generally) mediate political and cultural changes is by envisioning utopias in which these changes have already occurred, such as the idealized slave-free Canada and independent black Liberia of Stowe’s novel. Measuring the gap between such utopias and the actual social arrangements in the places sharing the utopias’ names is integral to the reception history we present. This understanding of reception is also consistent with Venuti’s notion of transnational readerships, created through translation, as communities that may be actual and yet, as many instances also show, aspirational.

The translation history that emerges through the remaining eleven essays in this collection further details the transnational political, economic, and cultural processes that helped make *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* an enduring global success, even as its politics attracted new forms of critique in the United States.⁴² Following its publications in the United States and Great

Britain, the novel became available in French, in multiple editions, by the end of 1852. By January 1853, when French dramatists created the first theatrical adaptations, Parisian theater audiences were well acquainted with the novel.⁴³ The almost immediate arrival of the novel in France was enabled by the established French-English readership, an example of transnationalism that preceded and accompanied the formation of the modern nation-state.⁴⁴ The first Spanish translation, made from English and published in Paris in 1852, is similarly a strong example of transnationalism. Its translator, the Cuban intellectual Andrés Avelino de Orihuela, whose liberal views had forced him into exile in Paris, described himself as cosmopolitan. As Kahlil Chaar-Pérez argues in his essay, Orihuela's translation was deeply informed by the political aspirations of the intellectual circles to which he belonged, including the independence of Cuba from Spain and its possible annexation to the United States.

From Paris, the early French and Spanish editions quickly reached other destinations. In 1853, two separate Romanian translations from French editions were published in the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, which were then under Ottoman control. This situation reflects the strong influence of French culture on nineteenth-century Romanian intellectuals, many of whom were educated in France. That same year, Orihuela's Spanish translation reached Spain, Colombia, and Argentina. Like the French and Spanish translations, the Dutch translations, the first of which were published in 1853, traveled across established routes of economic, political, and cultural influence, including colonial routes. In 1853, a Dutch translation was published serially in Surabaya in the Dutch Indies, and a book edition was advertised for sale in Batavia.

As translators approached *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, they were concerned less with truthfully conveying the novel's internal politics than with addressing political issues relevant to their own target readers. In this respect, we can implicitly connect translation history to international pathways of abolitionist discourse more broadly. For instance, according to Chaar-Pérez, Orihuela's translation imposes the ideals of secular republicanism and cosmopolitanism on the Christian morality and romantic racialism of Stowe's texts. Another popular Spanish translation of 1852, by Wenceslao Ayguales de Izco, was also framed within a liberal and anticlerical secular ideology. In fact, as Lisa Surwillo argues, Izco imprinted his standpoint so deeply on Stowe's novel that his translation became known as a progressive, rather than Christian, text. In places where *Uncle Tom's Cabin* first arrived in transla-

tion, a layering of ideologies occurred. Perhaps because French translations of the novel, informed by French racial sensibilities, first reached Moldavia and Wallachia, the novel could be used (as Ioana Szeman demonstrates) to mediate an emerging national imaginary in which the racially marked Roma could be imagined as integral to the new Romanian nation, rather than, as occurs in Stowe's original vision, as a nation's constitutive Other. Thus, the novel's circulation and uptake antedates, by more than a century and a half, what Seyla Benhabib calls the challenges of demanding recognition for "a dialogic and narrative model of identity constitution" across various forms of difference allied to claims for "the legitimacy of established constitutional democracies."⁴⁵

Such layering was especially complex in stage, film, and television adaptations. In many places, especially where print literacy was not widespread, these adaptations were more influential than the novel in mediating local politics. The French theatrical adaptation by Phillipe Dumanoir and Adolphe Dennery, analyzed by Emily Sahakian, was translated and performed in Spain in 1864, reached Brazil in 1877, and toured around Brazil and Portugal after its opening in Rio de Janeiro in 1879. According to César Braga-Pinto, this adaptation, rather than earlier translations of the novel, established *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as an important story in the Brazilian conversation about racial and class inequalities. In analyzing how Stowe's story mediated conversations about race in Brazil, it is therefore important to account for the fact that (as Sahakian argues) Dennery and Dumanoir's adaptation significantly rewrote Stowe's source, replacing its inherently Christian position with a secular humanist one that imagined the enslaved under protection and guidance from the white paternalistic state.

For Diana Taylor, the possibility that French racial politics may have thus informed Brazilian conversations about race would be an example of how performance participates "in acts of transfer," "transmitting memories and social identity" among populations but also to others who examine the archived remnants of extinct practices.⁴⁶ It matters, for example, that three decades of exposure to American-style minstrelsy in London, where a dozen stage adaptations were licensed within months of the novel's appearance,⁴⁷ did not result in fidelity either to stage conventions of black dialect and behavior or to anything approximating accurate or plausible traits in any of the principals: "Uncle Tom, as well as Eva, spoke in most pronounced cockney accents"; evidently, "George Harris enjoyed an Oxford education"; and Topsy was "endowed [. . .] with all the astute villainies of the Artful

Dodger.”⁴⁸ Such adaptation sounds absurd now, but the meaningful observation is not to inventory the infidelities to Stowe’s text but, rather, to note the matrix of associations made possible by invoking these facets of circulating repertoire where and when they constituted shared symbolic systems.⁴⁹ Retaining the American setting of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* mattered wherever it was read (or staged): to the French, it represented a lagging slavocracy; to most Britons, a glaring fault line in republican democracy; for Germans, schisms between those who generate wealth and those who accumulate it; to the provincial audiences of Cadiz, Spain’s own shameful involvement in the slave trade; and to twentieth-century Soviets, capitalism’s dystopia of racial inequity. But there is also the potential for refraction by the receptive culture: Uncle Tom and Eva may be separated not by race but by class markers; George’s ascendancy becomes teleological and even unnecessary to depict, as an after-story to the main action; and Topsy poaches on established veins of sympathy through tried-and-true tropes of antic entertainment. Just as the adapter or translator supplies vernacular genres as well as referents, the reader or viewer latches onto local meanings. Neither fidelity to Stowe nor “accuracy” about America is a relevant yardstick in acts of transfer. The concept of “reaccentuation” is closer to the mark.⁵⁰

Throughout the twentieth century, Stowe’s story retained its capacity to mediate specific intersections of local and global social politics, even as the geopolitical map of the world shifted as dynamically as it had in the previous century. Nineteenth-century liberals in various countries had used the novel to argue against slavery, serfdom, and the oppression of coolies, and throughout the twentieth century, the Soviets turned it into a staple propaganda text in their critique of Western imperialism.⁵¹ To do this, they had to radically revise Stowe’s Christian standpoint. Thus, Polish and Bulgarian translations and stage adaptations strategically used or removed references to Christianity from Stowe’s source text. In Bulgarian Soviet-era translations, for instance, Senator Bird evokes Christianity to defend the Fugitive Slave Law, while the abolitionist John Van Trompe, to whose house Senator Bird eventually escorts Eliza and Harry, is an atheist and a vocal critic of U.S. Christian ministers for their support of slavery (see Stefka Mihaylova’s essay). Likewise, in the popular 1961 Polish theatrical production of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* at the Rozmaitości Theater in Krakow, analyzed in Katarzyna Jakubiak’s essay, Eva’s death did not provide a glimpse of heaven but instead acquired a tone of despair and nihilism. As Jakubiak suggests, however, this tone, incompatible with Christian faith, was not necessarily

taken up by all or most Polish spectators. Catholicism, which retained a strong influence on Soviet-era Polish culture despite official suppression of the faith, may have enabled modes of spectatorship resistant to the producers' political intentions.

By considering this possibility of resistant spectatorship, Jakubiak's analysis resonates with Mary Louise Pratt's idea of "contact zones" (in this case, between the Soviet imperium and Polish Catholicism) that are enabled by "the literate arts" of "transculturation, critique, collaboration, bilingualism, mediation, parody, denunciation, imaginary dialogue, [and] vernacular expression," supporting "absolute heterogeneity of meaning." Such zones can be an opportunity for resisting cultures as much as a peril for those wanting "a stable, centered sense of knowledge and reality."⁵² In her analysis herein of the 2008 stage production of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by the Bahman Cultural Arts Center in Tehran, Debra J. Rosenthal explores a similarly complex political dynamic, as she compares state-authorized approaches to Stowe's novel with director and playwright Behrooz Gharibpour's staging, which resists simplistic anti-American propaganda by bringing Stowe's novel into conversation with local folklore's representational traditions. This compelling conversation is consistent with the rich tradition of Islamic engagement with *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that Jeffrey Einboden explores in his essay. What may be read, on one level, as comparative history can be read, on another, as connected history.⁵³ These recirculating currents of reading are characteristic of how *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is mobilized as ideology, mutable to many circumstances.

AMERICA'S MOST MUTABLE BOOK

The variety of transformations that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* has endured since 1851 begs the question of why so many diverse readers and audiences considered it a useful tool with which to address their specific concerns about social injustice. The various translations and adaptations of Stowe's novel almost invariably create culturally specific and ideologically targeted notions of "America." In the novel's diverse contexts of reception, "America," no less than "Uncle Tom," becomes a complex transnational signifier for freedom, inequality, democracy, and capitalist oppression, among other things. As Heike Paul demonstrates, F. W. Hackländer's 1854 German novel *Europäisches Sklavenleben* (European slave life; translated into English as *Clara; or, Slave Life in Europe*, 1856) likens the sufferings of an impover-

ished translator of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and his daughter, who dances in the local theater's corps de ballet, as enslavement on a par with that of American captives. Likewise, the anonymously published novel *Poor Paddy's Cabin; or, Slavery in Ireland* (1854) depicts the privations of the great potato famine as the backdrop for a single-minded critique of Catholicism's exploitation of the faithful. This is sentimentalism through and through, and upon emigration to America, the protagonist is given a copy of the Protestant Bible and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. These novelists simply filled in details from their own cultures, freely imitating for sentimental effect. Though *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is as rich in specific detail as realist novels, the essays in this volume demonstrate that it has been consistently read in a sentimental fashion, a reading encouraged by the enduring political efficaciousness of sentimental rhetoric.

In the twentieth century, the ideological malleability of the novel was further encouraged by its new status as juvenile literature. As our authors show, translators in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries did not feel bound to the English original as guarantee for the truthfulness and quality of their translations. This attitude was even more pronounced in editions for young readers. Although the first, abbreviated, Polish translation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was made from English in 1853 and a full translation was available in 1860, the first Polish translation for children, published in 1894, was made from a German edition for children. In Bulgaria, several partial or abbreviated translations for adults were made from English in the second half of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, the first adaptation for children, published in 1911, drew on French, Swedish, and Russian editions for young readers. In these editions, the political and philosophical discussions of slavery that characters hold throughout the novel are abbreviated or entirely removed. In some places, such as communist Bulgaria, where the children's editions were the only available ones, the unfamiliarity of readers with Stowe's politics, as presented in these discussions, allowed for easy replacement. The same holds true for historical audiences in Southeast Asia or Brazil who did not have access to the printed books and learned the story through silent film or performance.

The extent to which translators and adaptors felt free to insert local points of view is evident by their neglect or refusal to convey the uncompromised Protestantism of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. In Stowe's view, the values of Protestantism were inseparable from those of liberalism, and the moral axes of the story—Tom, Eliza, and Eva—evangelize variants of this perspective. It

is not incidental that the liberal community of sympathy at Eva's deathbed is also a Christian community, Eva and the slaves adhering to Methodism, her parents (or certainly her feckless mother) implied as Roman Catholics.⁵⁴ Christian allegiances mattered to readers: the *Natal Witness*, writing for British colonists in southeastern Africa, reported in 1859 that an edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* published in Rome made the brutal Legree "into a staunch Protestant" who "flogs Uncle Tom to death for holding the dogma of the Immaculate Conception." This adaptation served Roman Catholic preferences, but without any more mischief than the prominent Anglican scholar and hymnist J. M. Neale turning "John Bunyan into a teacher of high church doctrines."⁵⁵ More problematically for its transnational reception, the novel provides an entire Protestant repertoire: it includes hymns, details Quaker practices and politics, debates theological issues pertaining to slavery and liberal freedoms, teaches Christian self-sacrifice through example, and, in an early scene in the eponymous cabin, even gives a script for Protestant worship. This is why Jeffrey Einboden rightly refers to *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a conversion text. Yet the radical substitution of other ideologies and religions—from communism to Islam to Buddhism—conveys the translators and adaptors' awareness of Christianity and sentimentality as tools of Western cultural assimilation. While the Western sentimental novel encouraged the transcendence of racial, class, and ethnic differences for the good of all humanity, it also attempted to impose Western moral and aesthetic standards among readers and spectators from non-Western communities. Essays in this collection examine the implications of adaptation and appropriation across religious divides, seeing *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a vehemently Protestant text adapted for Catholic, Christian Orthodox, Islamic, and Buddhist assumptions.

Thailand, which was never colonized, represents a special case in the history of Southeast Asia yet has proven fully amenable (in the Western imaginary) to the imposition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as a universalized model for sentimentalized virtue. This is precisely the point of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The King and I*. Interpolating a theatrical adaptation of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* into a royal entertainment enables the king's concubine Tuptim, who loves another man, to mobilize an argument for "consensual love in a conjugal family rather than the authoritarian rules of royal sexuality," which, as Lauren Berlant explains, sets the musical squarely within the American Cold War ideology of democratic individualism and self-determination, manifesting emancipation not just in the choice of a love object but, sec-

ondarily, as physical freedom.⁵⁶ The episode does not occur in the autobiography of Anna Leonowens or its novelization by Margaret Landon;⁵⁷ thus, its inclusion in the 1951 musical verifies *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "as a master sign or supertext, whose reiteration in the twentieth century magnetizes an array of distinct and often conflicting desires about the execution of cultural difference in the global postslavery era," harnessed to progressive tendencies of a revolutionary impulse in American history.⁵⁸ The matrix of difference across races is highlighted through contrasted aesthetics; the commensurability of humanity is cemented by sentimentality. Nevertheless, Leonowens admired Stowe's work and likely read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* when it was serialized in the Singapore *Straits Times* (1852–53). Leonowens claimed that Lady Son Klin (Chao Chom Manda Sonklin), who liberated her 132 slaves in a reenactment of the Emancipation Proclamation, recognized that her teachings were simply in the tradition of the Buddha's doctrine.⁵⁹

For readers and viewers across the world, the major point of entry into the novel has been their concern over slavery and other forms of social oppression. In an 1856 letter from Florence Nightingale to Stowe, we find an example of how *Uncle Tom's Cabin* mobilized this familiarity to muster empathy across identity positions. Nightingale told Stowe how she had observed British soldiers reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin* while convalescing at the Eastern Front of the Crimean War.

The interest in that book raised many a sufferer who, while he had not a grumble to bestow upon his own misfortunes, had many a thought of sorrow and just indignation for those which you brought before him. It is from the knowledge of such evils so brought home to so many honest hearts that they feel as well as know them, that we confidently look to their removal in God's good time.⁶⁰

These soldiers fought another slave state, Russia, to limit its incursions on a waning empire (the Ottomans) that, in turn, countenanced and practiced slavery throughout its terrain. (Russia officially abolished serfdom in 1861, freeing twenty-two million people, or 35 percent of Tsar Alexander II's subjects, nineteen million more slaves than were freed in the United States.⁶¹ In the 1860s, Egypt alone received twenty-five thousand slaves per year, a five-fold increase from the previous decade. The Ottoman Empire's slave trade peaked in the last third of the nineteenth century.⁶²) The British army, implausibly joined with both French and Turkish allies against the Russians,

fought an ill-equipped blunder-filled debacle of the war. Reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the soldiers could be imaginatively transported out of the Caucasus, the alignment of their mighty empires, and the direct and immediate observation of mortality, to think across geographies and national interests, in order to achieve an act of transfer with Stowe's characters. Had they thought too carefully of both their allies and foes, the history of the Crimean War might be told very differently than it is. Likewise, in the Soviet Bloc and post-revolutionary Iran, interpretations of the novel have latched onto the possibility of revolution (spoken by St. Clare) rather than Stowe's alignment with gradualist emancipation politics. Substituting St. Clare's non-Christian teleology for Stowe's Protestant one explains the easy adaptability of the novel to secular and other non-Christian revolutionary agendas.

There are potentially many more circumstances in which *Uncle Tom's Cabin* might arise as an inspiration, comparative source, or countertext. Seymour Drescher's *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* begins with British efforts to curtail the slave trade out of West Africa in the 1770s and concludes with a chapter detailing several twentieth-century "reversions" within Europe, most prominently the Soviet Gulag and Germany's racial slavery under the Nazis (including forced labor and impressment). Drescher also reminds readers of the systematic and prolonged sexual slavery of Korean, Taiwanese, Chinese, Filipina, Indonesian, and Malay women in the name of imperial Japan. Forced labor was imposed by Italian, Belgian, Portuguese, and French colonial regimes throughout Africa during wartime.⁶³ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) may have brought language to bear against the problem but has not terminated the practice, and trafficking of children, women, and laborers continues on a global scale. No ethnicity or faith is immune or wholly innocent in these violations.

The contributors to this volume undertook its work because of our belief in the value of telling established stories differently, from subaltern as well as dominant points of view, highlighting both local complexities and global trends. We find the existing scholarship about Stowe's novel to be rigorous and sophisticated yet saturated by U.S. and British concerns. The specifics of the emancipation and abolition causes (especially the foreshadowing of the U.S. Civil War of 1861–65) dominate mid-nineteenth-century readings. The association of minstrelsy and blackface performance as a representation of the book on stage interleaves with this tradition that, at least in the United States, was racist and hateful. The book's sentimentality

has led to its relegation since the Civil War to being a mainstay of juvenile literature; alternately, it is the end case that gave a name to the stigmatized “Tom” who kowtows to racist overlords rather than fighting a system that systematically instills segregation, disadvantage, and self-deprecation, either in the name of a reward hereafter or out of complicity with a racist and racialized system. These readings represent only a fraction of the book’s rich reception history.

In telling some of this reception history as transnational rather than multicultural, we acknowledge not only the value of celebrating the enrichment that a cultural work receives when it lands in a community different from the original target audience but also the value of strategic impoverishment. Like other performance and film scholars who have adopted a transnational approach, we are particularly interested in how the politics of medium intersects with larger political and social concerns;⁶⁴ in fact, in telling the story of a single work across diverse media and geographies, we confirm their insight of how crucial the history of media is to geopolitical developments.

As Debra J. Rosenthal’s essay on Gharibpour’s theatrical adaptation shows, the story retains its power even when Tom’s regrettable acquiescence and George Harris’s emigration are replaced with a revolutionary teleology, spearheaded by Cassy, who waves a banner proclaiming “Freedom” (lettered in English for the Farsi-speaking audience) as the cotton fields symbolically burn all around her. In another recent mutation, Gerold Theobalt’s *Onkel Toms Hütte Reloaded* (touring Germany in 2015–16), Stowe’s story is enacted by four youths detained in a rehabilitation facility on the South Side of Chicago. They find parallels between their struggles and the fictional George, Cassy, Chloe, and Emmeline, and the play ends with the manumitted slaves opting to stay on the plantation as waged workers, to the refrains of hymns and pop music.⁶⁵ This repurposing of the name and many motifs of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* as an upbeat lesson for disadvantaged inner-city youths is a fantasia of European optimism. Within the United States, few would stomach such pairings in this day and age; however, Uncle Tom is very much on the minds of Germans, whether or not they are constrained by political correctness. During the American presidential election campaign of 2008, the popular left-wing Berlin daily *Die Tageszeitung* (The daily newspaper) featured the banner “Onkel Baracks Hütte” beneath a photograph of the White House (3 June 2008), evidently likening candidate Barack Obama’s aspirations to America’s other most famous trans-

national black figure. The journal's deputy editor in chief, Rainer Metzger, defensively remarked that this "cheeky" cover would be read ironically, as all Germans associate *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with issues of racism. Yonis Ayeah (speaking for the Initiative of Black People in Germany) was incensed, and Kristin Moriah calls out Metzger's "feigned innocence" of the collateral meanings arising from the image. She argues that "the novel has been as important for Germans defining America and its social problems as it has been for the formation of German cultural identity," beginning with the craze over *Sklavengeschichten* (slave stories) in the mid-nineteenth century and still evident in the community built in Zehlendorf in the 1920s and now a suburb of Berlin (as Heike Paul relates). In Zehlendorf, a popular restaurant called Onkel Tom's Hütte gave rise to a public housing site of the same name. An homage to solidarity across class, racial, and national lines during the Weimar Republic, it remains a conundrum for today's visitors who are unable to read the layers of textual history and social practice—and their ideologies—either through the peaked vernacular architecture of what were originally workers' cottages and apartments or in the name of the U-Bahn stop that services the community.⁶⁶

The Zehlendorf Onkel Tom complex—like so many other examples of the transnational palimpsest of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*—evinces what Pheng Cheah terms a "cosmopolitan optic," which enhances a sense of shared participation in humanity within the dynamic process of local self-definition and global flows.⁶⁷ Even so, as another scholar of transnational literature, Shu-Mei Shih, explains, "We live in an interconnected world defined by power relations." World literature and its material expressions must be understood within these relations. Societies sharing the same source, such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, connect themselves horizontally in a literary arc by intertwining symbols and ideas from the borrowed source and their own culture, connecting not only issues but temporalities.⁶⁸ These essays testify to this process.

Notes

1. *National Era* (Washington, DC), June 1851–April 1852; Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Boston: Jewett, Proctor, and Worthington, 1852).
2. Eric Sundquist, introduction to *New Essays on "Uncle Tom's Cabin"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 18.
3. [Gamaliel Bailey, ed.], *National Era* (Washington, DC), 15 April 1852, quoting the *Congregationalist and Christian Times*.

4. *Richmond Daily Dispatch*, 25 August 1852.
5. *Charleston Mercury*, 25 May 1852.
6. Henceforth, unless otherwise noted, all quotations from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* reference the Oxford World's Classics edition edited by Jean Fagan Yellin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).
7. *Boston Liberator*, 2 July 1852.
8. American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society resolutions adopted on 11 May 1852, as published in the *National Era*, 13 May 1852.
9. In *Raising Cain: Blackface Performance from Jim Crow to Hip Hop* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), W. T. Lhamon notes that disputes over Stowe's racism originated during the novel's serial publication. He argues, "Although clarifying these positions has its importance, it is also diversionary. It distracts from the impassioned way Stowe's writing, as part of blackface performance, executed the cultural work of seeming to change a thing into a man, and back again, in tidal circulation. . . . Is Stowe racist? Doubtless. . . . to see that Stowe's images of blacks are sentimentally racist is true but not whole. The racist parts elicit counterparts that ghost around them, cohere with them, and have continued to dawn, and set, as they travel through time together" (141).
10. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *A Key to "Uncle Tom's Cabin": Presenting the Original Facts and Documents upon which the Story is Founded, together with Corroborative Statements Verifying the Truth of the Work* (Boston: J. P. Jewett, 1853).
11. Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Literature and Philosophy in Dialogue: Essays in German Literary Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 112.
12. Translation theorist Lawrence Venuti defines a text that is rendered in a language different from the original as a translation if it "maintain[s] unchanged the basic elements of narrative form. The plot isn't rewritten to alter events or their sequence. And none of the characters' actions is deleted or revised. Dates, historical or geographical markers, the characters' names . . . are generally not altered." When any of these elements is changed, the resulting text is an adaptation rather than a translation. See Lawrence Venuti, "Translation, Community, Utopia," in *The Translation Studies Reader*, ed. Lawrence Venuti (London: Routledge, 2000), 470.
13. *Ibid.*, 471. See also Lawrence Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (London: Routledge, 1998), 4.
14. Venuti, "Translation, Community, Utopia," 486.
15. Sarah Meer, *Uncle Tom Mania: Slavery, Minstrelsy, and Transatlantic Culture in the 1850s* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2009), 9; Jennifer Griffiths, *Traumatic Possessions: The Body and Memory in African American Women's Writing* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009), *passim*; Lauren Berlant, "Poor Eliza," *American Literature* 70.3 (1998): 646.
16. David C. Wall, "Meddling with the Subject: The Imperial Dialogics of Language, Race, and Whiteness in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*," *Nineteenth Century Studies* 25 (2011): 72.
17. Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Dis-Covering the Subject of the 'Great Constitutional Discussion,' 1786–1789," *Journal of American History* 79.3 (1992): 849.
18. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Coliba lui moșu Toma sau Viața negrilor din sudul Statelor Unite* [Uncle Tom's cabin; or, The life of Negroes in the south of the United States], traducere de pe a lui Leon Pilatte de Theodor Codresco, cu "O ochire asupra sclaviei" de M. Kogălniceanu [translation of Leon Pilatte[']s version] by Theodor Codresco, with "A Brief

Overview on Slavery” by M. Kogălniceanu] (Iași: Tipografia Buciumul Roman, 1853), 4.

19. Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Bordeiul unchiului Tom sau Viața negrilor in America* [Uncle Tom's cabin; or, The life of Negroes in America], tradusa din frantuzeste de Dimitrie Pop professor [trans. from French by Dimitrie Pop] (Iasi: Tipografia Institutului Albinei, 1853), 4.

20. In eighteenth-century Britain, for instance, many feared that novels had the power to corrupt, by giving readers, especially young women, a taste for “adventure and intrigue,” a false sense that their wisdom surpasses that of their guardians, and, eventually, false expectations for their lives. See William B. Warner, *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1684–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 5.

21. Bettina Hofmann, “Uncle Tom's Cabin in Germany: A Children's Classic,” *Zeitschrift für Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 53.4 (2005): 263–64. She refers to Robert Münchgesang's translation, *Onkel Toms Hütte, für die Jugend und das Volkherausgegeben* [Uncle Tom's hut, for the youth and the people] (Reutlingen: Enßlin und Laiblins Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1911).

22. Catherine M. Cole, “Reading Blackface in West Africa: Wonders Taken for Signs,” *Critical Inquiry* 23.1 (1996): 183–215.

23. Eric Hayot, “World Literature and Globalization,” in *The Routledge Companion to World Literature*, ed. Theo D'haen, David Damrosch, and Djelal Kadir (London: Routledge, 2012), 224.

24. Kevin Riordan, “Salesman in Abu Dhabi: The Geopathology of Objects,” *Modern Drama* 57.3 (2014): 409–10.

25. Una Chaudhuri, *Staging Place: The Geography of Modern Drama* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995): 15.

26. Elizabeth Margaret Chandler, writing for the *Ladies Repository*, cited in Gay Gibson Cima, *Performing Anti-Slavery: Activist Women on Antebellum Stages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 70–71.

27. Susan Leigh Foster, *Choreographing Empathy: Kinesthesia in Performance* (London: Routledge, 2011) 177.

28. Margaret Cohen, “Sentimental Communities,” in *The Literary Channel: The International Invention of the Novel*, ed. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 106–9.

29. *Ibid.*, 111.

30. See, for example, Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Kathryn Kish Sklar and James Brewer Stewart, eds., *Women's Rights and Transatlantic Antislavery in the Era of Emancipation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Clare Midgley, *Women against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992); Jean Fagan Yellin, ed., *The Harriet Jacobs Family Papers* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Alan J. Rice and Martin Crawford, eds., *Liberating Sojourn: Frederick Douglass and Transatlantic Reform* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1999); Amanda Adams, *Performing Authorship in the Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic Lecture Tour* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014); Teresa C. Zackodnik, *Press, Platform, Pulpit: Black Feminist Publics in the Era of Reform* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011). Other transnational currents are also evident: see, for example, Enrico Dal Lago, *William Lloyd Garrison and Giuseppe Mazzini:*

Abolition, Democracy, and Radical Reform (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press 2013); Tom Chaffin, *Giant's Causeway: Frederick Douglass's Irish Odyssey and the Making of an American Visionary* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014).

31. Stowe, *Key*.

32. Cohen, "Sentimental Communities," 111–13.

33. The only person who is at odds with this assembly is Eva's mother, the proslavery Marie.

34. "If you want to be Christian, Jesus will help you," Eva says on her deathbed. "You must pray to him; you must read—" The Child checked herself, looked piteously at them, and said, sorrowfully, 'O, dear! You *can't* read, —poor souls!' and she hid her face in the pillow and sobbed" (296–97).

35. Margaret Cohen and Carolyn Dever, introduction to Cohen and Dever, *Literary Channel*, 2.

36. See, for instance, Rudolf Neuhäuser, *Towards the Romantic Age: Essays on Sentimental and Preromantic Literature in Russia* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974); Jonathan E. Zwicker, *Practices of the Sentimental Imagination: Melodrama, the Novel, and the Social Imaginary in Nineteenth-Century Japan* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Asia Center, 2006); Joaquín Álvarez Barrientos, *The Spanish Novel in the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); Nikolaus Wegmann, *Diskurse der Empfindsamkeit: Zur Geschichte eines Gefühls in der Literatur des 18. Jahrhunderts* [Discourse of emotions: The history of affect in nineteenth-century literature] (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1988); Annemieke Meijer, *The Pure Language of the Heart: Sentimentalism in the Netherlands, 1775–1800* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1998). Melodrama originated in Paris at the end of the eighteenth century and, through the mechanism of what Elizabeth Maddock Dillon calls the "performative commons," became a globalized discursive site. Its formal characteristics as a genre and its performative conventions were replicated in theaters and opera houses in every European city—metropolises as well as backwaters—and their colonies' ports. See Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, *New World Drama: The Performative Commons in the Atlantic World, 1649–1849* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

37. See "Uncle Tom's Cabin," <https://www.harrietbeecherstowecenter.org/utc/> (accessed 18 October 2015).

38. David S. Reynolds, *Mightier than the Sword: "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and the Battle for America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), 272.

39. Günter H. Lenz, "Towards a Politics of American Transcultural Studies: Discourses of Diaspora and Cosmopolitanism," in *Re-Framing the Transnational Turn in American Studies*, ed. Winifried Fluck, Donald E. Pease, and John Carlos Rowe (Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2011), 394–96.

40. Donald E. Pease, "Introduction: Remapping the Transnational Turn," in Fluck, Pease, and Rowe, *Re-Framing the Transnational Turn*, 4–5.

41. *Ibid.*, 5.

42. See, for example, James Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel," *Partisan Review*, 16 June 1949, reprinted in James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955): 13–23.

43. See Emily Sahakian's essay in this volume.

44. Cohen and Dever, introduction, 11.

45. Seyla Benhabib, *The Claims of Culture: Equality and Diversity in the Global Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 16.
46. Diana Taylor, *The Archive and the Repertoire: Performing Cultural Memory in the Americas* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 2.
47. Harry Birdoff, *The World's Greatest Hit: "Uncle Tom's Cabin"* (New York: S. F. Vanni, 1948), 151.
48. *Ibid.*, 152–53.
49. This point is powerfully made by Robin Bernstein in *Racial Innocence: Performing American Childhood from Slavery to Civil Rights* (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 13–16.
50. Caryl Emerson, "Bahktin and Intergeneric Shift: The Case of *Boris Godunov*," *Studies in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century Literature* 9.1 (1984): 145–67.
51. See John MacKay, *True Songs of Freedom: "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in Russian Culture and Society* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013).
52. Mary Louise Pratt, "Arts of the Contact Zone," *Profession*, 1991, 37.
53. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, "Connected Histories: Notes towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia," *Modern Asian Studies* 31.3 (1997): 745.
54. Joseph Helminski, "Harriet Beecher Stowe's Marianettes: Reconstruction of Womanhood in *The Minister's Wooing* and *Agnes of Sorrento*," in *Beyond "Uncle Tom's Cabin": Essays on the Writing of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, ed. Sylvia Mayer and Monika Mueller (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011), 175.
55. *Natal Witness*, 8 April 1859, 4.
56. Berlant, "Poor Eliza," 637–38.
57. Anna Harriette Leonowens, *The English Governess at the Siamese Court, Being Recollections of Six Years in the Royal Palace at Bangkok* (Boston: Fields, Osgood, 1870); Margaret Landon, *Anna and the King of Siam* (New York: John Day, 1944).
58. Berlant, "Poor Eliza," 637–38.
59. Susan Morgan, *Bombay Anna: The Real Story and Remarkable Adventures of the "King and I" Governess* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 149–51.
60. Letter from Florence Nightingale to Harriet Beecher Stowe, 26 October 1856, quoted in *Connecticut at the World's Fair: Report of the Commissioners from Connecticut of the Columbian Exhibition of 1893 at Chicago* (Hartford: Case, Lockwood, and Brainard, 1898), 301.
61. John MacKay, "The First Years of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Russia," in *Transatlantic Stowe: Harriet Beecher Stowe and European Culture*, ed. Denise Kohn, Sarah Meer, and Emily B. Todd (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2006), 77, 81.
62. Seymour Drescher, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 373.
63. *Ibid.*, 415–55.
64. The strong interest of performance and film scholars in transnationalism is evidenced by recent special issues on performance, film, and transnationalism in three major journals: *Theatre Research International* 39.3 (2014); *Theatre Survey* 55.3 (2014); *Nineteenth-Century Theatre and Film* 41.2 (2014).
65. For information on the Kempf Theater (Grünwald) production, see "Onkel Toms Hütte," <http://www.kempf-theater.de/onkel-toms-huette/> (accessed 23 December 2016). The manuscript is handled by Ahn und Simrock Bühnen- und Musikverlag GmbH (Hamburg).

66. Kristin Moriah, "Other People's Cabins: German Inversions of Onkel Tom's Hütte," *Lateral: Journal of the Cultural Studies Association* 4 (n.d.), <http://csalateral.org/wp/issue/4/other-peoples-cabins-german-inversions-of-onkel/> (accessed 31 December 2015).

67. Pheng Cheah, "What Is a World? On World Literature as World-Making Activity," *Daedalus* 137.3 (2008): 27.

68. Shu-Mei Shih, "World Studies and Relational Comparison," *PMLA* 130.2 (2015): 431.