TRANS/ATLANTIC MOBILITIES: TRANSLATING NARRATIVES OF IRISH RESISTANCE[1]

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> *Revolution really requires a transformation of human nature so that people are capable of democracy. It's a process that not only destroys habits of servitude and develops capacities for self-rule but also inspires political imagination and expands their desires, which can press far beyond the present political situation.*
>
> – Michael Hardt (138)

> *In Ireland, a country which has seen revolutions in every generation, there is properly speaking no national tradition. Nothing is stable in the country; nothing is stable in the minds of the people. When the Irish writer begins to write, he has to create his moral world from chaos by himself, for himself.*
>
> – Stanislaus Joyce (185)

> *Joyce and Yeats are the prose and poetry respectively of the Ireland that culminated in the Rebellion.*
>
> – Wyndham Lewis (75)

In the past few years, the conceptual framework of Atlantic studies has sought to expand the geographical boundaries and trajectories of Irish migration and diaspora research through an interdisciplinary focus which looks at mutual influences between Ireland and other Atlantic communities thus contemplating, in a larger and more fruitful context, how ideas and experiences have travelled and developed as a result of trade, military operations, colonization schemes, migration, and exile. Out of this web of multilayered connections, a new geography has emerged revealing a transatlantic space which transcends chronological and national boundaries in favour of a fluid map where the Atlantic shores become sites of productive confluences and meaningful intersections between different territories and peoples.[2]

Drawing precisely on how contemporary transatlantic scholarship has contextualized its objects of study in relation to exchanges, interactions, and negotiations between and across the Atlantic regions,[3] this essay attempts to explore the intricacies of certain literary and cultural links between Ireland and Cuba. The aim is to move beyond the traditional framework of 'national' literatures and cultures in order to map out,

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2 For transnational and comparative views of the Irish historical and cultural experiences in the Atlantic world as phenomena transcending traditional chronological, topical, and ethnic paradigms, see Gleeson; see also Byrne, Coleman & King.

3 A number of recent studies address the circulation of ideas in an international Atlantic context, the so called "Green Atlantic"; see, for example, O'Neill & Lloyd and Whelan.

through the often neglected lens of translation, an alternative transnational literary geography, an uncharted cultural space of significant transatlantic 'geotextualities' and 'geopolitics.' Thus, by concentrating on the reception and circulation of James Joyce's novel *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, first published in 1916 and subsequently translated in post-revolutionary Cuba, I will explore the existence of a shared discursive space, a 'contact zone,' established through the back-and-forth exchange of ideas and imaginaries about 'resistance' between the two islands. Unsurprisingly, the concern with the discourse of Irish resistance which had been present in the Cuban imaginary since the mid-nineteenth century, underlies the urge to reprint the 1926 Spanish translation of Joyce's novel in the Havana of the 1960s. As I will discuss, the new translation incorporates a revolutionary discourse which foregrounds the notion that both nations share forms of resistance before a common history of oppression and, likewise, encourages readers to discover a number of relevant analogies between the Cuba of the 1960s and the Ireland that witnessed the rebellion of 1916.

The above-mentioned transatlantic connections have been explored and discussed mainly in relation to the physical mobility of the migratory populations which, in the case of the Irish, traversed the Atlantic as labourers, migrants, exiles, political organizers and cultural workers. Thus, for the most part, the study of transatlantic mobilities has been concerned with the way in which social and individual practices have shaped the Atlantic world through the transatlantic exchange of ideas as a result of the actual migration of people. Yet, beyond these historically documented forms of material mobility is the less well-known, yet no less important form of circulation and migration embodied in, and represented by, translation. Translation is an essential form of transnational communication, representation, negotiation, transmission, appropriation, and adaptation between cultures which can never be understood in isolation, but always in relation to a social, political, or intellectual framework. The evolution and dissemination of fundamental concepts and assumptions always take place though translational exchanges.

Although the long-accepted notion of translation as a subsidiary discipline, a peripheral activity on the margins of other relevant cultural practices, has been debunked, among others, by a large number of studies which explicitly resituate the discipline of translation in the trans-cultural context of postcolonial studies,[4] the implications of translation for transnational and transatlantic cultural studies remain, for the most part, underexplored. As has been remarked, translation, in itself an intensely relational act, is one of the principal means by which texts circulate in the world republic of letters (Casanova) with different literatures and cultures often entering into cooperative negotiations through translation practices. Yet, this cooperation has traditionally been neglected by those national literary histories which have focused on

4 See, for example, Niranjana; Cheyfitz; Bassnett & Trivedi; Robinson; Tymoczko, *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*; Simon & St-Pierre.

production attached to a particular territory and in one single language, because, as has been noted, "processes of translation and transnational migration and their effects remain insufficiently studied outside of local specializations" (Huyssen 45).

It is my contention that, in order to effectively discuss the relevance of the transnational dialogue which underlies the study of mobility across the Atlantic, translation should not be underestimated. Translation always reveals a particular agency, a certain way of knowing and representing experience, thus joining in with other forms of epistemology and other discourses and practices concerned with intercultural contact, representation and re-enactment which become extremely relevant in order to appropriately approach the examination of transatlantic forms of cultural recollection.

As I will discuss in relation to the context of Irish and Cuban reciprocities, attention must be paid to the way in which these two forms of mobility, *translational* and *transatlantic*, interact. Translation, as a cross-disciplinary practice, must reach beyond regional and national frameworks, thus allowing for a perspective situated between different shores, languages, and historical periods, in a conceptual space constructed between shifting discourses in which new scenarios provide new meanings. In this respect, the fruitful interaction of Translation and Transatlantic Studies may cast new light on the discussion of the cultural and political discourses which are embroiled in representations of the Atlantic worlds as well as on the investigation of the so called forms of Atlantic solidarity (see Malouf): "the moments of cooperation and commonality – as presentiments of another conceivable world forged not in domination and mutual antagonism, but in solidarity" (O'Neill & Lloyd xx).

The invocation of solidarity between formerly oppressed Atlantic nations was indeed one of the major reasons that accounted for the publication of the translation of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in Havana in 1964, by the *Editora Nacional de Cuba*, the 'State Press,' which, apart from promoting Cuban books, was also committed to popularizing universal literature in translation. Symptomatically enough, although a canonical translation in the Spanish language by the acclaimed writer Dámaso Alonso already existed, the Cuban writer Edmundo Desnoes[5] chose to translate Joyce's *Portrait* into Spanish again. Alonso's translation, which had circulated widely in the Hispanic world, had not only become an emblematic text since its publication in Madrid in 1926 as *El Retrato del artista adolescente*, but, more importantly, this canonical translation was to exert a great influence on the work of acclaimed Cuban writers (Salgado 79).

5 At the time he translated *Portrait*, the writer Edmundo Desnoes was one of the most active intellectuals of the revolution. He was editor of the *Editora Nacional*, a member of the editorial board of *Casa de las Américas,* and editor of the emblematic journal *Lunes de Revolución*, a major forum for the publication and discussion of writers, artists, and intellectuals not only from Cuba but also from Latin America and many other countries.

Admittedly, the new version printed in Havana is presented as a *revised* translation, a gesture which, only five years after the triumph of the revolution of 1959, symbolically expresses the Cubans' right to contest impositions through the re-writing of their own versions of the literary canon, thus reaffirming Cuba's political and cultural independence. It is, thus, how Desnoes not only reinterprets the Spanish text through the insertion of a new prologue which functions as a revolutionary manifesto for readers on the island, but also modifies Alonso's choice of words in order to intentionally diverge from the version published in the former imperial metropolis. Unsurprisingly, the Cuban translation opts for a more ideologically charged vocabulary which encourages readers to discover analogies between the Cuba of the 1960s and the Ireland of 1916, the emphasis being on the existence of shared forms of resistance before a common history of oppression.

Until relatively late in the history of Joyce criticism, when attention to the writer's ideological perspectives finally helped to debunk the myth of his withdrawal from Irish politics, most commentators neglected to notice the specific colonial tensions represented in this early novel which, interestingly enough, Desnoes chooses to highlight in his translation.[6] The lost opportunity for Home Rule and the shame on Ireland of Parnell's downfall (which the Cuban translator invokes in his introduction) were relevant issues in Joyce's Triestine journalism during the years of his struggle to rewrite the novel, when he also lectured on Irish political and cultural themes. In a series of newspaper articles published between 1904 and 1907 ("Fenianism," "Home Rule Comes of Age," "Ireland at the Bar"), Joyce analyzed the Irish political situation and wrote about the evils of British imperial rule in Ireland, thus offering a lesson for the imperial ruler of Trieste.[7]

Conceived in "Dublin 1904" and completed in "Trieste 1914," *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* was finally published in 1916 after several chapters had been released in installments in *The Egoist*. By then, Joyce had provided a new ending to replace that of the partly destroyed *Stephen Hero* manuscripts. Thus, the 1916 *Portrait* ends with young Stephen Dedalus's jottings in his diary, from 20 March to 27 April. The echo of his enigmatic pronouncement in the 26 April entry – "So be it. Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" (Joyce, *Portrait* 252-253)

6 Manganiello's *Joyce's Politics* is often referred to as the pioneer study on Joyce and politics. Nolan's groundbreaking study, *James Joyce and Nationalism*, is a provocative revision of Joyce's writing, which reconsiders the relationship between modernism and Irish Nationalism through post-colonial and feminist theories. *Joyce, Race and Empire* by Vincent J. Cheng specifically looks at Joyce as writing from the perspective of a colonial subject and provides the first-full length study of Joyce's works from the perspective of post-colonial theory.

7 In their edition of *The Critical Writings of James Joyce*, Mason and Ellmann remark that the three articles "surveyed the Irish political situation finding fault with the Irish as well as with the British, but supporting Sinn Féin and the independence movement" (187).

– does indeed resonate with a peculiar irony when read in the light of the events of the Easter Rising (which began on 24 April, Easter Monday).

As mentioned before, compared to the earlier Spanish translation, the Cuban version deliberately incorporates ideologically charged vocabulary which encourages readers to be attentive to Joyce's 'revolutionary' politics and simultaneously hints at analogies between Cuba in the 1960s and Ireland in 1916. Perhaps one of the most striking examples can be found in the translation of the passage from Chapter V when, just before his talk with Cranly on his Easter duty, Stephen stands waiting for his friend and "stares angrily" at a hotel "in which he imagined the sleek lives of the patricians of Ireland housed in calm" (Joyce, *Portrait* 238). In line with what will be his proud boast at the end of the novel, "to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race," Stephen wonders how he might be able to liberate the conscience of the Irish race: "How could he hit their conscience or how cast his shadow over the imaginations of their daughters, before the squires begat upon them, that they may breed a race less ignoble than their own?" (Joyce, *Portrait* 238).

The noun "squires," which Alonso, the first Spanish translator, renders as "*galanes*" (Joyce, *Retrato* [1926] 270), thus, literally referring in the plural form to "a man who escorts a woman," is translated in the Cuban version as "*hacendados*" (Joyce, *Retrato* [1964] 253), i.e. the owners of "*haciendas*," vast landed states. This shift is extremely relevant since "*hacienda*" and "*hacendado*" are very popular terms in the Spanish-American cultural imaginary, particularly in relation to the social revolutions and the agrarian movements. In Cuba the term "*hacendados*" specifically refers to the sugar planters, export-oriented landowners whose pursuit of profit through free trade reinforced the dominance of foreign (colonial) power. With this significant new lexical choice the translation automatically brings to mind a form of landed oligarchy and a system of agrarian (capitalist) exploitation which the revolutionaries sought to abolish.[8] Interestingly, in the case of this specific semantic deviation from the earlier Spanish text, the Cuban translator explicitly connects the Cuban revolution with the struggle of Land League agrarianism in Ireland, a question which had come to occupy a central position during Joyce's childhood and had left its mark on the parliamentary career of Charles Stewart Parnell, "who agitated for the Land Act of 1881 and the unsuccessful Home Rule bill of 1886 and who plays a central role in the political mythology of Joyce's fiction" (Ford 752). Desnoes's version, which clearly invokes the vocabulary of the revolution and its struggle against class inequality in the predominantly agrarian Cuban society, ultimately stands as a reminder of the circumstances underlying Stephen's complaint in Joyce's text: the (British) colonial exploitation which the signatories of the 1916 Proclamation consciously opposed asserting "the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland."

8 For a thorough discussion of the relevant and "singular" role of the Cuban *hacendados* against the background of the revolution, see Winocur.

As we will see, what emerges from a close examination of the fourteen-page Prologue to the Cuban translation of Joyce's early novel, significantly titled "Al lector" ("To the Reader"), is an effort to pair Cuba's and Ireland's anti-colonial struggles and, likewise, to connect the two nation's histories of fighting for freedom and emancipation with the revolutionary present of the 1960s. Primary among Desnoes's objectives in the Prologue is to revisit Joyce's *Portrait* through a solidary contextualization of the transatlantic encounter between Cuba and Ireland, which the translation is called to enact. This contextualization takes place through a careful combination of paratexts, mainly the Prologue and also the editorial comments on the back cover, the main function of which is to turn Joyce into a role model for aspiring revolutionary writers.

Throughout the Prologue, Desnoes's 'revolutionary' portrait of Joyce (curiously echoing Joyce's own portrait of the character of Stephen[9]) is repeatedly emphasized with the establishment of similarities between Joyce's having to forge the uncreated conscience for colonial Ireland and the situation of the "Spanish-American writer." Desnoes insists that Joyce's Ireland "does remind us, to a certain extent, of our situation during the Republic" (Desnoes xv)[10] and quotes from his own translation of the passage in which Stephen Dedalus bitterly reflects on the power of the Irish "squires," which, as we saw, Desnoes decides to transform into (Cuban) "*hacendados*." In this respect, through his use of meaningful words with a specifically political significance in the context of Cuba's own history Desnoes makes Irish history mobile. Ironically, by foregrounding the relevance of agrarian movements in relation to the revolutionary processes in Latin American and particularly to the Cuban revolution, the translation simultaneously re-inscribes Joyce's novel from 1916 within the context of the land question in Ireland, one of the most important issues around which Irish politics revolved in Joyce's time. The Cuban translation thus functions as a form of transatlantic mobility with Joyce's colonial Ireland serving as a touchstone for a critique of colonialism in the larger context of Spanish-America.

The identification of Joyce with contemporary Spanish-American writers expressed eloquently in one of the blurbs of the back cover – "Joyce, furthermore, has so much in common with the social circumstances of Latin-American writers since in Ireland he experienced the fight against backwardness and the English colonial exploitation" – strategically brings together the Irish and the Cubans' struggles to overcome imperialism while simultaneously introducing the idea put forward by Fidel Castro in his "Second Declaration of Havana," in February 1962, that the writer's duty was to write against colonial oppression: "now, history will have to take the poor of America into account, the exploited and spurned of Latin America, who have decided to start writing histories for themselves for all time" (Young 216).

9 Cheng interestingly refers to Stephen's artistic calling as having "its first roots in the politics of national liberation" and explains that Joyce provided his fictional character "with a personal lineage of Irish patriots very much like Joyce's own" (72).

10 Unless otherwise indicated, the translations are mine.

The National Union of Writers and Artists, in which Desnoes participated actively, had enthusiastically endorsed this declaration which chose to place Cuba at the heart of the alliance of formerly colonized countries as the leading force against imperialism. "Joyce's experience has so many points of contact with the social circumstances of Spanish-American writers. In his time, Ireland was an underdeveloped English colony. Even the language was imposed by the conqueror" (Desnoes xiv), writes Desnoes, thus establishing a parallelism between the two countries' common colonial past, which is further emphasized in his decisions as a translator.

Symptomatically, in the case of the translation of the often-quoted passage in Chapter V reproduced below (when Stephen argues with the English Dean of studies over the right word for the utensil 'through which you pour the oil into your lamp'):

> -That said Stephen. Is that called a funnel? Is it not a tundish?
>
> -What is a tundish?
>
> -That. The ... the funnel. (Joyce, *Portrait* 188)

Desnoes encourages Cuban readers to approach the translation in the context of their own situation as colonial subjects. He significantly bypasses the Spanish translator's previous decision to provide synonyms in Spanish for each term, "funnel" and "tundish," and preserves the Hiberno-English "tundish" untranslated as if alerting his readers towards linguistic tensions and, simultaneously, gesturing towards the way in which a language may speak of unequal colonial encounters and forms of imperial domination. Ultimately, Desnoes's translation functions as a form of instrumentalization which Lawrence Venuti has appropriately described in the following terms:

> In creating stereotypes, translation may attach esteem or stigma to specific ethnic, racial, and national groupings [...] In the long run, translation figures in geopolitical relations by establishing the cultural grounds of diplomacy, reinforcing alliances, antagonisms and hegemonies between nations. (Venuti 67-68)

As mentioned before, the Prologue repeatedly invokes Ireland's history of the fight for independence in a clear attempt to produce an image of the social and historical context of Joyce's 1916 novel that can be relevant for Cuba's contemporary moment. In the six-page timeline "Joyce and his Time," which follows Desnoes's Prologue, 1916 appears as the year of the publication of *Portrait*, a biographical event which is significantly paralleled on the historical front with "the Rising of the Irish Volunteers" and is briefly explained in meaningful terms as an act of resistance and martyrdom: "Capitulation after a week of fierce struggles; executions."

On several occasions Desnoes suggests that the "alliance" (between Irish and Cubans) that the translation of *Portrait* in Cuba represents is far from accidental and he even seems to imply that, since there are so many common elements in the history of both oppressed nations, it is just natural that Joyce's novel echoes the history of Cuba in the Cuban idiom (Desnoes xiv). His shaping of Joyce as the only great European writer concerned with "national sovereignty" (Desnoes xv) forms part of a larger discourse of transatlantic solidarity which links Irish and Cuban nationalism: "Joyce ex-

perienced himself in his own home[11] the failure of the subsequent fights for independence [...] it should not be forgotten that those fights *almost* overlap with our last war of independence" (Desnoes xv, emphasis mine). Thus, the translator seems to invoke here the very same demands of the 1916 Proclamation which declared the right of the people of Ireland "to be sovereign and indefeasible" while simultaneously speaking to the persistence of the question of Cuba's own sovereignty among the ideologues of the revolution.

Undoubtedly, one of the most interesting examples of Desnoes's efforts to produce meaningful convergences which Cuban readers can easily recognize and identify with, is present in his reference to James J. O'Kelly (1845-1916), described as "one of Parnell's most faithful lieutenants," author of "a passionate defence of our fight: *La tierra del mambí*," and advocate of "Cuba libre" (Desnoes xv-xvi). The translator remarks that "O'Kelly, who had been to Cuba, was the only personal friend [of Parnell's] who did not take part in the betrayal which made young Stephen disappointed in Irish politics" (Desnoes xvi). The historical reference to O'Kelly and his faithfulness to Parnell, "the uncrowned king of Ireland" (Desnoes xvi), in connection with Joyce's protagonist and (indirectly) with Joyce's own disappointment in Irish politics (since Desnoes chooses to read *Portrait* as an autobiographical novel) invokes the relevance of Irish patriotism as a model for Cuba's own struggle for independence (first from Spain and later from the U.S.). It is at this point that the translator more obviously relocates Joyce's *Portrait* through a map of "transatlantic solidarities." As has been suggested, he conjures up the Irish tradition of resistance through his revisitation of Joyce's novel, presented as a source of inspiration for writers in post-revolutionary Cuba. Furthermore, by referring to O'Kelly's *The Mambi-Land* (*La tierra del Mambí*) he manages to recover an Irish narrative about Cuban resistance in the nineteenth century which is conveniently projected onto the present moment.

In 1872, the *New York Herald* sent James J. O'Kelly to Cuba to cover the insurgency against Spanish colonial domination later known as the 'Ten Years' War' (1868-1878). He was commissioned to find Carlos Manuel de Céspedes, President of the insurgent Cuban republic, which had proclaimed its independence from Spain in 1868. After a series of dangerous adventures while travelling beyond Spanish lines O'Kelly finally succeeded in locating Céspedes and in sending reports back to the *Herald*. However, he was captured on his return to Spanish-controlled Cuba and narrowly avoided execution. His case became a global *cause célèbre* attracting widespread international attention and great public interest. In 1874, he published a travel book based on his adventures on the island titled *The Mambi-Land or Adventures of a Herald Correspondent in Cuba*. His sympathetic portrayal of Cuban insurgency,

11 Curiously enough, Desnoes refers here to the famous political discussion at the Christmas dinner scene in *Portrait* as one of the bitterest arguments "in the literature of the time" which happened at "his [Joyce's] parents' dinner table," thus confusing the writer with his character.

part a war reportage and part an imperial travelogue, translated into Spanish in 1930 as *La Tierra del Mambí,* with a prologue by Cuban author Fernando Ortiz, eventually led to enduring popularity among Cubans. As Jennifer Brittan explains in her thorough discussion of O'Kelly's *The Mambi-Land* and Ortiz's translation:

> Taken up by nationalist insurgents in Cuba, the term [*mambí*] was an early harbinger of the nationalist rethoric of raceless fraternity that would emerge in the 1880s in the first wave of historiography on the Ten Years' War. This makes *Mambi* a genealogical rather than a territorial designation, linking Cuba to a history of anti-colonial struggle in the larger hispanophone Caribbean. (Brittan 379)

At the same time, given that, as Brittan appropriately remarks, "O Kelly's Cuban assignment borrowed against the success of Henry Morton's Stanley, the New York *Herald* correspondent sent into the African interior to find the 'missing' British missionary David Livingstone" (Brittan 380), the Cuban (and Irish) Question is mapped onto still other more distant geographies which include "the transatlantic routes of a mobile anti-colonialism" (Brittan 389).

Since Desnoes invokes O'Kelly's *mambí* narrative of Cuba's fight for self-government through Ortiz's prologue, in the context of the revolutionary present of the 1960s, a number of relevant connections emerge. In the Prologue to the 1930 translation of *The Mambi-Land*, Ortiz emphasizes O'Kelly's long career as an Irish nationalist, an active Fenian committed to Irish independence, a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and later the Irish Parliamentary Party, and a close ally of Charles Stewart Parnell (Ortiz 11-13). In Ortiz's Prologue O'Kelly is ultimately tied to Cuba through the bonds of a sympathetic nationalism, which gains him the title of transatlantic patriot:

> The adventures of this spirited Irishman in the land of the Mambí represented far more than the stimulation of the professional journalist in him. Among Cuban separatists he could reflect on the parallels between Cuba and Ireland and on the wretched political state of both countries […] Today, when Ireland, his homeland, is also a free state, we Cubans, might well consider consecrating a statue to the memory of James J. O'Kelly, as both a ceremonial thanksgiving and a spiritual bonding with the Irish people.[12]

Read in this context, Desnoes's translation of *Portrait*, strategically re-incorporated within the Cuban literary system, continues the dialogue with previous discourses which also hinted at the existence of a "spiritual bonding with the Irish people" ultimately functioning as a form of commemoration of the Irish legacy in Cuba. In a recent article, significantly entitled "The Irish Presence in the History and Place Names of Cuba," Rafael Fernández Moya, chronicler at the 'Historian's Office of Havana,' presents a catalogue of Cuban place names memorializing a host of Irish immigrants who, over the centuries, he suggests, made significant contributions to the economic, cultural, and political evolution of the island, from Spanish colonial times to the early republican era. Fernández Moya explains that the Irish were particularly noticeable

12 O'Riordan (136-137), translation of Ortiz's Prologue (53-54). Although to date there is no complete translation of Ortiz's Prologue, the extract mentioned is part of a selection of fragments translated by O'Riordan and included in the "Appendices" section of his book.

during the construction of the island's first railroad and specifically notes their involvement in the first workers' strike recorded in Cuba:

> After some weeks putting up with mistreatment and hunger, the "Irish"[13] workers and Canary Islanders decided to demand their rights from the administration of the railway works and when these were not adequately met, they launched the first workers' strike recorded in the history of the island. The repression was bloody; the Spanish governors ordered the troops to act against the disgruntled workers, resulting in injury and death. (Fernández Moya193)

As has been noted, archival records of Irish migration to Cuba indicate that there was a group of the so-called *irlandeses* contracted in New York in 1835 for the Cuban Railway Commission to lay the tracks of the first stretch of railroad on the island. These Irish bonded labourers, forced into a brutal work regime under Spanish colonial rule, developed forms of struggle against the use of coercive labour practices which far from being merely violent individual upsurges must well be interpreted as forms of resistance "by Irish migrants in the intersecting British and Iberian systems of colonial labor" (Brehony 70-71). Likewise, the transnational implications of anti-colonial Irish nationalism, which the Cuban translation of *Portrait* appeals to, prefigured and inspired other Third World liberation movements since, as has been noted, "[t]he Irish drive for independence was watched and emulated by nationalist movements in India, Egypt and elsewhere, with tokens of solidarity being exchanged and advice sought of the Irish by other colonized countries" (Tymoczko, "Translation and Political Engagement" 28).

This climate of complicity in post-revolutionary Cuba fosters the publication of the book *La Resistencia Irlandesa* (*The Irish Resistance*) by writer Roberto Yepe, which came out in Havana in 1969. The work, which attempts to revise 'The Irish Question' from its origins to the present, i.e. the troubles of 1968, is announced in the preliminary pages as a study of the tragedy of a country in which "generations of revolutionaries have shed their blood for freedom." As expected, the bibliographical list of works cited consists entirely of history books and essays with the remarkable exception of Desnoes's translation of Joyce's *Portrait*, doubtless a symptomatic gesture which speaks for itself. In his search for prototypes which can help legitimate the cultural and political projects of the new Cuba, Desnoes succeeds in shaping Joyce's narrative as representative of the above-mentioned Irish legacy of resistance, to the extent that his particular version of *Portrait* trespasses generic boundaries and is significantly listed with relevant titles on Irish history.

It is precisely in the context of this legacy of solidarities and complicities between Cuba and Ireland – which the new readers are encouraged to remember – where Joyce's novel is resituated. As has been discussed, the 1964 translation is introduced by a politically motivated Prologue, which relies on the use of ideologically

13 Fernández Moya explains that among the workers under contract were English, Irish, Scottish, North Americans, Dutch, and German labourers yet, since the majority of immigrants came from Ireland, they were all identified as "*irlandeses*."

charged vocabulary, while paying tribute to common struggles against colonial oppression, thereby linking Castro's Cuba,[14] James J. O'Kelly's *Mambi-Land*, and James Joyce's Ireland within a larger map of Atlantic sister nations united by common experiences of political resistance. Since the translation repeatedly invokes the similarities between the social and political conditions of pre-revolutionary Cuba and the Ireland of Joyce's *Portrait*, which the men and women of 1916 were attempting to transform, the (failed) dream of the welfare state promised by the Proclamation, one which would "cherish all the children of the nation equally," is ironically re-inscribed in the early years of enthusiasm which welcomed the (imagined) Cuba of the Castro revolution.

In the introduction to this essay I reflected on how recent publications in the field of Atlantic Studies have re-conceptualized the original framework of the discipline by beginning to move beyond the specificity of national literatures and cultures and by dismantling former hierarchies, thus postulating a rich variety of forms of (trans)atlantic solidarity. As I have argued, in the years following the Cuban Revolution, when the country was immersed in a radical process of self-definition and Cubans were asked to participate in the reformulation of their identity, the dialogue between Irish and Cuban cultural and political discourses was strongly determined by the forces of translation. Likewise, as discussed in relation to the 1964 Cuban version of *Portrait*, a rich network of meaningful convergences emerges when the linguistic and cultural exchanges between the two Atlantic nations are analyzed against the background of Translation Studies. Specifically, the translation of Joyce's *Portrait* in Cuba remains paradigmatic of translation as an essential form of negotiation between cultures which can never be understood in isolation, but always in relation to a social, political, or intellectual framework.

Transatlantic Studies, which are transdisciplinary by nature, cannot ignore the way in which translation and translational practices play a crucial role in debates about mobility in the transatlantic world. Whether in the rich intersections and overlaps of transnational affiliations and Atlantic cultural histories or in recent attention to issues of reciprocities between marginal Atlantic territories,[15] much more remains to be said on the role of translation in processes of identity formation across the Atlantic.

14 Fidel Castro, who has been known to display a great admiration for Ireland's struggle for independence, sanctioned the publication of a new edition of *The Mambi-Land* in 1968, on the centenary of the War of Independence; see O'Riordan 11.

15 For a study of the intersections between the margins of the "Atlantic Archipelago," see Norquay & Smyth. For a specific case study of complicities between peripheral Atlantic identities within the framework of Translation Studies, see Palacios and O'Donnell & Palacios.

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