

**CLASS STRUGGLE IN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S  
"UNCLE TOM'S CABIN":  
A MARXIST APPROACH**



**RESEARCH PAPER**

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by

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of the Study

People in their lives always get in touch with other people or their society. In reality there are a lot of problem that appears in their daily lives. Life will become more complicated as more problem appear. Social, political and economic problems cannot be avoided. Some people can drive and solve the problems. But some person give different response; they may see the problem as a border and find no way to solve the problem. It can cause a decrease in the morality of the people in society.

People live to make their lives better than they did before. But, life is a matter of choice. Sometimes life is not like what they want and they accept that fate. People's fate is conducted by themselves: they can change their fate and make life become better thing as they wish, the way to change their fate and to hope their wishes is called struggle for life.

Max and Engels write:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Free man and slave, patrician and plebeian. Lord and serf, guild-master and journey man, in a word oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant apposition to one another. Carried on an interrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstruction of society at large, or in her common ruin of the contending classes. ([www.marxist.com](http://www.marxist.com)). This statement is powerful that class and class conflict or class struggle or class struggle begins as the basic concept in understanding human societies. According to more (in Kerbo, 2003: 89). The key in understanding human societies was “the material conditions determining their production”, that is mode of production.

In a real life, a struggle can be seen in a society, the struggle varies, such as struggle for justice, struggle to get a job, struggle for freedom, struggle to get higher position in their profession, struggle to love and struggle to get achievement. Many ways are used to make necessities come true. They can do everything to struggle something they need. There are some people that use in appropriate ways, someone tries to reach his own goal without paying attention to other people. He or she tends to be selfish, thinking of himself. Meanwhile, someone who uses appropriate ways, he tends to use his or her honesty to reach something. For example, someone struggles to get the higher position in his or her profession. In here they can improve his or her ability by studying and working hard to get the higher position. This reality is portrait of life in society.

All of struggles related to the material back ground are the struggle to get the rank of class in society. This situation is caused by many factor, the condition of material background has emerged two different groups in the society, the rich and the poor. Marx (in Suseno, 1999: 113) said that society consist of high class and lower class. The differences in material achievement make the life style between the rich and the poor. Different the rich who was the wealth will get higher education and prestige than the poor. Everything is easy for the rich by using their wealth in feudal societies based on land and agricultural production; the two great classes are the lord and the serf, or the landed aristocracy and the peasant. Aristocracy own the land (the means of production), while the serf and peasant own little but their labor power.

The gap between social classes in society is caused by many factors. The main factor which causes this condition is that there are two groups in society. Up-level class, and low-level class. (<http://www.llbblueu.edu.cn/per/981/en/e-1-2.thm>), the lower class is the people who are ill educated and low-level workers. They have no power and authority, so those force them to obey master, here, and are the upper class. The upper class is the people who have high finance, Master authority, and have many means of production to fulfill their needs. To fund the means of production, the upper class need power of human resources to run them. Thus, they pay low-level class. In Mark View. "The upper class called the bourgeois and the lower class was called the proletariat" (Bresster, 1999: 212); <http://www.llbblueu.edu.cn/per/981/en/e-1-2.htm>).

Those gaps make the proletariat realize that they should struggle their faith in order to get equal prosperity, they must struggle for it. Angleton frequently shows "How the development of Marxist Theory always reflects the state of the working class struggle "(Selden, 1985: 45). Class struggle is the struggle by the lower workers to revolt against the upper class to go to the class less society; this condition is possible for them to make one step progress to reach the equal prosperity in society.

These phenomena caused many novelist create literary works. Literature has been an inseparable part within the history of man. As reflections of human lives, literary works have been continually giving

considerable contribution in shaping the humans civilization. Many intellectuals and writers have concealed their concern on the tragedies and the delights of human lives within literary works. On their duty to reveal the truth to the world, they face the risk and dangers and also have to sacrifice the previous things the have such as: beliefs and even lies.

The fragment of man's experience to escape from an oppression or humanity is one of major themes contained in many literary works. In common with other human activities, literary creation may raise many question about motives, skills and other conditioning on leading to socially valuable creation. The creation of literary work and social problem are possibly represented on the basis of author's background and experience or an example of social problems above can be reflected in a novel. While giving a human face to slavery and remarkably addressing the oppression of African Americans "who so low, who so poor, who so despised as the American slave?" (The life of Harriet Beecher Stowe pub. 1889, Ch. 16). She proved to be lasting and influential literary work for political, spiritual and humanitarian causes.

Harriet Elisabeth Beecher Stowe was born 14 June 1811 in the New England town of Litchfield. Connection she was the seventh of Lyman and Roxana Foote Beecher's nine children. At the age of twelve. Harriet began to attend the Harford female Seminary, an academy founded and run by her older sister Catherine. In 1834, at the age of 23, Harriet's firs story was published in western monthly magazine. In 1851 *Uncle Tom's cabin* first appeared as a

serial in an antislavery paper, the national era. Due to its popularity. It was published next year as two volume book in 1853. A key to “*Uncle tom’s Cabin*” was published to corroborate the novel fact’s when the American civil war broke out in 1861 Stowe wrote “*it was god’s will that this nation-the north as well as the south-should deeply and terribly suffer for the sin of consenting to and encouraging the great oppressions of the south*”. (The life of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Ch. 16). Harriet entered a prolific period of writing. *Pearl of one Island House* and home papers. *Little foxes, Nina garden, Religious poems, Queer little people, The chimney corner, Men of our times, old town folks, Little pussy willow, pink and white tyranny, Old town fireside stories and my wife and I* (the life of Harriet).

*Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, described by Stowe herself as a “series of sketches” depicting the human cruelty slavery. It is open with a description of Arthur Shelby’s Kentucky plantation during the antebellum period. Although Shelby is not characterized as a cruel master, he has nevertheless incurred serious debts, prompting him sell some slaves to avoid financial ruin. Mr. Haley, the slave trader, purchases Uncle Tom, Shelby’s loyal servant since childhood, and five year old Harry, a beautiful and talented child who sings dances and mimes. Shelby regrets taking the child away from his mother, Eliza, as much as he regrets betraying Uncle Tom’s faithfulness. Eliza overhears Mrs. Shelby a very religious woman. Protesting her husband’s decisions and decides to flee the plantation with her son George, her husband from a neighboring plantation has already left for Canada Via the

“Underground rail road”, a secret network of people who user run away slaves to freedom in the north. Eliza plant to do the same, an tries to convince uncle tom to save himself and come with her. Uncle Tom, however, must remain loyal to his master, despite his betrayal and the risk of death at the cruel hands of a new master, and does not accompany Eliza on her journey to the Ohio River.

Haley searches for Eliza in Vain, for spurred on by fear of losing her child and reaches the river quickly. Amazingly, Eliza crosses the river by jumping from one ice flow to the next. Upon reaching the shore in Ohio, Mr. Symmes, a man who has observed her brave feat, listen to her story. Fortunately, Symmes hates slaves trader and thus takes Eliza and Harry to the house of senator Bird, where they receive food and lodging. Ironically, Bird Just Voted for a bill prohibiting aid to fugitive slaves, but she senator is very moves by Eliza’s story. He thus changes his convictions and takes the runaway to a makes settlement, where they stay with the halliday family. Coincidentally, Eliza’s husband George has sought refuge in this very community and the young family is reunited. The Quaker helping the family board a ship for Canada before Haley’s hired slave hunters, Loker and Mark, can capture them.

Based on the facts above, the researcher is extremely inspired to expose about slave to find his freedom, by giving the little of this research paper “Class struggle in Harriet Stowe “*Uncle Tom’s Cabin: Marxist Approach*.

## **B. Literary Review**

The previous researcher of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was Wita Setiyanti in UMS (Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta) in her research paper entitled “*Needs for Belongingness in Harriet Beecher Stowe Uncle Tom's Cabin*”: A *Humanistic Psychological Approach*. The present writer analyzes the novel using *Marxist approach*. The title is “*Class struggle in Harriet Beecher Stowe Uncle Tom's Cabin: Marxist Approach*”.

## **C. Problem Statement**

Based on the research background above, the problem of the study is “how class struggle is reflected in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*”.

## **D. Limitation of the Study**

The researcher limits the study of class struggle on Marxist Approach. It is emphasized on Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*” by using Marxist Approach.

## **E. Objective of the Study**

The objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze the novel in term of it's structural elements
2. To analyze the novel based on Marxist approach



## **F. Benefit of the Study**

By presenting this research paper, the writer hopes that it will give some benefits as follows:

### **1. Theoretical Benefit**

- a. To give some information this can be used by the other researcher who one interested in analyzing this literary work.
- b. To give a contribution to other literary research in the study of Harriet Beecher Stowe's literary work.

### **2. Practical Benefit**

- a. For getting deeper understanding about Marxist issues in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Cabin Uncle Tom's*".
- b. For getting Bachelor degree of education in English department.

## **G. Research Method**

### **1. Type of the Study**

This research uses descriptive qualitative method.

### **2. Object of the Study**

The object of the study is Harriet Beecher Stowe "*Uncle Tom's Cabin*"

### **3. Type of the Data and the Data Source**

In this study there are two sources data namely primary and secondary data sources.

- a. Primary data

The primary data source of the study is the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

b. Secondary data

Secondary data I gained from author biography, essay, comment, historical information, the other book and thesis that are related to the research.

**4. Technique of the Data collection**

The collecting data technique is done through library research the data collected from books and articles related to the topic. In order to make the data more compete the writer is doing some steps. The necessary steps are as follows:

- a. Reading the novel and other books that are connected to the research repeatedly
- b. Finding out the important data
- c. Arranging data info several parts based on it's classification and
- d. Developing data that are provided

**5. Technique of the Data Analysis**

The data are analyzed by using descriptive analysis. This is an interpretation of the text and content analysis to get characteristic of the data of Marxism analysis of Karl Mark theory of the novel "*Uncle Tom Cabin*".

**H. Paper Organization**

The paper consists of six chapters. Chapter I is introduction the background of the study, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective

of the study. Benefit of the study, research methodology and paper organization. Chapter II presents the underlying theory consist of Marxist theory, especially the nature of Marxist and the principle of Marxist. Chapter III deals with the social background with all of aspect of the social reality of. Chapter IV is the structural analysis of the novel by describing character and characterization, setting a point of view, a plot and theme of the novel and a brief discussion. Chapter V is Marxist Analysis deals with the problems in the novel. Chapter VI contains conclusions and suggestion.