

**THE PORTRAYAL OF SLAVERY IN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S
*UNCLE TOM'S CABIN***



A Thesis

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University
in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements to Obtain an Undergraduate Degree in
English Literature Study Program*

BY:

FADEL FADHLURAHMAN HAKAM

F21116533

ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM

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ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM

FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES

HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY

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With reference to the letter of the dean of Faculty of Cultural Sciences Hasanuddin University No. 434/UN4.9.1/KEP/2021 regarding supervisor, we hereby confirm to approve the undergraduate thesis draft by Fadel Fadhlurahman Hakam (F21116533) to be examined at the English Department of Faculty of Cultural Sciences.

Makassar, January 19th, 2022

Approved by the Execution of Thesis Examination by
The Thesis Organizing Committees

First Supervisor

Second Supervisor


Prof. Dr. Fathu Rahman, M.Hum.
NIP. 196012311987031025


Dra. Herawaty, M.Hum., M.A., Ph.D.
NIP. 196301031988032003

On Behalf of Dean
Head of English Literature Study Program


Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum, Ph.D.
NIP. 196311031988112001

THESIS

**THE PORTRAYAL OF SLAVERY IN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S
UNCLE TOM'S CABIN**

BY

FADEL FADHLURAHMAN HAKAM

STUDENT NUMBER : F21116533

It has been examined before the Board of Thesis Examination

On January 28th, 2022

and is declared to have fulfilled the requirements.

Approved by
Board of Supervisors

Chairperson

Prof. Dr. Fathu Rahman, M.Hum.
NIP. 196012311987031025

Secretary

Dra. Herawaty, M.Hum., M.A., Ph.D.
NIP. 196301031988032003

Dean Faculty of Cultural Sciences
Hasanuddin University



Prof. Dr. Akim Duli, MA.
NIP. 196407161991031010

Head of English Literature Study Program
Faculty of Cultural Sciences

Dra. Nasmilah, M.Hum., Ph.D.
NIP. 196311031988112001

ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM

FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES

HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY

Today, January 28th, 2022, the Board of Thesis Examination has kindly approved a thesis by **FADEL FADHLURAHMAN HAKAM** (Student Number: **F21116533**) entitled:

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*UNCLE TOM'S CABIN***

Submitted in fulfillment one of the requirements of undergraduate thesis examination to obtain Sarjana Sastra (S.S.) Degree at the English Department, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Hasanuddin University.

Makassar, January 28th, 2022

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The thesis of **FADEL FADHLURAHMAN HAKAM** (Student Number: **F21116533**) entitled, **"THE PORTRAYAL OF SLAVERY IN HARRIET BEECHER STOWE'S *UNCLE TOM'S CABIN*"** has been revised as advised during the examination on January 28th, 2022 and is approved by the Board of Undergraduate Thesis Examiners:

1. Abbas, S.S., M.Hum.

First Examiner (.....)

2. Dr. Muhammad Syafri Badaruddin, M.Hum.

Second Examiner (.....)

STATEMENT OF WORK'S ORIGINALITY

The undersigned,

Name : Fadel Fadhlurahman Hakam
ID : F21116533
Title of the Thesis : The Portrayal of Slavery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's
Uncle Tom's Cabin
Department/Faculty : English Literature Study Program/Cultural Sciences

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Makassar, November 17th 2021



Fadel Fadhlurahman Hakam

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The Writer,

Fadel Fadhlurahman Hakam

ABSTRACT

Fadel Fadhlurahman Hakam. 2021. *The Portrayal of Slavery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin*. (Supervised by **Fathu Rahman** and **Herawaty**).

This study aims to portray the act of slavery and its effects towards the characters in a literary work entitled *Uncle Tom's Cabin* written by an American writer, Harriet Beecher Stowe. The objectives of this study are: (1) to know how the act of slavery was portrayed and how the characters encounter them in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and (2) to analyze the effects of slavery towards the characters found in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

The method of research that is used in this study is descriptive qualitative method. The data source of this study is Wordsworth version of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. This novel was originally published in 1852 with 415 pages in total. Moreover, the technique of data analysis that is used in this study is based on the theory proposed by Alan Swingewood entitled Sociology of Literature which examines the relationship between literary works and its social contexts.

The results of this study indicate that in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, there were series of events in the novel which portrays the cruelty and inhuman act of slavery towards the black characters. The slaves were treated as properties, forced to work hard labor without getting pay, became child breeder or victims of sexual abuse, victims of endless violence, family separation, and violation of human rights. In consequence of this, the characters were affected by the act of slavery in different ways. Some of them made a daring escape, disguised as a white person, committed suicide, had an uncommon behavior, made an ugly appearance in order not to be sold, and to the extent of killing their own child.

Keywords: *Slavery, Slaves, Effect, Sociology of Literature, Novel Uncle Tom's Cabin*

ABSTRAK

Fadel Fadhlurahman Hakam. 2021. *The Portrayal of Slavery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin*. (Dibimbing oleh **Fathu Rahman** dan **Herawaty**).

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan berbagai bentuk perbudakan beserta pengaruhnya terhadap karakter yang dijumpai dalam sebuah karya sastra dengan judul *Uncle Tom's Cabin* yang ditulis oleh penulis berkebangsaan Amerika, Harriet Beecher Stowe. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah sebagai berikut: (1) untuk mengetahui bagaimana tindakan perbudakan digambarkan dan bagaimana karakter di dalam novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* mengalami hal tersebut, dan (2) untuk menganalisis dampak dari perbudakan terhadap karakter yang terdapat dalam novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Metode penelitian yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif. Sumber data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah versi Wordsworth dari novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* yang ditulis oleh Harriet Beecher Stowe. Novel ini dicetak pada tahun 1852 dan terdiri dari 415 halaman secara keseluruhan. Selain itu, teknik analisis data yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah berdasarkan teori yang dipelopori oleh Alan Swingewood, yaitu Teori Sosiologi Sastra yang secara singkat membahas tentang hubungan antara karya sastra dan konteks sosialnya.

Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dalam novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, terdapat beberapa rangkaian kejadian didalam novel yang menggambarkan kekejaman dan tidak berperikemanusiaan tindakan perbudakan terhadap karakter-karakter berkulit hitam didalam novel. Sebagai budak, mereka diperlakukan seperti properti/barang, dipaksa untuk bekerja pekerjaan kasar tanpa mendapatkan upah, menjadi "sumber" untuk melahirkan banyak anak untuk dijadikan budak atau korban pelecehan seksual, korban kekerasan, korban pemisahan keluarga, dan korban pelanggaran hak asasi manusia. Tindakan-tindakan keji tersebut mempengaruhi karakter-karakter berkulit hitam dalam novel. Beberapa dari mereka mencoba untuk kabur, menyamarkan diri menjadi orang berkulit putih, bunuh diri, berperilaku tidak normal, mencoba untuk terlihat tidak menarik, dan bahkan menjual anak kandungnya sendiri.

Kata Kunci: *Perbudakan, Budak, Pengaruh, Sosiologi Sastra, Novel Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the research, identification of the problem, scope of the problem, statement of problem, objectives of the research, significances of the research, and sequence of writing.

1.1 Background of the Research

Slavery has been one of the major issues in the society since a long time ago. Generally, the term ‘Slavery’ can be defined as a condition in which one human being was owned by another. This statement is supported by Slavery Convention of 1926 which stated that ‘Slavery’ means the status or condition of a person over whose any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised, and ‘slave’ means a person in such condition or status. In addition, Allain (2007:3) also mentioned that Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998 define ‘Enslavement’ as the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over a person and includes the exercise of such power in the course of trafficking in persons, in particular women and children. Based on the statements mentioned above, slavery by all means is an act of owning people as a property by law which resulted in revoking their rights as a human being.

In America, there has been a long history of slavery starting from the arrival of the slaves from the African continent until the struggle to gain independence. According to Rose (1999) in *A Documentary History of Slavery in North America*, slaves were first brought from African Continent to Virginia, America in the Spanish West Indies by a Dutch privateer. The African captives were brutally

uprooted from their homes and forced to endure an inhuman voyage at sea. Half of the captives had died during the horrific journey to America. In addition, Hughes (2019) also stated on *The New York Times*, that the Dutch men arrived in the Colony on August 1916 and “*brought not anything but 20 and odd Negroes*”. The African people who were brought to the Colony in America were seen not as people but as commodities to be bought, sold, and exploited. The harsh treatment experienced by the slaves is such an intriguing topic to be discussed and analyzed especially in literature, considering how the black people still undergo discrimination until this day.

Literature, in its broadest sense, is any form of imaginative written work. It is supported by the statement of Pradopo (1994:26) which stated that a literary work is the impression of the world where the main characteristic that is put into the work is everything that wants to be pictured by the author, or in other word the reality. In addition to this, Wellek and Warren (1956:3) added that literature can be defined as a work done by an author which represents events happen in a society. The purpose of this is to deliver the author’s thoughts and ideas about certain things which sometimes can influence the reader’s mind. Based on the definitions that have been stated so far, the writer concludes that literature is not just any written form, it is the author’s product of imagination and deep thinking of the reality they see around them.

According to Wellek and Warren (1989: 120), literary works consist of three major forms: prose, poetry, and drama which can be differentiated by its own characteristics. Prose is a form of literature that possesses everyday language

written in a narrative structure, which makes it different from poetry and drama. It is supported by the statement of Cuddon (1992: 705) that the word “prose” derives from the Latin *prosa* meaning straightforward discourse. It is essentially consists of simple form of language that doesn’t require any rhythm, measure or rhyme as in poetry; or merely dialogues as in drama. One of most famous and well-consumed type of prose is novel. It can be simply defined as a narrative work which consists of fictional events characters, settings, plot, and theme. According to Abrams (1999:190), the term "novel" is now applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose. As an extended narrative, the novel is distinguished from the short story and from the work of middle length called the novelette; its magnitude permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), and more sustained exploration of character and motives than do the shorter, more concentrated modes.

One of the classic novels ever written which raised the theme of slavery is *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* (1852), written by an early Abolitionist women Harriet Beecher Stowe. Based on Augustyn in *Britannica*, Harriet Beecher Stowe is an American writer and social activist who was born on June 14, 1811 in Litchfield, Connecticut, U.S. She is well-known as the writer of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*, which contributed against slavery that it is cited among the causes of the American Civil War. Living in Cincinnati which separated only by the Ohio River from a slave-holding community for 18 years, she encountered fugitive slaves and learned

about their life in the South from her friends and from her own visits. This contact inspires Stowe to write.

The novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), is the first and most famous novel Stowe's ever written. According to harrietbeecherstowecenter.org, the novel was very influential in America and was the most famous best-seller of the time. As the first Abolitionist writer, she wanted to portray the cause of abolitionist and spread anti-slavery thinking to the society. Even though it is a fiction novel, it had the power to open the reader's eyes to the realities of slavery and the humanity of the enslaved people. Not only that, the novel was said to influence the Civil War. When Stowe visited President Lincoln at the White House in 1862, he is reported to have said, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war." This statement, regardless of its truth, testifies to *Uncle Tom's Cabin's* impact.

In this study, the writer has decided to analyze Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The novel tells about the story of Uncle Tom, a religious slave who belongs to Arthur Shelby, a Kentucky farmer. Due to Shelby's debt, He was forced to sell two of his slaves: Tom and Eliza's son, Harry, his fellow slave. Knowing her son is included as the deal with the coarse slave trader, Mr. Haley, She then flees to the north, hoping to find freedom with her husband George in Canada. Tom on the other hand was being transported by boat to slave market in New Orleans; Tom saved the life of Eva, A little girl. Felt grateful for saving his child, Eva's Father, Mr. Saint Clare then purchase Tom. Eva and Tom soon became great friends. Always frail, Eva's health begins to weaken rapidly, and her

last wish to her father was to free all his slaves. He makes plans to do so, but unfortunately he was killed before he was able to grant her daughter's wish. Then Mr. Saint Clare's cruel wife sold Tom to the brutal Simon Legree. Tom is taken to Louisiana with a group of new slaves including Emmeline. She was bought as sex slave to replace the previous Legree's sex slave, Cassy. When they meet, Cassy tells her story to Tom that she was separated with her daughter by slavery, when she was pregnant with Legree, she decided to kill the baby because she could not stand to have another child being taken away from her. Upon hearing her story, Tom encourages Cassy to find her freedom, which she does, She also took Emmeline with her. When Tom refuses to tell Legree where Cassy and Emmeline have gone, Legree order his overseer to beat Tom. When Tom is near death, he forgives Legree and his overseers. George Shelby, the son of his first master, Arthur Shelby, arrives with money in hand to buy Tom's freedom, but he is too late. He can only watch as tom dies a martyr's death.

The reason why the writer chose *Uncle Tom's Cabin* as the object of the study is that the writer came to the realization that it is not only action that could start a revolution, it can also be in an artistic way to demand a change, which is by writing a fictional novel based on the reality that the author had seen. The book had a major influence on the way the American public viewed slavery, considering America had a long history and debate on that matter. Therefore, the writer decided to bring up and analyze this issue which brings the title of this study as *The Portrayal of Slavery in Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The writer used the theory of Sociology of Literature proposed by Alan

Swingewood, which examines the relationship between literary works and its social contexts.

1.2. Identification of the Problem

After reading the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, the writer identifies some of the problems found in the novel:

1.2.1 The representation of slavery prior to American Civil War.

1.2.2 The resistance of the slaves.

1.2.3 The portrayal of women in the early feminism.

1.2.4 Inner spiritual conflict of the characters.

1.3. Scope of the Problem

Based on the problems identified from the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe, this research only focuses on the representation of slavery prior to American Civil War and how the characters deal with the slavery act.

1.4. Statement of Problem

Based on the statement above, the researcher formulates the statement of problem mentioned as follows:

1. How is the act of slavery portrayed and how do the characters encounter them in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?
2. What are the effects of slavery towards the characters found in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?

1.5. Objectives of the Research

Related to the statement of problem mentioned above, the researcher determines the objectives of the research mentioned as follows:

1. To know how the act of slavery was portrayed and how the characters encounter them in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.
2. To analyze the effects of slavery towards the characters found in the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

1.6. Significances of the Research

- a. Theoretically, this research can be useful to further literary study on Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* novel by applying sociology of literature theory.
- b. Practically, this research can provide a deep comprehension as well as expand knowledge generally for English Language Study Program students and specifically for any researcher analyzing *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and also other University Students who are also studying Literature.

1.7. Sequence of Writing

This thesis is composed of 5 (five) chapters:

- Chapter I is the Introduction of the Study which consists of the background of the research, the identification of the problem, the scope of the problem, the objectives, as well as the significances of the research.
- Chapter II is the Literature Review which consists of previous related studies, and theoretical framework.

- Chapter III is the Research Methodology, which provides data sources, technique of the data collection, and technique of the data analysis.
- Chapter IV consists of the findings of the research.
- Chapter V is the conclusion and suggestion to others who would like to do the same research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter consists of previous related studies and theoretical background.

2.1. Previous Related Studies

Based on the topic of discussion the writer has explained in the previous chapter, the writer has found related studies conducted, which were published in graduating papers and/or articles in journals. These studies are important in order to support the writer's analysis.

As seen on Olivia Martha Aldisa's (2016) study entitled *Analysis of Portrayal of the Protagonist in Harriet Beecher Stowe's **Uncle Tom's Cabin** or, **Life Among the Lowly** and William Styron's **The Confessions of Nat Turner***, this study attempts to identify the condition of slavery by analyzing the characterization of the main characters in two novels.

In Thohiriyah's (2019) work entitled *Solidifying the White Domination through Racism and Slavery in Toni Morrison's **Beloved***, the researcher is focusing on how the Whites perform racism and slavery to solidify their domination over the Blacks. The researcher uses the concept of racism and slavery to analyze the novel.

The most recent study is Alya Zulfikar and Ahmad Bukhori Muslim's (2019) study entitled *The Representation of Whiteness in Ralph Ellison's **Invisible Man***, this study aims to reveal how whiteness is constructed as a racist act in the society

which becomes the central issue of the novel. The researcher uses theory of representation and whiteness to analyze the novel.

Based on the previous related studies mentioned above, the writer concludes that the similarities between this study and all studies above are that it raises the issue of slavery and racism towards the black people. Not only that, there are also differences can be found which not yet been discussed by the following researchers. Aldisa (2016) analyzed one of the same novel: *Uncle Tom's Cabin* written by Harriet Beecher Stowe. However, the researcher combined two literary works and analyzes the characterization of the characters. Thohiriyah's (2019) research also uses the concept of racism and slavery but choosing a different novel, *Beloved* by Toni Morrison. Last but not least, Zulfikar and Muslim's (2019) study uses a different approach to analyze Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, which is by using the theory of representation and whiteness. In this thesis, the writer uses sociology of literature to analyze Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* that has not been discussed in the studies mentioned above.

2.2. Theoretical Background

Theoretical reference that is used in this study in order to support the writer's analysis is Sociology of Literature.

2.2.1. Sociology of Literature

In analyzing *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the writer attempts to apply Sociology of Literature proposed by Alan Swingewood. According to Swingewood (1972:11), he stated that, "*sociology is essentially the scientific, objective study of man in society, the study of social institutions, and a social processes; it seeks to answer*

the question of how society is possible, how it works, why it persist". The quotation above implies that sociology primarily focuses on society, which is the social behavior of human being, social relationships and interactions, and the processes that preserve and change them. In the world of literature, it also cannot be separated from human interactions whether with themselves or with the society or community around them. It is supported by the statement of Swingewood (1972:12) that *"as with sociology, literature too is pre-eminently concerned with man's social world, his adaption to it, and his desire to change it"*. Therefore, although both appeared to be different disciplines, they essentially complement each other in the ways to understand the society. In conclusion, literature consists of various events that can be explained systematically through the eye of sociology, which is the term for Sociology of Literature.

Swingewood categorizes three approaches to a sociology of literature: first, the documentary aspect of literature, which is a mirror image approach. This means that literature is a direct reflection of the society, such as social structure, class conflict, as well as family relationships of certain time. The second approach is how literature is seen from the author's process of production, especially its social situation. This approach moves away from the literary work as the center of discussion to patronage and cost of production. Last but not least, Swingewood (1972:13-21) stated that, *"a third perspective one demanding a high level of skills, attempts to trace the ways in which a work of literature is actually received by a particular society at a specific historical moment"*. This statement indicates the importance to have certain capability to be able to discover how a literary work is

received by the society in a certain historical times. In conclusion, this third approach concerns with the paradigm of the people to a literary work which is influenced by a historical events.

In *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the main topic that dominated the whole literary work is the horrors and immorality of slavery. Based on Swingewood's approach to sociology of literature as explained above, the writer concludes that the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is essentially a social document which reflects the society at that particular time, especially the reality of slavery. The novel was published in 1852 where the act of slavery has been thriving in the Colonies.

A. Slavery

Slavery refers to a condition in which individuals are owned by others, who control every aspect of their lives. It had previously existed legally throughout history, in many times and most places. To be a slave is to be owned by another person and in order to "obtain" a slave, they need to be bought in the slave trade. According to Lovejoy (1983:1),

"Slavery was one form of exploitation. Its special characteristics included the area that slaves were property; that they were outsiders who were alien by origin or who had been denied their heritage through judicial or other sanctions; that coercion could be used at will; that their labor power was at the complete disposal of a master; that they did not have the right to their own sexuality and, by extension, to their own reproductive capacities; and that the slave status was inherited unless provision was made to ameliorate that status".

In conclusion, a slave was classed as property and who is forced to work hard labor. They were considered as nothing more than just a possession of their owner (master) thus, they were treated based on the attitudes of their masters. However,

most of them were treated by coercion and were stripped from their own identity as a human being.

Slavery in America has been one of the most controversial phenomenon in the history of mankind. It had a long history of system and practice in different places in America until the struggle to gain independence. Morgan (2007:2) stated that slavery and slave markets were a widespread phenomenon in most continents for centuries even before Christopher Columbus had discovered the New World (the American continent) in 1492. One of the distinctions between slavery in America and the initial slavery in the ancient and medieval worlds like the Greeks and the Romans as well as the western shores of the Atlantic is that the slaves that were bought in the slave market in America lived and worked on plantations. Morgan (2007:2) also added:

“Black slavery flourished in the Americas because it was difficult permanently to employ white workers in semi-tropical agricultural labor. High costs were involved in attracting free white workers to the Americas. Moreover, European venturers overseas did not conceive of fellow Europeans as being fit to enslave”.

Not only that, Halpern (2002:11) stated that planters rely on slaves who came from the African continent because they were cheaper and were less bond to each other to cause some trouble. From the statements mentioned above, it can be concluded that in America, enslaving fellow white people were regarded not appropriate and demands high cost meanwhile Africans were considered as racially and culturally different from Europeans and as people who lack legal rights. Therefore, they were prime candidates for enslavement.

Before the Civil War occurred in the U.S., there were British colonies along the eastern seaboard of North America and throughout the Caribbean. Morgan (2007:7-8) also explained that “*the chief North American colonies were Virginia, Maryland, and Massachusetts Bay... By 1776 Britain’s Atlantic empire comprised thirteen colonies in North America*”. This statement indicates that the first three British colonies in America marked the history of establishment of control, settlement, colonization by England, Scotland, and Great Britain. During the 17th and 18th centuries, there were 13 British colonies in total established in North America. The colonies in America were a huge resource of raw materials and were considered as markets for manufactured goods therefore it was an opportunity to gain huge profits for the Europeans. It is supported by Current (1976:15) which stated that at that time, there were many lands in America that have not yet been “touched” therefore it was a huge opportunity for the Europeans to colonize and cultivate them. Morgan (2007:6) also added that “*the deployment of slave labor in the New World was thus intricately connected to rival ambitions among western maritime powers to exploit the agricultural and mineral resources of the New World.*” Thus, with the development of staple agricultural crops like sugar in the colonies, investors looked for high profits. To do so, they need a large labor forces to work in those plantations, therefore the Europeans turned to the African slaves that were brought from the African continent to be sold in the slave trade. In relation to this Woodward (1968:133) mentioned that “*... there could hardly have been successful colonization of the New World without the Negro*

slaves.” This emphasizes the importance and dependence of the Colonies towards the African slaves.

It has been a widespread historical fact that the first shipment of the African slaves arrived at the British Colony in America was in Jamestown, Virginia in 1619. It is supported by the statement of Austin (2018:7) in *1619: Virginia’s First Africans*,

“Virginia’s First Africans endured capture and a forced journey of 200 miles from Ndongo to the Portuguese port of Luanda, where they were loaded onto the slave ship San Juan Bautista. The San Juan Bautista sailed for Vera Cruz, Mexico, with 350 enslaved Africans aboard. They endured extreme conditions during a voyage of several months on a ship packed well beyond its capacity.

Before reaching Vera Cruz, the San Juan Bautista was attacked by the English privateer ships White Lion and Treasurer. The two English ships stole around 60 of the surviving Africans and sailed for Virginia. The White Lion arrived at Point Comfort in late August, 1619, and sold 29-30 Africans for food and supplies. The Treasurer arrived at Point Comfort a few days later and sold 2-3 Africans.”

Based on the statement above, it can be concluded that there were about 32 Africans were recorded arrived in Virginia in the late August 1619. They were initially taken from a Portuguese vessel bound from Angola to Vera Cruz and had endured a horrible journey at sea to the English colonies in America. Tarrant-Reid (2012:11) described that the African slaves spent five to twelve weeks crossing the Atlantic Ocean packed like sardines in a can, with their hands and feet chained.

In the plantations, the African slaves were considered as an exploited agricultural laborer. They were treated as a property since they were sold and bought like commodities. This is partly in consequence of the ingrained attitude of the European especially the British towards black Africans. Morgan (2007:22)

stated that the English attitudes towards Africans were because of the emergence of ethnocentrism and xenophobia towards ‘others’. Not only that, it is also because of racial prejudice towards black Africans. The skin color of these people had negative connotations for the British and many other Europeans at that time. Africans were regarded as heathens; therefore they seemed to be barbaric and were feared for their savagery. Furthermore, they had no constitutional rights, they cannot testify against a white person in the court, and they also cannot leave their “master” or owner without their permission. Based on Tarrant-Reid (2012:4),

“This system was not adopted when the British colonized North America in the seventeenth century and slavery became institutionalized as ‘chattel slavery’: Blacks were treated as property without the rights or privileges afforded a human being based solely on their skin color”.

Furthermore, Halpern (2002:11) also mentioned:

“By 1680, special laws – the slave codes – established lifetime slavery, limited the rights of slaves and free blacks discouraged masters from freeing slaves, and prescribed severe corporal punishments for rebels. They were followed by even more restrictive codes in the early eighteenth century.”

This statement indicates that the African slaves in the English colonies in North America were treated insignificant and were legally restricted to have freedom of their own and to make their own choices in life. The masters also were encouraged not to free their slaves and gave them severe punishment if they attempt any rebellion.

Slavery in the mid-1600s evolved into a race-based institution, which means the enslaved people were recognized by their skin color. According to Tarrant-Reid (2012:18), Massachusetts became the first colony to recognize slavery as a legal institution in 1641, following Connecticut in 1650 and Virginia in 1661. The

life of the African slaves in the colonies depended on where their plantation located. Halpern (2002:35) stated that,

“On the plantations, slaves had different experiences according to the places where they lived. In Virginia, they usually had little time for themselves, given the fact that tobacco growing was an exhausting, ongoing activity which filled most of the day. In the South Carolina low country, on the other hand, slaves worked according to the “task system”, performing certain given tasks on a daily basis after which they had time for themselves. Children and female slaves often performed domestic tasks; in general, the treatment of domestic slaves was less harsh than that of field slaves”.

This means that there were many ways the master was doing to their slaves and it differs according to the plantation. Some of them were doing nice and treat their slaves well, but many of them treat them bad and cruel. The harder field labor they had to work, the harsher the masters were. The slaveholders punished slaves through whipping, shackling, hanging, beating, burning, mutilation, branding, and imprisonment. Punishment was most often done in response to disobedience or perceived infractions, but sometimes it was carried out simply to reassert the dominance of the master. However, as the number of the African slaves grew greater especially in the South, there was a justifiable paranoia of the slaveholders and slaveowners: rebellion. Therefore, individual colonies passed series of laws known as slave codes to restrict their movements.

B. Slave Codes

Each colony in America has its own ways in restricting the behavior of their slaves or reasserting their dominance, which is by creating its own law or slave codes. According to Parker (2020:1),

“One of the legal strategies that Euro-American enslavers devised to control the time, energy, and mobility of enslaved people of African descent was

slave codes. Enslavers began to codify these restrictions into laws in the 17th century”.

Not only that, Morgan (2007:32) also mentioned that,

“Virginia was the first colony to pass laws restricting the rights of blacks, beginning in 1640. In South Carolina,, the Slave Act of 1691 declared ‘all Negroes, Mulattoes, and Indians’ sold into or intended for sale into bondage were slaves”.

This indicates that Virginia were the first colony in America to create laws that limited the rights of the African slaves. The laws include that the slaves couldn’t carry a weapon, an enslaved mother-born child were also considered as slave, a slave couldn’t disobey their master’s order, and most importantly they couldn’t leave the plantation without the master’s permission. In addition, occasionally the masters forbid their slaves to read, write, or educate them in general. It is supported by the statement by Morgan (2007:32) that,

“Slaveholders feared that educated slaves would escape or organize rebellions and revolt. Without slaves to do the work on the plantations and to help care for their families, many planters in the South believed the plantation-based economy would fail. Keeping the Africans ignorant was one way to exert control over a population that was quickly outpacing its white overseers”.

Although the treatment of slaves varied in each colony, the laws in slaveholding states left enslaved people without defense or recourse in any case.

Any violations of the laws that were created in each colony meant swift and brutal punishment towards the slaves. Halpern (2002:36) argued that,

“In general, any offence or challenge to public authority brought terrible punishments to common people, and torture and death were the norm. Slaves, whose grade on the social scale was even lower than that of common whites, were commonly mistreated, whipped, branded, tortured, and killed in the most inhuman way”.

This means that inhumane punishment was conducted to the slaves whenever they misbehave. It essentially reasserts the master's dominance to make them "know their place", which is the lower status in the society. Not only that, it is also a form of fear in case the slaves gather together and carry out a resistance against the master.

C. The Fugitive Slave Acts

The life of African slaves was very brutal which leads to a great number of cases of runaways from plantations. It is supported by the statement by Halpern (2002:37) that,

"The number of black runaways increased following the decrease in number of indentured servants and the consequent deterioration in the rights of African slaves. Between 1736 and 1776, in Virginia alone more than 1,500 runaway notices were published in newspapers".

Thus, with the increasing number of runaway slaves along with their notice which provided the name and sex, their distinctive physical features, as well as the reward for capturing them, the authorities passed certain laws for the fugitives.

The Fugitive Slave Acts were a pair of federal laws enacted by Congress in 1793 and 1850 that allowed for the capture and return of runaway enslaved people within the territory of the United States (even though they were in a free states).

Paul (2016) also mentioned in her article that,

"The Fugitive Slave Acts were congressional statutes passed in 1793 and 1850 that permitted for the seizure and return of runaway slaves who escaped from one state and fled into another. The Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, as a part of the Compromise of 1850, required that the U.S. government actively intervene to help slave owners regain control over their slaves. This act dictated that fugitive slaves were neither allowed to testify on their own behalf, nor were they allowed to have a trial by jury".

This law essentially indicates that heavy penalties were imposed upon federal marshals who refused to enforce the law or from whom a fugitive escaped; not only that, penalties were also imposed on individuals who tried to help the slaves to escape.

On the contrary, the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 was immediately met with criticism and inspired more abolitionist especially in the Northern states. Paul (2016) described that the cruelty of this law had huge impacts: it inspired a great number of abolitionist, it developed a more useful Underground Railroad, and it established a personal-liberty laws in the North. Essentially, Northerners were infuriated at the idea of turning their states into a stalking ground for bounty hunters, and many argued the law was similar to legalized kidnapping. It is supported by the statement by Olsen (2007:23) stated that,

“Obviously, the law invited abuse. Slave catchers went North with a general description of a fugitive and often found it easier to kidnap some likely looking fellow and bring him up before a sympathetic federal commissioner. In this way, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of free men and women were kidnapped and sent to slavery in the South”.

This implies that this law inflicted violence and injustice towards the slaves because they could not testify against the whites in court. The slaves that were fit to the description were sometimes kidnapped in order for the slave catchers to gain advantage. Therefore, some abolitionists organized classified resistance groups and built safe houses to help the enslaved people in their escape to the North. Furthermore, refusing to take part in the institution of slavery, most Northern states intentionally neglected to enforce the law. Several even passed so-called “Personal Liberty Laws” that gave accused runaways the right to a jury trial

and also protected free blacks, many of whom had been abducted by bounty hunters and sold into slavery.

D. The American Civil War

A prominent opposition towards Fugitive Slave Acts resulted in further hostility between the Northern and Southern states which then provoked the ongoing controversy over slavery. In the end, this disagreement would become one of the major issues that led to the Civil War. The American Civil War took place from 1861 to 1865. It is also mentioned by McPherson (2008) in *battlefields.org*, that *“the Civil War started because of uncompromising differences between the free and slave states over the power of the national government to prohibit slavery in the territories that had not yet become states”*. This quotation indicates that the war broke out between the two sections: the Northern states and the Southern states, and it emerged as a result of the differences between these two sections over slavery, states’ rights, and westward expansion.

Another difference between the two blocks is the source of production. While the South was utterly based on agriculture, the North was industrial. Khadidja and Fatiha on their thesis (2017) explained Southerners economy was based on plantations; a system of large-scale farming that depended on the labor of the enslaved people to grow certain crops, especially cotton and tobacco. Unlike the South, the Northerners economy was modernizing and relied on manufactures therefore they did not need slaves. These differences created a problem between the North and South. Southerners wanted to develop their

economy, and to compete with the Northern industrial section. In doing so, they used slaves to labor on their plantations. Slaves became a property in the South; they worked in severe conditions as planters, carpenters, drivers and so on. On the other hand, Northerners were against slavery, and they treated slaves as natural citizens; in addition, they sought to abolish the whole institution of slavery from the southern territories.

The nomination of Abraham Lincoln and finally the election as president supported by the Republican party was the main factor to urge the Southerners to secede. Core Knowledge Foundation (2017:67) stated that, “*in November 1860, Abraham Lincoln was elected president. One month later, South Carolina seceded from the Union. Over the next six weeks, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas also voted to leave*”. This secession of the eleven Southern states then resulted in the creation of a new nation called the Confederacy, in short for the Confederate States of America. This new republic elected Jefferson Davis as president and guarantees the future of slavery. Then, the civil war finally broke out. Northern victory in the war preserved the United States as one nation and ended the institution of slavery that had divided the country from the beginning.