

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I am going to draw some conclusion of my analysis on the portrayal of the protagonists in Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life among The Lowly* and William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner*. I found several similarities and only one outstanding difference between the two protagonists in those two novels.

Both the protagonists are black American slaves. They witness and experience the cruelty of some white American masters and also the bitterness of a slave's life. They have to be separated from their families because of being sold to pay their master's debt. They are treated as property, which means that their lives are in the hands of their masters. Both of them actually receive the promise of freedom from their masters; however, the masters cannot fulfill it. In the end, they die as slaves.

The only difference lies on the reaction of the protagonists towards the problem they face, which is reflected in their characteristics. Uncle Tom, the protagonist of *Uncle Toms's Cabin, or Life among the Lowly*, is portrayed as

being caring to the others no matter who they are. He shows an act of love to everyone unconditionally whether they are good or bad. He is also a selfless person. He thinks more about the needs of other people rather than his own. It does not matter for him to face everything that happens in his life as long as the others are safe. He is also a principled person. He knows what is right or wrong and tries to do the right things. He will accept every consequence that he has to face in his life for doing the right things. From the beginning until the end of the story, Uncle Tom's characteristics remain the same. He is a static character.

Different from Uncle Tom, Nat Turner, the protagonist of *The Confessions of Nat Turner*, is portrayed as a character whose characteristics change in the course of the story. He is a dynamic character. At first, he is portrayed as a person with positive characteristics. He is an intelligent, obedient, and kind person. Later in the story, after he feels betrayed and hatred, his characteristics changes. He becomes a cunning, rebellious, and violent person. He tries to fight and change the conditions he has been through by acting rebelliously and violently.

Despite the distinctive portrayal of the protagonists, both Harriet Beecher Stowe and William Styron have successfully made use of their portrayal of the protagonists to serve their purpose. Harriet Beecher Stowe has clearly portrayed Uncle Tom as a slave with all his positive characteristics. Having positive characteristics does not guarantee the slave to have a good life; even his life ends in the hands of his cruel master, Simon Legree. Stowe wants to show how the conditions of slaves at that time. She wants to criticize the institution of slavery since it gives a bad impact on slaves' life. White Americans treat black American slaves as property, not as human beings. By portraying Uncle Tom, the readers

will understand more about the bad impact of slavery. A slave cannot do anything except to accept everything, whether it is good or bad, that will happen to him. In other words, his life is determined by the master.

William Styron has portrayed Nat Turner clearly even though he does not live in a slavery time just like Harriet Beecher Stowe. He wants to show a slave's life based on a true story that happened in the past. The slave tried to fight for his rights, but in the end he still lost and had to face the penalty for what he had done. He could not do anything. Through the portrayal of Nat Turner, William Styron wants to show the bad impact of slavery on slaves' lives. The bitterness that the slave experiences in slavery has changed his positive characteristics into negative ones, which later lead him to his death. Being the property of his master, a slave's life is in the hands of his master; however hard he tries, he has no power to change his fate.

In conclusion, it is clear that through the portrayal of Uncle Tom and Nat Turner, both Harriet Beecher Stowe and William Styron have the same purpose, that is, to show how bad the institution of slavery is. Being the masters' property, a good slave like Uncle Tom or a rebellious one like Nat Turner, has to accept the fact that their fate is in the hands of their master. They do not have the rights as human beings.

In my opinion, a slave is a human being with feelings and mind just like white Americans. Therefore, I disagree with the institution of slavery because it was not in accordance with the America's Declaration of Independence, which states that men are created equal: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain

unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness” (“The Declaration of Independence : A Transcription” par 2).

