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# 厦门大学

## 硕士学位论文

### 《汤姆叔叔的小屋》中的圣经原型研究

### A Biblical Archetypal Study of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

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## Abstract

*Uncle Tom's Cabin* is the masterpiece of American authoress Harriet Beecher Stowe as well as the most influential anti-slavery literary classic in American literary world. It focuses on the poor life of black slaves and their struggle to achieve freedom, and makes a vehement attack upon the chattel slavery. According to Frye, as far as western literary tradition is concerned, two systems contribute to archetypes, that is, the ancient Greek mythology and the Bible of the Hebrews. Frye's Myth-Archetypal criticism is based on primitive human experience and aims at an overall understanding of the development of literary genres. He holds that we can penetrate into the most intrinsic and primitive spirit of human cultures and can be closer to the nature of literature. Archetypal criticism can include literature, culture and history etc.. Therefore, if we want to understand a literary work well, we must analyze the archetypes in the work against certain cultural background. Only through this can we understand the real meaning of the work.

With the application of archetypal theory, this thesis first gives a comprehensive introduction to slavery as the social background and to the great influence of Christianity on Stowe, then attempts to analyze various archetypal characters such as Uncle Tom, Eva, and also explore archetypal plots and archetypal themes of Love and Evil in terms of Biblical archetype to reveal abundant religious connotations of Christianity in this novel. By making use of archetypal analysis, we can have a deep discussion on Stowe's solution to slavery and illustrate where the modern misinterpretation and bias lie in order to better analyze why this novel is appealing but controversial. For Stowe, only the power of Christian love can ultimately defeat the slavery and oppression throughout the world. Stowe's strategy to redeem the world through the power of love is progressive in that period. However, as far as social reform is concerned, Stowe's strategy to changing the hearts is conservative and impractical. But to denounce Christian love in this novel as religious fakery would be the result of the failure to come to terms with the cultural background in which the novel was written. Taking

the ideology of the people at that time into a consideration, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is still a unique book. Despite some limitations in this novel, a reading of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with the theme of Love in mind is a rewarding experience. This thesis is expected to be of some help to Chinese readers to appreciate this classic novel better.

**Key Words:** Christianity; Biblical archetypes; Slavery;  
the Power of Love

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## 摘要

《汤姆叔叔的小屋》乃美国女作家斯托夫人的代表作，也是文坛上引起巨大反响的废奴文学的经典之作。它描述了黑奴的苦难生活及为争取自由不懈奋斗的历程，愤怒地揭发和控诉了奴隶制的罪恶。弗莱认为，就西方文学传统而言，两大文学体系构成了原型之本源，即古希腊神话和希伯来人的《圣经》。弗莱的神话-原型批评理论立足于人类原始经验，在整体上把握西方文学类型的共性及历时态的演变规律，借助作品中抽象出来的原型，切入人类历史文化沉淀中最本质、最原始同时也最真挚、最动人的精神之根，从而帮助我们抓住文学的本质。原型批评能够将文学、神话、文化、历史等诸多因素包含在内，借助特定的文化语境，深入分析作品中的原型，有助于我们真正把握作品的思想内涵。

本文采用原型批评理论，首先对斯托夫人所处时代的奴隶制度及基督教对她的重大影响做了全面的介绍。接着，从圣经原型批评的角度出发，试图分析《汤姆叔叔的小屋》中的各类人物形象如汤姆叔叔、小伊娃以及分析故事情节的圣经原型，同时也分析了爱和罪恶的圣经原型主题，以揭示这部小说中的丰富的宗教内涵。运用圣经原型分析可以深入探讨斯托夫人解决奴隶制度的方案及现代曲解这部小说的位置所在，从而更好的分析为何这部小说既令人喜爱又引起争议。在斯托夫人看来，唯有基督爱的力量才能最后消除奴隶制度和压迫。斯托夫人想通过爱的力量来改变社会的观点在当时具有进步性，但是就社会改革而言，只通过改变人心以此来拯救整个社会的观点过于保守。把小说中基督的爱误解为宗教伪装，这是由于没有理解这部小说当时所处的文化背景。考虑到当时的人们的意识形态，这部小仍然是一部独一无二的书。尽管这部小说有一定的局限性，但是以爱为主题解读《汤姆叔叔的小屋》是一个非常有价值的经历。希望这篇论文对中国读者更好欣赏这部经典著作有所帮助。

**关键词：**基督教； 圣经原型； 奴隶制； 爱的力量

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## Introduction

Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, is regarded as one of the most outstanding female writers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century America. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was, in fact, the best-selling novel of the nineteenth century. James A. Levernier in the *Reference Guide to American Literature* claimed that "if the greatness of a novel were based solely upon its popularity and sociological impact, then Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would undoubtedly be one of the greatest American novels of all time" (Zagarell, 1994: 13). *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is so popular that it has been translated into many languages and has been read all over the world.

There is no doubt that *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published in 1852 before the American Civil War, is an excellent and immortal novel that has an enduring impact on American literature. It was credited by some observers with stirring anti-slavery feeling to such a degree that the American Civil War was inevitable. Madeline B. Stern, writing in the *Reference Guide to American Literature*, noted: "There is no doubt that it is one of the few books to have changed the climate of public opinion and helped swing the political pendulum." Barbara Ryan in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* reported: "Though *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was not the first anti-slavery novel, it was incontrovertibly the most engaging, and it sold phenomenally well." Adams in his *A South-Side View of Slavery* admitted that "no fictitious narrative of slavery could make a deeper impression than a book on this subject written by a female hand which knew well how to touch the chords of the human heart" (Adams, 1885:165). And its influence on American attitudes toward slavery has become so legendary that Abraham Lincoln was reported to have commented upon meeting Stowe, "So this is the little lady who made this big war!" The remark was certainly an overstatement, but it indicated Stowe's fame and the extent to which her writing was seen as influencing the moral attitudes of the nation.

Stowe was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, the daughter of the respected Congregational minister Lyman Beecher and Roxana Foote. She was raised in an environment that emphasized strict moral principles and intellectual energy, which shaped her future writing. When Stowe was four years old, her mother died. Her

oldest sister, fifteen-year-old Catherine, assumed the care of the younger children. Their father soon remarried. Stowe had a good relationship with her stepmother, Harriet Porter Beecher, but Catherine remained the most important person in the young girl's life. When Stowe became depressed after her mother's death, she was sent to visit her grandmother and aunt on a farm on the shore of Long Island Sound. While there, she learned to read and, for the first time, met African Americans. Their treatment deeply disturbed the young Stowe.

Back in Litchfield in 1816, Stowe spent five years at "Ma'am" Kilbourne's school, where she was an avid student. Searching for books to read, she found a dusty copy of *The Arabian Nights* in her father's attic and read it many times. Eventually her father opened his library to her. One day he read her the "Declaration of Independence." In his *Harriet Beecher Stowe*, Noel Gerson recorded her reaction to this document from her writings: "I was as ready as any of them to pledge my life, fortune and sacred honor for such a cause," Stowe wrote (Gerson, 1976: 152).

At the age of ten, Stowe was enrolled in the Litchfield Academy, where she soon became first in her class. In 1824 Catherine Beecher started a school for teenage girls in Hartford, Connecticut, and Stowe was one of her first pupils. While there she discovered poetry and began writing an epic poem she called "Cleon," about an early Greek convert to Christianity.

In 1832, Dr. Beecher was chosen as president of Lane Theological Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, and the family moved into a large house in Walnut Hills. Her uncle, Samuel Foote, took Stowe to the theater to see Shakespeare's plays. She joined a literary society called the "Semi-Colon Club," where she was introduced to the anti-slavery movement. About the same time, Catherine Beecher started another school she called the "Western Female Institute," where Stowe was a student and later a teacher. In 1834 she won first prize in a contest conducted by the *Western Monthly Magazine*. Her sketch appeared in the April 1834 issue of the magazine and was published separately as *Prize Tale: A New England Sketch* (1834). On Jan. 6, 1836, she married Calvin Ellis Stowe, a professor in the Lane Seminary, and they had seven children during a period of financial hardship.

During the period, she did have the opportunity to visit the South, and she observed with particular attention the operation of the slave system there. In 1849 she published her first volume, *The Mayflower*, a slender book but one which



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