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**Bertha von Suttner's "Die Waffen nieder!": Moral literature in  
the tradition of Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin"**

Braker, Regina Berrit, Ph.D.

The Ohio State University, 1991

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Bertha von Suttner's Die Waffen nieder!:  
Moral Literature in the Tradition of  
Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for  
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate  
School of The Ohio State University

By

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\* \* \* \* \*

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1991

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**To John**

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Chapter I  
The Re-Examination of  
Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin  
as a Basis for Evaluation of  
Bertha von Suttner's Die Waffen nieder!

In Abhandlungen kann man nur abstrakte Verstandesgründe legen, kann philosophieren, argumentieren und dissertieren; aber ich wollte anderes: ich wollte nicht nur, was ich dachte, sondern was ich fühlte--leidenschaftlich fühlte--, in mein Buch legen können, dem Schmerz wollte ich Ausdruck geben, den die Vorstellung des Krieges in meine Seele brannte.  
Bertha von Suttner

Die Waffen nieder! (1889) by Bertha von Suttner (1843-1914), became a watchword for the European peace movement before World War I and was the impetus for the Austrian (1891) and German Peace Societies (1892)(35: pp. 254-6). With its message of radical criticism and cautious solutions this novel initiated Bertha von Suttner's unique role in late nineteenth century European public life and her importance to pre-war pacifism. From the publicity it generated and its commercial success we can conclude that Die Waffen nieder! was the most widely read fictional exposition of an anti-war message in the quarter century before 1914. An international bestseller,

it had as much to do with Bertha von Suttner's reputation as did her status as founder of the Austrian Peace Society and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize (1905). Historians may value Suttner's journalistic writing as a more significant contribution for its insight into European political life and its documentation of the events and policy decisions that increased international tension and finally led to war. The popular success of the novel, however, introduced thousands of readers to the arguments of pacifism and laid the groundwork for Suttner's later work.

As a nineteenth century predecessor and standard for the tendentious novel with international impact, Uncle Tom's Cabin (1851) by Harriet Beecher Stowe offers a point of comparison for Die Waffen nieder!. Just as Suttner's role as spokeswoman for the peace movement was initiated by her novel, Stowe became a spokeswoman for the abolition of American slavery through her anti-slavery novel. In the 1850s her work became the most widely read argument against slavery and it brought the author sudden international fame, though popular legend overestimates the influence of the novel by crediting it with the outbreak of the American Civil War.

Suttner and Stowe as writers have more in common than their bestseller success. They were both motivated by an

altruism that did not diminish in spite of their primary reason for writing--to earn money(84: pp. 15, 74, 77; 99: pp. 103-104; 115: p. 204). While that goal was best accomplished through entertainment genres, each writer also felt a didactic mission to reach her readers with a serious message. Neither achieved serious literary recognition, neither seemed to strive for it. Their lifetime reputations, for which the novels Die Waffen nieder! and Uncle Tom's Cabin are responsible, were based on an identification with reform movements rather than on literary excellence. Stowe and Suttner were writers of tendentious novels and popular entertainment, combining the formal elements typical of popular literature with contents that questioned traditional power structures in a way that allowed each author to succeed in her intention: the use of popular fiction for idealistic purposes. A comparison and contrast of Suttner and Stowe will yield a better understanding of Suttner as a writer, while a comparison of the novels will contribute toward evaluation of Die Waffen nieder!.

The initial reviews of Die Waffen nieder! and Uncle Tom's Cabin attempted to explain their enormous popularity, considering their authors' previous obscurity and in light of the novels' messages. Both contended with

negative criticism and abusive personal attacks. With time these reactions gave way to more considered estimation of the authors' roles in public life and, for Stowe, critical evaluation of her novel. The majority of work on Suttner to this day consists of appraisal of her historic role rather than literary treatment of her writing.<sup>1</sup> Thus there is greater emphasis on evaluating her journalistic writing than on assessing the importance of Die Waffen nieder!; it is treated only as the impetus for celebrity which Suttner was then able to capitalize on in her peace work. Although reactions to Uncle Tom's Cabin continue to have extra-literary overtones too, the novel's reception is characterized most recently by the attempt to find its proper place in American literature.<sup>2</sup>

Harriet Beecher Stowe's critical reception is varied, hinging at first on the acceptance or rejection of her message in Uncle Tom's Cabin more than on an evaluation of the novel's literary qualities. The tradition of such reception began at the novel's appearance with its immediate market success and with the striking role it immediately came to play in the abolition-slavery controversy. Uncle Tom's Cabin was not simply a literary product but a part of a political development, and people responded to it as such. The novel generated hate mail

and warm expressions of support(115: p. 298; 99: pp. 160-3); and because of the volatility of reaction, few found it possible to review the work solely in literary terms. For this reason the response to Stowe's other writing is a more reliable representation of her reputation as a writer. Hawthorne's much-quoted denigration of "female scribblers" no doubt included Stowe, for her novels are comparable to those of Susan Warner, Mrs. E.D.E.N. Southworth, and Fanny Fern, the authors whom Hawthorne reviled. As Stowe did in much of her fiction, they wrote serialized novels whose repeated message was that if women accepted a traditional role within the family, they would assume the spiritual leadership in the nation. Filled with moral homilies, these novels achieved a commercial success unknown to writers like Hawthorne and Melville(102: p. 123).

Although Stowe's name was worth something to publishers because of her enormous popularity, her literary worth was not considered.<sup>3</sup> Uncle Tom's Cabin was thought of as "much less a book than a state of vision, of feeling and of consciousness" as Henry James wrote(76: p. 92). In claiming that there was "no classified condition" for Stowe's bestseller, James implied that the phenomenon that was Uncle Tom's Cabin (along with its by-products) was anything but literary.

Some saw Stowe's literary talent in her New England novels rather than in her bestseller. James Russell Lowell objected to the didacticism of her two anti-slavery novels but reacted favorably to The Minister's Wooing(115: p. 442). Of nineteenth century response to Uncle Tom's Cabin, the strongest voice in support of it, and no doubt the most eminent, was that of Leo Tolstoy. His praise of the anti-slavery novel as an example of "universal art" needs further discussion later on, for with this appellation he ranked the work with Schiller's Die Räuber, Hugo's Les Misérables, and Dickens' A Tale of Two Cities(101: p. 242).

As the re-issue of her novels ceased except for Uncle Tom's Cabin, Stowe's reception in the twentieth century narrowed to evaluation of that novel. Not only was her name linked almost exclusively with her best-known work, she was also popularly associated with the spin-off products that Uncle Tom's Cabin sparked, most notably the Uncle Tom theatrical productions, though Stowe had no financial or other connection with them. The novel also started a tradition of anti-Tom novels that took issue with Stowe's interpretation of slavery, that defended Southern values, and that continued into this century with novels like The Clansman and Gone With the Wind(56: pp. 179-95). Only for its possible influence on the American

civil rights movement did Uncle Tom's Cabin receive renewed attention. James Baldwin's 1949 essay rejected the values that he saw as an essentially racist basis for Stowe's assumptions, and his criticism led the way for other denunciations of the work which once had been called "the great American novel"(38: pp. 13-22 and 87: p. 1). Critiques that are essentially denigration of the work repeatedly cite its sentimentality and dated stereotypes as sufficient grounds for rejection. But recent studies reconsider the novel's importance. Explorations of the underlying messages in Uncle Tom's Cabin claim that a rejection of patriarchal values pervades the novel. Indicative of such new readings are studies by Nina Baym, Jane Tompkins, and Elizabeth Ammons, which find that Uncle Tom's Cabin is a woman's protest novel rather than "Everyone's Protest Novel"(40: pp. 189-305, 102: pp. 122-46 and 87: pp. 155-95). These interpretations reconsider Stowe's criticism of American social and economic institutions, discover a fellowship of suffering between women and slaves through a rereading of Uncle Tom's character, and highlight Stowe's positing of an alternative matriarchal ideal.

Much as Stowe's reputation has been based on reactions to Uncle Tom's Cabin, Suttner's lifetime fame

was tied to Die Waffen nieder! until she became more prominent as a Nobel Peace Prize recipient. The title of the novel became a familiar quotation in German and Austrian newspaper headlines and articles that referred to the military or to the peace movement. The book's initial popularity in the United States eclipsed the bestseller status of the novel in Europe, its translations both in book form and in periodicals reaching a wide audience(28: 1890, letters 6 and 73). Reactions to the novel as literature were overwhelmed by responses to its message. The latter included praise for a worthy deed, on the one hand, and scorn for the pacifist message as an effeminate and therefore inappropriate public statement, on the other.<sup>4</sup> These attitudes continued in reactions to Suttner's public work as well and soon overshadowed discussion of the novel. Nevertheless, responses to her writing from contemporaries exist to give an idea of how it was evaluated as literature.

Letters to Suttner from Georg Brandes expressed a polite, deferential attitude even as he criticized her ideas, which did not agree with his own Nietzschean elitism. He allowed that her writing was most likely realistic in its depiction of the aristocracy and its faults, but he criticized her tendency to be "ein wenig zu sehr erklärend"(45: letter 1.) His nonspecific



statements about the glut of literature on the market may have been a veiled criticism of Suttner's work or perhaps they were meant simply as a complaint about the reception of his own work.

Michael Georg Conrad was in correspondence with Suttner when he read Die Waffen nieder!. He had published her work previously in Die Gesellschaft, and his earlier response to her writing had been favorable. Now, though he praised Die Waffen nieder! in a public review, in a private letter Conrad wrote Suttner a thorough critique of the novel:

Dein Waffenbuch ist ein gutes, schönes, bald ergreifendes, bald erschütterndes Buch. Aber das langt für uns nicht. Es ist ein unvollständiges Buch, es steht nicht auf der Höhe des Wissens und der Kunst. Ich wüßte im Augenblick keinen deutschen Schriftsteller, ob Mann, ob Weib, der es hätte vollkommener machen können, allein das ändert nichts, dadurch wirds nicht vollkommener. Wäre es ein reines, tendenzloses Fabulirwerk [sic], eine Romandichtung schlechtweg, würde mich das Unzulängliche nicht so erregen. Aber es ist's nicht, vielmehr, es soll's nicht sein, wofern ich Deine Absichten recht begriffen [habe], eine Kampfschrift wider den Krieg zu liefern, die alle Argumente erschöpft, jeden Widerspruch zum Schweigen zwingt. Ganze, wichtige Seiten der Frage hast du übergangen, die wissenschaftlichen Grundlagen mangelhaft aufgebaut, den Wurzelkomplex nicht in seiner Fülle analysirt [sic](50: letter 35).

He went on to give Suttner specific examples of what he missed in the novel: reference to the support for the military by the arts through the positive and enthusiastic

depiction of war, economic analyses of the causes of war, and a more radical outlook in the solutions that the novel proposed. Conrad ignored the novel's epilogue, in which Suttner had anticipated just such criticism. There the first-person narrator, Martha Tilling, answers this kind of reaction:

"Ich habe ja nur sagen können, was sich in meinem Leben--in meinen beschränkten Erfahrungs- und Empfindungskreisen abgespielt. Alle Seiten der Frage beleuchtet? Gewiß nicht! [. . .] Wie komme ich dazu, in ökonomisch-sozialen Fragen bewandert zu sein, und diese sind es--soviel weiß ich nur--, welche schließlich alle Umbildungen bestimmen. . . Keine Geschichte des vergangenen und zukünftigen Völkerrechts stellen diese Blätter dar--eine Lebensgeschichte nur."(5: p. 328).

In her memoirs Suttner repeated that her purpose was to appeal to her readers' personal reactions and feelings rather than to persuade through rational arguments. She was no doubt answering Conrad's criticism among that of others, when she asserted the value of emotive appeal in her brand of ethical pacifism against the strategic and logical arguments of the scientific pacifists.<sup>5</sup>

Conrad's criticism came from the literary Naturalist's insistence on delving into all symptoms and identifying every probable cause of a social problem. His own admission that he knew of no one "der es hätte vollkommener machen können" indicates that he realized how difficult it was to include a great number of significant

anti-war arguments in the realistic retelling of a lifestory.

Leo Tolstoy wrote to Suttner after reading Die Waffen nieder!, wishing her novel as much success in the struggle for peace as Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin had had in the fight against slavery. The implied comparison has been repeated whenever Suttner and her novel are mentioned, and one wonders if Tolstoy meant to imply the same approval of Die Waffen nieder! as he had for Stowe's work. His diary entry for the date of the letter contains only qualified praise, however: "Abends Die Waffen nieder gelesen, bis zu Ende. Gut formuliert. Man spürt die tiefe Überzeugung, aber unbegabt."<sup>6</sup> Seven years later in his crucial theoretical essay "What is Art?" Tolstoy would write that, however difficult it was to be effective in a novel of moral conviction, the communication of such conviction was the most important criterion in defining art.

Studies of Suttner after her death concentrated interest primarily on her role in the peace movement and her possible influence on Alfred Nobel's institution of the Peace Prize. Stefan Zweig commented on the accuracy of her assessments of pre-war political events and the prescience of her warnings and recalled her influence on his conversion to pacifism(117: pp. 195-203 and 118: pp.

243-4). In Rechenschaft. Publizistik aus den Jahren 1913 bis 1933 Carl von Ossietzky bitterly criticized Suttner's style of pacifism--he referred to sentimentality and naïveté as faults that hampered the entire peace movement. He identified her novel as a stimulus of pre-World War I thinking about peace, but he blamed the larmoyance of the novel and its author for the pacifists' failure.<sup>7</sup> Suttner's writing, finally, was considered effective enough to be banned and burned by the National Socialists(119: pp. 125, 137; 122: p. 223).

The reception of the activist rather than the author has continued to the present day; and whatever literary recognition she may once have enjoyed, she is now rarely given more than brief mention in literary histories. Das Maschinenzeitalter was republished in 1983 and Die Waffen nieder! reissued in a paperback edition in 1977. By contrast, however, interest in her as a historic personality has grown, especially with the renewal of pacifist movements in Germany and Austria. New editions of her memoirs appeared in the Federal Republic in 1965 and in the former German Democratic Republic in 1968. This revived interest is also without doubt a result of the women's movement and its quest to rediscover women who have disappeared from the history books.

A common thread running through the reception of Suttner and Stowe is the objection to their emotional appeal. With their stress on feeling and their insistence on a moral standard, they have been forgotten or derided as out-of-date in an ethically sceptical modern world. They have been faulted for their lack of objectivity, with their novels dismissed from serious consideration by their identification as "sentimental" and "tendentious." M. G. Conrad warned Suttner of such a judgment in his wish that she had been more rigorous in presenting exhaustive arguments. In Stowe's case the literary reception of her work is marked by disapproval for her bestseller, with strong attacks on its moralism and for "racism" but from a retrospective position that ignores the historic and cultural context in which the novel was written. Such criticism ignores the unrelenting attack on her own society that she undertook in writing Uncle Tom's Cabin. Only in recent reassessments do we find an interest in her message and the manner in which she presented it(82; 83; 87; 102). These assessments recognize that in writing this novel Stowe used literature as a moral tool for a moral purpose. This focus for interpretation is also appropriate to Die Waffen nieder! and can become the basis for a new examination of

Suttner's critique of antiquated institutions and thinking.

## Notes

The Re-examination of  
Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin  
as a Basis for Evaluation of  
Bertha von Suttner's Die Waffen nieder!

<sup>1</sup> Studies of Suttner's literary work include the following references as numbered in the bibliography: Fields (52), Stowe (112), and Wilson(96: pp. 31, 39). The majority of material on Suttner consists of historic reappraisal and biographical presentation(61; 80; 117; 34; 90; 81; 84; 91; 89).

<sup>2</sup> Examples of extra-literary reaction to the novel include 38; 66; 69. The tendency toward re-interpretation of the novel and its importance as fiction is apparent in 49; 51; 56; 102; 87; 82; 40.

In devoting attention to the popular authors of serialized novels in the nineteenth century, critics have confronted the disregard for the popular novel in the established canon, and their conclusions define the differences between these writers and their male counterparts in a larger cultural and social context. Tompkins concludes that if definitions of literary quality

change with political and social currents, then literature may indeed be defined as "doing work, expressing and shaping the social context that produced them," and she uses this standard in her study. Kelley finds that the "literary domestics" played an important role in nineteenth century changes in women's status and because they were "creators of culture" cannot be dismissed simply as writers of pulp fiction. Fiedler identifies the difference between the popular women writers and the canonized male authors as essentially two sides of the American frontier cultural tradition: while the latter celebrates the choice of a non-domestic context and mythifies the search for unusual experiences or adventure, the former idealizes the stability of home and its values. Kelley states that while the idealization of domesticity is a rationalization of its limitations, writers also expressed frustration at their confined existence.

<sup>3</sup> John R. Adams notes that Stowe's name appeared when she contributed articles to The Atlantic Monthly. The editors had originally conceived a policy of publishing articles anonymously unless the author's name could be used to draw subscribers(36: p. 132).

<sup>4</sup> Peter Rosegger commented on the novel in a letter to Bertha von Suttner(48), "Dieses Buch ist eine That! Es war ein Ereignis in meinem Leben." A bit of doggerel



by Felix Dahn, quoted in Suttner's memoirs(26: p. 143), gives another view:

Die Waffen hoch! Das Schwert ist Mannes eigen,  
 Wo Männer fechten, hat das Weib zu schweigen,  
 Doch freilich, Männer gibt's in diesen Tagen,  
 Die sollten lieber Unterröcke tragen.

<sup>5</sup> As pacifism became institutionalized and targeted modern warfare, it developed arguments and analyses that were labeled "scientific pacifism." Exhaustive works by Johannes Bloch (Der Zukunftskrieg, vom technischen und politischen Standpunkt aus betrachtet), Alfred Hermann Fried (Handbuch der Friedensbewegung) and others helped build the traditions of twentieth century pacifism. Although Suttner admired and valued the strategic arguments and logical conclusions of these contributions she argued with Fried that ethical pacifism had an important role to play in the struggle against militarism and war.

<sup>6</sup> Hamann(71: p. 140) cites the diary entry, dated 24 October 1891.

<sup>7</sup> Carl von Ossietzky's criticism of the lack of politicization of the German peace movement is valid. His criticism of Suttner's role is exaggerated and betrays an unwillingness to welcome into the peace movement all who opposed war:

Wie so viele Frauen, die aus reiner Weiberseele für die Verwirklichung eines Gedankens kämpfen, der männliche Spannkraft und ungetrübten Tatsachenblick erfordert, glitt sie ins Chimärische. [. . .] [Ein sanftes Aroma von Lächerlichkeit] hat nach außen hin so stark gewirkt, daß auch die tüchtigsten und bedeutendsten Männer es nicht haben beseitigen können(88: pp. 40-1).

## Chapter II

### Toward Writing as a Moral Vocation: Personal Influences and Literary Choices

The choices made by Stowe and Suttner, first, to become writers and, second, to address social and moral problems were determined by the conditions of their lives. Financial circumstances brought them to the first choice while the second was developed over time after they had begun to write and publish. The influences that led them to their vocations as writers are to be found in their life stories. We have noted that much of the reception of Suttner's work has a biographical interest. While her contributions are acknowledged, she is, like Stowe, treated much like a celebrity. Her life was interesting for its unconventionality, but the stages of her development do not interest us as antecedents for her career as a public personality. Nor do we wish to speculate about the ways in which the Suttners coped privately with the baroness' public role. Her life story is of interest to us for its explanation of her understanding of literature and its purpose. Her preference for a literature of morality can be understood

from her personal background. Biographies of Stowe have been marked by interest in her celebrity as well as by attempts to justify her role in the literary realm. Her life story is an account of the attainment of the American Dream by a woman. But it is more than a story of success as a result of doing the right thing. It interests us for the central role that religion and morality played in Stowe's life and their influences on her sense of calling.

Harriet Beecher Stowe was born in Litchfield, Connecticut on June 14, 1811(see 57; 99; 115). Her parents, Lyman and Roxana Beecher, were as close to aristocracy as was possible in New England, for Lyman Beecher was a leading Congregational clergyman in a society that conferred political and religious authority, if not material privilege, upon its spiritual leaders. Beecher entered a family of two sisters and three brothers that was to see the arrival of two more brothers before Roxana Beecher died on September 25, 1816. She spent the year following her mother's death with her mother's family in Nutplains on Long Island, where she was instructed by her Episcopalian aunt. Upon her return home she entered the primary school run by Madame Kilbourne, and in the same year a stepmother, Harriet Porter Beecher, moved into the Beecher home. Adolescence saw Beecher become a voracious bookworm who read whatever she could find (The

Arabian Nights, Cotton Mather's Magnalia, Walter Scott's novels, and Byron's poetry, among others). Her education continued in Miss Pierce's Litchfield Academy, where she earned distinction for an essay on a theological topic. Yet however Harriet may have excelled as a student, her formal education would have had to give way sooner or later to self-education. In a family with limited financial means, the boys were expected to follow in their father's footsteps and were sent on for higher education, while the daughters, if they were to pursue intellectual interests, had to do so on their own. Catharine, the oldest sister, regretted her lazy performance at Miss Pierce's school when she had to master the basic curriculum by herself years later upon founding her own school for girls, Hartford Female Academy. Beecher joined her there at age thirteen as a student and three years later as a teacher was just keeping ahead of her own students' subject matter(78: pp. 39-40).

In 1832 Lyman Beecher accepted the presidency of the newly founded Lane Seminary and moved his family to Cincinnati. The two sisters, having caught their father's missionary zeal to convert the West to the Beecher brand of Christianity, opened a new school in Cincinnati. Beecher was then twenty-one. Her melancholy nature and lack of sociability had made friendships difficult and

kept suitors at bay as well. She had turned to writing in Hartford, and in Cincinnati her social life included membership in a literary circle, the Semi-Colon Club. She had previously written a geography textbook that Catharine, as the educator in the family with an already considerable reputation, had had published (at first under her own name). The sketches and essays that Harriet Beecher presented and later published in a collection entitled The Mayflower received favorable reviews. In 1833 she became friends with Eliza Stowe, who was married to a promising young theology professor at Lane Seminary, Calvin Ellis Stowe. When Eliza died only a year later during a cholera epidemic, Beecher shared in Calvin Stowe's loss and became a sympathetic friend and devoted admirer. Harriet and Calvin had in common a New England theological background and they discovered a mutual interest in psychic phenomena. They were married January 6, 1836. Her words from a wedding day letter to her best friend suggest that the courtship was not an idyllic romance and marriage was not an occasion that she anticipated joyously. Instead she "dreaded the time" and felt "nothing at all" about "this overwhelming crisis"(115: p. 172). Stowe was later as frank to her husband about the disparity of her hopes for their relationship and the everyday reality of marriage and

family life.<sup>2</sup> Courtship and marriage scenes in her later novels, especially the idealized family scenes in Uncle Tom's Cabin, are a kind of compensation for what she seems to have expected but missed in her own experience.

The fifteen years that followed until the Stowes' return to New England were years of hardship and deprivation as Harriet depleted her physical resources with the bearing of children(82: p. 281) and as Calvin's position at the seminary failed to meet the growing financial needs of his family. That Lane Seminary, which suffered from low enrollments, was not to become the Yale of the West, as some had hoped, had been evident for several years before Calvin Stowe finally extricated himself from his commitments there to find a position elsewhere. Disagreement between students who were abolitionists and the seminary's trustees had resulted in the withdrawal of a majority of the students who followed their leader, Theodore Weld to Oberlin. Calvin's appointment at Bowdoin College in 1850 compensated the Stowes more with the relocation to New England than with salary, which was lower than that negotiated at Lane.

When she could find the time, Stowe had been writing to add to the meager income in Cincinnati--short pieces of a religious nature, but nothing notable; and the family's need for her contributions continued in Maine.

With the last of her children in infancy she began to write Uncle Tom's Cabin. She expected the story to last only several installments; and she may initially have regretted that it grew into a novel when the pay, originally agreed upon at three hundred dollars, did not increase even when the serialization continued for ten months. The work kept her from earning additional income(115: pp. 260, 272).

The writing of Uncle Tom's Cabin, however, signaled the real beginning of Stowe's career as an author. The conditions--whether the end of her childbearing years, the return to New England, or the new-found ability to write a novel--enabled her to write and publish for three decades; and her production was interrupted only by the Civil War. Although she considered her family her first responsibility, she could justify her occupation as a way to provide for her children's material needs. If her writing in Cincinnati had provided "pin money," Uncle Tom's Cabin provided much more than that. She became so successful that by 1862 she was the sole income earner in the family and could finance sometimes extravagant and ill-considered investments. Even so, she continued to think of herself as a simple homemaker who dispensed advice and stories to a farflung family, her audience. She worried about making her own family's expanding ends



meet and therefore continued to write and to publish until old age. Harriet Beecher Stowe died July 1, 1896 at age eighty-five. Though she had written many novels and countless sketches and essays, Stowe lives on in the public memory of course as the author of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Bertha von Suttner, born June 9, 1843 in Prague as Bertha Sophia Felicita Countess Kinsky of Chinic and Tettau, grew up with her expectations about her position as a member of an old Bohemian family unfulfilled and with constant reminders that she was an outsider to the Austrian aristocracy. Her widowed mother, Sophia Wilhelmine Kinsky (born von Körner), did not have the necessary pedigree to match that of Count Franz Joseph Kinsky, who had died just before his daughter's birth.<sup>3</sup> The snubs and indignities that Bertha Kinsky experienced sensitized her to the injustices of Austrian society's hierarchy. As an adult she consciously chose the role of outsider: a woman whose title represented the aristocracy but whose writing, speeches, and actions as a pacifist reaped both scorn and admiration, since her activism opposed war but also the rigid status quo of her class.

The young Bertha Kinsky grew up under the care of her mother, who failed time and again to increase the dwindling family fortune at the gambling tables of Marienbad and Bad Homburg. Her education, not the typical convent upbringing of a young countess, included the study of English, Italian and French, music, and literature. An arranged marriage to an elderly industrialist never came about because she could not reconcile herself to a union of purely financial consideration. A second engagement to a young Australian ended in humiliation for the countess when he abandoned her, leaving her waiting in vain at their engagement party to learn that her fiancé was a fortune hunter. Already in her late-twenties, she resumed serious voice training which she had begun earlier in consideration of a possible singing career. Though she feared stagefright, her mother's insistence on the singing career that she herself had once dreamed of and the lack of other prospects turned the young woman to voice teachers and practice rooms. Through singing she met Prince Adolf Wittgenstein-Sayn, who was planning to start a career as a singer in America. They fell in love and the possibility of a life together raised cautious hopes. The prince's death on the Atlantic passage, however, forced her to confront an unhappy reality; approaching thirty, with a career that existed only in her mother's

fantasy, she faced a modest and quiet life with her mother. That prospect must have been unbearable, for Kinsky sought employment as a governess in a wealthy family, an occupation of social subordination but one which at least offered the possibility of travel and social stimulation. She accepted a position in the von Suttner family as a companion and governess for the three teen-aged daughters. The youngest son, Arthur, who still lived at home as a student, often accompanied the young women. In the course of the three years that the countess worked for the Baron von Suttner's family she and Arthur, who was seven years her junior, fell in love. The age difference, and doubtless her lack of money stood in the way of parental approval of a marriage between the two. Financial problems had already necessitated a tighter budget in the Suttner household; and the possibility that a monetarily advantageous marriage for Arthur would help the family's economic recovery was no doubt a guiding thought of the baroness when she suggested that the countess accept a position as personal secretary and housekeeper for Alfred Nobel in Paris. Before two weeks in Paris had passed, however, Arthur's letters convinced her to return to Vienna incognito; the two secretly married and began a nine-year exile in the Caucasus.

By the time the Suttners returned to Austria in 1885, they had accustomed themselves to a very different lifestyle than either had previously known. Through a variety of odd jobs they provided themselves with a hand-to-mouth existence. He worked as a carpet manufacturing foreman and designer, architectural planner, construction foreman, and free-lance correspondent of Russo-Turkish war reports; she gave music and language instruction and then followed Arthur's lead in writing and having her stories published. By Austrian aristocratic standards such a lifestyle was bohemian. In spite of material deprivation, however, the Suttners enjoyed a freedom that spoiled for them the conservative and stuffy confines of life at the Suttner estate at Harmannsdorf when they returned to Austria.

Both Arthur and Bertha von Suttner had achieved moderate success as writers before they left the Caucasus (her books published during their stay abroad include Hannah, 1882; Inventarium einer Seele, 1883; Ein Manuskript, 1884), and they welcomed the opportunity to meet colleagues at a writers' congress in Berlin in 1885. Bertha von Suttner was interested in the ideas of Naturalism, to which she had been introduced by Michael Georg Conrad, specifically as they were redefining the purpose of literature. Her novel, Schriftstellerroman

(1886), included experiences from the congress and argued the merits of Naturalism. The same year Suttner published a social critique, Das Maschinenzeitalter--a fictional series of lectures given in a future century about late nineteenth-century European social conditions. The book came out in three editions, signed anonymously "Jemand" for fear that no one would take the work seriously if it were known that the author was a woman, and they were favorably reviewed before Suttner identified herself as the author. Having briefly mentioned the London International Arbitration and Peace Association in the book's conclusion since the existence of the organization had just come to her attention before Das Maschinenzeitalter went to press, she intended at the time to write a second book that would focus on the peace movement.

She started work on Die Waffen nieder! immediately after completing Das Maschinenzeitalter. After numerous rejections by periodicals and other publishers, the manuscript was brought out without major changes through persistence with Suttner's publisher E. Pierson in 1889. Her novel was ignored for the most part by the Suttner family and their social circle and those who did read it did not credit her with authorship(28: 1890, letters 32, 36). The success of the novel vindicated her

belief that the novel's ideas were acceptable to the general public. She acted then, organizing the response into an institution of public opinion with the founding of the Austrian Peace Society in 1891. As its president, she attended the International Peace Congress in Rome and gave the first of many well-received speeches. With the publication of the monthly journal of the Austrian Peace Society, also entitled Die Waffen nieder!, Suttner, at age forty-eight, realized her life's vocation. The highlights of her participation as a leading influence in peace congresses were at the Hague Peace Conferences. Suttner's salon facilitated discussion at the Conference of 1899, and in 1907 she attended the second Hague Conference as a journalist. Her primary energy was devoted to writing and speaking about peace and its realization but she continued to write fiction out of financial necessity.

In spite of the notable successes of her career there were also moments of discouragement. Throughout the nineties the Suttner financial situation worsened, culminating in the liquidation of the family estate just after Arthur's death in 1902. These personal worries only compounded the professional setbacks and disappointments she experienced. Her journal Die Waffen nieder! ceased publication in 1899 after seven years. Suttner continued writing her commentary in Die

Friedens-warte which took its place as the journal of the peace movement in German-speaking countries. She hoped that the movement might embrace supporters of all political persuasions and was disappointed, then, with the lack of cooperation with Social Democrats, unwilling or unable to recognise the ideological differences between the Liberal and Social Democratic analyses of war and of means toward its elimination. While she was an active supporter of the Hague Peace Conferences she became frustrated with the tendency of delegates to see their task in regulating war rather than eliminating it. As numerous as the disappointments were to become, Suttner did not back down. Having started her crusade she continued it, even when she realized that age was taking its toll on her effectiveness. Untiring as she was in her work, it was an additional disappointment to her when the first Nobel Peace Prizes were awarded to others before the recognition she deserved was finally bestowed on her.

On a tour of Germany in 1905 Suttner was notified by telegram of her selection as Nobel Peace Prize recipient. Following her acceptance she toured Scandinavia on a series of speaking engagements; and in 1912 she conducted a six-month lecture tour in the United States, where she was given an enthusiastic reception. When she published her memoirs in 1909, they were read by an international

public that had increased as Suttner's reputation had grown. Her reputation was based on the first exposition of her ideas in *Die Waffen nieder!* and her subsequent public position in Austria-Hungary and Germany as peace activist, as well as on her international stature at the Hague peace conferences and as a Nobel Prize laureate.

With the outbreak of World War I, and as war fever gripped Europe just after Bertha von Suttner's death on June 21, 1914, the lifework of this woman seemed to unravel completely. But as the war ground down into a weary battle for trenches, there were those who, unconvinced by the earlier Cassandra warnings of a woman named Bertha von Suttner, experienced the reality of her awful vision and were persuaded of the lesson that she had tried to teach.

Bertha von Suttner's career as a writer began when she became aware of the lucrative possibilities of publishing after her husband had sold several stories and articles to Viennese papers. Since her contribution to the couple's minimal income through her music and language instruction had diminished with the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, she began to write short stories in 1878. She sent her first one to the Viennese Presse



under the pseudonym B. Oulot--perhaps as a lark or at least without great expectation, for she reported surprise when the honorarium arrived(26: p. 106). Even with minor success for Arthur and Bertha von Suttner, however, poverty continued to loom as a taskmaster, since neither honoraria nor regular income were guaranteed. For all her later popularity, Bertha never escaped the need to write because of financial worry. In the Caucasus it was a matter of survival; after returning to the Suttner family estate survival became a question of staving off the family's financial ruin(71: p. 92). As Suttner's peace activism became a serious occupation, the constant financial strain limited her ability to underwrite her own costs at peace congresses and on lecture trips and sent her begging to Alfred Nobel and Andrew Carnegie, among other wealthy benefactors. For instance, she could only afford to attend the Hague Peace Conference of 1907 because she had convinced Prince Albert of Monaco to help finance a press service that she ran at the conference(71: p. 385). It was necessary then that she continue to write fiction regularly to help cover expenses, for she could not depend entirely on the kindness of benefactors.

The possibility of commercial success, rather than artistic reputation, is clearly what attracted Suttner to a career as a writer. This desire for financial security

is confirmed by her earliest writing: short prose fiction for popular magazines, and contributions to newspaper feuilletons and family-oriented papers. The stories' titles indicate their entertainment status: "Fächer und Schürze" and "Närrisches Zeug." After her first pieces were published, Suttner wrote serialized novellas and novels for popular periodicals, among them Die Gartenlaube, Über Land und Meer, and Das Berliner Tageblatt. Romance novels were sure sellers and Suttner capitalized on them often. Particularly after she had founded the Austrian Peace Society (1891) and had less time for writing fiction, Suttner depended on formulaic plots for entertainment novels that she could write quickly. The money-making goal of her fiction in this period is underscored again by titles that indicate light fiction and a rapid succession of publication dates that suggest quantity at the expense of quality: An der Riviera, 1892; Eva Siebeck, 1892; Im Berghause, 1893; Die Tiefinnersten, 1893; Trente et quarante!, 1893; Vor dem Gewitter, 1894; Einsam und arm, 1896. Suttner recognized the lack of literary quality in these works, referring to one of them as "großer Schmarr'n"; and she resented having to write novels and novellas that she was not interested in (28: 1891, letters 66 and 75). In correspondence she also expressed irritation that the lack of international

copyright laws allowed for unauthorized translations of her most popular books(28: 1890, letter 57 and 1891, letter 38). Greater popularity due to a wider availability may have been one result, but Suttner forfeited her share of the profits.

After the initial pleasure of discovering that her writing was marketable, she had begun to put more of her own interests into her work. During their Caucasian exile the Suttners acquainted themselves with liberal and contemporary ideas by reading Darwin, Herbert Spencer, the British historian Henry Thomas Buckle, and by corresponding with free thinkers and members of the literary intelligentsia. In works like Inventarium einer Seele (1883) she discussed these ideas. But she learned that commercial success did not always extend to essays and to the serious treatment of issues. The lecture format of her non-fiction was not appropriate for the popular market. Her income-earning purpose was thwarted whenever she tried to put more meaning into her writing and when she strayed outside the lighter fiction genres. Of all of Suttner's published writing a much higher percentage of her fiction was re-issued than of her non-fictional writing. Only four of sixteen non-fiction works were re-issued while a majority of her novellas and novels came out in more than one edition(84: pp. 135-37).

As Suttner's commitment to pacifism developed, she was confronted by this paradox of purpose; and in writing Die Waffen nieder! she attempted to bridge the gap between entertainment and education. After 1891 she was not so successful at overcoming that gap. Motivated primarily by financial necessity, her novels after Die Waffen nieder! were a second priority. And yet Suttner included socially critical messages, hoping to expose her readers to new perspectives. She never abandoned her belief that public opinion was a factor in policy-making, and she was therefore always concerned that the public be informed before it tried to influence lawmakers and government officials. To reach that goal through writing it was necessary to cultivate a large readership--a means also of course to greater royalties. Suttner was not widely read by the working class because she wrote about the class she knew best, the nobility, while her unremitting criticism of the conservatism that pervaded the Austrian aristocracy in turn alienated that public, leaving her a middle-class readership.<sup>4</sup>

Suttner's sense of moral responsibility was a vital inspirational factor. She felt that her best work was written from inner conviction ("aus innerm Drang"), promoting a cause or identifying social problems, even as she realized that tendentious writing was anathema to an

artistic reputation in a period of growing aestheticism. She regretted that literary reality when she wrote to Alfred Hermann Fried in 1902, "Die Absicht, Gutes zu wirken, gilt für so unkünstlerisch"(29: letter dated 23 August 1902). She followed an ethical imperative rather than an artistic muse. Much as Suttner wished to be taken seriously and reviewed positively as a genuine artist, she could not resist her didactic impulse to write functional fiction--neither artistic masterpieces, nor worthless penny novels but something "between education and mere entertainment"(86: p. 161).

Her non-sectarian moral stance was rooted in a strong belief in the ethical perfectability of humankind(84: pp. 181-82. She understood her role as a writer to include a moral responsibility to confront social problems, and she tried to meet this responsibility whenever she wrote--in the best and the worst of her work. She welcomed the ideas of literary Naturalism, finding a kinship with writers who also felt the necessity of depicting life with its misery and agony as well as its pleasures faithfully and honestly in art. Her contact with Michael Georg Conrad kept her up to date on the Munich circle of Naturalism. Having published in the first issue of *Die Gesellschaft*, she was interested in the literary developments represented there. For her this new literary

movement and its journal indeed stood for "die neue Wirtschaft, die neue Politik, die neue Moral, die neue Psychologie, die neue Erziehung, die neue Kunst"(96: pp. 31, 39). Especially its commitment to truthfulness and its challenge to hypocrisy made a firm supporter of Suttner. Because of her optimism and faith in humanity she lamented what she thought of as excesses-- representations of life that dwelt only on brutality and inhumanity. Even when she wrote about war crimes and genocide, she always sought to remind her readers that the human race was capable of and was indeed progressing toward an ethical ideal.<sup>5</sup> Suttner embraced the philosophical outlines of Naturalism--the need for art to diagnose human ills through detailed description in order that society might then work toward a cure. But she maintained her own autonomy in details of literary practice, leaving to others the literary experimentation that required minute description of milieu or explored the effects of Sekundenstil. In fact to attempt a treatment of the issues central to Naturalism in entertainment was difficult and unusual.

When she turned to her entertainment audience to inform them of progressive ideas, she often juxtaposed her didactic purpose onto her commercial aims in a peculiar manner. Long character monologues or an occasional

dialogue or lively discussion declaim the intended message and interrupt the narration. Romantic relationships and other developments of plot are often motivated by this speechmaking, such as when the hero and heroine discover a common idealism that gives meaning to their mutual attraction. Drawn from the author's experience, these discussions are plausible and realistic. Such expositions do not harm the standard romantic plot, but they add nothing new when they become as predictable as the plot itself. The rhetorical intrusions are most interesting when they come from social reformers--socialists and an occasional anarchist inflamed by the irresponsibility of a society oblivious to injustice and corruption (Vor dem Gewitter, 1894). Suttner returns to the same problems in different combinations in all of her fiction. Litanies of social problems and sermons from the gospels of late nineteenth-century alternative movements are spliced sometimes awkwardly into conventional romantic plots, as in the novels Schach der Qual (1899), and Der Menschheit Hochgedanken (1911) for example.

Before finding her role as pacifist organizer and spokesperson Suttner had seen writing as an appropriate context for social criticism. She did not pretend that writing literature was to be a purely aesthetic occupation and she rejected the idea of the writer as recluse.

Rather she always felt that the writer ought to become an activist, involved in the give-and-take of human problem solving(84: pp. 15-19). With the founding of the Austrian Peace Society she subordinated her writing to her organizational efforts; and with the publication of the journal Die Waffen nieder! and related writing, Suttner found a balance by uniting activism and writing into one occupation. She believed that it was the writer's duty to confront unabashedly problems in society: "'sobald ihm etwas wahr erscheint, muss er es sagen müssen, ob es nun gegen die Regeln der Konvenienz verstoße oder nicht'"(14: pp. 192-93). She viewed the writer as educator: "'Er soll nützen, erheben, beglücken [. . .] freudenhemmende Vorurteile wegräumen, Aberglauben und Dunkel zerstören helfen'"(14: p. 149). For her, questions of form were secondary; rather, the message ought to determine the quality of the work as, she maintained in Schriftstellerroman: "'daß der Dichtungsinhalt den Wert des Werkes bestimmt [. . .]'"(14: p. 197). Not only did Suttner depend on having a message in order to write, but she continued to write because, in fact, she always had something more to say. Usually her message consisted of a variety of liberal ideas that the hero or heroine proclaimed to a shocked group of stodgy, conservative aristocrats (Ein schlechter Mensch, 1885; Ein Manuskript,



1884.)

Suttner used her writing not only to advocate pacifism but to attack the growth of public anti-Semitism, to criticize the rigid authority of the Catholic Church, and to plead for greater human rights and freedoms. In Das Maschinenzeitalter (1889) (and similarly in Inventarium einer Seele, 1883 and Doktor Helmut's Donnerstage, 1892) she created an appropriate essay framework for her arguments. The future-projected lecture presentation of Das Maschinenzeitalter is especially appropriate to a serious consideration of social change and its possibility as an attainable goal. Reform suggestions that were dismissed as utopian in the nineteenth century are discussed from the point of view of their future existence, which gives an authority to her implicit criticism of nineteenth century conditions. In this book the author includes her favorite social-political reform proposals, among them internationalism, modernized secular education, republican democracy, equal status for women, and freedom from religious orthodoxy. Suttner was aware that Das Maschinenzeitalter reached a different readership from the one that her novels and novellas found. The work was quite well received and not only because of the stir of curiosity raised by the anonymity of its author (given

only as "Jemand")(26: pp. 137-39). Among positive reactions and speculation about who wrote the work, including several mentions of Max Nordau, it was, for example, reviewed favorably by August Bebel, whose major objections were based on the book's lack of socialist ideology(41).

Die Waffen nieder! proved to be the novel that most successfully carried out what Suttner had hoped to accomplish with her writing: to communicate a message of importance to a large audience. It is her strongest statement about a human problem and it represents a high point in her fiction, interweaving pacifist arguments into the plot in a credible manner. Although she had lacked a unified theme in her earlier novels, she placed primary emphasis in Die Waffen nieder! on war and its possible elimination with the title announcing the polemic.

Suttner's purpose in writing Die Waffen nieder! was to depict the cost of war in human suffering and material loss and to present pacifist arguments and solutions. In her Memoiren she recalled her intentions:

In Abhandlungen kann man nur abstrakte Verstandesgründe legen, kann philosophieren, argumentieren und dissertieren; aber ich wollte anderes: ich wollte nicht nur, was ich dachte, sondern was ich fühlte--leidenschaftlich fühlte --, in mein Buch legen können, dem Schmerz wollte ich Ausdruck geben, den die Vorstellung des Krieges in meine Seele brannte(26: p. 140).

This statement emphasizes communication of feeling as her primary intention for the novel, for she wanted to elicit an emotional response to a picture of war unflinching in its depiction of reality. To that end she researched the historical background and battle scenes thoroughly by interviewing veterans and consulting histories, military documents, and medical reports.

Upon completion of the manuscript, she then had great difficulty finding a publisher. Periodicals which had formerly encouraged her submissions rejected the manuscript. Die Waffen nieder! was too great a risk. If the Austrian censorship laws did not stop publication, readers might impose their own form of censorship and withdraw subscriptions. The consensus among editors of weekly and monthly papers was that the general public would be offended by the book's title, not to mention its content. At first even Suttner's regular publisher E. Pierson balked when she submitted the novel for publication as a book, insisting that she edit out controversial sections and change the title. The publisher may not only have feared the loss in printing costs if state authority removed the book from the market but was perhaps reluctant to take the business risk of bringing out a novel that inserted battle reports into a conventional Gesellschaftsroman. Suttner refused to

give in and Pierson eventually published a small first edition of one thousand copies.

The author's correspondence records how Die Waffen nieder! gradually became a big seller. To her friend Bartholomäus von Carneri, a member of parliament, she writes of the book's slow start: "Das Buch geht nicht" (Jan. 24, 1890) but also of her faith in its eventual success: "Übrigens geb' ich die Hoffnung nicht auf, daß das Buch doch noch geht; wenn nur erst die großen wichtigen Artikel erscheinen [. . .] . Und das langsame Durchsickern durch mündliche Empfehlung" (Jan. 24, 1890). Three months later she tells him of the turning point: "Mein Verlag Pierson schreibt jetzt zuversichtliche Briefe über 'W. n.' Es sind noch mehrfach eingehende u. günstige Bespr. erschienen und die Bestellungen fangen an" (March 11, 1890). And she writes of her belief that favorable reviews, specifically one by Carneri himself on March 15, 1890 in Die Neue Freie Presse, contributed to successful sales:

Vor allem der Artikel! [. . .] die Wirkung dieser Kundgebung ist gar nicht absehbar. [. . .] wenn diese Rezension nicht Massenbestellungen zur Folge hat, dann nützen bei unserm guten Publikum Rezensionen überhaupt nichts(28: 1890, letter 7).

Subsequent letters, in which she reports that the novel is selling quite well, confirm her faith in the power of favorable reviews. A second edition soon became

necessary, and there were numerous reprintings and a popular edition in the following years. Demand prompted translations into French, Polish, and Swedish by the end of 1890(28: 1890, letters 32, 57) and English translations spread the novel's popularity to England and the United States.

Suttner's comments about the effect of reviews on sales reveals something of her awareness of marketing. She was not content to let the advertising consist only of the standard publisher's notices. After having struggled to get Die Waffen nieder! on the market, she was willing to work hard to see that it was also read. She plugged the novel tirelessly in letters and through complimentary copies that she sent to prominent personalities. She was always eager to know of those readers' reactions; and when the comments were positive, they could be used as additional advertising. She could, however, be overly enthusiastic about the role of reviews and commentary in the commercial success of a book. When she requested Carneri to mention Das Maschinenzeitalter in a parliamentary speech, she overestimated the resulting chain of events:

Dann geht's durch alle Blätter, durch alle Gast- und Kaffeehaus- Kannegießereien--der Name des Buchs oder die zitierte Stelle wird zum geflügelten Wort und die Popularität ist da(28: 1889, letter 6).

Even though the comment grossly simplifies the process of making a bestseller, Suttner shows an understanding of the book market as a commercial endeavor and she did not shrink from exploiting her contacts wherever she could. Her interest in the popularity of Die Waffen nieder! and Das Maschinenzeitalter should not be construed solely as a wish for commercial success, however, but rather as a desire for a wide dissemination of her message, for she did not communicate similar anxieties about her "Schmarr'n."

When popularity came for Die Waffen nieder!, Suttner was not prepared for the sudden rise in sales of the book and worried that the public's expectations might be overwhelming: "Überschätzt mich nicht!"(28: 1890, letter 16). Though she promised and much later wrote a sequel (Marthas Kinder, 1902), after Die Waffen nieder! she was unable to write another novel with similar impact or another pacifist novel per se. But following her instincts, she began writing articles about the activities of peace organizations and their attempts at promoting international understanding through treaties and the arbitration of disputes. As she committed more of her

time to activism, she turned ever more to journalism and non-fiction. Her pieces appeared in Die Gesellschaft, Ethische Kultur, and Die Friedens-Warte in addition to articles for Die neue freie Presse and her own journal Die Waffen nieder!. Suttner's contributions to the two peace journals constituted a kind of sequel to Die Waffen nieder! in what clearly became a turning point in her career, from a writer of popular entertainment novels to a journalistic commentator on the military and political events of the day. The novel articulated her position. The main characters' statements are an expression of her own convictions. Their activities lay out a blueprint for Suttner's career, in which she went a step further by filling more formal parameters. The latter half of the novel especially is an iteration of Suttner's interests for the remainder of her life.

Unlike Suttner, who wrote and published steadily after the initial acceptance of her work, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote in fits and starts until she began work on Uncle Tom's Cabin. Only when it became clear that Calvin Stowe would remain a financial underachiever did she start to write seriously and regularly out of sheer economic desperation. Stowe had been determined to write "for the pay" during the Cincinnati years when the Lane Seminary decline became inevitable, and only her family

responsibilities kept her from this resolve. Frequent family and household interruptions distracted her and limited her to an occasional article or story meant to pay for household help. The chaos of a large family also became an easy excuse for her slipshod style and may have accounted for her inattention to technical details such as punctuation (an editorial task that she left to her publishers).

Unlike the Suttners, who first published under pseudonyms for family considerations, Stowe used the Beecher name and influence extensively. Especially through her sister Catharine's contacts she got her first works--moral essays and New England character sketches--published in religious papers and popular magazines for women readers. Short prose pieces were a manageable genre for a writer like Stowe, surrounded as she was by the cramped and often frantic circumstances of her household. Her original intention for Uncle Tom's Cabin, in fact, had been to write only a series of sketches on slavery. That the work became her first novel had as much to do with the family's move to Brunswick, Maine into a larger house, where Stowe had a room to herself for writing, as it had to do with literary development. During her childbearing years she had had no time to develop her craft as a writer; rather she had



crystallized the themes that later led her to write. Shaped by her religious background and by the poverty of the Cincinnati years, her idea of achieving social justice through a renewal of religious values remained constant throughout her career. Her sympathy with the downtrodden had become acute during that time. The novel was an indicator of the concerns that were to appear in works to come. In it she combined for the first time the moral homily, the description of domesticity as an ideal, and the stories of common people that appear in her other works.

With the serialization of Uncle Tom's Cabin the author began to guess at the potential financial rewards in ongoing publication of longer pieces. Certainly for her the future financial rewards of having become a novelist were just as important as the acclaim brought by this novel. Convinced of her ability to sustain production over a long period of time, she went on to take advantage of the steady income assured in serialized prose works. Her novels appeared over a period of many months in The Atlantic Monthly and The Christian Union, including The Minister's Wooing, My Wife and I, Pearl of Orr's Island, Pink and White Tyranny. Serialized publishing offered Stowe greater flexibility. When a novel was not forthcoming, she wrote sketches or stories on a unified

theme such as New England life or domestic arts (Palmetto Leaves, Oldtown Firelight Stories, "House and Home Papers") for initial presentation in a periodical and later re-issue in book form.

Stowe's business sense in regard to her writing developed over the years to the point where she became the primary income earner in her family. Calvin was apparently willing to relinquish the responsibility, acknowledging that his wife was better at managing money than he was(82: p. 170) but it had not always been so. Having learned from her financial blunder in connection with Uncle Tom's Cabin, when a "series of sketches" grew into an epic saga for which she did not insist on a larger honorarium, she became a much shrewder businesswoman. And she did not shrink from negotiating terms, nor did she hesitate to ask for advances from or draw on her account with a publisher when a promised piece was far from finished(82: pp. 170-72). Like Suttner, Stowe objected to the increased popularity of her books through pirate publication. Numerous unauthorized editions of Uncle Tom's Cabin in England denied her sizable income; and when Stowe sued over an unauthorized translation for German immigrants in the United States, she lost her appeal(115: p. 331). She later took costly and cumbersome precautions (trips to England and Canada) to see that her

copyright to subsequent novels would be protected(115: pp. 416, 534).

As much as Stowe thought about the monetary circumstances of her writing, she considered it of equal importance to present her ideals without compromise. With the Geography for Children she discovered that it was possible to make money from educational writing; and as far as Stowe was concerned, all of her writing had a didactic purpose. She valued literature as a source for self-education, not only from her own experience but also from her short career as a teacher. Her purpose as a writer was shaped by her position as daughter, sister, and wife of ministers. It is no wonder that her fiction is full of sermons, for her life was inundated with them. Her religious education no doubt affected her understanding of literature and its purpose. Puritan ideals of utility and morality in art most certainly caused her to evaluate the merit of literature on its basis "not mainly as a literary or artistic work, but as a moral instrument," as she put it(109: p. 161). Such a standard of evaluation led Stowe to write what amounted to Sunday School lessons for young readers that seem trite to modern readers. But her belief that literature should be a moral weapon also moved her to take issue publicly with her church's stance on slavery and to

denounce political leaders who advocated compromise. Among the abolitionist and religious papers in which she published (The Evangelist, The Independent, and The National Era) she found editors and readers who agreed with the stance in her articles and stories. Among her novels, the first two, Uncle Tom's Cabin and Dred, most closely fit her statement of extra-literary goals for her writing:

The use of the novel in the great question of moral life is coming to be one of the features of the age. A novel now is understood to be a parable--a story told in illustration of a truth or fact(115: p. 410).

Stowe may well have offered this description as an apology, written at the onset of her first intended novel at a time when she herself still made typically Puritan comments of disapproval about novels. Certainly her later writing seems less concerned with the great moral dilemmas of the time.

Stowe's goals for art were not determined solely by her religious background. The achievement of an informed and responsible body politic through art was consistent also with her democratic ideals. Thus her work had to be accessible to all--for cultural products also must belong to the people if social life and its governance lie in their hands. Stowe's identity as an American author very much determined how she perceived her task as a writer.

She claimed approval for her didactic tendencies from the Puritan tradition that required of art a positive moral influence(51: pp. 93, 98, 104, 109); and she addressed all of America--the South and the North, the disenfranchised and the electorate, children and adults--when she made herself an advocate of "the lowly," the American slave. She wrote for an inclusive audience, just as she wrote about a wide stratum of American society.

"Sentimental" is an oft-used adjective in studies about Harriet Beecher Stowe and her work(47: pp. 417-21; 75: p. 184; 106: pp. 109, 110; 108: p. 91). The identification is not incorrect, for her novels are indeed sentimental. She wrote with the intention of persuading readers to her point of view, and her readers were accustomed and susceptible to tearful scenes and reprimands of the kind that abound in Uncle Tom's Cabin (102: pp. 150-53). By becoming sensitive to the plight of slaves, they might feel the deep indignation that she did, and act upon it. A strong emotional appeal was necessary if, as Stowe hoped, her Southern readers were to be influenced to emancipate their slaves and Northern readers, far removed from the realities of the slave trade, were to aid runaway slaves, speak out against slavery, and work for its abolition. When she admonished her readers in the conclusion of Uncle Tom's Cabin to

"feel strongly, healthily and justly, on the great interests of humanity," she wanted more than their sympathy on the side of emancipation. Along with other evangelicals of her time, she was convinced that feelings of remorse would lead to change. Stowe, who before Uncle Tom's Cabin had not been seriously concerned with slavery in her writing, wanted her readers to have the same compelling reaction that she had experienced when her "vision" of a slave's death at the hands of his master appeared to her in a communion service. If she could only communicate her own overwhelming emotional response to that vision which individualized and personalized a distant but intolerable political situation, the author believed that she could convince others that slavery was universally intolerable.

She felt compelled to write the novel in reaction to the Compromise of 1850 and more specifically to the Fugitive Slave Law, which she saw enforced during her years in Cincinnati and which she perceived to be unconstitutional and immoral.<sup>6</sup> The Compromise of 1850, of which the Fugitive Slave Law was a part, regulated the growth of the slave trade into new states. The question of whether to prohibit or approve slavery in the territories of New Mexico and Utah was to remain unanswered until statehood, while California was to be

admitted as a free state. As the North's compromise in return for this concession to its wishes, the fugitive slave laws of 1793 were strengthened, carrying federal penalties for the harboring of runaway slaves.

Stowe was outraged at the Compromise of 1850. She felt that the Fugitive Slave Law was an immoral price for the Northern states to pay to guarantee the preservation of the Union, and her arguments suggest that she thought of it also as unconstitutional. As she saw it, the Compromise placed America's moral foundation into a bargain to save the nation, and thereby deprived the Union of its justification for continued existence. A nation founded on principles of freedom could not tolerate as contradictory an institution as slavery and then additionally require citizens to uphold the contradiction by legally restricting their only course of active disapproval. The Fugitive Slave Law, in making illegal any efforts to aid the flight of slaves into non-slave states and by providing for the return of runaway slaves to their owners, in effect wrote into law the recognition of slave status in states whose constitutions did not recognize or approve slavery. Stowe was incensed most of all that the Compromise cut short the freedom to act as an individual according to one's own conscience.

It was not unusual for Stowe to react to political events in her writing. Having grown up in the Beecher family, headed by its influential and outspoken patriarch, Lyman Beecher, Harriet was in the habit of having an opinion and airing it, whether it was about observing the Sabbath in a more strict manner, the merits of temperance, or the Presbyterian Church's position on slavery. She wrote about whatever occupied her mind, even if it was as trivial as "The Ravages of a Carpet" in House and Home Papers. Her lack of judgment could lead her disastrously astray, as when she took it upon herself to defend the honor of her deceased friend, Lady Byron, by repeating in The Atlantic Monthly the story shared in confidence by Lady Byron years earlier about her husband's infidelity with his half-sister. Stowe should not have been surprised at the furious criticism that resulted; her husband, her publisher from The Atlantic Monthly, and Oliver Wendell Holmes had all expressed strong reservations about the publication. Whatever lapses of judgment she may have had, however, her strongest work seems to be the result of following her own homespun literary advice: "One must write what one is thinking of. [. . .] A story comes, grows like a flower, sometimes will and sometimes won't."<sup>7</sup>



The story that became Uncle Tom's Cabin might better be compared to the growing of a tree. When Stowe began writing, she had only the intention of writing several episodes to portray of slavery "the best side of the thing, and something faintly approaching the worst"(51: p. 65). Long before she resolved to begin work on the series, she had written preliminary sketches, including one that eventually became Uncle Tom's death scene. Stowe had traveled in the South only once before writing her novel, but her long-time residence in Cincinnati had allowed her to see and hear much about the plight of slaves, especially from fugitives pursued by bounty hunters. Over the years her store of useful anecdotes had grown along with the conviction that Americans, including Southerners, would turn against slavery if only they knew what degradation it brought upon slave and owner alike. And so, a series of "pictures" grew into a novel of epic proportions and with two separate story lines. Since Stowe had not outlined the plot development, she had to improvise at weaving together the two strands, which came at times like "an irresistible impulse"(109: p. 165). As a result the story of Eliza and George Harris is overshadowed by the Uncle Tom sections. Without intending to, Stowe had written her first novel, one with immediate impact.

In writing Uncle Tom's Cabin Stowe took risks that she did not normally take in later works and that may have played a role in publishers' reservations about producing a bound edition of the novel. While she was still writing the novel for The National Era, Stowe found a publisher, John P. Jewett, only with difficulty. As the novel grew during serialization he became nervous about taking on what was becoming a major project, and a controversial one at that. He need not have worried that the investment in printing costs would yield insufficient return. While describing the uglier side of slavery, Stowe, previously the writer of puritanical Sunday school lessons, had become the author of a novel with a double-stranded narration and complex imagery as well as the creator of a work of popular fiction, replete with such modern staples as suspense, lust, violence, and sex on a subliminal level. When Stowe was later criticized for making indelicate references to sexual abuses in slavery, she insisted that the reality she depicted was shocking and had to be faced squarely in order to be challenged and overcome. With sadistic Simon Legree scenes, tales of sexual degradation, sermons, and exhortations for prayer and reform, Stowe had hit upon a best-selling combination for the repressed Puritan tastes of nineteenth century America.

Stowe's problems in finding a publisher for Uncle Tom's Cabin differed from those faced by Suttner. Stowe's publisher had real fears about the commercial success of a first novel which had appeared in an obscure periodical whose sales had not risen during the time the work was appearing. (Subscribers simply shared and passed on the weekly installments). Abolitionist literature, often considered inflammatory, was boycotted by many publishers; and Stowe had to take her chances with Jewett, who was not yet established. He apparently viewed the project as something of a gamble, having asked Stowe originally to cover half the expense of the first edition with a promise of fifty percent royalty payments(99: p. 158). In these negotiations Calvin had represented his wife and he opted for a ten percent royalty agreement rather than to borrow enough to put up half the printing costs. Hindsight shows that the Stowes could have become independently wealthy had they chosen the riskier possibility. Calvin's best excuse was that he did not have the capital and was not a gambler who would risk going into debt. It did not take long for the market to disprove Jewett's and Stowe's lack of confidence. Within forty-eight hours of appearing in the shops the first edition of five thousand copies was sold out. By the end of the year (1852) sales had reached 300,000, in seven

years a million. At decade's end the novel was available in twenty-five other languages(115: p. 269; 32: p. x).

Stowe then developed marketing savvy similar to that of Suttner. She cultivated the overseas market by mailing advance copies to prominent people in Great Britain. Her publication of A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin was an attempt to authenticate her story. The Key also assured the continuation of the controversy that raged over the novel and, of course, increased sales. And by drawing on the same market for Uncle Tom's Cabin, Stowe supplemented the meager ten percent she earned from the novel.

The inner necessity to write played a different role for Suttner than it did for Stowe. Though each depended for inspiration on having something important to say, Stowe seemed less discriminating in deciding what was important, while Suttner was capable of considerable self-criticism. Suttner worried, "Ein Feuilleton soll ich jetzt schreiben [. . .] und weiß nicht was"(28: 1890 letter 65). Stowe, in a similar bind, suggested a series of articles of household advice for The Atlantic Monthly. As Johanna Johnston notes, Stowe wrote the way she talked, "about any subject that crossed her mind. [. . .] She talked and she talked, in ink"(78: p. 161). At times she

was moved by genuine evangelical fervor to speak out or write, truly believing that what she had to say was important. At other times she seems to have been out of touch with her times, writing from naive assumptions. Her easy ability to churn out stories and articles was a talent Suttner did not share, and the latter often brooded over her lack of inspiration, "[. . .] ich habe jetzt eben keine Arbeit im Zuge, die mir so recht von Herzen ginge"(28; 1890, letter 32).

Such complaints became standard as Suttner's "Arbeit vom Herzen" took on the form of public appearances and speaking tours. Her convictions were expressed in letters enlisting support from men of influence and in current events commentary rather than in novels. She was not, as she claimed to be, "ein arbeitsunfähiges Ding"--rather her role had changed. In Die Waffen nieder! she had made her best case for the peace movement and its platform, and her deep commitment to that cause required her to go beyond writing tendentious novels.

The overwhelming need to speak out that motivated the writing of Die Waffen nieder! and Uncle Tom's Cabin signaled the end of primarily fictional prose writing for one author, while for the other it opened new possibilities in the genre. Though Suttner did not stop writing novels, they soon became secondary to her

new-found occupation as peace activist. With Die Waffen nieder! she had fulfilled what was possible in a novel of entertainment with a didactic purpose. Stowe, on the other hand, had not exhausted slavery as a topic of fiction. Her second novel, Dred, was a shrill warning about slave discontent and possible uprising and offered an alternative to Uncle Tom's pious acceptance of his lot. The moral outcry that characterized the two anti-slavery novels was not to be repeated, however, in the fiction that followed. Uncle Tom's Cabin was the closest that Stowe came to political agitation; Die Waffen nieder! launched Suttner into a new role as a spokesperson for pacifism.

Although their motivation as writers led them in different directions, Stowe and Suttner continued to share particular attitudes about literature and about their own roles as writers. Stowe did not consider herself to be much of a literary star, though one suspects that some of her comments were demure platitudes. Her narrative comment is that of a Christian mother who is concerned for the welfare of her children and her readers' children. It is more often instinctive than it is intentionally crafted writing. Similarly Suttner's humanitarian instincts guided her work and she became resigned to the inevitable criticism of her writing in a period of growing

aestheticism. By furthering particular points of view in their works and by emphasizing a strong moral justification for writing, Stowe and Suttner defied literary intolerance for tendentiousness. Stowe was adamant in her opposition to a "merely artistic point of view"(51: p. 55) in Uncle Tom's Cabin. She "no more thought of style or literary excellence than the mother who rushes into the street and cries for help to save her children from a burning house thinks of the teachings of the rhetorician or elocutionist"(99: p. 162).

Neither Stowe nor Suttner strove to attain artistic goals in their work; they had other aims. Stowe's comment to another writer, "Works of art be hanged! You had a braver thought than that!"(109: p. 161) leaves no doubt that she considered the pursuit of stylistic perfection a waste of time. In part, her Puritan background was responsible for a denigrating attitude toward artistic works that were devoid of "educating, quickening, reforming influences"(109: p. 124). Suttner shared Stowe's low regard for artistic effect. She belittled as shallow authors whose works are devoted primarily to aesthetic pleasure, "'wie etwa eine gelungene Theaterdekoration, oder eine hübsche Damentoilette auf dem Balle'." Suttner could never reconcile herself to art for art's sake, not only because she felt most comfortable

with the literary ideas of Realism and Naturalism, but also because of the socio-ethical concerns in works of Realism/Naturalism with which she sympathized. She shared Stowe's belief that art had a threefold function and her criteria--"'der Wahrheit, der Gerechtigkeit und der Schönheit gedient [zu] haben'"(14: p. 149) correspond to Stowe's demand for "educating, reforming, quickening influences."

This concept of art in the service of truth and justice as well as of beauty implies that the writer has an ethical responsibility. In his theory of art, published in 1898 under the title What is Art?, Tolstoy developed and expounded the notion of the writer's moral duty. Precisely because his theory concerns itself with the question of morality in art, Tolstoy's ideas are not presented here arbitrarily. It is appropriate to examine Uncle Tom's Cabin in view of his theory, because Tolstoy cited Stowe's novel as an example of his prescriptions for "universal art." An evaluation of Suttner's novel gains much from the Tolstoian definition as well.

Tolstoy's praise is reserved for those novels that communicate a moral message about the everyday realities of common people in a way that the masses can easily understand. He conceives of art as an act of



communication, whose result is an inclusive human relationship encompassing artist and recipients. He rejects elitism and traces exclusivity to the secularization of subject matter. Tolstoy finds that religious art was always accessible to and understood by all; and secular art, as produced for the private domain, became ever more inaccessible, physically with less public and church-related display and intellectually with demands for originality. To be sure, he recognized that the exclusivity of art raises a question not only of a religious or secular subject but of economic class as well:

Since the upper classes of the Christian nations lost faith in Church-Christianity the art of those upper classes has separated itself from the art of the rest of the people and there have been two arts--the art of the people, and genteel art(101: p. 144).

Tolstoy rejects "genteel art" as refined and artificial, for it is produced under circumstances that do not correspond to the everyday experience of work and survival. He denies the value of a quest for aesthetic perfection if the artist is thereby separated from common life. The more refined the work of art, the less it corresponds to human experience; and as it becomes more incomprehensible, the need for an interpreter arises. Tolstoy questions the possibility of achieving aesthetic ideals in the complicated economic structure consisting of

consumer (patron), producer (artist), and interpretive intermediary (critic) that exists for genteel art.

Furthermore, his criticism rests on the assumption that art is that which communicates "even the most trifling and simple feelings if only they are accessible to all men without exception, and therefore unite them"(101: p. 241). He is concerned not solely with a more democratic determination based on a majority's opinion but also with a definition of art that is religious when he asks how we can insist that a work is art when the majority of mankind thinks of it as rubbish. Because he defines humanity as spiritual, he requires art to reflect that spirituality. In this sense all art is religious:

transmitting feelings flowing from a religious perception of man's position in the world in relation to God and his neighbor--religious art in the limited meaning of the term; and secondly [. . .] transmitting the simplest feelings of common life, but such always as are accessible to all men in the whole world--the art of common life--the art of the people--universal art.(101; p. 241.)

The words "religious art" are not meant to imply an endorsement of any institutional religious position or program. Tolstoy's religious beliefs reject conventional orthodoxy and stress the equality of all humankind based on the notion of God in each human being. Thus the common spiritual humanity of artist and recipient is central to

his essentially democratic prescriptions.

Using de Maupassant as an example, he criticizes the artist who takes the "wrong" moral position in his work or who insists on neutrality for the sake of objectivity. Tolstoy disagrees that the human condition ought to be portrayed as objectively as possible; rather, the work of art "discloses, undrapes the object, and compels love of it if it deserves love and hatred of it if it deserves hatred"(101: p. 40). The point of connection with the recipient, who recognizes the sincerity of the artist's position, is in this taking of a correct moral attitude. Without the artist's moral stance the communication of feeling is not possible. The emphasis on feeling as a central point in Tolstoy's definition makes his theory anti-rationalistic:

The business of art lies just in this: to make that understood and felt which in the form of an argument might be incomprehensible and inaccessible. Usually it seems to the recipient of a truly artistic impression that he knew the thing before, but had been unable to express it(101: p. 178).

Tolstoy prefers art whose appeal is on an intuitive level, that is psychologically rather than rationally understood.

His rejection of abstract art is based on his refusal to interpret. By taking a work (his examples include a poem, an opera, and a painting) at face value, he claims that the work is absurd. He uses a description of the

work's concrete or literal detail to prove that it has no meaning. In refusing to extract or create meaning where he insists there is none, he rejects the artist's intentional abstraction. He demands instead that the artist strive to communicate feelings credibly and without artificiality. By refusing to decipher artists' veiled allusions in order to understand their work, he rejects abstraction as a hindrance to communication and a point of alienation between artist and recipient. Throughout the essay, Tolstoy stresses that it is the communication of feeling that is important, rather than interpretation of meaning. Interpretation is not only an intermediary step that separates artist from recipient, but it often results in disagreement. Tolstoy's ideal art is one that brings readers, viewers, and listeners together. If the meaning of life consists in striving toward the union of humankind, as he insists it is, then art must reflect that perception, for

Art is not a pleasure, a solace, or an amusement; art is a great matter. Art is an organ of human life transmitting man's reasonable perception into feeling. In our age the common religious perception of men is the consciousness of the brotherhood of man--we know that the well-being of man lies in union with his fellow men. [. . .] Art should transform this perception into feeling(101: p. 286).

Tolstoy concludes that the logical consequence of elitist trends is a gradual disappearance of art as a

cultural product created for public reception, as artists cease to communicate any commonality of experience. A consequence of incomprehensibility to ever greater numbers of people is the gradual demise of art as Tolstoy understands it, for "art may be intelligible only to the very smallest number of the elect and eventually to two, or to one, of our nearest friends, or to oneself alone"(101: p. 175). Particularly serious to Tolstoy was the diminishing value of communication in art, so central to his notion. He does not approve of the artist who is alienated from the public and who uses art as a representation of his separation. Rather, he finds it natural that literature be a dialogue between writer and reader:

[. . .] when we read or look at the artistic production of a new author the fundamental question that arises in our soul is always of this kind: "Well, what sort of a man are you: Wherein are you different from all the people I know, and what can you tell me that is new about how we must look at this life of ours? [. . .] we seek and see only the artist's own soul. [. . .] And therefore a writer who has not a clear, definite, and just, view of the universe, and especially a man who considers that this is not even wanted, cannot produce a work of art(101: pp. 38-39).

Stowe's understanding of the purpose of literature to be one of positive moral suasion predates Tolstoy's definition and is one of the reasons that he approved of Uncle Tom's Cabin. In her preface she states what

she wants her novel and the rest of literature to accomplish, and her flowery prose couches ideas similar to Tolstoy's. It is her intent that

every influence of literature, of poetry and of art, in our times, [become] more and more in unison with the great master chord of Christianity, 'good will to man.'

The poet, the painter, and the artist, now seek out and embellish the common and gentler humanities of life, and, under the allurements of fiction, breathe a humanizing and subduing influence, favorable to the development of the great principles of Christian brotherhood.

The hand of benevolence is everywhere stretched out, searching into abuses, righting wrongs, alleviating distresses, and bringing to the knowledge and sympathies of the world the lowly, the oppressed, and the forgotten(33: p. 9).

The treatment of the lowly, the depiction of social strata from low to high, the geographic settings that ranged from Vermont to New Orleans to Canada, and the moral outcry combine to constitute a Tolstoian "universal" work of art. But even without Tolstoy's essay to identify Uncle Tom's Cabin as such, the novel's broad international appeal testified to its universality.

## Notes

Toward Writing as a Moral Vocation:  
Personal Influences and Literary Choices

<sup>1</sup> Wilson(115) is a major source of biographical information about Stowe. See also Annie Fields (57) and Charles Edward Stowe(99).

<sup>2</sup> Mary Kelley quotes a letter of January 1, 1847 from Harriet Beecher Stowe to her husband in which she evaluates the good and the bad in eleven years of marriage(82: p. 283).

<sup>3</sup> The primary source for Suttner's biography is her Memoiren(26) also published in another edition under the title Lebenserinnerungen(27). See also Hamann(71), Kempf(84), and Kleburger(85).

<sup>4</sup> The working class was not a part of Suttner's regular readership and was introduced to her writing through the reprinting of Die Waffen nieder! in the Socialist periodical Vorwärts. The author did not shy away from the label "die rote Bertha," which she acquired after giving her permission for the reprinting.

<sup>5</sup> See Suttner(25), where a clear pattern of report and commentary on the political developments as they led to possible war or toward the securing of peace emerges.

Suttner's columns in the journals Die Waffen nieder! and Die Friedenswarte focused first on the negative news of the day and then offered glimmers of hope with positive reports.

<sup>6</sup> The novel as an argument for the humanity of the slaves suggests that Stowe saw a contradiction between guarantees of private property and guarantees of individual rights.

<sup>7</sup> The Stowe quote appears in Wagenknecht(108: p. 165). Ammons' anthology (37) revisits the controversy raised by the Lady Byron publications. For reactions to Stowe's work by her contemporaries see Wilson(115: pp. 442-43, 530; and Adams(36: p. 92)



### Chapter III

#### Uncle Tom's Cabin:

#### Harriet Beecher Stowe's Tolstoian Novel

Whether or not Harriet Beecher Stowe and Bertha von Suttner accomplished literary breakthroughs in their work or even if they worked within an approved tradition is not the concern of this dissertation. Whether or not they have been unfairly ignored by literary critics is also not of central interest here. Rather the question is what significance morality has in their writing and what import that moral element has for us today. In this chapter I shall explore the kinds of issues Stowe addressed in Uncle Tom's Cabin, the problems she exposed and criticized, the reforms she proposed, and her manner of doing so. Certainly an examination of that novel helps us to understand the oft-quoted reference to Die Waffen nieder! as "the Uncle Tom's Cabin of the peace movement." The American novel provides us with an understanding of what Tolstoy approved in it and suggests what he might have accepted and rejected in Die Waffen nieder!, while it is appropriate for comparison as a popular, sentimental novel of protest.

Stowe's novel was a sermon to the nation in the tradition of the author's Congregationalist father and his forefathers. It was a call to repentance meant for the consciences of her readers as much as it was a warning to the nation that a day of judgment would come. Uncle Tom's Cabin is a Jeremiad and its lamentations call a people to account for its sins. As such, the novel follows a Puritan tradition that would not have been considered radical or controversial(102: pp. 139-141). The sins that Stowe lists, however, belong to an unconventional agenda. We can identify three areas in which she addresses corruption that stems from slavery: the economic, the private, and the social sphere. She abhors the importance that profit plays in decisions to approve or denounce slavery and identifies Mammon as America's false idol. The realization that the political decisions in the Compromise of 1850 were based on economic priorities brought Stowe out of her complacency toward abolition.

She uses the George Harris story to expose slave-dependent production and the profits reaped by unscrupulous slave owners. The problem is presented in a tavern conversation between Mr. Wilson, George's former employer, and two strangers in reaction to a handbill advertising for the capture of George:<sup>1</sup>

'[. . .] a fine fellow--no mistake about that. He worked for me some half-dozen years in my bagging factory, and he was my best hand, sir. He is an ingenious fellow, too: he invented a machine for the cleaning of hemp--a really valuable affair; it's gone into use in several factories. His master holds the patent of it.'

'I 'll warrant ye,' said the drover, 'holds it and makes money out of it, and then turns round and brands the boy in his right hand. If I had a fair chance, I 'd mark him, I reckon, so that he 'd carry it one while.'

'These yer knowin' boys is allers aggravatin' and sarcy,' said a coarse-looking fellow, from the other side of the room; 'that 's why they gets cut up and marked so. If they behaved themselves, they would n't.'

'That is to say, the Lord made 'em men, and it 's a hard squeeze getting 'em down into beasts,' said the drover, dryly.

'Bright niggers is n't no kind of 'vantage to their masters,' continued the other, well intrenched, in a coarse, unconscious obtuseness, from the contempt of his opponent; 'what 's the use o' talents and them things, if you can't get the use on 'em yourself? Why, all the use they make on 't is to get round you. I've had one or two of these fellers, and I jest sold 'em down river. I knew I 'd got to lose 'em, first or last, if I did n't.'

'Better send orders up to the Lord, to make you a set, and leave out their souls entirely,' said the drover(33: pp. 130-31).

At this point George's incognito arrival interrupts the conversation. Stowe presents the situation: slave owners take financial advantage not only of the physical labors of their slaves but of the fruits of their mental powers. In addition a slave with intellectual capabilities can be in danger of being abused because mental prowess does not fit the white stereotype of the black slave as physically strong and mentally weak. Stowe argues first that

intelligence in the black slave is a proof of his humanity. When that point is lost on the crude defender of slavery, she has the drover make the point which in her mind defies contradiction: that the black slave is human and strives for freedom because of a spiritual property--his soul. She assumes that the religious convictions with which she vetoes constitutional guarantees of private property are shared by most of her readers.

Stowe uses strong language to denounce the injustice of an economy based on human exploitation, but the immorality of wealth based on slave breeding earns her most pointed attack. The stories of old Prue and Topsy illustrate two of the results of such breeding; and the author underscores the degradation and alienation from humanity that it produces. Prue is introduced as an unpleasant creature with "a peculiar scowling expression of countenance, and a sullen, grumbling voice." She responds to other people "gruffly, [. . .] with a sour, surly glance [. . .] and, with a malignant howl"(33: pp. 252,253). The other slaves shun her and haughtily denounce her drunkenness. Only Tom shows any feeling of pity for her and she tells him how her children were sold off one by one by her master who was a breeder. With her only reason for living gone when the last child, who was

left to her as compensation, died of illness and neglect because Prue's mistress insisted on her undivided attention, she became a hopeless alcoholic in search of death. The Prue and Topsy stories are linked by the discussion of slavery between St. Clare and Miss Ophelia, in which the latter vents her indignation at Prue's death. Following this protracted conversation, St. Clare presents Ophelia with Topsy so that she can undertake the reforms she had suggested for slaveholders.

Ophelia soon learns that Topsy is also the product of slave breeding when she questions her about her background:

'How old are you, Topsy?'

'Dun no, Missis,' said the image, with a grin that showed all her teeth.

'Don't know how old you are? Did n't anybody ever tell you? Who was your mother?'

'Never had none!' said the child, with another grin.

'Never had any mother? What do you mean? Where were you born?'

'Never was born!' persisted Topsy, with another grin, that looked so goblin-like, that, if Miss Ophelia had been at all nervous, she might have fancied that she had got hold of some sooty gnome from the land of Diablerie; but Miss Ophelia was not nervous, but plain and business-like, and she said, with some sternness,

'You must n't answer me in that way, child; I 'm not playing with you. Tell me where you were born, and who your father and mother were.'

'Never was born,' reiterated the creature, more emphatically; 'never had no father nor mother, nor nothin'. I was raised by a speculator, with lots of others. Old Aunt Sue used to take care on us.'

Undaunted by Topsy's lack of familial ties, Miss Ophelia plunges on:

'Have you ever heard anything about God, Topsy?'

The child looked bewildered, but grinned as usual.

'Do you know who made you?'

'Nobody, as I knows on,' said the child, with a short laugh.

The idea appeared to amuse her considerably; for her eyes twinkled, and she added,

'I spects I grow'd. Don't think nobody never made me'(33: pp. 281-82).

Topsy shares none of the context that other slaves had in common with their masters--the rudiments of family and the acquisition of minimal "white culture." She is not only alienated from the dominant culture but from her own class as well. For Stowe the lack of familial connection that resulted from slave breeding is a serious moral injustice, which is compounded by the total lack of religious or moral training of any kind. If Topsy's hobgoblin character is exaggerated, it was exploited as a stereotype only in later theatricals. To be sure, Stowe's own stereotyping is apparent in her depiction of Topsy as "one of the blackest of her race" and her later juxtaposition of Eva's white saintliness with Topsy's black amorality. But the exposition of Topsy's background makes clear that Stowe is not interested in blaming character flaws on race but on the condition of slavery. The Prues and Topsys might have been the exception, but

Stowe gives them considerable attention to emphasize the worst of slavery's debasing effects.

Nor does she spare those who are actually the least likely to mistreat slaves--the dealers and the benevolent slaveholders who insist that market value is the surest guarantee against abuse of slaves. She sees beyond the argument that it is in the business interest of the slaveowner or dealer to treat slaves humanely. For if the profit motive is the best argument for proper care, it is also a primary consideration in the decision to sell slaves and overrides any personal, familial, or humanitarian arguments against their sale. The conversation between Mr. and Mrs. Shelby illustrates that business imperatives have priority over emotional ties between master and slave:

'Well, Emily,' said her husband, '[. . .] the fact is that my business lies so that I cannot get on without. I shall have to sell some of my hands.'

'To that creature? Impossible! Mr. Shelby, you cannot be serious.'

'I'm sorry to say that I am,' said Mr. Shelby. 'I've agreed to sell Tom.'

'What! our Tom? -- that good, faithful creature! -- been your faithful servant from a boy! O, Mr. Shelby! -- and you have promised him his freedom, too, -- you and I have spoken to him a hundred times of it. Well, I can believe anything now, -- I can believe now that you could sell little Harry, poor Eliza's only child!' said Mrs. Shelby, in a tone between grief and indignation(33: p. 46).

While Mr. Shelby's position toward his slaves is that of a businessman toward his commercial assets, Mrs. Shelby sees the slaves as part of her personal familial domain. She takes over the Jeremiad, when she laments:

'This is God's curse on slavery! --a bitter, bitter, most accursed thing! --a curse to the master and a curse to the slave! I was a fool to think I could make anything good out of such a deadly evil. It is a sin to hold a slave under laws like ours, --I always felt it was, --I always thought so when I was a girl, --I thought so still more after I joined the church; but I thought I could gild it over, -- I thought, by kindness, and care, and instruction, I could make the condition of mine better than freedom--fool that I was!'(33: p. 48).

In times of business stability or growth when the necessity for the sale of slaves need not threaten, the illusion of "making slavery better than freedom" is possible. But Mrs. Shelby recognizes that benevolence cannot make the true reality of slavery any milder. She is the most responsible of the slaveholder representatives in the book, but she does not have the power to write free papers for her family's slaves. Only after the death of her husband and when the death of Uncle Tom moves her son George to remorse, are the Shelby slaves freed.

Stowe's criticism is not reserved for the slaveholders and traders alone. She also exposes as sinners those who support the institution more indirectly.



In upholding market interests by arguing for the inviolability of private property, the middlemen of slavery corrupt their own morality by violating human freedom. Stowe identifies legislators, constables, judges and lawyers as non-slaveholders, often Northerners, who nevertheless share responsibility for their part in defending and ensuring slave commerce. In describing two slaves at the New Orleans market she denounces in particular those who allow monied interests to dictate their actions contrary to the claims of moral principles:

These two are to be sold to-morrow, in the same lot with the St. Clare servants; and the gentleman to whom they belong, and to whom the money for their sale is to be transmitted, is a member of a Christian church in New York, who will receive the money, and go thereafter to the sacrament of his Lord and theirs, and think no more of it.

[. . .]

The respectable firm of B. & Co., in New York [. . .] wrote to their lawyer in New Orleans, who attached the real estate (these two articles and a lot of plantation hands formed the most valuable part of it), and wrote word to that effect to New York. Brother B., being, as we have said, a Christian man, and a resident in a free State, felt some uneasiness on the subject. He did n't like trading in slaves and souls of men, --of course, he did n't; but, then, there were thirty thousand dollars in the case, and that was rather too much money to be lost for a principle; and so, after much considering, and asking advice from those that he knew would advise to suit him, Brother B. wrote to his lawyer to dispose of the business in the way that seemed to him the most suitable, and remit the proceeds.

[. . .]

Two days after, the lawyer of the Christian firm of B. & Co., New York, sent on their money to

them. On the reverse of that draft, so obtained, let them write these words of the great Paymaster, to whom they shall make up their account in a future day: 'When he maketh inquisition for blood, he forgetteth not the cry of the humble!'(33: pp. 382-83, 390).

Stowe is relentless in her criticism of the businessman's capitulation to profit considerations. The repeated references to his standing as a Christian man in the community only highlight his crass opportunism. Stowe twice calls judgment upon Brother B.'s hypocrisy: at first through the reference to "the sacrament of his Lord," a reminder to her readers of the warning in Corinthians 11:27,29: "Whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. [. . .] For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself." And then through the Old Testament cry for retribution from Psalms 9:12.

As Stowe calls judgment on Brother B., she also calls judgment upon the nation for straying from its founding commitment to religious freedom and political justice. For her slavery was only a part of a greater falling away from grace. Brother B's hypocrisy is representative of an inconsistency throughout American life that she traces to the private sphere; and she sees a loss of the great social ideals--equality, the work ethic, and the pursuit of happiness--that inspired the founding of the nation.

These priorities are both American and Christian, but they are no longer nurtured in private life. Stowe suggests that the moral priorities she values are to be found outside of the mainstream, for example, in the Indiana Quaker community, whose harmony extends from the family out into the larger community. Measured against this model the other families and households, ranging from the Shelby estate to Simon Legree's anti-home, fail in varying degrees.

The embodiment of the ideal American community is presented by Stowe in the Quaker household of the Halliday family, in which the religious communalism of the Pilgrim forebears is united with the aspirations for political justice of the nation's founders. The Quakers are part of the highly organized Underground Railroad and fully aware of the illegality of their actions. And their willingness to risk all consequences for a just cause makes them heroes in the mold of Revolutionary War legends, while their pacifist humility evokes the Pilgrim's willingness to suffer hardship for religious conviction. Their quiet but active disapproval of the nation's unjust laws--"The Lord only gives us our worldly goods that we may do justice and mercy; if our rulers require a price of us for it, we must deliver it up"(33: p. 171)--reminds the reader

of the oppressive regimes that Quakers and other religious minorities fled from in order to start a new order in America. The idea that profit or "worldly goods" ought to be invested in assuring justice is a radical alternative that Stowe recommends in answer to the profit motives of the slavery she criticizes.

The Quaker community held up as an ideal is a cooperative extended family. Stowe first introduces the Halliday family, in which the mother, Rachel, is the organizational hub(102: pp. 141-142). She is the leader of the family not through any authoritative assertion but rather through her gentle encouragement and suggestions, "'Hadn't thee better?'" and admonishments that become no stronger than "'Come, come,' or 'I would n't, now'"(33: p. 169). The daily operations of the household run smoothly through a harmonious and cheerful cooperation of all members. The larger community is based on the same principle. Where there is need, the Friends step in to help each other. Their generosity and charity extend beyond the immediate community to those who are not members of the religious group and, in fact, even to those who oppose their efforts. Against the smooth efficiency of the Halliday household Stowe then contrasts the slave households(87: p. 23).

As the novel's setting moves southward, the organization and management of the plantation households become more chaotic and inefficient until, with the Legree plantation, only utter dissolution and depravity remain. It is notable that the family, as a unit of social and economic organization with the mother at its head, is Stowe's ideal and that she shows an increase in disorganization as woman's active influence decreases. This emphasis is apparent in her depiction of meals as an indicator of social health. In the Halliday family, meal preparation and consumption rate the narrator's attention while other everyday activities are secondary:

While, therefore, John ran to the spring for fresh water, and Simeon the second sifted meal for corn-cakes, and Mary ground coffee, Rachel moved gently and quietly about, making biscuits, cutting up chicken, and diffusing a sort of sunny radiance over the whole proceeding generally. [. . .]

While all other preparations were going on, Simeon the elder stood in his shirt-sleeves before a little looking-glass in the corner, engaged in the anti-patriarchal operation of shaving. [. . .]

Rachel never looked so truly and benignly happy as at the head of her table. There was so much motherliness and fullheartedness even in the way she passed a plate of cakes or poured a cup of coffee, that it seemed to put a spirit into the food and drink she offered (33: pp. 169-70).

The domestic idyll is exaggerated, but, no matter how unrealistic, it captures the undefinable atmosphere of home. Stowe emphasizes home as the mother's domain and as

the center of human activity; it is significant that she describes Simeon in a non-essential activity on the edge of the family's meal preparations.<sup>2</sup> Rachel Halliday is presented as more than the director of normal domestic activity; her household is described in religious terms, "a living Gospel, breathed in living faces, preached by a thousand unconscious acts of love and good will" and she attains the stature of the central figure in a ritual.<sup>3</sup> By contrast the St. Clare kitchen, presided over by Dinah, is "chaos and old night" in Augustine St. Clare's words, and he assures Ophelia that he is aware of the details of Dinah's rambling style of managing a kitchen:

'Don't I know that the rolling-pin is under her bed, and the nutmeg-grater in her pocket with her tobacco, --that there are sixty-five different sugar-bowls, one in every hole in the house, --that she washes dishes with a dinner-napkin one day, and with a fragment of an old petticoat the next?'(33: p. 250)

Not only does the kitchen look "as if it had been arranged by a hurricane blowing through it"(33: p. 245), but a different atmosphere prevails in Dinah's domain than in the Quaker kitchen. The St. Clare kitchen is the primary gathering place for the slaves where their competitive social hierarchy becomes obvious in gossip and banter and egotistic one-upsmanship. A spirit of cooperation is not possible here, for slavery fosters a concern for individual welfare rather than for the common good. This

self-concern is still sharper in Uncle Tom's introduction to the evening ration at the Legree Plantation:

It was late in the evening when the weary occupants of the shanties came flocking home, [. . .]. The small village was alive with no inviting sounds; hoarse, guttural voices contending at the hand-mills where their morsel of hard corn was yet to be ground into meal, to fit it for the cake that was to constitute their only supper. [. . .] Tom looked in vain among the gang, as they poured along, for companionable faces. He saw only sullen, scowling, imbruted men, and feeble, discouraged women, or women that were not women, --the strong pushing away the weak, --the gross, unrestricted animal selfishness of human beings, of whom nothing good was expected and desired; and who, treated in every way like brutes, had sunk as nearly to their level as it was possible for human beings to do. To a late hour in the night the sound of the grinding was protracted; for the mills were few in number compared with the grinders, and the weary and feeble ones were driven back by the strong, and came on last in their turn(33: pp. 403-04).

Instead of the cooperative preparation of a communal meal that took place in the Indiana Quaker family we see only the brutality of a system that dehumanizes the slaves in their relations with the master and with each other as well. No community is portrayed here, only individuals pitted against one another for survival.

Stowe places great importance on home as the locus of provision for physical needs and familial harmony. Women are not simply the primary providers of emotional care, for they function in the home also as household managers. The efficiency of the "household economy"<sup>4</sup> depends on

woman's recognition of her responsibility. But that responsibility may be ignored in the life of leisure that the slave system provides, allowing the slave-owning woman to relinquish her role. In the author's worst case scenario the absence of home and household management is related to the maltreatment of women and their appropriation to an improper role.<sup>5</sup>

In the Shelby family episodes Mrs. Shelby has an active role in running her household. Because of her husband's business blunders the sale of Tom and little Harry throw the entire estate into upheaval and, with Eliza's escape, into uproar and confusion. Her capabilities become apparent after Mr. Shelby's death, when she finally brings financial matters under control to the extent that her son can free all of their slaves.

At the St. Clare plantation in New Orleans, Marie St. Clare is listless and uninvolved, and her husband Augustine is also unwilling to impose disciplined management. Only his cousin from Vermont, Miss Ophelia, tries to introduce her New England order to the St. Clare chaos. Her attempts are doomed to failure, however; and she vents her frustration in conversation with her cousin, voicing her objections to slavery in the words of the housekeeper who prides herself on efficiency: "'Such shiftless management, such waste, such confusion, I never



saw!'"(33: p. 249). Ophelia sees the slave-run household as a constant financial drain and she chides Augustine for pouring more money into it. Although he is kind to his slaves and tolerant of their waste, Stowe shows his apathy to be a great cruelty, for it is his failure to provide for their care after his death that causes his slaves to be sold into barbarian conditions.

At the Legree plantation the household or family unit is non-existent; and the economy that characterizes Legree's management is one of total consumption, exploitation, and willful abuse without regard even for financial self-interest. The house is in disrepair, and Legree himself thrives on cruelty, debauchery, and perverted relationships with his slaves, who are the only people with whom he has regular contact, however dehumanized they are by his brutality. Legree's plantation is a tyranny of feudal barbarism devoid of any normal human interaction and threatened by his own volatile and uncontrollable temper. Stowe grants that Legree is an aberration, but he is one protected nevertheless by the laws of the slave code.

In addition to her criticism of the inefficiency of slavery Stowe castigates the aristocratic values it perpetuates. The loss of equality for all in order to provide leisure and luxury for a few is for her an

obliteration of the founding values of the American nation. In order to support the institution the slaveowners must reject the principles of the Declaration of Independence, as St. Clare's brother does in reaction to Augustine's paraphrase that all men are created equal: "'Poh,' said Alfred, 'one of Tom Jefferson's pieces of French sentiment and humbug. It's perfectly ridiculous to have that going the rounds among us, to this day'"(33: p. 314). Stowe responds indirectly to Alfred's denigration of the Revolutionary spirit when she reminds her readers in a later chapter that the slaves' desire for freedom ought to be understood in the tradition of the American struggle for independence:

Liberty! --electric word! What is it? Is there anything more in it than a name--a rhetorical flourish? Why, men and women of America, does your heart's blood thrill at that word, for which your fathers bled, and your braver mothers were willing that their noblest and best should die?

Is there anything in it glorious and dear for a nation, that is not also glorious and dear for a man? What is freedom to a nation, but freedom to the individuals in it? What is freedom to that young man, who sits there, with his arms folded over his broad chest, the tint of African blood in his cheek, its dark fires in his eye, --what is freedom to George Harris? To your fathers, freedom was the right of a nation to be a nation. To him, it is the right of a man to be a man, and not a brute; the right to call the wife of his bosom his wife, and to protect her from lawless violence; the right to protect and educate his child; the right to have a home of his own, a religion of his own, a character of his own, unsubject to the will of another(33: pp. 447-48).

Stowe's narrative comment reads like a Fourth of July speech, but one that points to the incongruity in the dispensation of the nation's highest good. In its reminder of what freedom meant to previous generations and of the oppression they fought against, her exegesis of liberty attacks denials of freedom in the America of her day and accuses the nation of perpetuating oppression. She claims for the slaves the same basic rights that white Americans of her day take for granted, and she pleads for consistency in the American grant of freedom to the oppressed.

Stowe warns that the heritage of freedom and equality is endangered by a continuation of slavery, which by its very nature means a greater stratification of society and a loss of egalitarian principles. The aristocratic values of the South are antithetical to the ideals that formed the Union and ought to be rejected rather than deferred to in political compromises.<sup>6</sup> As with the domestic values that die out the further south the plantation, she shows the growth of anti-democratic despotism southward from Kentucky to Louisiana. Mr. Shelby denounces his wife's willingness to sell her personal assets or earn the money to buy Tom back:

'If I can get the money no other way, I will take music-scholars; --I could get enough, I know, and earn the money myself.'

'You would n't degrade yourself that way, Emily? I never could consent to it.'  
 'Degrade! would it degrade me as much as to break my faith with the helpless? No, indeed!'(33: p. 297).

Mrs. Shelby is unwilling to accept that her idea of earning money is out of place in her social order. Her ethical priorities place a word of honor without regard to class higher than social propriety. For her husband, however, the appearance of a life of leisure ranks higher than any promises made to slaves. His wife's intent to help their slaves is at the least a breach of etiquette and at the most a rebellious reversal of the code of his class, for it is the acknowledgment of subordinates and their needs in a hierarchy where only the wants of the superiors are meant to be served.

Augustine St. Clare expresses more clearly than Mr. Shelby's reaction to his wife's ideas the slaveholder's perspective when he defines an aristocrat in reference to his brother and father:

'Now, an aristocrat, you know, the world over, has no human sympathies, beyond a certain line in society. [. . .] What would be hardship and distress and injustice in his own class, is a cool matter of course in another one'(33: p. 264).

Stowe intends to show that this attitude has no place in a society which claims a Christian and an anti-despotic egalitarian heritage--one that has broken with Old World traditions and thinking. The conflict is essentially one

of Old and New World perspectives, as represented by the St. Clare brothers:

'[. . .] we can see plainly enough that all men are not born free, nor born equal; they are born anything else. For my part, I think half this republican talk sheer humbug. It is the educated, the intelligent, the wealthy, the refined, who ought to have equal rights, and not the canaille.

[. . .]

'Of course, they must be kept down, consistently, steadily, as I should,' said Alfred, setting his foot hard down, as if he were standing on somebody.

'It makes a terrible slip when they get up,' said Augustine, --'in St. Domingo, for instance.'

'Poh!' said Alfred, 'we'll take care of that, in this country. We must set our face against all this educating, elevating talk, that is getting about now; the lower class must not be educated.'

'That is past praying for,' said Augustine; 'educated they will be, and we have only to say how. Our system is educating them in barbarism and brutality. We are breaking all humanizing ties, and making them brute beasts; and, if they get the upper hand, such we shall find them.'

'They never shall get the upper hand!' said Alfred. [. . .]

'The nobles in Louis XVI.'s time thought just so; and Austria and Pius IX. think so now [. . .].

'I tell you,' said Augustine, 'if there is anything that is revealed with the strength of a divine law in our times, it is that the masses are to rise, and the under class become the upper one'(33: pp. 314-15).

Augustine's progressive views are the product of radical Christian teaching about social justice. Initially shaped by the instruction of his devout mother, his ideas (especially the wording of his last statement) reflect

Stowe's belief in the inevitability of an egalitarian Kingdom of God on earth. She saw the revolutionary developments of the mid-century, specifically 1848, as consistent with the religious ideals of social justice for which she and other American religious reform movements were striving(51: p. 210). The reference to the French revolution reiterates that a social system based on inequity was bound to fail; and because of that failure Americans ought not to be tempted to remake the same mistakes. Furthermore, by citing the examples of the French Revolution, the slave uprising in Santo Domingo, and the Hungarian revolt in Austria she warns that history is on the side of the oppressed.

To anyone who would agree with Alfred's statement that inequality exists and is a good thing, Stowe answers with her depiction of Simon Legree as a despotic, ignorant brute who exploits slavery for all he can get from it. Clearly this man deserves none of the authority that he claims solely through the power of his money. His inhumane practices, however reprehensible they may be, take the economic essence of slavery to its logical conclusion as an exploitation of human resources for financial profit. Legree describes his treatment of his slaves, using profit as his rationalisation:

'I used to, when I fust begun, have considerable trouble fussin' with 'em and trying to make 'em hold out, --doctorin' on 'em up when they's sick, and givin' on 'em clothes and blankets, and what not, tryin' to keep 'em all sort o' decent and comfortable. Law, 't was heaps o' trouble. Now, you see, I just put 'em straight through, sick or well. When one nigger's dead, I buy another; and I find it comes cheaper and easier, every way'(33: p. 395).

His slaves have no chance of leaving the plantation except through death. Their subsistence is minimal, their lives nothing but toil and weariness, leading only to illness and death. While the Shelbys and Augustine St. Clare ease their guilt by indulging their slaves with greater leisure and simple pleasures, treating them to a minimal extent as human beings, Legree uses the definition of slavery as an institution of commercial production to justify using his slaves as work animals or machines in the most cost effective way. He does not even have scruples about telling a stranger of his system. He is a despot and his plantation represents a return to primitive conditions. It is located in the remote bayou, far from neighboring plantations and worlds removed from the social and political ideals that once inspired the earliest settlers. From the warm communality and efficient cooperation of the Halliday household to the brutality and human waste of Legree's plantation is a long journey. Stowe's juxtaposition of the contrasts is again a reminder of how far from its founding principles the nation has moved when

it allows such abuses in the name of the rights of private property.

The criticism of values in Uncle Tom's Cabin implies a need for reform on a structural basis; and while the narrator calls upon readers to do what they can as individuals, their responsibility includes working for institutional change. Stowe's goal is the elimination of slavery because of its debilitating effect on the nation. As institutions deemed essential to the Abolitionist goal, church and state are blamed for their refusal to contribute to the elimination of slavery and they are castigated for their failure to alleviate its damage.

As an unnatural and involuntary social unit made up of fragmentary families, orphans, and battered or abused individuals, the slave community is a poor provider of even minimal emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual needs. Friction arises when its members vent their frustrations on each other for lack of any other target. In spite of the suffering that the slaves have in common, Stowe often depicts a loneliness rather than a solidarity of suffering. On an individual level she describes the damage in characters like Topsy, Prue, and Cassy, who are viewed by their masters as unreliable and of little use. With the other slaves they are outsiders, objects of scorn and targets of misplaced hatred. Not



only are they emotionally scarred by their initial experiences, but the damage continues with their ostracism. On a larger institutional scale Stowe depicts the coldness and callousness of slaves toward each other as the result of their masters' denial of their humanity. The lack of community interaction follows closely the level of disregard by the master.

On the Shelby plantation the regular religious meeting is an important social event in the lives of the local region's slaves. Family relationships are valued and encouraged. The almost idyllic situation is exposed as illusory, however, when financial imperatives dictate the sale of slaves and thus the breakup of families as Shelby agrees to sell Tom and Eliza's son Harry to the trader Haley.

Contrasted with the examples of benevolent slaveholders who allow their slaves some measure of normalcy is the story of Cassy. Her life is one long dawning revelation of her status and of the degradation that she has been born into in spite of all the affection and trappings of luxury that were lavished on her in her childhood. At the death of her father, a plantation owner, she does not fully comprehend her position as a bastard slave when she is sold as part of the estate. She does not suspect that her "suitor" has actually bought

her. Her repeated requests that they marry are answered with suggestions that common law marriage is adequate in the eyes of God, even after the birth of two children. Gambling debts force her second master to sell Cassy and the children to a cousin, who eventually sells off her children. After attempting to murder this master, she is then sold again to a fourth owner and upon bearing him a son she turns to infanticide. Cassy harbors no regrets over this action, for her master dies from cholera and she is eventually sold to Simon Legree. She sees the only alternative to slavery in death or freedom, with the latter not in her power to give.

Repeatedly Stowe has slaves tell their stories of relative ease and comfort, even of familial happiness that end with a benevolent master's death or with financial disaster. The auction block becomes the agency of separation. The transaction cuts the slave off from the familiar. The slave's attempt to read in the manner and appearance of buyers any sign of being sold into benevolence or cruelty indicates the uncertainty and need to grasp at any hope. But dread is the only possible reaction for Tom when he sees a man approach him whose physical appearance awakens only revulsion:

A little before the sale commenced, a short, broad, muscular man, in a checked shirt considerably open at the bosom, and pantaloons much the worse for dirt and wear, elbowed his

way through the crowd, like one who is going actively into a business; and, coming up to the group, began to examine them systematically. From the moment that Tom saw him approaching, he felt an immediate and revolting horror at him, that increased as he came near. He was evidently, though short, of gigantic strength. His round, bullet head, large, light-gray eyes, with their shaggy, sandy eye-brows, and stiff, wiry, sun-burned hair, were rather unprepossessing items, it is to be confessed; his large, coarse mouth was distended with tobacco, the juice of which, from time to time, he ejected from him with great decision and explosive force; his hands were immensely large, hairy, sun-burned, freckled, and very dirty, and garnished with long nails, in a very foul condition(33: pp. 387-88).

This is of course Simon Legree, and purchase by him means the death of hope. It is the end of the line, for Legree uses up his slaves as a labor resource. At the Legree plantation cooperation among the slaves is treated as a conspiracy, and slaves report each others' infractions or missteps for the small rewards that Legree uses to keep them in line. The cruelty passed down by the master is inflicted in turn on someone else. The conditions he imposes discourage charity or sympathy and foster self-interest, as Cassy explains to Tom: "'When you've been here a month, you'll be done helping anybody; you'll find it hard enough to take care of your own skin!'"(33: p. 411).

Legree is a brutal satanic man, willful in his violence and tyrannical in his obsession with controlling his slaves. Tom's piety and insistence on morality only`

challenge Legree to break Tom's will, and in one confrontation Legree almost succeeds:

The gloomiest problem of this mysterious life was constantly before his [Tom's] eyes, --souls crushed and ruined, evil triumphant, and God silent. [. . .] Heavily sighing, he put it [the Bible] in his pocket. A course laugh roused him; he looked up, --Legree was standing opposite to him.

'Well, old boy,' he said, 'you find your religion don't work, it seems! I thought I should get that through your wool, at last!'

The cruel taunt was more than hunger and cold and nakedness. Tom was silent.

'You were a fool,' said Legree; 'for I meant to do well by you, when I bought you. You might have been better off than Sambo, or Quimbo either, and had easy times; and, instead of getting cut up and thrashed, every day or two, ye might have had liberty to lord it round, and cut up the other niggers; and ye might have had, now and then, a good warming of whiskey punch. Come, Tom, don't you think you 'd better be reasonable? --heave that ar old pack of trash in the fire, and join my church!'

'The Lord forbid!' said Tom, fervently.

'You see the Lord an't going to help you; if he had been, he would n't have let me get you! This yer religion is all a mess of lying trumpery, Tom. I know all about it. Ye 'd better hold to me; I 'm somebody, and can do something!'

'No, Mas'r,' said Tom; 'I 'll hold on. The Lord may help me, or not help; but I 'll hold to him, and believe him to the last!'

'The more fool you!' said Legree, spitting scornfully at him, and spurning him with his foot. 'Never mind; I 'll chase you down, yet, and bring you under, --you 'll see!' and Legree turned away(33: p. 455).

The confrontation is a reminder of the temptation of Christ by Satan. Legree's offer of power over the other slaves, his suggestion that Tom can join in partnership

with him if he will abandon his religion is a clear attempt to win the battle between good and evil that is represented by Legree and Uncle Tom. After this incident Tom begins to overcome the hardness of the other slaves with compassion and acts of kindness. Through perseverance and small gestures of charity he is able to have an influence on the atmosphere of cruelty around him. Legree's absolute influence is broken and Tom's Christian love begins to have effect.

Tom's victory over Legree may ring empty in an age of religious skepticism but Stowe meant it as a powerful rebuke of church leaders who supported slavery on the basis of a contrived scriptural argument. Her clergymen, laymen, and even Simon Legree spout Bible verses (Genesis 9:25; Ecclesiastes 3:11; Ephesians 6:5; among others) to show the "divine justice" of slavery. Throughout the novel she criticizes the lack of moral courage in the defenders of slavery and shows their position to be one of political and commercial expediency rather than of moral right. Even slaveholders such as Shelby and St. Clare are skeptical of a religious justification for the institution:

'Well,' said St. Clare, 'suppose that something should bring down the price of cotton once and forever, and make the whole slave property a drug in the market, don't you think we should soon have another version of the Scripture doctrine? What a flood of light

would pour into the church, all at once, and how immediately it would be discovered that everything in the Bible and reason went the other way!' (33: p. 218).

St. Clare's insight that political and financial power determine the perceptions of justice and morality, even in the church, is a strong statement and his sarcasm vents the author's feelings. Another episode where both sides of the slavery argument are backed up by Biblical citations suggests that a twist in interpretation makes all the difference and therefore undermines the validity of the proofs. The author rejects such self-serving argumentation as misuse of scripture. For her the Gospels' message of hope and charity, which is incompatible with a system that destroys those elements of faith, is proof enough of the correct Christian position toward slavery.

Stowe is disappointed as much in the failure of government as she is in the church for its support of slavery. It is clear to her that both are acting in a manner contradictory to their stated missions: the church in forgetting its call to help the oppressed and the state in its neglect of social equality and justice and secure basic rights. She is indignant at both, interrupting her narration as frequently to blame the nation's lawmakers for taking the wrong action as she does to call the nation's church leaders to task. In the novel's epilogue

she says that it was, in fact, "the legislative act of 1850, when she heard, with perfect surprise and consternation, Christian and humane people actually recommending the remanding [of] escaped fugitives into slavery, as a duty binding on good citizens"(33: p. 513), that spurred her on to try to move the electorate.

The territorial compromises that postponed but could not solve the political problem of balance between an agrarian and economically weaker South and the industrialized and demographically growing North, from the 1820 Missouri Compromise through the Compromise of 1850, hinged on the question of slavery in new territories. In fact, however, they were also about the spread of slavery into industry, constitutional guarantees of private property, and ultimately about whether the South would secede if political balance in Congress could not be maintained(97: pp. 115-18). Stowe questioned the guarantee of private property, which was cemented in the stricter requirements of the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 that runaway slaves could not be aided but must be returned to their owners; she argued that slaves were a different class of property that should be exempt from such laws, demonstrating in Uncle Tom's Cabin that slaves were human beings with valid claims on independence and basic rights. With other Abolitionists she maintained that

a higher moral law ought to determine the fate of slaves where Constitutional law proved inadequate. This interpretation was a part of the anti-slavery tradition that dated back to pre-Revolutionary attempts to abolish the institution. The failure by Southern leaders such as Jefferson to pass anti-slavery resolutions and to include an anti-slavery statement in the Declaration of Independence became symptomatic of the division between North and South(104: pp. 465-68).

Stowe understood very well the threat to the Union. She saw that the South continued to threaten secession because it had little to lose by doing so while the North continued to make compromises to avert disunion. Her repeated references to these compromises meant to save the Union are full of sarcastic denunciation. She argues that a nation based on principles of justice and equality, the founding of which was an act of defiance against oppression, cannot then maintain its unity by itself tolerating systematic oppression. For her the Union that legally recognizes slavery with all its attendant abuses is not worth keeping intact.

Uncle Tom's Cabin is still interesting to us today because Stowe did not attack slavery alone but looked for flaws in the larger society. She was concerned that a nation which allowed slavery to exist and flourish had



other problems as well that needed to be addressed. She was certainly not alone in identifying other injustices in the American society of her time. Many Abolitionists were active also in the fledgling women's rights movement and in the temperance movement. Others were involved in experimental reform communities that attempted to provide solutions to the problems in society of which slavery was only one. Stowe saw these movements as part of a larger tide of reform and revolution, a "mighty influence thus rousing in all nations [. . .] for man's freedom and equality"(33: p. 519) that she identified as the coming Kingdom of God. In Uncle Tom's Cabin she called not only for emancipation of slaves and cooperation from the North in assimilating freed slaves into a new life; she insisted on a general reform of society based on Christian virtues and domestic values<sup>7</sup>--ideals of affectionate care and attention, and compassion.

She presents her demands as part of the narrative and then closes the novel with a final appeal to her readers in her "Concluding Remarks." By rounding off the story with a return to the Shelby estate the author shows her Southern readers an example that she hopes they will follow, and of course the conclusion she wishes them to come to is that emancipation is the only remedy for the misery of slavery.

The Shelby emancipation is not a sudden occurrence in the story, for there are other previous references to emancipation. Especially Eva St. Clare's request that her father free Uncle Tom and her talk of what she would do with the family's slaves, though childish, are meant to be a serious suggestion to the reader.<sup>8</sup> Because of the extensive attention given to Eva and to her Christ-like nature, her pronouncements and reactions, which are in notable contradiction to her mother's opinions, are to rouse attention, for "of such is the kingdom of heaven." Eva's request that her father free their slaves and that he try to persuade others to do the same, or at least that he promise to free Tom at her death is presented in a very sentimental context. But the sentimental tone of the Eva scenes is only one means of getting Stowe's readers to "feel right": if they follow the child's suggestions, they will also act.

Mrs. Shelby is another example of a Southerner whose heart is in the right place. She is presented as a practical woman who objects in particular to the destruction of slave families; and her opposition to slavery is based on her "'common sense'"(33: p. 48). Her suggestions to economize, to sell off superfluous assets, and to take in music students are examples of her practicality in trying to solve the problem. Having had

to live with slavery, she has done whatever she could to insure a normal life for her slaves. With her husband's decision to sell Tom and Harry Harris, Emily realizes that her sense of responsibility is inadequate as long as others have ultimate control over the commercial decisions. Her frustration breaks out in indignation when Tom has been sold and again later when her husband refuses her permission to take any personal action toward buying Tom back.

Although Mrs. Shelby does not have the legal authority to emancipate the family's slaves, she succeeds in influencing her son to do what she cannot.<sup>9</sup> George Shelby has a congenial relationship with the family's slaves, but there is no indication at the beginning of the narration that the immature and impetuous George, who promises that he will bring Tom back to Kentucky, would also consider freeing Tom and the other slaves. His criticism of his father suggests that he is more in sympathy with his mother's ideas, but the conclusive experience for him is Tom's death. Realizing that he can never right the injustice that has occurred, he vents his anger by knocking Legree down and then turns his outrage into a solemn vow: "'Witness, eternal God! [. . .] that, from this hour, I will do what one man can to drive out this curse of slavery from my land!'"(33: p. 489).

George's action is meant to inspire Stowe's Southern readers. But they must be "in harmony with the sympathies of Christ" (33: p. 515), whether in the hot-blooded manner of George Shelby, in the cool practicality of his mother Emily, or in the deep sensitivity of Eva St. Clare. This is the prerequisite that Stowe sets for taking proper action.

Stowe delineates what is necessary for emancipation and what other responsibilities follow from it. Augustine St. Clare takes the first step when he promises Eva that he will free Tom and he commits himself by telling Tom of his resolve and by beginning the required legal procedures. His shortcoming is that he has not made his intent a part of his legal will; and when he dies suddenly, Tom's emancipation is left tied up in bureaucracy and there is no further provision for any of the other slaves. Topsy is the only one of the St. Clare slaves who is freed, and this only because Ophelia insists that her cousin write a deed and persists in her request until it is done. Augustine's procrastination of his good intentions comes in part from the lifestyle of leisure he cultivates; but it stems also from his recognition of the responsibilities that are associated with emancipation: "But, suppose we should rise up tomorrow and emancipate, who would educate these millions, and teach them how to

use their freedom?'"(33: p. 366). His question suggests that individual Southerners may take the first step but they stop short of the second one because, as St. Clare claims, they are "too lazy and unpractical." His question includes the North "where labor is the fashion" by implying that Northerners too are unwilling to assume the task of assimilating former slaves.

Unlike Augustine St. Clare, Emily Shelby is a Southerner willing to put emancipation with all its auxiliary responsibilities into action. From the day of Tom's sale she continues to look to alternatives in order to avoid going back on her word to her slaves. She is a woman of action rather than of words. While St. Clare amazes his cousin Ophelia with long speeches about the evils of slavery but is daunted by the enormity of the task and incapable of acting, Emily Shelby asks what can be done and, given the management of the plantation after her husband's death, takes the steps necessary to carry out her intention:

Mrs. Shelby, with characteristic energy, applied herself to the work of straightening the entangled web of affairs; and she and George were for some time occupied with collecting and examining accounts, selling property and settling debts; for Mrs. Shelby was determined that everything should be brought into tangible and recognizable shape, let the consequences to her prove what they might(33: pp. 483-84).

The necessity to sell property in order to settle debts (and one must assume that this does not include slaves) demonstrates that the consequences to the Shelbys include a shrinking of the family's business and greater economy in their daily living. In freeing the slaves and providing them with compensated employment and a certain amount of education, the Shelbys began to invest their "worldly goods to do justice and mercy"(33: p. 171) in the pattern of the Hallidays.

Stowe's expectation of Northerners is that they be willing to take the risks that the Birds and the Hallidays ventured in helping fugitive slaves. As with the Southern decision to emancipate, they must be inspired by a deep appreciation for justice, for only then can they be prepared to take the consequences suggested by Simeon Halliday of possible fines or imprisonment. The author suggests that Northerners ought to examine their own attitudes: "Northern men, northern mothers, northern Christians, have something more to do than denounce their brethren at the South; they have to look to the evil among themselves"(33: p. 515). She attacks the self-serving commercial interest of many businessmen on the periphery of the slave trade, the political wheeling and dealing in the Congress, and the collaboration of Northern justices in returning runaway (and sometimes legitimately freed)

slaves. She reprimands her Northern readers:

What do you owe to these poor unfortunates, oh Christians? Does not every American Christian owe to the African race some effort at reparation for the wrongs that the American nation has brought upon them? Shall the doors of churches and school-houses be shut upon them? Shall states arise and shake them out? Shall the church of Christ hear in silence the taunt that is thrown at them, and shrink away from the helpless hand that they stretch out; and, by her silence, encourage the cruelty that would chase them from our borders? [. . .]

Do you say, 'We don't want them here; let them go to Africa'?(33: p. 516).

Though Stowe was accused of supporting the back-to-Africa position of the American Colonization Society,<sup>10</sup> her rebuke here shows that she did not--in the book at least--really take that position. She consistently blames the North for hypocrisy in denouncing slavery while remaining unwilling to educate and employ the freed slaves. She calls upon the "Christian men and women of the North" to face the responsibility of providing refuge and healing, schooling, and a means of livelihood here.

In addition to such concrete actions Stowe's reform program includes a re-thinking of national values. With the territorial expansion of America, growing industrialism, and the gold rush in the West a reflection of the get-rich-quickly mentality, she warns that the abuses of slavery are part of a general loss of morality in a society dedicated to the pursuit of profit. She claims that the United States needs new values if it is to

solve the problem of slavery.

The need for Christian values to replace those of the market is reiterated in the novel's examples of direct action and involvement by individuals with the needy. Stowe's disappointment in institutionalized Christianity is notable in her repeated singling out of church leaders as misguided and her choice of Christian representatives among women, children, and slaves. As the novel's most important examples of true Christian behavior, Tom and Eva convince not because of their perfection--Eva's ethereal saintliness and Tom's long-suffering and undying compassion--but rather by the pathos of their sacrificial deaths. Eva's farewell speech evokes Christ's farewell to His disciples:

'I sent for you all, my dear friends,' said Eva, 'because I love you. I love you all; and I have something to say to you, which I want you always to remember. . . . I am going to leave you. In a few more weeks, you will see me no more--

[. . .]

'There is n't one of you that has n't always been very kind to me; and I want to give you something that, when you look at, you shall always remember me. I'm going to give all of you a curl of my hair; and, when you look at it, think that I loved you and am gone to heaven, and that I want to see you all there'(33: pp. 338, 339).

The words that accompany the distribution of locks echo Christ's "This do in remembrance of me," and her announcement of impending death is a paraphrase of the



words of John 14: 19, "Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more." The message is similar to an earlier exchange with Topsy, in which Eva overcomes Topsy's feeling that she is evil with a Gospel of Love:

'I love you, because you have n't had any father, or mother, or friends; --because you've been a poor, abused child! I love you, and I want you to be good. I am very unwell, Topsy, and I think I shan't live a great while; and it really grieves me, to have you be so naughty. I wish you would try to be good, for my sake; --it's only a little while I shall be with you.'

The round, keen eyes of the black child were overcast with tears; --large, bright drops rolled heavily down, one by one, and fell on the little white hand. Yes, in that moment, a ray of real belief, a ray of heavenly love, had penetrated the darkness of her heathen soul!(33: pp. 330-31).

Eva's frailty does not allow her to live long enough to do more than influence a few close people around her. Her desire "'to bless and save not only them, but all in their condition'"(33: p. 323) is not for her to accomplish but for those she inspires. Emancipation becomes an act of repentance, a restoration of justice by those who perpetuate injustice.

Tom's death is a sacrificial death too and it brings to mind the crucifixion:

'O, Tom!' said Quimbo, 'we 's been awful wicked to ye!'

'I forgive ye, with all my heart!' said Tom, faintly.

'O, Tom! do tell us who is Jesus, anyhow?' said Sambo; --'Jesus, that 's been a standin' by you so, all this night! --Who is he?'

The word roused the failing, fainting spirit. He poured forth a few energetic sentences of that wondrous One, --his life, his death, his everlasting presence, and power to save.

They wept, --both the two savage men.

'Why did n't I never hear this before?' said Sambo; 'but I do believe! --I can't help it! Lord Jesus, have mercy on us!'

'Poor critters!' said Tom, 'I 'd be willing to bar' all I have, if it 'll only bring ye to Christ! O, Lord! give me these two more souls, I pray!'

That prayer was answered!(33: pp. 481-82).

Tom's dying accomplishes more than the spiritual salvation of Sambo and Quimbo. His death and the remorse it brings to George Shelby result in freedom for his family and for the entire plantation. Tom's martyrdom therefore brings the concrete results of both spiritual and temporal reform. It is not the only parallel between Tom and Christ, however, for his life is the story of Christian love tried and tested in greater measure under each new master. The faith that "'nothin' can go no furdur than [the Lord] lets it'"(33: p. 117) helps him accept separation from his family; and his purchase by Augustine St. Clare seems a fulfillment of the conviction that "'the Lord, he'll help me--I know he will'." And yet the bitter cup awaits him. The hell that is Simon Legree's plantation becomes the true test of Tom's faith. Legree's embodiment of evil, the brutality of his overseers, and the resignation and despair of his slaves bring Tom to the verge of doubt with "bitter thoughts, --that it was vain

to serve God, that God had forgotten him"(33: p. 454). Just as he is about to ask why God has forsaken him, his despair produces a vision of Christ's suffering, which prepares him for martyrdom. Tom succumbs physically, but his moral defiance of Legree is strong enough to break the owner's influence over the slave drivers Sambo and Quimbo. He succeeds because his moral authority derives from love and forgiveness, and these are more powerful than brute force and the hatred of Legree.

While Eva and Tom are Stowe's idea of Christ come to earth in nineteenth century America, Mary Bird, the Quaker community, and Emily Shelby are the builders of the Kingdom of God on earth. Mary Bird, in her willingness to commit civil disobedience because of her disagreement with the new compromise law, has the reform spirit that Stowe proposes:

'It's a shameful, wicked, abominable law, and I'll break it, for one, the first time I get a chance; and I hope I shall have a chance, I do! Things have got to a pretty pass, if a woman can't give a warm supper and a bed to poor, starving creatures, just because they are slaves, and have been abused and oppressed all their lives, poor things!'(33: p. 100).

Mrs. Bird's indignation is strong--not so much from Abolitionist leanings, nor because her individual right to act according to conscience is curtailed, but because the legislation interferes with her right as a woman to provide care to anyone who comes to her in need. She

feels that this law intrudes too much into the private sphere, and she is convinced that her gravely important duties as caregiver must not be tampered with by an ill-considered law. The strength of her feeling comes from the conviction that her position is morally superior to her husband's rationalizations.

Stowe further demonstrates how individual action inspired by personal moral conviction can become part of an effective network of ethical behavior in her portrayal of the Underground Railroad. There are individuals involved, such as John Van Trompe(33: pp. 113-14), as well as entire communities, such as the Quakers. All of them have rejected the values and institutions of society and have committed their goods to the restoration of right. The following long conversation between various Halliday family members and George Harris, whom they are helping in his flight, delineates what the concerns and compassionate principles of these people are:

'Father, what if thee should get found out again?' said Simeon second, as he buttered his cake.

'I should pay my fine,' said Simeon, quietly.

'But what if they put thee in prison?'

'Could n't thee and mother manage the farm?' said Simeon, smiling.

'Mother can do almost everything,' said the boy. 'But is n't it a shame to make such laws?'

'Thee must n't speak evil of thy rulers, Simeon,' said his father, gravely. 'The Lord only gives us our worldly goods that we may do justice and mercy; if our rulers require a

price of us for it, we must deliver it up.'

'Well, I hate those old slaveholders!' said the boy, who felt as unchristian as became any modern reformer.

'I am surprised at thee, son,' said Simeon; 'thy mother never taught thee so. I would do even the same for the slaveholder as for the slave, if the Lord brought him to my door in affliction.'

[. . .]

'I hope, my good sir, that you are not exposed to any difficulty on our account,' said George, anxiously.

'Fear nothing, George, for therefore are we sent into the world. If we would not meet trouble for a good cause, we were not worthy of our name.'

'But, for me,' said George, 'I could not bear it.'

'Fear not, then, friend George; it is not for thee, but for God and man, we do it,' said Simeon. 'And now thou must lie by quietly this day [. . .]. Thou art safe here by daylight, for every one in the settlement is a friend, and all are watching. It has been found safer to travel by night'(33: pp. 170-71).

Several studies have noted Rachel Halliday's role in her family and the stress that Stowe places on woman's central place in the idealized domestic utopia she proposes as an alternative to the commercial and competitive society(87: pp. 168-70; 102: pp. 141-42). But the Quaker scenes, though redolent with symbolic imagery that casts women in a mythically significant role, also depict the community as a more encompassing framework and its men are imbued with new values as well. In this particular example Simeon Halliday Sr. is the "new man." The conversation gives a fairly comprehensive view of the alternative that Stowe meant the Quaker community to represent. There is a

quiet courageous acceptance of the consequences of disobeying the law, and because of their self-sufficiency the Quakers are prepared to face even imprisonment. Simeon, Jr. suggests that because of his mother's capabilities they have nothing to worry about. Previous conversations testify also to the community spirit that prevails when other members are unable to provide or care for themselves or their families. Halliday's rebuke of his son for speaking disapprovingly of lawmakers is a reminder not to judge others, which is consistent with the Quaker belief that the individual internalizes something of God that makes each person responsible alone to God. There is also an acceptance of the fact that the world may indeed be unjust and unfair but that each person can do something to right wrongs when confronted by them. For Halliday the purpose of life is to help others, no matter what the risk, no matter who the recipient is. When George Harris worries about the level of risk his presence brings, Halliday reminds him that the help given is not a personal favor but behavior based on principle. The final statement about the safety of the runaways is a reiteration that the whole community acts in the same manner. This scene goes one step beyond Stowe's projection in *Emily Shelby*, *Mary Bird*, *Eva St. Clare*, *Rachel Halliday*, and even Tom of a feminized domestic

ideal by presenting a whole society which is capable of embracing the alternative values these characters embody.

The effect that Uncle Tom's Cabin had was enormous. Fueled no doubt by Lincoln's reported comment upon meeting Stowe, "So this is the little lady who made this big war?" legend linked the novel with the very coming of the Civil War, though more than a decade passed from its publication to the war's outbreak(115: p. 484). The novel did however contribute something to a change in attitude toward the Abolition Movement, gave rise to numerous fictional and editorial refutations of its claims, and started a national dialogue about slavery(69: pp. 164-84). In fact, the work itself presents a national dialogue. There is discussion about slavery between non-slave characters, while the conversations between slaves add to the novel's compilation of evidence against the institution; and the narrator directly challenges the readers to consider slavery as a question that requires a response from them.

In the discussions between non-slaves Stowe treats the various responsibilities that arise from the two positions she presents: support and maintenance of the institution of slavery or its abolition. Those who own slaves have a responsibility to them. For those who do

not own slaves the question is of responsibility to the fugitives. Stowe broadens the focus of responsibility to a national level in the conversations about the merits or faults of the institution itself.

In their argument about the sale of Tom, Arthur and Emily Shelby disagree about what should be the responsibility of the slaveholder to the slave. Arthur counts himself one of the "men of the world [who] must wink pretty hard at various things, and get used to a deal that is n't the exact thing"(33: p. 48). He admits to recognizing a moral standard for men of business which is different from the one for "women and ministers'" and, by extension, anyone else who opposes slavery. Though he does not ask for approval of his double standard that goes "'beyond us in matters of either modesty or morals,'" he does not want to be "'rated, as if I were a monster, for doing what every one does every day'"(33: p. 46). He defines his morality according to the dictates of the majority and suggests to his wife that the best way for handling the human side of the sale of their slaves is to run away from confrontation:

'I'm going to get out my horse bright and early, and be off. I can't see Tom, that's a fact; and you had better arrange a drive somewhere, and carry Eliza off. Let the thing be done when she is out of sight'(33: p. 49).



But Emily Shelby refuses to "'help in this cruel business'," for she wants the slaves to know "'that their mistress can feel for and with them'"(33: p. 49). She sees herself as intercessor on their behalf, reminding her husband of promises made to them, asking what might be done to avoid terrible human tragedy and for both sides, since the sale of slaves brings "'a curse to the master and a curse to the slave!'"(33: p. 48). She elaborates further:

'[. . .] I have tried--tried most faithfully, as a Christian woman should--to do my duty to these poor, simple, dependent creatures. I have cared for them, instructed them, watched over them, and known all their little cares and joys, for years; and how can I ever hold up my head again among them, if, for the sake of a little paltry gain, we sell such a faithful, excellent, confiding creature as poor Tom, and tear from him in a moment all we have taught him to love and value? I have taught them the duties of the family, of parent and child, and husband and wife; and how can I bear to have this open acknowledgment that we care for no tie, no duty, no relation, however sacred, compared with money? I have talked with Eliza about her boy [. . .] I have told her that one soul is worth more than all the money in the world; and how will she believe me when she sees us turn round and sell her child?--sell him, perhaps, to certain ruin of body and soul!'"(33: p. 47).

Emily acknowledges the slaves' humanity by recognizing their traits of character and teaching them the value of family maintenance. When Arthur later responds, "'It's a pity, wife, that you have burdened them with a morality above their condition and prospects'"(33: pp. 296-97), he

does not accept that it is his wife who is primarily "burdened" with a morality that requires her to behave toward the slaves as she does. Her morality does not allow her to break a word of honor given or back down on a principle taught. Her code of honor includes the slaves, while her husband's definition(33: pp. 57,59,297) is limited to his business associates and the Shelby's social circle.

Arthur's denial of his responsibility toward his slaves, specifically his treatment of them as commercial property results in Eliza Harris' escape with her son Harry. Although Emily Shelby's kindness and her husband's deference to her domestic management are meant to present an example of slavery's best side, Eliza's desperate decision to run shows that benevolence is no guarantee against the flight of a slave when separation from loved ones threatens.

Eliza Harris' arrival at the Birds' house coincides with a discussion of the proper response to fugitive slaves in reference to the newly passed Fugitive Slave Law. Mary Bird argues for the moral rightness of helping individuals even at the cost of breaking a law, while her husband upholds responsibility to the state:

'But, Mary, just listen to me. Your feelings are all quite right, dear, and interesting, and I love you for them; but, then, dear, we must n't suffer our feelings to

run away with our judgment; you must consider it 's not a matter of private feeling, --there are great public interests involved, --there is such a state of public agitation rising, that we must put aside our private feelings.'

'Now, John, I don't know anything about politics, but I can read my Bible; and there I see that I must feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and comfort the desolate; and that Bible I mean to follow.'

'But in cases where your doing so would involve a great public evil--'

'Obeying God never brings on public evils. I know it can't. It 's always safest, all round, to do as He bids us.'

'Now, listen to me, Mary, and I can state to you a very clear argument, to show--'

'O, nonsense, John! you can talk all night, but you would n't do it. I put it to you, John, --would you now turn away a poor, shivering, hungry creature from your door, because he was a runaway? Would you, now?'(33: pp. 100-101).

Senator Bird is a bundle of contradictions. He is the legislator who tolerates injustice for the sake of keeping peace, the man of caution who argues that acts of charity might constitute "'a great public evil'," and the defender of a law which he cannot uphold in practice. He trivializes his wife's moral sense by weighing her "feelings" to disadvantage against pragmatism and public interests. Power and money buttressed by an argument of political expediency may have influenced Bird to support the compromise law in the statehouse, but his conscience guides his judgment in the test case to come. His wife is certain that the power of common decency and humanity will carry more weight than the claims of man-made laws. For

Mary that higher natural law is codified in the commandments of her Christian faith.<sup>11</sup> She believes that an adherence to Biblical tenets will solve all problems and she suggests, "'If folks want to keep their slaves from running away, let 'em treat 'em well, --that's my doctrine'"(33: p. 101).

Augustine St. Clare seconds Mary's conviction that slaves run away only if they have good reason to, when he recounts the story of a slave whose loyalty he won by saving his life, by nursing him to health after a near-fatal attempt at escape, and then offering him his freedom(33: p. 274). He illustrates that the human bond, once established between master and slave, is likely to hold if it is not betrayed by the owner. An insightful commentator on the problems and contradictions within Southern society, he identifies its shortcomings and denounces apologies for slavery, insisting that it is nothing other than base human exploitation. But though he speaks the language of the Abolitionist, he lacks the will to act in a manner that will alienate him from the Southern way of life. For he himself is not exemplary as a master. He is inconsistent, not believing in the system and yet remaining a part of it. He is portrayed as the Southern gentleman of leisure, indulgent toward his slaves and too comfortable to carry out his intentions of

granting freedom or of adding value to emancipation through necessary education.

In conversations between Augustine and his cousin Ophelia Northern and Southern values are contrasted. Against the lethargy that keeps Augustine from carrying out the reforms he talks about, Ophelia's industriousness, thrift and efficiency are quintessentially Northern. Her disapproval of slavery is taken for granted as a Northern position, just as she takes for granted that all Southerners support and approve of slavery(33: p. 259). But while Augustine's denunciation of the institution is based in a recognition that its demise is part of a larger historic process, Ophelia's stems from her Northern values of hard work and efficiency, which stand in contrast to the "shiftless" way of slavery. Her objections to slavery are also to a certain extent racist, in that she does not trust the reliability and honesty of the slaves, and she disapproves of the interaction between the two races that occurs in slave-owning families(33: pp. 196-97, 250, 210-11). As Augustine is the Southerner who thinks and talks the most about the evils of slavery, she is the Northerner whose ability to help is hampered by her prejudices.

Stowe's dominant message in the dialogues between Ophelia and Augustine is that the abolition of slavery is

not only a responsibility of the Southern slaveholding states but a national responsibility from which the North may not shrink. Augustine poses the author's challenge with a hypothetical question:

'If we emancipate, are you willing to educate? How many families, in your town, would take in a negro man and woman, teach them, bear with them, and seek to make them Christians? How many merchants would take Adolph, if I wanted to make him a clerk; or mechanics, if I wanted him taught a trade? If I wanted to put Jane and Rosa to a school, how many schools are there in the northern states that would take them in? how many families that would board them? and yet they are as white as many a woman, north or south. You see, Cousin, I want justice done us. We are in a bad position. We are the more obvious oppressors of the negro; but the unchristian prejudice of the north is an oppressor almost equally severe'(33: p. 366).

Augustine castigates the North for its hypocrisy, alluding with his questions to instances of Northern resistance toward the assimilation of blacks into their communities. With his present of Topsy he challenges Ophelia to practice what she preaches and to prove that the Northern principles of education and hard work can reform one slave. Ophelia succeeds only by following Eva's example. The essential ingredient for an effective conversion of Topsy from abused slave and callous and bragging sinner into an obedient child and productive human being is Christian love that breaks down the barriers of prejudice and contempt(33: pp. 330-331). Topsy becomes an example of the agenda Stowe would like to set for the nation: a

cooperative effort by South and North for emancipation, education, and Christian assimilation.

In addition to the views of the main characters Stowe also presents those of several incidental characters. Usually the pro-slavery arguments reiterate the position that blacks derive greater benefit in bondage than in freedom. An example is the conversation between two women on the Ohio River boat in reaction to the gang of slaves that the slavetrader Haley has brought on board:

'What a shame to our country that such sights are to be seen!' said another lady.

'O, there 's a great deal to be said on both sides of the subject,' said a genteel woman, who sat at her state-room door sewing, while her little girl and boy were playing round her. 'I 've been south, and I must say I think the negroes are better off than they would be to be free.'

'In some respects, some of them are well off, I grant,' said the lady to whose remark she had answered. 'The most dreadful part of slavery, to my mind, is its outrages on the feelings and affections, --the separating of families, for example.'

'That is a bad thing, certainly,' said the other lady, holding up a baby's dress she had just completed, and looking intently on its trimmings; 'but then, I fancy, it don't occur often.'

'O, it does,' said the first lady, eagerly; 'I 've lived many years in Kentucky and Virginia both, and I 've seen enough to make any one's heart sick. Suppose, ma'am, your two children, there, should be taken from you, and sold?'

'We can't reason from our feelings to those of this class of persons,' said the other lady, sorting out some worsteds on her lap.

'Indeed, ma'am, you can know nothing of them, if you say so,' answered the first lady, warmly. 'I was born and brought up among them. I know they do feel, just as keenly, --even

more so, perhaps, --as we do.'

The lady said 'Indeed!' yawned, and looked out the cabin window, and finally repeated, for a finale, the remark with which she had begun, --'After all, I think they are better off than they would be to be free'(33: pp. 150-51).

Such arguments were of course commonplace reflections of the belief in the plantation as an antebellum idyll; while they helped repress Southern fears of slave revolt(87: p. 29), they also allowed Northerners to remain complacent in relative ignorance. Only those who had seen slavery first-hand seemed to become passionate about abolition. Many of the first Abolitionist leaders were former slaveholders, and the initial growth of the movement was not in the North but in the border states(104: pp. 476, 481-84). One of the Abolitionists' most difficult tasks was to gain support from Northerners whose geographic distance from the problem allowed them to accept Southern rationalizations of slavery or simply to remain completely apathetic about the issue. Stowe takes on that challenge when she presents the dialogues between the slaves as a refutation of the cliché that "'they are better off than they would be to be free'."

The recurring theme throughout these conversations is the loss of family, the separation of spouses, children from parents, and of siblings from each other. Almost every sale described in the novel is an instance of the break-up of a family tie: Tom from Chloe and his



children, Harry from Eliza, Mammy from her husband. In answer to the Northern mother who refuses to acknowledge that the slave mother's feelings are the same as hers, Stowe has several slave mothers tell their stories. Tom prompts Prue to explain why she is drinking herself to ruin:

'What set you into this bad way of drinkin'?'

'To get shet o' my misery. I had one child after I come here; and I thought then I 'd have one to raise, cause Mas'r was n't a speculator. It was de peartest little thing! and Missis she seemed to think a heap on 't, at first; it never cried, --it was likely and fat. But Missis tuck sick, and I tended her; and I tuck the fever, and my milk all left me, and the child it pined to skin and bone, and Missis would n't buy milk for it. She would n't hear to me, when I telled her I had n't milk. She said she knowed I could feed it on what other folks eat; and the child kinder pined, and cried, and cried, and cried, day and night, and got all gone to skin and bones, and Missis got sot agin it, and she said 't wan't nothin' but crossness. She wished it was dead, she said; and she would n't let me have it o' nights, cause, she said, it kept me awake, and made me good for nothing. She made me sleep in her room; and I had to put it away off in a little kind o' garret, and thar it cried itself to death, one night. It did; and I tuck to drinkin', to keep its crying out of my ears! I did, --and I will drink! I will, if I do go to torment for it! Mas'r says I shall go to torment, and I tell him I 've got thar now!'  
(33: pp. 255-56).

As gruesome as Prue's loss is, the dread of impending separation is a torment of a different kind for Susan and Emmeline:

'Mother, just lay your head on my lap, and see if you can't sleep a little,' says the girl, trying to appear calm.

'I have n't any heart to sleep, Em; I can't; it 's the last night we may be together!'

[. . .]

'Mother, I think we might do first rate, if you could get a place as cook, and I as chamber-maid or seamstress, in some family. I dare say we shall. Let's both look as bright and lively as we can, and tell all we can do, and perhaps we shall,' said Emmeline.

'I want you to brush your hair all back straight, to-morrow,' said Susan.

'What for, mother? I don't look near so well, that way.'

'Yes, but you 'll sell better so.'

'I don't see why!' said the child.

'Respectable families would be more apt to buy you, if they saw you looked plain and decent, as if you was n't trying to look handsome. I know their ways better 'n you do,' said Susan.

'Well, mother, then I will.'

'And, Emmeline, if we should n't ever see each other again, after to-morrow, --if I 'm sold way up on a plantation somewhere, and you somewhere else, --always remember how you 've been brought up, and all Missis has told you; take your Bible with you, and your hymn-book; and if you 're faithful to the Lord, he 'll be faithful to you'(33: pp. 383-84).

Emmeline's brave optimism contrasts pathetically with her mother's fearful advice. Though they both hope to be sold together, or even singly into "respectable families," Susan knows that it is just as likely that her daughter may be sold into disreputable circumstances and used as a sexual plaything or for breeding purposes. She hopes to avoid those possibilities by de-emphasizing her daughter's beauty. And in case that fails, Susan gives Emmeline advice that seems futile and inadequate to the

circumstances, for Simon Legree becomes her new master. At his plantation she turns to Cassy for comfort and advice and hears the words of a mother who has given up all hope and lives in despair:

‘Mother told you!’ said Cassy, with a thrilling and bitter emphasis on the word mother. ‘What use is it for mothers to say anything? You are all to be bought and paid for, and your souls belong to whoever gets you. That’s the way it goes. I say, drink brandy; drink all you can, and it ’ll make things come easier’(33: p. 438).

Cassy, made more callous with every new master, has learned the hard rules of slave life. She has paid with her children and with her emotional and mental health for the shred of existence that has been left her. Her story, which she tells to Tom(33: pp. 422-27), is an on-going series of degrading events that ends with the killing of her last child:

‘I would never again let a child live to grow up! I took the little fellow in my arms, when he was two weeks old, and kissed him, and cried over him; and then I gave him laudanum, and held him close to my bosom, while he slept to death. How I mourned and cried over it! and who ever dreamed that it was anything but a mistake, that had made me give it the laudanum? but it ’s one of the few things that I ’m glad of, now. I am not sorry, to this day; he, at least, is out of pain. What better than death could I give him, poor child!’(33: p. 427).

After telling her tale Cassy acknowledges that she is “‘pursued by devils’” but she holds others accountable for the wrongs she has committed:

'They think it 's nothing, what we suffer, -- nothing, what our children suffer! It 's all a small matter; [. . .] Yes! and, in the judgment day, I will stand up before God, a witness against those that have ruined me and my children, body and soul!'(33: p. 428).

Cassy's call for a day of judgment is a warning of divine retribution but it is also a warning from a slave who has despaired of God's existence and who is willing to take justice into her own hands.

The day of judgment is a repeated theme in the novel and was part of the revivalist sermon tradition that Stowe inherited(104: pp. 24-25). In narrator comments and reader addresses she invokes God's punishment through quotations of Scripture and ironic asides, and she exhorts her readers to repentance with sentimental calls for salvation and threats of fire and brimstone. She uses sarcasm to mock the unrepentant who are smugly secure in their disregard for morality, and she gloats that the sinners' deceptions are transparent and, in fact, self-delusion. Just as the revivalist publicly calls sinners to repentance or describes their sinful lives to expose them, the author employs sarcastic accusations as a public identification and denunciation of America's sinners, in its churches, its statehouses, and on the stock markets as well as its main streets.

The emotional appeal of the book is directed at two kinds of readers, those who do not support slavery but have not acted to eliminate it and those who do not oppose slavery for a variety of reasons. To those who are already convinced that slavery is wrong Stowe addresses the sentimental asides in order to move them to act as Ophelia does at the death of Eva. The true strength of the sentimental death scenes is in their power of total conversion, as Eva's death affects Topsy and Tom's influences Sambo and Quimbo. Stowe believed in the power of love to soften the hardened heart and bring the sinner to remorse.<sup>12</sup> She took full advantage of the then popular penchant for tearful scenes of dying maidens and Sunday School sermons about children's innocence and spirituality when she wrote Eva's death scene. Her description of Eva is a foreshadowing of the child's fate and it generalizes her spiritual nature to apply a redemptive purpose to the phenomenon of infant and child mortality:

Has there ever been a child like Eva? Yes, there have been; but their names are always on grave-stones, and their sweet smiles, their heavenly eyes, their singular words and ways, are among the buried treasures of yearning hearts. In how many families do you hear the legend that all the goodness and graces of the living are nothing to the peculiar charms of one who is not. It is as if heaven had an especial band of angels, whose office it was to sojourn for a season here, and endear to them the wayward human heart, that they might bear it upward with them in their homeward flight(33: p. 307).

This description idealizes deceased children by giving their deaths the purpose of mediating divine love and salvation. Stowe saves her strongest warnings of punishment for those whose sinfulness, like that of Simon Legree, leaves them unmoved.<sup>13</sup> She uses the strong language of the frontier camp meeting<sup>14</sup> to shake sinners and professing Christians alike out of their complacency:

This is an age of the world when nations are trembling and convulsed. A mighty influence is abroad, surging and heaving the world, as with an earthquake. And is America safe? Every nation that carries in its bosom great and unredressed injustice has in it the elements of this last convulsion.

For what is this mighty influence thus rousing in all nations and languages those groanings that cannot be uttered, for man's freedom and equality?

O, Church of Christ, read the signs of the times! Is not this power the spirit of HIM whose kingdom is yet to come, and whose will [is] to be done on earth as it is in heaven?

But who may abide the day of his appearing? "for that day shall burn as an oven: and he shall appear as a swift witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger in his right: and he shall break in pieces the oppressor."

Are not these dread words for a nation bearing in her bosom so mighty an injustice? Christians! every time that you pray that the kingdom of Christ may come, can you forget that prophecy associates, in dread fellowship, the day of vengeance with the year of his redeemed?

A day of grace is yet held out to us. Both North and South have been guilty before God; and the Christian church has a heavy account to answer. Not by combining together, to protect injustice and cruelty, and making a common capital of sin, is this Union to be saved, --but by repentance, justice and mercy; for, not

surer is the eternal law by which the millstone sinks in the ocean, than that stronger law, by which injustice and cruelty shall bring on nations the wrath of Almighty God!(33: p. 519).

With this sermon Stowe ends the novel. She hopes to instill a fear of retribution in the reader and to convince the nation of its sin. Having discussed the choices before slaveholders and non-slaveholders, she concludes that slavery's abuse is in the institution itself with its definition of human beings as property to be bought and sold. And her ultimate mode of persuasion is the revival sermon, for her goal is no less than to bring about national repentance and conversion.

## Notes

Uncle Tom's Cabin:

## Harriet Beecher Stowe's Tolstoian Novel

<sup>1</sup> The edition quoted(33) uses the orthography of the first Jewett edition of Uncle Tom's Cabin. Open contractions and irregularities of spelling are reproduced from that text.

<sup>2</sup> Tompkins claims that "The removal of the male from the center to the periphery of the human sphere is the most radical component of this millenarian scheme"(102: pp. 142, 145-46).

<sup>3</sup> According to Elizabeth Ammons, Rachel Halliday in this scene raises the familial meal to the level of Christian sacrament. See 87: pp. 168-69).

<sup>4</sup> Tompkins uses this term to denote Stowe's alternative to the economy she criticized(102: p. 144).

<sup>5</sup> Ammons remarks on the novel's depiction of hell existing where mothers are absent: "[The St. Clare estate] stands out as one of the hells of Stowe's novel because it, like Legree's Red River inferno, has in effect no mother"(87: p. 165).

<sup>6</sup> Stowe's intent to be conciliatory toward the South failed in the strident tone of her criticism. Her



rigidity is an indication of how wrong she thought the South to be--but her choice of several Southerners as mouthpieces, especially St. Clare, show how little she appreciated the fundamental differences between Southern and Northern values. Excerpts and quotes from legislative records and public speeches in Robert S. Starobin's "The Politics of Industrial Slavery" give an indication of the South's insulation and conservatism and its apparent disregard for social tendencies elsewhere within the states(97: pp. 190-232).

<sup>7</sup> Tompkins interprets Stowe's depiction of her ideal for society in the example of the Quaker community as follows: "Man-made institutions--the church, the courts of law, the legislatures, the economic system--are nowhere in sight. The home is the center of all meaningful activity; women perform the most important tasks; work is carried on in a spirit of mutual cooperation; and the whole is guided by a Christian woman [. . .]"(102: p. 141).

<sup>8</sup> Eva is as much a voice for Stowe's message of emancipation as she is a stock figure from the popular culture of Sunday School tracts and sermons(102: p. 128).

<sup>9</sup> Jean Fagan Yellin, in "Doing It Herself: Uncle Tom's Cabin and Woman's Role in the Slavery Crisis,"

asserts that Stowe agreed with her sister Catharine Beecher about a limited role for women on public issues, consisting only of influence within the family as the proper sphere of action(87: pp. 85-105). Examples in the novel demonstrate that such a limited influence was insufficient to the abolition goals the author stood for.

<sup>10</sup> Forrest Wilson, claims that the Beecher/Stowe family position was in support of colonization(115: p. 137). Stowe is also seen as supporting this position by Robert B. Stepto, "Sharing the Thunder: The Literary Exchanges of Harriet Beecher Stowe, Henry Bibb, and Frederick Douglass"(87: pp. 149-50).

<sup>11</sup> She paraphrases the passage in Matthew 25:34-46 that outlines the behavior of the righteous toward "the least of these" as feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, taking in strangers, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned.

<sup>12</sup> Stowe along with other sentimental writers reflected their culture in this belief, according to Tompkins(102: pp. 156, 159-60).

<sup>13</sup> Tompkins notes that deceased mothers also belong in this category(102: pp. 128-29). It is a sign of Legree's excessive sinfulness that his mother's love and her forgiving appeals for his salvation are unheeded not

only while she lives but in reminders of her after death (33: pp. 432-34).

<sup>14</sup> Tyler explains that the resort to fire and brimstone sermons in the frontier camp meeting was a necessity if religion was to have an effect in the rough life of the backwoodsman(104: p. 35).

## Chapter IV

### Die Waffen nieder!:

#### The Uncle Tom's Cabin of the Peace Movement

Just as Stowe wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin with the belief that the Fugitive Slave Law would not succeed if people knew what slavery really was, Suttner believed that the militaristic climate of the eighties--the simmering Balkan conflict that strained relations between Austria-Hungary and Russia, and nationalist feelings such as the anti-German sentiments she had heard in France just before she wrote Die Waffen nieder!--could be overcome if enough people were made aware of what war really was. To give her readers an honest picture she defied censorship with a strong anti-war message couched in a sentimental novel.

Suttner depicts the devastation wars cause in one life, that of her main character Martha Althaus Dotsky Tilling. The life story becomes a lamentation. Martha suffers repeated human loss as a result of wars and tries to determine that they were necessary in order to make sense of her own situation. But rather than finding comfort in an unfathomable divine wisdom, as her relatives

and acquaintances encourage her to do, she concludes that it is human traits--jealousy, greed, and ignorance--that move states to order the opening shots of most wars. Certainly Suttner did not share the strong religious tradition that Stowe took for granted, and she did not intend a message with the religious symbolism that Stowe produced. She did, however, recognize the religious conservatism that many of her readers were steeped in and she appealed to their ethical sense, even while she questioned their orthodoxy. She too tried to awaken feelings of empathy and anger in her readers but at the same time she also compelled them to think with her. Through this two-fold appeal she reached a large audience of middle-class readers; she hoped that they would accept her solutions, which on the surface are not radical, but come from liberal democratic ideas.

Of Suttner's novels, Die Waffen nieder! is certainly her most daring. A historical novel, it deals with the years 1859 to 1871. Exhaustive documentation of war and its causes provides the novel with a focused critique that Suttner's other writing does not offer. In other novels she discussed a wide range of issues. In this one, however, she singles out armed conflict and, more importantly, its support structure in government and society. Here the author presents war in its most

gruesome manifestations and calls the state and the institutions which support it to task for encouraging war as an instrument of foreign policy. Her critique goes a step further, in that it also assigns responsibility to individuals, who by their patriotic enthusiasm or resigned acceptance condone armament and the future possibility for conflict.

The structure of the plot in Die Waffen nieder! is determined by the war history that Martha retells. The war of 1859 provides the first description of battle consequences, while the following period of peace allows for reflection and the development of arguments. The chapter entitled "1864" explores the prelude to new armed conflict, and the short peace interim that follows is devoted to criticism of the ways militarism is reflected in society. Suttner saves her most extreme descriptions of suffering for the chapter on the war of 1866. The following "Frieden" chapter is appropriately titled for its exploration of peace issues. This continues into the last chapter where it is interrupted by the war of 1871. The epilogue then allows the author one last opportunity to call out "Die Waffen nieder!".

The novel is autobiographical with its source in Martha's diary, the entries to which become the episodes of her story. The structure of the novel is based on

this diary which actually consists of two sets. From the beginning through the 1866 chapter Martha's story draws only on the personal diary she keeps in red notebooks, "die roten Hefte." They record the effect of war on her life. As she fills this journal with her own experiences and the stories she hears from others, it becomes a document of personal suffering. After 1866 she turns to a new blue set of journals and in them tells of the possibilities of institutionalizing peace. Much as Stowe builds up her argument in Uncle Tom's Cabin by having various groups speak for and against slavery and by gradually intensifying the strength of this testimony, Suttner's argument against war also builds in intensity as the novel progresses. Through narrator comment, dialogue, and document citation she produces a mixture of argument and lamentation.

Suttner is astute in her recognition of the obstacles to reform in Austria and she analyzes the stranglehold on society that its institutions have. They will not reform themselves, she tells us. And yet she gives no clear suggestions how change in society is to come about. While the people may indeed be part of this problem, once they recognize the need for change they have no means to work for it. Suttner seems aware of this dilemma but she gives her readers no more radical course of action than to

change their attitudes and thinking. She recognizes that this is not really enough. The problem is communicated in the novel when the principle characters have little recourse but to leave Austria in order to pursue goals of peace. The solutions they support and the spokespersons they seek contact with are only taken seriously elsewhere in Europe. The problem becomes apparent in another example from the novel. It is possible to conclude from the life story of Martha Tilling that nothing really has changed. The author counters this negative interpretation with an epilogue. Its message is that the hope for change lies in the future with generations to come. The novel's future was for Suttner the present and she set the example for her readers in the following years. She apparently did not consider the possibility that this positive ending might relieve the pressure on readers to do anything in their own lifetimes.

The novel begins with a flashback to Martha's childhood in which she gives a brief description of her background. Her family and friends, her interests and activities belong to the world of the upper classes in Austria. The novel's real plot begins with the death of her husband in the 1859 Italian campaign when a development toward enlightenment and pacifism begins for Martha Althaus Dotsky. Questioning the consequences of



military policy now for the first time during her widowhood, she begins to explore contemporary ideas, opening her mind to Renan, Strauss, and Darwin. She resolves to keep her son from the same fate as his father's and to give him a liberal education. After her second marriage to Friedrich Tilling, a first lieutenant, she worries when news of imminent war is greeted with enthusiasm by their garrison neighbors. Friedrich's departure for the Danish battlefield comes at the same time that their baby's birth approaches, and Martha and Friedrich fear the worst for each other. A difficult delivery aggravated by the trauma of farewell produces a child that does not survive. After a long convalescence with only intermittent word from her new husband at the front, Martha's hope returns with the cessation of hostilities; and Friedrich eventually returns from battle wounded but living. The two of them resolve never again to have life and death controlled by the whims of the state, and they plan Friedrich's retirement. Before he is able to receive his discharge, however, a stock market crash wipes out the investment they had planned to live on, and Friedrich is forced to continue his military service for the time being. But the complications of the territorial agreement and Bismarck's machinations result in yet another war, that between Austria and Prussia in

1866, for which neither Friedrich nor Martha can find any feelings of support. Their disillusionment is total. This is expressed primarily in letters to Martha from the front, in which Friedrich vents his revulsion at the destruction around him. A visit to the battlefield at Königgrätz by Martha to search for Friedrich brings her face to face with post-battle horrors. The Tillings and Althaus are grateful not to have had any immediate family losses in the conflict, but then during the post-war occupation a cholera epidemic wipes out Martha's father and sisters and brother. Friedrich resigns his commission in order to devote his time to the study and furtherance of pacifist thinking. Tired of Austrian provincialism and needing a change from the scene of so much grief, the Tillings travel throughout Europe, meet influential thinkers of like mind, and eventually settle in Paris. A daughter is born and life seems to hold no further threats to their happiness. They dread the outbreak of hostilities between France and Prussia but see no danger to themselves as Austrian citizens and stay on in France. During the siege of Paris a mob arrests Friedrich for suspected espionage and, after a sham trial, executes him. Martha's life story, the account of war and its impact on one woman's life, stops here. The author does not want to end on this despairing note, however. An

epilogue presents her hope for the future. Years have passed, and with her son's vow to follow in his mother's footsteps and the christening of Martha's grandchild, she reaffirms her dream of a pacifist future and passes it on to her children.

The commentary in the red notebooks, especially before the wars of 1864 and 1866, analyzes the causes of war. Martha studies the issue of sovereignty in Schleswig-Holstein and presents its complicated history in pedantic detail. The treaties and agreements that regulated claims and counterclaims to the territories ought to be settled in a peaceful manner, she concludes:

Solche Prozeßsachen [müßten] doch auf dem Wege der Prozesse--nämlich durch Abwägung der Rechtsansprüche und durch hiernach zu fällenden Rechtsspruch--zum Austrag zu bringen sein(5: p. 149).

These legalistic issues could hardly gain popular support for military action without the outburst of press propaganda, patriotism, and war fever. These, of course, distract the population from the sovereignty question, to which military conflict is not an adequate solution. This is soon apparent when the territory becomes a point of contention between Prussia and Austria within two years' time. Martha wonders if the diplomatic flurry is in fact about avoiding war. She thinks not: "Wenn das Wort 'Krieg' einmal gefallen, wohl noch sehr lange hin und her

debattiert werden kann, aber erfahrungsgemäß das Ende jedesmal Krieg ist"(5: p. 158).

While Martha's anger grows as she analyzes the war situation, Friedrich has the calm voice of reason. He firmly insists that he is not a war enthusiast when Minister Allerdings implies that all military officers look forward to battle:

'Gestatten Sie mir, Exzellenz, [. . .] für meine Person gegen die Zumutung mich zu verwahren, daß ich einen Krieg herbeiwünsche. Und auch gegen die Unterstellung zu protestieren, als dürfe der militärische Standpunkt ein anderer sein als der menschliche. Wir sind da, um, wenn der Feind das Land bedroht, dasselbe zu schützen, gerade so wie die Feuerwehr da ist, um, wenn ein Brand ausbricht, denselben zu löschen. Damit ist weder der Soldat berechtigt, einen Krieg, noch der Feuerwehrmann, einen Brand herbeizuwünschen. Beides bedeutet Unglück, schweres Unglück, und als Mensch darf keiner am Unglück seiner Mitmenschen sich erfreuen'(5: p. 76).

Only Martha accepts Friedrich's reasonable definition of the military's defensive role. Her father, General Althaus, is deaf to reason and argues that the possibility of winning glory for the state makes the essential difference between firefighters and soldiers. But Friedrich continues to insist on the responsibility to reflect seriously on the consequences of war, especially when the overwhelming quantity of suffering has a numbing effect:

'Wenn man beim Anblick eines vereinzelt Leidens von Mitgefühl ergriffen ist, [müßte] vertausendfachtes Leid auch tausendmal stärkeres Mitgefühl wecken. Aber das Gegenteil tritt ein: die Massenhaftigkeit stumpfte ab. Man kann den einen nicht so heftig bedauern, wenn man um ihn herum 999 ebenso Unglückliche sieht. Aber wenn man auch die Fähigkeit nicht hat, über einen gewissen Grad von Mitschmerz hinaus zu fühlen --zu denken und zu berechnen vermag man es doch, daß die unfafßbare Jammerquantität vorhanden ist--'(5: p. 130).

Suttner goes beyond her own wish that her reader, along with Stowe's, should "feel right." She recognizes that not all of her readers will admit a capacity for sympathy. For them and for those who dismiss pacifism as "weibliche Gefühlsduselei" she has a military officer insist on the need for reflection.

As Martha tells her story, she relies ever more on the descriptions in her diary. The "rote Hefte" include letters from the battlefield and summaries of medical reports. What Martha had previously only read about or imagined is verified here in first-hand descriptions by her husband or herself. The indignant cry of revulsion and pain speaks directly to the reader and draws the individual into a common sympathy.

Martha first imagines the worst possible death for her husband:

'schwere Wagen fahren über seine zerschossenen Glieder weg--Mücken und Ameisen wimmeln auf seinen offenen Wunden; die Leute, welche das Schlachtfeld räumen, halten den erstarrt Daliegenden für tot und scharren ihn lebendig

mit anderen Toten in die seichte Grube--hier kommt er zu sich und . . .' (5: p. 167).

She considers that any one or all of these descriptions are possibilities for Friedrich. By projection they are also the fate of many wounded. Though her father does not deny the reality of this picture, he offers the small comfort that it is an exaggeration of her overwrought imagination.

Martha also learns what goes on in battle from Friedrich's letters, which provide a variety of perspectives and episodes. He introduces these with a description of nature and war's effect on it:

'Die Juninacht, so mond- und sterndurchleuchtet, so warm sie auch ist, ist doch entzaubert. Man hört keine Nachtigallen und keine zirpenden Grillen; man atmet keine Rosen- und Jasmingerüche. Die süßen Laute werden durch die scharrenden und wiehernden Pferde, durch die Stimmen der Leute und das Geräusch der Patrouillenschritte unterdrückt; die süßen Gerüche durch Juchten-Sattelzeug- und sonstige Kasernenausdünstungen überduftet' (5: pp. 179-80).

The description of nature is a wartime modification of the romantic scene often found in novels of manners. Although all the elements of the idyll exist in this scene, the intrusions of battle have overwhelmed any sensory perception of them. In this description, as in many others, Suttner describes an idealized scene and its alteration by war. Her criticism is apparent in the verbs "entzaubert," "unterdrückt," and "überduftet."

Description and commentary are integrated in this example, while elsewhere they are not.

Friedrich writes of animal cruelty as a footnote to his reports of the immeasurable cruelty to humans. He describes the guilt he feels when his dog, wounded in battle, must be left behind and given up for lost, to be found only to die shortly thereafter(5: pp. 182-84). On another occasion he uses valuable ammunition to kill a horse trapped in a burning barn. Wherever he looks, and the vantage point varies from hilltop view of strategic moves(5: pp. 180-81), as on a chess board(5: p. 87), to the closeness of hand-to-hand combat(5: p. 182), he sees the destruction of life.

Even more gruesome than Friedrich's accounts of battle action itself are the post-battle scenes that Martha describes, when she goes to the front in search of Friedrich. All that remains behind is monumental misery. The report she gives the reader grows more intense with each new episode. At first she retells eyewitness accounts of doctors and nurses. When she comes face to face with the sights, smells and suffering of the slowly dying, her encounter verifies the scenes that she had only imagined before:

In der Kirche wenigstens war ein weiter Raum, wo die Unglücklichen nebeneinander lagen, hier aber waren sie auf- und ineinander geschichtet --haufen- und knäuelweise; in die Kirche waren doch Pflegende--vielleicht ein durchmarschierendes Sanitätskorps--gekommen, welche zwar mangelhafte, aber doch einige Hilfe geboten hatten; hier aber waren lauter ganz ungefundene Gebliedene--eine krabbelnde, wimmernde Masse halbverfaulter Menschenreste . . . Erstickender Ekel packte mich an der Kehle, [. . .] und ich stieß einen gellenden Schrei aus(5: p. 213).

Aghast at this waking nightmare, Martha can only escape by losing consciousness. Having gone to the battlefield for selfish reasons, she is overcome by the trauma suffered all around her. Her anguished descriptions fill her personal journal, adding an account of humanity's suffering to the story of her own pain.

After the death of her first husband, the cost of war to Martha is considerable. When she remarries an officer, she suffers psychological stress of worrying about him when he is at battle. And with the death of her father and siblings in a cholera epidemic the secondary effects of war take a further toll. Martha concludes her account of the cost of war in one person's life with the most difficult loss of all for her, Friedrich's death:

Friedrich--mein Einziger!--ward--infolge eines bei ihm gefundenen Berliner Briefes der Spionage verdächtigt . . . von einer fanatischen Rotte umring "à mort le Prussien!" --vor ein Patriotentribunal geschleppt-- -- am 1. Februar 1871 ----- standrechtlich erschossen(5: p. 320).



Friedrich's execution is unjustified and senseless and occurs just before the armistice is signed. It is the direct result of fanatic nationalism, the root cause of war and the essential evil that Martha identifies as the target for pacifist efforts.

Suttner knew that change would come only if the people wanted it. To break down complacency and resistance to reform in Austria, Suttner looked to the individual. Deferential attitudes toward change were a denial of responsibility for existing conditions rather than support for them. The author depicts the upper classes as enjoying a great measure of privilege and not particularly interested in political rights. The attendant responsibility for the problems and failures of the political system are thus left in the hands of the few in power. In Austria human inadequacy was rarely recognized as such; rather, the bureaucracy's red tape was blamed for the results of Schlamperei. When it came to really serious injustices, the results were accepted in resignation to "God's will." Certainly there were voices for reform in Austria but they were often ignored or censored or punished(79: pp. 51, 54, 55). Despite this conservative climate Suttner appealed to the ethical sense and rational thought of her readers in the hope that fundamental change might come from below. In the novel

her main characters challenge injustice with arguments for its elimination wherever they can. Through Martha and Friedrich Tilling she confronts resistance to critical thinking of any kind.

General Althaus and Tante Marie embody the opposition that Suttner felt had to be overcome before reform could take place. They are most likely composites of Suttner family members or acquaintances. As representatives of the older generation their attitudes will pass with time, she suggests. She implies that their tired clichés are indicative of the vacuousness of arguments for war. Taking historical events out of the realm of human control and placing them into the hands of God or the abstract realm of dynastic glory, the General and Tante Marie squelch doubts and questions with phrases about worthy sacrifices and rewards in the Hereafter. They are so tied to tradition and so resistant to reason that one has difficulty sympathizing or agreeing with them. One function they serve is to provide readers an easy rejection of their arguments. They are the individual representatives of the two pillars of the dynasty--the military and the Church--justifying war as an instrument of fate and they are there to provoke Martha's arguments.

Tante Marie's religious belief holds that humankind in its sinfulness is incapable of changing the world.

Social injustice is only a reminder of the world's fallen nature and its need of salvation. Martha agrees that salvation is necessary, but she and Marie are in fundamental disagreement as to the Savior and the consequences of the rescue. Marie's God is a stern Providence, and she leads Martha through her catechism of accepting war without complaint:

'Ja, du hast recht, Tante, was sein muß-- das Unabänderliche--'

'Das von Gott Gewollte' --schaltete Tante Marie bekräftigend ein.

'Muß man mit Fassung und Ergebung ertragen.'

'Bravo, Martha. Es kommt ja doch alles so, wie es von der weisen und allgütigen Vorsehung in unabänderlichem Ratschluß vorherbestimmt ist. Die Sterbestunde eines jeden, die steht schon von der Stunde seiner Geburt an geschrieben. Und wir wollen für unsere lieben Krieger so viel und inbrünstig beten--'(5: p. 18).

Complaints or rebellion are useless--resignation is the only proper attitude, since the situation is controlled by God. And this ends any thought of human intervention to prevent war. Her adjectives "weise und allgütig" are meant to move Martha from a grudging acceptance of her fate to gratitude for God's detailed plan. Knowing that her niece is not so devout as she herself is, Marie adds further divine justification for the war, "'Siehst du, Kind, wie in schweren Stunden die Seele doch zu der Religion flüchtet . . . Vielleicht schickt dir der liebe Gott die Prüfung, damit du deine sonstige Lauheit ablegst'"(5: p. 19). Here the words of intended comfort

turn into self-righteous chastisement.

At first, Martha accepts the pious assertions which echo other rebukes that her patriotism and her piety are wavering. The reason for her flagging faith in the fatherland and in its orthodoxy is that she has begun to think about war and its consequences. Unable to suppress her doubts, she begins to voice cautious questions and finds only contradictions in the pat answers, especially in the formulaic phrases that her aunt repeats. Careful not to offend ("Nichts konnte sie mehr beleidigen, als wenn man über gewisse Dinge rationelle Zweifel anstellte."), she still keeps her conclusions to herself:

Das wollte mir wieder nicht recht einleuchten, daß die ganze, noch aus dem Krimkriege herstammende Verstimmung zwischen Österreich und Sardinien, die ganzen Verhandlungen, die Aufstellung des Ultimatums und die Ablehnung desselben nur von Gott veranstaltet worden wären, um meinen lauen Sinn zu erwärmen(5: p. 19).

Martha finds however, that she cannot stop the critical train of thought, even if her sense of propriety still keeps her from speaking out. Her questions, which come whenever Marie speaks of the providential wisdom of war and the power of prayers and amulets to ward off the "inevitable," lead after the war to Martha's growing intellectual curiosity.

While Marie offers pieties and scolding moralities, the general gruffly insists on the permanence of war as a

natural phenomenon. His arguments are steeped in a militaristic tradition which for him is sacred. He defines war as an elemental necessity proven by history and tradition. In his arguments with Martha, Althaus counters her concern for the individual's loss with assertions of national glory. The clear implication is that the individual is insignificant. In a way, however, the purpose of his argument is actually to give meaning to the individual; his point is that a person's life is without importance unless it is tied up with the historic destiny of the state.

A patronizing disregard for the family sphere characterizes General Althaus' position. The family exists only to provide manpower for the war machine; and women's function is to raise sons, to boost morale during war, and to bear the sacrifice when their men are killed. The general preaches these duties of an officer's family with patriotic fervor:

'[. . .] eine so geringe Sache, wie eines einzelnen Soldaten Leben, [verschwindet] in der großen Sache, für die er es gelassen hat, gänzlich. Du, meine Tochter, bist lange nicht patriotisch genug gesinnt. Aber ich will jetzt mit dir nicht zanken . . . Die Hauptsache ist, daß du wieder gesund wirst und dich für deinen Rudi erhältst, um einen tüchtigen Mann und Vaterlandsverteidiger aus ihm heranzubilden'(5: p. 124).

The first and last word of this credo is "Vaterland." It is supposed to inspire sacrifice from the soldier and the

family as well. The role of mothers, daughters, and wives is not passive resignation to the patriarchal institution but active support of it. A universal willingness to accept loss of life is necessary for the greatness of the nation, "'Darum ist das Wichtigste und Höchste, was jeder einzelne erstreben muß und wofür er jederzeit gern sterben soll, die Existenz, die Größe, die Wohlfahrt des Reiches'"(5: p. 34).

When Martha declines the role prescribed by her father, he argues that her responsibility is to the family's military tradition:

'Ich war auch ein einziger Sohn und bin Soldat geworden. Arno [Dotzky] hat keine Geschwister, soviel ich weiß, und dein Bruder Otto ist gleichfalls einziger Sohn und ich habe ihn doch in die Militärakademie gegeben. Die Tradition unserer Familie fordert es, daß der Sproß eines Dotzky und einer Althaus seine Dienste dem Vaterland weihe'(5: p. 50).

But Martha is unmoved by her father's words. Having lost her first husband to tradition, she will have no more of sacrifice. Althaus then insists on the inevitability of military inclination. No matter if his daughter will not be a part of upholding family tradition, "'Zum Glück wird der Junge nicht um deine Erlaubnis fragen; das Soldatenblut fließt ihm in den Adern--'"(5: p. 50). On occasion the general reiterates the idea that militarism is so natural that it is a part of the gene pool, "'Gutes Soldatenblut lügt nicht . . . Ist der Bursche einmal

erwachsen, so wird er seinen Beruf schon selber wählen, -- und einen schöneren gibt es nicht als den, welchen du ihm verbieten willst'"(5: pp. 150-51). No matter what Martha may do to discourage her son Rudi from entering the military, the choice is not hers to determine but lies in nature. It is inevitable that he will become an officer because his father, uncle and grandfather were officers. The tradition is so strong in the family that he might well have inherited it, Martha's father suggests. Besides, Rudi is male. General Althaus believes that militarism is a trait of gender. He assumes that even Friedrich Tilling, though he rejects war, has an instinctual enthusiasm once one has started:

'Es wäre ihm aus sogenannten 'humanitären' Gründen lieber, wenn es zu keiner Schlacht käme; ist es aber einmal dazu gekommen, so wollte er wohl auch lieber dabeisein, da regt sich wohl die männliche Kampfeslust'(5: p. 105).

If the general is to believe in his son-in-law's masculinity, he cannot allow him a consistent pacifism. "Männliche Kampfeslust" is a natural attribute that assures and justifies the future of war according to the general.

Militarism even attains religious status for General Althaus. When Martha imagines the battlefield possibilities during the war of 1866, her father objects that this is "blasphemy!":

'Sündhaft [. . .] und unanständig und unsinnig. Solche Fälle, wie sie deine überspannte Phantasie ausmalt, die kommen mitunter--unter tausend Fällen einmal--bei der Mannschaft--vor, aber einen Stabsoffizier, wie deinen Mann, lassen die anderen nicht liegen. Überhaupt, an solche Grauendinge soll man nicht denken. Es liegt eine Art Frevel, eine Entheiligung des Krieges darin, wenn man statt der Größe des Ganzen die elenden Einzelheiten ins Auge faßt . . . an die denkt man nicht'(5: p. 167).

His insistence that Martha's imagination is overwrought proves to be wrong, when she later visits the battlefield of Königgrätz (Sadova) and fills pages of her life story with descriptions of the countless horrors she witnesses. When he maintains that the class system protects officers, he is blind to the inhumanity of this system. He exhorts his daughter to ignore the suffering and think only of the glory; and yet when its parts consist of detailed misery, war cannot be summed up as a great totality. Just as Marie is offended by the confrontation of religious orthodoxy with rational thought, the general places a taboo on the realistic portrayal of war and a serious consideration of its destruction. For him war is holy, ordained by God, "'Schon der Gott der Bibel war der Gott der Schlachten, der Herr der Heerscharen . . . Er ist es, der uns befiehlt, das Schwert zu führen, [. . .]'"(5: p. 79).

While Biblical examples give war a religious justification, popular thinking concludes that the



elimination of battle is impossible and not even desirable. Martha summarizes her father's arguments:

1. Kriege sind von Gott--dem Herrn der Heerscharen--selber eingesetzt, siehe die Heilige Schrift.
2. Es hat immer welche gegeben, folglich wird es auch immer welche geben.
3. Die Menschheit würde sich ohne diese gelegentliche Dezimierung zu stark vermehren.
4. Der dauernde Friede erschlaft, verweichlicht, hat--wie stehendes Sumpfwasser --Fäulnis, nämlich den Verfall der Sitten zur Folge.
5. Zur Bestätigung der Selbstaufopferung, des Heldenmuts, kurz zur Charakterstählung sind Kriege das beste Mittel.
6. Die Menschen werden immer streiten, volle Übereinstimmung in allen Ansprüchen ist unmöglich--verschiedene Interessen müssen stets aneinanderstoßen, folglich ewiger Friede ein Widersinn(5: p. 151).

For those who believe as he does there is no argument that can change the mind. Martha exhausts herself with trying and gets nowhere. To convert a convinced militarist like her father it takes personal calamity; and the post-war cholera epidemic that wipes out almost the entire Althaus family, including his favorite child, Otto, finally brings General Althaus to utter a deathbed curse on war. Only senseless loss in his own family convinces him.

Suttner's criticism of war is not limited to Naturalistic description of battle, and her objection to war is not based primarily on squeamishness at blood and mutilation. She objects to armed conflict because it is

not a solution that serves the interests of humanity. She identifies the institutions that support the military as the major hindrances to conciliatory alternatives and to reform in general. She finds their efforts misplaced-- in fact she links these institutions to fundamental flaws in society. Just as Stowe attacks a particular evil and then includes the support structure that maintains it, Suttner's criticism goes to the heart of Austrian society. She objects to the military's influence in government and in society and the Church. And she stresses the transitory character of dynastic power which is based on force; every military effort to increase national power and prestige brings the possibility of loss. Autocracy is for the author incompatible with the level of culture achieved in Western Europe; a remnant of a less civilized era, it stands in the way of social justice and an improved quality of life. When Suttner emphasizes the interdependence of the military, the dynasty, the Church, and the school, it becomes clear that the reforms she calls for require entirely new structures.

Suttner sees in the Austrian state hierarchy a disregard for human achievement in the cultural sphere and for the rights of the individual. The state takes precedence over the nation's other social and cultural accomplishments and needs. The author finds this

particularly deplorable, because the state's foreign policy decisions appear to be based not on questions of justice or right but the whims of diplomats obsessed with power. The difference between legal right and moral right is an issue that Suttner explores throughout the novel. In following the events that lead to the Austro-Prussian war of 1866, Martha discovers that treaties are meaningless agreements, for diplomats ignore them as soon as they deem it expedient to do so:

Unterm 7. April leugnet Österreich nochmals offiziell seine Rüstungen, spielt aber auf eine mündliche Äußerung an, welche Bismarck gegen Károlyi gemacht hätte, "daß man sich über den Gasteiner Vertrag leicht hinwegsetzen werde." --Also davon sollen Völkerschicksale abhängen, was zwei Herren Diplomaten in mehr oder minder guter Laune über Verträge sprechen? Und was sind das überhaupt für Verträge, deren Einhalten von dem guten Willen der Kontrahenten abhängig bleibt und durch keine höhere schiedsrichterliche Gewalt gesichert wird?(5: p. 159).

She denounces such power in the hands of so few men as immoral. With growing acceptance elsewhere of republican ideas such as unrestricted male suffrage and the rights of the individual this kind of power is tyranny out of step with the progressive spirit of the time.<sup>1</sup> It is clear to Martha that political expediency as a major factor in questions of war and peace is antithetical to the common good and therefore inappropriate.<sup>2</sup>

Martha's questioning stance grows out of her awareness of her own individuality. Even before her conversion to liberalism she has a strong sense of personal aspiration. She resents society's limitations on her as a woman in developing her ambitions. As a child her adulation of history's heroes was based on awe of the personal fame and glory that could be gained in war. As a young woman she responds to her husband's eagerness to go to war with jealousy, for she concludes: "[. . .] ich war ja sein Höchstes, sein Unentbehrlichstes nicht; wäre er sonst so frohgemut und ohne zwingende Pflicht--sein Regiment hat niemals ausrücken müssen--fort von mir?"(5: p. 37). While the state uses individual egotism for its own purposes by promoting the possibility for personal advancement and the opportunity to be a part of a historic event, it has little regard for other personal emotions. This Martha learns from her father: "'Gattenliebe-- Familienliebe--das ist alles recht schön . . . aber es soll erst in zweiter Linie kommen'." To this Martha can only answer with an incredulous question: "'Soll es?'" (5: p. 26). Surely a state that presumes its authority to be from God cannot disregard the familial and marital ties considered inviolable by the Church? For Suttner, at any rate, such disregard for individual rights is intolerable and one instance of church dogma corrupted by political

ends.

The author also attacks the state's despotism in questions of individual conscience. Martha insists that her son choose a civilian occupation. With the 1868 institution of a military draft her plans are thwarted, and she complains indignantly:

Daß mein Rudolf einst werde Soldat sein müssen  
--das konnte ich nicht fassen. Und da  
phantasieren die Leute von Freiheit!

'Ein Jahr 'Freiwilliger'' --tröstete mich  
Friedrich--, 'das ist nicht viel.' Ich  
schüttelte den Kopf.

'Und wäre es nur ein Tag! Keinen Menschen  
sollte man zwingen können, ein bestimmtes Amt,  
das er vielleicht haßt, auch nur einen Tag zu  
bekleiden, denn an diesem Tag muß er das  
Gegenteil von dem, was er fühlt, zur Schau  
tragen, [. . .] und meinen Sohn wollte ich vor  
allem zur Wahrhaftigkeit erziehen.'

'[. . .] Ganz wahr kann nur ein freier Mann  
sein; und mit diesen beiden--Wahrheit und  
Freiheit--ist's noch schlecht bestellt in  
unseren Tagen[. . .]'(5: pp. 285-86).

While disapproving the new military obligations, the Tillings do not, however, consider the possibility of civil disobedience. Friedrich's statement on the relationship between freedom and truth indirectly suggests the possibility of acting according to conscience and accepting the consequential loss of freedom. This is an alternative that Suttner herself never publicly endorsed.

When Suttner argues that guarantees for the social welfare of a nation's citizens have a greater claim on

the state than its desire for prestige and power, she echoes Stowe's insistence that a desire for federal union cannot take precedence over assurances for the familial union of its dependents. Personal fates are described as concrete evidence against arguments for an abstract state ideal. Much as Stowe questions the inviolability of the idea of "Union" by describing the human degradation and misery of slave family disunion, Suttner disputes the dynasty's benefits to its subjects by describing the personal fate of her main character. She weighs the values of personal happiness and human dignity against the militaristic values of the state and finds the nation's priorities wanting.

The author deplores the wartime devaluation of intellectual life and the underestimation, even in peacetime, of cultural achievements in a militaristic state. Martha is provided her first argument against war when she overhears a bookseller tell of the drop in his business:

'Sehen Sie, Herr Professor, jetzt geht es jenen schlecht, welche belletristische oder wissenschaftliche Werke schreiben oder verlegen --es fragt kein Mensch danach. Solange der Krieg währt, interessiert sich niemand für das geistige Leben. Das ist für Schriftsteller und Buchhändler eine schlimme Zeit.'

'Und eine schlimme Zeit für die Nation,' entgegnete der Professor, 'bei welcher solche Interesselosigkeit natürlich geistigen Niedergang zur Folge hat'(5: pp. 29-30).

Martha is among those who pay attention to little else than news from the battlefield, for anyone with a family member or friend at the front is justifiably concerned. Exclusive interest in the war's progress has a price that grows intolerable as the fighting drags on. Scientific and technical innovations, unless they have military application, are ignored; and intellectual achievements are underestimated because they are thought to be irrelevant to political events. Martha's father reacts with derision to a bookdealer's recommendation of Darwin's The Origin of the Species:

'Was kann denn in einem Buch über Tier- und Pflanzenarten Epochemachendes für uns Menschen enthalten sein? Ja, die Konföderation der italienischen Staaten, die Hegemonie Österreichs im Deutschen Bunde: das sind weittragende Dinge; die werden noch lange in der Geschichte bestehen, wenn von diesem englischen Buch da kein Mensch mehr etwas wissen wird. Merk dir das'(5: p. 36).

As a general, Althaus is of course more interested in the outcome of a battle than in the influence of a new scientific finding. And since he is clearly to be taken as representative of the military caste and equated with the upper echelons of Austrian society, his lack of interest in intellectual and cultural life stands as a bias characteristic of the Austrian upper classes. In conversation with a diplomat, to cite another instance, Friedrich Tilling complains of the loss of valuable

minds, if universal military service is adopted:

'Bei dem Gegner sind dieselben Elemente vorhanden--also heben sich die durch gebildete Unteroffiziere zu gewinnenden Vorteile auf. Dagegen bleibt--gleichfalls auf beiden Seiten --der Verlust an unschätzbarem geistigem Material, welches dem Lande dadurch entzogen wird, daß die Gebildeten--diejenigen, welche durch Erfindungen, Kunstwerke oder wissenschaftliche Forschungen die Kultur gefördert hätten--in Reih' und Glied als Zielscheiben feindlicher Geschütze aufgestellt werden.'

'Ach was [. . .] alles Dinge, welche die Machtstellung des Staates um kein Quentchen vergrößern [. . .]'(5: p. 268).

The health of a national culture is threatened in a military state, but even more endangered is the possibility for cross-cultural understanding and international cooperation. In Paris the Tillings exchange ideas with others in their quest for pacifist answers. But this informal meeting of minds is then dispersed because of wartime restrictions. The forced cancellation of official events such as expositions and conferences can be significant. And the results of gradual understanding and mutual respect between nations that grow from these formal and informal exchanges are lost. Martha quotes Renan in her diary:

'Ist es nicht herzerreißend, zu denken, daß alles, was wir Männer der Wissenschaft in fünfzig Jahren aufzubauen bestrebt waren, mit einem Schlag zusammengestürzt ist: die Sympathien zwischen Volk und Volk, das gegenseitige Verständnis, das fruchtbare Zusammenarbeiten[?] Wie tötet ein solcher Krieg die Wahrheitsliebe! Welche Lüge, welche



Verleumdung des einen Volkes wird nun nicht aufs neue in den nächsten fünfzig Jahren von dem anderen mit Begierde geglaubt werden und sie für unabsehbare Zeiten voneinander trennen! Welche Verzögerung des europäischen Fortschrittes!' (5: p. 300).

The most consequential victim of war is, thus, the progress between nations toward a breakdown of differences. Only through cooperation can peace and its benefits be secured. For Suttner (as for Renan) the rise of jingoism represents a setback and a continuing barrier to regaining previous advances. The loss of truth, indeed, the war machine's dependence on deception is its most fundamental breach of morality.

Standard definitions of morality, in fact, have no place in the hierarchy of political and military power, Suttner reminds her readers. The state relies on secrecy, duplicity, and slander to ensure popular support for wars. It rarely stands behind the slogans of just causes with which it embellishes its bellicose declarations. General Althaus explains to his daughter:

'Die Gründe, welche vor Ausbruch eines Krieges von den Kabinetten als Veranlassung desselben angegeben werden, die treten in den Hintergrund, sobald die Schlachten einmal geschlagen worden [sind]. Da bringen die Siege und Niederlagen ganz neue Kombinationen hervor; dann vermindern und vermehren und bilden sich die Reiche in vorher ungeahnten Verhältnissen.'

'Also sind die Gründe eigentlich keine Gründe, sondern Vorwände gewesen?' fragte ich.

'Vorwände? Nein'--kam einer der Generäle meinem Vater zu Hilfe. --'Anlässe vielmehr, Anstöße zu den Ereignissen, welche sich dann

selbständig nach Maßstab der Erfolge  
gestalten'(5: p. 1350.

When Martha claims that war is a tool not of justice but of greed, the general denies that the military objective of war spoils is more than an incidental product of happenstance. His rationalization is full of circuities; it states that battle is carefully planned in strategy sessions only to run an independent course toward results beyond human control. Althaus and his cronies characterize themselves in their arguments more through clumsy stupidity than cleverness and cunning. These characters perhaps seem overdrawn, but they are based on the "typical" Austrian officer who was more accustomed to the adoration of women and the obedience of male subordinates than to critical reasoning.

As Martha's studies of the historic causes and motivations for the war of 1864 in Schleswig-Holstein teach her, altruistic ideals may inspire a people to make the sacrifice that war demands, but the cause of justice is never the real aim of the state. She is disillusioned when the preparations for war with Prussia take place at the same time as each side claims to have no bellicose intentions. Her diary reports the following exchange of words:

Österreich erklärt, daß sämtliche umlaufende  
Gerüchte über geheimes Rüsten falsch seien; es  
falle ihm gar nicht ein, Preußen anzugreifen.

Es stellt daher die Forderung, daß Preußen seine Kriegsbereitschafts-Maßnahmen einstelle.

Preußen erwidert: Es denke gar nicht im entferntesten daran, Österreich anzugreifen, aber durch des letzteren Rüstungen ist es gezwungen, sich auf einen Angriff gefaßt zu machen(5: p. 159).

Martha becomes indignant that each state's denials of preparation for conflict become an excuse for an escalation of arms. Her experience has been that the outbreak of hostilities is always preceded by an arms build-up and a period of mutual posturing and exchange of threats, even while these are denied. She rejects the argument of war preparedness as a deterrent: "'Der bewaffnete Friede ist keine Wohltat . . . und nicht lange soll uns der Krieg verhütet bleiben, sondern immer'"(5: p. 331). Suttner's dissatisfaction with peacetime armament continued throughout her career. The re-definition of peace became a theme in her activism, when she described the situation as she saw it in 1896: "Nicht den Frieden zu erhalten, sondern ihn erst zu schaffen, gilt's, denn wir haben keinen. Wir leben im Rüstungskrieg, in einem auf die Dauer unhaltbaren Waffenstillstand"(18: p. 178; 59: p. 41).

Because of the possibility for greater international prestige, a foreign policy based on territorial gain takes precedence over domestic concerns in defining the state's interests. Here is another instance in which the state

ignores ethical imperatives. The predominance of Austria's policy of aggressive military preparedness--specifically the temptation to gain influence in the German Federation--gave the national agenda a militaristic focus. According to the novel's government representative, Minister Allerdings (as he is called behind his back), the slightest blunder or misunderstanding can bring on war, even when the state's other interests are not served by it:

'Allerdings,' bestätigte der Minister, 'der politische Horizont zeigt vorderhand noch keinen schwarzen Punkt; doch es steigen Wetterwolken mitunter ganz unerwartet rasch auf --und die Chance ist niemals ausgeschlossen, daß eine--wenn auch geringfügige--Differenz einen Krieg zum Ausbruch bringt. Das sage ich Ihnen zum Trost, Herr Oberstleutnant. Was mich anbelangt, der ich kraft meines Amtes die inneren Angelegenheiten meines Landes zu verwalten habe, so müssen meine Wünsche allerdings nur nach möglichst langer Erhaltung des Friedens gerichtet sein; denn dieser allein ist geeignet, die in meinem Ressort liegenden Interessen zu fördern [. . .]'(5: p. 76).

The deference with which the minister almost apologizes that no war is in sight typifies a state whose main business is fighting. His own wishes for peace are based only on his professional interests: his duties are easier to carry out and he will earn greater respect, perhaps even advancement if peace is sustained. He assumes that the military officer looks forward to war as an opportunity for honors and promotion. Suttner reproaches

the selfishness of such attitudes, and apparently the imperial and royal bureaucratic and military hierarchies encouraged this kind of ambition.

The minister admits that international prestige and power are the ultimate goal of those in government service. He explains that the diplomats' first priority is not the maintenance of peace, but "'jeder drohenden Verringerung [unserer . . .] Machtstellung entgegenzuarbeiten und jede mögliche Suprematie zu erringen trachten, eifersüchtig die Ehre des Landes hüten, angetanen Schimpf rächen . . .'" Martha responds that this diplomacy is based on bellicose principles: it assumes that all other states are enemies and insist on national claims "'auch wenn man sein Unrecht einsieht'" (5: p. 98). Thus wars are started because a few men are expert at fabricating conflicts, and the diplomatic corps of a militaristic state sees to it that conflicts between states can only be resolved through force.<sup>3</sup> Rather than searching for mutually advantageous solutions, diplomats see only the possibility of gain for their own side. Suttner protests this gamble with the lives and material well-being of a nation. Her analysis of Austrian diplomacy applied not only to Austria's foreign policy up to the establishment of the second Empire as described in the novel, but foresaw the manipulations of Austrian

diplomacy preceding World War I.<sup>4</sup>

In the wars that Suttner depicts the Austrian army is victorious in only one and that with Prussian help. The defeats of 1859 and 1866 proved the incompetence of the Austrian military and yet the Habsburg dynasty continued to stake its existence on it. Suttner tells us that there are also superficial reasons for maintaining the military structure; without it the social season would lose its flair. Lori Griesbach, Martha's childhood friend and the novel's most practiced flirt, shudders at the thought that the military might be deemed unnecessary<sup>5</sup>: "'Das wäre eine schöne Existenz--lauter Zivilisten--mir schaudert! Das ist zum Glück unmöglich'"(5: p. 30). She looks to every war as a possible rung for her husband in the promotion ladder. To welcome war as an opportunity to provide the decorations that make the Austrian officers such charming dance partners is an attitude Tilling denounces:

'Ich weiß wohl, daß die Gelegenheit zu persönlicher Auszeichnung [. . .] nur bei Feldzügen geboten wird; aber wie kleinherzig und enggeistig [. . .] Krieg [zu] führen, damit die Armee doch beschäftigt und befriedigt werde [. . .]'(5: p. 76).

He touches on the economic problem posed by a smaller military and a decrease in its use. A diminished reliance on military force means that many members of the upper classes would lose their occupation. "Kleinherzigkeit"

and "Enggeistigkeit" are identified here as the barriers to creative solutions to this problem.

Martha's greatest frustration is with the state's resistance to change. No matter how influential the voices of criticism may be, the guarantee for an abusive reign of might and its continuation is at the highest levels of government. In its loyalty to tradition and its distrust of innovation the Habsburg dynasty rivaled only the Russian imperial hierarchy amongst European great powers for reactionary attitudes toward reform. Wars were still fought for the glory of "'der langen römisch-deutschen Kaiser-Reihe'"(5: p. 157), or "'um diesen [häuslichen Herd] zu schützen und vor feindlichem Überfall zu wahren, um unseren Frauen den Frieden zu erhalten'." To this Martha's mental response is, "es war ja kein bedrohter Herd da, keine Barbarenhorden standen vor den Toren--einfach politische Spannung zwischen zwei Kabinetten"(5: p. 13). But the military slogans are largely unquestioned because they are part of a larger tradition, and everywhere Suttner finds the dynasty's attempt to maintain status quo in a changed world and a rigid adherence to tradition. In her criticism of Austria's ossified social and state institutions she repeatedly challenges taboos against innovation. The tyranny of the Habsburg state, she says, arises from its

commitment to a paternalism out of place in the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Yet because she believes in humanity's gradual victory over barbarism and that the cultural and technological achievements of the nineteenth century are an indication of human capability, she views resistance to reform as ultimately futile.

The author is further perturbed that intellectual developments go largely unnoticed by the aristocracy. An exchange of ideas in intellectual salons as they existed in other European cultural centers is impossible. Martha explains why the mix of upper classes and intellectuals cannot succeed in Austria:

Unsere gewohnte Gesellschaft wäre ganz unangenehm überrascht gewesen, bei mir unadelige Leute anzutreffen, und hätte nicht den rechten Ton gefunden, mit solchen zu verkehren. Und diese selber hätten meinen mit "Komtesseln" und Sportsmen, mit alten Generälen und alten Stiftsdamen gefüllten Salon schon gar unerträglich langweilig gefunden. Welchen Anteil konnten Männer von Geist und Wissen, Schriftsteller und Künstler, an den ewig gleichen Erörterungen nehmen: bei wem gestern getanzt worden und bei wem morgen getanzt wird[?] [. . .] hätte ich mich auch in jene Gruppe eingedrängt, sogleich würden die eben geführten Gespräche über Nationalökonomie, über Byrons Poesie, über Theorien von Strauß und Renan verstummt sein, und es würde geheißen haben: 'Ach, Gräfin Dotzky! . . . gestern auf dem Damen-Picknick haben Sie bezaubernd ausgesehen . . . und Sie gehen doch morgen zum Empfang bei der russischen Botschaft?' (5: pp. 42-43).

Martha describes a society that enjoys the present and refuses to contemplate social and political problems.



Because the aristocracy is given no real power it busies itself with meaningless diversion. Society's insularity assures a continuation of this complacent attitude. Suttner does not excuse the nobility. She faults them for valuing their life of privilege over the possibility of gaining political influence.

As a pillar of the dynasty the Church stands as one of the strongest bulwarks against change. Suttner is particularly critical of its support of the military. She also attacks the inner contradictions that arise from its neglect of social inequities and its tolerance of rituals that have lost their spiritual value. The Church abrogates its role as a force for reform when it fails to practice the virtues it teaches.

Church support for the military pervades society not just in wartime but in peacetime as well. Martha's criticism builds from her sceptical review of a peacetime Holy Week ceremony to a complete rejection of religious dogma riddled with inconsistencies, especially in regard to its sanction of war. For her the service is nothing more than a social or cultural event. She is unmoved by the tradition represented in the ceremony, seeing only the pomp of royalty in its attempt to act out the humility of Christ. While her sister accepts the intended message uncritically, Martha questions the meaning of the ritual:

'[. . .] es gibt nichts Schöneres und Erhebenderes als diese Zeremonie . . . der Triumph der christlichen Demut: Kaiser und Kaiserin auf dem Boden rutschend, um die Füße armer Pfründner und Pfründnerinnen zu waschen-- symbolisiert das nicht so recht, wie klein und nichtig die irdische Majestät vor der göttlichen ist?'

'Um durch Niederknien Demut sinnbildlich darzustellen, muß man sich eben sehr erhaben fühlen. Es drückt aus: was Gott Sohn im Vermächtnis zu den Aposteln, das bin ich, Kaiser zu den Pfründnern. Mir kommt dieses Grundmotiv der Zeremonie nicht gerade demütig vor'(5: p. 68).

Because she is sensitive to peripheral details of the ceremony, Martha interprets its message differently. It is not a religious ceremony, for the appearance of the military makes it an event of state: "dieselben [Generalität und Offizierskorps] waren ja nicht die Träger der Hauptrollen, sondern nur zum Ausfüllen der Bühne bestimmt"(5: p. 69). In her description she emphasizes the lack of humility in the spectacle as a kind of theater piece and in the elitist observance of strict protocol in the spectator gallery:

[Wir begaben uns . . .] in den großen Zeremoniensaal der Burg. Dasselbst waren auf einer Estrade Plätze für die Mitglieder der Aristokratie und des diplomatischen Korps vorbehalten. Man war da also wieder unter sich und teilte rechts und links Grüße aus. Auch die Galerie war dicht gefüllt [. . .] aber doch etwas "gemischt," nicht zur "Creme" gehörig wie wir da unten. Kurz, die alte Kastenabsonderung und -bevorrechtung--anläßlich dieser Feier der symbolisierten Demut(5: p. 69).

The Austrian nobility does not practice the virtue presented in the ritual; it participates only as spectator of the tableau. Martha views the emperor's assumption of the role of Christ in the ceremony as a misrepresentation of humility and she sees the audience repudiating the ceremony's intended meaning. The values of charity, generosity, and tolerance that selflessness engenders exist in representational form rather than in practice in this closed aristocratic circle. Suttner exposes the inability to do more than pay lip service to the humanitarian values of the Christian heritage. And she sees this failure as a result of society's militaristic identity.

Religious observance is nothing more than social fashion, and the proprieties of high society leave no room for behavior based on Christian teaching. For Martha the event is simply another public representation of nobility and an opportunity to be a part of the spectacle of an imperial parade:

Endlich traten wir vor das Tor hinaus, wo unsere Wagen warteten und eine Menge Volk versammelt war. Diese Leute wollten wenigstens diejenigen sehen, welche so glücklich waren, den Allerhöchsten Hof gesehen zu haben: sie konnten dann ihrerseits als diejenigen, welche die Gesehenhabenden gesehen hatten, wieder minder Bevorzugten sich sehen lassen(5: p. 72).

In this passage, perhaps better than any other, Suttner ridicules the hierarchy of Austrian society and the

aristocracy which values little more than its traditions of privilege and the unifying honor code and loyalty commanded by the monarchy. The adherence to the Spanish Court Ceremonial, the limitations of access to court to those who could prove proper ancestry, the military educations of aristocratic sons and convent upbringing of their sisters testify to the pervasiveness of obsolete traditions in the upper classes.

By transferring its divine authority to the dynasty, the Church becomes a tool for maintaining injustice. Instead of preaching a message of peace, priests and chaplains justify war by citing Old Testament references to the vengeful God of battle. The battle cry, "Mit Gott für König und Vaterland" is backed up with amulets, with prayers, and with chaplains' exhortations. Special services are held to consecrate the dead, to celebrate victories, and to provide comfort in defeat. In the earlier part of the narrative Martha, whose family has not succeeded in comforting her, succumbs to the spectacle of the ceremony:

Wie erhebend--wenngleich schmerzlich--  
hatte die große Trauerzeremonie auf mich gewirkt  
[. . .] In der Mitte der Kirche war ein hoher  
Katafalk aufgestellt, von Hunderten brennender  
Wachslichter umgeben und mit militärischen  
Emblemen--Fahnen, Waffen--geschmückt. [. . .]  
Ja, mit den Weihrauchwolken, mit dem Geläute  
und den Orgeltönen, mit den in einem  
gemeinsamen Schmerz vergossenen Tränen stieg da  
sicherlich ein wohlgefälliges Opfer zum Himmel

auf, und der Herr der Heerscharen mußte seinen Segen träufeln auf jene, denen dieser Katafalk errichtet war(5: p. 35).

She is moved by the trappings of the official ceremony of mourning and the loss she shares with others. But as she hears repeated references to "der Herr der Heerscharen: and to the "Gott der Schlachten," Martha begins to question the compatibility of a God of Love with the angry God whose means of justice is battle. Much later Friedrich shares her doubts when he writes to her from the battlefield of his inability to justify his role in the military:

[. . .] Das ist so eine Wandlung, wie sie bei vielen Leuten in Glaubenssachen eintritt [. . .] wenn sie zu der Einsicht gelangen, daß die Zeremonie, der sie da beiwohnen, auf [. . .] grausamer Torheit, wie bei den religiösen Opferschlachtungen beruht, dann wollen sie [. . .] nicht mehr sich und die Welt betrügen, indem sie den nunmehr entgötterten Tempel betreten. So ist es mir mit dem grausamen Marsdienst ergangen. [Das] Geheimnisvolle, Überirdische, Andachtsschauer Erweckende, welches diese Gottheit [. . .] auch in früherer Zeit noch meinen Sinn umdunkelte, das ist mir jetzt vollständig abhanden gekommen. Die Armeebefehl-Liturgie und die rituellen Heldenphrasen erscheinen mir nicht mehr als inspirierter Urtext; der gewaltige Orgelton der Kanonen, der Weihrauchdampf des Pulvers vermag nicht mehr mich zu entzücken: ganz glaubens- und ehrfurchtslos wohne ich der fürchterlichen Kultushandlung bei und kann dabei nichts anderes mehr sehen als die Qualen des Opfers, nichts hören als dessen jammervollen Todesschrei(5: p. 187-88).

With his complete alienation from war Friedrich is converted to pacifism. His depiction of the battle

ritual complements Martha's description of the memorial service. His reference to Mars makes it clear that he does not identify as Christian the religious trappings used to justify battle. His denunciation speaks of deception and his language--"grausam entgöttert, umdunkelt, fürchterlich, Qualen, Todesschrei"--describes a mystical ritual of evil. For him the barbarity that is loosed in war is a concrete form of hell. It represents a reversion to base instincts and stands in opposition to the teachings of moral thought and the traditions of civilization. Friedrich criticizes the Church's hypocrisy:

'[. . .] diejenigen, deren Beruf es wäre, diese Sätze zu lehren [Du sollst nicht töten--sollst nicht stehlen--liebe deinen Nächsten wie dich selbst--verzeihe deinen Feinden], sind die ersten, welche unsere Waffen segnen und des Himmels Segen auf unsere Schlachtarbeit herabflehen'(5: p. 79).

Rather than using its influence to mediate conflict, the religious community has become a part of the uniformed parade that brings death and destruction in its wake.

Just as its peacetime rituals are empty, the wartime comfort that the Church offers is also a meaningless sham, as Martha discovers in her trip to the battlefield and its make-shift aid stations in search of her husband:

Und das war der Tempel des Gottes der ewigen Liebe--das waren die wundertätigen Heiligen, welche da in den Nischen und an den Wänden fromm die Hände falteten und ihre Köpfe

unter dem goldstrahlenden Glorienschein  
emporhoben? . . .

'O Mutter Gottes, heilige Mutter Gottes. . .  
einen Tropfen Wasser . . . erbarme dich!" hörte  
ich einen armen Soldaten flehen. Das hatte er  
zu dem buntbemalten, tauben Bilde wohl schon  
tagelang vergebens gebetet. --O ihr armen  
Menschen, ehe ihr nicht dem Gebot der Liebe  
gehört, das ein Gott in eure Herzen gelegt  
hat, werdet ihr immer vergebens die Liebe  
Gottes anrufen--solange unter euch die  
Grausamkeit nicht überwunden ist, habt ihr von  
himmlischem Mitleid nichts zu hoffen(5: p. 210).

Martha faults the Church for having betrayed its mission,  
its symbols of love and mercy bringing no comfort. Rather  
than empowering its members to apply Christian teaching in  
order to change their own world, the Church emphasizes  
resignation. Here there is again description of a scene  
meant to inspire hope, in which wartime conditions intrude  
and distort. Martha's conclusions in this example  
reinterpret the message of despair to remind the reader  
that solutions lie in the realm of human possibility. The  
Church's attempt to prepare soldiers for death is nothing  
more than an empty promise of afterlife reward. A  
chaplain assures Martha and Friedrich that the dying  
soldier need not fear death because he has the guarantee  
"vor dem himmlischen Richter Gnade zu finden." This  
promise is not much comfort for the dying soldier whose  
last moments could be relieved by human aid.

Suttner criticizes the values of the Austrian military state as anti-rational and anti-individualistic. The most dangerous of its "ideals" is unquestioning loyalty to the state. This kind of patriotism cannot admit to weakness or faults which would be a breach of loyalty to the regime; the dynasty might be made obsolete in a process of reform. Uncritical acceptance of the dynasty's claims, especially in times of war, assures the support that is psychologically important to the fighting forces. Martha is reminded of this when she questions the value of victory:

Doch wie, wenn der Feind siegte? Diese Frage ließ ich einmal im Kreise meiner militärischen Freunde laut werden--wurde aber schmäählich niedergezischt. Das bloße Erwähnen von der Möglichkeit eines Schattens eines Zweifels ist schon antipatriotisch. Im voraus seiner Unüberwindlichkeit sicher sein, gehört mit zu den Soldatenpflichten. Also gewissermaßen auch zu den Pflichten einer loyalen Leutnantsfrau(5: p. 14).

The suggestion that defeat is possible is demoralizing and therefore considered to be a self-fulfilling threat. While victory is thought to be linked to the side of justice, defeat implies the opposite. And so Martha's consideration of defeat suggests that she doubts Austria's moral position. Before the war of 1859 she voices the possibility that Austria is not on the side of right:



In allen geschichtlichen Kriegsberichten hatte ich die Sympathie und die Bewunderung der Erzähler immer für diejenige Partei ausgedrückt gefunden, welche einem fremden Joch sich entringen wollte und welche für die Freiheit kämpfte. [. . .] soviel schien mir doch klar: die Jochabschüttelungs- und Freiheitsbestrebung lag diesmal nicht auf österreichischer, sondern auf italienischer Seite. [. . .] Da hatte ich Unselige wieder an einem sakrosankten Grundsatz gerührt, nämlich daß unsere Regierung--d.h. diejenige, unter welcher man zufällig geboren worden--niemals ein Joch, sondern nur einen Segen abgeben könne; daß die von "uns" sich losreißen Wollenden nicht Freiheitskämpen, sondern einfach Rebellen sind, und daß überhaupt und unter allen Umständen "wir" allemal und überall in unserem vollen Rechte sind(5: pp. 21-22).

Suttner knew that the kind of disagreement that led to Austria's war with the Italian "rebels" was not limited to Austria; the wish for independence from foreign domination was repeated wherever imperialism had imposed foreign domination. However, the nature of the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy led repeatedly to this kind of conflict.<sup>7</sup> Rather than accepting assertions of legal right, Martha looks for the position of moral right. In her exploration of this dichotomy she finds Austria most often on the side of legal right but moral transgression. War could be avoided by taking the moral high ground. She concludes that the ethical solution to conflict ought to be not war but conciliation. A spirit of generosity and a tolerance for independence would serve all concerned. For victory only sows the seed for further discontent, as did

Austria's victory over Lombardy in 1848; and the war of 1859 with its moral and material loss indicated that defeat is a double one.

In her description of the war of 1864 in which Austria and Prussian fought together, she notes that Austrian enthusiasm for a future German Empire was based on nationalism. This ethnic pride was a possible threat in a multi-national state. The Habsburgs depended on dynastic loyalty, as an officer reminds a subordinate who believes he is fighting for a just cause in the 1864 campaign with Prussia against Denmark:

'Was mich daran begeistert,' sagte ein junger Oberleutnant, 'ist das edle Motiv: unterdrückte Rechte unserer Brüder verteidigen. Daß die Preußen mit uns gehen, oder vielmehr wir mit ihnen, das sichert uns erstens den Sieg, und zweitens wird es die nationalen Bande noch enger verknüpfen. Die Nationalitätsidee--'

'Reden Sie lieber nichts von der,' unterbrach der Regimentschef etwas strenge. 'Für einen Österreicher schickt sich dieser Schwindel nicht wohl. [. . .] Böhmen, Ungarn, Deutsche, Kroaten --wo ist da das Nationalitätsband? Wir kennen nur ein Prinzip, das uns vereint, das ist die loyale Liebe zu unserer Dynastie. Was uns also begeistern soll, wenn wir zu Felde ziehen, ist [. . .] daß wir unserem erhabenen und geliebten Kriegsherrn Heeresfolge leisten dürfen. Es lebe der Kaiser!'(5: p. 104).

The young officer's enthusiasm is kindled by the two-fold cause of nineteenth century independence movements: the fight against oppression and the nationalist assertion of self-determination. The latter goal is vetoed by his superior because it is out of place in the political

reality of the Habsburg empire. By implication the former cause, anti-dynastic in its focus, is also suspect as treasonous for an Austrian officer who needs no other inspiration than loyalty to the emperor. Clearly Suttner thinks the rebuke a weak substitute for a just rationale.

The loss of 1859 was one of the first signs of Austria's decline,<sup>8</sup> yet as weak as the Habsburg empire was to become, it did not change its course. The dynasty continued to rely on traditions based on the honor code. Suttner denounces the definition of honor and reputation that requires revenge from individuals and states for the slightest perception of injury.<sup>9</sup> While the honor code gives foundation to the assertion of legal right, it stands in the way of moral right. Friedrich criticizes the code though he admits to having submitted to its requirements:

'[Ein Freund des Duells zu sein] habe ich nie behauptet. Ich sagte nur, daß ich gegebenenfalls selbstverständlich zum Duell greifen würde [. . .] gerade so selbstverständlich, wie ich schon mehreremal in den Krieg gezogen und bei dem nächsten Anlaß wieder ziehen werde. Ich füge mich den Satzungen der Ehre. Damit will ich aber keineswegs gesagt haben, daß diese Satzungen, wie sie unter uns bestehen, meinem sittlichen Ideal entsprechen. [. . .] Einmal wird eine erhaltene Injurie, wenn sie unverdient ist, nicht auf den Empfänger, sondern auf den rohen Geber als Schmach zurückfallen; zweitens wird das Selbsträcheramt auch in Sachen der Ehre ebenso außer Gebrauch kommen, wie in kultivierter Gesellschaft die Selbstjustiz in anderen Dingen tatsächlich schon verschwunden ist'(5: p. 99).

Tilling does not believe in the military's outdated value system, though he must live by it for his livelihood and is confident that it will be overcome someday. His belief in human progress toward an ideal society echoes Suttner's faith in a just future. In spite of the resistance to reform that she saw around her, she based her optimism on her own conversion to the progressive thought of her times. Just as Suttner grew from frivolous interests to committed activism, Martha Tilling's story and that of her husband testify to the possibility for change.

The novel is not excessively optimistic, however, for it shows military thinking and values to be pervasive throughout Austria. Force is required as a response to perceived insult not only between individuals but by the dynasty on an international basis. Any threat to dynastic sovereignty is construed as meriting an ultimatum; all opportunities for building a stronger position are to be taken. General Althaus is true to this tradition in his exuberance for military solutions to diplomatic problems: "'Ich träume immer, dass die Habsburger noch einmal die ihnen gebührende deutsche Kaiserwürde zurückerlangen'"(5: p. 97). This is wishful thinking and an "ideal" both anachronistic and self-defeating in the alliance-making Europe of the

Bismarck era. Rather than accepting its changed position in Europe, Austria deludes itself with memories of past greatness. The general uses strong words when he denounces the Prussian army after its 1866 victory, but they cannot be backed up:

'Nach dem Vorgefallenen müssen wir die Übermütigen züchtigen, wir müssen den annektierten (so nennen sie's--ich sage 'geraubten') Staaten wieder zu ihrem zertretenen Recht verhelfen, das erfordert unsere Ehre und das Interesse unserer europäischen Machtstellung, Freundschaft--Allianz mit diesen Frevlern? Nimmermehr. Außer sie kämen demütig gekrochen.'

'In diesem Fall,' bemerkte Friedrich, 'würde man wohl den Fuß auf ihren Nacken setzen; Bündnisse sucht und schließt man nur mit jenen, die einem imponieren, oder die gegen einen gemeinschaftlichen Feind Schutz leisten können. In der Staatskunst ist Egoismus das oberste Prinzip.'

'Nun ja,' gab mein Vater zurück, 'wenn das ego Vaterland heißt, so ist solchem Egoismus doch alles andere unterzuordnen, so ist doch alles erlaubt und geboten, was dem Interesse dieses Ichs dienlich erscheint'(5: p. 228).

The general's crusty patriotism would be comical if it did not so closely reflect the attitudes of Austrian leaders.<sup>10</sup> For him honor and a position of power are only attainable through military means; alliances require compromise and reduce the possible gains for the state. Patriotic egotism as an expedient before which all other considerations fall is not an appropriate character trait for a defeated nation, Friedrich argues. By 1866 Austria's "Ehre und Machtstellung" are a sham and would be

better served by conciliation and compromise, he suggests when he answers his father-in-law, "'die eigenen Interessen [sind] auch ohne Schädigung der fremden, vielmehr im Verein mit [diesen], am wirksamsten zu fördern'"(5: p. 228).

Suttner objects to military honor because it stands in the way of ethical solutions and perpetuates war. Martha Tilling describes the cry for Prussia's humiliation as repayment for 1866: "[. . .] der Revanchegedanke, der jede verlorene Partie [. . .] zu begleiten pflegt, der schwebte über allen Kundgebungen der Politiker. [. . .] hatte in diplomatischen Kreisen sogar schon einen Namen: 'La revanche de Sadowa'"(5: p. 272). As long as force decides questions of justice and as long as revenge for perceived injury motivates new wars she is convinced: "Jeder Krieg --was immer dessen Ausgang sei--enthält unweigerlich den Keim eines folgenden Krieges in sich"(5: p. 136).

Militarism's influence in the teaching of patriotism and piety as an integral part of education is also of concern to Suttner. Martha and Friedrich Tilling object to the conservative ideology of their upbringing, but they overcome it in adulthood through self-education. The effort to instill in Martha's son a spirit of intellectual openness is an uphill battle against the traditions of

their family and class. For of course General Althaus and Tante Marie are also interested in passing on to the new generation their ideals. Tante Marie never misses an opportunity to preach her beliefs:

'Grüße mir den lieben Kleinen, und er soll nur immer recht brav lernen. Ich schicke ihm gleichzeitig ein paar Bücher: 'Das fromme Kind und sein Schutzengel,' --eine wunderschöne Geschichte--und 'Vaterländische Helden' --eine Sammlung von Kriegsbildern für Knaben. Man kann den Kleinen nicht früh genug Sinn für derlei beibringen. Dein Bruder Otto z.B. war noch nicht fünf Jahre alt, als ich ihm schon vom großen Alexander, von Cäsar und anderen berühmten Eroberern erzählte--und wie ist er jetzt für alles Heroische begeistert--es ist ein Vergnügen!'(5: p. 146).

Support for the Habsburg dynasty through cross and sword is taught at an early age, first in the family. Later the relationship between the nobility and dynasty is maintained by institutional indoctrination--through religious and military education. The aristocracy maintains its position of prestige and power through the institutions of Church and military--and with them opposes change.

Suttner faults the traditional education of the upper classes as insufficient to prepare for life. Narrowmindedness is the principle flaw in schooling for both boys and girls. In girls' education Martha derides false modesty and prudery as inadequate to the realities that life may present:

'Geschehen dürfen alle Greuel, aber nennen darf man sie nicht. Von Blut und Unrat sollen die zarten Frauen nichts erfahren und nichts erwähnen, wohl aber die Fahnenbänder sticken, welche das Blutbad überflattern werden; davon dürfen Mädchen nichts wissen, daß ihre Verlobten unfähig gemacht werden können, den Lohn ihrer Liebe zu empfangen, aber diesen Lohn sollen sie ihnen zur Kampfesankündigung versprechen. Tod und Tötung hat nichts Unsittliches für euch, [. . .] aber bei der bloßen Erwähnung der Dinge, welche die Quellen des fortgepflanzten Lebens sind, müßt ihr errötend wegschauen. Das ist eine grausame Moral, wißt ihr das? [. . .] Dieses Wegschauen--mit dem leiblichen und mit dem geistigen Auge--das ist an dem Beharren so vielen Elends und Unrechts schuld!'(5: p. 220).

She equates the taboo on sexual information with the taboo on discussing possible mutilation in war and finds either one perverse. They are certainly out of place in education. Her sarcasm protests the prissy conventions and phony moralities that hinder dissemination of knowledge. These are also obstacles to the elimination of injustice, for with proper instruction about sexuality these young women would be able to draw conclusions about war's possible consequences in their own lives. Suttner implies that their support would turn to protest.

It is the educational system with its emphasis on the military that has turned Martha's brother into a chauvinistic cadet impatient for his first battle experience. Otto's enthusiasm for war has been nurtured by training that emphasizes only positive aspects of it:



Der Krieg wird als ein notwendiges Übel hingestellt [. . .] zugleich aber als der vorzüglichste Erwecker der schönsten menschlichen Tugenden, [. . .] Mut, Entsigungskraft und Opferwilligkeit, als der Spender des größten Ruhmesglanzes und schließlich als der wichtigste Faktor der Kulturentwicklung. [. . .] die Erfolge und Vorteile des Krieges werden auf das lebhafteste herausgestrichen, während man die [. . .] Nachteile--Verrohung, Verarmung, moralische und physische Entartung--gänzlich mit Stillschweigen übergeht(5: p. 222).

The cadets are not the only ones prepared for the future with a one-sided view of war. Martha's own education of private tutoring, intended to provide the proper attitude toward the military for a general's daughter and future officer's wife, awakened an enthusiasm for the textbook heroes of history. She once chose Joan of Arc, Catherine the Great, and Maria Theresia as her role models. She admits having had little interest in non-military figures:

Für Gelehrte, Dichter, Länderentdecker hatte ich wohl einige Hochachtung, aber eigentliche Bewunderung flößten mir nur die Schlachtengewinner ein. Das waren ja die vorzüglichen Träger der Geschichte, die Lenker der Länderschicksale; die waren doch an Wichtigkeit, an Erhabenheit--an Göttlichkeit beinahe--über alles andere Volk so erhaben [. . .](5: p.6).

Not until she discovered familial happiness and saw it threatened by war did she reject the textbooks' admiration for conquerors. She tries to summon again her childhood hero worship, but to no avail. Her first tentative doubts about the necessity and benefit of war grow into

full-fledged scepticism in widowhood. Then with exposure to other interpretations of historic greatness Martha sees the possibility for cultural achievement as a positive measure of national reputation. Friedrich also follows Martha's course of self-education. Having lost all faith in schools that suppress truth or evade honesty, the Tillings decide to teach Rudi on their own as long as they can, in spite of the interference of others with a less enlightened attitude:

[. . .] wir wurden nicht müde, die Fragen, welche seine erwachende Wißbegier an uns stellte, zu beantworten [. . .] so gut und soweit wir konnten. Auf Lügen ließen wir uns nicht ein. Wir scheuten uns nicht, solche Fragen, auf die wir keinen Bescheid wußten-- auf die kein Mensch Bescheid weiß--mit einem aufrichtigen 'Das weiß man nicht, Rudi' zu beantworten. Anfänglich geschah es, daß Rudolf, mit solcher Antwort nicht zufrieden, seine Frage nochmals bei Tante Marie, bei seinem Großvater [. . .] vorbrachte, und da wurden ihm stets unzweifelhafte Aufschlüsse zuteil. Triumphierend kam er dann zu uns: 'Ihr wißt nicht, wie alt der Mond ist? Ich weiß es jetzt: sechstausend Jahre --merkt euch das'(5: p. 131).

The need to have an answer to every question is a weakness in the primary educational system. "Right" answers provided by authority figures to questions that deserve an honest answer discourage further thought and questioning. Such a tradition of education obstructs the intellectual quest for alternatives or the development of innovative solutions.

Suttner's repeated emphasis on self-education, especially as continued by the Tillings into mature adulthood, is suggested not only as a way to keep up with a modernizing world but implies a criticism of the insufficiencies of traditional upper class education. Dedicated to the support of conservative interests, the convent school and the military academy are opposed to progressive reform movements. Their success could be seen in the distrust of political reform that Suttner found all around her.

Much of Die Waffen nieder! is, as we have seen, an attack on Austria's militarism. This bulk of the novel is based on material from the "rote Hefte." In the chapter entitled "Frieden" Martha begins relying on material from the other source books, the blue notebooks, while continuing her own story from the red diaries. A significant portion of the novel, about one quarter, is based on this new diary.

While the "rote Hefte" are concerned with a description of war and its roots, the "blaue Hefte" are dedicated to peace. They form a counterpart journal which Martha begins keeping after Friedrich has devoted himself fulltime to peace advocacy.

[. . .] die Geschichte der Friedensidee, soweit wir von derselben Kenntnis erlangten, haben wir da zu Protokoll gebracht. Daneben die Aussprüche verschiedener Philosophen, Dichter, Juristen und Schriftsteller über "Krieg und Frieden." Es war bald zu einem stattlichen Bändchen herangewachsen, und im Laufe der Zeit [. . .] sind sogar mehrere Bändchen daraus geworden(5: p. 277).

These volumes introduce the tradition that the Tillings have joined. With references to the proposals of prominent thinkers, previous efforts at disarmament in history, news of a contemporary peace organization, and modern goals of the peace movement, the blue notebooks are a kind of pacifists' Bible.<sup>11</sup> They provide evidence that already in Suttner's time pacifist ideas were no longer new or without important spokespersons. They redefine heroism and patriotism in non-militarist terms and are intended to provide moral support for fledgling pacifists. Finally, they suggest that the study of peace can develop into a serious intellectual endeavor.

Throughout Die Waffen nieder! Suttner argues against war in the discussions between the Tillings and the Althausen. Martha's siblings rarely comment for either side and it is possible that the younger generation does not automatically reject the Tillings' arguments. Outside of the family, representatives of the dynasty and the Church provide further opportunities for Martha and Friedrich to attack militarism and to present the

arguments of the peace movement. To overcome the institutionalization of militarism Martha proposes the institutionalization of pacifism. She sees the roots for reform already in place. The peaceful exploitation of technology, the development of social criticism in the fledgling social sciences, the growth of internationalism in new political parties elsewhere on the continent are signs of change that she would like to see strengthened and consolidated in the cause of maintaining peace. Her emphasis on the importance of institutionalized solutions differs from Stowe's greater stress on individual action. Her call for internationally authorized bodies and agencies is appropriate to her goal of pressuring militaristic governments, since she believed that they are more likely to respond to initiatives arising from institutions invested with authority by other states than they are to initiatives put forward by individuals.

Because of technological advances that had come about throughout the nineteenth century, Suttner saw the need to curtail the possibility of war as ever more urgent. An Althaus family friend, Dr. Bresser warns of the consequences of new weapons technology:

'Bei der Furchtbarkeit der gegenwärtig erreichten und noch immer steigenden Waffentechnik, bei der Massenhaftigkeit der Streitkräfte wird der nächste Krieg wahrlich kein 'ernster,' sondern ein--es gibt gar kein Wort dafür--ein Riesenjammer-Fall sein . . .

Hilfe und Verpflegung unmöglich . . . Die Sanitätsvorkehrungen und Proviantvorkehrungen werden den Anforderungen gegenüber als die reine Ironie sich erweisen; der nächste Krieg, von welchem die Leute so geläufig und gleichmütig reden, der wird nicht Gewinn für die einen und Verlust für die anderen bedeuten, sondern Untergang für alle(5: p. 332).

This description of the kind of new armaments that were being developed and stock-piled in the period between wars is a warning that ought to find great resonance. Suttner believed that the amazement and wonder which welcomed non-military applications of technology must surely turn to horror at the military monster that such developments also made possible. Friedrich warns that the decisionmakers in government and military must from now on weigh more fully the costs of battle. As every new war serves as a testing ground for more efficient, more destructive weapons technology, the losses only increase:

'einst [wird] die Schießtechnik so weit vorgeschritten [sein], daß jede Armee ein Geschosß abfeuern kann, welches die ganze feindliche Armee mit einem Schlag zertrümmert. Vielleicht würde so das Kriegführen überhaupt unterbleiben. Der Gewalt könnte dann--wenn zwischen zwei Streitenden die Allgewalt eine gleich große wäre--nicht mehr die Rechtsentscheidung überantwortet werden'(5: p. 120).

The suggestion that war might be made obsolete with unthinkable weapons seems a modern thought. Suttner herself had originally heard it from Alfred Nobel as early

as 1872, and Nobel later wondered in a letter to her whether his inventions might do more for the cause of peace than all of Suttner's peace advocacy because they made war less likely (26: pp. 92, 233; 34: p. 290).

Friedrich's warning against ever more sophisticated warfare, however, still speaks of a future threat.

Elsewhere in the novel the author decries the military use of inventions that were intended to make life easier. She saw this as a misuse of tools that might improve the human condition and lead to greater understanding between peoples:

[. . .] der moderne Schienenweg, das Symbol der nationenverbindenden Kultur, als Beförderungsmittel der losgelassenen Barbarei: --das ist gar zu widersinnig und abscheulich. Wie falsch klingt da auch das Telegraphengeklingel . . . dieses herrliche Siegeszeichen des menschlichen Intellekts, der es fertiggebracht hat, den Gedanken mit Blitzesschnelle von einem Lande zum anderen zu leiten; alle diese neuzeitlichen Erfindungen, welche bestimmt sind, den Verkehr der Völker zu fördern, das Leben zu erleichtern, zu verschönern, zu bereichern: Die werden jetzt von jenem altweltlichen Prinzip mißbraucht, welches die Völker entzweien und das Leben vernichten will. 'Seht unsere Eisenbahnen, seht unsere Telegraphen--wir sind zivilisierte Nationen,' prahlen wir den Wilden gegenüber und benutzen diese Dinge zur ver Hundertfachen Entfaltung unserer Wildheit . . . (5: pp. 200-201).

The inventions of the nineteenth century were the by-products of science, in Suttner's mind. She hailed these achievements as concrete proof of the superiority

of scientific thinking over ways of understanding life based in religious traditions and out-dated social and economic systems. These inventions therefore represent rational progress. Along with others in the peace movement she equates technological progress with positive social results and sees the use of scientific applications in war as an abuse(103: p. 234).

If science is to set the imperative for change, then new social ideas are necessary. For these she turned to Darwinism, the explanation that most intellectuals of her time accepted.<sup>12</sup> The success of evolutionary theory to explain genetic developments inspired a search for evidence that social change could also be understood in the same manner. The belief in the evolution of society toward a higher level of justice and the refinement of ethical principles took the place of religion. Martha and Friedrich certainly have faith in the gradual improvement of society:

'Besser und einträchtiger und glücklicher werden die Menschen beständig--seit den Uranfängen bis auf heute. Aber so unmerklich langsam, daß eine kleine Spanne Zeit, wie ein Jahr, kein sichtbares Vorwärtsschreiten aufweisen kann'(5: p. 155).

The Tillings are convinced that the evolution of feudalism to republicanism, the development of benevolent absolutism of the Enlightenment into the democracies of the nineteenth century are evidence of human society's slow



evolution toward a more just and ethical behavior. And they see evidence for progress in cultural achievements that include the arts and technical wonders, as these were exhibited in the Paris Exposition of 1868. In their optimism the Tillings overestimate the response to cultural innovation. Even France, which attracts them with its cosmopolitanism and open exchange of ideas, they see to be vulnerable to nationalist hatred and petty political intrigue. While they find it easier to pursue their ideal of extranational cultural awareness in France than in the homeland they have left behind, it is the home of Friedrich's executioners.

Suttner's references to Erneste Renan and David Strauss were sure to be controversial with many readers--as would be any other attempt to discredit religiosity as false piety and empty ritual. Martha reads Strauss' Das Leben Jesu as part of her self-education and brings Tante Marie's condemnation down upon herself:

'Neulich, als ich in meiner Unschuld zum Erzbischof von einem Buch sprach, das ich auf deinem Tisch gesehen und das ich dem Titel nach für ein Andachtsbuch hielt: "Das Leben Jesu" von einem gewissen Strauß--da schlug er die Hände über dem Kopf zusammen und rief: "Barmherziger Himmel, wie kommen Sie zu so einem ruchlosen Werk?" Ich wurde ganz feuerrot und versicherte, daß ich das Buch nicht selber gelesen, sondern nur bei einer Verwandten gesehen. "Dann fordern Sie diese Verwandte bei ihrer Seligkeit auf, diese Schrift ins Feuer zu werfen." Das tue ich hiermit, Martha. Wirst du dies Buch verbrennen?'

'Wären wir um zwei- oder dreihundert Jahre jünger, so könnten wir zusehen, wie nicht nur das Werk, sondern auch der Autor in Flammen aufginge. Das wäre wirksamer--momentan wirksamer--auch nicht für lang . . .'

'Du antwortest mir nicht. Wirst du das Buch verbrennen?'

'Nein'(5: p. 68).

Martha is astonished at Marie's request.<sup>13</sup> In her mind an era whose excesses included bookburning ought to have been overcome. She insists, however, that the pursuit of truth will continue to overcome repressive actions.

As the ideas of the latter half of the nineteenth century in science, social science, and religion provided alternatives to stagnating traditions, a new emphasis on cultural and intellectual history also challenges a view of history derived only from military and political developments. Martha discovers this direction in Henry Thomas Buckle's History of Civilization:

[. . .] die Geschichte der Menschheit wird nicht--wie dies die alte Auffassung war-- durch die Könige und Staatsmänner, durch die Kriege und Traktate bestimmt, welche der Ehrgeiz der einen und die Schlaueit der anderen ins Leben rufen, sondern durch die allmähliche Entwicklung der Intelligenz.  
[. . .] Von der althergebrachten Bewunderung, mit welcher andere Geschichtsschreiber die Lebensläufe gewaltiger Eroberer und Länderverwüster zu erzählen pflegen, konnte ich im Buckle gar nichts finden. Im Gegenteil, er führt den Nachweis, daß das Ansehen des Kriegerstandes im umgekehrten Verhältnis zu der Kulturhöhe eines Volkes steht: --je tiefer in der barbarischen Vergangenheit zurück, desto häufiger die gegenseitige Bekriegung und desto enger die Grenzen des Friedens: Provinz gegen Provinz,

Stadt gegen Stadt, Familie gegen Familie. Er betont, daß im Fortschritt der Gesellschaft, mehr noch als der Krieg selber, die Liebe zum Kriege im Schwinden begriffen sei(5: p. 39).

Although Buckle's emphasis on cultural history was not unique, it was Suttner's first encounter with a recognition of intellectual achievement in historical analysis. Different from the idea that German esteem of culture was a compensation for lack of political greatness before the Wilhelminian Empire,<sup>14</sup> Buckle insisted that intellectual developments, along with natural factors such as geography and climate, ultimately mattered more than political or military events in the course of civilization and the lives of nations. Suttner finds particularly attractive his notion that the scientific method could be used to analyze and project ways to social betterment. Thus international understanding and peace could become realistic goals for the peace movement.

The Tillings support the foundation of international arbitration bodies as a future way to solve the conflicts that now break out in wars. Martha reacts to the Austro-Prussian and the Franco-Prussian Wars with an unwillingness to believe that hostilities rather than peaceful settlement should decide the outcome: "Dass derselbe zu einem Kriege führen würde, fürchtete ich nicht"(5: p. 149). She believes that vigilante justice has disappeared in civilized countries in favor of the

jurisdiction of courts. Nations ought to learn from this to realize the benefits of peaceful conflict resolution. A permanent court of arbitration and a confederation of nations were goals of the nineteenth century peace movement, and Martha and Friedrich support these institutions meant to serve international mutual cooperation. They were to be the culmination of a historic development that moved from the consolidation of defensive units from feudal forts to the rise of nation states to confederations and to multi-state alliances. Suttner places great emphasis on these proposed institutions as the basis for assuring peace.

She backed up her cry for disarmament and peace with rational arguments and with the endorsements of prominent writers and philosophers. These thinkers represented for her a rationalist tradition that could provide a firm basis for the institutionalization of peace; reason would lead to a recognition of common extra-national interests. But for some readers reason was not enough. She also believed that a strong ethical appeal to humanitarianism was necessary to move people to work for change; she had faith that her readers' moral instincts need only be awakened. General Althaus resists all anti-war arguments until his rationalizations are destroyed by the death of his daughters and only son. Suttner hopes that her

readers will agree with the message that war is accursed. She expects them to go beyond his words to work for the acceptance of non-military solutions.

The Tillings' internationalism challenges assumptions of sovereignty when national interest infringes on other groups. Nationalism is the obstacle to peaceful cooperation because the insistence on national differences leads to assertions of superiority and all too often brings on the waste of war. Interdependence of nations through trade agreements and cultural and scientific exchange ought to lead to the realization that all people share a common humanity. For these official measures to be successful, individuals must first develop mutual respect and human understanding on a personal level. Martha serves as an example when she responds to her father's patriotic fervor. In one instance he has just told an anecdote from the suppression of the Italian uprising in 1848. Martha reacts:

'Abscheulich!' rief ich. 'Jeder dieser totgeschossenen Italiener, auf die er oben aus sicherer Höhe zielte, hatte eine Mutter und eine Geliebte zu Hause und hing wohl selber an seinem Leben'(5: p. 52).

Later Martha pleads once more for empathy for others when her father makes a New Year's toast to the battles to come and the territorial gains they will surely bring:

'Nein, lieber Vater--fr die Italiener und fr die Preuaen ist heute auch Neujahr . . . da wollen wir ihnen kein Verderben wnschen. Mgen im Jahre 66 und in den folgenden alle Menschen besser, eintrchtiger und glcklicher werden!'(5: p. 155).

As expressions of human compassion for others regardless of nationality, Martha's rebukes come from her own experience of loss. Suttner challenges her readers to help create a world of humanity and justice. Her main character recognizes the possibilities:

'Schon dmmert die Erkenntnis, daa die Gerechtigkeit als Grundlage allen sozialen Lebens dienen soll . . . und aus solcher Erkenntnis wird die Menschlichkeit hervorblihen [. . .]'(5: p. 334).

Justice as a goal and humanitarian behavior as a guiding principle were central to Suttner's reform proposals. The agencies by which these ideals might be realized were to be the institutions proposed by the peace movement. A federation of states and an arbitration body backed up the argument for disarmament and demilitarization. The success of these institutions depended on individual commitments to human compassion and just behavior.

Suttner's presentation of rational solutions couched in an emotional appeal was a successful combination. She was convinced that the peace movement could find supporters among a wide range of the populace; and she turned to the middle and upper classes, satisfied that the cause of peace was supported among the working class

through the Social Democrats' anti-war position. She found her audience, in fact, among shopkeepers, teachers, other civil servants, and bureaucrats. In reaching this audience she was certain of the importance of ethical pacifism as a complement to "scientific pacifism," which impressed her with its factuality and quantitative evidence. Compilation of data had its importance in parliamentary debates over military budget, a standing army, and weapons development. Nevertheless this scientific pacifism would never convince the general public; rather, an appeal to conscience could have more success in challenging feelings of nationalism and loyalty to the status quo.

Central to the novel is the moral message, and in this lies its greatest point of similarity with Uncle Tom's Cabin. With Stowe, Suttner defines morality differently from the way her society does. Religious hypocrisy receives her most pointed attention, and in this, Suttner matches Stowe's sarcastic tone. The strength of the novel's appeal, however, lies with its communication of feeling. The author's ethical point, that sympathy for human suffering is the necessary first step in a turn away from war, is illustrated by Martha's example, and the description of Martha's travails is meant to awaken a similar reaction in the reader. Suttner uses

the first-person narrative of the autobiographical novel as an appropriate form for Martha's story. With the events of recent history recognizable to her readers her account is believable. The novel's shortcomings when compared with Uncle Tom's Cabin lie in the communication of its message. While for Suttner the anti-war message and the war history determine the structure of the novel, for Stowe the story presents the message. The characters in Die Waffen nieder! do not achieve the metaphoric levels of meaning of an Uncle Tom or an Eva. Also the wide range of characters in Uncle Tom's Cabin does not exist in Die Waffen nieder!. From saints, to characters whose morality is inconsistent, to villains, Stowe gives voice to all of society. Suttner concentrates on Martha's family and her immediate social sphere as representative of her society.

For all the novel's shortcomings, however, Suttner's ethical pacifism in Die Waffen nieder! found an audience. After the novel had begun to awaken interest in the peace movement, two thousand readers in Austria responded to Suttner's newspaper announcement in 1891 of the founding of the Austrian Peace Society. Both the novel and its author were quite favorably received in the United States, where ethical pacifism had a strong tradition in Quaker influence. Her denunciation of the nationalist tradition in Austria and Germany, however, obviously proved



insufficient to reverse the growing militarism of the Habsburg and Wilhelminian Empires.

## Notes

Die Waffen nieder!:The Uncle Tom's Cabin of the Peace Movement

<sup>1</sup> In describing the German political structure, Ralph Flenley points out the paradox and shortcomings of a highly industrialized and technically modernizing nation with an anachronistic political system. Austria's efforts at industrialization without modernization of its out-dated governmental structure was a failed attempt at following what was a flawed example(58: p. 305; 79: pp. 18-23).

<sup>2</sup> As A.J.P. Taylor points out, Austria-Hungary's dependence on military success led it to fall behind other European great powers in industrialization and political modernization(100: p. 89).

<sup>3</sup> This is an apt description of Austrian policy under Mensdorff and Esterházy, as it is described by Taylor(100: pp. 120, 126).

<sup>4</sup> In his account of the diplomacy of the pre-war period Theodor Wolff ascribes war guilt to Austria(116).

<sup>5</sup> William M. Johnston's report that, "During the 1920's, not a few civilians missed seeing bright uniforms enlivening the streets of Vienna"(79: p. 55) supports

Suttner's characterization of superficiality in Lori Griesbach. He gives the Austro-Hungarian army credit for providing stability and spectacle in the years before 1914. His indulgent assessment of the army's role is too forgiving and falls short of finding the military leadership responsible for the poverty it brought down on Austria in the 1920's as a result of the war.

<sup>6</sup> Taylor describes Franz Joseph's conservatism in the period after 1859 and underscores the intolerability of absolutism as political behavior of a late nineteenth century head of state: ". . . the decisions depended not on the wish of the peoples, but on the sudden autocratic resolve of Francis Joseph. There was no attempt to consult the peoples and no intention of taking them into partnership; they were regarded as tiresome, wayward children, and the only problem was how to put them in a good humour so that they would pay their taxes and serve in the army for the greater glory of the dynasty"(100: p. 96).

<sup>7</sup> In spite of Habsburg insistence on its multinational mission, "to keep all the nationalities in a balanced state of mild dissatisfaction" in the words of the Austrian Prime Minister Taaffe, the attempt by different groups--notably the Germans and Hungarians--to assert cultural superiority and gain prominence in

domestic affairs threatened other national groups with minority treatment, provoking them to seek national autonomy. The Italians succeeded through the wars of 1859 and 1866 at breaking away from Austria-Hungary, the Czechs insisted on equality with the Hungarians through a restoration of the Bohemian Kingdom, while the Pan-Germans sought greater prominence through integration in a Greater Germany. The Taafe citation comes from Taylor(100: p. 157).

<sup>8</sup> The loss is significant according to Taylor because of the nature of the threat: the national idea as opposed to the Austrian idea(100: pp. 35-36, 233).

<sup>9</sup> This was legislated until 1911, according to Johnston(79: pp. 53-54).

<sup>10</sup> Mensdorff and Esterházy stubbornly insisted on Austria's claims before the war of 1866 with Prussia and Beust's hostility to Bismarck after the war emphasized continued differences between Austria and Prussia(100: pp. 120, 131).

<sup>11</sup> These notebooks also are an example of what the journals Die Waffen nieder! and Die Friedens-warte were to become.

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Jay Gould identifies Louis Agassiz as the only major scientific opponent to the theory of evolution in the nineteenth century(70: p. 43).

<sup>13</sup> Conversations similar to this one must have taken place between Arthur or Bertha von Suttner and his parents. She wrote to her friend Carneri, "[Die Eltern] sind nämlich feudal fromm"(28: 1890, letter 1).

<sup>14</sup> See Robert E. Prutz, "Die politische Poesie der Deutschen," in 98: pp. 70-73. Prutz identified the glorification of culture as an escape from political reality--an assessment that is echoed in Carl E. Schorske's analysis of Vienna at the turn of the century(95: p. 8. See also 113: p. 236).

## Chapter V

### Concluding Assessments

The novel Die Waffen nieder! has often been compared to Uncle Tom's Cabin for its treatment of a moral problem. The comparison is apt, for the question that prompted Tolstoy's positive assessment of Uncle Tom's Cabin interests us also in regard to Die Waffen nieder!: to what extent and in what manner literature is or ought to be an instrument of morality. Though there are of course differences between the two novels, the striking similarities suggest possible answers to the problem of successfully combining entertainment with education.

The biographies of Stowe and Suttner have several coincidental similarities (loss of parent, unconventional educations, and late starts in their careers), that help us understand the choices the authors made in their writing. Economic need motivated them to write good sellers above all--romances and serialized novels of manners. Periods of hardship sensitized them to social problems, inspiring the two authors to discuss serious concerns in a portion of their fiction and, particularly in Uncle Tom's Cabin and Die Waffen nieder!, to criticize

their societies' institutions. Stowe's family life led her to emphasize maternal and domestic values, while Suttner's egalitarian marriage prompted her to write about the possibility for cooperation in all human relations. Their experiences as teachers and their regard for self-education influenced their understanding of literature as an educational tool. Their appeals to emotion as well as to reason communicated the urgency of their messages through reiteration of arguments from a variety of perspectives.

The critiques of society in these novels attack national institutions and social values, identifying problems deep in the moral foundations of their nations. In Uncle Tom's Cabin Stowe rejected capitalist values, because they supplanted the national religious foundations with a worship of mammon that required human sacrifices. Suttner renounced militaristic nationalism in Austria-Hungary for breeding values that placed power before justice and encouraged a tolerance for inhumanity. She joined Stowe in decrying the Church's alliance with power--military power in the case of Austria and, in America, monetary power that depended on slavery.

As a part of their critique Suttner and Stowe identified the patriarchal character of institutions as a problem. The male domination of state, military, church,

and finance is obvious in both novels. Throughout Uncle Tom's Cabin slave transactions are carried out by men, while support among women for the slave trade is presented as an aberration--though abolition is not an exclusively female interest. The anti-slavery movement, in fact, provided a model for how political issues ought to be attacked by both sexes. Martha Tilling criticizes the military in spite of its masculine character. As long as the military depended on the moral support, approval, and enthusiasm of women, there would be those who felt that the military concerned them deeply and that they had a right to question its structure. Suttner challenges the idea that enthusiasm for war is an innate male trait; rather the teaching of nationalist and militarist values is responsible for it.<sup>1</sup>

The issues of slavery and militarism offered a way to approach the "woman question," a subject about which Stowe and Suttner were ambivalent in public statements while their actions clearly supported an emancipated role for women. Uncle Tom's Cabin and Die Waffen nieder! are inherently feminist novels, for they attack the patriarchal nature of society itself, challenging the ideology of the separate sphere and inferior status of women that had become so pervasive a reality in the nineteenth century (67: pp. 12-13, 30-41; 44: p. 77).



Episodes in which women are told by men (Sen. Bird and Mr. Shelby in the American novel, General Althaus and Militäroberpfarrer Mölser in Suttner's work) that they cannot have influence in public life and should not try to oppose male wisdom are notable for each author's repeated insistence on women's capacity to understand political questions, business matters, and intellectual developments. Suttner took care throughout her career to avoid the label "bluestocking" for herself, but she allows Martha Dotsky to be more interested in intellectual pursuits than in the social whirl of her class. Stowe, though she idealized domesticity in an apparent acceptance of the home as woman's legitimate workplace, gives her female characters the last word; and she allows wives the satisfaction of proving their husbands wrong. The women in Uncle Tom's Cabin and Martha assert the importance of their ideas by effecting change where they can. Both Suttner and Stowe asserted the right of women to exercise an influence in political questions by speaking out on the "male" issues of commerce and the military.

Stowe, in fact, is radical in her proposed solutions. Beyond the emancipation of slaves as the answer to the novel's central problem she suggests a remedy for the larger social ills of the nation that rivals those of the radical feminists of her day in its novelty.<sup>2</sup> Insisting

that women not abandon domestic values but rather recognize the moral superiority of their activity and make their influence felt on issues outside of the home, she turned the tables on the question of power. She argued against the idea that the private family sphere would suffer with the intrusion of public matters if women took an interest in political questions. She proposed that the lofty virtues ascribed to women be allowed to have effect in the profane world outside of the home. If women were indeed best suited for creating a nurturing environment then their ability to establish and maintain a well-run household was urgently needed in the public sphere. Stowe upheld the maternal role of self-sacrifice to family as an ideal for the rest of society. She rejected the notion expressed by St. Clare that women's "piety sheds respectability on us," by insisting that social injustice could only be solved if the virtue that was expected of women was practiced also by men. Influence alone was not adequate. All the saintliness of Augustine St. Clare's mother and the moral perfection of his daughter are not enough to inspire the actions that Augustine knows to be right and that only he can carry out. (Eva's remark about emancipation, "I would do it, if I could" is indicative of women's lack of freedom to act). It is not clear whether Stowe believed the gender definitions of her

time and would have attributed St. Clare's failings to his gender. She is not consistent in the novel--Marie St. Clare is certainly not the model of feminine virtue that was required by the myth; while the only man who lives up to the standard of morality that she proposes is Uncle Tom, and she implies that the "docility" of his race makes Tom's self-sacrificial behavior possible. George Shelby's liberation of his slaves is the one act of contrition by a major male character and represents only a partial success of Emily Shelby's influence in public life through her husband and son.

Although Stowe did not publicly denounce conventions governing women's behavior, her own personal example makes it clear that she could defy them when necessary--she became the principal breadwinner and that role no longer confined her to the home. Eric Sundquist claims that she would not have approved Susan B. Anthony's advice that a woman break the law to protect her child from the abusive father: "And don't you break the law every time you help a slave to Canada? Well, the law which gives the father the sole ownership of the children is just as wicked, and I'll break it just as quickly"(87: p. 22). And yet Mary Bird's "It's a shameful, wicked, abominable law, and I'll break it, for one, the first time I get a chance"(33: p. 100) echoes Anthony's defense of her action.

Suttner's proposals for reform were as much a reflection of her experience as Stowe's were of hers. She called for tolerance and international understanding after years of adapting to new personal situations and varied cultural environments. She urged an international policy of pacifism as an outgrowth of reasonable behavior between individuals and small social groups. She believed that pacifist solutions were an attainable possibility because they constituted a rational answer to human conflict, and besides she was convinced that they would ultimately be necessary. Renouncing power and its dependence on force, she proposed a search for cooperation and compromise.

To achieve such a thorough reform of outlook, society would have to rethink its assumptions about political and social interactions, change education accordingly, and work toward an egalitarian social structure. The characters in Die Waffen nieder! show by their arguments against pacifism just how drastic a change the securing of peace would be. To eliminate war is to deprive large numbers of men of their livelihood and to remove for an even larger number an outlet for "male" aggression. To work for the elimination of war was to challenge not only the assumption that war was a way of demonstrating masculinity<sup>3</sup> but the entire ideology of dominance based on force, which undergirded the imperial dynasty.

Suttner was interested not only in an ultimate cessation of hostilities: she also foresaw in a world at peace an atmosphere of harmony in which other injustices could then successfully be overcome. Although Die Waffen nieder! is devoted primarily to its anti-war message, the novel briefly touches on other social problems to which its author gave greater attention in other novels. Her interest in contemporary alternative movements in general was prompted by her contact with free thinkers, animal rights proponents, women's rights activists; and of these activists many joined the peace movement or supported its efforts in their own organizations.<sup>4</sup> Suttner's treatment of the injustice of war is, thus, a point of contact to other issues and to their proponents and clearly identifies her as a proponent of thorough, even radical, reform.

In tandem with the institutional changes that would lead to egalitarian international relations she saw the necessity for reform of smaller social units, such as the family. While the Tillings argue that the elimination of war is a matter of regional, national, and eventually extra-national interest, they themselves exemplify the possibility for harmony based on mutual respect on an individual level. Martha's entire life story is in fact a proposal for an alternative way of life.

In treating the central issue of her novel, Suttner made her personal position clear, for the voice of the narrator is dominant. Only through Martha's first-hand experience of the post-battle scenes can she claim to know what she has been arguing about and challenge her father's "Was wissen Frauen darüber?" Always Suttner reserves the last word for her fictional identity. Both she and Stowe ignore claims that they know too little about the issues they discuss by reporting on them with authority--Stowe's narrator in the moral imperatives of a preacher and Suttner's in eyewitness accounts.

An emotion-laden defense of war and its sentimental counterpart in the American argument for retaining slavery were appropriate targets for novels like Uncle Tom's Cabin and Die Waffen nieder!. The two authors recognized the strength of support that resulted from lawmakers' orations and yellow journalism's sensational slogans. Suttner and Stowe countered with descriptions of cruelty and depravity that would guarantee a response. That response was to be remorse on the one hand and on the other an anger deep enough to inspire the will to change.

While Stowe's novel succeeds as a sentimental work which rightly earns approval for its naïve qualities, Die Waffen nieder! succeeds more for its analysis and argument than its use of sentiment. Though Stowe depended heavily

on sentimentality, Suttner seems to have been incapable of writing a purely sentimental novel. Throughout Die Waffen nieder! she contradicts her own stated goals for the novel, analyzing and arguing at every turn. While she intends the novel for her fiction audience, she is aware of a non-fiction audience as well: those readers who, like Conrad, expected a thorough and rigorous work of criticism from her. Because of these readers she is, as Brandes noted, "ein wenig zu erklärend," for she misses no opportunity to draw the intended conclusion.

Suttner's greatest shortcoming in writing Die Waffen nieder! is in the consequence of her analysis. She became trapped by the radicality of the novel's message, with the title as example. "Die Waffen nieder!," when first uttered in the novel, means that war would end if the armies would simply stop, disarm, or not go to war in the first place. And the novel's ultimate message is that international organizations can convince governments to turn from war. But this hope was unrealistic under the conditions that Suttner describes. She does not ask her readers to go beyond supporting peace-making institutions to achieve the overthrow of the institutions that make war.

The issues of slavery and war have their part in the discussion of differences between the two novels. The

elimination of slavery in the United States had an influence on the continued favorable reception of Uncle Tom's Cabin. The lack of resolution of the problem of war allows novels like Die Waffen nieder! to be derided as overly idealistic and utopian. Thus the issues addressed by the authors differ in scope and solvability and they affect the kind of influence the novels still have today.

The question of eliminating or retaining the slave trade had been an issue since the nation's founding, and with congressional balance between North and South hinging on the slave or free status of new states in the westward expansion, the issue was one of great public concern when Stowe wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin. With each new compromise bringing renewed threats of secession from the South and refusal to approve the spread of the slave trade by the North, it was only a matter of time before the question would require a final binding answer. The political and commercial interests added complications and further considerations to the question of tolerating the institution in its original Southern states and made serious confrontation inevitable, producing a threat of national proportions. It was in this atmosphere that Stowe wrote her novel; and its provocation of the South along with its encouragement of civil disobedience in the North helped to draw the lines of confrontation more



clearly.

The novel was meant to address the entire nation. Its characters came from New England and New York, from the midwestern states of Ohio and Indiana, from Kentucky and Louisiana, and were a cross-section of American life. Its readers were presumed to be found all over the country as well. Stowe's appeal was national rather than individual and fit her perception of the problem. Although she encouraged individuals to act on their own, she saw the ultimate remedy in a democratic decision formed by strong public opinion and majority opposition to slavery. And so her addresses to the reader in the styles of camp meeting sermons and political stump speeches constituted a kind of political campaign on behalf of abolition, even if that meant risking the breaking apart of the nation. The strength of her campaign helped to assure the eventual wartime expedient of slave emancipation while it guaranteed the continued popular reception of Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Certainly the novel would not hold the same interest for us today had the Confederacy won the Civil War. Yet the novel remains interesting to us still, because it reflects with its misconceptions about the South and its idealization of the North the confrontation of regional differences. It is a novel that adds its own images to

the American literary tradition as it invokes American ideals and myths and speaks of paradoxes in American society. Its problematic portrayal of the slaves is an expression of the ambivalence of a class-stratified society that is dedicated, at least in word, to social justice and equality.

The novel's primary concern, of course, is no longer important except as the reflection of a historic phenomenon. Yet even while Uncle Tom's Cabin is in many respects out-dated, its secondary messages about justice and moral responsibility are still worth discussing and give the novel continued relevance. Important still are Stowe's plea for personal morality as acted out in human compassion and her emphasis on social morality within an institutional structure, her insistence that public policy would more successfully provide humane treatment for all of society's members if it followed a maternal example.

Because war is an international phenomenon, Suttner addressed a problem of a different magnitude than American slavery; and she could not view its elimination with the same assurance of inevitability that Stowe assumed for abolition. Her confidence that pacifism's solutions would succeed was based on her conviction that the problem of war would someday in the future have to be faced. With conscription bringing previously unheard of percentages of

the population in Europe to mobilization and with the technological advances in weapons guaranteeing more destruction, she recognized that any future war would be a total war. And of course the stalemate of World War I and the apocalyptic destruction of World War II only proved the pacifist analyses of the late nineteenth century correct.

In contrast to Stowe's national sweep of scenery, Suttner limited herself to her own milieu. Her presentation of individual experience in the novel became for many of her readers a personal confidence shared with the author. This very personal appeal was appropriate to Suttner's modest goals: to do whatever she could to further pacifism and its proposals. And yet Die Waffen nieder! did not have the success that Suttner would have wished at convincing its reader of the need for changed thinking on an individual basis. Rather it became a rallying cry for scattered individuals like Alfred Fried, who learned through her novel that other people thought as he did and that they could be organized in a peace movement. Even if it is true that the novel was a call to the converted, it nevertheless provided moral support and extended a more inclusive invitation to many thousands to join that movement(35: pp. 254-56).

The influence of her novel during Suttner's lifetime was certainly not the same as that achieved by Stowe with Uncle Tom's Cabin in hers. While both authors set similar goals for their novels, Stowe did so within a national tradition that regarded protest as a legitimate political outlet and that tolerated public involvement in the political process. Suttner, however, flouted not only the aristocratic traditions of Austria-Hungary but also its militaristic values and the social taboos against women speaking out on a male preserve. Die Waffen nieder! did awaken interest in the peace movement in Austria and added a popular contribution to American and British pacifism with the English translation; but it could never mobilize public opinion to accomplish what Uncle Tom's Cabin had succeeded in doing in the United States.<sup>5</sup> Martha Tilling's life story and the author's plea for ethical pacifism remained only a counterpart to scientific pacifist studies, though they were an important counterpoint. In its insistence that war and peace were the concern not only of governments but also of the people, the novel foresaw the modern peace movement as an amalgam of grass roots protest and expert analysis of weapons and their alternatives in international conflict resolution.

Unlike Uncle Tom's Cabin the primary message in Die Waffen nieder! is still relevant as are many of its arguments. While the destruction of nuclear annihilation is widely accepted as a deterrent against war, conventional wars continue to be fought. Martha's arguments that an armed peace is no peace at all but merely a cease-fire, that an arms race inevitably leads to another war, and that each war carries the seeds of the next one rebuke our modern complacency about traditional military thinking, which still tolerates minor wars and occasional lapses into provocations that threaten full-blown military reactions.

Because the problem of military conflict has yet to be solved, the principal concern of Die Waffen nieder! remains its strongest point of interest, but its secondary issues are also interesting for their continuing role in the contemporary alternative agenda. Even despite the period trappings of Die Waffen nieder! Suttner's discussions about social inequities, religious dogmatism, and animal rights ring modern today. They speak of the relationship that has long existed between pacifism and other alternative social points of view, and of course such issues continue to challenge human morality.

Surveying the contemporary criticism of the peace movement, historian Karl Holl recently spoke of Suttner's

contribution to it as a "sentimentale, naive Erscheinung, mehr moralisierend als den harten Fakten der Politik orientiert"(74: p. 73). Though he attributes some of the early antipathy to the novel to "maskulinen Vorurteilen der Zeit gegenüber einer emanzipierten Frau," he also claims, "Doch wenn das Urteil auf den intellektuellen Tiefgang ihres Beitrags zur Friedensdiskussion abzielte, mochte es nicht einmal völlig ungerecht sein"(74: p. 74). Suttner's disregard for the economic reasons for war or for its social results was noted early on by Michael Georg Conrad, and her endless moralizing and desperate cry of "die Waffen nieder" was criticized by Carl von Ossietzky. Such criticism, however, misunderstands Suttner's position and the limitations she accepted. Realizing that the Socialists were best suited to argue against war as it affected the working class and acknowledging that others had developed strategic arguments about the inefficiency of modern war in accomplishing foreign policy goals, she set for herself a more modest goal. Convinced that no one group would achieve peace by itself, she wanted to write a novel that concentrated on personal morality. As such Die Waffen nieder! could not become an exhaustive work on the implications of social and class manipulations, of economic interests, and of cultural products that give

psychological and emotional support for war. Suttner meant to rouse the middle class out of its acceptance of war's inevitability by showing the everyday reality of battlefield slaughter. Like Uncle Tom's Cabin, her work is a story of individual conversion which was intended to lead to readers' conversions. With some it was successful, while for others its message was the irritating cry of a doomsayer and stood too much in contrast with the Zeitgeist.

Time and the lessons of two increasingly destructive world wars have confirmed the warnings of Die Waffen nieder! as still relevant. As the novel addresses personal fears about war, encourages pacifist opposition based on the dictates of conscience, and insists that change is possible through re-education and the influence of informed public opinion, it projects attitudes that are common a century after its publication.

One can agree with those who find the arguments for pacifism in Die Waffen nieder! unoriginal and Suttner's style less than effective. As a piece of moral literature, however, the work made a contribution to the peace movement which remains significant. For it is precisely the moral element that makes it a communication of common humanity between author and reader. Such literature defies the hard realities of politics. Uncle

Tom's Cabin did and Suttner did too. If she did not have the success that Stowe enjoyed and that Tolstoy wished for her, this lies less with the novel and its message, less with the literary flaws of Die Waffen nieder!. It lies, rather, in the political problem of mobilizing broad public opposition to war in a society that restricts and stifles political involvement by its citizens.



## Notes

## Concluding Assessments

<sup>1</sup> A similar conclusion is reached by Gwynne Dyer, "The military institution, for all its imposing presence, is a highly artificial structure that is maintained only by constant endeavor"(54: p. 125).

<sup>2</sup> A variety of critics identify the position towards feminism represented by Stowe's reform solutions as "midway between the moderate position of women's 'influence' and the more radical position of feminist 'power'"(87: p. 23). and as "a protest in behalf of bourgeois white womanhood as well as of black slaves" (56: p. 173). Precisely because she did not accept the entry of women into the masculine world, her insistence on the superiority of maternal values and the imperative of applying them universally to the nation's problems is so unusual. Only because she did not elaborate in detail how this transformation of society based on "feminine" values was to come about (unlike her half-sister Isabella Hooker, who foresaw a matriarchal government as part of a Kingdom of Christ) did she avoid identification with the women's movement.

<sup>3</sup> By extension pacifism was an "unmännliche Verirrung" as Holl describes the attitude toward the peace movement by a militaristic society(74: p. 56).

<sup>4</sup> The attraction of the peace movement for those working for reform elsewhere in society is noted by Holl. For instance the peace movement was perceived as a concrete attempt to dismantle patriarchal institutions: "die Forderung auf Abbau der patriarchalischen Strukturen der Gesellschaft ergab sich auch aus dem Befund, daß vor allem sie für militärische Tendenzen und Dispositionen der Gesellschaft zum Krieg verantwortlich seien"(74: p. 57).

<sup>5</sup> See Hamer(72: PP. 8-14, 231) for a discussion of the limitations on political activism in Austria at the time Suttner's novel enjoyed its widest popularity.

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