African Reaction Essay, Research Paper

How the European Settlers Further Oppressed the Native Africans

In the last few readings and cases studies, women and the peasant farmers were the subject and target of much of the white European aggression. The whites saw the women and peasants as minor threats to their occupation of the land and used this idea to further the oppression in African states.

Chapter 11

In the Orange Free State the main target of the white oppression of blacks were women. Women were subjected to mental and physical abuse routinely in their everyday lives. To see that there were documented accounts of rape by police men and physical brutality towards women for simply not complying to the regulations set by the whites is sickening and disheartening for all of the human race. However, it is encouraging that even after twenty years of battling and trying to get some sort of relaxation of rules, that the resistance stayed strong and true.

After the ?native policy? was passed which tried to keep women at home and working primarily for themselves and their children, there was a shortage of labor in the towns took the women out of the rural homes and into the urban setting of domestic employment. This meant more civilized work for black women, which as a result led to a stronger economy base.

This was not the end result of the oppression that the black women would receive. They were forced to carry passes and the black women united on May 28, 1913 to vow that no matter what actions that the whites did to them they refused to carry the passes. This is known as a passive resistance. A nonviolent display by the women that frustrated the whites more than anything. The whites tried to crush the resistance many times and succeeded, but only for a short time. This resistance was finally resolved and the women were allowed to live without carrying passes. The resistance by this group of black women set the standard for all women, all classes included, that when united, victory is a realistic and possible goal.

Chapter 15

In the Giriama resistance, there was a leader, someone that called all the women together to unite and to make a stand to the British oppression and that was Mekatalili. Mekatalili acted as a politician for the women bargaining and working for the rights of African women. The women realized that it was much easier to follow someone that had an understanding of their oppression. They had someone that was on their side that both sides of the opposition could speak to and bargain on their behalf.

When place in the situation that these women were in, sometimes there is a lack of direction. This is what Mekatalili gave to them. They had someone to rally behind and to make the initiative for them. This can be compared to what Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. did for the African Americans during the civil rights movement of the 1960?s. In both cases, they trusted their leaders to make the right decisions for them and they wholeheartedly followed them.

Chapter 16

In the Bambatha Rebellion, the white dominators felt the heat of a rebellion and responded with vigor. They whites wanted to crush this uprising before it gained momentum and took over the white government. There were several factors that the blacks had going for their side. One main factor was the number of natives compared to the whites. Even though the blacks had 4,000 casualties in the rebellion, they still heavily outnumbered the white oppressors.

There was main major flaw that the blacks had in their resistance in the Bambatha Rebellion. The rebellion was made up of mainly peasant workers. They lacked complete involvement of the black population. There were many that had steady employment and were making decent wages. This is why the rebellion failed. When there is a reluctance in a population to rebel, the task is many times cut short of its goals.

There were many instances in which there were symbolic actions against the whites. An example is when the blacks were killing all of the white animals in protest. This may have had an impact on unifying the blacks but had little or no impact on the views of the whites. The Bambatha Rebellion could have been a huge success for the black community but with out the full support of the blacks, it was short lived.

In the Fog of the Seasons End

In Alex La Guma?s story, the reader sees something that is appalling and has become one of the major atrocities of the world; apartheid. The way that people expected treatment like that is unbelievable and horrifying.

The people of South Africa were caught in a vicious cycle of hate and racism. When someone is treated a certain way and told that they are not equal to someone else because of the color of their skin they begin to believe it. This is why apartheid lasted as long as it did. For generations this was commonplace for the native South Africans. Once it has been etched in to the minds of one generation that they are unequal, it is passed down to the next. The same is true on the other side?s view. If a white child is raised in the atmosphere that it is acceptable to oppress a race of people, they continue on with the tradition. The ideals of one generation are easily passed down to the next and then to the next after that. This can be compared to our own American history of the South and its practice of slavery and then segregation. For centuries whites were taught that the African American should ?know his place? in society.

These are simply beliefs that people had of one another. When such beliefs are taught learned and passed along, these beliefs migrate and seem to become fact. It is difficult to break this trend and as Americans we are still trying to educate the racist mind that people of different skin color are equals. This is an on going battle that was supposed to have been abandoned in the 1860?s. If has taken us this long to make progress, the South Africans still have a long difficult road ahead of them. Only after support of those that have converted to the new style of thinking can this idea that some one is inferior due to skin color can be exterminated.