

The slaving voyage of the albion-frigate essay sample

[Parts of the World](#), [Africa](#)



“ The Slaving Voyage of the Albion-Frigate”

1. Who wrote the document?

The author of this document was Jacques Barbot. He was born into a Protestant family around 1650 in Saint-Martin, France. Barbot’s family business was maritime trade, so he was bound to continue the family name in commerce. Barbot and his younger brother were both involved in commercial trade when they were young, his brother being a part of the African slave trade. The Barbots moved to England in 1685, after the religious tolerance of Protestantism in France was ended. In England, both brothers opened up a commercial firm. After the shipwreck of their first slave-trading voyage, the Barbots bought the Albion-Frigate in 1698 and went on in their slave-trade business.

2. When was the document written and/or published?

This document was written when Jacques Barbot was on his first voyage in the Albion-Frigate, which lasted from 1698-1699.

3. What type of document is it?

This document is a narrative journal entry.

4. Why was the document written and for what audience? Under what circumstances was it written?

This document was primarily written in order to tell future travelers about the Atlantic Slave trade and how the slave trade works. While writing this, Barbot aims to tell about how the slaves aboard his voyage were treated. When in Africa, he writes about the Africans, their culture, their leaders, and the impact of slave trade on African society. He barter with the African

chiefs to get better prices and talks about the slaves as property, not humans. He also talks about how good he is to the slaves on his vessel. He also gives advice about how to face and prevent slave revolts. 5. What point of view does it reflect? If the document is arguing against another view or opinion, what is it?

This document was written from the perspective of a slave trader, which will obviously reflect upon the point that the slaves in the vessel were rebelling against the traders even though they were being treated very nicely.

Barbot's point of view argues with that of Olaudah Equiano's. In Equiano's narrative, he describes the extreme hardships and desperate conditions he faced in the "middle passage" as compared to the neat and clean conditions on Barbot's voyage. 6. How, specifically, does the author go about achieving his goal(s) for the document? Barbot aims to tell the future travelers about how slave trading is, although very dangerous, a very profitable job. He writes about how he bartered with the King for the slaves. "[The King] will be content with thirteen bars for males and nine bars and two brass rings for females...The King ordered the public crier to proclaim permission of trade with us... we had aboard 648 slaves of all sexes and ages, including the sixty-five we purchased at the Gold Coast, all very fresh and sound, very few exceeding forty years of age" (80). This shows how well the trade with the King went even though they had some bartering issues at first. Barbot also writes about the decent treatment of slaves on his voyage as compared to others.

He writes “ It is true, we allowed them much more liberty and used them with more tenderness than most other Europeans would think prudent, as we had them all on the deck, every day in good weather... We took care they did wash from time to time, to prevent vermin, which they are subject to.

Towards evening the blacks would divert themselves on the deck, as they thought fit; some conversing together, others dancing, singing or sporting after their manner...” (83). Barbot also writes about how the slaves that fell sick were treated by “ surgeons” in the hospital-like room on the ship. Even though Barbot writes about how well the slaves were kept in his ship, he also talks about how the slaves rebelled. He also states that the slaves were given knives a couple of days before, but they were not expected to behave like that. Barbot states “ Thus armed they suddenly fell upon our men and stabbed one of the stoutest...Next they assaulted our boatswain and cut one of his legs... others cut the cook’s throat to the windpipe and yet others wounded three of the sailors and threw one of them overboard” (83).

After the slaves rebelled, Barbot writes that in order to prevent a reoccurrence, “ We had as many of our men as convenient to lie in the quarter-deck, and gun-room, and our principal officers in the great cabin, where we kept all our small arms in readiness with sentinels constantly at the door and avenues to it, being thus ready to disappoint any further attempts our slaves might make on a sudden” (83). This tells the future travelers how to deal with the slaves when they start revolting regardless of the treatment. 7. What material is believable? Is there any material that you find unbelievable? Why? The part in which he talks about the trading of

materials for slaves is believable because the King would require much goods and money for the economy.

The part about treating the slaves in a proper way seems a little unbelievable because when compared to Equiano's narrative, it seems like Barbot makes everything up. Barbot writes about the cleanliness and order in the ship while Equiano writes about the stench from the lower deck that wouldn't even let him breathe. Barbot also writes about the singing and dancing the slaves do on deck but Equiano writes that slaves of all kinds were chained together and kept in the lower deck. By comparing the narratives of both a slave and a slave owner, it seems that Barbot is exaggerates the truth by stating that the slaves were kept in very good conditions.