

Historical globalization on first nations essay sample

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The way of the Blackfoot First Nations was feared and fierce, but at the same time interesting and educational. Life was family and religion orientated and resources were abundant before the contact of the European Civilization. Legacies of historical globalization have affected many other indigenous groups around the world, other than the Blackfoot. Mostly the European explorer contact has affected the culture of these indigenous groups, such as changing their life styles, forcing them to live the “ proper” way, using the natural resources of the native land making resources scarce. In my opinion the Blackfoot culture changed in a negative and positive way because of the cultural contact with the European. My essay is to talk about how the Blackfoot ways were before and after the contact of the Europeans, how their way of life was the only way that they knew of, living off the land, and never taking and using more resources than necessary.

The Blackfoot norm consisted of living in bands; which typically had one respected leader. Living off the natural resources of the land; a Blackfoot person diet consisted mainly of buffalo meat. Blackfoot people were expert horseback riders, excellent buffalo hunters and fierce warriors. The Blackfoot were feared by many other Native groups around there region such as the Cree, Sioux and Crow Nations. After Cultural contact with the Europeans explorers, life changed for the Blackfoot by being assimilated. , Segregated and integrated.

The indigenous group I have researched is the nomadic Blackfoot people of the plains. The term “ Blackfoot” refers to four major tribes that are a part of a Confederacy. First are the Blackfoot or Siksika people, second were the Bloods or Kainai people, third were the Peigans or Piikuni people and fourth

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are the Southern Peigan people. Each tribe was very independent but all had the same teachings and language. The territory of these tribes varied from Northern Saskatchewan River in Alberta, to the Yellowstone River in Montana and from the Rocky Mountains of Alberta to the Cypress Hills between the border of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The civilization of the Blackfoot originated around 10 000 years ago. As referred by the origin story's told orally by Blackfoot Elders. The Blackfoot people live in structured bands; each band had one respected leader called a Chief.

A Chief was chosen depending on his recognized qualities by the people, he had to be a good warrior but yet still generous. Within each band there are 10-30 lodges, which housed about 80-240 people. If a band was going through hardship, members of the band were allowed to split up and join other bands. All bands a part of each tribe reconnected during the summer to affiliate in social and religious ceremonies and gatherings. The jobs of the Blackfoot men are hunting for food, and making the weapons to hunt and use in battle. Women had a much bigger role in maintaining life, such as doing everyday household chores like cooking and cleaning, Putting up and taking down the tipi's gathering wild plants and food, making the clothing and taking care and teaching the children. The diet of this tribe consisted mostly of Buffalo meat, Buffalo was the main resource because they were found all over the plains. Pemmican was made from the Buffalo meat which was buffalo fat and dried berries crushed up.

The Blackfoot used the resources from the buffalo very wisely, using every part of the body even including the tongue and Bone Marrow. This tribe were

not farmers, only hunters. They did not have flour or grain. The only thing that was grown was tobacco to use in religious ways. Children of the Blackfoot were taught survival skills from older generations. The way they were taught was verbally and through observations. Story robes taught the children of their history. Story robes were important events told through pictures drawn on the back of buffalo hides. Religion and family played the biggest role in the lives on the Blackfoot people, with their gathering to reunite family such as a Powwow and the Religious ceremonies such as the Sundance; where families also met to support each other.

The Blackfoot territory location gave the people a advantage of being able to keep on living their normal lives because they were far away from foreign explorer`s. Not until 1754 did the first encounter occur with explorer Alexander Henday. When these two cultures came into contact Henday unsuccessfully attempted to engage the Blackfoot people in trading with the Hudson`s Bay Company. 50 years later around the 1800`s more explorer`s came into their region, changing their way of life completely.

Blackfoot people were treated poorly by these explorers because Blackfoot children were being taken from their homes and put into residential schools, which tried to assimilate the children. Only the Europeans benefited from this contact, because they took advantage of the Blackfoot peoples resources which included the buffalo and land. Blackfoot culture was hindered by the Europeans because of reserves and residential schools. Everything the Blackfoot had known as their norm changed because of treaty 7. The Treaty played in favour to the Europeans.

Within Treaty 7 the Blackfoot`s received guarantee to a little bit of their original territory, this guarantee was called a reserve. Near extinction of the buffalo due to over hunting by the Europeans also changed the lives of the Blackfoot. The changes to the educational system after cultural contact was that Blackfoot children were taken from their homes, and forced into the classrooms of residential and boarding schools in southern Alberta. This was very different from the way they were traditionally taught by their parents and grandparents. Putting Blackfoot children into residential schools, was the change of the future for the Blackfoot`s. Blackfoot religion still exists to this day, but other religions are influenced into the culture.

The traditional way of life has been lost due to other cultures globalization, But the languages and religion of the Blackfoot`s still remains to this day. There is no actual enhancement to the culture of the Blackfoot people from the contact of the European civilization. Blackfoot children being assimilated and other generations being put on reserves, is not an enhancement to the culture. Assimilation occurred when residential schools tried to teach the Blackfoot children the skills to be labourers in the economy, so that they would become part of the white population. Segregation occurred when the teaching about “ civilized” way of the white society to the Blackfoot children outside of their bands so that they could return as “ good Indians. “

Integration also occurred because eventually Blackfoot children were taught in the same schools as other Canadian children giving them and equal chance to improve their lot. The type of Authority that rules the Blackfoot is both Federal Government, but the Blackfoot people are working towards a

self-government system within the reserves. Blackfoot people are using technology to revitalize the language and culture for years to come.

Economic elements help to protect their own globalization within society by farming, producing oil and gas within the reserves. Political elements of globalization provide means for the Blackfoot people to protect their culture and religion and provide health care and education.

In conclusion my opinion is that historical globalization on the Blackfoot people is both a positive and negative effect, because in a negative aspect it took away their culture, assimilated their children, changed their traditional way of living; But in a positive aspect it gave the Blackfoot people a chance to receive free health care and education, securing their survival within the “white society.” Europeans did corrupt the Blackfoot’s way of traditional living, but at the same time without all the hardship that they went through they would have not become widely known throughout the world, and the independent tribe as they are today. I think the perspective of this Indigenous group would be that there is still impacts from their future today. Some people are still deeply upset from what they had to go through being in a residential school. Which are forcing them to make a change about what happened in the past and guarantee it does not happen to their children in the future.

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