

# Responses of caribbean people to oppression essay sample

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Oppression in the Caribbean took place in many ways. These were taken place by the slaves or laborers who were tired of the harsh ways in which they were treated and decided to react either violently or non-violently towards the owners or planters. The Amerindians were one of the first migratory groups in the Caribbean. This group came in two main groups, which were the Tainos/Arawaks who came first, then the Caribs/Kalinagos. This group was the first to face oppression by the Europeans when the later arrived. When the Europeans arrived they disrupted the peaceful environment in which the Amerindians used to plant their crops. They came to produce wealth by trade, or plunder if necessary and in doing this also spread the Roman Catholic faith among the Amerindians. The Amerindians responded to this oppression by the moving and going into the mountains, build a village and then came back to help the whites. This was the main response to oppression, which was known as the grand maroonage. Some also went into town were they had families and spent a little time there and then went back to the plantation. This was known as the petite maroonage. Some of the Amerindians to the lesser extent committed suicide, infanticide and abortion in response to oppression. In the case of the Africans who also faced oppression by the Europeans responded both non-violently and violently towards the whites. This group was first faced with oppression on the arrival to the Caribbean. They were shipped in small containers that were very unsanitary. These containers were very small and packed with many Africans. These conditions caused the death of many of these Africans. This was physical form of oppression because the people were captured and taken with out them being asked. It was also psychological oppression

because the ones taken had never seen the sea or a white people and therefore did not know what was happening around them. They responded to this oppression in many ways.

The non-violent method of resistance took the form of pretenses where the Africans faked illnesses, inability to understand instructions, stupidity and ignorance. They also injured themselves, re-opening of old wounds, telling lies, working slowly and many more. When these non-violent ways failed they resorted to the violent ways where they had rebellions, destruction of mills, sabotaging of machinery and the murdering of planters and other enslaved. The Haitian revolution occurred in 1791 in the Caribbean. This was lead by the Africans in response to oppression and was known as the most successful revolution in the Western Hemisphere. During this revolution they were many violent revolts and battles for ownership. At the end Haiti won the battle against the French in 1803 and the final declaration of an independent country in 1804. Emancipation occurred in the late 19th and 20th century.

During this period the ex-slaves stayed and worked on the plantations cause there was nowhere to go. In bigger territories the ex-slaves moved and started planting small crops for themselves. There was a shortage in labor when the slaves left so the planters brought in indentured labor. The Caribbean saw the development in a dynamic and independent peasantry shortly after emancipation. Ex-slaves were able to settle in free villages and cooperate to buy bankrupt or abandoned sugar estates. Some of them squatted on the vacant land but they cultivated traditional food and cash

crops and tried their hands at bananas, coconuts, rice and arrowroots. As a result they were able to vary and increase their resources and sources of income by accepting paid seasonable labor on the estate. The indentured Indians were the last group to respond to oppression. This group was told one thing and when they arrived the opposite happened. As they arrived they were housed in barracks, which were unsanitary and unhealthy. Sometimes they needed passes to leave the estate like in slavery and flogged.

It was sometimes called a new system of slavery because of these situations. They responded with high levels of suicide on the plantation due to nostalgia and the intense desire to return home. They also engaged in revolts but they were quickly suppressed and therefore did not reach the stage of being noted revolts. These different forms of oppression then lead to the formation of governments and cabinets in different countries in the Caribbean. The internal Self Government was the first to be found. They were given responsibilities like a ministry, but the British dealt with defense and foreign affairs. This lead to the formation of cabinet governments throughout the Caribbean from 1954 - 1959. In conclusion it is seen the different ways in which the groups have responded to the different forms of oppression. After all this Indenture-ship occurred. After Indenture-ship the east Indians, the Chinese, the Africans chose to accept land and stayed in the Caribbean and they added another dynamic element to the peasantry system by producing rice, cocoa, ground provisions and also some of them did sugarcane. The Chinese on the other hand moved into what was called local commerce or tailing. They set up shops, laundries and restaurants.

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