

Nicolette Soverall

World Civilization

Topic - Narrative(Olaudah Equiano,1789)

During Equiano's extensive travel throughout Africa, having passed through the hands of many different masters he made some notable discoveries. Despite his unfortunate misfortune of being captured and forced into slavery, he noticed that the language between neighboring tribes was very similar and on one occasion was the same as his native tongue. Throughout the different Nations, he always found someone who understood him, he also stated that he even acquired a few more dialects. It seemed as though he found some comfort though enslaved being around people whom he could relate to, those who shared cultural similarities.

When confronted with people that differ from him, he was amazed and confounded by the differences in physical and cultural behavior. His first impression of the Europeans was that of astonishment which quickly turned into grave terror. His initial interaction of being tossed onboard made him feel as though he was in a different world, one filled with bad spirits that eventually would kill him. The most obvious characteristics that confirmed these fears were their complexions, long hair and a language he had never heard.

In Equiano's protest against slavery, he used the Europeans projected cultural image to make his appeal. For it seemed that they prided themselves to be known as Christians and followed God and His word. He addressed them as nominal Christians, Christian only in name not in their deeds, he referenced the verse do unto all men as you would men should do unto you? Appealing to their sense of compassion beckoning them to place themselves in the lives of those separated from family, torn from all they've known and not being able to form a community even after the horrible event. For luxury, lust, and gain they perpetuate new horrors as they turn a blind eye to the abolishing of the slave trade.