Name

Professor name

Subject

Date

Bacon’s Rebellion

The background of Bacon’s Rebellion 1676 highlights the conditions of power struggle between the two selfish leaders for tyranny in Jamestown. The common people were encountering many socio-economic problems such as reduction in tobacco prices, growth in commercial level competition from Maryland and Carolinas. People of Jamestown had limited access to the English market and faced high prices of manufactured goods. Mercantilism was the dominant issue faced by the Jamestown. The colonizers were focusing on the agenda of maximizing exports in the form of manufactured goods and minimizing imports. They had a protectionism policy which was unfavorable for the colonists (Rice 10). Mercantilism resulted in the unequal distribution of wealth. The rich colonizers were getting wealthy because they could make the best out of the manipulative conditions. They took every opportunity to increase their profits, which, resulted in accumulation of their wealth. Governor Berkley did not retaliated against Native Americans when they attacked (Rice 10). The laws of colonial Virginia distinguished between blacks and whites as they promoted racism. The customs at Jamestown were alarming to the elite planter resulting from multiracial alliances.

Nathaniel Bacon was the colonial leader in Virginia and was responsible for Bacon’s Rebellion of 1676. He acquired his graduation degree from University of Cambridge and law degree from Gray’s Inn. He came to Virginia for responding to the attacks of native people and rejected Berkeley’s policy of refusing retaliation (Rice 4). His agenda was to engage in expeditions against natives and weaken their power.

Early relationships between English colonists and Native Indians were not good. Native Indians early engagement with English colonist like Captain John were not bad as it provided them trade opportunities. The colonists later started exploiting the natives and they in turn developed the feelings of hostility. Colonists had destroyed raids on Indian settlements and burned their corps. The facts depicts that colonists wanted to maintain superiority and power over the natives (Rice 30). Colonists benefited from these relationships because they implemented policies on plantation that allowed colonists to derive massive profits. Colonists had also worked to expand English settlements which, caused native people to lose their lands.

He was married to Suffolk Duke’s daughter, Elizabeth. Financial support from his father allowed him to buy two estates in James River and Virginia. He had a plantation field of 40 miles above Jamestown near Richmond. Financial and social power further his kinship by marriage to Governor William Berkeley he was made the governor council. Wealth of Berkeley also helped him in winning the powerful seat (Rice 15). The cordial relationship between Bacon and Berkeley didn’t lasted for longer and it turned sooner into rivalry. Both had strong personality which resulted in a conflict becoming most visible in the dispute over Indian policy. Bacon presented a policy as a response to Native American attacks which, suggested removing all native Indians. The policy focused on territorial expansion that was criticized by Berkeley. He was concerned about the Native American attacks and was not satisfied with Berkeley’s decision of refusing retaliation. He came to Virginia for rebellion and challenged Berkeley’s decision who was convinced to avoid retaliation for preventing the Indian war. Bacon did not understood his cousin’s agenda of protecting trade among the two territories based on his policy of caution (Rice 25). In 1676 Bacon started expedition against the Indians. Initially Bacon faced criticisms but due to public support he was given the commission by Berkeley. With public pressure Bacon managed to launch many military expeditions and he also seized control of the government. He also repealed low prices of tobacco and high taxes.

Bacon was engaged on armed rebellion and pressurized elites to engage in implementing harsh system of slavery. His agenda was to acquire more land for the poor restive white. He was unable to achieve much though he mounted a rebellion by provoking thee blacks and whites. He died after initiating rebellion and was unable to achieve his mission. “The true seventeenth-century patriot, who gave his life in the cause of American liberty” (Rice 204). His resulted into the development of more harsh slavery system for blacks. However in the long run Bacon left a deeper impact on the society and his idea of rebellion was later used by Washburn in 1957. His idea also initiated many civil right movements. This rebellion was viewed differently from different fractions such as the poor were happy and supported Bacon while the British government supported the idea of Bacon. Later the state sent military forces and supported Bacon’s idea of expedition. The ruling class was against this rebellion because it was focused on assisting the poor. There was also imposition of a broader color line which divided the poor blacks and rich whites.

In the end of the book the author has stated that Bacon must be viewed as a dramatic leader who has set the foundations for providing justice to the poor planters (Rice 209). He set an exemplary modern for the future rebels like Washburn and leaders like Thomas Jefferson to challenge the social injustice which prevailed in the form of clear division between the rich and the poor. White writers have provided superheated rhetoric’s who are unreliable narrators for evaluating the real role of these rebellions. The legacy of the rebellion failed to get rid of the colonial government or provide justice to the poor planters. However Bacon can be seen as a hero because he stood for the poor blacks and whites and emerged to establish colonial democracy.

Work Cited

Rice, James D. Tales From a Revolution : Bacon's Rebellion and the Transformation of Early America. Oxford University Press, 2012.