Ideology Of Nat Turner

The Confessions of Nat Turner provide insight into Nat Turner's ideology for the rebellion. He stood up for what he believed in and fought for the rights of everyone even while he was in custody. No one knows for sure why Nat answered Thomas R. Gray's questions while in his cell. However, many suspect it was a way for him to share his reasoning and inspire others to do the same. Many different historians have looked at the confessions and attempted to decode what Nat really said versus what Thomas Gray put down as Nat's words. One major part of the confessions is when Thomas Gray asks Nat if he feels mistaken for what he did and Nat replies with, "Was Christ not crucified" (Greenberg 46). Nat's response provides insight into why he led the rebellion and why he told his story. Nat's statement was a very important part of human history and provides insight into why he led the rebellion.

In the film, Nat Turner: A troublesome Property historian Herbert Aptheker argues Nat Turner's statement was "one of the great moments in human history" (Christopher). However, William Styron viewed Nat's statement as evidence he was a lunatic (Christopher). Aptheker felt Nat stood up for what he believes in even when the odds were against him. Nat compares himself to Christ to show that just because someone is punished for their actions does not mean what they did is wrong. However, Styron believes this shows how motivated Turner was by his religious beliefs. He implies Nat felt he was a gift from God and that his rebellion was based solely on religion. However, historians also believe it was a goal of Thomas Gray to make Nat seem like a religious fanatic that was led solely by his religious beliefs rather than slavery. This does not prove Nat Turner was a lunatic but instead shows how important the goal of ending slavery is to him. He hopes to inspire others by telling his story and die fighting for what he believes in.

The Nat Turner rebellion created a fear among slaveholders that what Nat Turner had done would lead to more rebellions. This is shown in many articles like The Constitutional Whig. The article calls the murders dreadful and cruel as well as an insurgency (Greenberg 63). Nat Turner wanted to convince these people rebellions would keep happening until they realized the effects of slavery. Nat attempted to tell his story, through Thomas Gray. There were certain aspects of the story Thomas Gray could not makeup and Nat knew this.

Nat Turner included the statement, "Was Christ not crucified" because he knew Gray would include it in his confession. Nat's statement informed people that slaves would not back down and standing up for what you believe in is more important than what people think of you at the end (Greenberg 46). An article from The Liberator supports how important religion was to everyone at the time. The article says, "IMMEDIATE EMANCIPATION can alone save her from the vengeance of Heaven, and cancel the debt of ages" (Greenberg 70). This shows how everyone, not only Nat, was focused on religion in a time like this. He was not crazy but rather sharing how important he felt the emancipation of slaves was.

Religion was important to everyone during the time of slavery. Nat Turner was not the only one to bring religion into the argument over slavery. Many slaveholders used the bible to justify owning slaves. Nat Turner stood for what he believed in and felt it was the right comparison to make. Nat's statement not only allowed him to tell his story but also helped to explain how important the rebellion was to him. He would do anything to get rid of slavery in the United

States and felt his religion was also against slavery.

Works Cited

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