

Colonized Women Talk Back

Directions: Create lanyards with the following statements about African women on the back and the woman's name on the front. Distribute lanyards, one to each student. Students should silently read the information on the back of the lanyard. Provide assistance if students need help pronouncing names or words. Call each colonized woman's name. Students should step forward and read/dramatize their statements. After all the names have been called, engage students in post discussion questions.

1. I rose to power in the 16th century Kongo Kingdom (now Angola). I converted to Christianity, allied with the Portuguese, and seized the throne. I fought the Portuguese when they tried to expand their control of my country.
2. In 1922, we organized to free Kenyan activist Harry Thuku, jailed by the British. When our men failed to take action, I told them to take my dress and give me their trousers. I led the charge of ululating women against the prison doors. The soldiers killed me and 27 others.
3. In 1929, my neighbors and I "sat" on a tax collector sent by the British. Igbo women in Nigeria always shamed men by sitting on them and singing insulting songs when they failed to respect women and their work. When the British proceeded with their tax, we attacked British court buildings. The soldiers killed 50 of us. Our revolt is called the Aba Women's War.
4. I provided food & supplies for our Kikuyu men fighting the British in Kenya.
5. I joined the Mozambique Liberation Front resisting Portuguese colonizers. I have been the 1st lady of two countries, Mozambique and South Africa.
6. I joined the Mozambique Liberation Front and cared for children orphaned by the war. I married FRELIMO leader Samora Michel but died when I was only 25. Today my birthday is celebrated as Mozambican Women's Day.
7. I spoke out and sang songs against apartheid. The South African apartheid government banned me and refused to let me return to South Africa for thirty years.
8. I was wrongfully enslaved in the Gold Coast. I escaped to British-controlled territory and in 1876 I brought my case against my former master to a British colonial court. I lost my case but I was heard.
9. In 1954, I helped organize South African women's opposition to oppressive government policies. I was tried for high treason and jailed. My husband and all my children were also imprisoned.

10. I was a leader of a group that protested against pass laws for African women. My friend and I led an historic march in which more than 20,000 women demonstrated in 1956.
11. I was born in England into a white privileged life, but I questioned the treatment of Black people in my adopted country of South Africa. Side by side with my best friend, we led an historic march in which more than 20,000 women demonstrated against injustice in 1956.
12. I was born into an activist Jewish family in South Africa. I joined the anti-apartheid struggle. I was arrested and jailed. I left South Africa but in 1982, I was killed by a letter bomb sent by South African government agents.
13. My father was the editor of Indian Views, an anti-colonialist newspaper. I protested social injustice in South Africa using Gandhi's nonviolent methods. In 1952, I was imprisoned without a trial for six months and banned for five years.
14. In 1913, I demonstrated against government laws that forced Black South African women to carry passes. As we marched, we shouted, "We have done with pleading; we now demand!"
15. In 1900, I led a 6th month siege against the British. I was commander-in-chief of the combined Asante forces and had my own army. The British exiled me to the Seychelle Islands far from Ghana. I died there in 1921.
16. I was a Shona spiritual leader living in colonial Rhodesia. When the British imposed taxes on us, we rebelled. In the 1890s I led the resistance. The British hanged me. Today places all over Zimbabwe are named for me.
17. I began wearing Yoruba dress and speaking Yoruba in public to demonstrate my nationalism and opposition to British colonialism. I traveled to England in 1947 to protest a British crafted constitution.
18. I was born in Egypt in 1879. When Egyptian women left harems all over Egypt to protest British rule, I stepped forward to organize the protests. In 1923 founded the Egyptian Feminist Union. We focused on various issues, including women's suffrage and education. That year I also removed my veil in public, shocking many. Yet within the decade, most woman in Egypt had removed their veils as well.
19. I was born in 1935 in French-ruled Algeria. When I was growing up, all children were instructed to say every morning, "France is our mother." I refused and instead would shout "Algeria Is Our Mother!" Of course, I was punished for this. As I grew, I continued to protest French control of my country. In 1935 I was tried for bombing French soldiers and sentenced to the guillotine. Public outcry saved me. I am still alive and still protesting injustice.

20. In Nigeria in 1946 our women's women began to organize against the British particularly the taxation of market women. Fifty of us died charging British courts buildings.

Discussion Questions

- 1. What are the women fighting for/against?**
- 2. What are their common traits or characteristics?**
- 3. What strategies did the women use?**
- 4. Why is it important to reconsider how we define the terms resistance and rebellion? How are they ways these women resist/rebel important to our understanding of the diversity of lived experiences during colonialism?**

Sources

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Colonized Women Talk Back: Answer Sheet

1. Queen Nzinga
2. Mary Nyanjiru
3. Nwanyeruwa Ojim
4. “Mau Mau” supporter
5. Graca Machel
6. Josina Machel
7. Miriam Makeba
8. Abina Mansah
9. Albertina Sisulu
10. Lilian Ngoyi
11. Helen Joseph
12. Ruth First
13. Fatima Meer
14. Charlotte Maxeke
15. Yaa Asantewaa.
16. Nehanda
17. Olufumilayo Ransome-Kuti
18. Huda Shaarwai
19. Djamila Bouhired
20. Abeokuta Women’s Union