

Escaping from Europe

Fifth Estate History

Fifth Estate Collective

2016

The discovery of Columbus by the Arawaks was fortuitous as the three ships might have made landfall almost anywhere else on the continent that lay between the explorers' intended destination in eastern Asia. The random meeting had deadly consequences for the tribal people who had cheerfully welcomed their strange visitors.

The nearly naked Arawaks were fascinated by the clothing covering the entire body of their strange visitors, but particularly by the metal armor the soldiers wore.

At ease in their land and their bodies, they didn't realize the murderous potential of these armored men whose steel didn't just cover and protect their corporeal beings.

The invaders also possessed heavily armored personalities—extensions of an eons old culture of domination and submission, of hierarchy patriarchy, state society, acquisitiveness as substitute for intimacy, symbolism replacing living life directly.

An inferior culture met a superior culture, but the rigidity and arrogance of Columbus and his men blinded them to the reality of their historic encounter.

Rather than shedding their clothing and armor, stopping their obsessive search for gold, ceasing Columbus's desire to possess every piece of land or water he saw by naming it in honor of their horrid religion, they saw these gentle people as objects to be eliminated or enslaved, their land to be confiscated, and their wealth to be looted.

They thus destroyed the opportunity they must have at least vaguely glimpsed that offered them a chance for psychic revolt and renewal from the pathogen of European culture they carried with them. Columbus and his men could have shed their emotional and metal armor and embraced the people as the New World rather than the land.

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