

My opinion of Apocalypto

I have read many scathing criticisms of Mel Gibsons movie, but now that I have actually seen it - here is my opinion - from an Arawak perspective, I watched the entire film with my wife, and two sons 13 and 11 years old; it was rated 'R' for violence, but we do not see the need to hide such realities from our male children - who may very well have to experience this dark side of life one day in the future.

This movie has offended my Mayan brethren very deeply.

We all also watched Pirates of the Caribbean - which offended my Carib brethren deeply.

And before it all we watched '1492 Conquest of Paradise' - which mainly portayed our own Lokono-Arawaks and our Taino-Arawak first cousins.

I cannot honestly say that I was 'deeply offended' by any of them, my main criticism for all three is that actual Mayans, Caribs, and Arawaks should have been employed - though other tribesmen & women can do almost as good a job - if actual traditionalist Mayans, Caribs and Arawaks are there to advise them in our ways. Europeans still seem bent on relying on non-indigenous 'Academics' for 'expert advice' on all things indigenous - and these effectively result in inaccuracies or outright falsehoods.

The time frame at the end with the European arrival was more a reality for Aztec ruling elites than Mayans - who's city states had already fallen prior to 1492 for the most part. And at the beginning the noise the Tapirs made whilst being hunted by the Mayans was an outright falsehood, I have hunted Tapirs before with other Arawaks and Tapirs do not ever make such noises, some of the murals in the 'Mayan cities' were also false according to most Mayan archeology experts, as to any other aspect - I cannot say whether a small group of cold hearted Mayan ruling elites ever introduced & orchestrated human sacrifice; but it is entirely possible in my opinion.

Even in our modern age there are countless cases of a corrupt few rulers (worldwide) unleashing savagery in the areas they exercised power (Pol Pot, Adolf Hitler, Sadam Hussein, Idi Amin etc.) , we would be naive to try to pretend we were the only race on the Earth to live perfect humanitarian lives and never committed any atrocities whatsoever. From the 100 or so books in my library of New World tribes - it appears that one out of every 50 known tribes had some very bloodthirsty cultures, but the vast majority were more humanitarian than most of the so called 'Christian' settlers and explorers that came un-invited into our Hemisphere and spread their religion's denominations, sects and cults among us by shedding the blood of our men, women and children.

I know my Carib brethren today deny that even ritualistic cannibalism was ever practiced by their ancestors, but I know from my Arawak family history oral tradition that on at least one occasional my own Lokono ancestors ate the arms and legs of the first non-Amerindians that harmed us (they raped two of our girls who were out collecting berries - so our men hunted the perpetrators down and killed them consuming parts of the limbs which they roasted). Yet the Academics say my people never did such things. This does not bother me in the least, and I feel no need to hide or apologize for this part of our history or deny it ever occurred, do the French of today deny that they drank the blood of Guillotine victims during the French

revolution thinking it had medicinal properties? It is a documented fact of sordid European history. We cannot expect to be taken seriously by other peoples if we keep promoting the story line that we were without vice prior to 1492, in my opinion we WERE mostly virtuous - but we had our share of bad leaders like anyone else.

Perhaps I see the world differently, maybe I try to see the good in everything - but I ended the film with a sense of hope not dismay, Jaguar Paw (the Mayan hero of Apocalypto) exhibited virtues that I would wish for my own sons to emulate, I see no need for Mayans to be ashamed because a few wicked leaders ruined their great Civilization, most Mayans today are good people - just as their ancestors were 500 years ago, so too are most Caribs and Arawaks...but we certainly are not now - nor have we ever been - all perfect.

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