

# **A Brief History of Haiti**

**By Jonas Ward**

# Why I chose Haiti

## Important Quote 1

“Despite being described as a kind and upright culture by Columbus, the Europeans massacred the Taino ruthlessly, sometimes not even intentionally. European guns and steel cut down the Taino with impunity. Diseases like smallpox ravaged them. In 1518, a smallpox epidemic would kill 90% of the remaining Taino. Systems like *encomienda* would render the remaining Taino in a system nearly identical to slavery. The Spaniards had no pity for all of the indigenous people they slaughtered. This massacre would be one of the first genocides committed in the name of profit and imperialism, however, it would be nowhere near being the last.”(Ward 2)

## Important Quote 2

“They were in the process of forming their own government, militias, and systems, a new black led society that would inform the government of Haiti later on. However, with this new society, came old problems. In order to have a working economy and to support themselves, the revolutionaries needed to monopolise on Saint Domingue’s key export: sugarcane. In order to do so, they had many former slaves return back to their plantations to harvest sugarcane, and in some cases, be sold back into slavery.”(Ward 11)

## Important Quote 3

“The European powers saw Haiti as a threat and a message, that there slaves could rise up and massacre them. They wanted to keep Haiti isolated and weak. The French even went as far as to force Haiti into paying France 112 million francs for independence reparations. One must also keep in mind that Haiti was heavily dependent on food imports, and the crippling sanctions forced Haiti to tear up a lot of soil and trees to make improvised farmland, just to support the population. The Spanish side of Haiti would also split off, creating the modern day country the Dominican Republic. Haiti would even succumb to US occupation.”(Ward 13)

**Thank you**