Was the “Great Discoverer” Italian or Spanish, Nazi or Jew?

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Was the “Great Discoverer” Italian or Spanish, Nazi or Jew?

It is perhaps fair to say that our story opens at Alfred University, where, during the fall of 1990, I served as distinguished scholar of American Indian Studies for a program funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities. Insofar as I was something of a curiosity in that primarily Euroamerican staffed and attended institution, situated as it is within an area populated primarily by white folk, it followed naturally that I quickly became a magnet for local journalists seeking to inject a bit of color into their otherwise uniformly blanched columns and commentaries. Given our temporal proximity to the much-heralded quincentennial celebration of Christopher Columbus’ late 15th century ‘discovery’ of a “New World” and its inhabitants, and that I am construed as being in some part a direct descendant of those inhabitants, they were wont to query me as to my sentiments concerning the accomplishments of the Admiral of the Ocean Sea.

My response, at least in its short version, was (and remains) that celebration of Columbus and the European conquest of the Western Hemisphere he set off is generally analogous to celebration of the glories of nazism and Heinrich Himmler. Publication of this remark in local newspapers around Rochester, New York, caused me to receive, among other things, a deluge of lengthy and vociferously framed letters of protest, two of which I found worthy of remark.

The first of these was sent by a colleague at the university, an exchange faculty member from Germany, who informed me that while the human costs begat by Columbus’ navigational experiment were “tragic and quite regrettable,” comparisons between him and the Reichsführer SS were nonetheless unfounded. The distinction between Himmler and Columbus, his argument went, resided not only in differences in “the magnitude of the genocidal events in which each was involved,” but the ways in which they were involved. Himmler, he said, was enmeshed as “a high-ranking and responsible official in the liquidation of entire human groups” as “a matter of formal state policy” guided by an explicitly ‘racialist’ ideology. Furthermore, he said, the enterprise Himmler created as the instrument of his genocidal ambitions incorporated, deliberately and intentionally, considerable economic benefit to the state in which service he acted. None of this pertained to Columbus, the good professor concluded, because the “Great Discover” was ultimately “little more than a gifted seaman,” an individual who unwittingly set in motion processes over which he had little or no control, in which he played no direct part, and which might well have been beyond his imagination. My juxtaposition of the two men, he contended, therefore tended to “diminish understanding of the unique degree of evil” which should be associated with Himmler and ultimately precluded “proper historical understandings of the Nazi phenomenon.”

The second letter came from a member of the Jewish Defense League in Rochester. His argument ran that, unlike Columbus (whom he described as “little more than a bit player, without genuine authority or even much of a role, in the actual process of European civilization in the New World which his discovery made possible”), Himmler was a “responsible official in a formal state policy of exterminating an entire human group for both racial and economic reasons,” and on a scale “unparalleled in all history.” My analogy between the two, he said, served to “diminish public respect for the singular nature of the Jewish experience at the hands of the Nazis,” as well as popular understanding of “the unique historical significance of the Holocaust.” Finally, he added, undoubtedly as a crushing capstone to his position, “It is a measure of your anti-semitism that you compare Himmler to Columbus” because “Columbus was, of course, himself a Jew.”

I must confess the last assertion struck me first, and only partly because I’d never before heard claims that Christopher Columbus was of Jewish ethnicity. “What possible difference could this make?” I asked in my letter of reply. “If Himmler himself were shown to have been of Jewish extraction,
would it then suddenly become anti-semitic to condemn him for the genocide he perpetrated against Jews, Gypsies, Slavs and others? Would his historical crimes then suddenly be unmentionable or even ‘okay’? To put it another way, I continued, ‘Simply because Meyer Lansky, Dutch Schultz, Bugsy Siegel and Lepke were all Jewish “by blood,” is it a gesture of anti-semitism to refer to them as gangsters? Is it your contention that an individual’s Jewish ethnicity somehow confers exemption from negative classification or criticism of his/her conduct? What are you saying?’ The question of Columbus’ possible Jewishness nonetheless remained intriguing, not because I held it to be especially important in its own right, but because I was (and am still) mystified as to why any ethnic group, especially one which has suffered genocide, might be averse to lay claim either to the man or to his legacy. I promised myself to investigate the matter further.

A Mythic Symbiosis

Meanwhile, I was captivated by certain commonalities of argument inherent to the positions advanced by my correspondents. Both men exhibited a near-total ignorance of the actualities of Columbus’ career. Nor did they demonstrate any particular desire to correct the situation. Indeed, in their mutual need to separate their preoccupation from rational scrutiny, they appeared to have conceptually joined hands in a function composed more of faith than fact. The whole notion of the “uniqueness of the Holocaust” serves both psychic and political purposes for Jew and German alike, or so it seems. The two groups are bound to one another in a truly symbiotic relationship foundational in the mythic exclusivity of their experience: one half of the equation simply completes the other in a perverse sort of collaboration, with the result that each enjoys a tangible benefit.

For Jews, at least those who have adopted the Zionist perspective, a “unique historical suffering” under Nazism translates into fulfillment of a biblical prophecy that they are “the chosen,” entitled by virtue of the destiny of a special persecution to assume a rarified status among — and to consequently enjoy preferential treatment from — the remainder of humanity. In essence, this translates into a demand that the Jewish segment of the Holocaust’s victims must now be allowed to participate equally in the very system which once victimized them, and to receive an equitable share of the spoils accruing therefrom. To this end, Zionist scholars such as Louis Irving Horowitz and Elie Weisel have labored long and mightily, defining genocide in terms exclusively related to the forms it assumed under Nazism. In their version of ‘truth’, one must literally see smoke pouring from the chimneys of Auschwitz in order to apprehend that a genocide, per se, is occurring.[1] Conversely, they have coined terms such as ‘ethnocide’ to encompass the fates inflicted upon other peoples throughout history.[2] Such semantics have served, not as tools of understanding, but as an expedient means of arbitrarily differentiating the experience of their people — both qualitatively and quantitatively — from that of any other. To approach things in any other fashion would, it must be admitted, tend to undercut ideas like the “moral right” of the Israeli settler state to impose itself directly atop the Palestinian Arab homeland.

For Germans to embrace a corresponding “unique historical guilt” because of what was done to the Jews during the 1940s, is to permanently absolve themselves of guilt concerning what they may be doing now. No matter how ugly things may become in contemporary German society, or so the reasoning goes, it can always (and is) argued that there has been a marked improvement over the “singular evil which was Nazism.” Anything other than outright nazification is, by definition, ‘different’, ‘better’ and therefore ‘acceptable’ (“Bad as they are, things could always be worse.”). Business as usual — which is to say assertions of racial supremacy, domination and exploitation of ‘inferior’ groups, and most of the rest of the nazi agenda — is thereby freed to continue in a manner essentially unhampered by serious stirring of guilt among the German public so long as it does not adopt the literal trappings of nazism. Participating for profit and with gusto in the deliberate starvation of much of the Third World is no particular problem if one is careful not to goose step while one does it.

By extension, insofar as Germany is often seen (and usually sees itself) as exemplifying the crowning achievements of “Western Civilization,” the same principle covers all European and Euro-derived societies. No matter what they do, it is never ‘really’ what it seems unless it was done in precisely the same fashion the nazis did it. Consequently, the nazi master plan of displacing or reducing by extermination the population of the western USSR and replacing it with settlers of “biologically superior German breeding stock” is roundly (and rightly) condemned as ghastly and inhuman. Meanwhile, people holding this view of nazi ambitions tend overwhelmingly to see consolidation and maintenance of Euro-dominated settler states in places like Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, the United States and Canada as “basically okay,” or even as ‘progress’. The ‘distinction’ allowing this psychological phenomenon is that each of these states went about the j intentional displacement and extermination of native populations, and their replacement, in a manner slightly different in its particulars from that employed by nazis attempting to accomplish exactly the same thing. Such technical differentiation is then magnified and used as a sort of all purpose veil, behind which almost anything can be hidden, so long as it is not openly adorned with a swastika.

Given the psychological, sociocultural and political imperatives involved, neither correspondent, whether German or Jew, felt constrained to examine the factual basis of my analogy between Himmler and Columbus before denying the plausibility or appropriateness of the comparison. To the contrary, since the paradigm of their mutual understanding entangles the a priori presumption that there must be no such analogy, factual investigation is precluded from their posturing. It follows that any dissent on the ‘method’ involved in their arriving at their conclusions, never mind introduction of countervailing evidence, must be denied out of hand with accusations of ‘overstatement’, ‘shoddy scholarship’, ‘stridency’ and/or ‘anti-semitism’. To this litany have lately been added such new variations as “white bashing,” “Ethnic McCarthyism,” “purveyor of political correctness” and any other epithet deemed helpful in keeping a “canon of knowledge” fraught with distortion, deception and outright fraud from being ‘diluted’. [3]

Columbus as Proto-Nazi

It is time to delve into the substance of my remark that Columbus and Himmler, nazi lebensraumpolitik and the “settlement of the New World” bear more than casual resemblance to one another. It is not, as my two correspondents wished to believe, because of his ‘discovery’. This does not mean that if this were ‘all’ he had done he would somehow be innocent of what resulted from his find, no more than the scientist who makes a career of accepting military funding to develop weapons in any way ‘blameless’ when they are subsequently used against human targets. Columbus did not sally forth upon the American islands and the “settlement of the New World” bear more on the same fashion the nazis did it. Consequently, the nazi master plan of displacing or reducing by extermination the population of the western USSR and replacing it with settlers of “biologically superior German breeding stock” is roundly (and rightly) condemned as ghastly and inhuman. By extension, insofar as Germany is often seen (and usually sees itself) as exemplifying the crowning achievements of “Western Civilization,” the same principle covers all European and Euro-derived societies. No matter what they do, it is never ‘really’ what it seems unless it was done in precisely the same fashion the nazis did it. Consequently, the nazi master plan of displacing or reducing by extermination the population of the western USSR and replacing it with settlers of “biologically superior German breeding stock” is roundly (and rightly) condemned as ghastly and inhuman. Meanwhile, people holding this view of nazi ambitions tend overwhelmingly to see consolidation and maintenance of Euro-dominated settler states in places like Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, Argentina, the United States and Canada as “basically okay,” or even as ‘progress’. The ‘distinction’ allowing this psychological phenomenon is that each of these states went about the intentional displacement and extermination of native populations, and their replacement, in a manner slightly different in its particulars from that employed by nazis attempting to accomplish exactly the same thing. Such technical differentiation is then magnified and used as a sort of all purpose veil, behind which almost anything can be hidden, so long as it is not openly adorned with a swastika.

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The 1492 “voyage of discovery” is, however, hardly that all is at issue. In 1493 Columbus returned with an invasion force of seventeen ships, appointed at his own request by the Spanish Crown to install himself as “viceroy and governor of [the Caribbean islands] and the mainland” of America, a position he held until 1500. [5] Setting up shop on the large island he called Espanola (today Haiti and the Dominican Republic), he promptly instituted policies of
slavery (encomiendo) and systematic extermination against the native Taino population. Columbus’ programs reduced Taino numbers from as many as 8 million at the outset of his regime to about 3 million in 1496. Perhaps 100,000 were left by the time of the governor’s departure. His policies, however, remained, with the result that by 1514 the Spanish census of the island showed barely 22,000 Indians remaining alive. In 1542, only two hundred were recorded. Thereafter, they were considered extinct, as were Indians throughout the Caribbean Basin, an aggregate population which totaled more than 15 million at the point of first contact with the Admiral of the Ocean Sea, as Columbus was known.

This, to be sure, constitutes an attrition of population in real numbers every bit as great as the toll of twelve to fifteen million — about half of them Jewish — most commonly attributed to Himmler’s slaughter mills. Moreover, the population of indigenous Caribbean population destroyed by the Spanish in a single generation is, no matter how the figures are twisted, far greater than the seventy-five percent of European Jews said to have been exterminated by the nazis. worst of all, these data apply only to the Caribbean basin; the process of genocide in the Americas was only just beginning at the point such statistics became operant, not ending, as they did upon the fall of the Third Reich. All told, it is probable that more than one hundred million native people were ‘eliminated’ in the course of Europe’s ongoing ‘civilization’ of the Western Hemisphere.

It has long been asserted by “responsible scholars” that this decimation of American Indians which accompanied the European invasion resulted primarily from disease rather than direct killing or conscious policy. There is a certain truth to this, although starvation may have proven just as lethal in the end. It must be born in mind when considering such facts that a considerable portion of those who perished in the nazi death camps died, not as victims of bullets and gas, but from starvation, as well as epidemics of typhus, dysentery and the like. Their keepers, who could not be said to have killed these people directly, were nonetheless found to have been culpable in their deaths by way of deliberately imposing the conditions which led to the proliferation of starvation and disease among them. Certainly, the same can be said of Columbus’ regime, under which the original residents were, as a first order of business, permanently dispossessed of their abundant cultivated fields while being converted into chattel, ultimately to be worked to death for the wealth and ‘glory’ of Spain.

Nor should more direct means of extermination be relegated to incidental status. As the matter is framed by Kirkpatrick Sale in his book, The Conquest of Paradise:

“No SS trooper could be expected to comport himself with a more unrelenting viciousness. And there is more. All of this was coupled to wholesale and persistent massacres:

“A Spaniard — suddenly drew his sword. Then the whole hundred drew theirs and began to rip open the bellies, to cut and kill [a group of Tainos assembled for this purpose]-men, women, children and old folk, all of whom were seated, off guard and frightened. And within two creeds, not a man of them there remains alive. The Spaniards enter the large house nearby, for this was happening at its door, and in the same way, with cuts and stabs, began to kill as many as were found there, so that a stream of blood was running, as if a great number of cows had perished.”

Elsewhere, Las Casas went on to recount how:

“In this time, the greatest outrages and slaughters of people were perpetrated, whole villages being depopulated...The Indians saw that without any offense on their part they were despoiled of their kingdoms, their lands and liberties and of their lives, their wives, and homes. As they saw themselves each day perishing by the cruel and inhuman treatment of the Spaniards, crushed to earth by the horses, cut in pieces by swords, eaten and torn by dogs, many buried alive and suffering all kinds of exquisite tortures...[many surrendered to their fate, while the survivors] fled to the mountains [to starve].”

The butchery continued until there were no Tainos left to butcher. One might well ask how a group of human beings, even those like the Spaniards of Columbus’ day, maddened in a collective lust for wealth and prestige, might come to treat another with such unrestrained ferocity over a sustained period. The answer, or some substantial portion of it, must lie in the fact that the Indians were considered by the Spanish to be untermenschen, subhumans. That was the conventional view is borne out beyond all question in the recorded debates between Las Casas and the nobleman, Francisco de Sepulveda, who argued for the majority of Spaniards that American Indians, like African blacks and other “lower animals,” lacked ‘souls’. The Spaniards, consequently, bore in Sepulveda’s estimation a holy obligation to enslave and destroy them wherever they might be encountered.

The eugenics theories of nazi ‘philosopher’ Alfred Rosenberg, to which Heinrich Himmler more-or-less subscribed, elaborated the mission of the SS in very much the same terms. It was upon such profoundly racist ideas that Christopher Columbus grounded his policies as initial governor of the new Spanish empire in America.

In the end, all practical distinctions between Columbus and Himmler — at least those not accounted for by differences in available technology and extent of socio-military organization — evaporate upon close inspection. They are cut of the same cloth, fulfilling the same function and for exactly the same reasons, each in his own time and place. If there is one differentiation which may be valid, it is that while the specific enterprise Himmler represented ultimately failed and is now universally condemned, that represented by Columbus did not and is not. Instead, as Sale has observed, the model for colonialism and concomitant genocide Columbus pioneered during his reign as governor of Espanola was to prove his “most enduring legacy,” carried as it was “by the conquistadors on their invasions in Mexico, Peru, and La Florida.” The Columbian process is ongoing, as is witnessed by the fact that, today, his legacy is celebrated far and wide.
The Emblematic European

This leaves open the question as to whom, exactly, the horror which was Columbus rightly ‘belongs’. There are, as it turns out, no shortage of contenders for the mantle of the man and his ‘accomplishments’. It would be well to examine the nature of at least the major claims in order to appreciate the extent of the mad scramble which has been undertaken by various peoples to associate themselves with what was delineated in the preceding section. One cannot avoid the suspicion that the spectacle bespeaks much of the Eurocentric character.

Was Columbus Italian?

The popular wisdom has always maintained the Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, a city state which is incorporated into what is now called Italy. Were this simply an historical truth, it might be accepted as just one more uncomfortable fact of life for the Italian people, who are — or should be — still trying to live down what their country did to the Libyans and Ethiopians during the prelude to World War II. There is much evidence, however, militating against Columbus’ supposed Genoese origin. For instance, although such records were kept at the time, there is no record of his birth in that locale. Nor is there reference to his having been born or raised there in any of his own written work, including his personal correspondence. For that matter, there is no indication that he either wrote or spoke any dialect which might be associated with Genoa, nor even the Tuscan language which forms the basis for modern Italian. His own writings — not excluding letters penned to Genoese friends and the Banco di San Grigorio, one of his financiers in that city — were uniformly articulated in Castilian, with a bit of Portuguese and Latin mixed in.[23] Moreover, while several variations of his name were properly applied to him during his lifetime, none of them was drawn from a dialect which might be considered Italian. He himself, in the only known instance in which he rendered his own full name, utilized the Greek Χρυσός de Colón.[24] Still, Genoa, Italy, and those of Italian descent elsewhere in the world (Italo-Americans, most loudly of all) have mounted an unceasing clamor during the 20th century, insisting he must be theirs. Genoa itself invested considerable resources into ‘resolving’ the question during the 1920s, ultimately printing a 288 page book assembling an array of depositions and other documents — all of them authenticated — asserting that Columbus was indeed Genoese. Published in 1931, the volume, entitled Christopher Columbus: Documents and Proofs of His Genoese Origin, presents what is still the best circumstantial case as to Columbus’ ethnic identity.[25]

Spanish?

Counterclaims concerning Columbus’ supposed Iberian origin are also long-standing and have at times been pressed rather vociferously. These center primarily in the established facts that he spent the bulk of his adult life in service to Spain, was fluent in both written and spoken Castilian, and that his mistress, Beatriz Enríquez de Arna, was Spanish.[26] During the 1920s, these elements of the case were bolstered by an assortment of “archival documents” allegedly proving conclusively that Columbus was a Spaniard from cradle to grave. In 1928, however, the Spanish Academy determined that these documents had been forged by parties overly eager to establish Spain’s exclusive claim to the Columbian legacy. Since then, Spanish chauvinists have had to content themselves with arguments that The Discoverer is theirs by virtue of employment and nationality, if not by birth. An excellent summary of the various Spanish contentions may be found in Enrique de Gandia’s Historia de Cristobal Colon: analisis critico, first published in 1942.[27]

Portuguese?

Portuguese participation in the fray has been less pronounced, but follows basically the same course — sans forged documents — as that of the Spanish. Columbus, the argument goes, was plainly conversant in the language and his wife, Felipa Moniz Perestrello, is known to have been Portuguese. Further, the first point at which his whereabouts can be accurately determined, was in service to Portugal, plying that country’s slave trade along Africa’s west coast for a period of four years. Reputedly, he was also co-proprietor of a book and map shop in Lisbon and/or Madiera for a time, and once sailed to Iceland on a voyage commissioned by the Portuguese Crown. Portugal’s desire to extend a serious claim to Spain’s Admiral of the Ocean Sea seems to be gathering at least some momentum, as is witnessed in Manuel Luciano de Silva’s 1989 book, Columbus Was 100% Portuguese.[28]

Jewish?

The idea that Columbus might have been a Spanish Jew is perhaps best known for having appeared in Simon Weisenthal’s Sails of Hope in 1973.[29] Therein, it is contended that the future governor of Espanola hid his ethnicity because of the mass expulsion of Jews from Spain ordered by King Ferdinand of Aragon on March 30, 1492 (the decree was executed on August 2 of the same year). Because of this rampant anti-semitism, the Great Navigator’s true identity has remained shrouded in mystery, lost to the historical record. Interestingly, given the tenacity with which at least some sectors of the Jewish community have latched on to this notion, it is not at all Jewish in origin. Rather, it was initially developed as a speculation in a 1913 article, “Columbus a Spaniard and a Jew?”, published by Henry Vignaud in the American History Review.[30] It was then advanced by Salvador de Madariaga in his unsympathetic 1939 biography, Christopher Columbus. Madariaga’s most persuasive argument, at least to himself, seems to have been that Columbus “great love of gold” proved his “Jewishness.”[31] This theme was resuscitated in Brother Nectario Maria’s Juan Colon Was A Spanish Jew in 1971.[32] Next, we will probably be told that The Merchant of Venice was an accurate depiction of medieval Jewish life, after all. And, from there, that the International Jewish Banking Conspiracy really exists, and since the Illuminati takeover of the Masonic Orders. One hopes the JDL doesn’t rally to defense of these ‘interpretations’ of history as readily as it jumped aboard the “Columbus as Jew” bandwagon.[33]

Other Contenders

By conservative count, there are presently 535 books and articles devoted specifically to the question of Columbus’ origin and national/ethnic identity. Another 300-odd essays or full volumes address the same question to some extent while pursuing other matters.[34] Claims to his character, and some imagined luster therefrom, have been extended not only by the four peoples already discussed, but by Corsica, Greece, Chios, Majorca, Aragon, Galicia, France and Poland.[35] One can only wait with bated breath to see whether or not the English might not weigh in with a quincentennial assertion that he was actually a Briton born and bred, sent to spy on behalf of Their Royal British Majesties. Perhaps the Swedes, Danes and Norwegians will advance the case that he was a descendant of a refugee Viking king, or the Irish that he was a pure Gaelic adherent to the teachings of Saint Brendan. And then there are, of course, the Germans...[36]

In the final analysis, it is patently clear that we really have no idea who Columbus was, where he came from, or where he spent his formative years. It may be thought that he was indeed born in Genoa, perhaps of some “degree of Jewish blood,” brought up in Portugal, and ultimately nationalized as a citizen of Spain. Province of Aragon. Perhaps he also spent portions of his childhood being educated in Greek and Latin while residing in Corsica. Maiorca.
The Specter of Hannibal Lecter

At this juncture, the entire planet is locked, figuratively, in a room with the socio-cultural equivalent of Hannibal Lecter. An individual of consummate taste and refinement, imbued with indelible grace and charm, he distracts his victims with the brilliance of his intellect, even while honing his blade. He is thus able to dine alone upon their lives, his feast invariably candlelit, accompanied by lofty music and a fine wine. Over and over the ritual is repeated, always hidden, always denied in order that it may be continued. So perfect is Lecter’s pathology that, from the depths of his scorn for the inferiors upon which he feeds, he advances himself as their sage and therapist, who is incomparably endowed with the ability to explain their innermost meanings, he professes to be their savior. His success depends upon being embraced and exalted by those upon whom he preys. Ultimately, so long as Lecter is able to retain his mask of omnipotent gentility, he can never be stopped. The sociocultural equivalent of Hannibal Lecter is the core of an expansionist European ‘civilization’ which has reached out to engulf the planet.

In coming to grips with Lecter, it is of no use to pursue the solution of sympatric biography, to chronicle the nuances of his childhood and catalogue his many and varied achievements, whether real or imagined. The recounting of such information is at best diversionary, allowing him to remain at large just that much longer. More often, it inadvertently serves to perfect his mask, enabling him not only to maintain his enterprise, but to pursue it with ever more arrogance and efficiency. At worst, the biographer is aware of the intrinsic evil lurking beneath the subject’s veneer of civility, but — because of morbid fascination and a desire to participate vicariously — deliberately obfuscates the truth in order that his homicidal activities may continue unchecked. The biographer thus reveals not only a willing complicity in the subject’s crimes, but a virulent pathology of his or her own. Such is and has always been the relationship of “responsible scholarship” to expansionist Europe and its derivative societies.

The sole legitimate function of information compiled about Lecter is that which will serve to unmask him and thereby lead to his apprehension. The purpose of apprehension is not to visit retribution upon the psychopath — he is, after all, by definition mentally ill and consequently not in control of his more lethal impulses — but to put an end to his activities. It is even theoretically possible that, once he is disempowered, he can be cured. The point, however, is to understand what he is and what he does well enough to stop him from doing it. This is the role which must be assumed by scholarship as a-f-vis the psycho-path.

It may well be that there are better points of departure for intellectual endeavors to capture the real form and meaning of Eurocentrism than the life, times and legacy of Christopher Columbus. Still, since Eurocentrists the world over have so evidently clapsed hands in utilizing him as a (perhaps the) preeminent signifier of their collective heritage, and are doing so with such apparent sense of collective jubilation, the point has been rendered effectively moot. Those who seek to devote their scholarship to apprehending the psychopath who sits in our room thus have no alternative but to use him as primary vehicle of articulation. In order to do so, we must approach him through deployment of the analytical tools which allow him to be utilized as a preeminent signifier of their collective heritage, and are doing so with such apparent sense of collective jubilation, the point has been rendered effectively moot. Those who seek to devote their scholarship to apprehending the psychopath who sits in our room thus have no alternative but to use him as primary vehicle of articulation. In order to do so, we must approach him through deployment of the analytical tools which allow him to be utilized as a


[3] Assaults upon thinking deviating from Eurocentric mythology have been published with increasing frequency in U.S. mass circulation publications such as Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, and others. The criticism is not without force, for the fact is that many of the authors who write from this perspective have, in the very language they use, assumed the very positions they claim to reject. The assumption is that Eurocentrism is a straightjacket of thought, and that a true, objective, and balanced appraisal of international affairs requires that the observer is detached from his or her cultural heritage. This, of course, is a fallacy. The truth is that every culture has a set of assumptions about the world that it sees as true. It is not possible to step outside of one’s cultural background and see the world as it truly is. Therefore, any attempt to do so is doomed to failure.
Columbus' programs reduced Taino numbers from as many as 8 million at the outset of his regime to about 3 million in 1496. Perhaps 100,000 were left by 1547, 1549; Valladolid, 1557; Academia Historica, Madrid, 1851–55, esp. Chaps. 29, 30, 37.


One of the more immediately accessible is Kuper, Leo, Genocide: Its Political Use in the Twentieth Century, Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1981.


One of the more thoughtful elaborations on this theme may be found in Smith, Bradley F., Reaching Judgment at Nuremberg Basic Books, New York, 1977.


Las Casas, quoted in Thatcher, op. cit., pp.348ff.


The most succinctly competent overview of this subject matter is probably Cecil, Robert, The Myth of the Master Race: Alfred Rosenberg and Nazi Ideology, Dodd and Mead Company, New York, 1972.

The polemics of Columbus’ strongest supporters among his contemporaries amplify this point. See, for example, Oviedo, Historia general y natural de las Indias, Seville, 1535; Salamanca, 1547,1549; Valladolid, 1557; Academia Historica, Madrid, 1851–55, esp. Chaps. 29, 30, 37.

Sale, op. cit., p. 156.


On Columbus’ signature, see Thatcher, op. cit., p.454.


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