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Wallowing in a Theological Stupor or a Steadfast and Consuming Faith: Scholarly Encounters with Columbus' Libro de las Profecías

**Delno C. West
Northern Arizona University
Flagstaff, Arizona**

ABSTRACT

The *Libro de las profecías* was drafted in 1501 and remains the only work written by Christopher Columbus which has not been thoroughly studied. This paper describes the document and argues that the persuasive rhetorical power of noted nineteenth and twentieth century historians convinced scholars that the treatise was the ravings of a troubled mind. Only recently have historians begun to understand the importance of this work as it relates to Columbus' mentality and Enterprise of the Indies.

INTRODUCTION

Christopher Columbus is the first American hero with all the rights and privileges, myths and legends, and criticisms the title carries. He has been portrayed as imaginative, persistent, courageous, intelligent, ignorant, audacious, lucky, egotistical, humble, avaricious, generous, single-minded, tenacious, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Jewish, a Tertiary of the Third Order of St. Francis, a scientist, a mystic, a merchant, and a member of the Masonic Lodge.

In 1882, the largest American Catholic fraternity was founded at New Haven, Connecticut, and took the name of Columbus because, as the founders said, his first act was to plant the cross of Christ on the New World shores, "a symbol of his sacred commission."¹ In the same decade, a movement was mobilized by Count Antoine Roselly de Lorgues to canonize the discoverer on the grounds that he had brought the "Christian faith to half the world."²

Five hundred years of reports, chronicles and scholarship has investigated every aspect about Columbus and his "Enterprise of the Indies." New

light is shed on old topics from time to time as a new document surfaces or our thinking is revised. As we approach the quincentennial of Columbus' discovery, mainframe computers are crunching important data in order to advance our knowledge and accessibility to the sources, life, thought and achievements of the Genoese explorer.

Such abundant attention to the subject has left us a significant corpus of literature about Christopher Columbus and his accomplishments. But even so, one major source about him and his enterprise, written by the Admiral himself, has remained generally unstudied. In the summer and fall of 1501 he drafted a manuscript titled, *Libro de las profecías*. Scholars have known of it but have not used it, and it was not put into modern print until 1892 when Césaire de Lollis included it in the *Raccolta Columbiana*.³ Even with a printed critical edition, scholars continued to ignore it for another sixty years.

The problem scholars have had with the *Libro de las profecías* has been one of misunderstanding and credibility. Historiographically, when Columbus scholars have been confronted with the *Libro de las profecías*, they have looked the other way. Our model of Columbus as Renaissance scientist, adventurer and mariner does not include an obsession with eschatology. Nevertheless, he believed that God had called him for a special mission of apocalyptic importance. As he carefully reminded his sovereigns in a letter dated 7 July 1503, he had received a vision while yet a young man in which the Holy Spirit spoke directly to him in these words:

God . . . will cause your name to be wonderfully proclaimed throughout the world . . . and give you the keys of the gates to the ocean which are closed with strong chains.⁴

The driving motivational force in his life was ultimately his role in God's scheme for history:

Who doubts that this light was from the Holy Spirit . . . whom with rays of marvelous clarity it consoled . . . with forty-four books of the Old Testament and four Evangelists, with twenty-three epistles of those blessed apostles, encouraging me to proceed, and continuously, without stopping a moment, they encouraged me with great haste.⁵

Columbus' spiritual desire was to spread the Gospel and initiate a new crusade to recapture the Holy site of Solomon's Temple. It is impossible to calculate when this mission became incorporated into a broader eschatological framework, but he implies that such thinking occurred early in his career and that these dreams were a part of his arguments before the king and queen.⁶ Compiling the *Libro de las profecías* must have been on his mind for several years as elements of it appear in isolated passages in his early letters, the diary and reports. The adoption of Xpo Ferrers for his signature in 1502 confirms a specially perceived relationship and calling from God.⁷

Written between the third and fourth voyages, the timing of the *Libro de las profecías* was unfortunate due to the stress caused by losing favor at court. Later, scholars would come to the conclusion that this apocalyptic treatise was the product of a discouraged and troubled mind. To Columbus, however, it was the framework in which he wished the world to view his accomplishments. The central theme of the book is that an important stage of prophecy had been fulfilled, in time, by his discoveries. The eschatological clock was ticking away and the next steps, he tells his monarchs, must begin. First, the Gospel message must be spread on a global scale beginning with lands he has discovered and brought under the Spanish flag. Second, the riches of the New World should be dedicated to the recapture of Jerusalem thereby securing the most important site in Christendom so that other events of the last days could begin.

THE DOCUMENT

The *Libro de las profecías* presents an array of prophetic texts, commentaries by ancient and medieval authors, fragments of Spanish poetry and Columbus' own interpretations of these writings to prove his theses. Columbus finished the basic draft in the fall of 1501 and gave it to his friend the Carthusian monk, Gaspar Gorricio, to read and add more references where appropriate. On 23 March 1502, as Columbus left Seville to start his fourth voyage, Father Gorricio returned the draft manuscript to him with his additions. The Gorricio additions were minor as he indicated in his letter accompanying the manuscript.⁸ This is the form in which we still have the treatise, a rough draft with notations and additions to be incorporated. The *Libro de las profecías* was first found when the library of Don Diego was inventoried. Ferdinand catalogued it with other books owned by his father and used it in writing his biography. Bartolomé de las Casas mentions it, and it was catalogued by De la Rosa y Copes in his *Biblioteca Colombina*.⁹

With the exception of some tutoring from his brother, Columbus was self-taught. Despite the hours he spent pouring over the theories of experts, the years at sea accumulating practical experience, and the long discussions with scholars, churchmen and old sailors in many ports, he believed the key to his success was the gift of knowledge given to him by the Holy Spirit. The gift of understanding, *spiritualis intellectus*, enables the recipient to penetrate revealed truth, and it intensifies one's faith so that all things ultimately are seen through faith.¹⁰ Columbus never claimed to be a prophet and only recorded two visions in which he believed God communicated directly with him. Neither of these visions were revelations; rather they were words of comfort and encouragement. He believed that he had received the charismatic gift of *spiritualis intellectus* which enlightened his mind to enable him to understand the hidden mysteries of prophetic texts, to gain practical and intuitive abilities in navigation, and to comprehend cosmography and related sciences intellectually. As he put it,

I have met and I have had discussions with wise people, ecclesiastics and laymen, Latins and Greeks, Jews and Moors and with many others of other sects. To this I found our Lord very favorable to my desire and I received from Him the spirit of intelligence: in seamanship he made me abundant, of astrology he gave what was needed, and so of geometry and arithmetic and ingeniousness in the soul and hands to draw the sphere . . .¹¹

Virgil Milani has argued that Columbus was attempting to stress a deeper meaning for “intelligence” at this point, and that he could have meant “entelequia,” a term utilized by St. Augustine when referring to intelligence of or from God.¹²

The draft structure of the *Libro de las profecias* is composed of 84 folios (10 pages are missing) divided into an introduction and four parts. Although he gives credit to Joachim of Fiore, the Sybils, Merlin and the pseudo-Methodius, Columbus limited his citations, with very few exceptions, to the most impeccable authorities: the Church Fathers and well respected medieval and contemporary theologians. The only instance in which he interpreted an event without supporting authority was when he proclaimed that his discoveries fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy about a new heaven and a new earth. Columbus’ exegetical method was orthodox and his conclusions conservative. He did not criticize the church, state or society nor did he even hint at any kind of *renovatio ecclesiae* or *reformatio mundi*. His interpretations accomplish the opposite in that they strengthen the established order by advocating the strongest possible apocalyptic role for the Church, Spain and its Catholic monarchs.

The introduction (ff. 1v-6r) includes an unfinished letter to the Spanish monarchs which explains his purpose for writing the book and lists some of the authorities upon whom he relies, his general themes, and the scope and character of the treatise. He particularly calls attention to the prophet Isaiah who foretold his two principal themes (the salvation of all people and their gathering on Mt. Zion in the last days) and reminds his readers that Isaiah was the preferred prophet of St. Jerome and St. Augustine because the Church Fathers believed him to be the clearest herald of the Gospel preached to all people.¹³

Part I (ff. 6v-30v) begins with several quotations from Psalms announcing the “peoples of the world” and the capture of Jerusalem, St. Isadore’s summary of types of prophecy and how to interpret them, and the prophecies announcing the triumph of Christianity when all men will join the faith and history will culminate in the heavenly Jerusalem. Part II (ff. 30v-53v) explores prophecies fulfilled in the past and includes the famous prophecy of Abdias foretelling lands in the southern hemisphere. Part III (ff. 54v-67r) is devoted to the present and immediate future and relates Columbus’ discoveries to selected scripture. The key scripture upon which he builds his case is John 10: “I am the Good Shepherd and I know my sheep . . . and I

have other sheep which are not of this flock and I must bring them in, and they will hear my voice, and there will be one flock and one shepherd.”¹⁴ This is then supported by quotations from Christian authors, especially St. Augustine, and includes the famous passage from Seneca’s *Medea*. The final part (ff. 67r-84v) is devoted to the more distant future and contains many Biblical quotations about mythical islands and their treasures which Columbus argued should be donated to the greater cause of worldwide missionary activity and the recapture of Jerusalem. Attached to the end are lists of Biblical quotations to be incorporated into the text at a later date.

COLUMBUS SCHOLARS AND THE *LIBRO DE LAS PROFECÍAS*

The evidence of Columbus’ strong spirituality has never been seriously questioned although that spirituality needs more detailed definition. He was closely tied to Franciscan Observantine reformers who had deep roots in Spiritual Franciscanism.¹⁵ His reputation has been that of a man whose deep religious faith showed a special devotion to the Virgin and the Trinity. For the past two hundred years, however, scholars have been reluctant to incorporate his eschatological beliefs or his religious treatise on prophecy into his other writings.

Contemporaries noticed immediately the eschatological significance Columbus attached to his discoveries. Agostino Giustiniani, Bishop of Nebbio, in annotating his *Polyglot Psalter* left us what is probably the first biography of the Admiral. In the margin next to Psalms 19: 4, “their message reaches out to all the world,” the bishop gives us a brief summary of Columbus’ life and notes that the Admiral frequently claimed to have fulfilled this prophecy.¹⁶ Bartolomé de las Casas recognized the providential role of Columbus in these words:

But since it is obvious that at that time God gave this man the keys to the awesome seas, he and no other unlocked the darkness, to him and to no other is owed forever and ever all that exists beyond those doors.¹⁷

Early biographers down through Washington Irving generally accepted Columbus’ apocalyptic faith and the *Libro de las profecías* as normal fare for fifteenth century Christians. Irving eloquently summarized:

It . . . filled his mind with solemn and visionary meditations on mystic passages of the Scriptures, and the shadowy portents of the prophecies. It exalted his office in his eyes and made him conceive himself an agent sent forth upon a sublime and awful mission, subject to impulses and supernatural intimations from the Deity . . .¹⁸

Scholars in the middle and later nineteenth century and throughout much of the twentieth century have been curiously reluctant to admit that the first American hero was influenced by prophetic ideas. Ironically it is

doubtful that many of these influential scholars bothered to read the treatise, but their persuasive rhetorical power convinced subsequent historians that the *Libro de las profecías* was simply the ravings of a troubled and senile mind. At best the document was an embarrassment to be avoided and it thus fell from favor as an historical source.

In his signal work, *Ferdinand and Isabella*, W. H. Prescott describes Columbus' *Libro de las profecías* as "dark and mysterious annunciations of sacred prophecy" and "visionary fancies." Henri Harrisse called the treatise a "deplorable lucubration which we sincerely hope will never be published . . ." and Alexander von Humboldt, who accepted Columbus' apocalypticism up to a point, concluded finally that the treatise was the product of "melancholy and morbid enthusiasm." By 1891, Justin Winsor described the hero of the quatracentennial as having "mental hallucinations" in his later years. At the turn of the century, Filson Young grieved deeply at the state of the Admiral's mental health and lamented about the *Libro de las profecías*,

Good Heavens! In what an entirely dark and sordid stupor is our Christopher now sunk — a veritable slough and quag of stupor out of which, if he does not manage to flounder himself, no human hand can pull him.¹⁹

In the early and mid-twentieth century, scholars have adopted Freudian explanations, tied the work to other social or political forces at work in the fifteenth century, or ignored the *Libro de las profecías* entirely. Bernardini-Sjcestedt placed the book in the genre of romantic crusade literature while both Jaques Heers and Felipe Ximénez de Sandoval believed it to be an attempt by Columbus to restore luster to his voyages by arousing Christian enthusiasm through the device of eschatological forecasting.²⁰

Cecil Jane called Columbus a mystic and describes that mysticism as "an exaggeration of that of most of his contemporaries." Samuel Eliot Morison recognized Columbus' Christian faith as "genuine and sincere" and goes on to credit him "that his frequent communion with forces unseen was a vital element in his achievement." But the *Libro de las profecías*, Morison concluded, was simply a ploy to appeal to the Queen's mysticism "and convince her that he was the chosen man of destiny to conquer an Other World and bring home treasure wherewith to recover the Holy Sepulchre." Morison only mentions the *Libro de las profecías* once, did not bother to consult it, and proceeded to ignore it for the rest of his studies. A few years later Ballesteros y Beretta stated that the prophecies "bordered . . . on the ridiculous."²¹

One late nineteenth century study, specifically focused on Columbus' religious nature, is ambivalent about the depth of his conviction. William and Charles Gillett, in their paper before the American Society of Church History in 1892 titled, "The Religious Motives of Christopher Columbus," chose the tone of nineteenth century Protestant rhetoric to portray the discoverer's piety. Phrases such as ". . . Columbus and the sovereigns, having

succumbed to dastardly motives of sordid gain . . . lost their pristine missionary zeal,” or “in this, as almost everywhere, the first cry is ‘gold,’ and the second is ‘Christianize’ — but with a suspiciously intimate connection with *more gold*.” And, in summary, “but in these extracts [from the sources] we fail to find anything which necessitates or justifies the suppositions of those who imagine that we must incorporate religious motives with those of material advantage . . .”²² Not only did the Gilletts miss the point, they failed to include the *Libro de las profecías* in their survey of the sources!

On the other hand, Francis Steck in his speculative essay, “Christopher Columbus and the Franciscans,” goes in the opposite direction and almost canonizes the Admiral when he states:

Christopher Columbus and the Franciscans . . . Christ-bearers they were . . . by unbroken and brave loyalty to Christian ideals and principles . . . traversing boldly the uncharted Sea of Darkness and carrying the Crib of Bethlehem, the Sermon on the Mount, and the Cross of Calvary to a degraded and down-trodden race . . . in the love of their Savior, and in the healing power of their Sanctifier . . .²³

It has been only in the past thirty years that scholars have sought to find a definition for Columbus’ apocalypticism. Marcel Bataillon examined Columbus’ interpretations from the *Libro de las profecías* within the context of general millennialism of the times, and his efforts were followed by an excellent chapter in John Phelan’s book devoted to apocalypticism in the Age of Discovery. Professor Phelan was not surprised at Columbus’ eschatological conclusions about spreading the Gospel to the lands he had discovered

Little wonder that he was obsessed by the image of himself as the instrument of Divine Providence. Little wonder that he was convinced that the mission of fulfilling the other apocalyptic prophecy had also been reserved for him [the capture of Jerusalem].²⁴

Phelan stressed that Columbus must be taken seriously in his prophetic statements,

Columbus’ unique historical perspective must not be forgotten. He was looking back through fifteen hundred years of Christianity. It seemed to him that his discoveries represented the grandiose climax of Christian history. His opening of the ‘door of the Western Sea’ promised the speedy fulfillment . . . of the words of Mark 16:15 . . .²⁵

James Cummins analyzed Columbus’ scheme to liberate Jerusalem in a *festschrift* contribution published in 1976. Cummins advocated the provocative idea that the Admiral set about to fulfill the medieval ideal of freeing the Holy Sepulcher and saw himself as the new David. Just as David had provided the wealth for Solomon to build the original temple on Mt. Zion, Columbus would provide the gold for the Spanish monarchs to

recapture the sacred site and usher in the apocalypse: "In his mind, the whole '*empresa de Indias*' was only a memo to that predestined end: the New World was to redeem the Old City."²⁶

The scholarly work by Phelan and Cummins legitimized Columbus' eschatological ideas, but they have been received by a mixed audience. Mario Góngora, for example, incorporated Phelan's conclusions into his history of colonial Spanish America as did Luis Weckmann in his study of medieval influences upon Mexico.²⁷

Paolo Taviani in his important and comprehensive recent biography about Columbus utilizes the *Libro de las profecías* as an important source and calls the Admiral a man with a "sincere profession of religious faith" who could not remain indifferent to divine mystery and believed that his Christian faith gave meaning to his life,

The reconquest of the Holy Sepulchre was a mission in which he felt privileged to participate . . . It was thus a vital element in his personal philosophy of existence. It gave him purpose, and for that purpose he worked, for that purpose he lived.²⁸

Other biographers, however, have not followed suit. As recently as 1985, Gianni Granzotto declared that the *Libro de las profecías* indicates that Columbus,

. . . drifted... away from reality . . . because of his advancing age, his infirmity, and his continual disappointments . . . turned [to] mad ravings . . . mild delirium . . . came to believe that he had been chosen by God for his exploits . . . attributed his successes to the divine mission for which he had been destined . . . projected . . . delusions into the future . . . [by] compiling a Book of Prophecy.²⁹

The first in-depth study to focus on Columbus' eschatological ideas was published by Alain Milhou in 1983. This was followed in 1985 by Pauline Moffett Watts' article on Columbus' sources for the *Libro de las profecías*. Milhou attempted to give exhaustive explanations of Columbus' messianic mentality and its relationship to his apocalyptic ideas. The author has investigated almost every aspect of Columbus' eschatological statements even to the point that Milhou sees the Admiral's preoccupation with gold as symbolic Christian iconography. Many of Milhou's conclusions are sound and his book now provides a foundation from which scholars may comfortably investigate the Admiral's religious motives.³⁰

Pauline Watts has improved our understanding of the *Libro de las profecías* by showing that Columbus' "Enterprise of the Indies" was part of a larger scheme to restore the Holy Lands to Christendom and that "his apocalypticism must be recognized as inseparable from his geography and cosmology . . ." She has clearly pointed out the extensive use the Admiral made of a wide range of ancient and medieval authors in composing the treatise.

Watts' most important contribution is her thorough analysis of Columbus' use of Pierre d'Ailly's *opuscula*, the *Imago mundi*, and Pope Pius II's *Historia rerum ubique gestarum* in developing his apocalyptic theories.³¹

CONCLUSION

We have just begun to incorporate the *Libro de las profecías* into our understanding of Columbus, fifteenth and sixteenth century apocalypticism, and the treatise's place in the history of ideas. Critical translations at least into Spanish, Italian and English need to be made so that the source is available to a wider audience. Columbus' knowledge and use of the Bible, the Church Fathers, and important medieval theologians, should be analyzed. The *Libro de las profecías* demonstrates that the Admiral was much better read and familiar with a wider range of literature than is usually assumed. Astrology also was important to Columbus, and he refers to it throughout his diary and letters. The most complete account of his knowledge on this subject is to be found in his eschatological treatise. Last, the *Libro de las profecías* should be compared with and placed into the larger body of apocalyptic literature from the late middle ages in Europe, especially its relation to Spanish and Spanish American eschatology.

The *Libro de las profecías* is an important treatise which gives us insight into the mind of Christopher Columbus. It is not the ravings of a psychotic or reflective of an old man's senility. It is a standard and rather ordinary apocalyptic text which displays some urgency for action but no hint for revolution. There is nothing radical in the treatise, and in fact, the Admiral limits himself to exploring the meaning of his discoveries without predicting any forthcoming cataclysmic events.

Columbus had an unshakable sense of calling which for him translated into prophetic destiny. Prophecy was the bridge between cosmological theory and fifteenth century science and God's plan for the world. The secret of the Sea of Darkness to the Admiral had not been penetrated because God wanted it hidden until He was ready. Columbus firmly believed that God had selected him to uncover its mystery and to reveal new lands to gain for Christ. Christoferrans, the Christ Bearer, believed that God had given him a special spiritual intelligence to understand the mysteries of prophetic Scripture relating to unknown regions of the earth and then he set out to accumulate the intellectual abilities necessary to achieve his mission. Thus, faith and reason became wedded in his mind and created an unshakable resolve to reach his goal.

NOTES

1. C. J. Cauffman, *Faith and Fraternity: The History of the Knights of Columbus, 1882-1982* (New York, 1982), p. 81. By 1899, the ceremony for members of the fourth degree included a long discourse on the theme of

Columbus' prophetic name which translated as "Christ-Bearer Dove and symbolized the baptism of the New World," p. 139. Thomas Cummings, writing in *Donaboe's Magazine*, xxxiii (November, 1895), p. 1243, stated that Columbus inspired the Knights of Columbus because he was "a prophet and seer, an instrument of Divine Providence, a mystic of the very highest order . . ."

2. A. Roselly de Lorgues, *Histoire posthume de Christophe Colomb, per le c^{te} Roselly de Lorgues* (Paris, 1885), p. 381. Despite widespread support, the effort toward canonization failed.

3. *Raccolta di documenti e studi pubblicati della R. Commissione Colombiana per quarto centenario dalla scoperta dell'America* (Scritti di Christofono Colombo, ed., C. de Lollis, Roma, 1894) II, pt. 1, *Libro de las profectas*, pp. 76-106. It is described briefly in Consuelo Varela, *Cristóbal Colón: Textos y documentos completos Relaciones de viages, cartas y memoriales* (Alianza Universidad, Madrid, 1982), pp. 262-266. The actual incipit (Biblioteca Colombina, Seville, No. 2091, Registro de Hernando Colón) reads: "Liber seu manipulus de actoritatibus, dictis ac sententis et prophetiis circa materiam recuperande sancte ciuitatis et montis Dei Syon ac inuentionis et conversionis insularum Indie et omnium gentium atque nationum ad reges nostros Hispanos."

4. *Raccolta Colombiana*, II, pt. 1, *Relazione del quarto viaggio*, Letter to king and queen dated 7 July 1592, p. 192.

5. *Libro de las profectas*, p. 79.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 79. "And with this *fire*, I came to your Highnesses." [italics are mine] He is speaking here of Divine inspiration using the word "fire" in its typical medieval symbol for the Holy Spirit as derived from the fire which came down at Pentecost.

7. C. Varela, *Cristóbal Colón*, p. 305, for the date of Columbus' adoption of Xpo Ferrens.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 75-76 for Gorrício's attached letter. In the *Raccolta Colombiana*, III, pt. 1, *Autografi de Cristoforo Colombo*, pp. xviii-xxii, de Lollis identifies four handwritings in the treatise, Christopher Columbus, Bartholome Columbus, Ferdinand Columbus and Father Gorrício.

9. *Biblioteca Colombina. Catálogo de sus libros impresos* (Seville, 1888), pp. 51-52.

10. P. F. Mulhern, "Gifts of the Holy Spirit," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York, 1967) VII, pp. 99-100. *Spiritualis intellectus* was promised in Isaiah 11: 1-3 and given to the Apostles at Pentecost. The Church Fathers saw this and other gifts as special aids for Christians to use against evil. St. Thomas Aquinas believed that all gifts from the Holy Spirit were supernatural aids to enable the receiver to achieve natural perfection. In the later Middle Ages, *spiritualis intellectus* was claimed by many individuals and groups. The importance of *spiritualis intellectus* to the Spiritual Franciscans, for example, who greatly affected Columbus' ideas through their influence upon the Observantine reform movement, was primary as it

validated their claims to be the new spiritual men predicted by Joachim of Fiore. The Spiritual Franciscans believed that the age into which the world was entering would be illuminated with a true form of *spiritualis intellectus*. See M. Reeves, *Prophecy in the Later Middle Ages*, (Oxford, 1969), p. 210.

11. *Libro de las profecias*, p. 79 and p. 82 where he proclaims that his self-education in all fields was secondary to the insights and knowledge given to him by the Holy Spirit.

12. V. Milani, *The Written Language of Christopher Columbus* (Buffalo, New York, 1973), pp. 129-132.

13. *Libro de las profecias*, p. 98.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 143. He thoroughly glossed this from St. Augustine, St. Gregory, St. John Chrysostom, and Nicholas of Lyra.

15. A. Bernaldez, *Historia de los Reyes Catholicos D. Fernando y Doña Isabel* (Sociedad de bibófilos andaluces, Sevilla, 1890) I, ser. 1, pt. 2, p. 78 clearly states that Columbus appeared in the streets of Castile "wearing the habit of an *Observantine Friar* . . ." [italics are mine]. His ties to the Observantine reformers has been shown most recently by A. Milhou, see note 29.

16. Agostino Giustiniani, *Polyglot Psalter* (Genoa, 1516), note D.

17. Bartolomé de las Casas, *History of the Indies*, trs. A. Collard (New York, 1971), p. 35.

18. W. Irving, *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (New York, 1849) II, pp. 491-492.

19. W. H. Prescott, *Ferdinand and Isabella* (Boston, 1837) III, pp. 243-244. H. Harrisse, *Notes on Columbus* (New York, 1866), p. 84. A. von Humboldt, *Cosmos: A Sketch of a Physical Description of the Universe*, trs. E. C. Otté (New York, 1858), p. 65. J. Winsor, *Christopher Columbus and How He Imparted the Spirit of Discovery* (New York, 1891), p. 504. F. Young, *Christopher Columbus and the New World of His Discoveries* (London, 1906), p. 146. Similar wording of Columbus' condition can be found in many late nineteenth and early twentieth century writers. Three more prominent writers will serve as examples: J. Wassermann, *Christoph Columbus, der Don Quichote des Ozeans* (Berlin, 1926), p. 206 "... die ihn möglich machte, und der wie die meisten Elaborate des Verfassers den Beveis liefert, dass sein Bildungsniveau selbst für das Zeitalter auffallend niedrig war. Spanisch Finsternis." M. André, *La Véridique Aventure de Christophe Colomb* (Paris, 1927), p. 259 calls him "quite mad" and a "possessed and hallucinated being." And in the famous volumes by J. Thacher, *Christopher Columbus: His Life, His Work, His Remains* (New York, 1904) II, p. 566 "Fancy was disordering his brain." III, p. 461, the *Libro de las profecias* was written when the "... aged Admiral was broken in mind and body . . ."

20. A. Bernardini-Sjcestedt, *Christophe Colomb* (Paris, 1961), p. 275. J. Heers, *Christophe Colomb* (Bienne, 1981), p. 579. F. Ximénez de Sandoval, *Cristóbal Colón: evocación del Almirante de la mar Océana* (Madrid,

1968), pp. 277-279. Ramon Iglesias, however, seems to have misread the *Libro de las profecías* when he interpreted it only in light of Columbus' building a new argument to convince the court to restore his titles and privileges. Iglesias ignores the consistency of eschatological remarks made by Columbus in his earlier writings. See. R. Iglesias, "The Man Columbus," in *Columbus, Cortés, and Other Essays* ed. L. Simpson (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), pp. 31-32. A reprint of Iglesia's original article published in 1920.

21. C. Jane, *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (New York, 1970), p. 27. S. E. Morison, *Admiral of the Ocean Seas: A Life of Christopher Columbus* (Boston, 1942), p. 577-578. A. Ballesteros y Beretta, *Cristóbal Colón y il descubrimiento de América* (Barcelona, 1945) II, p. 692.

22. W. Gillett & C. Gillett, "The Religious Motives of Christopher Columbus," *Papers of the American Society of Church History*, IV (1892), pp. 14, 18-19.

23. F. Steck, "Christopher Columbus and the Franciscans," *The Americas*, III, no. 3 (1947), p. 337.

24. M. Bataillon, "Evangélisme et millénarisme au Nouveau Monde," *Courants religieux et humanisme a la fin de xv^e et au début de xvi^e siècle* (Colloque de Strasbourg, May 9-11, 1957), pp. 25-36. J. Phelan, *The Millennial Kingdom of the Franciscans in the New World* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1970), p. 23.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

26. J. S. Cummins, "Christopher Columbus: Crusader, Visionary and *Servus Dei*," *Medieval Hispanic Studies Presented to Rita Hamilton* ed. A. D. Deyermond (London, 1976), p. 45.

27. M. Góngora, *Studies in the Colonial History of Spanish America*, trs. R. Southern (London, 1975), pp. 206-209. L. Weckmann, *La herencia medieval de México* (El Colegio de México 1984) I, pp. 263-265.

28. P. Taviani, *Christopher Columbus: The Grand Design* (London, 1985), p. 113.

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