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Columbus's Seven Years in Spain Prior to 1492

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ABSTRACT

One of the most conspicuous facts in Columbus' biography is the prominence of unverifiable assertions in major scholarly treatments. The common practice of such "creative non-fiction" has caused widespread confusion about the most crucial and decisive period in the mariner's career, the seven years in Spain prior to the 1492 embarkation.

It appears that we cannot date or even place in sequential order various events that have been reported in the mariner's life in these years. The attempt to date and order these events has led biographers to create and describe unverifiable scenarios as if they really happened. Probably the only hope for establishing sounder points of reference for the events of this period lies in the Spanish archives, which the Spanish government is now putting in order.

This situation in Columbus scholarship raises important questions about the philosophy of historical biography. It invites speculation on necessary distinctions between the domain of the historian and the domain of the creative artist, and suggests that the analytical approach to the sources practiced by Jacques Heers in *Christophe Colomb* might be a proper approach for future biographers.

One of the most conspicuous facts in Columbus biography is the presence of unverifiable assertions and incidents in major scholarly treatments. Such assertions and incidents, often quite clearly fictional, have been a traditional ingredient in lives of Christopher Columbus both in his own time and in the nineteenth and twentieth century. The most likely reason for the practice is simply the frustrating gaps in the available documentary evidence, gaps where little or nothing is known for certain about the activities of the subject. These fictional insertions are sometimes styled "creative non-fiction."

Those who favor this fleshing-out of scholarly biographies with imagined events contend that this is the only way to make biography palatable to prospective readers. These proponents sometimes hold that the practice is not unscholarly so long as the imagined events fall within the

bounds of probability and do not violate the spirit and personality evoked by the events and activities which *are* authentic.

The best argument I can think of for opposing the practice of this "creative non-fiction" is the confusion that biography-padding has caused in the available biographies of Columbus. Nowadays everyone laughs at Washington Irving's sentimental imaginings in his account of a conflict between the pedantic scholars of Salamanca and the brilliant navigator.¹ But when we look at the most recent major biographies both in English and in Spanish, we find that neither Morison nor Ballesteros seems to have had any qualms about including in his narrative, without *caveat* of any kind, events for which there is no documentary proof.

The classic instance of this is the insertion into Columbus biography of the wreck of the ship *Bechalla* off Cape St. Vincent in August, 1476. The ship did indeed sink at that time in a fight between a Genoese convoy (in which the *Bechalla* was sailing) and a squadron of French marauders; but researchers have never found lists of the crews of the ships and so we do not in fact know that Columbus was aboard that ship or any other ship in the Genoese convoy. Yet in their biographies neither Morison (1942) nor Ballesteros (1945) shows any doubts that Columbus was aboard some ship in the convoy, and both name the *Bechalla* as the ship he was probably on.² As a consequence, generations of readers in the Spanish and English-speaking worlds have grown up thinking that Columbus was wrecked at the time the *Bechalla* went down and entered Portugal by swimming ashore near Lagoe at that time.

The extensive research that produced information about the attack on the Genoese convoy³ was mounted in an attempt to ascertain the truth of the statement by Columbus's son Ferdinand, in his life of his father, that the navigator was aboard a ship that was wrecked off Portugal and swam ashore.⁴ It is true that Columbus was associated through a large part of his life with the firms which sponsored this convoy, and also true that Columbus arrived in Portugal about 1476; but these facts do not of themselves make it true that Columbus was aboard a ship in that convoy. The relatively careful Ballesteros, sensing that the case is not made, buttresses it by citing Columbus's 1505 letter to King Ferdinand claiming that his arrival on the peninsula was miraculous;⁵ but Columbus's letter mentions no shipwreck at all, and his assertion might mean only that he had been under the miraculous direction of God throughout his life. Certainly there is no duty to prove or disprove Ferdinand's assertion that his father reached Portugal initially by swimming ashore after a shipwreck, for his biography is full of exaggerations and inaccuracies, and the wreck of the *Bechalla* and other ships in the seafight in question do not of themselves prove that Columbus was aboard a ship in the convoy in question.

The biographies of Morison and Ballesteros contain various less spectacular fictional incidents and imagined assertions which allow the reader to feel that a substantial amount is known about the discoverer's life at

every period. This feeling, of course, is no less fanciful than the various examples of wishful thinking in Ferdinand's biography. In fact, there are still extensive periods in the life of the discoverer about which we know almost nothing.

Of the period in the biographies which are distinctively flavored by fictional inserts, the most crucial and decisive is the period of seven years in Spain, 1485-1492, just prior to the embarkation of the first fleet of discovery. A quote from the early paragraphs in Morison's account of this period in *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* will establish the flavor of the fiction I am speaking of:

Columbus knew nobody in Spain except his Molyart brother- and sister-in law, who lived at Huelva, but they were in no position to do anything for him.

When his ship rounded the promontory at the entrance to the Rio Tinto, Columbus noted on a bluff the buildings of the Franciscan friary of La Rabida. These suggested a solution of his first problem, what to do with Diego while he sought friends and ways and means. The Minorites were noted for their hospitality, and often conducted schools for young boys; perhaps this house would take charge of his son.⁶

This is fiction because no one knows whether the Molyarts could or could not have cared for Diego; and we do not even know whether Diego divided his time between the friars and the Molyarts or spent it exclusively with the friars. We do know that Columbus later gave Molyart employment, lent him money, and obtained some confiscated furniture from the sovereigns for the Molyarts.⁷ Obviously he felt some obligation to the family — although this may have simply been the obligation which any Italian would feel to members of his family. At any rate, it is impossible to know whether Columbus's first thought of leaving Diego with the Franciscans came when he spied La Rábida from the river Tinto; we do not know whether he had inquired ahead of time about this possibility. And we do not know whether he had heard that the Franciscans might help him with his Enterprise. Morison is making the narrative readable, not overly concerned about sticking strictly to the documented facts.

The fourth centennial celebration and the increased availability of documents at that time⁸ stimulated much new scholarship, including a new synthesis of known and presumed facts about the period in the life of Columbus between his departure from Portugal and his embarkation on the 1492 voyage. This synthesis was carried out by Henry Vignaud in his *Histoire Critique de la Grande Entreprise de Christophe Colomb*.⁹ It is full of gaps during which nothing certain is known about Columbus, but it accommodates most of the known facts, and it dominated this portion of Columbus biography at least until the appearance in 1964 of Juan Manzano Manzano's study of these same years in Columbus's life. Morison pointed

out in 1942 that nothing substantial had since been added to the facts in Vignaud's synthesis except the monograph of D. José de la Torre on Beatriz Enriquez de Harana and the work of Fr. Angel Ortega on La Rábida.¹⁰

In 1964 Manzano introduced a radically altered sequence of events in his *Cristóbal Colón: siete años decisivos de su vida, 1485-1492*.¹¹ Some of Manzano's sequence appears more cogent than Vignaud's, because his analysis of the movements of the Spanish court during these years makes it hard to see how some of the known events in Columbus's life could have happened at the times indicated in Vignaud's sequence, such as Columbus's initial acquaintance with Medinaceli.

Thus we have two radically contradictory accounts, both synthesized by conscientious scholars, of the sequence of the events which Columbus probably engaged in. I shall spend the rest of this paper comparing these two accounts and commenting on them.

The older account is presented succinctly by Morison in AOS, I, 107-138. Columbus arrived in Palos about the middle of 1485 and leaves his son Diego with the Franciscans at the friary, La Rábida. The prior, Fray Juan Pérez, may have sent Columbus to Seville with a letter to a notable Franciscan astronomer, Fray Antonio de Marchena. Alternatively, Marchena may have been visiting at La Rábida when Columbus got there.

At any rate, Marchena was impressed with Columbus's ideas and sent him to the wealthiest grandee in Castile, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, to seek support. Morison says Medina Sidonia was interested, and in a piece of fiction which I shall glance at below, "was at the point of promising to equip a fleet for Columbus when, owing to an unseemly brawl with the Duke of Cádiz, the Sovereigns ordered him to leave Seville and the negotiations were broken off. Columbus then turned to . . . (the) Count of Medina Celi, who had a large establishment at Puerto Santa Maria and owned a merchant fleet" (AOS, I. 110).

Medinaceli intended to sponsor the voyage, but when he asked permission of the queen she took the whole project over for the Crown and invited Columbus to court. He arrived in Córdoba on 20 January 1486. By then the sovereigns had departed on one of their frequent peregrinations, and so Columbus had to wait until the sovereigns returned in April. In the mean time he became acquainted with the Genoese in town and through them met the Haranas, including an orphan niece named Beatriz Enriquez de Harana, who became Columbus's mistress and in 1488 bore him his second child, the illegitimate son Ferdinand.

Columbus was first presented to Isabel in the Alcázar of Córdoba on about 1 May 1486 (AOS, I. 115). The queen "placed Columbus in the charge of her comptroller of finances, Alonso de Quintanilla, who put him up at his house, and introduced him to the very magnificent Don Pedro Gonzales de Mendoza . . . Grand cardinal of Spain . . ." (I. 115). This same summer she appointed a commission headed by Fray Hernando de Talavera to study the Enterprise and make recommendations (I. 116). The

commission began deliberations at Córdoba in this same summer of 1486 (I. 116), and held some crucial sessions at the College of St. Stephen in Salamanca about Christmas, 1486. Columbus met the prior of St. Stephen, the Dominican priest Diego de Deza, at this time (I. 116-117). In spite of this activity the deliberations dragged on interminably and the commission did not report until four or five years later, perhaps in late 1490.

Columbus's activities in the mean time are shadowy. For awhile he was paid meager stipends by the crown, but these ceased in the summer of 1488 (I. 118). He reopened negotiations with Portugal in this same year, 1488, but these fell through (I. 118). At the invitation of the Spanish sovereigns he visited them at their siege camp near Baza in the summer of 1489 (I. 130). He may have sold books and maps in Seville, and it may have been at this time that he acquired and annotated a number of books on cosmology and history which survive to this day.

When the Talavera commission reported unfavorably, probably in Seville in 1490 (I. 131), the sovereigns neither accepted nor rejected the report, and let Columbus know that when the war with Granada was over they might be interested in his Enterprise. He waited awhile but in the summer of 1491 he decided to try his luck in France and went to La Rábida for his son, Diego (I. 132).

The rest of the account is not in question; with the aid of Fray Juan Pérez, who was at La Rábida when he got there, he reopened negotiations with the Spanish crown, and after the fall of Granada on January 2, 1492, the monarchs' resistance gradually diminished. Though the negotiations nearly broke down more than once, Ferdinand and Isabel agreed not only to sponsor the Enterprise but to do so on terms astonishingly favorable to Columbus.

In this narrative by Morison we frequently encounter his tendency to humanize a story with a bit of fiction, as when he says that Medina Sidonia became interested in the enterprise and was on the point of sponsoring a fleet when the sovereigns made him leave Seville. There are no documents to support the assertion that Medina Sidonia was about to sponsor a fleet for Columbus at this time, or even any documents to show that he met Columbus at this time. We encounter fiction again when Morison tells us that Quintanilla put Columbus up at his own house in Córdoba in 1486 following the mariner's introduction to the Queen about May 1. This is an extrapolation from a 1493 letter from Medinaceli to the Queen via Cardinal Mendoza;¹² no one knows whether Medinaceli means 1486 or 1488-9. If he means 1488-9, Morison's remark about Quintanilla vis-a-vis Columbus in 1486 are all fiction, but Morison gives no hint of this.

The key matters are the date of the Talavera Commission's report and the time of Columbus's encounter with the Medinas, although the date of his relationship with Quintanilla is of interest too. The account related by Morison, inherited from Vignaud¹³ in substantially the order in which he tells it, suggests that Columbus had to give up the active sponsorship of

Medinaceli, who had the resources to mount the fleet, in favor of a half-hearted royal consideration which dragged on for five years or more without any report from the commission of inquiry for more than four years and without any real result until after Granada surrendered. This sequence has been called into question, as we shall see.

The biography of Antonio Ballesteros y Beretta (1945) follows the same traditional order and asserts the same excruciating slowness on the part of the commission, but adds in considerable detail an account of the movements of the court of Ferdinand and Isabel.¹⁴ This addition makes little difference in the total impression we get of Columbus's life during these critical seven year, but it did inspire a younger scholar, Juan Manzano Manzano, to explore the implications of the itinerary of the royal court. Manzano examined the movements of the court in even greater detail and studied with care the laws governing presentation of petitions to the monarchs and laws governing the formation of commissions of inquiry like the Talavera Commission. This enabled Manzano to infer with some cogency a completely different sequence of events which does much to eliminate the almost total vacuum in the middle of the story as told by Morison. Manzano also adopts numerous corrections, both from his own scholarship and from contributions by Ballesteros and others. One reflection of his success is the fact that Paolo Emilio Taviani, in his elaborate study *Cristoforo Colombo: la genesi della grande scoperta* (1972), follows Manzano in a number of his revisions in the accepted sequence of Columbus's life at this point.¹⁵

Manzano reports his findings in his 1964 book *Cristóbal Colón*, mentioned above. In summary, his synthesis of the story is this (I have omitted a few points on which he and Morison do not differ substantially):

When Columbus arrived at La Rábida in March 1485, he met Fray Antonio de Marchena, who proved to be his firmest and most useful supporter during the next seven year. Fray Juan Pérez was probably not at La Rábida at this time (pp. 30-32).

From 18 March until 3 September 1485, the monarchs and the royal court were in or near Córdoba (pp. 38-39). Columbus went to Córdoba during this period, probably bearing an introduction from Marchena to Talavera, who may be the person who brought him to the sovereigns' attention. By custom and law the sovereigns would have referred him to their Royal Council, who heard Columbus's proposal at this time and rejected it (pp. 49-52). Columbus then took his only recourse and made a direct appeal to the sovereigns seeking a special commission to study his project (p. 50).

The sovereigns granted him an audience, which took place in the archbishop's palace in Alcalá de Henares on 20 January 1486 (p. 56). As a result of this audience Marchena appeared before the sovereigns in Madrid, probably on 24 February 1486, and warmly defended the navigator's proposal (p. 63). Subsequently the monarchs appointed a commission of scholars, of

specialists in geography, and of specialists in navigation, headed by Talavera, to study the proposal (p. 64).

From 20 through 24 April 1486, Columbus was with the court in Guadalupe, and probably formed his famous attachment to the Virgin of Guadalupe at this time (pp. 73-74). During the rest of 1486 he may have been with the court in its wanderings (documented on a daily basis), or simply living in Córdoba (pp. 74-76). He may have met Beatriz Enriquez de Harana at this time. The first sessions of the commission took place in Salamanca at the College of St. Stephen in the period 7 November 1486 to 30 January 1487 (p. 79). Columbus probably appeared at some of these sessions and probably stayed at the Dominican convent with Father Diego de Deza, tutor of the royal prince Don Juan (p. 79).

On 3 March 1487 the court returned to Córdoba and instituted the final long crescendo of assaults on the kingdom of Granada which continued until the Moors surrendered in January 1492. On 5 May 1487, Columbus received a subvention from the crown (pp. 80-81), apparently to reimburse his expenses while testifying before the commission.

According to Manzano, the Talavera commission almost certainly reported to the monarchs before the fall of Málaga on 18 August 1487 (pp. 108-09), more than three years earlier than in the scenario followed by Morison and Ballesteros. On the day the city fell, Columbus received a further subvention at Córdoba to go to the royal camp at Málaga, where he learned from the monarchs that they could not undertake the Enterprise now but might consider it after the conquest of the Moors (pp. 108-111).

Before 17 October 1487, Columbus received what was apparently intended as a final subvention to cover expenses (p. 111). From then until late March 1488 he apparently lived in Córdoba and Seville, probably as a bookseller. This is the most likely time for his acquisition and annotation of the many books of his in the Columbian Library in Seville. By late October 1487 he had formed the liaison with Beatriz Enriquez, who gave birth to Ferdinand Columbus the following August (p. 122).

In the spring of 1488 Columbus received a letter dated 20 March from John II of Portugal inviting him to return to Lisbon to confer (pp. 148-49). Columbus went to see the sovereigns in Valencia or Murcia to try to get a decisive response about his enterprise (pp. 151-157). The war was not progressing, and the sovereigns apparently let him go on to Portugal without much concern (p. 157). On 16 June 1488 he received a gift of money from the court, perhaps solicited by Columbus himself in order to get to Lisbon (p. 150).

Whatever the tenor of the presumed talks with King John, Columbus was back in Seville in October, 1488 (pp. 160-162). Probably he was in touch with Fray Antonio de Marchena, custodian at this time of Los Observantes de Sevilla (p. 167). Marchena introduced him between October 1488 and May 1489 first to the Duke of Medina Sidonia and then to the Duke of Medinaceli (pp. 167-169). Medinaceli listened to Columbus, intervened

with the queen through Cardinal Mendoza in an effort to get the *Enterprise* reconsidered, and provided Columbus with lodging and sustenance at various times from 1489 to 1491 (pp. 172-175). It is essential to note this: Manzano insists that Medinaceli's assertion to the Queen in his 1493 letter that he met Columbus when the latter first came from Portugal means the mariner's return from visiting King John in 1488. Since Medinaceli says Columbus was talking of going on to France at this time, Manzano's conclusion is an attractive one.¹⁶

By now the court was ready to try again to bring the Moors to their knees by taking Baza; and when in May 1489 the queen summoned Columbus to court in response to the appeals of Medinaceli she issued a proclamation (pp. 187-188) which would permit the navigator to follow the army to Jaen, the base of the campaign against Baza. Columbus arrived at Jaen after 22 May 1489 (p. 188) and had an interview with the queen (p. 193). He was still in Jaen when the influential Alonso de Quintanilla, treasurer for the king and queen, arrived there in August, 1489, and he was put under Quintanilla's protection (p. 197). (Morison, we remember, places this event in 1486.)

Baza fell on 4 December 1489, and then with a quick and hazardous march through the mountains the sovereigns attacked Guadix, which fell on the day it was attacked, 30 December 1489 (pp. 200-202). By 3 January 1490, Ferdinand and Isabel were back in Jaen, confident that the Moors were finished. Manzano thinks that Columbus stayed right with the court during these heady days in order to be present when the surrender came and, hopefully, beneficiary of the sovereigns' triumphant high spirits.

But when the triumph proved illusory he probably returned to Medinaceli's seat in Puerto de Santa Maria (p. 210) and finally, in 1491, became disgusted and returned to La Rábida intending to remove Diego and set out for France (pp. 221-224). It was now that he met Fray Juan Pérez, the former confessor of the queen (p. 229), who intervened successfully for Columbus as described in all accounts.

Manzano's synthesis, based on the day-to-day movement of the court, is attractive because, given the known facts of the mariner's stay in Spain during the period, it is hard to see any other arrangement that would match up with the known locations and activities of the monarchs and the court.

As for the key matters identified above in the description of Morison's account, Manzano asserts a credible dating for Columbus's encounter with Medinaceli and his residence with this nobleman, supporting the assertions of Ferdinand and Las Casas; and he advances a quite credible sequence and dating for the report of the Talavera commission and the royally ordered trip by Columbus to Málaga to receive the verdict from the sovereigns. Manzano's refusal to concede that Columbus probably was in Lisbon to see the Bartholomew Diaz fleet return to the Tagus in December 1488 is on the side of scholarly caution, for opinion is divided on whether Diaz returned in December 1488 or December 1487 and because opinion is also divided on

whether Christopher or Bartholomew Columbus wrote the postil in which the writer claims to have been present when Diaz returned to Lisbon.¹⁷

Even so, Manzano frequently slips into fiction in the course of his narrative. A few examples must serve, among many. There is no documentation to show that Columbus was with the court at Guadalupe in April of 1486; he does appear to have been with the court in Alcalá de Henares on 20 January and in Madrid with them on 24 February; but this by no means shows that he was still with the court when it got to Guadalupe. He might have visited the shrine by himself in the intervening months, or at various other times when there are gaps in our knowledge of him.

Again, there is no documentation to show that Columbus was introduced to Medina Sidonia and Medinaceli by Marchena or by anyone else in the period between October 1488 and March 1489. There is no way to show that Medinaceli's crucial reference to Columbus's coming from Portugal (in his 1493 letter to the queen) actually means Columbus's return from a 1488 visit to Portugal. This is an important weakness, because much of Manzano's case depends on the reader's acceptance of the proposition that Medinaceli is referring to 1488 and not 1485. In justice we must acknowledge that if Medinaceli *did* mean 1488, then the case for Manzano's sequence is infinitely stronger than the one presented by Morison and Ballesteros.

Further, there is also no documentation to show that Talavera reported to the sovereigns prior to Columbus's visit to Málaga, as Manzano contends, although the cessation of regular stipends to Columbus shortly thereafter might indeed suggest that the crown felt the reason for the stipends had ceased — i.e., to enable CC to cooperate with the Talavera commission.

This last defect in Manzano's synthesis would perhaps be fatal except that no one can document any other date for the Talavera report, so that Ballesteros' otherwise cogent account of the Vignaud sequence lacks any strong or persuasive evidence that Talavera reported at all, as does Morison's account and that of Vignaud himself. Manzano's attitude that the punctual and demanding sovereigns would not have put up with year after year of interminable indecision speaks very loudly against a three- to four-year delay before a report.

On balance, Manzano's sequence is stronger than Vignaud's; but this must not blind us to the fact that he cannot prove that Medinaceli's phrase "when he first came from Portugal" means 1488 rather than 1485, just as Morison and Ballesteros do not cite any evidence at all that Columbus met the Medinas in 1485 or that Talavera reported late or early.

What is the inference to be made from this comparison of the two cases? The inference I make is that neither case is really very strong; we still simply do not know what the sequence of Columbus's activities in the period 1485-1492 was, except for the very few instances when he is recorded as receiving a stipend on a certain date in a certain place, or is otherwise clearly pinpointed in the few known documents.

Thus it all comes down to the philosophy of historical biography: what is it that the historical biographer is supposed to do? To the degree that he is a teacher, it is doubtless his duty to entertain. But we must ask, with Socrates in Plato's *Republic*, whether the teacher's first task is not to ascertain that what he is teaching is the truth, and to avoid teaching what he does not know to be the truth.

The only answer to Socrates is not a historian's answer. It is the poet and novelist's answer advanced by Philip Sidney, that a fiction writer cannot lie because he does not affirm that anything is literally true; he is simply writing fiction. The historian does not have this refuge, for his chief duty is to ascertain and promulgate the historical facts. What I am saying is that in the absence of much more documentary evidence, a large proportion of what passes for Columbus biography is simply fiction.

The research in the files of Genoa which led up to and followed the celebration of the fourth centenary of the Columbus landfall removed a great deal of the mystery from the early life of the mariner, though by no means all of it. What we have to hope is that the Spanish government's projects to catalogue, edit, and promulgate the voluminous document in the Spanish archives, and the parallel project of the American scholar Charles Polzer, the New World Archive, will ultimately bear fruit in extensive further discoveries of the sort that Alicia Bache Gould achieved in naming the crews of Columbus's ships in the 1492 fleet.¹⁸ Eugene Lyons' recent discovery of the details of the *Niña's* construction in the Casa de Contratacion¹⁹ is an example of what we must hope for. Until that time, this most critical period in Columbus's life is a period where extreme caution must be observed by historical biographers.

Perhaps the true future of historical study of Columbus — in the absence of many more Alicia Goulds — is mapped out by Jacques Heers' landmark study *Christophe Colomb*.²⁰ Heers' book is not a narrative at all but simply an analysis of the primary documents, carried out in roughly chronological order, made on the basis of Heers' profound knowledge of Genoa and of Genoese activity in Spain and the Atlantic islands. If the Heers approach is followed, then the shady areas of Columbus's life can safely be left to the poets, dramatists, and novelists, whose imaginary worlds are governed only by their duty to be true to the *spirit* of human society, and not by the letter of historical fact.

NOTES

1. *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, ed. John Harmon McElroy (Boston: Twayne, 1986), pp. 47-53.

2. Samuel Eliot Morison, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1942), I, 34; Antonio Ballesteros Beretta, *Cristóbal Colón y el descubrimiento de América* (Barcelona and Buenos Aires: Salvat Editore, 1945), I, 274.

3. A. Salvagnini, *Cristoforo Colombo e i corsari Colombo*, in *Raccolta Colombiana*, II.iii, 137-154; G. Pessagno, "Questioni colombiane," *Atti della Società Lioure di Storia Patria*, 3 (1926), 565-67, 603, 607.

4. Ferdinand Columbus, *The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus by his Son Ferdinand*, tr. Benjamin Keen. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1959), pp. 13-14.

5. Ballesteros, I, 264, 274. The letter appears on p. 357 of Consuelo Varela's *Cristóbal Colón: Textos y documentos completos*, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1984).

6. Morison, *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, I, 108.

7. Paolo Emilio Taviani draws this information together in *Cristoforo Colombo: la genesi della grande scoperta* (1972), paperbound rpt. (Novara, Italy: Istituto Geografico de Agostini, 1982), pp. 396-397.

8. Especially in the *Raccolta di documenti e studi pubblicate della R. Commissione pel Quarto Centenario dalla Scoperta dell'America* (Rome: Ministero della Publica Istruzione, 1892-1896). 14 vols.

9. (Paris: Welter, 1911), I, 399-730 and II, 9-134.

10. Morison, AOS, I, 125, note 1. The references are to José de la Torre y del Cerro, *Beatriz Enríquez de Harana y Cristóbal Colón* (Madrid: Compañía iberoamericana de publicaciones, 1933) and Angel de Ortega, *La Rábida, historia documental crítica* (Madrid: Librería católica de Gregorio del Amo, 1925-26).

11. (Madrid: Ediciones Cultura Hispánica, 1964), pp. 30-229.

12. Duke of Medinaceli to the Cardinal of Spain, Collogado, 19 Mar. 1493. Vignaud, *Histoire Critique*, I, 528.

13. AOS, I, 107-129; Vignaud's account. *Histoire Critique*, I, 399-730.

14. Ballesteros, I, 393-556.

15. Paperbound rpt. (Novara, Italy: Istituto Geografico de Agostini, 1982), pp. 147-153. 170-175; 392-405, 430-443. English edition, *Christopher Columbus: The Grand Design* (London: Orbis, 1985), pp. 168-173, 189-194, 433-447, 474-487.

16. See note 12, above. The letter is addressed to Cardinal Mendoza.

17. The only evidence we have that Christopher Columbus was in Portugal in these years, except for the testimony of Juan Moreno in *Los Pleitos de Colón* (ed. Duro, II, 75) is Postil 24 in the discoverer's copy of D'Ailly's *Imago Mundi*, which says, or seems to say, that the writer was in Lisbon in Dec. 1488, at the return of the Diaz expedition which had rounded the Cape of Good Hope. Las Casas says this Postil 24 is in Bartholomew Columbus's hand (*Historia de las Indias, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, Vol 95 (Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1957), Chap. 27, I, 102-104), while Diego Luis Molinari (*La Empresa Colombina* (Buenos Aires: Impr. de la Universidad, 1938) and Morison (AOS, I, 106, note 29) identify the hand as Christopher's.

Respecting the date of Diaz's return, Las Casas (following the Portuguese chronicler Hernando Lopez de Castaneda) places the return of the Diaz

expedition in Dec. 1487 at a time prior to King John's letter of 20 March 1488, inviting Christopher to come to Lisbon. Las Casas points out that at the time some persons started counting the new year from Christmas day, so that Bartholomew (who on this assumption must have written the postil, because Christopher was in Spain at the time; the return of Diaz occurred in the first week of 1488, i.e., between Christmas and New Year's of 1487. Morison, however, points out (*AOS*, I, 106, note 29) that some of the historical evidence strongly supports Dec. 1488, not 1487, for Diaz's return. We must conclude that the issue of whether Christopher went to Portugal in 1488 is right where it was in the early 16th century, when Moreno said yes and Las Casas said no: not proved either way.

18. *Nueva lista documentada de los tripulantes de Colón en 1492* (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1984).

19. *National Geographic*, 70, no. 5 (Nov., 1985), 600-605.

20. (Paris: Hachette, 1981).