

CHAPTER 7

A PIGEON FROM GENOA OR A MEMBER FROM PORTUGAL?

*I am not the first Admiral in my family. Let them
give me, then, whatever name they wish, for in the end,
David, most knowledgeable King, was first a shepherd.*

DON CRISTÓBAL COLÓN

There is no doubt today that Admiral Colón was not the weaver Colombo. Having thus far reviewed a large part of the history as well as part of the legend, the reader is well prepared to delve deeper into the events of the life of Admiral Cristóbal Colón, who is falsely called *Colombo* in Portugal and Italy, *Colomb* in France, and in most other places is called *Columbus*. But his name was Colón and understanding this misnomer makes it easier to understand how the history became inaccurate.

In the book *O Mistério Colombo Revelado* (The Columbus Mystery Revealed, Lisbon, 2006) a lot of effort was spent in those 640 pages explaining every facet of the history and the documentation in minute detail. While that book focused on the documentation, this book focuses more on the overall scenario.

It is a reality that until today no document has ever been found in Portugal relating to any Colombo before 1504 when Rui de Pina wrote about Cristóbal Colón's March 4, 1493 reunion with the King of Portugal at Vale do Paraíso. The inexistence of a *Colombo* is to be expected since the discoverer's name was never Colombo. Furthermore, the last name "Colón" that the discoverer used in Spain was not his birth name. The name Colón was, on the contrary, an invented identity. Furthermore, in most of the Admiral's writings there are lies intermingled with the truth to intentionally make the facts very difficult to uncover.

For the last five hundred years his true nationality has been a focus of discussion. However, those investigators that attempt to uncover the truth are faced with constant lies, both in the discoverer's own writings as well as those of his contemporaries, in a maze of contradictions and falsehoods that were meant to keep his true identity a mystery forever.

Without knowing for certain what was the truth, historians chose from the documents the information they perceived to be correct and discarded the information they deemed false or incompatible. Today it becomes evident that some of what historians accepted as false is in fact the truth, and what was accepted as the truth, in fact, is the lie. In the end each historian wrote a biography to his own taste, depending on his personal experience and knowledge. Unfortunately, no matter how hard they tried, the holes and uncertainties in the biographies continued presenting a less than credible "official history," as already explained in the previous chapter.

Since 1991, when our interest was peaked by this peculiar mystery of our human history, over three thousand books, chronicles and articles in five different languages, have been read and reread. Numerous documents have been studied and the archives and museums of many countries have been visited, following the clues, with the hope of presenting a more correct history based on the proven facts and not on mere interpretations taken out of context.

Although history books declared that the reason the Admiral changed his name and hid his identity was to hide a peasant birth or possible Jewish roots from the courts, there is neither proof nor logic behind these assertions. It is important that the reader understand that when Colón chose

to hide his true name and lineage he was not doing it for his own personal reasons - neither to hide a "peasant birth" nor "Judaic blood" as suggested. Colón could not hide himself, for he was in the public eye. There were greater overriding reasons, reasons of State that had to do with his father's identity. This becomes evident once we learn all the facts of this case.

Today, we are closer to the truth than ever before, however an investigation of this magnitude never would have been possible before the "Age of Information" that we live in. Unlike the times of previous historians who had to accept doubts and make do because of the difficulties in verifying the information, today in a few hours one can fly to Lisbon or Seville and have a look at a document to verify its content. With the help of fax, phone and Internet, one can send and receive information in seconds to and from experts in any topic to help clarify uncertain points. In a not-so-distant future, utilizing modern sciences like DNA, radiocarbon and forensics, scientists may finally confirm the correct family of Admiral Cristóbal Colón and put an end to all the doubts.

Plenty of reasons exist to accept that the First Admiral of the Indies was a Portuguese nobleman with close ties to the throne of Portugal and whose past was intentionally covered-up to build the exact labyrinth that historians have been lost within for the last five centuries. But how and why was this done?

The first dead end of this labyrinth is the wrong name of *Cristóvão Colombo* used by the Portuguese chroniclers to intentionally deflect from the truth. The discoverer is still wrongly called Cristóvão Colombo in Portuguese today. They wrongly call him Cristoforo Colombo in Italy and in France they wrongly call him Christophe Colomb. The Latin form of Cristoforo Colombo is Christopher Columbus. The English language has used the Latin form "Christopher Columbus" and, from this wrong name, many other languages derived their form of the name of the discoverer, thus, in Polish it is *Kolumb* and in Lithuania it is *Kolumbas*.

Even more interesting is that when we attempt to translate the Latin word "Columbus" to Spanish, most dictionaries will wrongly translate it to the word "Colón". And it works the other way as well. When translating the word "Colón" into English, Lithuanian or any other languages, we get the wrong translation as "Columbus, Kolumbas, Kolumb, Colomb, Colombo, etc..."

All these names are wrong translations of the assumed name that the discoverer used in Spain because the discoverer never called himself *Christopher Columbus* but instead used a Latin-Greek combination of *Cristoferens Kólon*. In old Portuguese the name was "Xpovam Colon" it is written this way by King João II in a letter to Colón in 1488, (SEE CHAPTER 11). The correct Portuguese form was *Colon* in 1488 and never *Colombo* as Rui de Pina erroneously wrote in 1504. In Spanish the discoverer's name has remained *Cristóbal Colón* to this day.

The Admiral rarely spelled out his name, but instead wrote it in the following coded way "Xpo FERENS." (SEE FIGURE 7.1). When one looks at his letters it becomes apparent that his signature is a cryptogram carrying a coded message concealed from the uninitiated. The secret message this signature contains still remains to be completely deciphered.

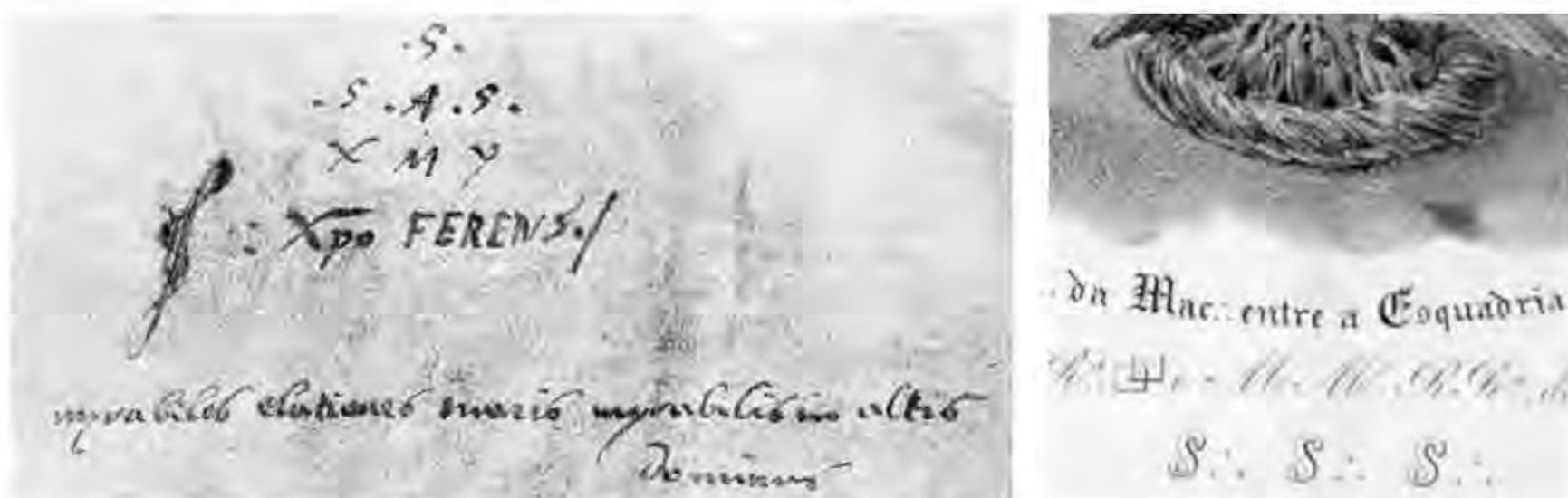


Figure 7.1: On the left is the coded signature that Cristóbal Colón used when signing his letters, including what appears to be a big letter S as a monogram. The three Ss are used today in Freemasonry (right).

The signature is a real puzzle. The proposed explanations for the top three lines of code in his signature, “.S., .S. A .S., X M Y,” include *Santo, Santo Altísimo Santo, Cristo Maria José* (Saint, Supreme Saint, Saint, Christ Mary Joseph) but nobody to date has been able to decipher his signature beyond doubt. The full solution to this secret signature still remains illusive.

On the lower line, Colón wrote two dots (:) – what was termed in old writing the perfect separator or *colon* – and on the right side the period (.) and slash (/), the imperfect separator or *semi-colon*. The Admiral used this *colon* symbol as his chosen last name of **Colón**, which was taken from the Greek *kólon*, meaning *member*.¹⁶⁵ Between the *colon* symbol and *semi-colon* symbol the Admiral wrote his chosen first name as *XpōFERENS*. *Xpō* (read Christ) is a Greek combining form for “Christ” and *FERENS* is a form (nominative singular masculine present active participle) of the Latin verb *fero*, loosely meaning “ferrying, carrying, bearing.”

Therefore, the Admiral’s cryptic signature is the second dead end in this labyrinth. It’s as if James Bond signed a letter merely as 007, a code that meant nothing to outsiders, but to those initiated into the secret, by writing “007” it would be the same as writing “James Bond” without having to identify himself.

It becomes clear that the Admiral and his descendants did all they could to hide his true identity and this signature generated the intended confusion that grew into the huge mystery that historians face today. This labyrinth was created solely with the intent to keep the Admiral’s identity from us, the outsiders, however there were many persons who knew him well, knew who he was, as well as what kingdom he came from.

It is a fact that the true identity was covered-up. The same way that the Admiral covered up and lied about his identity and his place of birth, so did those around him - including his son, D. Fernando Colón, and Colón’s secretary, Diego Mendez de Segura – all of them understood the reasons behind the need to propagate the mystery.

This fact is an essential piece to keep in mind when one scrutinizes through the counter information that was written during Colón’s lifetime, as well as by his family, friends and court chroniclers, because they all had a part in the cover-up of Colón’s true identity.

To decipher the hidden life of the discoverer, historians have a few key writings, however, all of them are problematic because of the contradictions, inaccuracies and censorship they contain. One of these writings is *Historia de Las Indias*, written by Friar Bartolomé de las Casas, whose father sailed with Admiral Colón and who had access to many of Admiral Colón’s original documentation.¹⁶⁶ Another important book is *Historie del S.D. Fernando Colombo...* attributed to the Admiral’s son, Don Fernando Colón, commonly called *Historia del Almirante*.¹⁶⁷

Unfortunately, Fernando Colón’s *Historia del Almirante*, written around 1537, was translated into Italian and printed around 1571. After that Fernando’s original Spanish manuscript disappeared and has never been found.

As the reader will come to realize from the next chapter, any book printed under the control of the Italians and so close to 1572, date of the death of D. Luis Colón and the start of the 31-year-long court fight for Admiral Colón’s inheritance, should be seen as suspicious and must be looked at with due care to decipher what may be truth and what may be lies added by the Italian pretenders solely to support a false Genoese birth.

Historians who have utilized the *Historia del Almirante* for their conclusions, have presumed the contradictions were written by Fernando Colón, however in many cases it is illogical to assume this, since the problematic sections make up an incompatible contradictory and incoherent story, which Fernando Colón would not have written. Aside from the contradictions, there are sections that are out of place and make no sense, the Italians should be blamed for inserting new material or modifying what Fernando Colón had written, just as they modified Fernando Colón’s name to the incorrect name of *Fernando Colombo*.

In order to solve this five-centuries-old puzzle, one must try to confirm everything through different sources. However, for some details we have only Fernando Colón's book as a source and, therefore, a good dose of logic and common sense must be applied, while maintaining in focus the whole backdrop of the history presented so far.

Fernando Colón is clear in affirming that there was an intentional "mystery" around his father's persona and that the Admiral, himself, wished this mystery to continue after his death. For this clear reason, one must not expect that Fernando Colón would come right out and tell us a step-by-step detailed account that would expose his father's identity. Instead, Fernando could give away only veiled clues that future readers could utilize to identify his father. But, even then, only if someone was willing to do quite a bit of investigating in Portugal, where the Admiral lived and was married.

Through bad comprehension, blind faith, inaccurate translations, and even by fraudulent intentions, the history was written as each historian saw fit, even when there were no facts. It is truly a shame that it has taken five hundred years to understand the false tale the Admiral sold us, because it might be too late to pick up the trail of evidence. Five hundred years is a long time for evidence to disappear but at least we can attempt to clarify where some things went awry.

Those who accept the "consecrated history" of the weaver Colombo as being the correct history, do so by interpreting in the *Historia del Almirante* three elements attributed to Fernando Colón:

- **Firstly:** they say that Fernando Colón confirms that his father "changed his name from Colombo to Colón."
- **Secondly:** they say that Fernando Colón confirms that his father "was born in Genoa."
- **Thirdly:** they say that Fernando Colón confirms that his father's original name was "Colombo the same as the Dove of the Holy Spirit."

But these three important points are arrived at by wrong deductions and are not an accurate portrayal of what Fernando Colón wrote.

The best way to understand this is to look at the very words in *Historia del Almirante*, words often mistranslated into English and whose meaning was badly interpreted even by Spanish readers. The numbers and the bold text were added to make each point clearer:

First Chapter – On the homeland, origins and name of the Admiral Cristóbal Colón

*Being that one of the principal things that is required from the history of all wise men is that one know his homeland and origins, because it is customary to esteem more those who come from big cities and of well-to-do ancestors, **some wanted** that I occupied myself in declaring and saying how:*

- 1 – the Admiral came from illustrious blood, although his parents, through bad fortune, had come to have great need and poverty,*
- 2 – and **[some wanted]** that I should show how they [his parents] descended from that Colone, of whom Cornelius Tacitus, in the beginning of the twelfth book of his work, says that he took King Mitridate prisoner to Rome, for which, it is said, that to Colone were given the town and the Consular dignities and the Eagles [standard of a Roman legion] and tribunal or Consular tent;*
- 3 – and **[they]** wanted that I make a great commotion of those two illustrious Colones, his relatives, of whom Sabellico writes of having a great victory against Venetians, as in the fifth Chapter will be told by us;*

(A) - But I removed myself from this undertaking [which they had wanted me to declare], believing that he was elected by Our Lord for something so grand as he did. And, because he would be thus a true Apostle of His, as in fact he was, [the Lord] wanted that in this case he [Colón] imitate the others, the said, to publicize His name, [Our Lord] elected them from the sea and from the coast, and not from highnesses and palaces. And that he [Colón] also Himself [Jesus] imitate, that being his ancestors of the royal blood of Jerusalem, he desired, that his parents be less known. In as much as his person was well adapted and endowed with everything that for a thing of such grandeur was necessary, the more he wanted that his homeland and origins be less certain and recognized [thus hidden].

- Because of that [his origins being hidden], some, who in a certain way think of reducing his fame,*
 4 – *say he was from Nervi*
 5 – *others, that [he was] from Cugureo*
 6 – *and others [that he was] from Buyasco*
Which are all small places, near the city of Genoa and in its very coast.
And others, who want to exalt him more [exaggerate],
 7 – *say he was from Savona*
 8 – *and others [say] that he was Genoese*
 9 – *and still those that reach further for the heights [who exaggerate the most], make him*
from Plasencia, in which city are some honorable persons of his family, and tombs with arms
and epitaphs of Colombo, because in effect [they say] this was already the surname and fam-
ily name of his elders, although he, according to the country where he went to live and start
new status, trimmed the word so that it conformed to the ancient, and distinguished those
who from him proceed, from all the others who were collaterals, and this way [the exagger-
ators say] he called himself Colón.
- (B) – *Considering this [that was being said by others about the name and place of birth], I was moved*
to believe that in the same way that most of his things were accomplished through some mystery,
also what has to do with the diversity of such a name and last name was not without mystery.
- (C) – *Many names we could bring as an example, that, not without an occult reason, were given*
as an indication of the effect that was going to follow, in a way that it was predicted to him the
wonder and novelty of what he did.
- (D) – *Because, if we consider the ordinary family name or surname of his elders, we could say that*
truly he was a “colombo” or “dove” [only] while he brought the grace of the Holy Spirit to
that New World, which he discovered. Showing, according to the baptism by Saint John the
Baptist the Holy Spirit in the figure of a dove showed that He was the loved son of God, that
there [in the New World] was not known.
And [too] because over the waters of the Ocean he also took, like the dove of Noah, the olive
and the oil of the Baptism, for the union and peace that those peoples with the Church would
have, for they were entrapped in the ark of darkness and confusion.
- (E) – *And by consequence, it came to him appropriately the surname of Colón, which he renewed,*
because in Greek it means member. Because, being [or taking] as his proper name Christopher,
making it known that he was a member, that is of Christ, for whom, for the health of those
people he would be sent.
- (F) – *And then, if we want to reduce his name to the Latin pronunciation, which is Christophorus*
Colonus, we say that the same way it is said that Saint Christopher got that name because he
passed Christ over the deepness of the waters with such danger, for which he was called Christo-
pher [Christ bearer or porter], and this way as he took and brought the people, the which no
other person was adequate to take them, the same way the Admiral, who became Christophorus
Colonus, supplicating to Christ His help and that He favor him in the dangers of his passage.

The majority of historians who affirm that the noble Admiral Cristóbal Colón was the peasant wool-weaver Cristoforo Colombo will eventually, after being cornered with their lack of proof, point to the text above as proof for their assertions. However, reading carefully there is nothing in the text to scientifically support that Colón was a Colombo.

Looking carefully above, Paragraph (A) does not confirm nor deny points 1, 2, 3. Paragraph (B) and (C) mostly denies points 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 by saying that, contrary to what was being invented, the name came from in intentional **mystery** invented for **occult reasons**, thus known only to a few.

What becomes clear is that Fernando Colón could not tell us anything concrete about his father because that would betray his father's wishes. Otherwise in a chapter titled *On the homeland, origins and name of the Admiral Cristóbal Colón*, we don't read:

The Admiral, my father, was born of high nobility on the Island of Madeira, Portugal. His father, my grandfather, was Władysław III, former King of Poland who, ruled several great kingdoms and disappeared in battle at the age of 20. He went secretly to live in Portugal, self-exiled, where he was forced to live in dire straits where his livelihood was sugar and other goods, which he transported by sea from Madalena to Funchal. Because my grandfather was related to the Italian Colonnas, as Pope Martin V, my distant cousin asserted, in order to protect my grandfather's royal Jagiello identity, my father, the Admiral, assumed the ancient form of the name Colonna and shortened it from Colonna to Colón, because in Greek, this ancient form of the family name, means member. Since, he was a member knight of the Portuguese Military Order of Santiago, this new name "Cristóbal Colón" seemed to fit him like a glove to a hand, because it was, at the same time, the motto of his great Atlantic voyage: A Member Going for Christ!

One would expect something like this, written straightforward in Fernando Colón's own words, however that is not what we get in Fernando's book and this evasiveness has created lots of confusion.

Furthermore, a lot of what Fernando writes in his Chapter One is not his words but what others wanted him to say. They were attempting to get Fernando to either expose the whole secret of the identity or lie and exaggerate. In the entry marked (A) above, Fernando clearly says that he was not going to expose the mystery because his father wanted that both, his place of birth and lineage, not to be told to the public.

Therefore, what one can gather from Fernando's passage is that when he gives a place of birth he is giving us one that does not betray the secret. Those who were insisting that his father was born here or there, either did so to take away from the Admiral's fame or were "reaching for the skies," another words, they were inventing or lying. And those that really assembled a "Taller-Tale" were the ones who insisted he was a Colombo from Piacenza, who had shortened his name to Colón.

Regarding this point Fernando again tries to walk a fine line between preventing the lies from growing and saying too much of the truth. So in part (D) above he tries to counter the hearsay with a little factual information explaining that his father could only have been seen as being a *colombo* (meaning *dove*), not by his birth name, but only if you compared him to the dove [colombo] of the Holy Spirit or the dove [colombo] from Noah's Ark. Therefore, the only implication is that the original surname was never Colombo.

Nothing in the text can be used to affirm what the birth name of Fernando's father was, nor the birthplace of Fernando's father. It is all hearsay from third persons that Fernando was merely repeating to show us how it was a problem for outsiders to know the truth, not only because of the initial mystery, but especially because of all the misinformation that already in 1530 surrounded the identity of the famous Admiral of the Indies.

Because of all the misinformation being written, one must be careful in reading to see what may be fact and what may be fantasy. Trying to look for the words coming directly from Fernando Colón, and leaving out the hearsay and exaggerations, the following can be extracted:

Being his ancestors of the royal blood of Jerusalem... the more he wished that his homeland and origins be less certain and known... what has to do with him choosing such a name and last name is not without mystery... for an occult reason the name Christophorus Colonus was chosen as an indication of what was going to happen... he took the surname of Colon from Greek because it means member and also because it was an old form of his ancestor's name which he "renewed" (recycled)... the correct name in the Latin pronunciation is Christophorus Colonus.

In the preceding text there are no contradictions and may actually be the only truth of the whole text since the Latin word *colon* does comes from the Greek word *kólon*, which indeed does have the meaning of *member*. By this fact we can throw away all other versions of the name because Colón for member in Greek is not the same as Colombo, which is dove or pigeon in Italian and *Christopher Columbus* is not the same as *Christophorus Colonus*.

Columbus is Latin.
Colombo is Italian.
Colombe is French.
Colom is Catalan.
Palomo is Spanish.
Pombo is Portuguese.

All of the names above are equivalent to the Greek περιστέρι [peristéri] meaning pigeon. Pigeon is clearly not the Greek meaning of *member* adopted by the Admiral.

Those historians who have insisted on calling the Admiral *Columbus*, because they claim it is the Latin form of Colón, his Spanish name, must not be aware of the numerous Papal letters written in 1493. All of those letters are in Latin and the last name of the Admiral is clearly written as “Colon” (SEE FIGURE 7.2). The use of the word *Colon* by Pope Alexander VI was not a mistake. The Pope was using the correct Latin form of the Greek *kólon*. The Latin *colon* and *semi-colon* came from the Greek word “kólon” which has “member” as one of its meanings, exactly as Fernando Colón told us it did.

As the Pope’s documents confirm, the Pope knew not to write *columbus* for pigeon but instead *colon* for member.

There is no document anywhere in Portugal or Spain where the future discoverer is called *Colombo* or *Columbus*.

Although in 1504, Rui de Pina misleadingly wrote *Colonbo*, João de Barros, in his book, corrected it to *Colom*. Barros’s *Colom* is not short for *Colombo*, as one may think, but is the proper Portuguese form of the Spanish *Colon*, because Portuguese words never end with an *n*, therefore, *bombón* (candy) and *con* (with) in Spanish, are *bombom* and *com* in Portuguese.



Figure 7.2: The background image above (D) is of Latin letter from Pope Alexander VI, inserted into the Admiral’s Book of Privileges. The other three extracts superimposed images (A, B, and C) are taken from three other Papal letters. The letters are all in Latin and the discoverer’s last name is written by the Pope always **Colon** in Latin never **Columbus**.

Looking at King João II's letter, written to the future Admiral in 1488, the name is clearly Xpoval Colon, (SEE CHAPTER 12). The king's letter alone, negates Rui de Pina and all other Portuguese writers who wrote Colombo, because, not only was the king's letter written before the others, but it comes from the highest authority in Portugal. Whatever Rui de Pina wrote in 1504, whether by mistake or by duress, is incorrect in all aspects:

It is not the same as "member" in Greek

It is not what the King of Portugal called the Admiral

It is not what the Pope called the Admiral

And it is also shown to be inaccurate by Colón's own Book of Privileges, where the Admiral calls himself Xpoval Colon in 1502, the same as King João II did in 1488 (SEE FIGURE 7.3 IN THE COLOR INSERT)

All these original documents, King João II's letter from 1488, the *Capitulaciones de Santa Fe* from 1492, the many Papal letters from 1493, Colón's own *Book of Privileges* from 1502 and the dozens of letters from the Spanish court to the Admiral, are consistent in using "Colon". More importantly, they precede Rui de Pina (SEE FIGURE 7.4).

Furthermore, for over five centuries the family name used by the Admiral's descendants in Spain is still the same *Colón* he took on for himself. It would be unwise, as it has been up to now, for Portuguese historians to give Rui de Pina more weight than all of these others, including official court documents, Colón's own documents and Fernando Colón's writings.

Even though this appears well-defined, everyone continuously ignored Fernando Colón's statement that his father was a *Colonus* not a *Columbus*. Not only did the world insist on erroneously calling the Admiral by *Colombo/Columbus* outside of Spain, but they also forced this false name onto Fernando Colón. Fernando was born in Spain and baptized with the surname of Colón. Ignoring the facts, they renamed him Fernando Colombo/Columbus going as far as attributing to him a false grandfather named Domenico Colombo.

Once this Colombo yoke was placed on the necks of the Colón family it became impossible to remove, any historian who attempted to correct it had as much success as did Fernando Colón. But Colombo, although the most widely used, was not the only wrong version of the surname others utilized.

In the early days, translators used Colomo, Coloma, Colom, Colyn, Collon, Coloni, Coullon, Columo, Colmo, Colóbo, Colomb, Colombo, Cholonbo, Columbus, Columbo, among others (SEE FIGURE 7.5). The cause of all of this confusion, however, was not Fernando Colón, whom many blame, but his father who wished that their true family name be kept secret.

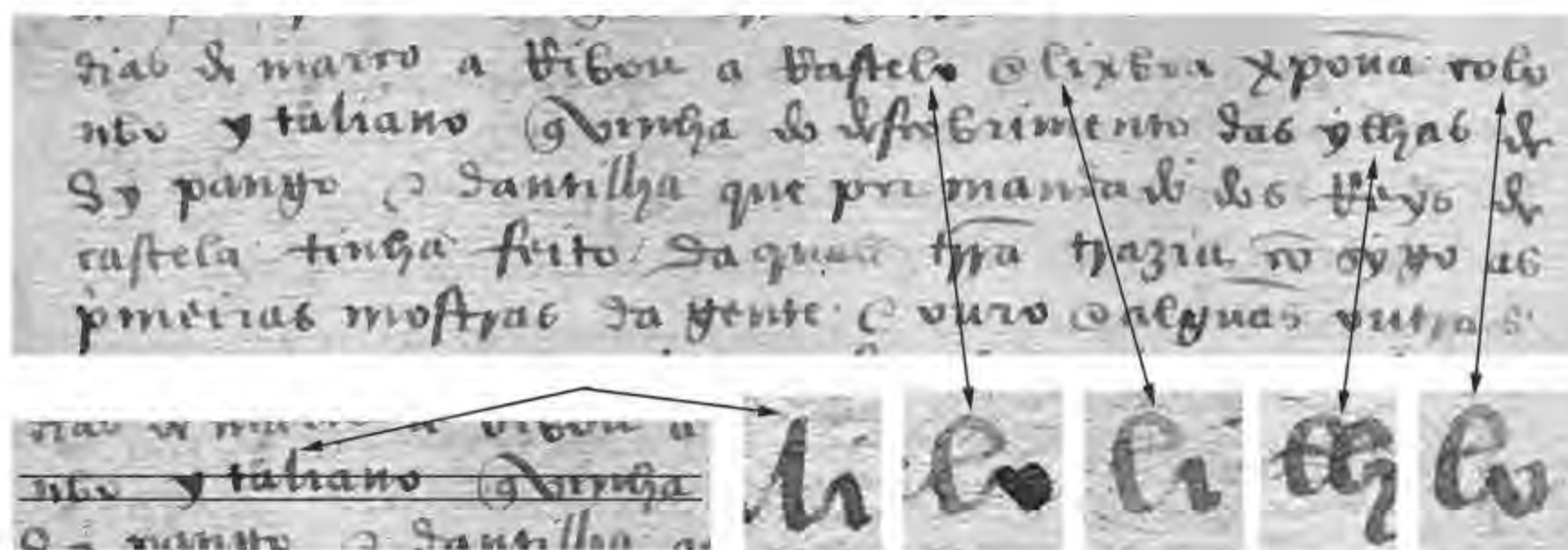


Figure 7.4: Page from Rui de Pina's *Códex 632*, kept in the National Library, where is written "Colo / nbo ytaliano" starting at the end of the first line. There is quite a bit of space around "y taliano" as if the space was left blank and the word added later. Because the word does not align with the baseline of the words left and right of it (bottom left) many suspect it was written at a later time after the censors decided what to write as a nationality that would cover-up the true nationality. Also, the *L* of ytaLiano looks different from other *L*s (bottom right).

**Esta carta embió Colon a lescrivano Deracion
delas Yllas halladas en las Indias. Conteneda
a otra De sus Altezas.**

Figure 7-5B: This last sample is the tavlibe from the Spanish letter and it uses the correct name: *Esta carta envió Colon al escrivano de racion de las Islas halladas en las Indias. Conteneda a otra De sus Altezas.* That is: This letter sent Colon to the scrivener of rations about the Islands found in the Indias. Contained with another to Their Highnesses.

Thus the Admiral, could not be a laboring weaver, but had to be a nobleman from birth just as his high-level marriage, noble connections, schooling and coat of arms attest. However, “*to cajole certain elites who did not look with good eyes upon the favors that the discoverer was receiving at the Court, some documents were hurriedly written calling him Genoese.*”¹⁷⁰

In an age when the inheritance of noble blood was so vital to a person’s life and livelihood it would seem foolish for someone to want to hide their noble lineage and step into the shadows as a nobody, but it appears that this was exactly what the Admiral did. There had to be a crucial reason for doing this. It was not done on a foolish whim.

Throughout all the writings related to Colón in the last 500 years, are lies, false information, contradictions and other attempts to hide the truth, all historians know this. However, all those that unknowingly supported the fictitious history of the weaver were forced to present excuses for the inventions that they accepted as correct.

This applies not only to the name Colombo, the low lineage and Genoese place of birth, but also to the wrong geographical information that Admiral Colón intentionally gave relative to his navigation and whereabouts. History books erroneously publicized the view that:

He was a poor pilot and bad navigator who incorrectly read his instruments. He incorrectly estimated his locations because he was a former weaver. Since he was the first European ever to sail so far west, it is understandable that he would be confused thus, he believed to be in India. After all, he had no reference for where he was. He was quite delusional, completely lost and he died still believing that he had reached the real India.

Other historians who reasoned better, blamed Admiral Colón outright for lying to the Spanish Monarchs, claiming he had reached India instead of a New World, but could not explain the reasons why he would lie.

Yet another group of historians blamed the scribes, the chroniclers, as well as the court for that information which seemed to make no sense, but all were unable to make the leap beyond a lost and lowly wool-weaver who knew absolutely nothing about everything.

The same way that the ancient astronomers accepted that the Sun orbited the Earth and held that as a solid time-tested fact, even after Nicolaus Copernicus and Galileo Galilei presented a different and actually correct solution, so have historians twisted and minimized the facts of the life of Admiral Colón to make them fit into their long-accepted “truth.”

Better answers are found, not by bending or ignoring the facts that don’t fit, but by digging deep and searching wide for a solution in which the facts fit without having to be forced.

It is evident that many threads from the tapestry weaved by Cristóbal Colón’s life in Spain had their ends tied not just to the kingdom of Portugal but right into the court of King João II, that same king who in 1488 wrote to the Admiral a private letter calling Colón “*Nosso especial amigo em Sevilha*” (Our special friend in Seville.) The king whom everyone was fooled into believing that Colón hated, yet all Colón’s actions are contradictory to hating João II.¹⁷¹

Many contemporary writers added to the confusion, some intentionally and others without knowing it, either by their own errors or by the manipulation of the facts orchestrated by Colón himself.

which is not the same as Colón in Spanish, making the Catalan *Colom* a mistaken name.

A bigger mistake happened when this Catalan letter was printed in Rome, it ends with the name *Christoforus Colom* (Catalan for pigeon). In this Roman edition, a statement was appended by the Italian bishop of Monte Peloso, “R. L. de Corbaria” (or Berardus/Leonard of Carninis), where he further corrupts the name from *Colom* to “*Columbo*.”

This Latin letter with the wrong name was the one that was then printed all over Europe carrying the name as *Columbo*. Beginning in April 1493, these outsiders were mistranslating the Admiral’s name as *Colom*/*Columbo*/*Columbus*. Therefore, right from the beginning one can see how authors, printers and translators changed the facts. First they corrupted the name from Colón to *Colom* and finally to *Columbo*/*Columbus*, (SEE FIGURE 7.6). The public all over Europe got to know Colón only by the inaccurate name of *Columbo*/*Columbus*, and the rest, as they say, is (wrong) history (SEE FIGURE 7.7).

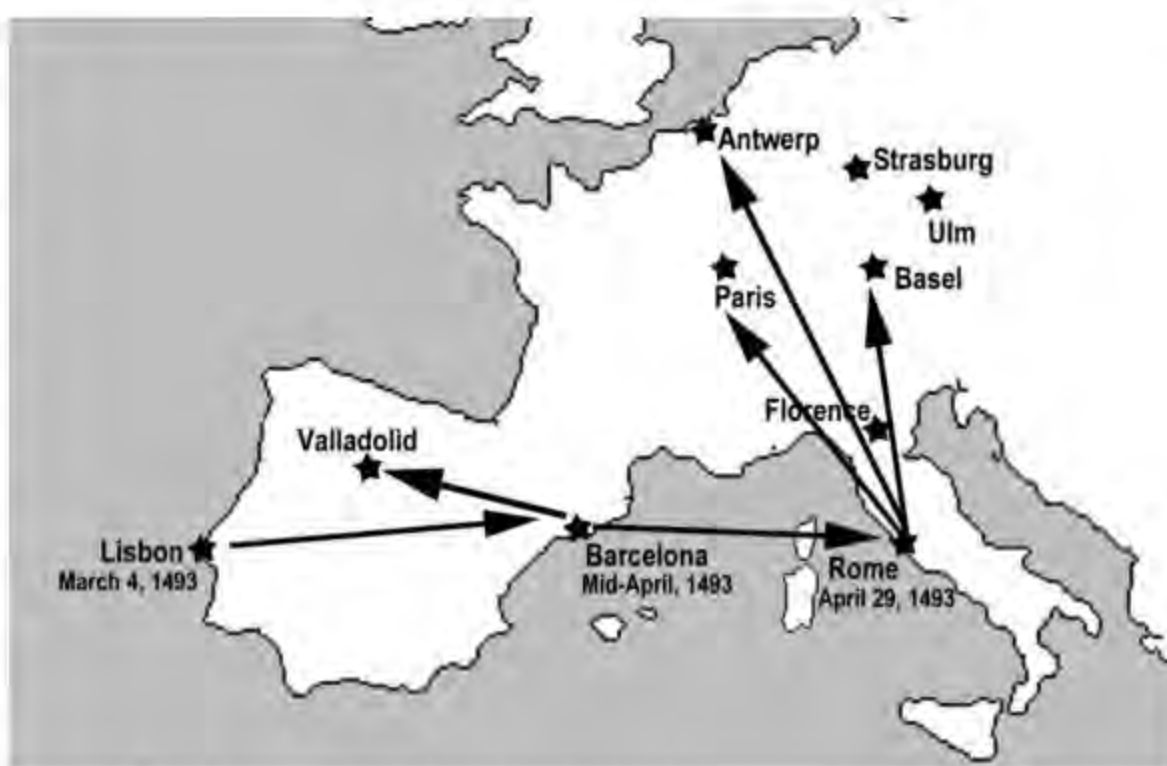


Figure 7.7: This map shows how fast Colón’s letter spread over Europe as well as how the error was propagated in Barcelona, then in Rome and from there onwards.

As the false name spread, other inventions were added. Although, neither Colón, the Spanish documents, nor Fernando Colón’s *Historie* ever said where Colón was born, authors, writing far from the action, in some cases, going against the very documents, they were utilizing, presented him as a “Genoese” or Italian.

A clear case of fraud is perpetrated by Richard Eden in the first English translation of Peter Martyr’s book, and is another perfect example of these inventions. The correct name in Latin was *Christophorus Colonus*, as Fernando Colón stated and as Peter Martyr published it in 1511.

However, in 1555, when Richard Eden translated Peter Martyr’s 1511 book, Richard Eden, inserted this text: “(otherwise called *Columbus*) *A gentilman of Italy, borne in the citie of Genua*,” without alerting the readers that Peter Martyr did not write this.

Like the bishop of Montepeloso, and so many writers after him, Richard Eden took it upon himself to corrupt Martyr’s words without letting anyone know he was doing it, as can be seen in FIGURE 7.8. All this continuous misinformation has caused immense problems for researchers and has caused countless wrong biographies of Colón to be written.

Colón’s Lisbon letter of March 4, 1493 was the first ever international “Press Release” in history. It marks the first time in history that a news event made use of the printing press to distribute news all over Europe within a few months and this was done intentionally. Had Colón arrived before 1440, when Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press, his great feat would have taken years to publicize. Colón’s letter written from Portugal must be viewed as a very well calculated propaganda strategy implemented by King João II against the world by way of Admiral Colón. There was no other reason whatsoever for Colón to send off this letter from Lisbon to anyone other than his Spanish employers Isabel and Fernando.

Admiral Colón should have guarded the discovery as a highly sensitive Spanish State Secret. Instead, his announcement was sent off to third parties, who got it printed at all the major cities making the discovered lands known to all. The intentional publication put heaps of undue pressure on Queen Isabel to hurry and protect those lands from other kingdoms who could have rushed ships there ahead of hers.

Caput primum. Fol. iij.

PETRI MARTYRIS

ANGLI MEDIOLANENSIS CONSILIARII
REGII PROTHONO. APOSTOLICI
OCEANEA DECAS PRIMA AD
ASCANIVM SEFORTIAM VI
CECOMITEM CARDINA
LEM VICECANCELLARIUM.



Solebat grata vetustas pro dijs habere viros, quorū industria et animi magnitudine ignota maioribus eorum terrae panderetur. Nobis autem qui deū habemus vnicū sub triplici persona quem colamus, restat ut huiusmodi genus hominum si non coluerimus, admiremur tamen. Reges vero observemus quorum ductu & auspiciis datum est illis cogitata perficere, utrosque etiam extollamus & pro viribus illustremus iure merito. Quare de insulis maris occidentis nuper repertis, & rei autoribus quid referatur habeto. Hoc siquidē tuis literis vehementer cupere ostendis, ab ipsius ergo initio rei, ne sim cuiquā insurius, exordiri est animus. Cristophorus Colonus Ligur vir, Fernando & Helisabethae Regibus Catholicis proposuit & suavit se ab occidente nro finitimas

Figure 7.8A: In Peter Martyr's book where one can read in the second line from the bottom: "Christophorus Colonus Ligur vir, Fernando & Helizabetae," without any mention of "Italy," "Genoa" or "Columbus."

What should have been maintained as a "Top Secret" discovery of lands to the west and only revealed in confidence to the Spanish court, whom he hounded for seven years for sponsorship, so that they had time to secretly plan the next step, instead spread like wildfire amongst all European kingdoms.

Along with the news of the New World, the Admiral's name, miswritten as *Columbo* instead of Colón, was also disseminated and most people around the world still call him by this wrong name today.

Independently of the motivations, many contemporaries of Colón added to the confusion that surrounded his name and nationality without knowing for a fact who he was or where he came from, because Colón was intentionally hiding his past. How the errors and misinformation came to be is not as important as realizing that errors exist and need to be identified, corrected or discarded.

Many researchers contented themselves with the invented explanations presented for contradictory clues with no investigation into the genealogy of the discoverer's noble Portuguese wife as we have now done.

Others, to justify their preconceived conclusions, created more elaborate contradictions by inventing scenarios of how such a marriage between their Genoese peasant and the Portuguese noble could have taken place.

As an example of these inventions, let us look at what Samuel Eliot Morison wrote in his book *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, considered up-to-now to be the definite biography of "Columbus." Morison presents the controversial issue of Colón's marriage the following way:

To some writers this marriage appears to be a great mystery. How could a foreign chartmaker [out of the blue Morison promotes the Genoese weaver to a chartmaker!] of low birth who had been literally "on the beach" a few years before, marry into one of the noble families of the kingdom?²¹⁷²

¶ THE FIRSTE BOOKE OF THE DECADES
OF THE OCEAN, WRITTEN BY PETER MARTYR OF
Angleria, Milenoes, counsiler to the kyng of Spayne and
Protonotarie Apostolicall, To *Ascanius*
Sphorcia, vicount Cardinall. etc.



HE REVERENDE AND thanckefull antiquite was accustomed to esteeme those men as goddes, by whose industrie and magnanimitie suche Landes and Regions were discovered, as were vnknownen to theyr predicessours. But vnto vs hauynge onely one god whom we honour in triplicitie of person, this resteth, that albeit we do not woorship that kind of men with diuine honoure, yet do we reuerence them, and woorthely maruell at theyr noble actes and enterprises. Vnto kynges and princes we gyue due obeyfaunce, by whose gouernaunce and furtheraunce they haue bin ayded, to perfurme theyr attemptes. We commende bothe, and for theyr iust desertes worthely extoll them. Wherefore, as concernyng the Ilandes of the west Ocean, lately discovered, and of the auctours of the fame, (whiche thyng you desyre by your letters to knowe) I wyll begynne at the fyrst auctoure therof, lest I be iniurious to any man. Take it therefore as foloweth.

¶ *Christophorus Colonus* (other wise called *Columbus*) A gentelman of Italy, borne in the citie of *Genua*, perswaded Fernando and Elyzabeth, catholike prynces, that he

Figure 7.8B: Here's Richard Eden's translation. Starting on the second line from the bottom one can read "Christophorus Colonus then Eden's insertion: (otherwise called Columbus) A gentelman of Italy, borne in the citie of Genua. Perswaded Fernando and Elyzabeth" clearly showing how Eden invented text that was not in the original by Martyr.

This is the exact question we began to ask over and over more than two decades ago but where we saw the impossibility of any such marriage between a peasant and a noble ever taking place, Morison simply invented his answer:

Already about 25 years old when she caught young Christopher's roving eye, her mother was glad enough to have no more convent bills to pay, and as son-in-law to secure an up-and-coming young man of gentlemanly manners, who asked for no dowry.

This statement by Morison is a total falsehood written completely without any proof. Morison's need to fit the historical facts of Colón's life into the preconceived conclusion that he was a peasant weaver leads to Morison's type of solutions. They merely invent. No one knows whether Colón received a dowry or not. We don't even know the exact date of marriage or the name the future discoverer was using in the 1470s in Portugal when he got married.

What we do know for a fact is that Filipa's mother was not paying any such "convent bills" because Filipa was so privileged that she lived with all expenses paid at the Lisbon Monastery of *Todos-os-Santos* (All-Saints) of the elite Military Order of Santiago, as will be covered in the next chapter.

Morison even went as far as inventing that his "Colombo" peasant was an *up-and-coming* star. As if the mother-in-law, Isabel Moniz, foresaw, circa 1478, that he was going to become famous in 1493, although he was a peasant and *literally "on the beach"* at the time of the wedding!

Contrary to Morison and all the supporters of the wool-weaver tale, it is impossible to find a way to justify how Filipa Moniz could have married a non-noble two-bit weaver who they accept had washed ashore only two years prior, from parts unknown, with no known family, no money, no education, no ship, nor even a job that would allow him a foothold in that highly restricted high-class society of Portugal.

Portugal's high class society was so restricted in those times that some nobles even went as far as actually arresting their dead brother's widows for marrying other nobles who were below their rank.¹⁷³

The implication is that Filipa's husband, the future Admiral, had to be her equal in social stature or higher, otherwise she could never have married him. We must not allow such a central subject to the history and identity of Colón, as is his Portuguese noble marriage, to be taken so lightly as did Morison and others.

The whole tale invented by Morison, that a peasant could marry a Portuguese Captain's daughter, is a perfect example of how preposterous have been the biography books on the history of the noble Admiral Colón when they attempted to make him fit into the weaver's life.

The motivations that bring an author to take such wild liberties with the truth, as did Morison, are not intended to be dealt with in this book, however it is something that should alarm all readers because the established pattern up-to-now had always been one of accepting the myth of the Genoese weaver and then twisting the known facts of the noble Admiral's life to fit into that tale. At the same time, important facts that deny a peasant birth for the discoverer were minimized or discarded as not important.

The life of Don Cristóbal Colón is filled with small details that never received the proper attention such as the word *Colonus* utilized by Fernando Colón for the Latin form of his father's name contrary to the word *Columbus* erroneously used by the majority of writers.

The reason so little weight was given to Fernando Colón's words was due to their apparent unimportance within the accepted myth of the Italian Colombo, a myth that overshadowed everything else.

These small clues received little attention from historians such as Morison, or more often were passed off as misinterpretations or inventions of Fernando Colón. Many of these peripheral facts must be the keys to understanding the truth about the discoverer's true identity. They only appeared peripheral because historians were not looking with the right focus and persisted in accepting the fairytale marriage without understanding its impossibility and implications. After all, had the story made sense, Colón's history would not remain the controversy that it has.

The accepted tale was written based on a misnamed person and on documents found in Italy about a weaver Colombo while manuscripts found in other places, such as Spain and Portugal, were ignored. Portugal is important because it is the only place where we know for certain the discoverer lived and sailed before appearing in Spain. There is absolutely no proof that Admiral Colón ever lived in Italy.

Never in the past 500 years was there a serious investigation done in Portugal until now. The result of this Portuguese void was the "castle in the air" story written and taught all over the world for centuries and which has been contested decade after decade by many who saw its lack of foundations and who refused to believe it.

The fact is that every piece of the story promoted in the official tale has contrary documentary evidence that refutes it, yet the majority accepted the peasant Cristoforo Colombo, wool-weaver from Italy, as being the same man as the Viceroy, Governor and Admiral Don Cristóbal Colón. However, the myth of the wool-weaver had so many holes in it that it was finally sunk in 2004 by forensic science.

Forensic science and DNA analysis confirms, exactly as many insisted, that the current history is a lie and that the Colombo wool-weavers of Italy have nothing to do with the noble Colón of Portugal and Spain.¹⁷⁴

In September of 2002 the investigators in Seville unearthed the bones of Don Cristóbal Colón's younger brother, Don Diego Colón, who died in 1515.

In June of 2003 the investigators took the bones from Cristóbal Colón's tomb inside the Cathedral of Seville. More importantly they also opened the tomb of Cristóbal Colón's son, Don Fernando Colón, buried inside the cathedral in Seville and the only bones of which there is no doubt of whom they belong to.

DNA and forensic analyses were done at laboratories in several countries by a team of forensic experts led by Profesor José A. Lorente, Director - Lab of Genetic Identification, Dept. of Legal Medicine, University of Granada, and the results were, not surprisingly, yet more support that the history was wrong.

DNA tests showed that Don Diego Colón and Don Cristóbal Colón were brothers and both related to Don Fernando Colón. Results from the analysis further deny the tale of the Genoese Cristoforo Colombo thus confirming the facts already pointed out in our previous books. Every new piece of evidence that is uncovered instead of confirming the official tale, a reasonable expectation, actually serves to deny it and instead supports more and more what our research had already uncovered.

One of the forensic clues that sinks the Genoese Colombo myth is the fact that the bones of Admiral's brother, Don Diego Colón, show him to have died close to 56 years of age. Don Diego Colón died in 1515 and thus would have been born around 1459. Many had asserted this Don Diego Colón was the same weaver Giacomo Colombo from Genoa. However, the Admiral's brother having been born in 1459 could not have been born in 1468, the year that the documents in the Genoese archives show their weaver Giacomo Colombo to have been born.¹⁷⁵

The date of birth of the weaver Giacomo Colombo in the *Raccolta* is some 9 years later than that of Don Diego Colón and, therefore, the two can't be the same person, as the history books had continuously insisted.

Further proof of the Genoese Colombo myth comes from the DNA analyses. The DNA of some 477 Colombo and Colom subjects from Italy, France and Spain were compared to Colón's DNA and not a single one matched. Again, where a match was most likely to have been found, if the current history had been correct, they got instead 477 negative proofs. That is 477 scientific refutations that Cristóbal Colón was Cristoforo Colombo.

At the same time, at our request, two subjects were analyzed for DNA matches, one was His Lordship the Portuguese Duke of Braganza, D. Duarte Pio, heir to the throne of Portugal and the other was His Lordship the Portuguese Count of Ribeira Grande, D. José Zarco da Camara. The DNA from Admiral Colón showed some similarities with the DNA from the Duke of Braganza, although not enough to say they were closely related.

These forensic clues, which carry a lot of weight since they are based on verifiable science, support the words of Don Fernando Colón, who wrote that his father was of noble lineage and not the peasant laborer that others were already declaring:

*Falsely calling him a craftsman... [as such the Admiral] would not have learned so many letters or sciences... especially the four main sciences... Astrology, Cosmography, Geometry and Navigation... The admiral was a man of letters and of great experience, and did not spend time on things manual or on mechanical arts.*¹⁷⁶

Therefore 21st Century science has confirmed that Don Fernando Colón was right and that his father could never have been the wool-weaver Colombo, or *Pigeon* but was instead a *Kólon*, or *Member* of some special organization and born of a noble family.

CHAPTER 8

A WILL WITHOUT A WAY

*Some things I wish that you knew, but not by letter,
nor by a third party, and thus they remain untold.*

DON CRISTÓBAL COLÓN

Read any work on the life of Admiral Don Cristóbal Colón and it will state conclusively that he was born in Genoa in 1451. Yet, at the same time, most historians concur that the biography of the discoverer is marred by inaccuracies, doubts, uncertainties, falsehoods, and even blatant lies. Many of these problems are traceable to the Admiral's efforts to hide the truth of his identity from the public. Over 500 years later the famous navigator continues to be almost as much a mystery to us as he was to outsiders during his lifetime. However, there were some who knew him intimately and helped in a rigorous multi-national effort to safeguard his true identity from the public.

To investigate Colón's life is to enter a labyrinth full of deceptions. Once one enters, it becomes nearly impossible to exit, and each facet must be tackled, and vetted, one at a time because even documents long-held as authentic may turn out to be frauds.

A Last Will dated February 22, 1498, known as the *Mayorazgo** (Majorat), which has been attributed to Cristóbal Colón, materialized in Spain nine decades after the discoverer died. The document was presented by an Italian imposter named Baltasar Colombo during Colón's inheritance lawsuit for the Dukedom of Veragua. This Genoese Baltasar Colombo who was not related to the Colón family. Housed in the Archivo General de Indias in Seville, Spain, under the catalog entry *Patronato, 295, N. 101, Testamento de Cristobal Colón*, it is considered by many, including the Spanish State, as a genuine document. As is the case with everything related to Colón, this document has been part of an ongoing controversy, accepted by some as fact and by others as fiction. As we will see, it is in fact a forgery.

This Mayorazgo includes the statement "*being I born in Genoa*," which has been utilized as the crucial proof that the Discoverer of America declared he was born in Genoa, Italy. Yet Colón had spent the last twenty-two years of his life hiding his identity as well as his place of birth, but supposedly he decided to reveal everything in a Last Will in 1498. If this was true, how come no one knew for certain where he was from when he died in 1506? How could there still be any doubt about where he was from after such a straightforward affirmation in his Last Will? Why would the question of his nationality still be important in the court case that the Second Admiral, Don Diego Colón, brought against the Spanish King in 1511, when third parties had to testify if they knew where the Admiral was born?

Why would his son, Don Fernando Colón, still need to hide his father's birthplace in his *Historie* written some thirty years later?

In 1511, nobody could tell the Royal Court tribunal for certain where the Admiral was from.¹⁷⁷ Why would the Spanish King not have pointed to this Last Will as the final proof that Colón was born in Genoa? Especially since the document pleads with the Spanish "*King and Queen, Our Lords, and the Prince Don Juan, their firstborn, Our Lord*" to enforce Colón's last wishes. As an Admiral for Spain, his Last Will would have to be presented to a court officer upon his death for review of who his successor was going to be. But this Last Will of 1498 was never authenticated by anybody, casting immediate doubt over its validity.

* Mayorazgo is a Spanish word used to define an entailed estate, inherited by primogeniture. It stems from the word "mayor" meaning, in this case, "first born."

The fact that historians had accepted the *Mayorazgo* as a valid document can only be attributed to not examining the document in person, as well as to the fame that the Genoese wool weaver tale had attained. This document is the pillar that supports the official history of Colón's Genoese origins because in it Colón supposedly had written, "*Siendo yo nacido en Genoba* (Being I born in Genoa)." And it is exactly there, in those five words, where we find the first clue that this document is not all that it seems. After all of the effort Cristóbal Colón had put into hiding his true identity and nationality, to read this phrase as if it came from Colón's own pen is completely counterintuitive to everything we know about the Admiral.

Admiral Colón is not the only person to blame for the confusion and mystery that was created around his true identity, a puzzle that baffles historians to this day. The mystery of his identity has also grown over these five centuries due to biographies that rely on unsound documentation and continuously propagate uncertainty as fact, even inserting inventions as reality. No one knows for certain where Don Cristóbal Colón was born, nor the identities of his parents.

The consensus over the last century has been that Don Cristóbal Colón began his life in Genoa as a peasant wool-weaver named Cristoforo Colombo, but academics today are describing this theory as inaccurate and implausible.¹⁷⁸ The Cristoforo Colombo weaver from Genoa could never be the Don Cristóbal Colón from Iberia whose son's marriage was fought over by King Fernando and the most powerful noble in Spain, the Duke of Medina Sidonia. Medina Sidonia wanted to marry his daughter to Admiral Colón's son, Don Diego, while King Fernando wanted to marry him to the king's cousin, María de Toledo y Rojas.¹⁷⁹

Even though Admiral Colón himself worked to marry his son to Medina Sidonia's daughter, telling his son before he set sail on the fourth voyage that, if the king wants to discuss Diego's marriage, he should wait until the Admiral returns, it was to no avail. Neither the Admiral nor his friend the Duke prevailed and King Fernando won the battle over Don Diego Colón who ended up married to the king's cousin.

Can anyone imagine a King and his most powerful Duke fighting over marrying their noble relatives to the peasant son of a wool-weaver?

Historians based their support for this wool-weaver theory mainly on the *Mayorazgo* and the *Assereto Document*¹⁸⁰ and the 1892-96 books of the *Raccolta Colombiana*, which are now, thankfully, available for everyone to read online at the *Biblioteca Digital Hispánica*.¹⁸¹ Lack of easy access to documents and writings that were in Spain and Portugal made it easy for academia to rely solely on the *Raccolta* as the last word.

The *Mayorazgo of 1498*, in the end, is the only document that could bridge the great divide of differences and contradictions between the life of Don Cristóbal Colón, Admiral, Governor and Viceroy of the New World, and the life of the peasant weaver Cristoforo Colombo.

Within the *Raccolta's* pages there are doubtful documents that do not exist in original form, only posterior copies, and other documents that have been modified from their original content during the 19th Century transcriptions. This deliberate modification of documents makes them unreliable. However, there were also fabricated documents included in the *Raccolta* by the Genoese Commissione Colombiana. This last point prompted Historian Ángel de Altolaguirre y Duvalé, one of the *Raccolta's* Spanish collaborators, to later complain that, "they should have eliminated those [false] documents as worthless."¹⁸²

It is fundamental to understand that, due to the 4th Admiral's death in 1578 without a descendant, a lawsuit was commenced in Spain to sort out who the next Admiral should be from amongst Cristóbal Colón's many descendants. Any Colón family member who had a sliver of a chance joined in the lawsuit which dragged on until 1609.

During this thirty-year-long litigation for Cristóbal Colón's inheritance, some Italians named Colombo were tempted to join the lawsuit to steal the inheritance from Cristóbal Colón's legitimate descendants. Because Cristóbal Colón's true identity and birthplace were a secret, the Italians were able to

propagate many falsehoods during this litigation for Colón's rich inheritance which included Duke of Veragua, Duke of La Vega, Marquis of Jamaica, Admiral of the Indies and Governor of Santo Domingo.

One of three Italian pretenders, Anton Francesco Colombo, a canon and doctor from Piacenza, Italy, was rejected when he could not show any blood relation to Cristóbal Colón.

The second, Bernardo Colombo of Cogoleto, failed because he presented false genealogies even though the Government of the Republic of Genoa, who "by vote of the Serenissimo Senato," had sent instructions in 1586 to the Genoese Ambassador Giambattista Doria in residence at the Spanish Court to contribute his assistance to the "Colombo of Cogoleto."¹⁸³ It is important to note here that in 1586 the Government of the City of Genoa was so ignorant of who Cristóbal Colón was that it backed some Colombo, not from Genoa, but from the town of Cogoleto. The idea was to steal the inheritance from Spain to the benefit of the Republic of Genoa, which would in turn benefit the City of Genoa.

The third pretender, Baltasar Colombo, forced himself into the Colón lawsuit, more creatively. Baltasar first convinced the Spanish tribunal that the names Colón and Colombo were the same name and same family. In order to pull off this deception, Baltasar Colombo twisted the facts and presented false documents as evidence. This is how the now famous *Mayorazgo of 1498* came into existence.

The first fact to understand, before tackling the subjects of Colón's identity and place of birth, is that the name "*Cristóbal Colón*" was an alias the explorer used in Spain. While Colón was utilizing this alias to hide his identity, he could only do so successfully if he also hid where he had been born. It would serve his purpose of hiding his past to declare that he was from Italy or from any other place except his true place of birth.

The second fact to understand is that neither Cristóbal Colón nor his descendants ever declared where the Admiral was actually born nor who his parents were. It was meant to remain a secret.

The name Colón should be *Colonus* in Latin, while the Colombo is *Columbus* in Latin. Contrary to what has been written by many, the word Colón is not the Spanish translation of the Italian word Colombo, or Columbus.^{184,185} Colombo in Spanish is Palomo.

The authors of the *Raccolta* employed these names Colón and Colombo interchangeably and not unintentionally. This error of mistranslation, however, continues to be accepted today and has been impossible to correct. Cristóbal Colón is still known by the wrong name outside of Spanish speaking nations.

When we try to pinpoint what was Colón's true nationality, we are left with another puzzle. While Colón was alive people declared that he was Portuguese, Ligurian, Italian, Milanese, or a Genoese from Genoa, Savona, Nervi, Cogoleto, Bogliasco, Saona, Piacenza, Monferrato, Calvi, and so on. In the early 1800s, a book published in Italy claimed to prove that Admiral Colón was from the Italian *Colones* family of Cuccaro.¹⁸⁶ Basing themselves on Baltasar Colombo's documents and falsely calling the Colombos of Cuccaro by the name *Colones*, falsely renaming Blathazar Colombo to "Blathazar *Colón*" has fostered and perpetuated more confusion.

Furthermore, the *Mayorazgo* purports to be merely a copy, as is clearly written on its first words, "*Transcription of another testament taken from the original that was made by Cristóbal Colón, former Admiral in Seville, year of 1498.*" However, this imaginary "copy" is "signed," not by the copyist, but by the dead Admiral.

The first sentence indicates that Colón was already dead when the document was "written," as it describes him as "*former Admiral.*" This demonstrates that the former Admiral Colón had nothing to do with creating this "copy," and that whoever wrote this put the signature "el Almirante" on it. Additionally, the document does not have one single notary or witness signature to attest to its fidelity as a "genuine" copy. Not a single person certified this *Mayorazgo* as being a true and accurate copy made from an actual original document. Notary certification was standard protocol for the day, especially for a document pretending to carry the weight that this "copy" intended. Thus, it is legally worthless. If Baltasar Colombo had found such an original to make this copy from, why would Baltasar not have presented the essential original to the court?

But the most outrageous aspect of the forgery is the signature that appears at the end. No copy, or transcription, of a dead man's Last Will would ever carry the signature of the dead man. It would, instead, have a statement from the notary making this copy that the "original had been signed by such and such a person and by such and such witnesses and, this being the truth, I, the notary such and such, sign my name and place my seal here on this copy attesting to its accurateness" – as Spanish notary ordinances dictated.¹⁸⁷ Would anyone have made such an important copy of a last will and not have followed the protocol of the day to make it as valid as the original? There is no notary involved because there was no original to copy from.

Nevertheless, many, including the authors of the famous *Raccolta*, have accepted this document without question as the ultimate proof that Cristóbal Colón was the same Cristoforo Colombo from Genoa. Indeed, the Genoese authors of the *Raccolta* in 1892, as do many around the world today, utilize this *Last Will of 1498* as the main justification for their wrong conclusion that the wool-weaving Colombo of Genoa was the same Admiral and Viceroy of the Indies.

Baltasar Colombo first forced the Spanish court to accept the lie that *Colón* and *Colombo* were the same names, which is not the case, as Chapter 7 already explained. In the 1580s Baltasar Colombo gives his "invented" Cristóbal Colón a noble grandfather named Lança Colombo, noble Lord of Cucaro, and not the weaver Domenico Colombo that the *Raccolta* would present 300 years later.

Baltasar relied on bought witnesses, including a monk whose sworn oath stated that he remembered the Colón brothers being born in Cuccaro castle. Seeing that Colón was born around 1456 and the monk's oath written in the 1580s, the monk swore to have remembered something that happened over 125 years prior.¹⁸⁸ Yet this false pretender fought for Colón's inheritance for three decades because the Admiral's true lineage was so murky and the forged documentation was extensive, making it difficult for the judges on the Council of the Indies tribunal to decide what was true.

Without having one single original document to present and prove his disingenuous claim, the impostor Baltasar was rejected. In the end, all of Baltasar Colombo's expensive forgeries were to no avail:

*Notably excluded... the said Don Baltasar [Colombo], for not being, as he pretends, from the same family or agnation of the founder [Don Cristóbal Colón]... Don Baltasar is not nor has he proved to be a relative of the founder*¹⁸⁹ *...not legitimate, public, authentic, nor solemn... once seen by all the judges of the investigating Council, they made no more of it than that of a simple paper.*¹⁹⁰

Not only was Baltasar Colombo's claim to the inheritance rejected but so too was his Mayorazgo "copy" of a supposed Last Will of 1498 for being a "blank paper."¹⁹¹ Admiral Colón never wrote a Last Will of 1498; Baltasar made it up. If there had ever been a real document for Baltasar to copy from, then where was it and how come no one else had ever seen it? If there was a real Mayorazgo of 1498, then that original document would have been brought by Baltasar to the attention of the Spanish judges for scrutiny, especially since this document benefited only Baltasar Colombo. Would it not have been wise for him to do all he could to bring in the original, had there been one, instead of a non-notarized copy?

In thirty years of litigation, Baltasar was neither able to prove any relationship to the discoverer nor to prove that Admiral Colón was a Colombo from Baltasar's City of Genoa. In the end, Baltasar did not inherit the Dukedom of Veragua or the post of Admiral of the Indies.

Some of this information is not new, and has already been discussed in Enrique de Gandía's 1942 book *Historia de Cristóbal Colón. Análisis crítico de las fuentes documentales y de los problemas Colombianos*. However, the English-speaking world, influenced by the Italian-Americans and their Knights of Columbus, which lobbied Congress and President Roosevelt for the *Columbus Day* federal holiday in 1934,¹⁹² buttressed in that same year of 1942 another, more desired, though far-fetched, view.

They sided with Samuel Eliot Morison's account, which accepts "hook, line and sinker" this Last Will of 1498 along with the *Raccolta*'s erroneous conclusions, as the authority on Colón's origins. Morison even denied that there had ever been any controversy at all around Admiral Colón's identity, lineage, social stature, or nationality and accepted that he was Colombo the wool-weaver.

This *Mayorazgo* of 1498 was falsified with the specific objective of opening the door for Baltasar Colombo to enter into litigation and vie for Colón's contested inheritance. The document failed, and at the time was rejected as a worthless piece of paper, yet somehow for over century, many historians continued to insist on presenting this document as accurate and authentic.^{193,194}

This *Mayorazgo* has no notary signatures, is not an original, has the signature of a dead man on it, the year 1598 was clearly changed to 1498 (SEE FIGURE 8.1), and it contains various falsehoods in its text that make it an obvious forgery. A single falsehood is enough to prove that a document is a forgery and by examining just some of the false information, we can see why no one should ever accept this document as genuine again. The full text of the document, along with a more comprehensive explanation of its many falsehoods, was presented during the conference "Cristóvão Colón, Portugal and Cuba," on May 24, 2008 at the Town of Cuba, Portugal.¹⁹⁵ Here is a sampling of some false statements contained in the document:

Entre las cuales es aquesta de Xamaica, a que nos llamamos de Santiago (Among them [islands] is this one of Jamaica, which we call Santiago): In 1498, supposed date of this document, Colón gave no importance at all to Jamaica and it was not even occupied by Spaniards until 1509. In 1498 Colón was only concentrating on Española (Haiti/Dominican Republic). Jamaica was meaningless as Colón had only visited Jamaica once, in May of 1494 and made no more commotion about it than any other of the Antilles. Jamaica only became important decades after Colón's death when his grandson, Admiral Don Luis Colón, was named the Marquis of Jamaica in 1537. The Marquis of Jamaica was one of the titles that Colón's descendants were fighting over from 1578 until 1609 and thus important to Baltasar Colombo as well.^{196,197}

E así lo suplico al Rey e a la Reina, Nuestros Señores, y al Príncipe Don Juan su primogénito Nuestro Señor (And this way I plead to the King and Queen, Our Lords, and to the Prince Don Juan, their firstborn, Our Lord): This document has a date of 22 February 1498, however, the Prince Don Juan mentioned in the document, had died on October 4, 1497.¹⁹⁸ By February 22, 1498, Prince Don Juan had been dead for four and a half months. How could someone plead with a dead Prince to enforce his Last Will? Those historians who accepted the document as authentic were quick to suggest that Admiral Colón was not aware that the Prince had died. They overlooked the fact that Colón was in Spain at the time of the Prince's death and that, as an Admiral of the kingdom, he would be required to take part in the Prince's funeral entourage. Furthermore, even if he had not taken part in the funeral, the whole kingdom would have received notice of the Prince's death within days of the Prince dying and the kingdom would have entered a period of mourning. There is no way anyone in Spain would not know of the Prince's death, as it would have been talked about everywhere. All of these points should be convincing enough for anyone to accept that Admiral Colón knew the Prince was dead. If there was still any doubt, Colón's knowledge can be confirmed in the Historie by the fact that on November 2, 1497, Admiral Colón sent his two sons, who had been serving as pages to the Prince, to serve Queen Isabel instead because of the "death of the Prince."¹⁹⁹ Thus Colón's son proves that twenty-seven days after the Prince had died, Admiral Colón already knew of Prince Don Juan's death. Therefore, it makes no sense that Colón would sign a Last Will four months later begging the same dead Prince to enforce his Last Will.

Que tiene el Almirante Don Enrique en el Almirantazgo de Castilla (As has Admiral Don Enrique in the Admiralty of Castile): There was no "Admiral Don Enrique" in Castile in 1498, nor any time prior. The Admiral of Castile in 1498 was named "Don Fadrique" and Cristóbal Colón, as Admiral of the Indies for Castile, knew very well who Admiral Don Fadrique was.²⁰⁰ Don Fadrique was not Don Enrique.

The last pieces of this forgery includes the date, written initially as 1598 with the number '4' later written over the '5,' and the signature "El Almirante" with the secret code taken from Colón's true signature, but formatted incorrectly, (SEE FIGURE 8.2). The signature "El Almirante" and the secret code written above it on this document are wrong – not to mention that a dead man's signature would never



Figure 8.1: The False Mayorazgo of 1498 is eleven pages long. Above is the beginning of the first page and the end of the last page. The first word in the document, “Treslado,” means copy. For the last word, the forger botched Admiral Colón’s signature because he did not understand either its meaning nor what the dots indicated. Dots were added to the XMY, where they do not belong, (SEE FIGURE 8.2). Only two of the “S”s are dotted; the last “S” has no dots. There is also another letter that looks like an “A” under the “M,” and even the date was written initially as 1598 and then changed to 1498. Finally, it is signed “El Almirante” (the Admiral), which is absurd for a Last Will, which requires a person’s name, not his title. Furthermore, there is not a single signature on this document, not from a Notary, a witness, or even a pseudo-Colón.

appear on a “copy” or “transcription” of any of his documents. Furthermore, there were no witnesses, which are required to legally attest to a person’s signature on a Last Will. There is no sign of any “public notary,” as there is on Colón’s genuine Last Will of 1502, or witness, as we can find on Colón’s authentic Codicil of 1506. There is also no signature for the public notary who would have made this “1598” copy for Baltasar Colombo, and there are no witnesses to attest that this is a true copy. How could anyone consider this document to be anything but a fraud? Thus the Spanish Tribunal declared it worthless, a blank piece of paper.

The authors of the *Raccolta* understood this Mayorazgo’s importance to the frailty of the Genoese theory by describing it this way: “è il documento dove esplicitamente e solennemente Colombo si dichiara genovese” (it is the document where explicitly and solemnly Colombo declares himself Genoese).²⁰¹

For the first ten years of research, I could not find a single confirmation that Admiral Colón was a Genoese, yet I kept coming up against this Mayorazgo in the *Raccolta* as proof. It was a conundrum I found impossible to explain it.

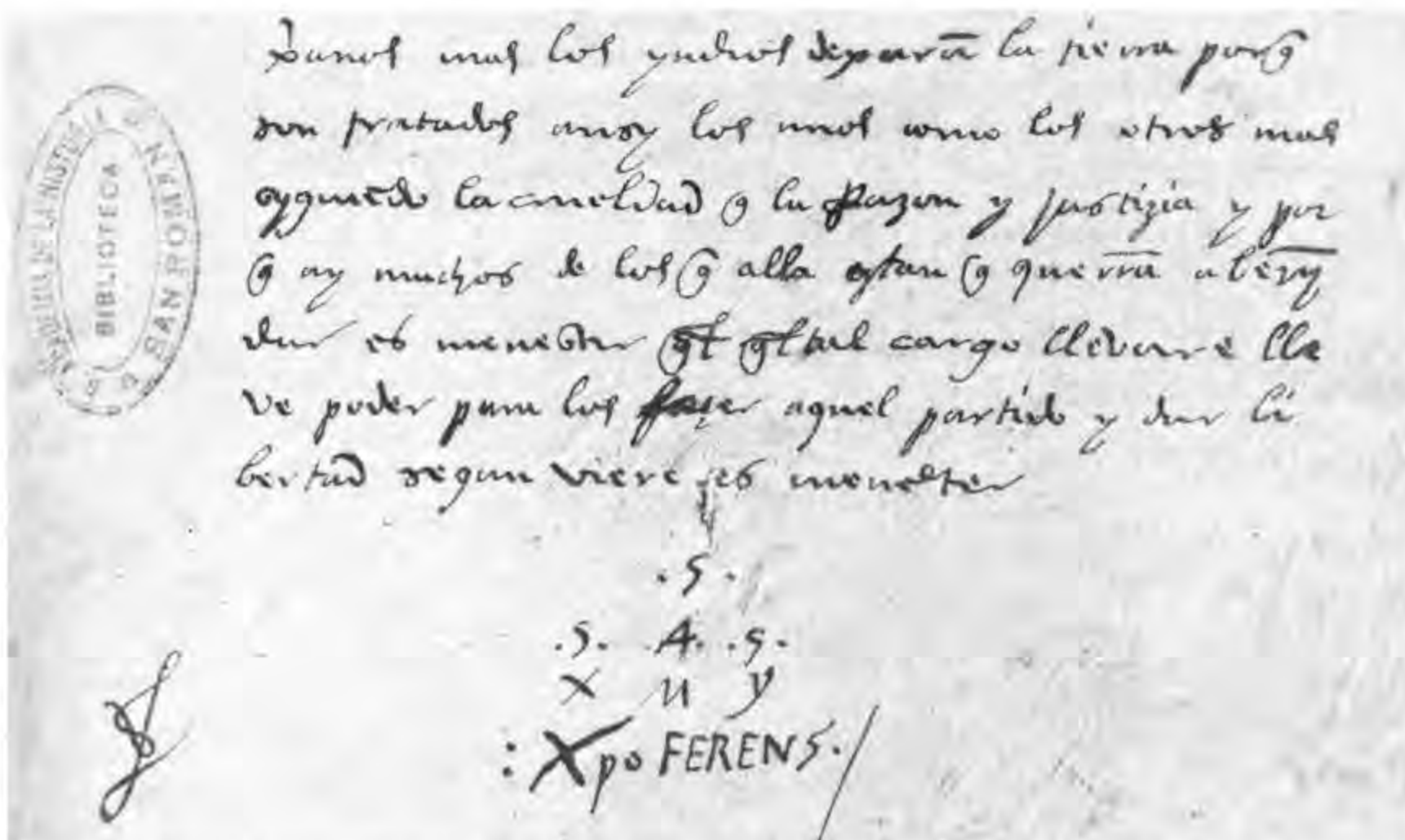


Figure 8.2: Here is the correct format of Cristóbal Colón's carefully invented secret signature, which the signature on the Mayorazgo of 1498 does not match.

"*Siendo yo nacido en Genoba*" (being I born in Genoa) is a pretty straightforward assertion. Had Admiral Colón been born in Genoa, neither the imposters nor the Government of Genoa would have needed to forge documents in the 1580s to send to Spain, as they did. Nor would Baltasar Colombo have needed to forge any of the other documents he presented to force himself into the *Lawsuit for Succession to the Dukedom of Veragua* in an attempt to steal Colón's inheritance of gold, titles, posts, properties, coat of arms, and Admiralship for himself.

Had Admiral Colón been born in Genoa, the other pretender, Bernardo Colombo, would not have gone to Spain with falsified documents for the same purpose, aided by the City of Genoa itself, compelling King Felipe (Philip II) of Spain to write a letter admonishing the City of Genoa for the genealogy falsifications. Bernardo Colombo was sent back to Genoa because of the blatant forgery. Though only seventy-six years had passed since Cristóbal Colón's death, not one single citizen of the Genoese Republic could prove kinship with him, as the Argentine historian Enrique de Gandia notes:

*In 1582 arrived from Italy Don Baltasar Colombo, Lord of Cuccaro, in Monferrato, and a resident of Genoa, in 1588, arrived another Italian, Don Bernardo Colombo, natural of Cogoleto, on the coast of Genoa. But this litigant was forced to withdraw for having been demonstrated in the litigation the falsity of the documents on which he based his claim.*²⁰²

The Genoese documents only needed to be forged if the Admiral was not actually from that city. All of those who had heard that he was "Genoese" and repeated that he was from Genoa, or somewhere nearby, did not know the truth. Moreover, if Admiral Colón had truly been a wool-weaver named Cristoforo Colombo, son of another wool-weaver, Domenico Colombo, and grandson of Giovanni Colombo, also a wool-weaver, as the *Raccolta* and the City of Genoa have attempted to prove, then it would have been impossible for Baltasar Colombo to attempt to usurp that same wool-weaver as his noble relative. Baltasar Colombo set out to prove that Admiral Colón was born of the same feudal house of Cuccaro in Monferrato, a completely different lineage.

In thirty years of litigation Baltasar was unable to prove any family relationship to the discoverer nor to prove that Colón was a Colombo from Genoa. He did not inherit the Dukedom of Veragua, regardless of how many fraudulent documents he produced.

When I first saw the Mayorazgo in the Archives of the Indies, I was amazed to see that the authors of the *Raccolta* had manipulated its transcription. Not only is the text presented in pages 301 to 303 not part of the Mayorazgo document, the whole *Raccolta* opening paragraph claiming Martín Rodryguez had notarized the Mayorazgo on February 22, 1498, is fictional.

How did the authors of the *Raccolta* get away with it? They did it by joining different documents and then adding a footnote at the bottom of page 301, as shown in FIGURE 8.3. Lines 3-11 show that the opening text of the notary was taken not from a 1498 document but from a 1606 document presented by Navarrete and note 15 declares that the document comes from those documents presented by Baltasar Colombo in the court case, where they wrongly call him *Baltasar Colón*.

3-11. En-espaldas] Per questo tratto utilizziamo il Memorial del 1606, tenendo conto delle aggiunte e varianti offerte dal Navarrete, op. cit. I, Introducción, Ilustración 10. 3. y muy leal manca in Navarrete loc. cit. jueves-días e febrero suppliti con Navarrete, loc. cit. 4. .1498.] Nel Memorial .1497.; in Navarrete, ibid. mil é cuatrocientos é noventa y ocho 6. islas de las manca in Navarrete. 7. Santa María manca nel Memorial. all] Navarrete así 10. Memorial nuestra señora 11. espaldas] Fin qui Navarrete, loc. cit. riprodusse il ms. di Simancas. firmadas nel Memorial. 15. La facoltà reale che segue è riprodotta dalla Demanda y oposición de don Baltasar Colón.

Par. I, vol. I.

38*

Figure 8.3: The misleading footnote of the *Raccolta* page 301, which tries to explain how the authors joined several documents that were not related to make one continuous 1498 Mayorazgo and then inserted dates and other details not in the documents. The first sentence says they utilized a document from 1606 taken from Navarrete's book. That they inserted the 1498 date where there isn't one and the last footnote says they took this info from what "Baltasar Colón."

The *Raccolta* claims the Mayorazgo had the following text preceding it:

*In the very noble and very loyal city of Seville, Thursday, 22 of February, year of the birth of Our Savior Jesus Christ of 1498, being inside the houses where lives the most magnificent Lord, Don Cristóbal Colón...*²⁰³

However, the Mayorazgo document itself is nothing like what the *Raccolta* describes, there is no Martín Rodryguez on it nor does it start with, "In the very noble and very loyal city of Seville..." The first paragraph of the Mayorazgo starts with, "Transcription of..." and then the body text starts with, "En nombre de la Santísima..." as can be seen in FIGURE 8.1.

Many historians saw nothing wrong with this 1498 document not having any witnesses. They wrongly presumed that Admiral Colón would sign it, without having his signature witnessed. Authentic documents from Colón show that he was very concerned with following the legal requirements – registering with a public notary and having several witnesses – for validating his documents. Note the following letter, written in the same year that Colón supposedly wrote the controversial 1498 Mayorazgo:

*16 of November of 1498 at Santo Domingo on the island of Espaniola: At the time that the King and the Queen, my Lords, which was in the year of 1492, agreed that I should go discover the Indies, I made a contract with Their Highnesses, that I would have one-eighth of all gain resulting from the armada that I was preparing, contributing I the one-eighth part of the expenses, as can be seen more detailed in the said agreement... Even though Their Highnesses have already granted me the said award and this document has expired, save it very carefully and have the said notary sign it, firstly making a copy of it here by a public scrivener who swears [to its accuracy] and then take it to Palos, and after, have it put with the other valuable documents in Las Cuevas [Monastery] of Seville.*²⁰⁴

As these instructions indicate, Admiral Colón understood perfectly well the established regulations that important documents were subjected to in order to be legal. Both originals and copies needed to be notarized, witnessed, and, because of their importance, very well guarded. Colón's documents were so safeguarded that he kept a steel box in the Las Cuevas Monastery to store them in. This being the case, it is unlikely that he would ever have written a Last Will on some scrap of

paper, without any signature or witnesses to validate it. Furthermore, when the box at Las Cuevas was inventoried there was no 1498 Last Will on the inventory list.²⁰⁵ Several of Colón's descendants, beginning in 1578, had also looked in the box, and no one had ever seen this Last Will of 1498 that Baltasar supposedly copied and presented to the court some ten years later. Nor had any one of those people at the court overseeing the inheritance lawsuit ever seen a Last Will of 1498 before Baltasar presented it:

And because it is said dryly and openly that the said Baltasar had previously presented the said Mayorazgo, that he calls authentic, with other writings, your majesty should be well served not to accept the fraud that can result from this, because what Baltasar had presented previously was supposed to be a missing page from the Last Will of 1502.²⁰⁶

It is clear that the only Last Will Colón signed was the Last Will of 1502 and not Baltasar's forged *Mayorazgo* from 1498 without any signatures. Baltasar's forgeries took a long time to create and were well planned. However, because so much of the text of the Last Will of 1498 is made up, it makes it easier to identify the document as a forgery. Aside from the falsehoods already presented above, some falsified items were inserted specifically to benefit the City of Genoa. One of those is the statement which orders the buying of shares, called *logos*, in the Genoese Bank of St. George:

Haga comprar d'ellas en su nombre e de su heredero unas compras que dicen logos, que tiene el oficio de San Jorge, las cuales agora rentan seis por ciento y son dineros muy seguros. (Should buy them in his name and of his heir some purchases that are called logos which the office of San George has, the said [logos] are paying six per cent and are very secure monies.)

Precise details like this are excellent ways to prove the forgery for, if you can find the true interest rate for the bank's shares in 1498, something a forger one hundred years later would not have bothered to research, it is a way to expose the fraud.

According to *Economic and Social History of Europe in the Later Middle Ages (1300-1530)*, "in 1498 a new loan of 1600 luoghi was floated paying an interest at 4 per cent," and the Bank of St. George paid it back, for it, "was liquidated in 1513."²⁰⁷

Clearly, the four percent the bank was offering in 1498 is not the same as the six percent made up in the false document. And there is even more proof of the forgery. A study done by two Italian professors, Michele Fratianni and Franco Spinelli, shows that the Genoese Bank of St. George of Genoa, contrary to what this document says, was so *insecure* that it had closed its doors to new clients from 1445 until 1530.²⁰⁸ Therefore, even if Admiral Colón wanted to buy those *logos*, or shares, he would not have been able to – not in 1498 and not during any day of his lifetime – because the bank was closed to outsiders for Cristóbal Colón's entire life, and that of his son Diego Colón.

Even in 1522 when Colón's grandson, Don Luis Colón, was born the Bank of St. George was still closed.

In all the investigations into the Bank of St. George, not once do the names Colombo or Colón show up as a one of its shareholders.²⁰⁹ The only logical conclusion is that Baltasar Colombo was working hand-in-hand with the City of Genoa to profit from stealing Colón's inheritance from his legitimate heirs.

All the evidence shows that the *Mayorazgo* of 1498 was fabricated by Baltasar Colombo with the intent to open the doors to the litigation so he could vie for the contested inheritance. The document failed to do that and was rejected as an invalid "blank piece of paper," yet many still insist in presenting it as accurate and authentic.

The fraudulent nature of that 1498 *Mayorazgo* becomes even more apparent when one reads Colón's letter to friar Gaspar Gorricio written from Granada on May 24, 1501:

I am in great need of a copy authorized by a Public Notary of a provision that is there that allows me to institute a mayorazgo and I would like it to be on parchment... and after copied, have them return the original to you Sir so that it remains where it is and the other be brought here.²¹⁰

On May 24, 1501, the Admiral requested a copy of the 1497 Royal Grant to institute a Mayorazgo and this copy ends up four days later, on May 28, 1501 “legalized by Alonso Lucas, Juan Fernandez and Martin Rodriguez, Notaries of Seville, on twenty-eight of May of thousand five hundred one, kept in the Archive of the Duke of Veragua, Register of the Seal of the Court in Simancas.” Navarrete and others erroneously interpreted this confirmation kept in the Colón archives without any Mayorazgo, as a confirmation of the false Mayorazgo of 1498.²¹¹

Aside from the many other facts that attest that Colón never wrote this document from 1498, historians accepted Navarrete’s confused conclusion that the abovementioned document from “Archive of the Duke of Veragua, Register of the Seal of the Court in Simancas.” made by Martin Rodriguez on May 28, 1501 was a registration for the fraudulent 1498 Mayorazgo.²¹²

Navarrete erred in his conclusions, not only because Colón had asked Gorricio four days earlier for a copy of the 1497 Royal Grant, not mentioning any copy of a 1498 Mayorazgo, but also because Colón would not be formally registering a 1498 Mayorazgo in 1501, while he is writing his actual Mayorazgo which he would register shortly after. Knowing he was about to write his Mayorazgo and having four days earlier requested a notarized copy of the 1497 Royal Grant that allows him to make that Mayorazgo, he would not be taking time to register a 1498 Mayorazgo about to be immediately superseded.

On May 24, 1501 he wrote to Gorricio from Granada and only 12 days later, June 9, 1501, while still in Granada, Colón writes to friar Gaspar confirming: “I received all your letters and the copy of the Mayorazgo.”²¹³ And then on September 28, 1501 the monarchs in Granada confirmed the copy. These documents later got transferred to the Archivo General de Simancas, the official building that houses the archives of Spain built in 1540.

The word *mayorazgo* that Colón used to refer to the copy of the 1497 Royal Grant “that allows me to institute a mayorazgo” can easily be confused with an actual formalized mayorazgo. Notice that what Colón requested on May 24, 1501 was only a copy of the 1497 document from the court that allowed him to institute a Last Will. This is evident in the text of the Simancas document where the monarchs themselves ask Prince Don Juan to “defend and protect the said grant.”²¹⁴ In 1498, the monarchs would in no way ask their dead son to uphold their grant. Thus it becomes evident that this document is from a time before the prince died and has nothing to do with any document from 1498.

Colón never mentions any Last Will of 1498. What he was doing on May 24, 1501, was preparing to start writing his actual Last Will, which was finalized in 1502. That was why he needed that copy of the 1497 Royal Grant that Gaspar Gorricio sent at the end of May 1501. This copy was the one duly confirmed in Granada on September 28, 1501, by the following:

- I THE KING. - I THE QUEEN. - I Fernan Alvarez de Toledo, secretary, and I Gonzalo de Baeza, accountant of the king and of the queen our lords, directors of the office of high clerk of its privileges and confirmations made it be written by their order. - Fernand Alvares. - Gonzalo de Baeza. - Rodericus, doctor. - Antonius, doctor. - Fernand Alvares. - By the esquire Gutierrez - Alonso Gutierrez, arranged...²¹⁵

Therefore, one can affirm that Colón started to write his only Last Will for the first time in 1501 and only after he had everything in order and legalized, as he prepared for his fourth and last voyage across the Atlantic, which began on May 9, 1502.

Further proof of this timeline is found in the notes from the Council of the Indies, as they struggled in the late 1500s with the decision of who was next in line to receive the Admiral’s inheritance or *Mayorazgo*. In the Council’s notes, we see that “*the Last Will of Colón was dated April 1, of 1502.*” This was the same Last Will being kept safe in Las Cuevas that Colón declares in a letter to his son Diego Colón, before setting sail on the fourth voyage:

“Most dear son... All my privileges and documents are left with friar Don Gaspar and a *document for the administration of my property* if it becomes necessary at any time... I entrust Beatriz Enríquez to you... To Violante Moniz give ten thousand maravedís per year.”²¹⁶

This “document for the administration of my property” that Colón mentions in the letter to his son was the one and only authentic Last Will dated April 1, 1502, planned well in advance, properly formalized and declared. But this Last Will of 1502 disappeared some eighty years later and was replaced by the false document historians came to call the Last Will, or *Mayorazgo*, of 1498. Further confusion was then created by those who mixed up this false “Last Will/Mayorazgo of 1498” and the authentic “1497 Royal Grant to Institute Mayorazgo,” by referring to them both as a *mayorazgo* and using this name interchangeably to refer to the 1497 grant and the 1498 forgery.

The 1497 Royal Grant, originally signed by the Spanish Monarchs in “Burgos, 23 of April of 1497,” is what Martín Rodríguez formally copied on May 28, 1501, in Seville, at Colón’s request, and then confirmed in “Granada 28 of September 1501. – I THE KING. – I THE QUEEN.” It was never an actual *mayorazgo*, but only the authorization to institute a mayorazgo. Again, Colón only finalized the true Mayorazgo/Last Will on April 1, 1502.

Many investigators, including Ricardo Beltrán y Rózpide and Anunciada Colón de Carvajal, investigated the case of the lost 1502 Last Will of Colón.^{217,218} Anunciada Colón wrote about the problematic situation surrounding the disappearance of the document that her famous ancestor had written before setting sail on his final voyage.

It also becomes clear that when the Italian impostor, Baltasar Colombo, arrived in Spain, the Colón archives had already been investigated with a fine tooth comb by many descendants and no 1498 Mayorazgo was ever reported. Whatever “copy” Baltasar presented to the Spanish Tribunal was invented and not based on any real Mayorazgo written by Cristóbal Colón in 1498 because Colón never mentioned a 1498 document and the inventory of the family’s metal box housing Colón’s documents in Las Cuevas never lists one.

Historian Ángel de Altolaguirre, Spanish collaborator of the *Raccolta*, giving faith to that 1501 notarized document “that allows me to institute a mayorazgo” found in the Archives of Simancas by Navarrete, decided that the Mayorazgo of 1498 must be authentic. Many others gave faith to Altolaguirre’s conclusion, accepting it as authentic as well.

The problem stems from Navarrete’s error in joined two separate documents together as if they were one and even though Navarrete alerts us that there is no 1498 Mayorazgo anywhere, except in the documents presented by Baltasar Colombo, historians accepted it as authentic.

Núm. CXXVI

Facultad al Almirante D. Cristóbal Colón para fundar uno ó mas Mayorazgos (Copia legalizada por Alonso Lucas, Juan Fernandez y Martín Rodríguez, Escribanos de Sevilla, en veinte y ocho de Mayo de mil quinientos uno, existente en el Archivo del Duque de Veraguas, Regist. del Sello de Corte en Simancas); *y Testamento, é institucion del mismo Mayorazgo hecha por el Almirante.* (Copia de las que se presentaron en los autos y litigios seguidos de antiguo sobre la sucesion de esta Casa.)

En la muy noble Ciudad de Sevilla á _____ del mes de _____ año del Nacimiento de nuestro Salvador Jesu-
cristo de mil y quatrocientos y noventa y siete años, estando dentro en las casas donde posa el muy magnífico Sr. D. Cristóbal Colón, Almirante mayor del mar Océano, Visorey y Gobernador de las Indias y tierra-firme, por el Rey y la Reina nuestros Señores, y su Capitan general del mar, que son en esta Ciudad en la colacion de Santa María, estando ahí pre-

NOTA

Aunque no tenemos motivo fundado para desconfiar de la legitimidad de este documento que ha sido varias veces y desde antiguo presentado en juicio ante los tribunales, y nunca con-
vencido de apócrifo ó supuesto, sin embargo carecemos de la satisfacción de haber encontrado en los archivos que hemos reconocido y citamos siempre, un original de letra del Almirante ó firmado por él, ó una copia legalizada en toda forma como lo está la facultad Real que antecede para instituir el mayorazgo y el codicilo otorgado en 19 de Mayo de 1508 que se insertará en su lugar. En este estado acabamos de ver en unos apuntes que en el Archivo Real de Simancas existe la aprobación del Mayorazgo de Colón, despachada en Setiembre de 1501; y este documento, que podrá contribuir á dar mayor valor y autoridad á esta disposicion del Almirante, nos asegurará si puede tener fundamento la anulacion que se dice haber hecho esta de la escritura anterior, substituyendo otra escrita de su propia letra á 1.º de Abril de 1502, que suplen dejó en el Monasterio de las Cuevas de Sevilla en poder de Fr. Gaspar Gorricio al partir para su último viage.

Figure 8.4: Navarrete’s description on page 221 of what he was piecing together.²²⁰ The “Facultad al Almirante” is the court’s grant to institute Mayorazgo, and the “copia” of the Mayorazgo is a copy presented 100 years later in the inheritance lawsuit, “autos y litigious.” Note the text of the grant has blank day and month and the third line reads “mil y quatrocientos y noventa y siete años,” which is year 1497.

Figure 8.5: Navarrete’s final note on page 235 where he declares, starting at the end of the fourth line, that there is no Mayorazgo of 1498 written by Cristóbal Colón “carecemos de la satisfacción de haber encontrado...” Therefore, Navarrete admits that neither the document nor the signature in that document presented by Baltasar Colombo in the lawsuit were written by the Admiral.

What Navarrete did was to take the 1501 legal confirmation of the 1497 Royal Grant to institute the Mayorazgo from the Archives of Simancas and then attached to this legalized document Baltasar's 1498 Mayorazgo calling it "Testament and institution of the Mayorazgo done by the Admiral from a **Copy from those which were presented** [by Baltasar Colombo] in the ancient ongoing case and litigations **to the succession of this House**", SEE FIGURE 8.4.²¹⁹ Note that Navarrete does not derive the 1498 text from the Archives of Simancas nor from any legal or notarized document. Navarrete got the text from a non-legalized document, (a forgery) presented in the inheritance lawsuit 100 years later by Baltasar Colombo, a document declared to be the same as "a blank piece of paper."

It might have seemed small, even insignificant, for Navarrete to join the authenticated document with Baltasar's dubious one, but the ramifications for historians were enormous, leading many in the wrong direction. After joining these two disparate documents together, Navarrete, possibly feeling guilty, explains that there is no legalized copy of that 1498 Mayorazgo anywhere, as seen in FIGURE 8.5.

We lack the satisfaction of having found in the archives that we have recognized and always cited, an original [of the 1498 document] in the Admiral's handwriting, or signed by him, or a copy legalized in all conforming as is the [1497] Royal Grant to institute mayorazgo that comes before [referring here to the document from Simancas that he added before this transcription of the document taken from the litigation] and [legalized as also is] the Codicil given on May 19, 1506.²²¹

Navarrete makes it very clear that he never saw in any archives any legalized copy or any original of a Mayorazgo of 1498 written by Colón, and Navarrete could not have seen it because it is a fraud created some 100 years later. Many claimed this document to be authentic because Navarrete's slight of hand convinced Altolaguirre into accepting it as authentic and on these two famous authors was hung the faith of countless others – until now.

All that has been utilized as the pillars in support the Genoese theory are at minimum of dubious origins. One cannot claim Colón to be Genoese simply because all outsiders have said so, nor because he spent time with Genoese or worked with Genoese or borrowed money from Genoese. None of this is the same as being Genoese.

Another authentic document, the Admiral's *Codicil*, or *addendum*, to his Last Will, dated May 19, 1506, helps reinforce Colón's adherence to procedure:

In front of me, Pedro de Ennovedo, Notary of Their Highnesses' he [Colón] declared that he had made his testament before a public Notary, that he now would be rectifying it and he rectified the said testament, and would be approving it and he approved it as good, and if it was necessary to grant it, he granted it anew.

Here the authentic Last Will had been correctly drawn up "before a public notary," an official of the kingdom, but there is no trace of any such notary in any part of the Last Will of 1498. This codicil of 1506 continues, in Colón's own words:

When I left Spain, in the year of [one-thousand] five hundred and two, I made an ordinance and entail of my worldly goods, and that which then I saw that pertained to my soul and the service of God eternal, and the honor of myself and my successors. The said document I left at the Monastery of Las Cuevas in Seville, with Friar Don Gaspar with others of my documents and my privileges... Done on 25 of August of one thousand five hundred and five years, follows Christo Ferens.

Then his notary confirms the witnesses:

Witnesses that were present and saw made and executed all the above to the said Lord Admiral, according and how it is above said: the said Bachelor of Mirueña and Gaspar de la Misericordia, residents of the said town of Valladolid, and Bartholomé de Fiesco and Alvar Pérez and Juan d'Espinosa and Andrea and Fernando de Vargas and Francisco Manuel and Fernán Martínez, servants of the said Lord Admiral. And I the said Pedro de Ennovedo, abovementioned scribe and notary public, in unison with the said witnesses in all the above I was present. Hence I made here my sign, as such, in testimony of the truth. Pedro de Ennovedo, notary.

This is the one and only Last Will, created in 1502, that can be considered valid. Note there is no mention of any other will dated 1498, and it was signed not as *El Almirante*, which is a title, but by the name, *Christo Ferens*.

Notice how this authentic document is formal and is correctly executed and witnessed, as usual and according to custom. The act was carefully witnessed by many, and a representative of the crown, Pedro Ennovedo, was present to verify the text, confirm the Admiral, the witnesses, and the signature he saw on the document, describing it as *Christo Ferens*. Ennovedo did not attempt to forge the signature, as was done on the false document dated 1498. When we compare the strict structure of one document, with all its legalities and witnesses, to the imprecise informalities of the other, lacking a single witness or signed name, it is impossible to accept that Colón had anything to do with the document today called the *Mayorazgo of 1498*.²²²

The evidence this chapter has presented so far should be sufficient to convince the skeptics that the *Mayorazgo*, or *Last Will of 1498*, that Baltasar Colombo presented to those Spanish judges who were involved in sorting out the dispute over the Admiral's inheritance, claiming that Admiral Colón supposedly had admitted to being "born in Genoa," should be discarded once and for all. It is clearly a fake.

This document has no value in helping us uncover the truth about Colón's identity or birthplace.

These are the perils of trusting what others have faith in, because Navarrete never found any legal confirmation of this false Last Will of 1498. However, Navarrete misled his readers because he believed the 1498 document as authentic as the vanished Last Will of 1502.²²³

Yet many have attempted to publicize its authenticity, including Altolaguirre, Samuel Eliot Morison, Paolo Emilio Taviani and the City of Genoa. Navarrete, wanting to believe that the 1498 document was authentic, fooled Altolaguirre, and based on these two countless others have tried to make the Admiral's story corroborate a Genoese birth that never happened.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER FLOCK TOGETHER

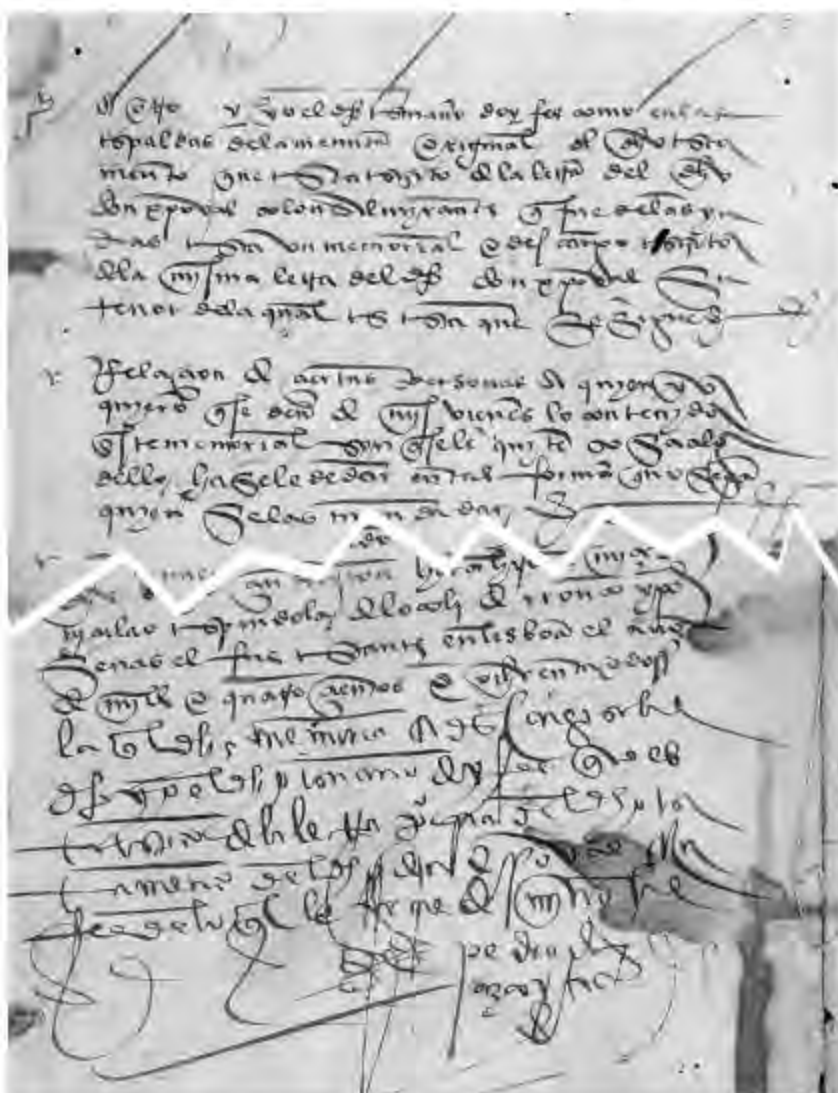


Figure 8.6: The Memorial de Pagos (Memorandum of Payments) consists of two pages. The image shows the beginning of the first page and end of the last page.

Now that the false *Mayorazgo*/Last Will of 1498 has been discredited, let us examine one more dubious document that has been taken as evidence to support the Genoese birth, the *Memorial de Pagos* (Memorandum of Payments). Those same historians who accepted the Last Will of 1498 have also stated over and over that the Admiral wrote this *Memorial de Pagos* on his deathbed on May 19, 1506, yet there is no proof of that affirmation. We can tell that this is yet another untruth because someone named Pedro Azcoitia notarized it. The reader will recall from above that the notary at Colón's bedside on May 19, 1506, the day before he took his last breath, was Pedro de Ennovedo and that his *Codicil* was clearly witnessed, dated, and then signed "in testimony of the truth. Pedro de Ennovedo, notary." Everything was legalized and terminated on May 19, 1506.

The *Memorial de Pagos*, supposedly notarized on May 19, 1506 by Pedro de Azcoitia, does not actually have any date on it, (SEE FIGURE 8.6). Azcoitia referred to Colón as the "former Admiral of the Indies," demonstrating that Colón had already died. In other words, the document had to have been written after the "former" Admiral died on May 20, 1506, as the text shows:

I, the said notary give testimony how on the backside of the original memorandum to the said testament that is written in the hand of the said Don Xpoval Colón former Admiral of the Indies is a memorandum and of his written in the same letters of the Lord don Xpoval its content is this that follows:

Relation of certain people to whom I want that it be given from my goods the contained in this memorandum, without taking away anything from it. It should be given in such a way that they don't know who orders it given...

The said memorandum and charge aforementioned, I, the Notary testify that it was written in the proper handwriting of the said testament of the said don Cristóbal, in testimony of the abovementioned I signed with my name. - Pedro de Azcoitia.²²⁴

How strange that the pseudo-notary would have to repeat three times that the “writing was in the hand of the [deceased] Admiral” as if he feared no one would believe the document to be authentic. Would it not have been easier, more believable, and keeping within the custom to have other witnesses sign along with him instead?

Though most will not see anything wrong with this document, we can detect multiple problems. First, it is not dated, which is a requirement for any legal document, nor is it witnessed. The dead “Admiral who used to be of the Indies” thus never ordered it to be copied, and it was apparently drafted on the backside of the “original” testament. If this was true, why would it need to be copied to a separate piece of paper and thus separated from the rest of the testament where it had been written? If it was on the memorandum of the original testament, then Pedro de Ennoredado would have been the one to notarize it, not some other notary who was not even at Colón’s bedside.

If Colón was already dead and he had not asked Ennoredado to copy this *Memorial*, why would Azcoitia see a need to copy it years later? It is highly unlikely that such a text would have been on the same paper as the testament witnessed by Pedro de Ennoredado without him mentioning it. Clearly, the *Memorial de Pagos* was not written on May 19, 1506. It could have been fabricated the next day, the next year, or the next century, intentionally, with no date and secret payments that could never be verified.

A public notary would never leave a document undated, given that this was a legal requirement. In fact, Pedro de Ennoredado dated Colón’s *Codicil* very clearly:

In the very noble town of Valladolid on the 19 of May of 1506... along with the said witnesses in all the above-mentioned I was present. And therefore I made here my seal in testimony of the truth. Pedro de Ennoredado.

That was obviously the last text of Colón’s memorandums.

The Admiral’s addendum to his Last Will of 1502 was finalized on the May 19, 1506, and *Ennoredado* mentions no other documents were written at his bequest. Colón died the next day. Any additions on the back of some paper, if such a thing ever existed, has no weight coming from any other notary aside from the one who was at Colón’s deathbed.

So who was Pedro de Azcoitia? According to the documents of the Lawsuit for the Succession of the Dukedom of Veragua, in which Baltasar Colombo was taking part, Pedro de Azcoitia is described as “*successor en el oficio de Pedro de Hinoxedo*” (successor in the office of Pedro de Ennoredado).

This memorial was another suspicious document presented by Baltasar that the other litigants protested against because “the transcription by this Pedro de Azcoitia is a manifest falsehood... Azcoitia committed a falsity because he could not confirm something that did not happen in his presence... by attesting that the writing of the said **memorial** was in the Admiral’s handwriting, because of this falsehood one cannot give any credit to the document.”²²⁵ Again the Spanish court was skeptical of this “notary” and refused to accept the document.²²⁶

Thus, yet another document that was considered suspicious 400 years ago is now accepted by today’s historians as authentic proof that our mysterious Colón was a Colombo from Genoa. Those who do consider Azcoitia’s text legitimate should examine it more closely because it still points directly to Portugal. The document asks to pay:

*A Jew who lived in Lisbon, Baptista Espínola in Lisbon, Luis Centurión Escoto and Antonio Vazo, who lived in Lisbon around the year 1482, some reales of Portugal.*²²⁷

In combining Azcoitia's memorandum with the false Mayorazgo of 1498, we end up with a "Genoese" who did not will a single dime to any "Colombo relative" in Genoa, who paid his debts secretly to his "fellow Genoese" living in Lisbon, but whom he had not seen or heard from since at least 1482.

If the pretender Baltasar Colombo wanted to connect the Admiral to Genoa and to the Genoese in a way that could never be verified because that connection never existed. Ordering that, "*It should be paid in such a way that they don't know who orders it paid,*" is a good way to do that. By having this clause in the document, if the *chancellor of Genoa* was never paid, because this Memorandum of Payments is forged, then he would have no information to give because he had been paid "secretly."

Regardless of all of the uncertainty, one thing that is true is that no one becomes Genoese simply by association with Genoese, nor Spanish by association with Spanish, nor are people's names indicative of one's place of birth, nor does being called a Genoese *Spinola* or *Escotto* (names in the Memorandum of Payments) confirm any ties to Italy. There were many children of Genoese citizens born and living in Portugal.²²⁸

All the documents that have been used to support the Genoese theory are either of dubious origin or are complete forgeries since it is now obvious Colón was not Genoese. The scientific conclusion can only be that the *Mayorazgo of 1498* is just as worthless, from a historical accuracy standpoint, as is the false *Codicil Militar de Colón* found at the Corsini Library in Roma, in 1785, both worth as much as a "blank piece of paper," and that the *Memorandum of Payments* is as fraudulent as the *Mayorazgo of 1498*, as well as the following fraudulent *Letter of Columbus* offered to historian Henry Harrisse in 1883.

The letter came to light in October 1883 while Henry Harrisse was in Paris. It was then put up for sale in New York and Chicago in 1887, as Mr. Harrisse explained. Following an investigation of it, the letter was deemed an exact forged "copy" of an "original" letter that had holes in it made from a memo spike.²²⁹ The "original" letter with the holes in it came to light in Italy in 1829 and has, since then, been housed in Genoa. The "copy" and the "original" are such perfect duplicates that when you take one and place it on top of the other, even the holes match up perfectly.

In fact, the letter with the holes in it appears itself to be a Genoese forgery. Just compare its signature to Admiral Colón's authentic signature in FIGURE 8.2 to see they are not the same. Some day when a scientific investigation is done to all the Genoese documents attributed to Colón, the truth will be known.

When historians began to claim that the Assereto Document and other Genoese documents may be blatant forgeries done by the City of Genoa to influence history, Columbus biographer Paolo Emilio Taviani explained why the Assereto still had to be authentic:

*It is important to bear in mind that at the time when Assereto traced the document, it would have been impossible to make an acceptable facsimile. Nowadays, with modern chemical processes, a document can be 'manufactured,' made to look centuries old if need be, with such skill that it is hard to prove it is a fake. Fifty years ago this was still impossible.*²³⁰

Taviani must have been living in a fantasy world if he believed good forgeries were impossible to create at that time. Contrary to Taviani's assertion, there were many forged documents related to Admiral Colón, including the letter presented in FIGURE 8.7, so masterfully forged before 1883 that it is virtually impossible to tell the copy apart from the original.²³¹



Figure 8.7: Here are the two letters that Henry Harrisse presented. It is nearly impossible to tell the forged letter (right) apart from the original. The main difference between these two documents is that the original has holes in it, while the forged document has the holes drawn on it, almost as if it was a photograph of the original. (Christopher Columbus and the Bank of Saint George, Henry Harrisse, page 41.

DECEIVED HISTORIANS

The Third Admiral, Don Luis Colón, died in 1572 and the Fourth Admiral, Don Diego Colón, who was the last of the male heirs, died in 1578 and at that time the flood gates opened for all of Colón's great-grandchildren to compete for his inheritance. In 1609 the Spanish Tribunal finally decided on Nuño Álvares Pereira Colón y Portugal, descendant of the King of Portugal, as the legitimate heir to the Dukedom of Veragua and Fifth Admiral of the Indies.

It had been 30 years of underhandedness, backstabbing, lying, cheating, falsifying, inventing, false accusations, and even murder. With so many Colón nobles vying for the inheritance against false Colombo impostors and with three decades to plan and execute their treachery the truth became the innocent casualty.

Baltasar Colombo, Lord of Cuccaro, was a rich outsider from Genoa who had plenty of resources to pay to have documents created, forged, and even printed in order to shore up his tall tale of Cristóbal Colón being a relative Colombo from Genoa. Much of the confusion we face today stems from the underhandedness of this inheritance war of 1580 to 1609. In that lawsuit Baltasar attempted to force the Spanish court to accept that the names Colombo and Colón were the same by presenting misleading, misinterpreted, and mistranslated documentation. He based many of his assertions on nothing less than Don Fernando Colón's *Historie* and tried to prove that the name of Cristóbal Colón's father was Domingo Colombo because this name fit the genealogy of the Colombo's from Cuccaro.

What becomes obvious is that a huge fraud was created to support the non-existent ties of Admiral Colón to Genoa so that the Genoese pretenders, the rebuffed Bernardo Colombo with his false genealogies and especially the persistent Baltasar Colombo, could try to steal one of the world's richest inheritances, the Dukedom of Veragua, for themselves. They failed in their scheme, however, in the end their forged documents came to be utilized as authentic in support of a history that never quite fit the life of Admiral Don Cristóbal Colón.

Baltasar Colombo had the most to gain. He was not a blood relative of the Colón family and therefore would need to create the greater lie. Interestingly, Don Fernando Colón's *Historie* was printed in Italy right around the time of the lawsuit. Could Baltasar Colombo have stolen documents from the Las Cuevas box, such as the Admiral's *Book of Privileges* that is now in Genoa, to pretend Colón had ties to that city? Did he steal Don Fernando Colón's manuscript and pay to have the *Historie* falsified and printed in Italy so he could use it as basis for his lawsuit claims?

The idea that Baltasar is the person who paid to have the *Historie* corrupted and printed is not so far fetched. Baltasar showed up in Spain with a Paulina (a Papal order) that allowed him to force others to hand over whatever he asked for, allowing him access to documents in Admiral Colón's archives. Finding a manuscript from Fernando Colón, he saw an opportunity the other litigants did not need. While there was no doubt that all the other litigants were descendants of Colón, Baltasar was the only outsider and would need the *Historie* to turn the tables in his favor. Thus taking the manuscript to Italy, paying to have a corrupted translation printed with what he needed it to say, Baltasar could then utilize the printed book to his advantage in the lawsuit. He did present the *Historie* as evidence in his favor.

Did Baltasar, or some other Genoese even fake the commentary about the "Genoese Colombo brothers" in the writings of Antonio Gallo, Chancellor of the Bank of S. George? Out of some ten copies of Gallo's work only four include the anecdote of *Navigatzbne Columbi* and those few have gross errors.²³² Many copies of Antonio Gallo's book found in other countries do not have this "Genoese Colombo brothers" text, and the few copies in Italy that include the story are from the seventeenth century, long after Gallo died. Even the example in the City of Genoa, (Biblioteca Civica Berto di Genova) has the *Columbi* text pages numbered 93-100 but inserted between pages 88-89 and had its title changed to include *Navigatzbne Columbi* in it.²³³

It is obvious that much effort was put into falsifying the story of the life of Cristóbal Colón, and we are just beginning to understand the lengths people went to in order to either obfuscate the truth, or to personally benefit from a lie, or both.

Cristóbal Colón's true identity was so important that great effort was put into carrying out its censorship. King John II, Cristóbal Colón and even Queen Isabel managed to fool us all with the assumed identity of the great navigator, which allowed a Viceroy to pass as wool-weaver for over 500 years.

With all the clarifications presented here and with the explanations of all the falsities contained in the text of the Mayorazgo, it is clear that Colón never wrote the words "*being I born in Genoa.*"

Thus, because Colón never declared where he was born, the investigators, historians, scholars, and academics of the world are still free to deliberate the true identity and place of birth of the immortal Admiral.

This deliberation is not only a challenge but an obligation that we all must accept because Cristóbal Colón's life is a part of our shared human history which has been confused and concealed for far too long.

CHAPTER 9

THE TRAIL OF BLOOD

*I was falsely accused that I had gone to the
King [of Portugal] to give him the Indies.*

DON CRISTÓBAL COLÓN

The facts had been so twisted in the history of this man that what ended up being written into the history books was completely out of line with the customs of the day, making a weaver fit into a noble's life. Historians have gone to incredible lengths to make the unacceptable acceptable, the illogical logical and to present the most abhorrent social coupling between peasant and noble as if it was a common occurrence and everyday common event.

For five centuries rumors, rhetoric and uncertainty kept this controversy alive and after centuries of investigating the events of 1492, there are still too many uncertainties. Why? The cause for this confusion is not only that Colón lied and covered up his identity. A lot of uncertainties and confusion resulted from the court fight over the inheritance, which begun in 1578 especially with the forged documents introduced by the Genoese litigants. Much underhandedness and fraud took place, some of which was exposed in the previous chapter. Based on the Last Will of 1498, historians refused to consider any other possibility for who Colón might have been and the investigation continuously centered only on Genoa and a Genoese identity.

The power of the wool-weaver myth to influence how investigators perceived the documentation is amazing and they bent over backwards to make seemingly unconnected things fit together as if they had always been meant to be.

During a live debate, January 22, 2008 on RTP2 TV in Lisbon, University Professor of History, Manuel Garcia, who has authored dozens of books on the history of Portugal insisted that the history of the discovery of America was arrived at "*through careful speculation and deduction*" and is the correct history. Yet, he also admitted that "*in the life of Cristóbal Colón all of his training is achieved in Portugal.*" This ray of insight was insufficient to take the professor from his support of "speculation and deduction" that an illiterate wool-weaving peasant would be schooling and training in Portugal at an age of 25. Despite admitting "never having seen the documents from Genoa or from Spain" on which he supported his point of view, he accepted the "official tale" and also tried to convince the other debaters to accept it.

When confronted with the problem of a "peasant weaver" being able to marry the noble Portuguese Filipa Moniz in 1479, he invented that the wool-weaver "*must have received a social promotion*" in Portugal to marry the woman that we know Admiral Colón married.

This was incredible to watch, when confronted with two pieces of the puzzle that do not fit – the marriage between a peasant and a noble – historians see nothing wrong with inventing facts, instead of admitting that the story might not be correct.

There is a big disconnect between what was accepted and what can be proven by the documentation. Not only the inventions help to sustain the myth. The myth is also kept alive by pushing aside or minimizing facts in the documents that could lead us to the truth. The preconceived notion that the noble Colón must be made to fit the peasant Colombo wool-weaver from Genoa is so overpowering that fantasy takes over.

The Genoese Colombo, as can be shown in all the documentation, was a pauper working menial jobs and so poor that he was, in union with his father, unable to pay a menial debt of fifteen Italian *lira* (about \$92.00 USD today) thus a Notary had to make a note of the debt.²³⁴

As a poor laborer that Colombo would not have known how to read and write, peasants did not attend school in medieval times. Schools were for the rich and public schools are such a fairly new phenomenon that when I grew up most of my elders did not know how to read and write in Portugal, my own maternal grandfather could not even sign his name.

Therefore at age 25, the age they say the Genoese was when he would have arrived as an illiterate peasant, he could not have gone to school in Portugal.

As soon as he got to Portugal, they say, the wool-weaver began to study and in a few years became fluent, not only in Portuguese, but in all the other subjects that Admiral Colón knew: Castilian, Latin, cosmography, geometry, cartography, Portuguese high tech navigation, theology, math and even the secret ciphers that Colón used to write coded letters to his brother.

The peasant Colombo would have learned all of this in the short eight years, 1476-1484, they allow for him to live in Portugal.

In their tale, not only did the weaver Cristoforo succeed in becoming a scholar but so did his weaver brother Bartolomeo Colombo, transforming him into that noble Bartolomé Colón, who received Colón's cipher letters, who was already in Lisbon working as a mapmaker and who could equal Cristóbal in many sciences including high tech navigation and even surpassed his older brother in the use of the lance.²³⁵

The third brother, Giacomo Colombo, documented indentured to a weaver teacher in 1484 at 16 years old, thus documented as born in 1468, they say he also learned to read and write, not Genoese but Spanish in Iberia as an adult. Yet, millions of modern day illiterate adults, with better means of support and resources, continue to be unable to learn to read and write their own language, much less a foreign language.

They further accepted that the same penniless lowly wool-weaver who supposedly swam to the coast of Portugal from a shipwreck in August 1476, thus arriving with empty hands, empty pockets, and with no job or any means of support would in a mere two years be married to a noble lady of the kingdom named Filipa Moniz, who was daughter of a privileged Portuguese Templar Knight of the Order of Christ and Captain of the Island of Porto Santo.

This unbelievable marriage between peasant and noble is the first clue for anyone who wants to unravel the fictional tale.

This marriage was the piece that struck me as unbelievable in 1991 when I began this investigation. One must ask immediately, if the historians who accept the wool-weaver Colombo understand the social environment of his times? The marriage of peasants with nobles in the 15th Century was unheard of and it was socially unacceptable.

Here again, the Portuguese academics are to blame. One can't fault foreign academics for not knowing the customs of the kingdom of Portugal nor how noble was the family of Filipa Moniz. However, the Portuguese scholars themselves are guilty of inventing more lies to make the wool-weaver theory fit.

Instead of questioning the marriage of peasant and noble, they accepted it, but because it was an impossible marriage, they then began peddling the lie that Filipa Moniz was a "poor noble of little insignificance." They further invented that the Colombo wool-weaver was "a well-to-do merchant" not a weaver, who got some sort of promotion in Portugal.

When I confronted them with a newly discovered document proving that Filipa Moniz resided at the Monastery of All-Saints, the elite residency of the Military Order of Santiago, the Portuguese historians, without an ounce of proof, began espousing that she was living there as "a lowly servant maid" to the "*donas*" of All-Saints.

Thus by knocking the noble lady down from her elite status and propping up the marooned peasant as a "merchant" suddenly the scales didn't look so far off for the world to believe it - until my first book got published in Portugal in 2006.²³⁶

Nowhere in Portugal exists documentation relative to any Colombo, but this was of no importance, if the foreign scholars wrote that Filipa's husband was a "weaver Colombo" then the Portuguese scholars would repeat the same story as if the foreigners knew better. If they had questioned the tale sooner, possibly the truth would have been found already, for it is within Portugal that lies hidden the secret of who Cristóbal Colón truly was.

How incredible is it to have accepted that a noble and privileged daughter of a King's Captain would be authorized by the King and by her family to marry some foreigner peasant nobody that had just been dragged in by the waves with no ship, position, station or education in that "closed noble society" of Portugal just so that she could "*avoid paying any more convent bills*" as Samuel Eliot Morison invented?²³⁷

At the time when Filipa married Colón, Portugal's society was so restrictive that the Captain of Funchal in Madeira arrested his own brother's widow merely because she married a **nobleman** who was beneath her social status.

Not to be outdone, the Captain of Machico in Madeira not only arrested the **nobleman** Simão Barradas and castrated him, but incarcerated him in an underground dungeon for months where "*he was forced to perform the arduous and degrading penitence of turning a grain mill like a mule*" simply for wanting to court the Captain's daughter, Ana Teixeira.²³⁸

In the end, the noble Simão Barradas did not marry the Captain's daughter and the king himself arranged Ana's wedding to one of the worthy nobleman of the king's household.

Another words, Ana Teixeira, a lady of less social status than Filipa Moniz, was prevented from marrying a **NOBLEMAN** because he wasn't good enough for the First Captain of Machico. Yet, how can we have been persuaded to believe that the daughter of the Captain of the neighboring Island, with higher stature, would be thrown to the wolves?

This incredible mishmash of fact and fantasy between noble and peasant had succeeded in misleading generation upon generation of scholars.

Understanding the marriage of Admiral Colón to Filipa Moniz is brandishing the linchpin that debunks the whole peasant wool-weaver fantasy. Once one realizes that Filipa Moniz was not only noble but that she was so connected to Portuguese royalty, that she was most likely of royal blood herself, the tall tale we were sold becomes apparent and crumbles under its own fictional weight. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The genealogical investigation shows that Filipa's sisters married high Portuguese nobles. Filipa's cousins and nieces married counts and marquises all of them descendants of kings. But "poor Filipa" all she could manage to find, according to historians, was a washed ashore peasant, as if there was a shortage of nobles or even affluent non-nobles in Portugal to marry her to?

When I read in D. Diego Colón's Last Will and Testament, that his mother, Filipa Moniz, was buried in the Chapel of Piety of the Monastery of Carmo in Lisbon, I was astounded. This huge house of worship was built by Portugal's great super hero of wars against Spain, D. Nuno Álvares Pereira. (His great-great-grandson married Colón's granddaughter.) This shows how important Filipa Moniz was, yet nobody in Portugal seemed to know about her burial, especially not the workers of the Carmo Museum, which I visited several times.

As my investigation progressed I focused on remarkably important overlooked clue. Both Las Casas and Don Fernando Colón wrote that Admiral Colón's wife lived in a place where Colón would regularly go attend Mass called the "Monastery of All-Saints" in Lisbon. In Don Fernando's words "*it happened that a Lady named Dona Filipa Moniz, of noble lineage and of the peerage, Comendadora* in the Monastery of All Saints, where the Admiral regularly went to Mass, took such a liking to him that they married.*"

* Comendador/a [Commander (English)] was a knight/lady of a military order who held a commandery. A Commandery was a district or a manor with lands and tenements appertaining thereto, under the control of a member of an order of knights who was called a commander; also called a preceptory. Preceptory was historically the regional seat of any of the various orders of Christian Knights within a given geographic area. A preceptor or commander, who was answerable to the Grand Master of the respective order, governed these areas. A preceptory's main properties, which could be vast holdings, would be its house of worship, accommodations for the brethren and income producing lands, buildings, grants and privileges.

The Monastery of All-Saints, today's French Embassy in Lisbon (SEE FIGURE 9.1), was nothing less than the elite abode of the wives and children of the Portuguese Knights of the Military Order of Santiago. It was rent-free to live there.

What a phenomenal clue this is? By telling us that Filipa was a “Comendadora” in All-Saints and that the Admiral used to frequent that elite palace, Don Fernando Colón was giving us a solid clue to his father's social stature in Portugal before the marriage.

It is not surprising that non-Portuguese scholars would have missed this *All-Saints* clue, but how could this fact have been overlooked in Portugal?

Unfortunately for the truth, in Portugal there were no scholars who understood the intimate details of the life of Admiral Colón and because of this lack of knowledge many pieces of the puzzle passed unnoticed.

Adding to the predicament, because the Portuguese believed the history was correct, those academics have been only too eager to admonish others who insist with them to take a closer look. When they had been confronted with Don Fernando's words, they parroted a too often heard phrase among Cristóbal Colón historians:

“Don't believe Fernando Colón. All those words written by Don Fernando were lies meant to exalt and engrandeur his peasant wool-weaving father and nothing more. Just like the father was a peasant boaster so too was the son. The father pretended to be a noble and the son lied to make the pretense real but it is all lies, all of it lies.”

The biographies of the Admiral are full of statements like these echoed by the scholars of all different nations in an attempt to sustain a fable.

In 1988 Mascarenhas Barreto caused a stir with his *Portuguese Columbus* book, which appeared to turn the tide against the wool-weaver.²³⁹ In order to calm the waters and make the doubters see it their way, in 1991 the Portuguese academies supported some half dozen scholars of their clan who published several books ensuring the readers that there was no reasons to question the wool-weaver history. They proclaimed that the official story was factual and that the Last Will of 1498 and the documents in Genoa prove everything the official history books say.



Figure 9.1: Todos-os-Santos (All-Saints) Monastery of the Order of Santiago, Lisbon where Filipa used to live, was a palace that today houses the French Embassy, and King João II's emblem is still visible behind the French flag above the entranceway (top left). It was a well-guarded palace with high thick walls because it housed not only the Elite Comendadoras but served as repose for its Master, King João II, as well. The south-facing wall, (bottom left) remains intact and ends at an imposing corner four stories high (bottom right), (Author fotos 2002).



Figure 9.2: This section of a significant document from the All-Saints Monastery relative to 1475 conserved in the Portuguese Archives, mentions Filipa Moniz along with the other eleven "donas" Comendadoras living at this Santiago Property. This is the first document found to date in the Portuguese Archives related to the immortal Admiral's Portuguese life. (TT, Convento de Santos-o-Novo, Doc. 477. Convento de Santos[-o-Velho], 4-1-1475. Image provided by AN/TT.)

Unfortunately, none of those Portuguese scholars spent any time investigating Colón's life to see, if in fact, the tale was correct or not. Therefore, the books of Vasco Graça Moura, Alfredo Pinheiro Marques, Luis de Albuquerque, Luís de Lancastre e Távora and Luís de Mello Vaz de São Payo meant to prop up the official history, served only to keep the lie intact and to hinder the fact-finding work for another two decades. Today the facts show they were all wrong and Fernando Colón was correct.

Thankfully, after a decade of debating my publications, many academics are now realizing the Genoese story was baseless and inaccurate.²⁴⁰

Following Fernando's clue to All-Saints, it became imperative for me to locate the 15th Century documents of the Portuguese Military Order of Santiago. Filipa Moniz's name was indeed located in a document from All-Saints with a date of 1475, exactly as Don Fernando had declared. This document proves that Filipa Moniz, not only was one of the 12 elite *Donas Comendadoras* of the Commandery of All-Saints, but was also part of the governing board of that Commandery, (SEE FIGURE 9.2).

Incredibly, the document had been held in the hands of a Portuguese scholar in 1992, but because in Portugal little was known about the life of Admiral Colón, that scholar had no idea what he had put his hands upon.²⁴¹ Therefore, this great discovery in the Portuguese archives passed unnoticed for 15 more years. **What a national treasure this document is?**

It is the first document ever to be found inside Portugal somewhat related to the discoverer of the New World prior to him becoming famous in Spain. The document in FIGURE 9.2 was presented for the first time in my book.

What is the importance of the document in FIGURE 9.2 and what's so important about Filipa Moniz living in All-Saints?

For starters we can throw away all the false information invented by Morison and divulged worldwide by others saying that "*Filipa Moniz was forced to marry a peasant as a way to leave the monastery because her mother could no longer afford the bills to keep her in there.*"²⁴²

Morison's statements do not reflect the truth because the *dona Comendadoras* did not pay to live at the Monastery of All-Saints of the Order of Santiago. The property was granted to the Santiago Knights in 1194 by King Sancho I to be utilized exactly for the purpose of housing those elite Knights' wives and children **free of charge**. Furthermore, the document shows that Filipa was not being temporarily housed there, but was one of the twelve elite *dona Comendadoras*, just as Don Fernando Colón stated, and in charge of the decision making process:

Most honored, devout, Lady Dona Beatriz de Menenses, comendadeira [Mother Superior] of the said monastery and Graça Estévez, Lianor Correa, Catarina Rodriguez, Susana Pereira, Catarina de Valadares, Dona Lianor de Meneses, Filipa Moniz, Johana da Silva, Johana de Lordello, Beatriz de Goes and Catarina da Rosa, all “donas” [comendadoras] of the said monastery being in committee.

The above document proves Filipa Moniz was therefore a member of the Portuguese Military Order of Santiago, a member of the ruling committee and one of only twelve *donas comendadoras* with privilege to live there, since there was only room for twelve plus their entourage of servants.

Historians have continuously harped on the fact that Filipa Moniz did not have the nobility title of “Dona” and therefore D. Fernando Colón was wrong in what he wrote. However, it is important to note that in Portuguese “Dona” is a nobility title abbreviated as D.^a, while the “donas” with lower case is the feminine form of “donos” meaning “owners.” The *donas* Comendadoras of All-Saints were all in conjunction the *owners* of the All-Saints Commandrey.

To be in charge of a Commandery and/or to become a member of the Military Order of Santiago was neither trivial nor simple:

Aside from the problems of blood lineage (the Military Orders excluded the descendants of Jews, Moors or Gentiles,) the questionnaire of the militias required the non-exercise of manual labor (not only of the candidate but his parents and grandparents), a legitimate birth, as well as an age no greater than 50 years not less than 16.²⁴³



Figure 9.3: King João II's coat of arms and motto, “PELA LEY E PELA GREY” (By the Law and by the People) is still visible on the ceiling of the All-Saints palace of the Order of Santiago where Filipa Moniz lived with the other elite noble ladies of Santiago.

Now here is a more important fact regarding the Order of Santiago. All religious/military orders had their established statutes and the members were required to follow those rules. By the rules of this order, the marriages of the Santiago members required **authorization** from the order's Master:

*The Order is governed by the Master to whom the whole body of the militia owes obedience, as is determined by the Rules. Acts such as the authorization for matrimony in its dominions... are the jurisdiction of the Master... marriage is not entirely impossible, but once consummated the *comendadora* must leave the monastery [and Filipa Moniz is no longer living at the Monastery after January 20, 1479].²⁴⁴*

At the time that Filipa Moniz lived at the All-Saints Commandery of Santiago its Master was none other than King João II of Portugal, (SEE FIGURE 9.3). This way we must accept that Filipa Moniz and the man who later assumed the name of Cristóbal Colón had their married authorized by the Master, King João II, prior to January of 1479, as the order's rules required.

The above facts proves that Don Fernando Colón was correct and all others were incorrect and it proves that Cristóbal Colón was a nobleman in Portugal in order to marry Filipa. The fact is that the further we dig into the story, instead of finding more conformation that the history was correct, we find the opposite. Everything points away from a peasant and from Genoa. The tales invented by Morison and others on how Filipa's marriage with a peasant took place is a perfect example of how the history books continuously go against the facts by completely leaving out the details of the Portuguese life of the discoverer. It is by connecting the dots around Filipa's marriage that one can see how erroneous was the claim that the Admiral Colón was a peasant.

VOYAGE TO THE CENTER OF THE WEB

Academics understand the impossibility of any medieval peasant marrying a noble. *The social rules at the time confirm that a peasant could never marry a noble by which the peasant origins of Colón are thus, unbelievable*, wrote Prof. João Paulo Oliveira e Costa, History Chair at Universidade Nova de Lisboa in 2014, and he is not the only Portuguese university professor now questioning the wool-weaver fable.²⁴⁵ The facts in this book show that the tale of the Genoese wool weaver has run its course and is now discarded.

If the Genoese Cristóforo Colombo had been a nobleman, as was Martim of Bohemia, for instance, who married the daughter of the Captain of Faial Island in the Azores, their marriage would not have been impossible. But the *Raccolta* documents prove beyond doubt that the Genoese Colombo was a family of weavers, lowly peasants and nothing more. Knowing that the King of Portugal had to authorize the marriage, it becomes imperative to take a closer look at Filipa's family and her sisters' marriages.

Dames of comparative stature to Filipa, for example Captain Zarco's daughters, had their marriages arranged by the king of Portugal and without the brides or their father having a say in the matter. The king sent four nobles to Madeira bearing a letter to Captain Zarco that read, "I send you these four knights to marry your four daughters."

One can only marvel at how the choice of which knight married which daughter took place, nevertheless, if Zarco's daughters had direct intervention from the king in their choice of grooms, why would Captain Perestrelo's daughters be treated differently?

In fact, Captain Bartolomeu Perestrelo's children, Filipa's brothers, sisters, cousins, nieces and nephews, all married high nobles and royal bloods that were counts, marquises, captains and other descendants of kings. Accepting that such a privileged lady as was Filipa would have been married to an illiterate vagrant without a penny to his name was outrageous.

We must not repeat the error of those who came before us and overlook the words of D. Fernando Colón, who wrote that Filipa was a *dueña*, *hidalga* and *Comendadora* three titles belonging only to the elite of her time. The Order of Santiago was an exclusive "club" and Filipa's own nephew, D. Pedro de Noronha, aside from being King João II's Lord Chamberlain, was the Commendador-Major of the Order of Santiago.

How amazing is it that this information has been kept out of the world's history books for 500 years? João II's Lord Chamberlain, D. Pedro de Noronha was grandson of Bartolomeu Perestrelo I and thus nephew by marriage to Cristóbal Colón. Who would have guessed that Cristóbal Colón was uncle, by marriage, to the King of Portugal's Lord Chamberlain long before anyone outside Portugal knew who Colón was?

This is only the tip of the iceberg, Bartolomeu Perestrelo's sister-in-law, Violante Nogueira, aunt of Izeu Perestrelo and aunt of Filipa's other half-sisters, became *Comendadeira* (Commendadora-Major or Abbess) of the All-Saints Monastery for the Order of Santiago, she held the elitist of *donas'* positions. Violante Nogueira was even more important than that. This sister-in-law of Bartolomeu Perestrelo was so high up in Portuguese society that she was the Governess for King Duarte I's daughters. Another words, Violante Nogueira raised the Portuguese Princesses, one of which, D. Leonor, went on to become Holy Roman Empress by marriage to Frederick III, Holy Roman Emperor. Another, D. Joana, went on to become Queen of Castile and Leon, by marriage to Enrique IV, of Spain. This Queen Joana was the mother of Queen Juana "*la Beltraneja*," already discussed, from whom Queen Isabel stole the Spanish crown in 1479.

One must seriously pounder all of these connections for they are central to discovering the truth about Don Cristóbal Colón.

The Spanish word *hidalgo(a)* is a contraction of "*hijo de algo*" meaning "*son of a somebody*" or a child of somebody of great importance in the society and it was no mistake that Don Fernando Colón described Filipa Moniz that way. Filipa's presence in the elite monastery of the Order of Santiago was due to her father and mother's high nobility status. By the same token, Cristóbal Colón's presence

inside the same monastery had to be for the same reasons, due to his father and mother's high status in the Portuguese society.

Only if Filipa and Cristóbal were persons of similar status could they have been authorized to marry by King João II, Santiago's Master (SEE FIGURE 9.4). Marriage authorization was required not just for the residents inside All-Saints but for all of Santiago's members, a requirement that was clarified thanks to Professor Joel Mata's study.²⁴⁶ If Filipa Moniz had not been a Comendadora of Santiago, then it would have been up to King Afonso V to choose the husbands for the Captain's daughters, as was customary, because, at any time, that husband could become Captain due to someone's death. Thus, even if Filipa was not a member of Santiago, she still could not have married by her own will or desire as this king's letter shows:

To all who see this Our letter... it was our desire to grant the said captaincy to Dona Branca de Aguiar, his daughter, and to become Captain, whoever with her married, and such marriage she will effect with that person which we so choose... and therefore because we feel that the said Dona Branca de Aguiar will be with him very well married, we are pleased that as soon as the said Jorge Correia is married to her... from that moment onward we will have him as our Captain... 1497.²⁴⁷

The affairs of Filipa's father, Captain Perestrelo, as a noble knight who oversaw part of the king's territory, required the usual careful intervention from the court. The same way that Captain Zarco's daughters, Captain Teixeira's daughters, Captain Aguiar's daughter and all other captains' daughters required the king to have a say in the matter so did Bartolomeu Perestrelo's daughters. To think otherwise is again to grant yet another of the many exceptions to the history of Admiral Colón so that he can fit into a wool-weaver tale.

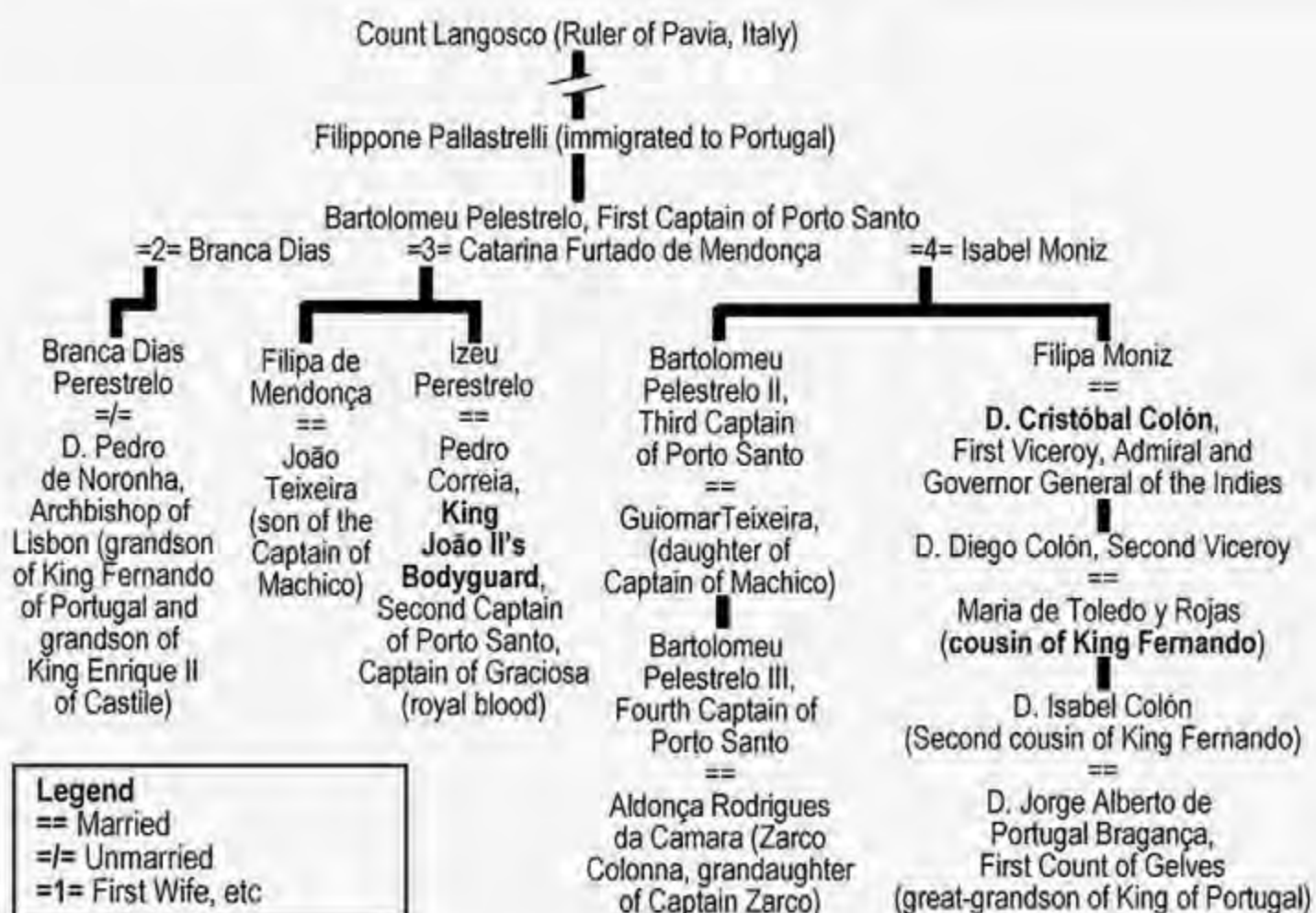


Figure 9.4: Bartolomeu Perestrelo I was born in Portugal. Filipa Moniz and her half-sister, Filipa de Mendonça, would be named after her paternal grandfather, Filippone, called Filipão in Portugal. Cristóbal Colón's father-in-law was a noble Portuguese knight and the First Captain of Porto Santo Island in the Madeira archipelago. Colón's brother-in-law, Bartolomeu Perestrelo II, became Third Captain of the island in 1473. The larger island of Madeira was divided into two Captaincies: Funchal was awarded to Captain João Gonçalves Zarco while Machico went to Captain Tristão Vaz. Note that Colón's sister-in-law and brother-in-law married children of Tristão Vaz, the Captain of Machico, while Colón's nephew married into the Zarco clan, Captain of Funchal.

Filipa Moniz, unlike non-Santiago members, had yet another layer of covenants to surpass in order to marry because King João II had to authorize her marriage. The Master of Santiago would not allow a marriage between a noble and a peasant when he had tens of thousands of Portuguese nobles and thousands of children from Santiago member knights that he could have married Filipa to, especially since the noble class in Portugal was one of the more discriminating of Europe.²⁴⁸

Furthermore, we should not overlook the fact that the Monastery of All-Saints was, by definition, a convent with well-guarded heavy gates and stone walls so strong and thick they are still standing today and so high they reached four stories in some places. It is almost a given that by attending Mass inside the monastery of All-Saints of the Order of Santiago, Cristóbal Colón had to be a member of Santiago. That church was not open to the general public and served the members living there in seclusion. How could Colón get inside there to go attend Mass “on a regular basis” as his son declared? Wasn’t it because he was a member of Santiago just as his chosen name implicates: *colon* from the Greek *kólon* for *member*?

If we learn that a man married a woman whom he met inside a CIA property, where she resided along with other CIA agents, and where the man visited on a regular basis, then we accept without doubt that both the man and his wife must belong to the CIA. This is how one must view the connection to the All-Saints Monastery and defend that Colón was a member of Santiago before he married Filipa. This must be accepted as the only explanation. Filipa Moniz is a major key to unlock the life of Admiral Colón, so let’s have a look at her family.

MORE ROYAL BLOODS

Filipa’s niece, the Marquesa of Montemor, Isabel de Noronha (also called Isabel da Silva in Spain) married at the same social level as the Queen of Portugal’s sister, D. Isabel, Duchess of Bragança. Another niece married the Count of Abrantes, King João II’s Chief Guard, member of the king’s council and Treasurer of the King’s household. To those who continuously wrongly insist in saying that Colón’s in-laws were “poor broken down nobles” who could not find anyone better to marry than the ilk of poor weaver laborers these genealogies show that it was not so. Simply looking at who the other sisters married is enough proof.

One can’t help but wonder if all the fog that surrounds all Portuguese families connected to Admiral Cristóbal Colón was intentionally conjured to keep the curious meddlers like us from getting to the truth about Colón’s parents.

There was some confusion about Branca Dias Perestrelo, mother of the Marquesa of Montemor, whether or not she was really Captain Bartolomeu Perestrelo’s sister. Branca Dias Perestrelo was daughter of Bartolomeu Perestrelo and of his second wife, Branca Dias. In a correction to his book, *Sangue Real* (Oporto, 1998), the author Manuel Abranches de Soveral says:

*Branca Dias Perestrelo was not sister but daughter of Bartolomeu Perestrelo and of his wife Branca Dias. That Branca Dias (Perestrelo) would have been born between 1418 and 1420. The great Salazar e Castro guarantees that Branca Dias was daughter of Bartolomeu Perestrelo and of his wife Branca Dias.*²⁴⁹

Reading this note one can see how confusing genealogy truly is, for Branca Dias Perestrelo, aside from being daughter of Bartolomeu Perestrelo I was, effectively, sister of Bartolomeu Perestrelo II and aunt of Bartolomeu Perestrelo III.

Only if Filipa and Cristóbal were high nobility could their son, Diego Colón, be married to King Fernando’s cousin and why Filipa and Cristóbal’s granddaughter, Isabel Colón, could marry into the house of Bragança, (SEE FIGURE 9.5).

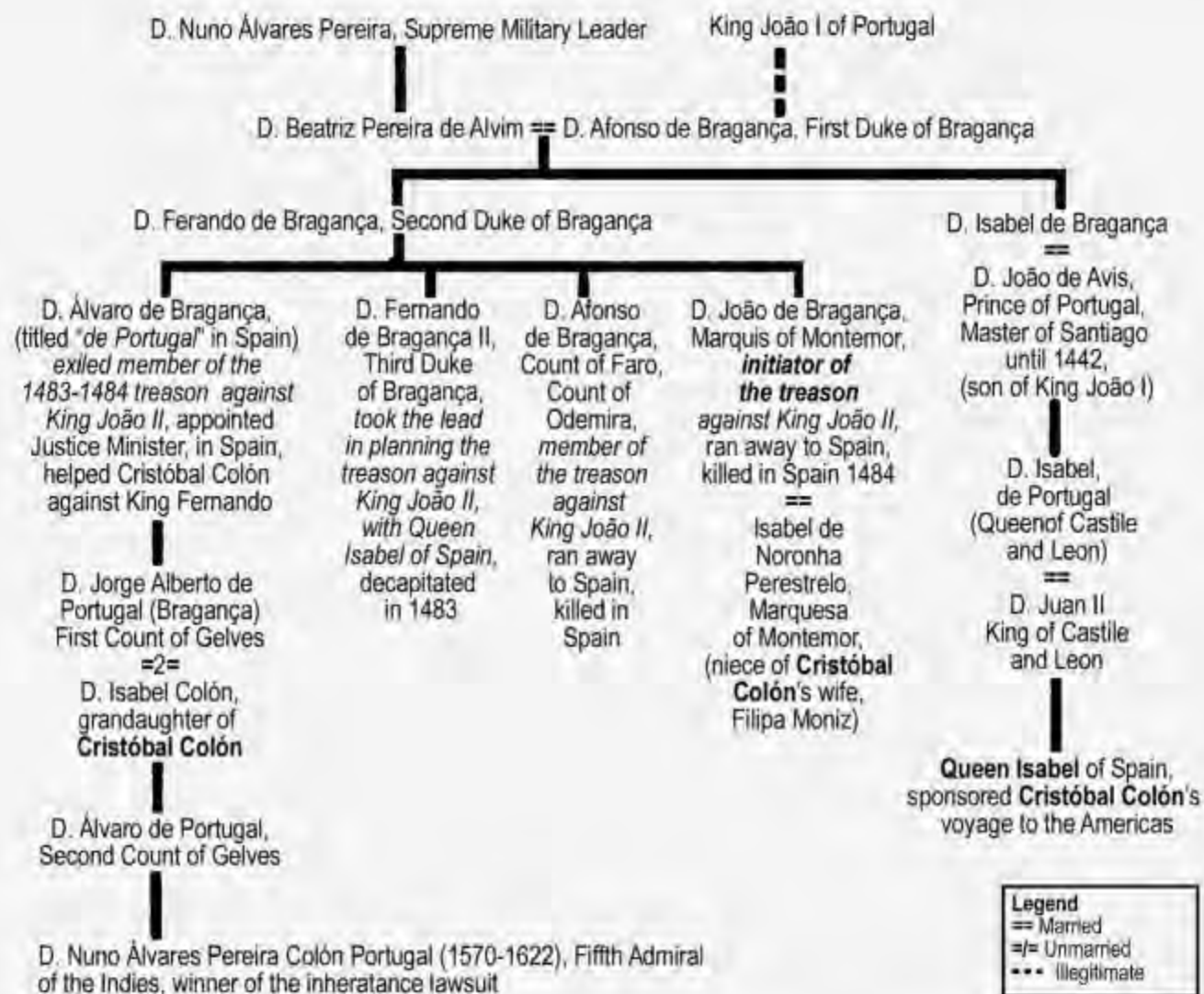


Figure 9.5: Cristóbal Colón's granddaughter, Isabel Colón, married a royal Bragança also descendant of Nuno Álvares Pereira. Isabel de Noronha, Marquesa of Montemor, was cousin of Diego Colón, father of Isabel Colón as well as aunt of Isabel Colón's husband, D. Jorge, Count of Gelves. Queen Isabel of Spain was second cousin to the traitors of King João II whom she conspired with to assassinate King João II.

When one looks at FIGURE 9.6 and sees the royal "pedigree" of the 5^o Admiral of the Indies, Nuno Álvares Pereira Colón y Portugal, one can see the arranged marriage for his grandmother, Isabel Colón, was to D. Jorge Alberto de Portugal y Melo (Bragança), descendant of the Royal House of Portugal and of the house of D. Álvares Pereira.

Filipa was not the insignificant damsel-in-distress Samuel Morison made her out to be and that others accepted. Filipa Moniz and Colón's in-laws were so high in the Portuguese nobility that among them are the kings of Portugal, Spain, England and France. Thanks to fabulous works of investigation that have taken place in the last decades, including Manuel Abranches de Soveral's book *The Portuguese Furtado de Mendonça. Essay about their true origins*, one can better understand the blood connections between the Kings and Colón's in-laws.²⁵⁰

Filipa's father, Bartolomeu Perestrelo I, was born in Lisbon, Portugal 1396 and became an alderman for the city of Lisbon. Until 1442, Bartolomeu was a Knight of the household of the Master of the Order of Santiago, Prince João de Avis, (grandfather of Queen Isabel SHOWN IN FIGURE 9.5) who died in 1442. Bartolomeu Perestrelo then became a Knight of the household of the Master of the Templar Order of Christ, Prince Henry the Navigator. Bartolomeu's father, who moved to Portugal around 1385, was Micer Filippone Pallastrelli, (called Filipão Perestrelo in Portugal,) a Lombard knight from Piacenza, son of Micer Gabriele Pallastrelli, descendant of Count Filippone Langosco, rulers of Pavia.

Bartolomeu Perestrelo I married at least four times. His wives were Margarida Martins, Branca Dias, Catarina Furtado de Mendonça and Isabel Moniz.²⁵¹ With Branca Dias he had at least one daughter, Branca Dias Perestrelo, mistress of D. Pedro Henriques de Noronha, grandson of Kings Enrique II of Castile and Fernando I of Portugal and archbishop of Lisbon. From this Perestrelo-

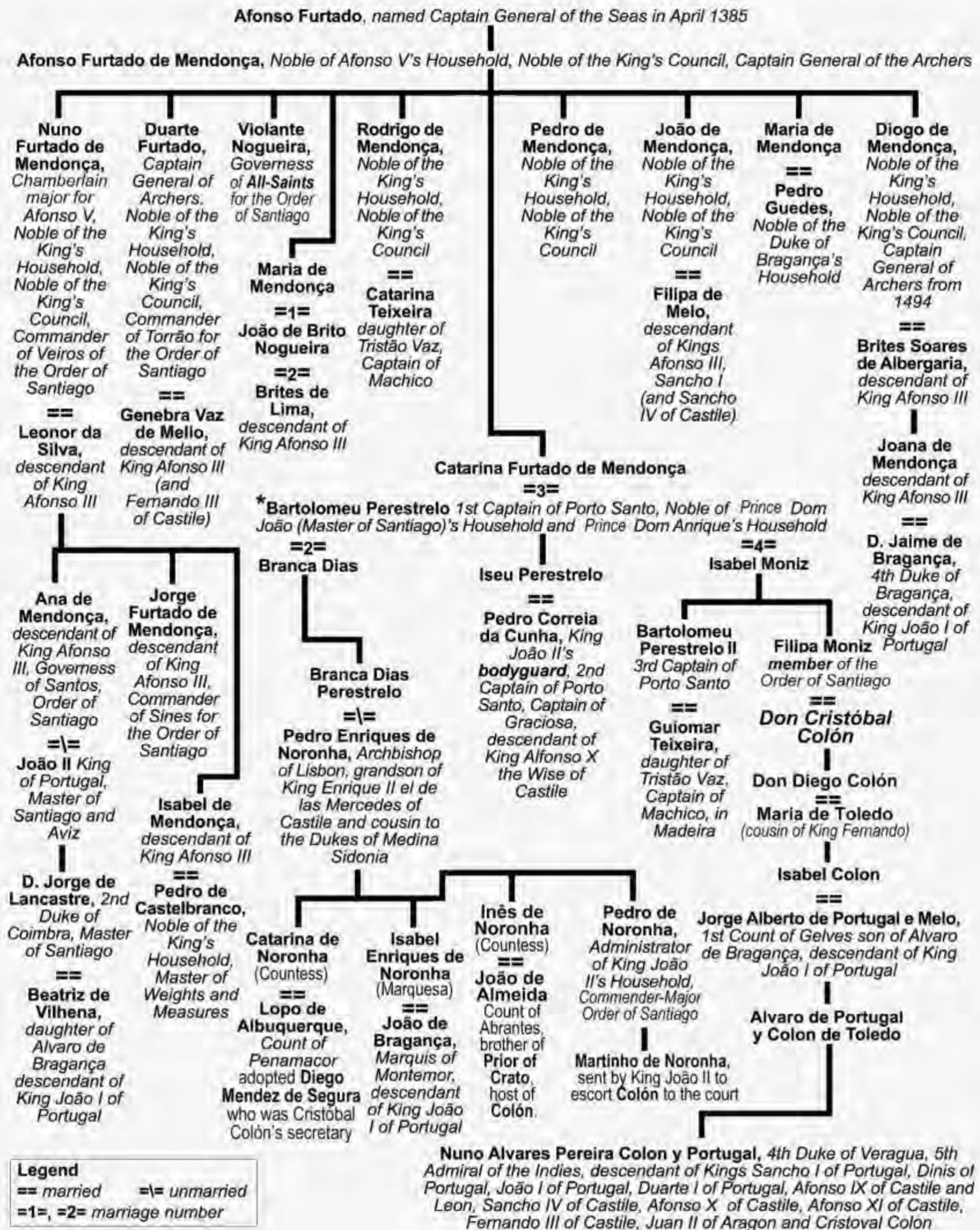


Figure 9.6: Royal Family Ties: Cristóbal Colón's in-laws, the Perestrelas, the Mendonças, the Furtados and the Noronhas, were all connected to King João II's Royal Household, they were members of the Order of Santiago and descendants of kings. Note the different royal lines that converge onto D. Nuno Álvares Pereira Colón y Portugal, Fifth Admiral of Indies and Governor of Portugal. How does a Genoese Colombo of low birth fit into this genealogy. The answer is that he never could fit and that Don Cristóbal Colón was a nobleman, son of noble parents, a member of Santiago for whom the doors of its monasteries were open, but whose true lineage has been hidden from us.

Noronha union were born elite grandchildren of Bartolomeu Perestrelo, all of them great-grandchildren of King Enrique II of Castile and Fernando I of Portugal, (SEE FIGURE 9.7):

D. Catarina de Noronha – married to D. Lopo de Albuquerque, Count of Penamacor, (traitor to King João II, who used the alias Pedro Nunes and held in the London Tower.) He was King Afonso V's Chief Falconer, Lord Chamberlain, Chief Steward, Captain of the Royal Guard and Royal Ambassador to Rome and France for King Afonso V. The Count of Penamacor was the adoptive father of Diego Méndez de Segura, future secretary of Colón, as shown in FIGURE 9.6.²⁵² The Count of Penamacor, is buried in the Convent of Santo Antonio da Castanheira, near Vila Franca de Xira. The same convent where Cristóbal Colón visited Queen Leonor on March 11, 1493 (SEE FIGURE 9.8). Their son, D. Garcia de Albuquerque, married his cousin Leonor Perestrelo. D. Lopo de Albuquerque took part in the treason against King João II in 1484 supported by Queen Isabel of Spain, as mentioned in Chapter 5.

D. Isabel Henriques de Noronha – (called Isabel da Silva in Spain) married D. João de Bragança, brother of the Duke of Braganza, Marquis of Montemor, Supreme Military Leader of the Kingdom, great-grandson of King João I of Portugal. This Marquis was the initiator the 1483 treason against King João II supported by Queen Isabel of Spain, as also mentioned in Chapter 5.

D. Fernando de Noronha – Governor of the House of "Queen" Dona Juana "Her Excellency" during her exile in Portugal.²⁵³

D. Pedro de Noronha – Lord Chamberlain of King João II, Comendador-Major of the Military Order of Santiago and Lord of Cadaval, Ambassador to Pope Innocent VIII. The Lord Chamberlain was the highest post at the court and responsible for all day-to-day functions. The son of this D. Pedro, called D. Martinho de Noronha, was the messenger that King João II sent to bring D. Cristóbal Colón from Lisbon to the court at Vale do Paraíso on March 8, 1493.

D. Inês de Noronha – married D. João de Almeida, Count of Abrantes, brother of D. Diogo Fernandes de Almeida, the Prior of Crato who was entrusted by King João II with hosting D. Cristóbal Colón at Vale del Paraíso, March 9-11, 1493. Their brother, D. Francisco de Almeida, became First Viceroy of India and was married to Brites Pereira, daughter of Vasco Martins Moniz, uncle of D. Cristóbal Colón's wife. The Almeidas were one of the most powerful families in Portugal during João II's reign.²⁵⁴

All of these grandchildren of Captain Bartolomeu Perestrelo were nieces/nephews of Filipa Moniz and of Cristóbal Colón, all were of royal blood and so important that they were married to Counts, Marquises, were put in charge of the king's court, named Comendador Major of the Order of Santiago and in charge of the household of Spain's deposed Queen.

It is undeniable that D. Cristóbal Colón's in-laws were above the average nobles of the kingdom and had great connections and influence in the court of Portugal. Bartolomeu Perestrelo I also married Catarina Furtado de Mendonça with whom he had at least three daughters. One of these, Izeu Perestrelo, married Pedro Correia da Cunha, Second Captain of Porto Santo, First Captain of Graciosa in the Azores and, even more importantly, was one of the twenty five Royal Guards of King João II.

John Boyd Thacher wrote that:

*May, 1458, Prince Henry, by virtue of his authority as Grand Master of the Order of Christ, appointed Pedro Correa da Cunha, the son-in-law of Bartholomeu Perestrello, to be Governor of Porto Santo. When Bartholomeu II became of age and returned from Africa, where he had been employed in arms, he claimed his rights as Governor and obtained them March 15, 1473. Pedro Correa died in 1499 and was buried in the chapel of St. João in the monastery of Carmo at Lisbon - where Izeu Perestrelo was also buried.*²⁵⁵

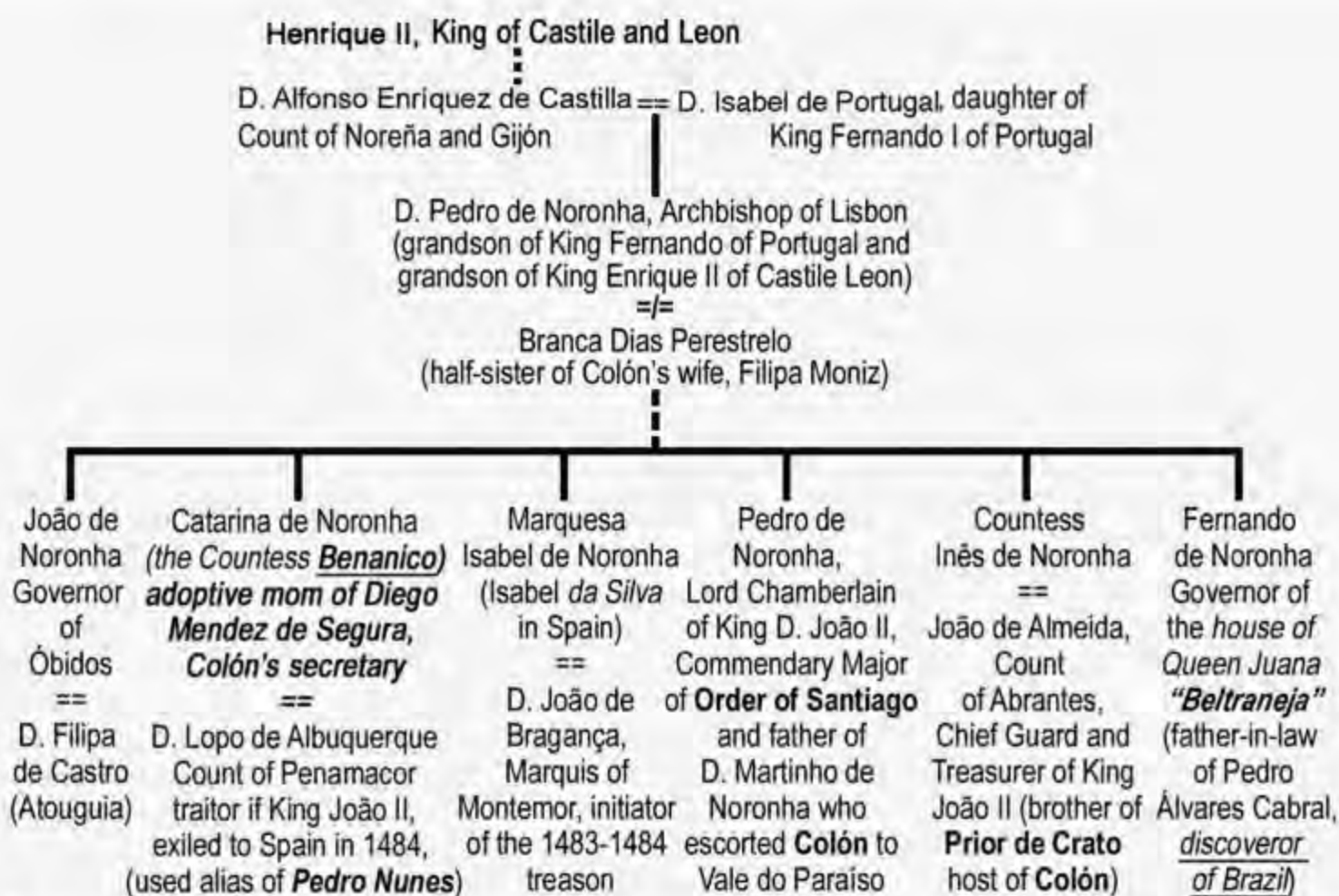


Figure 9.7: The Noronha-Perestrelo Family. Colón's sister-in-law, Branca Dias Perestrelo, was the mother-in-law of two Counts and one Marquis, as well as mother of King João II's Lord Chamberlain. Her daughter married to João de Almeida, was the sister-in-law of Diogo Fernandes de Almeida, (Prior of Crato) who hosted Cristóbal Colón at Vale do Paraíso (these Almeidas descended from King Pedro I of Portugal.) Branca's grandson, Martinho de Noronha, was sent by João II to escort Colón to and from the court.

Again we see two very important nobles buried at Carmo, in Lisbon, with Filipa Moniz, yet there are no plaques there to remind the visitors of this fact nor that they are connected to Cristóbal Colón.

Nuno Furtado de Mendonça was brother of Catarina Furtado de Mendonça and therefore brother-in-law of Bartolomeu Perestrelo I. Nuno married a descendant of Portugal's King Afonso III and was the Chamberlain of King D. Afonso V. His daughter, Ana de Mendonça, thus Bartolomeu Perestrelo's niece, was King João II's mistress. Captain Bartolomeu's niece gave birth to King João II's son, D. Jorge de Lancastre, who was invested as Master of the Military Order of Santiago in 1492 by King João II.

The king's mistress was direct cousin to Izeu Perestrelo, Filipa Moniz's half-sister. Violante Nogueira, sister of Catarina Furtado de Mendonça, aside from being the Governess for King Duarte's daughters, was Ana Mendonça's aunt as well as Izeu Perestrelo's aunt.

How amazing is it that the sister-in-law of Cristóbal Colón's father-in-law raised a queen and an Empress and only 500 years later the world is learning of this? The truth is that the current "Fairy Tale" of the Genoese weaver was only able to take hold because these facts were not spoken about by the Portuguese academics and no one else bothered to look into this.

Furthermore, Bartolomeu Perestrelo's father-in-law, the father of Catarina Furtado de Mendonça, was Captain General of the Archers for king Afonso V and her grandfather was Captain General of the Seas, lending credence to how influential and connected was the family of Cristóbal Colón's wife. However, there is more about this family's important positions in the kingdom.



Figure 9.8: Tomb of Colón's traitor nephew, D. Lopo de Albuquerque, Count of Penamacor, inside the Convent of Santo Antonio, Loja Nova, near Vila Franca de Xira, formerly known as Santo Antonio of Castanheira, where Colón went to meet the Queen of Portugal on March 11, 1493 (author photo, 2007).

Catarina Furtado de Mendonça's seven brothers, thus Perestrelo's brothers-in-law, were all knights initiated into the Portuguese Military Order of Santiago, (where João II was Master,) they were all tilted *Nobles of the Royal Household* and of the *Royal Council*. Luis Adão da Fonseca confirms further that *the women of this Mendonça family occupied in these decades the highest places in the Monastery of All-Saints*, exactly the motherhouse of the female segment of the Order of Santiago where Filipa Moniz lived.²⁵⁶

You cannot get closer to the throne than being a king's councilman, his bodyguard, his chamberlain and his mistress, nor is there a much higher noble title than being Count and Marquis. Filipa Moniz's extended family and thus relatives of Cristóbal Colón by his 1479 marriage, filled all of these titles and positions, long before Colón became famous.

With his last wife, Isabel Moniz, Captain Bartolomeu Perestrelo had at least two children, Bartolomeu Perestrelo II, Third Captain of Porto Santo and Filipa Moniz Perestrelo, wife of Cristóbal Colón. Other children mentioned in the Spanish documents are:

- **Violante (Briolanja) Moniz**, married first to Miguel Muliarte. After Admiral Colón assassinated Muliarte, Colón got the Florentine banker, Francisco de Bardi to marry Violante.
- **Friar D. Cristóvão Moniz**, prior of the Carmo Monastery in Lisbon.
- **Ana Moniz**, was married the nobleman Juan Barahona, who declared himself brother-in-law of Bartolomeu Perestrelo II.²⁵⁷

These relatives of Filipa Moniz appear to have been condemned to obscurity in Portugal due to their ties to the mysterious First Admiral of the Indies.

Colón's son, the Portuguese D. Diego Colón, was forced by King Fernando of Spain to marry the king's cousin María de Toledo y Rojas, a royal blood from several lines.

Closing the circle of the Portuguese nobility and royal blood, Isabel Colón, granddaughter of Admiral Cristóbal Colón, married D. Jorge Alberto de Portugal y Melo [Bragança], First Count of Gelves, great-great grandson of King João I of Portugal.

D. Jorge Alberto de Portugal y Melo was nephew of the Marquis of Montemor and son of D. Álvaro de Bragança. Álvaro de Bragança was Lord of Tentúgal, Póvoa, Buarcos and Cadaval, chancellor of the Kingdom of Portugal until his exile to Isabel's court and great-grandson of D. Nuno Álvares Pereira and of King João I, as seen in FIGURE 9.6.

When the treasons against João II took place this D. Álvaro de Bragança was exiled from Portugal and moved to Spain. There he was called D. Álvaro de *Portugal* and named Court Justice Minister by his cousin, Queen Isabel of Spain. This D. Álvaro de Bragança as brother of the Marquis of Montemor, was brother-in-law to Colón's niece, the Marquesa of Montemor. At the same time D. Álvaro was father-in-law of Colón's granddaughter Isabel Colón. This Don Álvaro *de Portugal* while living in Spain defended D. Cristóbal Colón's rights against the Spanish throne.

In one of his letters, Colón reminds King Fernando of this by insisting with the king that he was due "*the tenth part, as Your Highness agreed in Burgos due to the intervention of Don Álvaro de Portugal*."²⁵⁸

What reason did the Portuguese D. Álvaro de Bragança have to come to the aid of D. Cristóbal Colón against the king of Spain? Is it not likely that it was because Colón was one of his countrymen and a family relation? All of these marriages prove the existence of a wide web of blue bloods surrounding D. Cristóbal Colón and tying him to his Portuguese Master, King João II.

How can any historian believe today that a certain "foreigner Colombo, peasant and poor son of a Genoese wool-weaver," could have scaled the fortified walls of All-Saints Monastery, forced the Master of Santiago, King João II, to authorize his marriage to the aunt of King João II's Chamberlain, and be suddenly immersed so deeply into the restricted circle of the Portuguese high society to the point of plunging into Portugal's secrets of navigation, as clearly Colón was, fifteen years prior to becoming famous as Spain's Admiral of the Indies?

These rarely discussed ties of Cristóbal Colón to the Portuguese nobility, were minimized, many times ignored and even denied by many who understood the impossibility of a Genoese weaver marrying any Portuguese noble. However, the truth is now here for everyone to see. The Portuguese, beginning with Rui de Pina, have partaken in propagating a fallacy of history with worldwide repercussions.

MORE COLOMBOS WHO WERE NOT

Aside from sailing to Canada in 1477 (SEE CHAPTER 11), Admiral Colón had sailed for a long time in a fleet that was commanded by one of his famous relatives also called “Colombo.” The exact words from Colón’s son Fernando are:

A notable man of his name and family, called Colombo, very well-known in the seas due to the fleet that he maintained against the infidels... He was called Colombo the Younger, to differentiate him from the other [Colombo the Elder] that had previously been a great man of the sea.

It is important to understand that during the Spanish War of Succession, Portugal’s King Afonso V had at his service two French Admirals, both of them were called “Colombo.”

The Vice-Admiral of Normandy, who used to be called simply “Colombo” received the qualifier of “the Elder” because a new *Colombo* arrived on the scene. The new *Colombo* became identified as “the Younger.”²⁵⁹ *Colombo the Elder*’s real name was not *Colombo*, his real name was *Guillaume de Casenove Coullon*. The name “Colombo” was his nickname or *Nome de Guerre* and it was the name of his warship *La Colombe* (the Dove).²⁶⁰

Portugal’s Ambassador, Lopo de Albuquerque, Count of Penamacor, had gotten Louis XI of France to promise extensive military action along the Spanish-French border in support of Afonso V in Queen Juana’s War of Succession.

Shrewd and vicious, the French king, Louis XI, spun deceptive snares, which earned him the nicknames of “the Cunning” in France and “the Fox,” in Portugal, with very good reason. Louis XI was playing both sides of the Spanish War of Succession cunningly.

Louis XI sent his Vice-Admiral of Normandy, *Colombo the Elder* and his Chamberlain, *Colombo the Younger* to aid the Portuguese war fleet against Isabel and Fernando along the Straits of Gibraltar. However, at the same time Louis XI was attempting to arrange for his son to marry Isabel and Fernando’s daughter, Princess Isabel.

Louis XI’s border war in support of Portugal never materialized. King Afonso V of Portugal sailed to France in 1476 to personally ask the engagement of the French king against Spain. Afonso V’s committee again included Colón’s nephew, the Count of Penamacor, as well as king João II’s future spy, Pêro da Covilhã (SEE CHAPTER 12.) The fleet of twenty one ships left Lisbon for France on August 1476.²⁶¹

Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão wrote that, “D. Afonso V sailed to Lagos, where the Monarch was saluted by Admiral Coulon [*Colombo the Elder*], who patrolled the Atlantic coast at the service of the king of France.”²⁶² Just two weeks prior, Colombo the Elder had helped Portugal break an attempted siege of Ceuta by Spanish ships allied, irony of ironies, with a Muslim fleet.²⁶³ At this time, mid 1476, Colombo the Elder was involved in a famous battle along with his Portuguese co-commander Pedro de Ataíde, known as “o Inferno” (the Hell) and Louis XI’s Chamberlain, *Colombo the Younger*. Their famous battle near Portugal’s Cape San Vicente involved a fleet of eight Genoese ships and after defeating them, Colombo the Elder took his fleet to Lisbon, where he remained until December 1476.²⁶⁴

The other French Admiral fighting alongside Colombo “the Elder” and Pedro de Ataíde, “the Hell”, one year later escorted King Afonso V on his return from France to Portugal. He was Colombo “the Younger.” Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão explains that “the command of the return fleet was entrusted to ‘Misser Gorje’... having Afonso V arrived at Cascais [Portugal] on November 15 [1477].”

The name of this “Misser Gorje,” who commanded the fleet of Portugal’s Afonso V, was written in French as *Jorge Patiologot du Vissagat*, also called “George le Grec” [George the Greek]. He was the captain of King Luis XI’s squadrons. In November 1477 George le Grec received letters of natural-

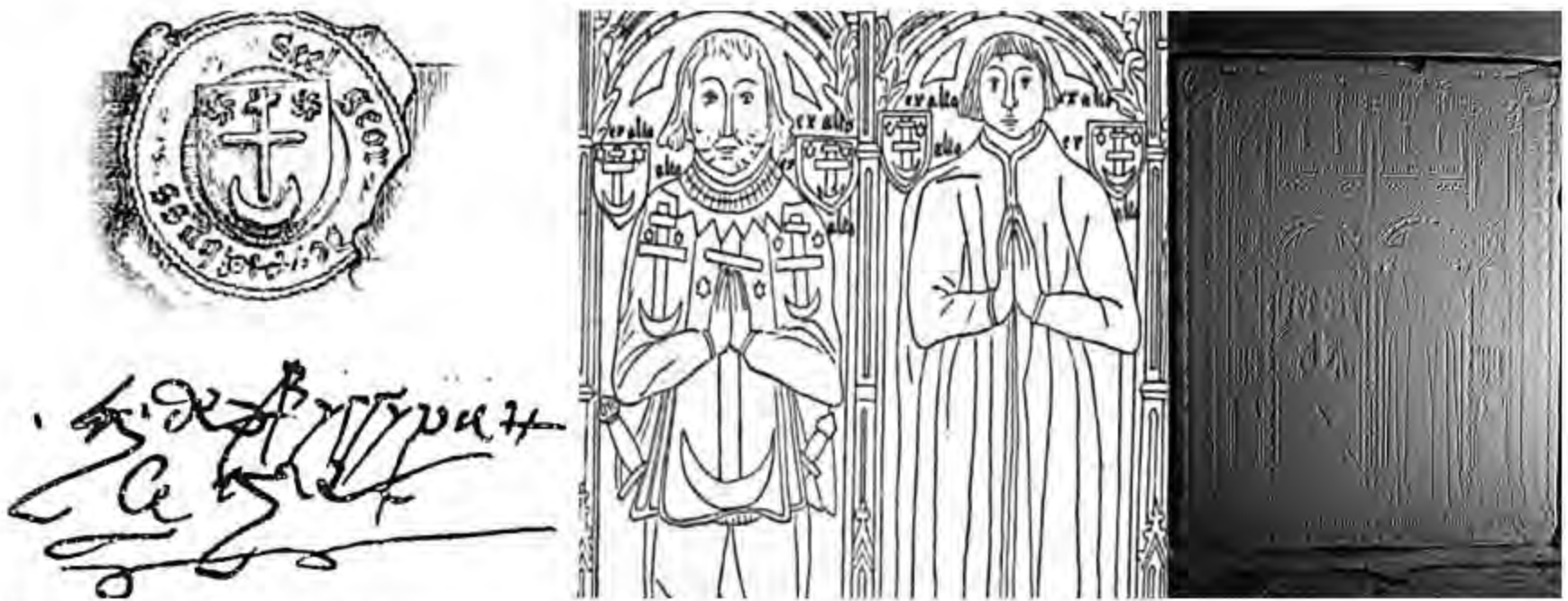


Figure 9.9: Seal and signature of the Viscount "G. De Byssipatt le Grec" (left) along with a tombstone from Hannaches, France, where the Bissipat's are buried (right). One of the figure has the same coat of arms as on the seal.

ization in France.²⁶⁵ George *le Grec* was none other than the famous *Colombo the Younger*. He belonged to one of the western world's most important imperial families, the Byzantine Palaiologos [Greek: Παλαιολόγος]. He was Byzantine royalty.

King Luis XI of France described *George le Grec* as a Prince "most illustrious, descendant of the Byzantine emperors, adviser and our chief steward, Knight and Captain of the King's ship" *la Normande*.²⁶⁶ On April 1471, *George le Grec* was part of a Calais Garrison and he is called a *Knight* on a pardon letter received from King Edward IV of England.²⁶⁷

Now that we identified *Colombo the Younger*, Admiral Colón's relative, it is evident that his true name was not *Colombo*, nor was it *George le Grec* but actually Georgios Palaiologos *Dishypatos*, or *Byssypatt*, as he signed on his documents (SEE FIGURE 9.9). "George de Bissipat, dit le Grec," a royal Prince, was protected and honored by the King of France who married him to lady Marguerite de Poix and named him Viscount of Falaise, and Lord of Hannaches and of Troissereux.

Colombo the Younger died in 1496, thus, as Chamberlain of the King of France, he would have plenty of opportunity, along with his children, to mingle with their relative, Bartolomé Colón, future Lieutenant of the New World, who lived at the court of France until late 1493.

The family of George de Bissipat (*Colombo*) ended up marrying into the Portuguese Count of Monsanto's family through Louis de Dommartin, Lord of Fontenoy-le-Château, who was a descendant of the Portuguese D. Margarida de Castro, sister of D. Álvaro de Castro, First Count of Monsanto. The Lord of Fontenoy-le-Château's wife was Philippa de La Mark, daughter of Hélène de Bissipat (*Colombo*), viscountessa of Falaise and granddaughter of *Colombo the Younger*.

This connection is important because Philippa de La Mark (*Colombo*) and her husband Louis de Dommartin were not only Lords of Fontenoy-le-Château but are tied to the construction of Waldseemüller's world map, created in Saint-Dié-des-Vosges, France. The Grand Provost of Saint-Dié-des-Vosges was none other than Louis de Dommartin.²⁶⁸

We are highlighting all of this here because historians were aware from Fernando Colón's *Histoire...*, that Cristóbal Colón sailed for a long time along with his relative, the corsair named *Colombo the Younger*, with whom he attacked some ships at Cape St. Vicente in Portugal. However, some historians appear to be completely unaware that the two French corsair Colombos were actually at the service of the King of Portugal in 1476 fighting against the Spanish. What we have are two famous seamen both named Colombo – *Colombo the Elder* and *Colombo the Younger* – however, just like Cristóbal Colón, neither of these were Colombo by birth name, only by nickname.

There was also a Juan Antonio, described as relative of the Admiral, who captained ships to the New World and is shown in later writings as Juan Antonio "*Colombo*." However, this surname is obviously not the correct birth name since the Admiral's family was always known as Colón and never

Colombo. If Juan Antonio was a relative, then his family had to be either Colón, or from a family whose nickname was “Colombo.”

It is obvious that the real names of George Bissipat, Casenove Coullon and Cristóbal Colón were never “Colombo.” If people called any of them Colombo, it was as a *Nom de Guerre*, a nickname. Therefore, by the same token, the attribution of *Colombo* to Juan Antonio must be as a nickname not as a family name.

In Fernando Colón’s Testament he names one of his servants as *Juan Antonio* from *Fontenoy-le-Château* in Lorraine, France. Fernando’s servant mentioned in the Testament is most likely the same relative Juan Antonio “Colombo” that captained the ships for Fernando’s father, the Admiral. On 11/4/1509, Juan Antonio is described as “*mayordomo del muy magnifico sennor Don Diego Colon, almirante de las Yndias*” (Chamberlain of the very magnificent Lord, Don Diego Colón, Admiral of the Indies) in a document depositing Cristóbal Colón’s bones at the Las Cuevas Monastery.²⁶⁹

Anne de Neufchâtel, granddaughter of the Portuguese Margarida de Castro, was then the Lady of Fontenoy-le-Château by marriage. Her son married *Colombo the Younger’s* granddaughter, *Hélène de Bissipat, Viscountess of Falaise*. Could this Juan Antonio from Fontenoy-le-Château be a son or grandson of the famous *Colombo the Younger*, George Bissipat? If he was, then he could easily have been called Juan Antonio “Colombo” after his famous ancestor.

The author’s own grandfather was nicknamed “Rei” (King) and no one on our village ever referred to our family by the family name of Rosa. Even today when visiting my homeland, if I say that I am from the Rosa family many will not know who I refer to, but if I say that I am a *Rei*, they immediately know who my family is. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to see that Juan Antonio, as George Bissipat’s descendant, would be called “Colombo” even though he was Juan Antonio Bissipat.

UNRAVELING THE THREADS

As one can see, the fabric of Colón’s life weaves through the lives of so many Portuguese nobles. Encounters that appear to be casual happenings at first glance were nothing of the sort. The pieces of the puzzle left to us by D. Fernando Colón were clues intended to lead us to the true lineage of his famous father because he could not make the information public at the time. In many of the passages relating to the Admiral’s life there are lies that make no sense and truths, now apparent, about his father’s ties to Portuguese nobles. Following the ties to these Portuguese families we find them connected to Colón’s wife’s family.

Most of the persons who appear in Colón’s life after 1484, both in Portugal and Spain, had a secret reason for being there and were connected to the King of Portugal. For instance, the Prior de Crato, mentioned in Colón’s log, who hosted the Admiral in his house for two days at Vale do Paraíso, in March 1493, and D. Martinho de Noronha, sent by King João II to Restelo to escort Colón to the Portuguese court, are two such cases.

These two high nobles were not chosen at random to be host and messenger to Colón.

D. Diogo Fernandes de Almeida, Prior de Crato, was not only one of João II’s most trusted men and a member of the Junta of Scientists, but his brother, the Count of Abrantes, was married a niece of Colón’s wife. About this Prior de Crato, Colón wrote that he had “*recibió muy muchas honras y favores*” received many high honors and favors.

D. Martinho de Noronha, the King’s messenger, was son of D. Pedro de Noronha, João II’s Lord Chamberlain, and grandson of Branca Dias Perestrelo, sister of Colón’s wife. Thus the king’s messenger was Colón’s nephew.

On Monday, March 11, 1493, after eating with King João II, Admiral Colón prepared himself to return to the Niña and contrary to what has been wrongly and deceptively written by the Portuguese chroniclers, the king “*always ordered him to be seated and made him great honors... always showing him much love*” ordering his knights and nobles to escort Admiral Colón,

Admiral Colón further says, “*the King received me with the greatest of honors and made me great favors and ordered that I sit and spoke in a very good way... and showed much pleasure that the voyage had been made and had been successful.*” Again João II orders D. Martinho de Noronha to honor his uncle, D. Cristóbal Colón, by escorting him back to the ship.

How can any one see all of these nobles, all of these famous Portuguese navigators and all of these royal blue-bloods, that king João II held in such high regard and trust, mingling with Cristóbal Colón; helping him, hosting him, throwing him parades worthy of the greatest heroes, - even a special request from the Queen to go visit her- and still continue insisting that Colón was a nobody weaver and a stranger to the Portuguese court prior to 1493?²⁷⁰ Why have we not included him in the same group of trusted noble men of the King of Portugal: his servants?

The lattice of genealogical connections is enormous: a weaved web that encompasses the Portuguese Admirals, navigators, knights, members of the military orders, the kings of Portugal and D. Cristóbal Colón. For 500 years no chronicle or book has presented these connections, on the contrary, they tried to deny there was any connection between Colón and the Portuguese.

By taking on a false identity, the Admiral became alienated from his true lineage at both courts and lived solely as his alter ego of “XpoFerens Kólon,” – a newly invented man without a past. All of the people who knew him in Portugal understood the reasons for the secrecy surrounding his identity. Amongst those Portuguese was another highly trusted agent of João II named Rui de Pina.

On the contract for the first voyage, called *Capitulaciones de Santa Fe*, signed on April 17, 1492, the future Admiral is clearly titled “*Don*” *Cristóbal de Colon* by the court before he had done anything.²⁷¹ It is obvious that Admiral Colón could never have been of peasant stock.

The title of “Don” was an elite prefix used by members of the high nobility to differentiate them from the lower nobility. Cristóbal Colón was titled “Don” as were his two brothers D. Bartolomé Colón and D. Diego Colón and his two sons D. Diego Colón and D. Fernando Colón.

Nobody has been able to explain this award of the “Don” title to the Admiral’s two brothers simply by them showing up in Spain, this would never happen if they were wool-weavers from anywhere. The two of them show up in Spain, are granted favors by Queen Isabel and King Fernando and then titled with high nobility qualifiers, why?

We must accept the only answer to be that they were already high nobility prior to 1492 because it is the only reasonable explanation for why the both of them were elevated into the club of the high noble elite without having lifted a finger in any great endeavor of the kingdom. When looking at the whole scenario, it is impossible to fit peasant wool-weavers into this story.

The Admiral’s son, D. Diego Colón, who was a Portuguese, was named Page to the Spanish court on May 8, 1492, this was three months before the fleet lifted anchor on the First Voyage and ten months before the Admiral’s successful return to Spain.

What an incredible gift for the son of a “peasant wool-weaver” to be made a Page to the future king and awarded a yearly stipend and yet, we are supposed to accept that no one in Spain knew the true lineage of all these “Colóns.”

How and why could such a thing happen without the monarchs having any idea who they were?

Cristóbal Colón only lifted anchor August 3, 1492. Yet his son was already a Page for three months and all this without the Spanish court knowing if the voyage was going to be successful or not! Naming the Portuguese-born D. Diego Colón as Royal Page long before the triumphant return voyage is the best indication of the social stature of the Colón family. It indicates that they were already noble and that Colón’s nobility was not acquired after the Admiral’s successful return, as historians had declared.

Before the facts presented in this book there wasn’t a good explanation for neither these nobility traits nor a clear understanding of D. Cristobal Colón’s connections to the Portuguese nobles, his relatives by marriage. For this reason many historians were confused about who was who and when a Portuguese brother-in-law is mentioned it was not easy to fit him into the hierarchy of the Portuguese court or in the European nobility tree.

In this chapter we presented information that for the first time places Don Cristóbal Colón inside his high nobility family and social circle. This makes him “guilty by association” of being a high noble since there are way too many connections with the nobility and royalty to keep justifying a non-noble birth.

Some Portuguese writers have intentionally attempted to maintain these noble connections murky because of their implications, they didn’t want to bring more fame to a man whom they saw as a peasant, a liar and an ignorant sailor.

Others have simply not done any investigative work because they saw Admiral Colón through the eyes of his first Portuguese chronicler as an “*arrogant self-important disrespectful wool-weaving peasant who was lost on his voyage and knew nothing about navigation.*”

Because of this manufactured disdain for Colón, Portuguese historians have not been interested in digging into the pre-1493 archives in search of documents that contain the true name of Filipa Moniz’s husband, since he never was a “Colombo.”

In the heart of the Portuguese academics there still lives a hatred for this man, a disdain based on false information passed down by the chroniclers who called him a “*fantasist*” a worthless dog “*who went off to bark his dreams in Spain.*”

We feel that what has been presented so far is sufficient to prove the history was incorrect. Even so, many today, like Morison before us, still allow themselves to be so convinced by the old fairytale that they insist in accepting grave impossibilities as mere discrepancies. They see the noble marriage, the title of Don and his son being a Page as having no relevant weight to the biography of the First Admiral of the Ocean Sea.

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

If one asks, was there censorship in Portugal around the life of Cristobal Colón? The answer can only be “Yes.”

It is yes, because no Portuguese chronicler or genealogist ever wrote about Colón prior to 1504 and even then, they only mention him as an “unknown” who came into Lisbon harbor on March 4, 1493 from discovering the New World. Nothing was said about his Portuguese past. Why?

Are we to accept that it was because Rui de Pina or Garcia de Resende, both of which were alive and well before 1493, during Colón’s Portuguese life, had never heard of him until March 1493? It is so incredibly far-fetched that a man, who was uncle to the King’s Lord Chamberlain, brother-in-law to the king’s bodyguard, whose wife’s sisters were cousins to the King’s mistress, and who had regular direct audiences with king João II, was unknown to the chroniclers who surrounded that very king.

They wrote as if no one had ever heard of this man. It was as if he never existed in Portugal. While writing about Filipa Moniz they simple declare that she married a certain “Italian Colombo” and that “this Colombo, as all affirmed was Italian” and even stranger is when they wrote, “Filipa Moniz Perestrelo married Colombo who discovered the Western Indies for Castile.”

The way the phrases are constructed and what is left out of them is highly suspicious because it goes against logic.

One would expect that the chroniclers would not have missed the opportunity to tell the world that this “*unworthy Colombo*” had learned everything he knew from the Portuguese. Yet they didn’t do that. One would expect the Portuguese to emphasize that this now famous Admiral and Viceroy was uncle to so many high level Portuguese nobles, yet they hushed that up. They wrote nothing about his Portuguese life nor about his connections to King João II, which he very clearly had. Furthermore, the fact is that Filipa Moniz married him fifteen years prior to the First Voyage and by all accounts, Filipa was already dead when he became famous with his new name.

If the Portuguese chroniclers knew Cristóbal Colón only through his Portuguese wife, who was already dead when he became famous, than they had to know many other things about him, such as his lineage, his birthplace, his true name, his connections to the Portuguese nobility and the reasons

why King João II would authorize his marriage with that noble Comendadora.

But by writing only about the Spanish events, by utilizing not only his false name but corrupting that name from Colón to Colombo, the Portuguese chroniclers covered up the whole Portuguese life of the Admiral, as well as the name he was known by in Portugal when he married in 1479.

At the same time they concealed his connections to the Portuguese court, his many years of navigation at the service of the Kings Afonso V and João II, his connections to the Portuguese Junta, or Council of Mathematicians and his past residence at the Portuguese Island of Madeira.

Yet countless persons in Portugal had to have known the discoverer very well prior to 1484 and had to know about his direct contact with the king before and after “running away” to Spain. He lived in Madeira and sailed to highly secret places such as St. Jorge da Mina.

Lets not forget that in the voyage to build fort St. Jorge at Mina in 1481-1482 participated only people that João II trusted and who were meritorious of the “great secrecy and rigorous sworn oaths” by all involved. Lets not also forget that King João II himself used to talk to Colón about matters of discovery. The king of Portugal even showed him bamboos and pines coming from western seas as proof that there were lands to the west.

Furthermore, João II allowed Colón to have access to secret Portuguese information such as the secret scientific measurements from José Vizinho at the Equator in 1485 and the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope in 1488 and told him on March 1493 that there was a continent (Brazil) south-west of the Cape Verde Islands.

King João II was not an idiot. He would never share these Portuguese secrets with someone he could not trust, especially while Colón is next door working for his only enemy in Europe. It is not possible for Cristóbal Colón to have been an insignificant figure at the Portuguese court whose name the Portuguese quickly forgot once he was not around. Once they saw him sailing into the Port of Lisbon, on March 4, 1493, the chroniclers pretend they had no idea who he was nor that he had sailed into that same port countless times under the Portuguese flag.

Why then, does Rui de Pina give us such a sterile account of that event saying simply that on March 4 arrived at Restelo an “Italian Colonbo” and nothing more? Why does he not mention anything about his previous Portuguese life, his marriage to the noble comendadora and his inner connections to the court? Was it because that would betray his king and his nation?

Nothing was mentioned. If it wasn't for decades of investigation, we would not have learned that Colón was uncle to D. João of Bragança, Marquis of Montemor and Supreme Military Leader of the kingdom, nor that he was uncle to that famous Ambassador and Captain of the Royal Guard, D. Lopo de Albuquerque, Count of Penamacor, not even that he was uncle to the King's Lord Chamberlain, D. Pedro de Noronha, and thus to D. Martinho de Noronha, who escorted him from Lisbon to the court.

Furthermore, being connected by marriage to the Portuguese families of Admirals Pedro Álvares Cabral and Vasco de Gama, as seen in FIGURE 9.10, it appears nobody had ever heard of this man in Portugal. It is as if Colón had just fallen from the sky on March 4, 1493 and become simply a “certain Italian Colonbo who discovered the Indies for Spain” and nothing more. The secret identity was now impenetrable and pushed onto the public full force.

Yet when Colón arrived at Santa Marin on February 19, 1493, announcing himself as Admiral Colón from Castile, the local Captain didn't ask “Colón who?” Instead he sent Colón fresh food saying, “he knew him very well.”

While stopping over at the Island of Madeira on 1498, Captain João Gonçalves da Camara threw a great celebration for this Colón, Admiral from Castile who was well known “*because he had been a resident there*,” a celebration worthy of a Portuguese hero. Are we to believe that both of these Captains only knew Colón by his secret alias, an alias that he had only assumed when he moved out of Portugal and forgot his real name that they used to know him by?

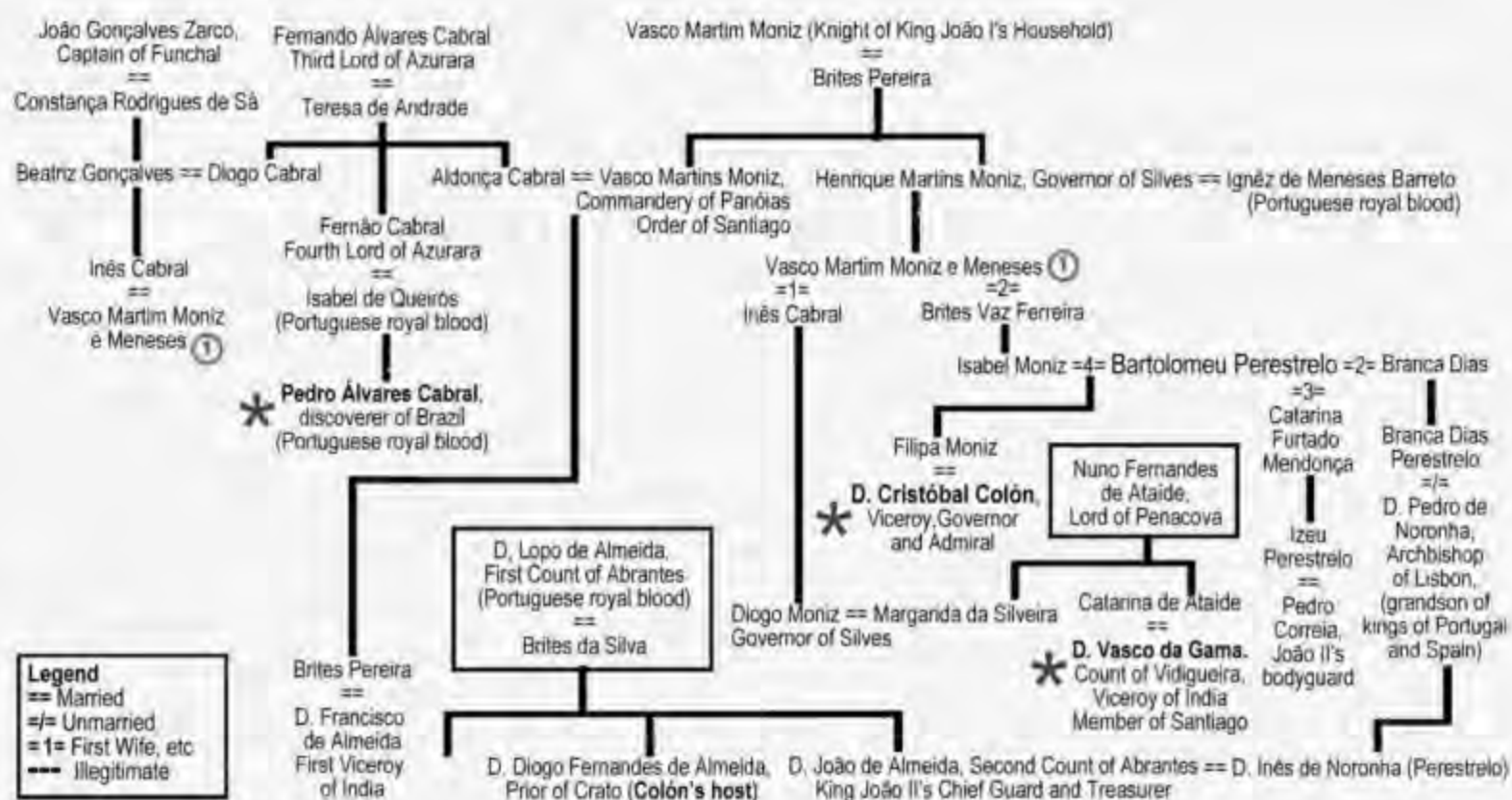


Figure 9.10: Admiral Colón was part of a web of elite Portuguese nobility that included the Zarco, Almeida, Cabral and Noronha families. The three great discoverers, **Colón**, **Cabral** and **Gama** were part of the same Portuguese clan. Note that Francisco de Almeida, First Viceroy of India, was brother of the Prior of Crato, Diogo Fernandes de Almeida, one of King João II's most trusted men and the host of Admiral Colón at Vale do Paraíso. The other brother, Second Count of Abrantes, was married to Filipa Moniz's niece.

All of these persons knew him before he assumed the new identity. They had known him by a different name, by a different title and in a different role before 1484, yet they had no problem still recognizing him over ten years later under the false name.

He was further known, not only to Rui de Pina but to the expert scientists of the Council of Mathematicians, by the Portuguese Royal House including Queen Leonor who sent a special messenger on March 11, 1493 to Vale do Paraíso *"with great insistence asking him not to leave without visiting her"* and once Colón stood before her, *"the Queen became very happy"* with his visit and treated him *"as a great Lord."* Why would the queen want to see him if she did not know who he was?

It was not normal for the Queen of Portugal to insist with foreigners who were visiting the King of Portugal to go out of their way to go see her. The queen requested this man's presence with great insistence and once there, he made the queen very happy to see him.

Should we keep insisting that this man was a peasant nobody and that nobody in Portugal knew his true name, status and identity, while they, at the same time, recognized him, threw him celebrations and requested his presence?

To accept such impossibility would be to completely ignore reality. Only in a fiction novel could one accept that a person who was unknown by their true name and status in Portugal would continue to be known after moving to another kingdom, changing his identity and living there in hiding for ten years, as the proponents of this history had forced us to believe.

However, it was not entirely the fault of the chroniclers and the history book writers. The Admiral bears the brunt of the misgivings and misconceptions about his life.

The good news is that, now the world's academics are changing their perspective on Colón. Although considered by many to have spent his youth as an illiterate peasant, Charles Hamilton, noted handwriting expert strongly suggests that Colón learned to write while young after a study of Colón's papers.²⁷² This is what Fernando Colón had already told us.

In Portugal the history of Colón is quickly readjusting to the new facts. On March 2013, Portugal celebrated, for the first time in 520 years, Cristóbal Colón's arrival at Lisbon on March 4, 1493. For 520 years Portugal ignored this arrival as insignificant, but in fact Lisbon was the first place in the Old World that the Admiral stepped onto after his great voyage. This was the 520th anniversary of the return from the Discovery of the New World and there is now talk about planning a regatta titled *Rota de Regresso/Return Route* to retrace that famous first return from Santo Domingo to Lisbon: www.returnroute.org.

Furthermore, after my presentation at the Portuguese Academy of History on May 16th, 2012 the President of the Portuguese Academy of History, Manuela Mendonça, lectured several times to the public in full support of what has been written in my various books. Regarding Filipa Moniz, Professor Mendonça stated:

*Cristóbal Colón married a woman of the House of Viseu. He was a highly regarded navigator; otherwise he would not have been given Filipa, daughter of a man as important as was Perestrelo. A lady who belonged to a military order of the utmost prestige in Portugal, such was the Order of Santiago, the Donas of Santos, part of the Military Order of Santiago. She was not, as was stated at one point, a poor orphan girl who was living there. That was not true at all. She was a Dona. A Lady who was at Santos. A protected Lady, naturally by the nobility, but in short, a Lady who had been placed there, due to her privileged stature.*²⁷³

Another well-respected Portuguese academic, João Abel da Fonseca, Deputy Secretary-General of the Marine Academy and Secretary of the Class of Maritime History, Academic Correspondent of the Portuguese Academy of History, Vice-President of the Section of History of the Geographical Society of Lisbon and Chairman of the Council of the Institute of European and Atlantic Culture, wrote that:

Any lucid historian (certainly if he is not lucid, he can hardly be considered a historian), given the knowledge of the restrictive social relationships that prevailed at that time, can never doubt the fact, to me more than obvious, that Cristóbal Colón had to be someone born of high nobility. Regarding this fact, it is no longer up for dispute. The proofs are so plentiful that, simply by enumerating them, one is left with this obvious conclusion. To try and disprove [Colón's high nobility birth] would be a waste of time.

Historians are suddenly making a 180° about face from a peasant wool-weaver to a man of high noble birth because the evidence that Admiral Colón was nobility is conclusive.

Was he a member of the Order of Santiago? We now have evidence that he could have been. It so happens that the Admiral's personal desk was preserved in his family until 1908 and brought to the United States in 1909. It is housed in a sanctuary at the Columbus Chapel and Boal Mansion Museum, in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania.

Aside from the great national treasure that Colón's desk is, it seems to confirm that Admiral Colón was a Member Knight of the Portuguese Military Order of Santiago, just like his wife was. The world is so lucky to have this remnant of his life survive until today. What is on the desk is a clue to his membership in the Santiago Order. The desk has seashells attached to it, some positioned uncannily like the Ss on Colón's signature. Another seashell is seen above the lock which has eight-pointed stars on it. The seashells are references to the Order of Santiago and the eight-pointed stars are references to the Order of Santiago as well as to the Order of Christ, (SEE FIGURE 9.11). Alejo Fernández also painted on Colón's robe a symbol that appears printed on the cover of the Order of Santiago's Rule Book, as shown in FIGURE 9.12. Little by little the 500-year-old cloak is being lifted off Admiral Colón's secrets, many of them hidden in plain sight.



Figure 9.11: The seashells are symbols of Santiago on the Admiral's personal desk also note eighth-pointed stars on the lock as well as the two obelisk type columns topped by spheres, similar to today's Freemasonry. (Photos by the author with permission of the Boalsburg Museum and Columbus Chapel).



Figure 9.12: The symbol of a crown surrounding two branches at the bottom of the cover of the Book of Rules for the Order of Santiago (circled), appears very similar to the symbol hidden on Colón's clothes (circled). The **L** on the book cover stood for Master D. Jorge's last name "Lancastre," inherited from his great-great-grandmother, Philippa of Lancaster, daughter of John of Gaunt, 1st Duke of Lancaster.

CHAPTER 10

MISCONCEPTIONS, MISGIVINGS AND MISLEADINGS

And all must be done secretly so that no one suspects him.

DON CRISTÓBAL COLÓN

The life of the First Admiral of the Indies presents itself as a truly thought-provoking puzzle. For those who intend to extract from it a true and accurate story, the lies, censorship and false information that has long-been accepted makes the task almost impossible. All historians face this challenge when they try to identify the facts through the opacity of 500 years of deceptions and censorship.

The Admiral is largely to blame for this, since he weaved around himself a web of mystery by cleverly avoiding using his given name and instead using the coded signature of “: Xpo Ferens ./” as already presented in FIGURE 7.1.

However, a share of the blame can be put on the monarchs of both kingdoms for whom he worked, who, knowingly helped propagate the charade. The misinformation conveyed by the writers of his day has been emboldened in the world’s history books. All of that, combined with other numerous, but unreliable sources, has assembled a story that is far from the truth.

We were all tricked into accepting the old narrative, but in reality, the facts not only do not confirm the official story, they contradict it. In 1902 Henry Vignaud, in his book *Toscanelli and Columbus*, said:

Columbus never spoke one word of truth on what related to himself personally; and his family, on this point, has carefully followed his example. Throughout his letters and writings he has sprinkled incorrect statements, skillfully devised, with the object either of obscuring certain portions of his life or of hiding traces of his origin; and, in fact, these statements have resulted in the creation of a sort of conventional history as to the formation of his ideas and the causes which led to his discovery. The principal disseminators of this history were Las Casas and Ferdinand Columbus (sic) and criticism today is destroying fragment by fragment this falsification.²⁷⁴

Henry Vignaud wrote this in 1902 and was right to say that Admiral Colón and others were lying, but when Vignaud wrote that he was “*destroying fragment by fragment*,” what he saw as the falsification, Vignaud was convinced that the noble Admiral was in fact that peasant wool-weaver *Columbus* presented in the *Raccolta*. That *Columbus* ended up depicted in all our history books, but we now can tell the man named *Columbus* was the wrong person.

The *Raccolta* publication was a political endeavor of the City of Genoa, which had only one purpose. The City of Genoa’s purpose was to promote amongst the world’s academics the idea that the navigator was the same person as their poor, unschooled weaver of low birth. This theory was totally wrong, as evidenced by the information now available.

It is apparent that the courts and Colón hid his true name and lineage not to hide a low birth from the monarchs, as Vignaud and all who came after him accepted, but instead to hide his true lineage from the public. There had to be colossal personal and political reasons for hiding Colón’s identity.

The supporters of the “peasant Genoese” theory keep it afloat using hearsay and by theorizing that a peasant could become an Admiral and Viceroy. The 1991 books and articles by the Portuguese academics, already mentioned, became widely accepted as the last word on the debate concerning the “Portuguese Theory.”²⁷⁵ Those respected authors didn’t take the trouble to investigate the riddle of Colón’s life; they merely reaffirmed the “Genoese theory” as the correct theory.

Those authors devoted their work not to a scientific endeavor. Their publications focused on attacking Mascarenhas Barreto's book about a *Portuguese Columbus*, which they did very well. But none of those authors made a serious investigation of the facts or even looked at the documents. In short, those often cited 1991 "books of Portuguese academics refuting the Portuguese theory" are of no help whatsoever to clarify the dilemma of the nationality since they also repeatedly relied on erroneous *Raccolta* facts in their blind support of the Genoese theory.

Our desire to research this subject was also sparked by Mascarenhas Barreto's book. Initially we assumed Barreto was way off the mark, however after years of digging into the facts, it became obvious that no one had ever reached the truth though Barreto made good points, his conclusions lacked factual evidence.

The crux of the "Cristóbal Colón" problem is not just that there are different stories sewn together as if one; but also the prejudices with which each writer helps to invent, disguise and distort the truth in order to fit a preconceived angle. A small example of this is the oft-quoted chapter by Professor Luis de Albuquerque, "*Lá vem Cristóvão Colombo, que tem muito que contar*" (Here comes Christopher *Columbus* who has much to tell us).

Professor Albuquerque's scientific reputation has served as a buttress for defending the "Genoese Columbus" against the "Portuguese Colón." However, Albuquerque did not do an investigation into the documents, because of that, he was wrong in writing, "*Columbus never wrote that he had been present during the debriefing between the king and [José] Vizinho. From what he writes we can only infer that, somehow, he knew [about the meeting]*" (page 139).²⁷⁶

In fact, Cristóbal Colón's note clearly says "I was present," showing that even careful writers, like Albuquerque, can be led astray by preconceived notions, as well as a refusal to truly examine the documents and juxtapose them with other facts.

The note that Luis de Albuquerque denied, was written by Colón in Latin as "*Rex Portugalie misit in Guinea, anno domini 1485, magister Jhosepius, fixicus eius et astrologus, ad compiendum altitudinem solis in tota Guinea, qui omnia adimpleuit et renunciavit dito serenissimo regi, me presente,*" (SEE FIGURE 10.1.)²⁷⁷

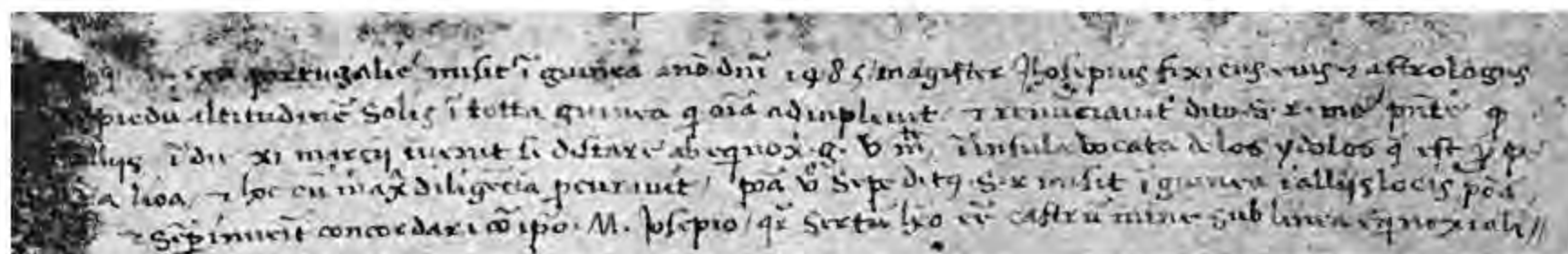


Figure 10.1: Personal note left by the Admiral about his secret meeting with the King of Portugal and Vizinho. At the end of the second line is abbreviated "me presente" (I present). The image with the transcription was taken from the book *Christopher Columbus: His Life, His Work, His Remains (as revealed by original printed and manuscript records)*, John Boyd Thacher, New York and London, G. P. Putman & Sons, 1903-4.

Colón's *note* explains that João II of Portugal, in order to obtain the measurements of the height of the Sun throughout Guinea [Africa], dispatched his physician and astrologer, Master José [Vizinho], who then, in 1485, presented his results to *the Most Serene King while he* [Colón] *was present*. Therefore, Cristóbal Colón, King João II and José Vizinho were together. Colón's note negates Albuquerque's affirmation that Colón "had never said that he was *present*."

By itself, Albuquerque's error is miniscule, but it becomes very serious when one wrongly utilizes the lack of Colón's presence at the Portuguese court to then deny that Colón took part in King João II's navigational and political secrets. This is then utilized to make the leap and contend that Colón could never have been Portuguese.

This is, in fact, the problem that encompasses the entire bibliography of Cristóbal Colón: truths are denied in order to enforce a fantasy, while imaginary facts are invented to deny reality. Five centuries of minor half-truths have added up to a monumental misinterpretation.

If trusted Portuguese academics deny the fact that the Admiral was present with the King of Portugal, brushing it off as an insignificant piece of the puzzle, can they be trusted to get other facts correct?

These Portuguese authors, considered authorities on the subject by foreigners, were not refuting the theory that Colón was Portuguese based on the indisputable facts of the life of the Admiral, but simply by accepting that the Genoese Theory was considered correct. To merely repeat what those foreign to the Portuguese history wrote only served to maintain the shaky status quo, not to resolve it.

The fact is that Cristóbal Colón tells us, in the above-mentioned note, that he was present with José Vizinho in 1485, while Vizinho presented to King João II the secret results of his assignment to go measure the height of the Sun at the Equator. Vizinho's scientific experiment resulted in a secret *Table to the Declination of the sun* which allowed Portuguese pilots to calculate their locations by utilizing the Sun. This was an extremely important navigation discovery that brought advantage to the Portuguese nation.

We must answer the question of "Why would King João II have shared such an important state secret with Colón, if the future Admiral was not one of his highly trusted servants?" The answer to this question is even more important, since this took place in 1485, and Colón had already "run away" to Spain in 1484.

Only if Colón had been involved in a painstaking double-agent mission against the Court of Castile, can we explain João II and Colón's actions.

This would mean that during the last 22 years of his life, from 1484 to 1506, Colón was making false promises to Spain of an "India to the West."

The scenario of Colón as an infiltrated Portuguese double agent explains all of Colón's and João II's actions.

However, there was yet another ploy in which the Portuguese and Spanish courts were involved. This ploy was keeping secret Colón's true identity, his true social status and his true nationality. The deception against the public and the identity fraud began while Colón was still alive. This is the reason why we are having so many problems today validating any facts that confirm his true identity.

True to the role of a secret agent, Admiral Cristóbal Colón, just like James Bond, was relentless and ruthless, as he needed to be to protect himself and the mission he and Portugal's King João II had planned. After João II's death in 1495, Colón was in a highly precarious situation and even went so far as to kill his own brother-in-law, Miguel Muliarte, with his own hands, to prevent the truth of what he was doing to be exposed to the Spanish Monarchs:

Miguel Muliarte, who was Colón's accountant and comrade, being infirm [Colón] gave him beatings from which he died, because, by the pleadings of friar Juan Françes, [Muliarte] translated into Castilian a letter that the said friar wrote, in his French language, [with the truth] to their Highnesses.²⁷⁸

In the letter below one can glimpse Colón's double agent game. In it, Colón explains to his son how Amerigo Vespucci was working for the Admiral and how Vespucci would try to convince King Fernando (Queen Isabel had already died) that Spain's "false India" to the West was better and richer than the true India that Portugal had reached in the East:

Letter to Diego Colón, Seville, 5th February of 1505. *Most dear son:... I have spoken with Amerigo Vespucci, bearer of this [letter], who goes there [to the court] beckoned about matters of navigation. He always had the desire to please me... he goes as one of my own and with a high desire to do whatever will benefit me, if it is within his reach... he goes determined to do for me all that he possibly can... he will do all and will negotiate and will put it into action, and all shall be done secretly, so that no one suspects him. I have told him all of which could be told to him regarding this and informed him of the payment that was made to me and is still being made. This letter shall also be for the Lord Lieutenant [Bartolomé Colón], so that he can see how he [Amerigo Vespucci] can be useful and advise him. His Highness [King Fernando] must be made to believe that his ships went to the best and richest of the Indies. And if there is anything more to know about this, I will satisfy it there verbally, because it is not something that I can put in writing.²⁷⁹*

The deceit in this letter is blatant. Colón's and Amerigo's trickery should be done secretly so the ploy is not uncovered. At the time this letter was written, Europe was already aware that, for the last six years, the Portuguese had brought ships laden with valuable spices from India and were selling it in Lisbon.

It was also known that the Portuguese ships were involved in ferocious sea battles with the famous Muslim vessels travelling from the Red Sea, as well as with Indian fleets.

Yet, for twelve years of travelling to his "India" Colón had not seen even a glimpse of any such ships, nor encountered any spices.

Vasco da Gama arrived in Lisbon from his voyage to India in September 1499 and right away the Spanish monarchs, quite aware of Colón's deception, sent Francisco de Bobadilla to arrest and depose Colón in Santo Domingo and take control of the government of the New World. After his arrest in 1500, Colón would never again rule over his territories.

In fact, already in 1494, during the negotiations for the Treaty of Tordesillas, a Portuguese traitor was alerting the Spanish court that Colón's voyage to "India" was a Portuguese conspiracy against Spain:

*The enemy [Portugal] has put in your path two false things... this which they are calling India, accepting views erroneous and contrary to reality... it is fantasy to think... that to the West you can find India, the which, we all know is to the East.*²⁸⁰

This 1494 letter to Queen Isabel is very clear in calling Colón's voyage a Portuguese conspiracy. Again, in 1496 King Fernando accepted that Colón and Portugal had duped Spain in a well-contrived scheme to take Spain's focus "away from Portuguese ventures." King Fernando thought that France was now trying the same ploy against England with John Cabot. King Fernando's letter to his Spanish ambassador, Dr. Puebla in London, is evidence that he believed Cabot was another deception like the one Colón had done to dupe Spain:

*If it happens to him [the King of England] as it did to us [Spain], with this of the Indies, God help him!... This has to be the endeavors of the King of France, to try to entice the King of England as a distraction and take him away from other ventures... Try to find a way that in this, or in other similar ventures, the King of England is not tricked, because the French could try to double-cross him in this and many other ways.*²⁸¹

In the above letter, written March 28, 1496, Fernando's statement, "God help him," shows that the Spanish Monarch had already realized that Colón had duped Spain into sailing west to India across the Atlantic. This was the beginning of Colón's downfall, a situation Colón was still trying to protect against with Vespucci's help in 1505.

Francisco de Bobadilla, a member of the Order of Calatrava, (where King Fernando was Master,) was secretly appointed to succeed Cristóbal Colón as governor in the New World.

In August 1500, Bobadilla arrived in Santo Domingo. Bobadilla had been given enough powers by King Fernando to do whatever he saw fit in order to enforce the Spanish crown's authority against the three Colón brothers. Bobadilla had been given, in D. Fernando Colón's words, "many blank documents with King [Fernando]'s signature and sealed," which Bobadilla used to write in whatever orders were necessary to gain control over the colony. This included naming himself governor and raising peoples' salaries in order to wrestle power away from the distrusted foreigners: Admiral Colón, his two brothers and their loyalists.

With the colony turned against them, Cristóbal, Bartolomé and Diego Colón surrendered peacefully. They were arrested, chained and sent to Spain where they were immediately released by the Monarchs upon arrival, with due apologies for any mistreatment received at the hands of Bobadilla.

Cristóbal Colón would never again rule his New World and was even barred from setting foot on his island of Española [today's Haiti/Dominican Republic].

King João II, who supported Colón in this important secret mission, had been dead for five years and King Manuel I was now King of Portugal. While João II was the greatest foe Spain had ever faced from Portugal's throne, as explained before, King Manuel I was Spain's greatest friend. King Manuel had lived at the Spanish court from 1483 to 1484. He went on to marry, not one, but two Spanish

daughters of Isabel and Fernando, as well as one granddaughter. King Manuel I was even sworn by Isabel and Fernando as heir to the Spanish crown in 1498.

As such, in 1498, Portugal's King Manuel I was the first in line to inherit the Spanish throne, and there should be no doubt that Manuel I had a hand in the final downfall and collapse of Colón's rule since, as King of Portugal, Manuel I would be aware of the final phase of Colón's plan of revolt.

It is logical that Colón's plan to revolt and crown himself King of the New World would have put the New World in Portugal's sphere of influence. The Admiral and his brothers were continuously accused of wanting to revolt against the Spanish crown, "*spilling the Castilian blood like capital enemies, in disservice of the Kings, and who sought nothing more expect to revolt with the Empire of these Indies.*"²⁸²

As a foreigner, Colón had to continuously fight against these accusations, which he brings up in his letter to the Monarchs, from Jamaica, July 7, 1503:

Who can believe that a poor foreigner would have revolted against Your Highnesses in such a place without cause, nor without the arm of another Prince and being alone amongst your vassals and naturals?

Cristóbal Colón's plan of revolt becomes more evident in the following exchange with Bobadilla's replacement, Comendador Nicolás de Ovando:

In the presence of Ervas and the accountant, Ovando said that the Admiral [Colón] had wanted to revolt with the Island, and would have done so by now.

Ervas told him that such never happened, neither was it true.

The Comendador [Ovando] replied: "You, who arrived yesterday, want to know more than I?"

Ervas replied: "Well they have sent his son [D. Diego] here."

*The Comendador replied: "Suitably foolish is the son as the father was wicked."*²⁸³

By 1500, the political landscape between Portugal and Spain was vastly altered from what it had been around 1483, when Queen Isabel had tried to assassinate King João II.

Manuel I's son, Prince Miguel da Paz, grandson of Isabel and Fernando, born 23 August, 1498, was seen as the future Emperor of all Iberia and Manuel I, having been sworn as Isabel and Fernando's heir, did not need any revolt to claim the New World. A revolt by Colón would have been problematic for Manuel I, since it is doubtful that Colón would want to have been an ally of Manuel I: the anti-João II.

The name of Manuel I's son, Miguel da Paz, (*Miguel of the Peace*), is an indication of the attitude of D. Manuel I towards Spain, compared to that of João II.

After 1495, Colón lacked protection from João II and was then, in fact, a man without a kingdom. The deception of *India* needed to continue as if Colón himself believed in the lie he and João II had created. Colón's only hope to ward off suspicion and protect his family's interests in Spain was to keep pretending the Americas were India.

Colón's letter that Vespucci carried to his son, presented above, shows that, as late as 1505, he was still lying and deceiving the King of Spain about India and he had the aid of those who worked for him. Colón's affirmations about India, as seen in this letter, have confused many into believing that Colón had truly confused America with India. That is not what the letter depicts. The letter lets us see a glimpse of the lies in which his life was immersed.

Unfortunately, historians tried to decipher the truth about Admiral Colón by passing over his inconsistencies and lies, as if his claims were mere ravings of a madman who knew nothing of navigation or about the globe. Some even wrote that Colón suffered from schizophrenia. It is clear that an undercover double agent had to have two identities – one while working for his true leader, King João II, and another that he presented to the Monarchs of Spain. What appears to some authors to be schizophrenia was nothing more than a genius double identity, which deceived the masses for centuries.

PARADIGM CHANGE

While past biographies accepted the lies as truth and tried to explain Colón's lies as a lack of wisdom, let's take an opposite approach: by looking at what is hidden behind the lies, some light can be shed on the truth.

While others saw the above letter of 1505 as their "proof" that Colón was steadfast in his "belief" that America was India, we see the sinister plan against Spain very clearly and pound an intriguing point about Vespucci. If the conspiracy against the Spanish crown needed to be so well hidden so that "no one suspects them," how could the Colón family risk involving Vespucci, an outsider, in their plot?

The fact is, just as King João II never worried about sharing Portuguese secrets with Colón, Admiral Colón did not worry about sharing secrets with his "servant" Vespucci. The only explanation for this is that they were all in the conspiracy together. Like the others working with Colón in Spain, including friar Gaspar Gorricio and Antonio de Marchena, Vespucci was one of the conspirators against Spain. After the position of Chief of Navigation, or Pilot Major, of Spain was created for Vespucci, he used his post to steal maps from the Spanish crown and was demoted.

The start of their relationship was not spontaneous, nor coincidental – Vespucci did not randomly come into Colón's life in 1505, when he was beckoned by King Fernando to go to the court. The clandestine relationship between Colón and Vespucci had begun more than ten years earlier.

The Second Admiral, Don Diego Colón, initiated a complaint against the Crown of Spain to enforce his deceased father's contract, signed in 1492, the *Capitulaciones de Santa Fe*. While interviewed as a witness in this court case, Vespucci admitted that he: "*knew very well the handwriting and signature of Don Cristóbal Colón because this witness had seen him write and sign many times, and because he was an official of the said Don Cristóbal Colón and kept his books and because of this he has a good memory of his handwriting.*"²⁸⁴

This confirms that Vespucci worked for Admiral Colón. Returning to the above correspondence of February 1505, we find yet more elements of the deception against Spain. Colón admits to *receiving payment* for his role in convincing the Crown of Spain that he had reached the richest parts of India. Certainly that is the implication of "*the payment that was made to me and is still being made.*" This phrase undoubtedly discloses that Colón had an employer who was paying him, other than the Spanish crown, whom he had been deceiving.

Since the letter is written to his son and brother, Colón must be talking truthfully. The same must be accepted of the letters that he wrote to friar Gaspar Gorricio, his faithful friend at the Monastery of Las Cuevas, with whom Colón housed all his documents.

The contradictions written to the Spanish Monarchs, and to their agents, appear to be intentional lies. Without a doubt, Colón was not referring to payments made to him by the Spanish Monarchs, because, one thing that is repeatedly seen in Colón's complaints is that the Spanish Monarchs did not sufficiently appreciate him, nor reward him for all his work. He often wrote that the Spanish crown did not pay him and his crew on a timely manner. Colón's statement clearly stated that the "payments were still being made" and were, without a doubt, not coming from the court of Spain.

Apparently, all that could be safely told to Vespucci, regarding this deception and reward, Colón had personally told Vespucci.

Both the author and the two recipients of the letter, the Admiral's brother and son, held additional secret information that was not revealed to Vespucci. Therefore, the *Adelantado*, Don Bartolomé Colón, and the future Second Admiral, Don Diego Colón, must have been co-conspirators in the deception.

If the payment that "*was made to me and is still being made*" didn't come from the Spanish crown, then who was paying him? Was it not someone from Portugal, the only kingdom that benefited from Colón's lies about India? Perhaps he was being paid by the Order of Santiago in Portugal, where Colón's wife was a member and which was at that time being led by King João II's son, Don Jorge de Lancastre: a great adversary of King Manuel I and a nephew of Bartolomeu Perestrelo.

Was the Order of Santiago maintaining João II's mission alive? Or perhaps it was the Portuguese Templar Order of Christ? Or whatever secret society went on to become the Freemasons, since the Freemason symbols still adorn the Monastery of Las Cuevas today as well as Colón's portrait in Seville. The answer to this question will need to be found through future investigations. It is clear from the letter that the Admiral was being paid by *someone other than the Spanish crown*.

The controversy over the Admiral's social status is also apparent when we analyze Amerigo Vespucci's relationship to Colón. Here is what Juanoto Berardi wrote in a notarized document dated December 15, 1495 – calling Vespucci a *servant* of Admiral Colón:

*I, for Your Lordship and for your brothers and sons and your affairs, have done and worked three years... I have forsaken, in order to serve you, my trade and homestead, and have lost and spent my estate and that of my friends... I plead with the Lord Admiral that as a reward, You be pleased to pay to Jerome Rufaldi and to Amerigo Vespucci... and the said Amerigo... watching and working in my absence and in my presence over the things of Your service hoping to receive the rewards that from Your Lordship were expected to receive. I leave and constitute in my place Jerome Rufaldi and Amerigo Espuchi (sic) and Diego de Ocaña, my special friends, servants of Your Lordship.*²⁸⁵

Again we call the reader's attention to the fact that, when confronting this elusive Admiral and his far-fetched "official" history, one must constantly be alert. How could Vespucci, an Italian nobleman who studied with the children of kings, be considered a "servant" of any peasant wool-weaver? By convention, "a servant" is put in the service of someone of higher lineage and status than theirs. Not only was the noble Vespucci a servant of Cristóbal Colón already in 1495, but the nobles Jerome Rufaldi, Diego de Ocaña and Juanoto Berardi were also servants of Colón. As is obvious, Colón had many noble servants around him, which is contrary to the lineage of the peasant laborer.

It is also impossible to continue ignoring the continuous connections of Cristóbal Colón to Portugal, because not only did Vespucci sail for Portugal, but Berardi and Ocaña held privileged positions in Portugal before relocating to Spain to be "servants" of Colón. They lived in Spain, yet continued secretly running their businesses in Portugal, as did Colón's sister-in-law, Briolanja Moniz (SEE CHAPTER 12).

All documents and letters associated with Colón's life – such as the letter presented above – are often misinterpreted. Many are quickly rejected and others undervalued. Furthermore, historians have even described the Admiral as inept, confused, ignorant, incompetent and even senile. This phenomenon is caused by the need to fit the known facts of Admiral Colón's Spanish double-life into the preconceived notion that he was born the Genoese weaver Colombo.

Thus, when faced with Colón's obstinate insistence to King Fernando that Spanish ships had found the "best of the Indies," historians decided that the discoverer had not recognized that the lands he had visited were not those of the real India. From this misconception, historians presumed that Colón had to be unaware of the actual size of the earth.

Historians, having convinced themselves that Colón was lost and confused, and that he always believed that he had reached the real India, utilized the above letter as their proof that, even as late as 1505, Colón thought the New World was India.

But the letter Vespucci carried is a clear demonstration of Colón's betrayal. It is yet another of Colón's attempts to reinforce the lie of India upon the Spanish court, it proves nothing else. Colón was well aware that his voyage was a deception against Spain and carefully cautioned his son in the above letter by writing, "*all shall be done secretly, so that no one suspects him*" and that nothing else about this can be put in writing. These are not the words of a senile man but those of an astute secret agent who did not want his cover exposed.

Looking at the facts without prejudice, one can easily identify many other important lies that the Admiral propagated to maintain his ruse of the mission of India; a Portuguese deception targeting Queen Isabel's kingdom, as the author of the 1494 *Memorial Portugués* had already demonstrated Colón's First Voyage to be.²⁸⁶ The five episodes explained below are only a summary of the in-depth

analysis presented in the book, “O Mistério Colombo Revelado” (Lisbon, 2006) and show how Colón treacherously planned the frauds, expertly executed them with his cronies, and then masterfully convinced the court to believe his deceptions:

1. The Santa Maria’s Adulteration

The ship Santa Maria never sank or ran aground on the First Voyage, as Colón related, but was instead ordered hauled onto today’s Caracol Beach in Haiti and shot with a cannon.²⁸⁷ The ship served as housing and supply store for Colón’s marooned men, which included the Spanish court’s overseers. The Admiral stranded them so that they could not contradict him in court.

When the Admiral pompously arrived in the Old World announcing, “*I come from India and left there a conquered city and built a fortress to control it,*” no one could contradict him. The two men who had been sent by the Spanish Monarchs to keep an eye on Colón and who could have pointed out to the Monarchs that there was no city conquered, just a few grass huts, and no fort built, only the Santa Maria put aground and rechristened as *Natividad*, never returned.

Colón forced them to stay behind in the New World by putting the Santa Maria ashore, then shooting her from side to side with a cannonball so that the ship could never again float. To further solidify the plan, Colón brought with him in the caravel Niña all of the pilots.

The first time reading the account of the Santa Maria’s sinking, I knew it was a false report. Any man of the sea, as were Colón and his right hand man Juan de La Cosa, would never have lost a ship in calm waters by it merely edging up against a reef, especially a reef already mapped the day before. Here is a review of some important points of the supposed sinking according to Colón’s Diario:

At midnight on December 24, 1492, the Santa Maria was coasting in calm waters on a quiet, windless night off the Northern coast of Haiti, an island that Colón had baptized Española. Because it was such a calm night, Colón went to sleep and the ship’s master also decided to take a rest, leaving a boy at the helm.

While the boy manned the helm, the ocean currents supposedly pushed the Santa Maria up onto a reef and the boy cried out an alarm that the ship had run aground. Admiral Colón was the first to arrive on deck. (Colón is always the first on the scene, enabling him to control the recording of the events.)

Next up comes the ship’s master, Juan de La Cosa, whom Colón orders to take the launch with some men and throw an anchor off the stern to pull the Santa Maria free.

Juan de La Cosa decided, instead, to save only himself by rowing to the Niña and leaving the Santa Maria and its crew to whatever fate awaited them. Juan de La Cosa’s treachery, or treason, meant that his own ship would not be saved by such a simple action and would have put in danger so many crewmen’s lives along with the life of the Captain of the Fleet. Yet Juan de La Cosa was never disciplined for his treason. In fact, La Cosa sailed again with Colón in the next voyage as if no treachery had ever taken place.

However, the Santa Maria would merely be resting up against a reef and was not broken up by waves. It was not taking on water and it was not in danger of sinking. To save a ship in such a situation would not be too difficult, presuming only the keel was aground and the remaining ship still sat in the water. The water would maintain the ship upright, unless the ballast shifted all to one side – a near impossibility given the calm seas that Colón described.

Though a ship cannot sink in calm waters by nudging up to a bank or reef without being broken apart, (“*it went aground so gently that it was hardly noticed,*” according to the Diario), the fact that the ship’s master ran away without any attempt to save the ship was the first thing that triggered my suspicion.

This non-conforming and suspicious behavior by the ship’s master, not only in disobeying orders but in acting completely out of character for a seaman, compelled me to look closer at this episode. In order to prove definitely that the Santa Maria never sank on Christmas Eve 1492, I purchased a detailed mariner’s map of Caracol Bay in 2002 to locate the reefs where Colón claimed the Santa

Maria ran aground. But it was not until Google maps came along that the proof of Colón's lie could be reliably presented.

I have not yet been able to ascertain the time of the high tide for Christmas Eve 1492, but according to Cap Haitien Tide Charts²⁸⁸ the tidal difference between high and low tide at Cap Haitien averages 0.76m (2.5 feet) and this meager tide makes it virtually impossible for the Santa Maria, which had a draft of 9 feet to ever be in any grave danger if it ran aground on calm waters because the maximum it could be raised out of the water at low tide would be 2.5 feet, meaning it could tilt a little to one side, but never take on water, because the seawater all around it would keep it upright.

Therefore, since no water could come over the sides, the ship could never sink, rather it would just sit on the reef indefinitely. Furthermore, if they truly had unloaded the ship, as Colón claimed, it would now clear the reef whenever the high tide arrived. If it could not clear the reef when unloaded at high tide, then it could never have gotten onto the reef in the first place when it was loaded because the extra weight would not allow it.

Having been born on the Island of Pico, one of the Azores Islands, I spent my youth looking at the sea everyday. I witnessed the heroic efforts sailors made while in distress during bad weather, how the sailors struggled with all their might to save their boats. In the Santa Maria scenario, not a single attempt was made to save the ship. When the ship got onto the reef, the master ran away with the rowboat. Colón and the crew abandoned ship and moved to the Niña and in the morning quickly unloaded the

Santa Maria without a single attempt to free it from the reef. This scenario runs completely contrary to real life, and though technology has improved, the nature of those who live by and for the sea has not.

Here are the facts from the Ship's Log:

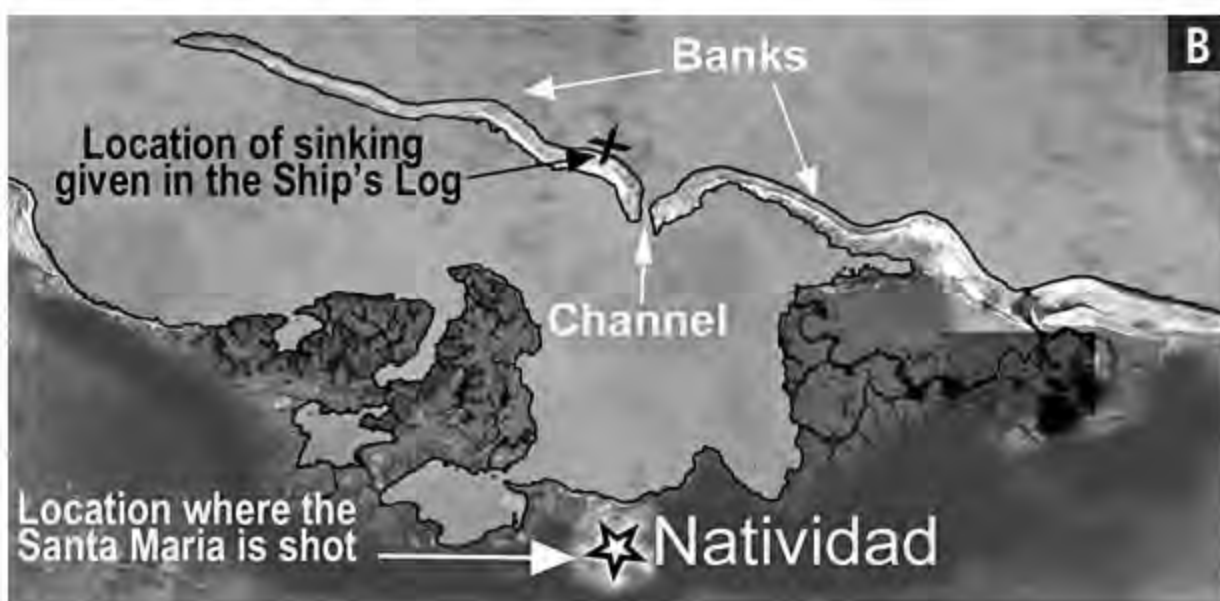


Figure 10.2: The Factual Reality. Figure (A) is a map of Española (Haiti) drawn by Colón during the first voyage of 1492 showing where his "fort" Natividad was located. From this freehand map of the northern coast of Haiti one can see how the Admiral was well prepared to interpret his environment. Comparing his Española map with a Google satellite image (B) one can see how well it compares to the real thing. In image (C) is an enlarged image of the rectangle shown in Figure B with the location of the supposed shipwreck and Natividad on today's Caracol Beach, (star). This satellite image clearly shows the large reefs described by Colón where he declared the Santa Maria ran aground and was lost. These banks are six miles away from Natividad, where the Santa Maria was shot and left behind.

- **Tuesday, December 25, Christmas Day, 1492:** The Santa Maria is reported as running aground and lost on the coral banks that are located six miles offshore from Caracol, but the court didn't know where the banks were located, (SEE FIGURE 10.2). Therefore, the Santa Maria *"could not be saved, and she settled on her side, broadside onto the sea... although the waves were little or none... The Admiral moved to the caravel [Niña]... everything was off-loaded from the holds in a very short space of time."*
- **Wednesday, December 26:** *Our Lord had caused the ship to run aground here so that I might establish a settlement... I have ordered a tower and fortress to be built, all in good order, with a large moat... it was the will of God that the ship should run aground there so that I should leave men behind... not a shoelace was lost from what was on the ship, nor a plank nor a nail, because she [the Santa Maria] remained as sound as when she left [Spain.]* He gave that settlement the Portuguese name of *Natividade*, meaning *Christmas*: a fitting name for the fortress that Holy Mary (Santa Maria) gave birth to on Christmas Day 1492.
- **Wednesday, January 2, 1493:** *He ordered a lombard (cannon) to be loaded and fired at the side of the flagship [Santa Maria, that had been lost six miles offshore but that now, miraculously] was on land. And he saw the range of the cannonball and how the shot passed through the side of the ship and went [across the beach] into the sea, way beyond [the shoreline.]*
- The administration of the fortress [the Santa Maria] and its people were handed to one of his loyal men, the Master-at-Arms of the fleet, *Diego de Arana* (brother of his mistress Beatriz Enríquez de Arana). Diego de Arana was promoted to Captain of La Natividade. Along with Arana, the two men from the court, *Pedro Gutiérrez*, the King's royal steward [representative of royal household], and *Rodrigo de Escobedo from Segovia*, [royal Secretary of fleet], *entrusted with all the powers given to him by the Monarchs*, were left in charge.
- Without delay Colón left for Spain, carefully taking with him all of the pilots, *Sancho Ruiz*, *Pedro Alonso Niño*, *Roldan* and *Juan de La Cosa*, any of who, if left behind, could have sailed a repaired Santa Maria homeward. (The *Pinta* at this time, most likely on Colón's orders, was absent reconnoitering the Eastern part of Haiti, and therefore, its crew was not witness to this whole ruse.)

Result: the men from the court are left behind with a beached boat that had a hole in its hull. Even if they could repair the hole and get the Santa Maria afloat, they wouldn't have a single pilot to find their way back to Spain. Therefore, Colón was free to report to the court of Queen Isabel whatever lies he wanted to, exactly as he did, without anyone contradicting him.

The evidence presented shows how the Santa Maria could not have sunk on Christmas Day 1492. According to Colón's own diary, the Santa Maria was left "on land" on January 2 and was, at that time, shot by a cannonball on Colón's orders.

The Santa Maria could not have run aground on those reefs six miles offshore on December 24, 1492 and at the same time be on today's Caracol Beach on January 2, 1493. The two accounts are incompatible and only by accepting the evidence that Cristóbal Colón lied about the sinking and that the Santa Maria was beached on purpose are we able to explain the whole scenario.

Dr. Chanca, one of those on the Second Voyage, wrote that as the Europeans toured the area, only eleven months later, they found "an anchor from the flagship that the Admiral had lost in the other voyage."²⁸⁹ This huge ten-foot tall anchor, which can be seen in Port-au-Prince today, was at one of the nearby villages and is further proof that the Santa Maria was not lost at sea because an anchor does not float and there was no way for the natives to recover such an anchor from the sea bottom in those days, SEE FIGURE 10.3.

During his fourth voyage on 25 June 1503, Colón beached his two ships on in St. Anne's Bay, Jamaican, propped them up at the water's edge and fortified them so that they could be utilized as a fortress where the crew lived for over one year. We must accept the same fate for the Santa Maria. The Santa Maria never hit any reef but sailed right to the beach, alongside the Niña, on December 24, as Colón planned to do.



Figure 10.3: The Santa Maria's huge anchor inside the Musée du Panthéon National Haïtien in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

Once they arrived at King Guacanagari's village, the Santa Maria was ordered pulled up onto the beach and then rechristened Natividad. This is why nothing was lost from the Santa Maria, not even a single nail, and how she "remained as sound as when she left" Spain.

Once on land, the ship was secured and fortified. With its supplies intact, the marooned crew would have food, arms and shelter for one year while they awaited Colón's return. The ship was marooned on purpose for the following reasons:

- Colón could ditch the court's overseers so they could not contradict his lies of India
- Queen Isabel would be forced to send a rescue fleet for the marooned men
- Colón could secure a claim to the territory with this marooned colony
- The Santa Maria would have been highly dangerous to sail back through the winter seas of the Azores "because, he says that the ship was very heavy and not suited to exploration."

On January 2, Colón ordered the Santa Maria shot with a cannon on the beach. Seven days earlier in his logbook, however, Colón recorded the ship lost on coral reefs that are located six miles offshore. A Lombard shot could never hit the Santa Maria six miles away since a lombard's reach was only 600m, 1/3 of a mile. Colón left the ship where he said he shot it, on today's Caracol Beach, where it had been sitting safe and sound before he sabotaged it with the cannonball. How could a ship that sank six miles offshore, by lying on its side and taking

on water, as he cleverly described it in the logbook, then succeed in reaching a beach six miles away? This feat would require a large crane and diesel powered tugboats available only some 400 years later.

The Santa Maria was intentionally put on the beach and the cannonball shot through its hull was done so that those men left behind could not sail the ship home once Colón left.

When Colón returned on November 30, 1493, he found the natives had killed all his men and Natividad had been burnt to the ground. The Santa Maria was finally lost to fire.

What this new way of looking at the events does, is explain many things, including how the bell from the Santa Maria was found in 1994 in the wreck of the ship San Salvador, which sank off the coast of Portugal in 1555. Many puzzled over how the Santa Maria's bell survived when the Santa Maria sank. The only answer is that the Santa Maria never sank. When the natives decided to burn the Santa Maria in late 1493, the bell, like the anchor, survived because it was metal, and was recovered by Admiral Colón upon his return to Natividad on November 30, 1493. The bell had been stored in Santo Domingo until it was shipped to Spain in 1555.

Thus, the Santa Maria was not consumed by water, as Colón attempted to have us believe, but by fire. It is only by locating the reefs on a map, following details from the Ship Log, that one can uncover Colón's deception of the sinking.

2. The Cinnamon Deception

On that First Voyage nothing was left to chance when it came to fooling the Spanish court with the false India. A Portuguese co-conspirator, at the appropriate time, "planted" in the enemy ship the only cinnamon found in the New World to this day, as Las Casas relates it:

Again the Admiral went ashore to hunt, Martín Alonso Pinzón came to him holding two pieces of cinnamon and said that a Portuguese sailing in his caravel saw an Indian with bundles of it... but cinnamon was never found in any of these islands.

This episode of a Portuguese handing cinnamon to Pinzón, cinnamon that could only have been brought secretly from Europe, makes this unidentified Portuguese another agent of King João II. Saying he got the cinnamon from an Indian who had *bundles* of it was completely impossible because cinnamon has never existed in the Americas and could only have gotten there on the Admiral's ships. For a ruse of this magnitude it was important to give Spain the hope of a spice trade in order to push them to the west and far away from the Portuguese monopoly of the Africa Gold Trade and the soon-to-be Portuguese Indian Spice Trade.

3. The Canaries in the Azores

Already finding himself in the Azores during the return voyage, Colón wrote a letter to the Spanish, which he dated, "*Written on the caravel, at the Canary Islands, February 15, year 1493.*" Colón was well aware that he was nowhere near the Canaries (Spanish territory) because he was at Santa Maria Island in the Azores (Portuguese territory). The Ship's Log clearly says that on that date, "*Friday, February 15: After sunrise they saw land, it was at the bow to east-northeast... The Admiral, by his navigation, found himself to be at the islands of the Azores.*" It becomes obvious that when Colón wrote that he was at the *Canary Islands* he was lying in order to hide from the Spanish court the fact that he had intentionally sailed to King João II's domains.

4. False Escape to Madeira

On the third voyage, the Admiral secretly planned with co-conspirator Friar Gaspar Gorricio to go to Portugal's Madeira Island. Afterwards, he lied to the Spanish Monarchs, claiming that he was forced to go to Madeira to avoid a "French pirate." This small extract from Las Casas, who may or may not have been aware of Colón's lie, gives us the details:

He got news that a French fleet was waiting at Cape San Vicente for the Admiral to capture him. For this reason he deliberated to dodge them, as they say, and made a detour aligning his route straight to the island of Madeira... reaching it the following Sunday, June 10... At the village [Funchal] there was made a great welcoming and lots of festivities for he was there very well known, he had been a resident there at some time.

In this episode of the visit to Madeira in 1498, one can find two very important facts.

Firstly, the man known in Spain as Colón was **very well known in Portugal** and his arrival was not only well received, but also even celebrated by the Captain of Funchal and its other residents. The Portuguese Captain organized this celebration, even though Colón was working for the enemy of Portugal and had not been living in Portugal for some fourteen years.

Secondly, from the start, Colón's intention had always been to sail directly to Madeira with a secret cargo of people and goods, but Colón lied to the Spanish Monarchs by claiming that a French pirate was his reason for taking that route. Here is the lie written in Colón's letter to the Monarchs:

I left in the name of the Holy Trinity, Wednesday May 30... and sailed to the island of Madeira, by an unusual route, to avoid any scandal that could arise with a fleet from France, which awaited me at Cape San Vicente.

With this opportune lie about a French fleet, Colón did not have to come up with the real reason as to why he, several weeks before, had already secretly planned this exact route to go to the island of Madeira. True – Colón had secretly planned this voyage to Portuguese Madeira with his co-conspirator, Gaspar Gorricio, who resided at the Monastery of Las Cuevas. The French pirate's fleet had no influence whatsoever on Colón's route. Furthermore, note that a route to Madeira took Colón's ships closer to Cape San Vicente, where the French fleet allegedly awaited him, while a route to the Canaries would take him away from the French fleet. Here is Colón's letter to Friar Gaspar Gorricio showing that he already planned to go to Madeira on May 12:

Reverend and devout Father: The load and people grew here so much that it was necessary to have another ship to lighten it, and because of this, I have not departed. I took a ship from Biscay

that will take this overflow along to the island of Madeira, and I will depart in the name of our Lord on Monday... I ask as a favor to help me with your prayers, in which I have great strength. Lord save your reverend person. Done at Sanlúcar de Barrameda on May 12.

It is clear that already on 12 May, a secret trip was planned to the island of Madeira. The Admiral did not learn of that French pirate until sixteen days later, as seen in this second letter of May 28:

Letter to Fray Gaspar Gorricio, Sanlúcar de Barrameda, May 28, 1498:

Reverend and devout Father: After having written, I did not leave because the load and people here increased so much more that the ships would have been unseaworthy and due to this, I seized a ship and had lightened much of it, and then afterwards I bought a caravel in Palos and on Thursday it arrived and I loaded it and am awaiting weather, which, since I left there, has not been favorable for sailing, on the contrary, it's as if it was in December, except for Monday. And on that day a ship departed from Palos that was going to Lisbon loaded with wheat and on Wednesday the French captured it at Cape San Vicente and today [May 28] they threw the people on land here in Rota, and they came to tell me how they are awaiting me, and that they are 13 ships.

I'm very well prepared in a great way as to what pertains to navigation, but very unprepared for war that it can't be said worse, and God forgive those who have been the cause of it. It is certain I have no weapons or artillery... I will depart tomorrow (with the help) of Our Lord, if the weather consents. May He guide us, and to Him I ask you to please commend us.²⁹⁰

On May 12 he had a voyage planned for Portuguese Madeira. On May 28 he learned of the French fleet. Read again the lie that Colón wrote to the Monarchs, Fernando and Isabel, explaining to them why on May 30, he sailed “by an unusual route” to Madeira. Neither the evidence of intent to make a trip to Portuguese Madeira, nor the lie of avoiding the pirate, could have been presented better than Colón did in his letters to Gaspar Gorricio, as contrasted with the deceptive letter to the court. Colón's detour to Portuguese Arzila on May 11, 1502 was also done with this same preplanning and secrecy (SEE CHAPTER 14).

5. A Beeline for Lisbon

On March 4, 1493 Admiral Colón anchored in the Tagus River in front of Restelo, not far from the All-Saints Monastery, in the outskirts of Lisbon, Portugal. He had triumphantly returned to the Old World with the news of his “discovery” however, he did not sail directly to Spain with the news. Colón sailed, instead, to King João II of Portugal – not to his rival, Queen Isabel of Spain. After arriving in Portugal, Colón wrote to Spain, saying: “After writing this [letter] and being already in the sea of Castile [Spain], there came so much south and south-east wind, which made me unload the ships, but I ran here to this port of Lisbon today, that was the greatest wonder in the world, where I decided to write to Their Highnesses... Done on the fourth day of March.”

What a maneuver. Everyone fell for this lie. Everyone believed that Colón was forced into the port in Portugal to escape a storm, which could not be further from the truth. Colón's voyage to Lisbon was a route that he intentionally planned starting in the Azores. The Lisbon stopover was no accident. From the Ship's Log we see that he left Santa Maria Island in the Azores and steered “on his route” directly to Lisbon and to no other location. Here are the pertinent entries from the Ship's Log:

- Santa Maria, Azores: Sunday, February 24, [1493]... *was a good time to go to Castile, stopped taking wood and stone and ordered to sail EAST.*
- Monday, February 25... *navigated on his route to the EAST.*
- Tuesday, February 26... *sailed on his route EAST 100 miles and 32 miles EAST-NORTHEAST.*
- Wednesday, February 27: *This night and day he sailed off his route due to contrary winds.* “Off his route” means that he was no longer heading EAST for Lisbon.
- Thursday, February 28, *contrary winds continued and he sailed northeast and EAST-NORTH-EAST so as to not get too far off his route.*

- Friday, March 1: *He sailed this night EAST quarter to the NORTHEAST.* Note that he keeps correcting his route to get to his intended destination.
- Saturday, March 2: *He sailed on his route tonight EAST quarter of NORTHEAST.* Colón continues correcting the route, navigating EAST quarter to NORTHEAST on a route to Lisbon.
- Sunday, March 3: *After sunset he navigated on his route to the EAST 60 miles. There came a thunderstorm that ripped out all the sails... They saw signs of being close to land. They were located near Lisbon.* On March 3 at night they could already see the land of Portugal. With a storm, if there ever was one, or without a storm, the Admiral had intentionally set the course of the Niña towards the Port of Lisbon. That is where he was when the “storm” appeared.
- Monday, March 4: *At daybreak he identified the land as the rock of Sintra, close to the river at Lisbon.* He was at the “wrong” location, if he had intended to go to Spain, yet he did not change his route to head for Spain. Instead he *sailed into Lisbon’s harbor and at the hour of terce he arrived at Restelo. Then the Admiral immediately wrote to the King of Portugal, who was just nine leagues from there.*

As one can see by reading the Ship’s Log, it is more than proven that the great Admiral made *his route* east from the Azores directly towards Lisbon, and that he corrected his course, as necessary, in order to arrive at the Port of Lisbon on the night of March 3, 1493.

On the night of March 3, the Niña was intentionally in front of the Port of Lisbon, Portugal. Why?

The answer can only be because that was where Colón would find King João II; the monarch to whom he *immediately wrote to* in order to give the news of his voyage. The lie of the storm that forced him into Portugal was used to hide the truth of the route from the Azores to Lisbon. If there was such a terrible storm how could Álvaro Damán be leading a marching band to welcome Colón to Lisbon, as the Admiral noted in his Ship Log?

The lie of the storm worked flawlessly to fool the Spanish Monarchs while helping King João II of Portugal, but it also misled us all for over 500 years.

It was easy to believe – and teach – that the discoverer did not know what he was doing while sailing because he supposedly started life as a wool-weaver and all that he accomplished was through beginner’s luck. But the Admiral shows us, time and time again, that the reality was very different. Colón was highly skilled in navigation and cartography, calculating his routes and distances with great accuracy. He was also highly skilled at deceiving others. While at sea, he knew at all times where he was located. Colón knew what he was doing when he lied about those locations. Colón himself was providing many *false testimonies*, as is clearly shown in these two letters found in the archives written to his son Don Diego Colón:

Seville, December 21, 1504: Most Dear Son: I have written to the Holy Father... The copy of the letter I send you. I would like that the King, Our Lord, see it or the Lord Bishop of Palencia before I send the letter, to avoid false testimony.

Follow-up letter:

Seville, December 29, 1504: Most Dear Son: With Don Fernando [Colón] I wrote you extensively... with them was a copy of a letter that I am writing to the Holy Father about the things of the Indies. This copy I sent so that His Highness look at it or the Lord Bishop of Palencia to avoid false testimony. The wages of these people who went with me is late.²⁹¹

Admiral Colón had written to the Pope a letter on the subject of the Indies on which he was the only expert of his day, yet he was concerned that his letter may contain “false statements.” Who else would write false statements in his letters? Colón had been providing false testimony about the New World since 1493.

We also see in this letter, as mentioned above, a complaint that the court did not open the royal purse in a timely manner, and Colón and his men were dissatisfied with the court’s slow payments.

These five incidents: reporting that the Santa Maria sank and was lost at sea when it was actually in one piece on the beach, bringing Cinnamon secretly to say the natives had it, saying he was at the Canaries while in the Azores, lying about the reason he sailed to Madeira, and sailing straight for Lis-

bon and not Huelva on the return voyage, were all part of a consorted effort to mislead the Spanish crown. However, many historians were also misled because of their preconceived notion that Colón was lost, incompetent and confused.

ADMIRAL WITHOUT A COMPASS

This book is not intended to be a criticism of the thousands of books about the weaver Cristoforo Colombo. It seeks, above all, to be a reference of truth about Admiral Cristóbal Colón, pointing out documents, facts, figures and clarifications. Furthermore, arguing against an ingrained work like that of Samuel Eliot Morison's *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*, winner of the Pulitzer Prize, could seem a futile exercise for many reasons.²⁹² However, considering that Morison's book was, up-to-now, accepted worldwide as the authority on the subject of Admiral Colón, it would be remiss to not point out some of the more obvious mistakes found within its pages. These mistakes were later repeated in Paolo Emilio Taviani's book *Christopher Columbus: The grand design* and in many others.

Some misinterpretations of the Spanish language are understandable, such as when Morison wrote inaccurately, "a Spaniard called his ship *rocín de madera* (wooden jade) or *pájaro puerco* (flying pig)."

The Spanish used *pájaro puerco* to mean "dirty bird" and *rocín de madera*, referring to the ship as a "wooden beast of burden," and the mistranslations are almost irrelevant. If we were not dealing with such a serious and worldwide controversy, we could laugh at them and let them pass. But to take a *dirty bird* and wrongly call it a *flying pig* makes one wonder what else Morison misinterpreted.

Because mistranslations, including the discoverer's name, are responsible for much confusion, it helps to carefully pound the meaning of each phrase. An example of such an important mistranslation is the word "*burla*," used by Admiral Colón to mean "*deception*." This Spanish word *burla* has consistently been wrongly translated in the English language books as a "*joke*" instead of a "*deception*," giving it a completely different perspective.

Admiral Colón used the word *burla* as the meaning for *deception*, "*to all whom were told of this enterprise, all at once said that it was a deception*" however, it becomes much less sinister when the historians translate it as "*to all whom were told of this enterprise, all at once said that it was a joke*."

In order to not adulterate the sources, we have tried consistently to maintain the original words, or their meanings, so that the reader not be shown something that is not there. In reality, the whole, incontestable truth has yet to be uncovered, and our research continues. Any historian that claims to have definitive evidence of who Admiral truly was prior to leaving Portugal and changing his name to Colón is blinded by his own wants, because, so far, no concrete evidence of his true name has been found, only optimistic deductions and we will present our top candidate later. What is clear, however is that neither Lollis, Morison, Taviani, nor any other historian, has been able to truly pull together all the facts of Colón's life into a believable story, instead they have modified or discarded the information they considered inconvenient to their narrative. This book has tried to include all the information available in order to capture the true sense of who Colón was.

Therefore, in this chapter, which includes deep-rooted fallacies, we included a sample of conclusions that the books of Morison (and Taviani along with others) have propagated which served to further obscure the facts.

Erroneous deductions presented in *Admiral of the Ocean Sea*:

Morison: *There is no mystery about the birth, family or race of Christopher Columbus. He was born in the ancient city of Genoa sometime between August 25 and the end of October 1451, the son and grandson of woolen weavers* (page 5).

False assumption: Colón's true origin has always been a mystery. His own son, Fernando Colón, did not know (or would not tell us) who his father was and where his father was born. By saying that "*there is no mystery*" Morison alluded to the actual mystery that existed 500 years ago and continues to exist today.

Morison: *Nobody in the Admiral's lifetime, or for three centuries after, had any doubt about his birthplace,* (page 6).

False assumption: Again Morison completely ignores the facts. There has always been doubt about Colón's birthplace – the first time he was ever given a nationality in Spain, Colón was called “Portuguese.” Queen Isabel's accountant called him Portuguese in 1487; this is the first nationality Admiral Colón was ever given (SEE CHAPTER 14). Some Italians, during Colón's public life, called him Ligurian, Italian, Milanese or Genoese but the Spanish court began to simply call him *foreigner*. Calling him *foreigner*, instead of a specific nationality, was because the court doubted his place of birth or did not want to reveal where he truly was from.

Morison: *The youngest brother, Giacomo (age 16... there is record of his apprenticeship to a cloth weaver in 1484,* (page 9).

False assumption: Assumes that this apprentice cloth weaver named *Giacomo Colombo* is the same younger brother of the famous Admiral Colón who was a nobleman called Don Diego Colón. Morison does not explain how the Giacomo cloth weaver *apprentice* in 1484, could suddenly become Governor of Hispanola in 1494, in charge of noble Spaniards, nor how a cloth weaver could earn a noble title of *Don*, reserved only for high nobility, without having done anything, nor how a peasant weaver from Genoa could read and write in Spanish, as Don Diego Colón did. If Don Diego Colón had spent his youth as a peasant learning how to weave cloth in Genoa, as did the *Giacomo Colombo*, how did he learn Spanish? Furthermore, forensic studies of Don Diego Colón's bones show him to be about ten years older than Giacomo Colombo was.

Morison: *Probably displayed the arms (blue bend on a gold field with red chief) which the Admiral afterwards quartered with the arms of Castile; members of trade guilds in the Italian cities often used just such a simple coat as this,* (page 9).

False assumption: He starts from the mistaken assumption that the Admiral's original coat of arms belonged to a guild of weavers, in Genoa, without showing any evidence of this. Morison presumes that a person could use as their own personal coat of arms in Spain the arms of an Italian guild. He also wrongly assumes that the Admiral *quartered* his own shield, going against heraldry rules. Actually his shield was *quartered by* Queen Isabel, who augmented Colón's original coat of arms in 1493, as a reward for the success of the First Voyage. Morison further assumed that any coat of arms, the guild's arms in this scenario, would be accepted into the emblazoned Nobility Class simply by any person presenting them. In reality, there would be the customary investigation into the person's lineage and confirmation of his arms by the King of Arms of the kingdom from where the nobleman came. Furthermore, the original *Decree of Arms*, signed by Queen Isabel in 1493, was discovered in 2006, proving not only that Morison and all others were wrong but also validating that our assertion about Colón's original coat of arms already having the five gold anchors, published in our book “O Mistério Colombo Revelado,” was correct, (SEE CHAPTER 17).

Morison: *The one impossible circumstance is Columbus's claim to have been the Captain. No young fellow of about 20, who had been carding and weaving wool most of his life, would so quickly have risen to command,* (page 18.)

False assumption: Incorrectly assumes that bluebloods could not be captains of ships if they were minors, and assumes a captain's post was decided by age as opposed to the person's social rank. Working from the wrong premise that Colón was the peasant wool-weaver Colombo, Morison dismisses Admiral Colón's own statement that he was Captain of a ship for King René d'Anjou. Morison declares the weaver Colombo would have been too young, too inexperienced and too unprivileged. Morison did not consider that social rank was more important than the person's age. At age thirteen, King Fernando of Aragon, the “Catholic King,” was made captain of an

army that was victorious over King D. Pedro of Aragon, Constable of Portugal (son of Pedro First Duque of Coimbra.) Just like Prince Fernando was made captain at thirteen years old, Admiral Colón could have been appointed Captain of a ship merely by virtue of his high birth, even if he was barely thirteen years old.

Another of Morison's inaccurate assumptions was that he declared Colón's wife to have been poor and unable to pay convent bills, as was already presented in Chapter 7. As one can see, Morison's accepted story made little sense and discarded many facts. Still, many were so convinced of this fairy-tale that they accepted impossibilities as possible, brushed aside discrepancies as irrelevant and also denied facts in order to impose their wrong contrived assumptions.

Both Morison and Taviani accepted the theory that Colón was the Italian weaver Colombo and accepted that the Colombo mentioned in the dubious *Assereto Document* was the same Admiral Colón.

They disregarded the views of others who refuted the *Assereto*. Antonio Rumeu de Armas wrote that the *Assereto Document*, supposedly dated August 25, 1479, looked like a purposeful falsification by the Italians. It has serious errors, such as being “a loose leaf inserted in a notary book in Genoa.” It also contains “different handwritings in the same sentence and text written one over the other” to look like what the Genoese counterfeiters hoped to substantiate. It also has text crossing the paper fold where it would have been stitched, which is impossible to do if this was a stitched book.

Furthermore, when one tries to collate the loose pages into a single document, the collated pages are not in sequential numbers. The *Assereto Document* is another good example of a document presented by the Genoese as a quick fix but which does not fit into reality.

If we take the *Assereto Document* at face value, we end up with famous Italian commercial houses, Centurione and Di Negro, who apparently sent a certain *Christofforus de Columbo* all the way to Madeira Island to buy sugar without giving him any of the money that he needed to make the sugar purchase!²⁹³

Money was the most important element in any transaction that is how trade is conducted, after all. Should we believe the document? The *Assereto Document* has many other shortfalls, which make it worthless in our search for the truth. It does not explain who is the *Christofforus de Columbo* mentioned because he has no family declared he could be one of many Colombos in Genoa.

Furthermore, and this is paramount, the Italians intentionally forged the initial publication of the *Assereto Document* by cutting out pages and merging other pages together. It turns out that the *Assereto Document* is not one but several documents joined together to look like one, (SEE FIGURE 10.4).

Since some Genoese citizens named Colombo and the Government of the City of Genoa forged documents back in the 1580s that were presented in Spain during the inheritance lawsuit over the Admiralty and Dukedom of Veragua, we should not hesitate to believe that the *Assereto Document* is another fraud invented to plug an obvious hole in the Genoese wool-weaver theory.

In order to compile the *Raccolta Colombina*, the City of Genoa had combed through their notary archives and published all the documents relating to their Colombos. The *Assereto* was not seen at that time – so where did it suddenly materialize from?

In truth, no one has ever done a scientific examination of all the Genoese documents to determine which are authentic and which are fraudulent. Furthermore, a lot of the documents mentioned in the *Raccolta Colombina* do not even exist. No one has ever seen originals because they only exist in transcriptions from centuries later, and some – after miraculously appearing – disappeared just as suddenly, never to be seen again.

Even if the *Assereto Document* were authentic, nothing in it ties that *Christofforus de Columbo* to the Admiral Cristóbal Colón. The *Assereto* is truly irrelevant to the life of Admiral Colón for it does not fit the life of the discoverer.

Unlike the *Christofforus de Columbo*, who supposedly was a mere passenger on a ship in 1479 with no money in a sugar buying voyage, Admiral Cristóbal Colón would never have been a mere passenger. Admiral Cristóbal Colón would have been Captain of the ship, as he always declared that he was since early on in his seafaring career.

Figure 10.4A: The strange Assereto Document, as it was originally published by the Italians in the early 20 Century, fraudulently showing what appears to be a full cohesive document of 14 pages of text.



With all the obvious problems the Assereto Document presents, one would be very foolish to accept it as proof of anything other than another Genoese attempted manipulation of the facts. If the reader finds my accusations of fraud too harsh, here's

what Angel de Altolaguirre, famous Spanish historian and avid proponent of the Genoese Colombo, declared about the reliability of the *Raccolta* documents, "when the City of Genoa asked him his opinion, as they offered him the first book of the *Raccolta* edition with much fanfare, Altolaguirre declared that they should have eliminated the false documents, since those are worthless."²⁹⁴



Figure 10.4B: The Assereto Document in its true form. It has 8 blank pages, some pages have very dense text with very loose text in other pages. There is different calligraphy styles between the pages, there are lines extending beyond the fold meaning it was folded after written of the pages and mismatched page numbering between pages 4 and 5 and pages 5 and 6. There is also a page half written at the middle of the document. Furthermore, there is no way to join these pages into one unit because once you fold them and put them into a booklet, the pages become out of order.

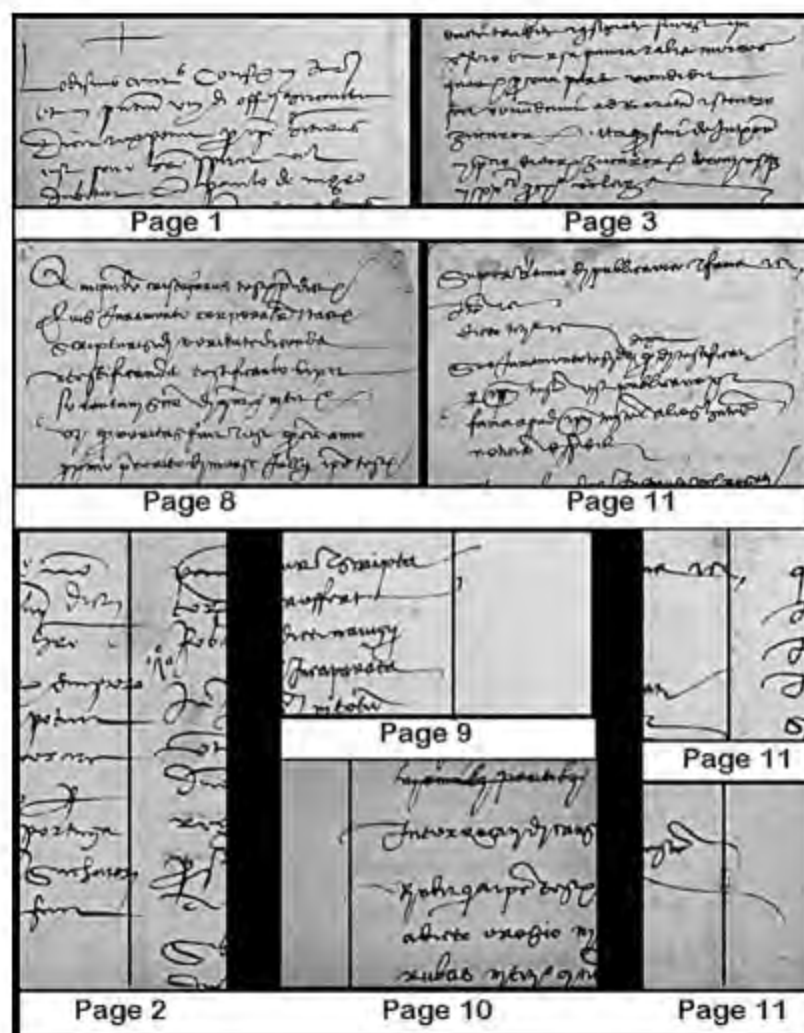


Figure 10.4C: The top four images show the difference in handwriting styles. The bottom five images show how the text goes across the fold of the pages. On the lower right image the stitching hole is very clear between both lines of text meaning these pages were not originally part of an integral document.

MAINTAINING THE LIES

Let us now take a small step backward in order to review some other crooked pillars in the history of Cristóbal Colón.

Ptolemy's work was discussed earlier as well as how Colón was well versed in the various sciences of his day. By using his expert knowledge, Colón managed to fool many who were less knowledgeable. Admiral Cristóbal Colón is the first to tell us that he was a scholar. He demonstrated this repeatedly in his letters by citing numerous works, and then he confirmed it with references from those authors, as we can see even today in his letters. Here are a few citations taken from his letters, printed in Consuelo Varela's book *Cristóbal Colón, Textos y documentos completos*.²⁹⁵

- *Your Highnesses know, it has not been that long that no other land was known aside from that which Ptolemy described.*
- *Cardinal Pedro de Ailiaco wrote extensively about the end of the sect of Mohammed... in a treatise he did (called) De concordia Astronomie veritatis et narrationis historie.*
- *The Abbot Joachin Calabrés [Joaquín de Fiore, 1135-1202] said that he who would rebuild the house of Mount Sión had to come from Spain.**
- *Ptolemy believed he had well corrected Marino, and now we find his writings tend well towards the truth.* [Marino was Marinus of Tyre, Phoenician (circa 70-130 AD), geographer and mathematician.]
- *Ptolemy places Catigara at 12 lines [12 time zones or 180°] distant from his West, which he placed 2 1/3 degrees from Cape San Vicente in Portugal.* [Ptolemy's 0° was located 2 1/3° West of Portugal at the Canary Islands].
- *Marino constituted the [known] lands in 15 lines [225°]. This same Marino in Ethiopia [Africa] represented beyond the Equatorial line more than 24 degrees, and now that the Portuguese sail there they find it correct.*
- *Pliny writes that the sea and land together form a sphere.*

In just these few lines one can see how well versed Colón was. Historians have wrongly claimed that Colón was an ignoramus, unschooled, uncultured, with no navigational experience and who could barely Captain a ship.

However, this is far from the truth. The Admiral was such a scholar that he owned various books and while writing his *Book of Prophecies*, Colón utilizes quotes from 90 different sources, from classics like Plato and Aristotle, to other writers who lived during Colón's lifetime, such as Enea Silvio Bartolomeo Piccolomini and Johannes Müller von Königsberg.²⁹⁶ Colón had read all of these authors and because he was such a well-read person, his writings are full of at least two very important aspects:

- 1- clues to his deep knowledge and, more importantly
- 2- clues he left by oversight that show the deception he was perpetrating against Spain.

His writings must be read carefully as a detective investigating a crime, seeking truth in between the lies. What do we mean by this?

Take another look at the first quote presented above, written in August 1498, and take into consideration the following: Colón is telling the Spanish Monarchs that before his voyage to the West in 1492, "no other land was known aside from that which Ptolemy described." Thus, the Admiral is clearly admitting that his *Indies* to the west were **new lands** because "no other lands were known" before, yet he gives those new and unknown lands the name of **India**, a land very well known for thousands of years prior to 1492 and already well described in Ptolemy's *Geographia*!

Why did Colón call these new non-India lands by the name of India?

*Joachin Calabrés, Joachim de Fiore, Joachim of Flora or Gioacchino da Fiore was born in Calabria c. 1135. By interpreting the Book of Revelations, he preached of a New Age that did away with the men-made rulers of the various religions and the Vatican -peddling indulgences as if it was God itself- would cease to exist and all would be replaced by the Order of the Just. Christians, Muslims, Jews and other sects would unite in harmonious existence giving rise to the Age of the Holy Spirit: Humanity's third and final age, an age of universal love when mankind comes in direct contact with the Divine Spirit of God, thus reaching the total freedom preached by the original Christian message. Joachim's followers are called Joachimites. The Age of the Holy Spirit is to follow the Age of the Son which begun with the birth of Christ and which had followed the Age of the Father (pre-Christ.)

Admiral Colón, a man who was not only made Admiral but also Governor and Viceroy by the Monarchs, was not an ignorant man. Only those who believe in the lies he perpetrated, lies meant to trick us into believing his deception, are tricked into thinking that he didn't know what he was doing.

Cristóbal Colón was lying when he said that America was *India*. Colón never misunderstood where he was sailing to in 1492 nor where he was located at on any of his four voyages. The following examples help to make this clear:

1. The Time Zones

In his hundreds of personal notes, there is one dated 1494, it states that the eastern end of Española (today Haiti and Dominican Republic) was located about five time zones to the west of Cape San Vicente in Portugal.

This statement reveals how precise Cristóbal Colón was in his knowledge since Portugal is, in fact, five time zones east of Haiti. Colón knew this fact in 1494 by timing a Lunar eclipse, (SEE FIGURE 10.5). This calculation was done using an hourglass filled with sand to measure time and observing the eclipse with his naked eye, without the help of any modern instruments. This is only one of many cases that demonstrate his professional prowess and skill. Here is the text of the note:

The year of 1494, when I was on the island of Saona, which is at the eastern end of Española island, there was an eclipse of the moon on Sept. 14 and it was found that there was a difference from there to the Cape of San Vicente in Portugal five hours and more than half.

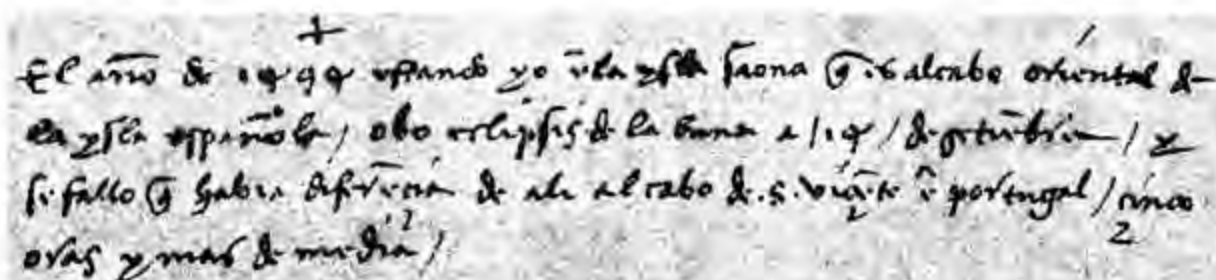


Figure 10.5: Note written by Colón to himself where he reveals that he knew in 1494 that he had travelled only 5 time zones west of Lisbon.

Each time zone is fifteen degrees, ($360^\circ \div 24h = 15$), which makes five time zones a total of 75° . If Colón accepted Saona to be five and a half hours away, that would equal 82° from Portugal. Actually, US Eastern Standard Time is five hours behind Portugal's time. It is impossible to deny that Colón had acceptably measured his location by the math just presented.

If he placed himself only 82° west of Portugal in 1494, according to his own measurements, this means he was nowhere near that India which Ptolemy placed 225° west of the Canaries. He was even less than 82° west of the Canaries, since these are several degrees West of Portugal.

Even if Colón wanted to reach that same China that Ptolemy had located 180° East of those Canaries, Colón would have needed to travel, not 80° degrees but 180° degrees West of the Canaries. He had not even gone half the distance to China, never mind to India.

Since the real India was known to be located only nine time zones, or 135° degrees eastward of Spain, then, from Spain heading westward to India, the voyage would have to be not twelve time zones (180°) but fifteen time zones (225°).

According to his own estimate, standing on the island of Saona there was still seven more time zones to go before he reached Ptolemy's China. This means that, the frontier of India was still ten time zones away from Saona. On September 1494, Colón knew that the time zones left to reach India from Haiti were twice more than the distance he had sailed from Spain to Haiti (SEE FIGURE 10.6), yet he insisted with the Spanish court that he was in India.

2. Counting on the Leagues

History books have alleged that the Admiral did not know how to use navigational instruments and didn't know how to calculate his routes. They claimed he used shorter leagues and severely miscalculated the size of our Globe, thinking it was way smaller than it is. But the facts do not confirm this long-held view.

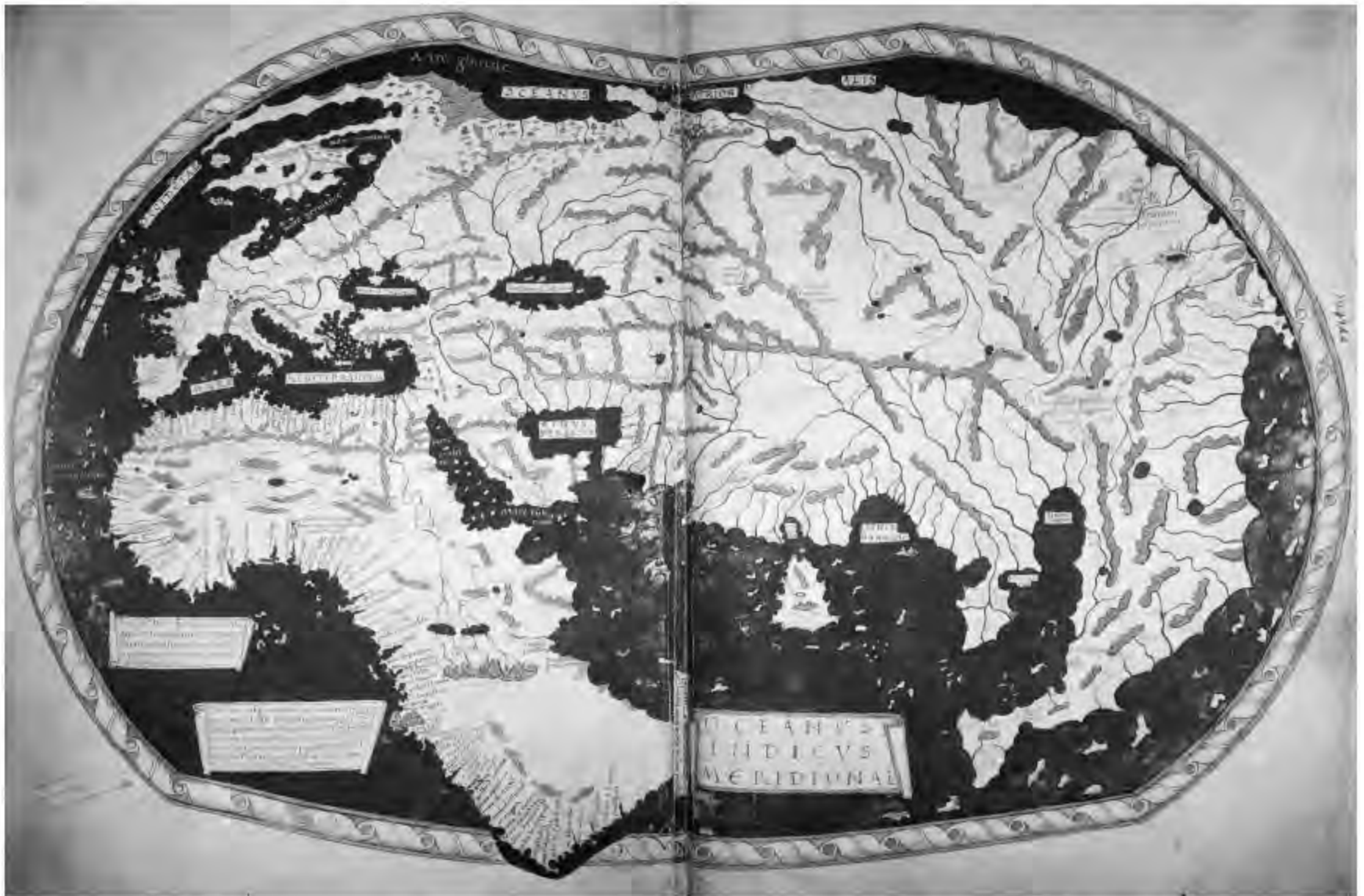


Figure 10.6: The globe is composed of 24 time zones, making up its full 360 degrees. Here we see, on a map of the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope by Henricus Martellus in 1489, that 12 of those time zones, or 180 degrees, were estimated from the Canaries to China, to the east, which included India. Therefore the unknown half of the Globe from the Canaries across the Atlantic to China heading west would also equal 12 time zones, or 180 degrees. It was already accepted that India was well within the known half of the globe.

On the second voyage, Admiral Colón measured approximately 1,140 leagues travelled, “of four miles each,” which is 4,560 of Colón’s miles, from the Canaries to Haiti. This distance is about the same as that which he had recorded in the log of the First Voyage, about 1,142 leagues (4,568 miles). Colón could perceive that he had traveled about the same distance west on both voyages. During that Second Voyage, Colón noted that he had traveled about 5 time zones west of Portugal. The earth has 24 time zones along its 360 degrees and if one travels about 4,560 miles along five and a half of those time zones, then each time zone is some 830 miles at that latitude.

Thus, the total circumference of the 24 time zones at the latitude of Haiti, 20° N, was some 21,888 of Colón’s miles ($24 \times 912 = 21,888$). If one divides the 360° by those 21,888 miles, one gets 61 of Colón miles per degree at the height of Haiti – the actual miles are about 23,407 or 65 miles per degree. This is only off by some 5% not the 25% that historians insisted.

If he was calculating some 61 miles, or 21,888 miles per degree at the latitude of Haiti, Admiral Colón could never accept that at the Equator, the degree could be only 56.66 miles. This would mean that at the Equator it would be less than at the Latitude of Haiti. Therefore, if he was writing to the Monarchs that the Equator measured only “20,400 miles,” Colón could not explain this unless our earth were flat like a cylinder from Haiti to the Equator and not the sphere that he and all scholars agreed it to be.

Just as some use Kilometers and others use Miles today, in those days it was understood that one mile could vary in size between the sailors of different kingdoms and between versed doctors and scientists, but the space they were measuring did not change. The measurements they took were consistent with the reality of what was being measured in whatever units they chose to measure it.

In this letter sent to the Catholic Monarchs by their scientist Jaime Ferrer, cosmographer for the Crown of Aragon, the fact that there was not a standard measurement is explained:

*The partitioning of the stadiums, although they are a different number than gives Ptolemy, according to what doctors Strabo, Alfragrano, Macrobius, Theodosius and Euristhenes give, in essence all ends up the same, because Ptolemy makes the stadiums bigger, so that his one hundred and eighty thousand stadiums are of those from the said doctors two hundred fifty-two thousand at the equatorial line as above said.*²⁹⁷

It is repeatedly stated that Admiral Colón could not sail, could not read a map, misjudged his instruments, miscalculated his distances, was constantly confused and believed that the measure of the equatorial degree was equivalent to only 56.66 miles.

Even if prior to his great First Voyage he had assumed the equatorial degree to be much smaller, the experience of crossing the Atlantic three times (outbound in 1492, return in 1493, outbound in 1493), and locating himself at only five time zones west of Cape San Vicente near parallel 20, and measuring about 61 of his miles per degree, than certainly Colón would have to admit to himself that he was wrong about any smaller estimates he may have made before setting sail.

It is imprudent to accept today that the Admiral ever believed the equatorial degree to be much smaller than it actually is. The Portuguese nautical science of those days was off by less than 4 percent, this is contrary to a shorter measurement, and Colón was privy to and sailed with the Portuguese state-of-the-art technology.

Furthermore, knowing in 1494 that he had traveled only some five time zones, he was still located seven time zones away, that is another 6,300 of his miles, from Haiti heading west, just to reach Ptolemy's easternmost point of Sinae (China) where Ptolemy had placed his 180° Eastern limit.

Yet from Ptolemy's Sinae westward, to reach the eastern parts of India there were still another three time zones, some 2,700 miles (SEE FIGURE 10.7). This means that from Haiti to India, there were still 9,000 Colón miles left to travel, that is twice those 4,560 miles he had sailed.

Another words, from Haiti to India, following Ptolemy's map, Colón still had to sail another 150 degrees. By simple mathematics, one would have to suspend reality to believe that he was in the real India when he had calculated himself to be 10 time zones away from where everyone already knew India to be.

To suspend reality has been the only way history books have been able to make the official story sound logical.



Figure 10.7A: Here is Ptolemy's map of India in the *Geographia*, published in Rome in 1478, the same edition that Cristóbal Colón owned. Note that India's Eastern border is placed at about 148° east from the point 0° at the Canaries Canary Islands.

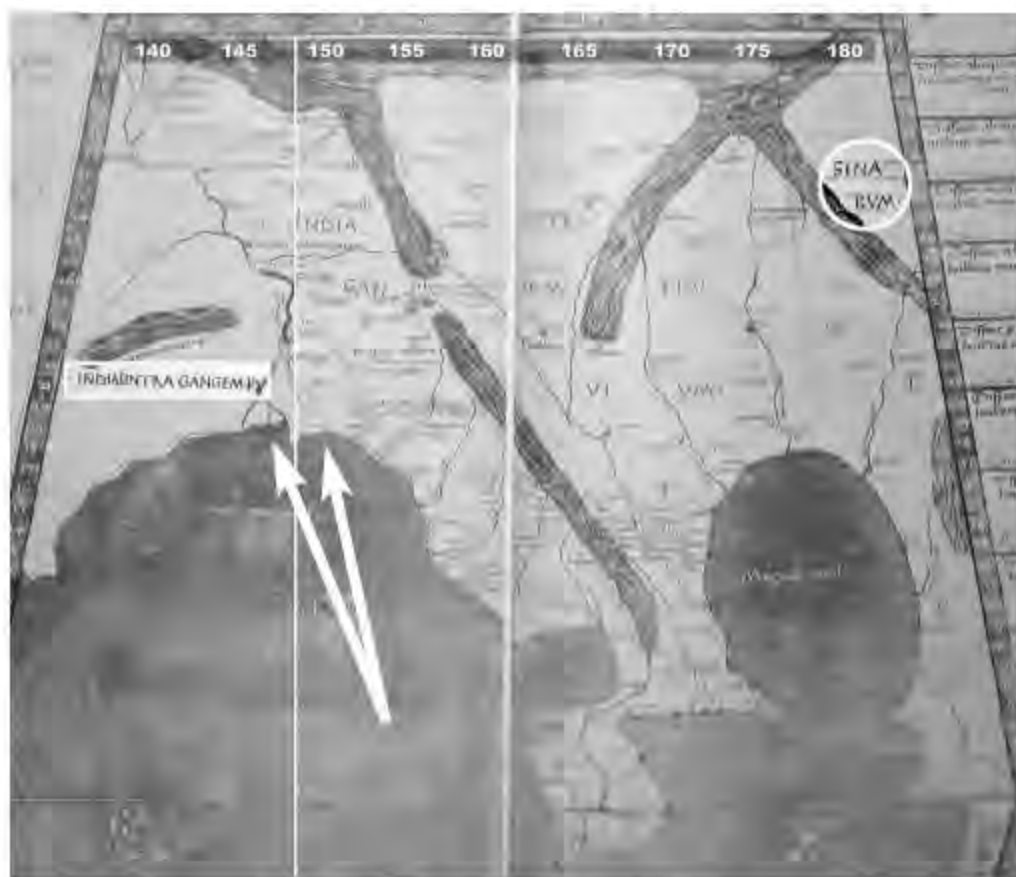


Figure 10.7B: Here is map No. XI of the same *Geographia*. We indicate the delta of the River Ganges (arrows) and its location at about 148 degrees. Then at the 180° mark from the Canary Islands China begins (circle) therefore you could not reach India unless you passed over China.

3. The Environment

Many argue that the only mistake Admiral Colón made in order to “believe” he had reached India was to underestimate a short equatorial degree of only 56.66 miles instead of the actual 69.166 miles. What they do not take into consideration is the accuracy of his navigation. He consistently found his way home to Europe and then back to Haiti, which would be impossible if he was utilizing wrong measurements. Historians also disregarded the information Europe already possessed about India. The history and the culture of India were well known. Artisans of India had the fame of working eminently on gold and silver.

India was famous for its elephants and warriors, famous for its diamonds and rubies, as well as a tremendous spice trade controlled by countless Muslim ships – Colón did not find any of these off the coast of the Caribbean islands or anywhere else in the Americas.

The Admiral had found only tree trunks dugout into small canoes, people completely “*naked as the day they were born,*” without any metal tools or weapons: “*They do not carry weapons nor know them, because I showed them swords and they grabbed them by the blades and cut themselves through ignorance.*”

As the Ship’s Log indicates, he found only small quantities of gold and no cities whatsoever – not even a single stone house, only a few huts built from branches and grass. Would the noble, well-traveled and well educated Don Cristóbal Colón truly mistake this unindustrialized and innocent paradise to be the real, commercialized India of warrior-ridden elephants? Of course not.

He realized right away that this was no place near India and wrote in his logbook, “*They do not carry weapons nor know them... they are very without malice or war, naked all, men and women, as their mothers bore them... people very poor of all possessions... and convinced that we had come from heaven. These people are very gentle and very fearful, naked as I have said, unarmed and without laws.*”

When one compares both environments, Colón’s “Indians” could never be the Hindu civilization, world famous for trade and commerce with the Muslims, and the cunning warriors who had defeated the huge armies of Alexander the Great. Mistaking the American natives for true Indians is contrary to what Colón and the Europeans knew about India. Calling the lands “India” and calling the people “Indians” was only done to tempt and lure the Spanish Monarchs into coveting this territory for their own conquest. Admiral Colón called the Caribbean India primarily:

*“because he knew how notorious it was to all, how rich and famous was the India, through this name [manipulation] he wanted to tempt with the Catholic Monarchs, who were skeptical of his enterprise.”*²⁹⁸

4. Spheres and Hemispheres

There is no reason for us to accept that the said 56.66 miles per equatorial degree was truly what Colón believed, as explained above, but let us look at this measure of their “confused” Colón and see if it makes any sense. The confused Colón, it is said, believed that half of the globe known by Ptolemy (180 degrees or 12 time zones from the Canaries to China) would be 10,200 miles at the Equator (180°x56,66). Then logically, the other “unknown” half of the globe – the other 12 time zones from the Canaries westward across the Atlantic to Ptolemy’s China – would be the same 10,200 miles. Thus, having traveled only five time zones, or 4,560 miles, to the New World, as Colón had measured in 1494, the discoverer knew that distance travelled could not be even half of the 10,200 miles from the Canaries to China. We can understand this perfectly viewing the 1507 map of Martin Waldseemüller in FIGURE 10.8.

Simply looking at the time zones sailed by Colón in FIGURE 10.9 reveals that something is not right in the telling of the story. Colón would have had to believe it was possible to arrive in India without having passed Japan or without going through Ptolemy’s famous China.

The Admiral owned *The Book of Marco Polo* and he quoted from it often. Marco Polo clearly states that Japan is located some 1,500 miles east off the coast of China and wrote, “*this land is extremely far from the shores of India.*”²⁹⁹ Thus logically, through the ancient accepted knowledge, this demonstrates that Colón could not truly believe that he had arrived at the shores of the real India of spices fame without having passed China. Because Colón knew he was not in India, he often called this territory “The Indies” and not “India.”

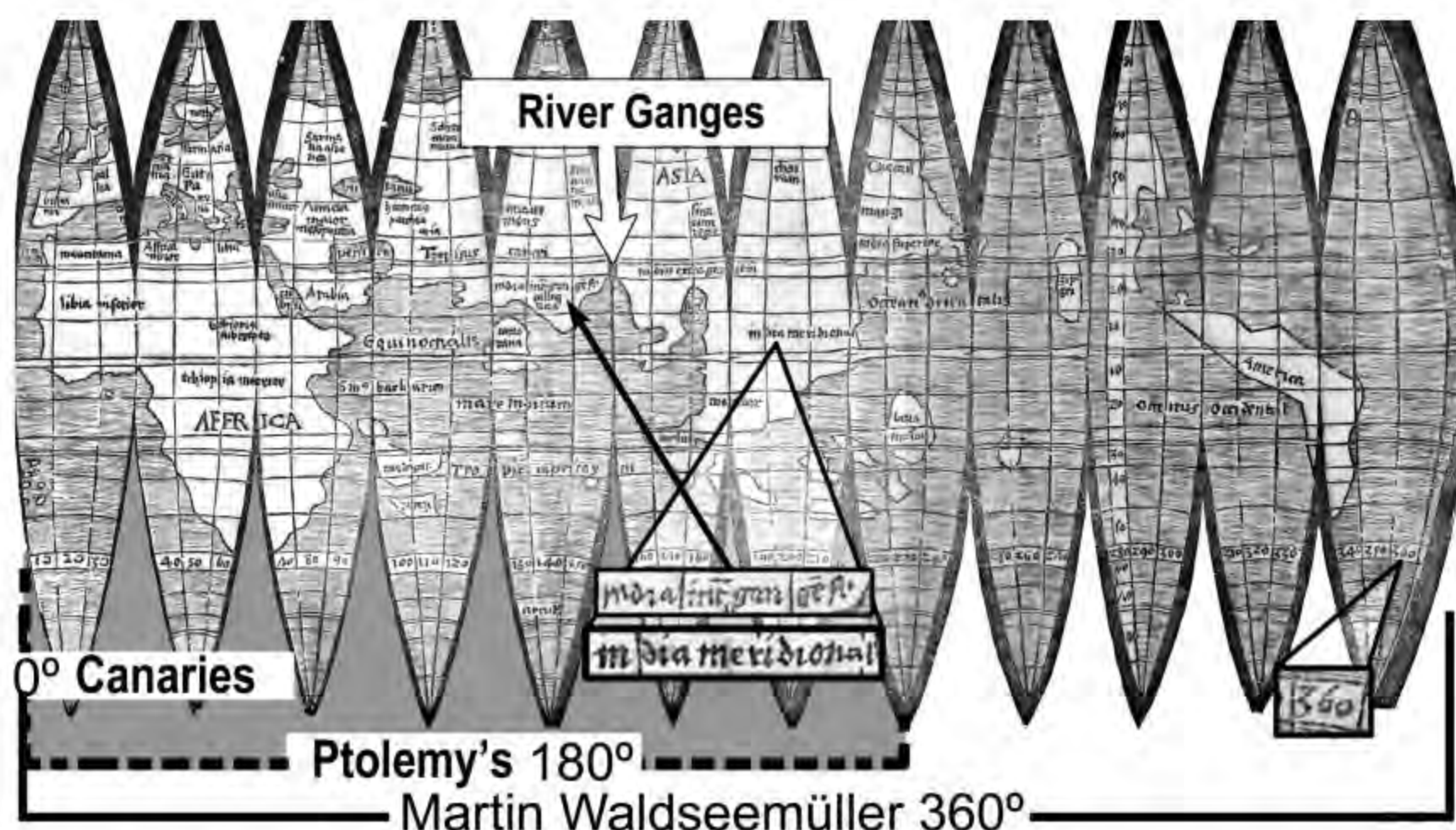


Figure 10.8: The truth exposed: the Waldseemüller map with the 360 degrees of the world. Waldseemüller included Ptolemy's 180° and clearly shows that the region "India Inter Ganges R." (black arrow) never changed since the time of Ptolemy, remaining to the west of the mouth of the river Ganges (white arrow). Waldseemüller puts it in the same place where Ptolemy located it, nine time zones east of the Canaries and very far west of the 180 degrees eastern limit.

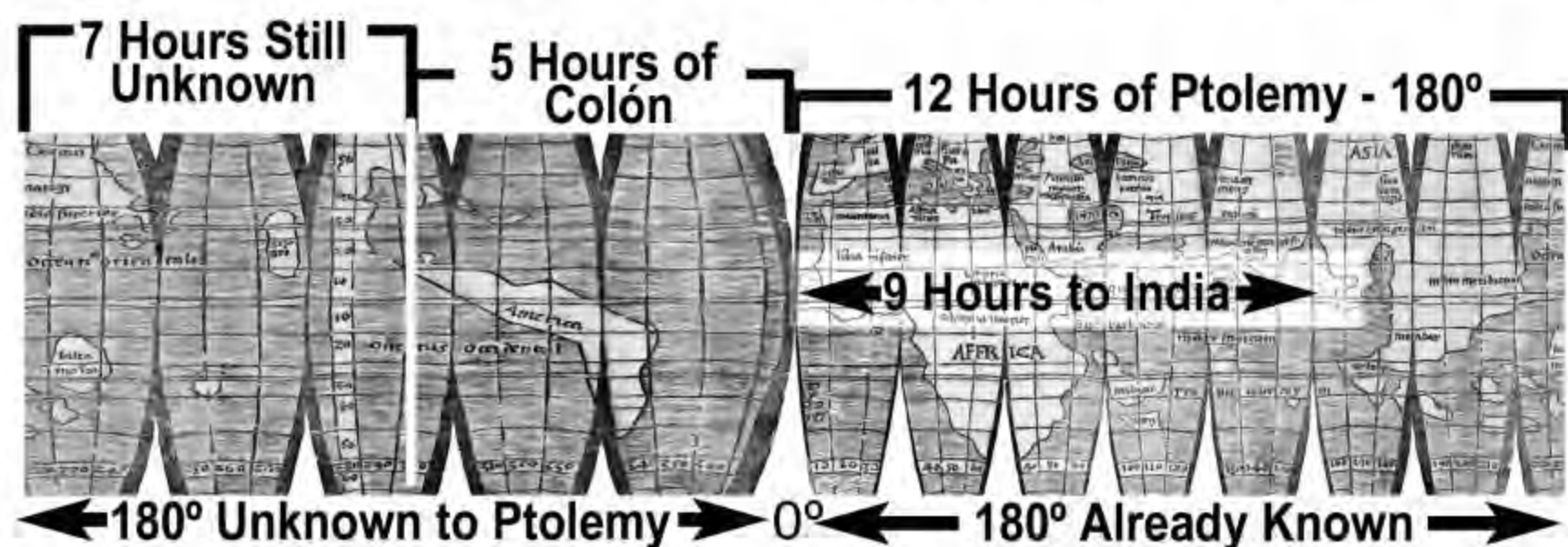


Figure 10.9: Still very far from reaching India. The theory of the "confused" Colón can be easily rebuked using simple math. In 1494 Colón knew he was only 5 time zones west of Portugal, which makes it five time zones west of the Canaries at 0°. This left him with still seven more time zones to reach the line of Sinae drawn by Ptolemy, at 12 lines or 180° east of the Canaries. And there still remained more than three time zones to go from Ptolemy's Sinae at 180° to the mouth of the river Ganges at 148°.

There is solid evidence that Cristóbal Colón never misjudged his navigation or miscalculated his measurements. Even if we had no evidence of his piloting expertise, merely the fact that he sailed so far and made his way back home is evidence enough. Any pilot or sailor will tell you that once a ship loses sight of land, if there is no experienced pilot on board, it will be almost impossible to know where the ship is located, as well as to sail it back to the home harbor. Admiral Colón was not lost at sea for a single hour during the four voyages that he captained. He always knew where his ship was located on the sphere.

Cristóbal Colón was an expert at navigation, just like the Portuguese pilots of his day were, with whom he had learned to navigate. The Portuguese held secret information of the Atlantic and maritime technology, as has been shown by many published works,³⁰⁰ secret knowledge that Colón also

possessed. It becomes apparent that Cristóbal Colón misrepresented what he was doing during his voyages as well as the exact coordinates and distances of where he was navigating. When Colón gave wrong measurements to the New World, he did so intentionally. He was able to give false measurements because no one could verify and contradict him.

However, on the routes that were already established, Colón could not lie or misrepresent the miles or degrees, because his deception would be apparent. For instance, during the First Voyage, he stated on February 27, 1493 that the ship was located “*one hundred twenty-five leagues from Cape San Vicente [Portugal] and one hundred six from Santa Maria*” in the Azores.

Valentim Fernandes from Moravia (royal printer at the court of Portugal from 1495 to 1516), wrote that the island of Faial in the Azores is some 290 leagues from Portugal. Yet another similar confirmation of this is written in 1450 by Prince Henry “the Navigator.” In his letter of donation for that island of Faial to the Flemish Jacome de Bruges, it is stated that Terceira Island, East of Faial in the Azores, is located about 260 leagues from Portugal. We understand these measurements were not as accurate as today’s GPS, and that a margin of error is expected when measuring with the rude instruments of their day over a non-stationary sea. The important thing is to realize that they were all measuring that distance very close to one another using the same system of measurements known as the Portuguese Maritime League (PML).

With this in mind, we can take a very specific measurement given by Admiral Colón during his return voyage and utilize this measurement to decipher the true length of Colón’s leagues. On February 27, 1493 he wrote in his *Diario* that the Niña was located 125 leagues from Cabo São Vicente and 106 leagues from the Island of Santa Maria.³⁰¹ This gives us a total of 231 leagues from C. S. Vicente to Santa Maria Island.³⁰²

For any one who wants to decipher the true size of Cristóbal Colón’s league, this measurement is the best clue. Colón was on a route that was very well known because it was travelled frequently by the Portuguese navigators. For nearly 100 years Portuguese ships had been making voyages between Portugal and the Azores Islands.

If we look at the actual distance on Google maps from the island of Santa Maria in the Azores to Cape S. Vicente in Portugal, we get about 1,426 ± km (SEE FIGURE 10.10). Doing the math with the numbers above, Colón calculated a distance of 231 leagues which divided by the distance of 1,426 km, gives us 6,173 meters per league. It is by this well-known longitude between the Azores and Portugal that we can show how expert Colón was in Portuguese navigation. Valentim Fernandes, Prince Henry “the Navigator” and Colón all coincide with the distance of leagues of the Azores from Portugal.

According to Tenente-Coronel João José de Sousa Cruz, the old Portuguese *Légua de 18 ao grau* (League of 18 to the degree) was equal to 6,173 meters.³⁰³ By utilizing the 231 leagues that Colón measured, we can put forth a confirmed measurement of the oft-debated Colón league. It must have measured about 6,173 meters and thus it was the same PML leagues that the Portuguese were utilizing. This is proof that Colón never used “smaller leagues,” as many have written, but utilized the same high technology sailing knowledge and measurements as the Portuguese navigators.

Admiral Colón sailed with the same Portuguese technology utilized by Vasco da Gama and all Portuguese navigators of his time, as it would be expected. When Colón gave different measurements, it was not out of ignorance but with a clear intent to deceive Queen Isabel. Admiral Colón would not be sailing the “known sea” with one size league and the “unknown sea” with different “smaller league” of elastic sizes.

On November 13, 1492 Colón wrote that he travelled “*ochenta millas, que son veinte leguas*” (eighty miles which is twenty leagues) meaning he measured four miles per league. Portuguese Geographer Duarte Pacheco Pereira, one of King João II’s royal guards, along with Colón’s brother-in-law Pedro Correia, wrote in his *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*,³⁰⁴ that there are 18 leagues to the value of a degree. A quick calculation utilizing those 231 leagues measured by the Portuguese from Santa Maria to S.

Vicente and Pacheco Pereira's 18 Portuguese Maritime Leagues of 6,173 meters per degree gives us 40,001,040 meters (40001.04 km) at the Equator.

Compare this estimate for the Portuguese Equatorial Degree in the late 1400s to the actual size of the Equatorial degree which is 40075.017 km and it is astounding at how the numbers match up. Were the Portuguese geographers of the 15th century more accurate than we had accepted up to now? After all, Eratosthenes had already calculated the size of the earth to be 39,691km some 1,700 years prior to Colón's voyage³⁰⁵ and Colón read this information in his 1477 edition of *Historia Rerum Ubique Gestarum*.

All the misleading measurements and degrees were a cleverly propagated deception by Colón meant to trick the naïve. After all, while on the Island of Saona, Colón correctly placed himself at some 5 time zones west of C. S. Vicente on September 14, 1494, a calculation that only works if the navigator was utilizing a globe close to its actual size and, therefore, Colón never truly believe erroneously that the earth was 25% smaller as many still claim today.³⁰⁶



Figure 10.10: The Azores can be utilized today to confirm what was the value of Colón's league. This well-traveled route of the 15th Century shows Colón's measurements from February 27, 1493 this distance match perfectly to the Portuguese Maritime League.

5. A Brother's Support

Whatever the perspective through which one looks at this problem, the hypotheses of the history books appear incorrect while Colón's measurements and navigational routes appear correct, except for the wrong name of 'India,' which he falsely applied to unknown lands.

Not only was Admiral Colón an expert navigator but so was his brother Bartolomé, who captained a ship from Spain to Haiti in 1494. Admiral Colón in a letter dated July 7, 1503, described how Bartolomé Colón even sailed a ship through a hurricane and survived. Once you accept Admiral Colón as the expert navigator that he was, there are many ways to prove this fact. What he knew and did was very different from what he wrote to others and very different from what he wanted others to believe he was doing. In other words, the Admiral did all he could to deceive his contemporary competitors as well as his employers at the court of Spain. Thus, Colón fooled an entire world in March 1493 into believing that he had reached India.

He admits that he lied to the crew during the entire First Voyage by keeping two sets of measurements. Of the two sets, the broadcast one contained false leagues travelled, thus misleading his pilots, captains and sailors, who were expert seamen in their own right. That he was capable of fooling his shipmates shows the extent of Colón's expertise and cunning. This trick ensured that everyone on the return voyage was confused because they had been given wrong measurements for the whole outgoing trip that were way shorter. Colón was never lost because he utilized the correct measurements from his secret log.

There are yet more ways to show the accuracy of his secret measurements. Consider this: How could Colón ever find his way back to Spain from Haiti in 1493, following a completely different route than the route he travelled on the outgoing voyage of 1492, and then find his way again back to Haiti in late 1493 if, in fact, he had been using inaccurate measurements?

Many people believed that Admiral Colón was lost, but that is not true. He was not lost for a single day during his voyages. He traveled straight west in 1492 and found land in just 33 days, brilliantly following the shortest route there and did not sail blindly around in circles. Then, on the way back to Europe, he plotted a straight route for the Azores Islands and anchored in Santa Maria Island, on February 1493. Again, he used the most efficient routes, which are still sailed today. This could only be the result of information he obtained from previous secret voyages made by the Portuguese: the only sailors making those reconnaissance voyages at that time.

The Admiral was shrewd enough to lie about the leagues traveled to the West and to keep his logbook secret, where he plotted the exact measurements and directions taken. He also confiscated maps and logs from the others before reaching land. Without the correct information, all of the sailors and pilots who were aboard the caravels Niña and Pinta had no idea where they were located or where they were going. They were totally lost on the return trip.

Only Admiral Colón, applying the true knowledge of the routes and utilizing the latest Portuguese technology, knew they were getting close to the Azores and, in a short time, that they would reach those islands. On February 10, 1493, as the ships entered the sea of Azores, only Cristóbal Colón knew where the ships were located in the vast Atlantic:

[Captain] Vicente Yáñez and the two pilots Sancho Ruiz and Pero Alonso Niño and [pilot] Roldán were plotting the course, and according to their calculation they were all well to the East of the Azores islands... in the vicinity of the island of Madeira or Porto Santo. But the Admiral placed himself way off their reckoning and well behind them, for on this night he reckoned that the island of Flores lay to the North... The Admiral was one who knew better how to measure the leagues travelled, by his great wisdom and memory and experience of navigation. [He was correct]... they were [off by] 150 leagues closer to Castile.³⁰⁷

Note that there were three experienced pilots and a captain doing the calculations – and they all were wrong. A few days later, on February 15, Rui Garcia, a native of the port of Santoña, sighted land. Again, the pilots and sailors erroneously insisted on their wrong location, convinced that it was Sintra in Portugal or Galicia in Spain. But only Admiral Colón knew that they were still halfway to Europe. It was the little island of Santa Maria in the Azores.

The myth that insists Colón grossly underestimated the correct number of miles per degree of longitude, because he wrote, “*I say that the world is not as big as people say and that a degree of the equatorial line corresponds to 56 and 2/3 miles,*” can’t be substantiated any longer, since this is clearly a contradiction of our globe and of the facts as Colón knew them to be.

In his own note from 1488, Colón noted that Bartolomeu Dias had rounded the Cape of Good Hope in Africa and had made a voyage of 3,100 leagues, showing he knew well before 1492 that the globe was not so small – a fact that many insist Colón believed. (From Lisbon to the Cape of Good Hope around the bulge of Africa is roughly 9,600km. Round-trip that is 19,200km. Dividing these 19,200km by the league of 6173 meters one gets 3110 Leagues. Colón noted that Dias sailed 3100 leagues, which appears to be quite accurate.)

Another passage history books utilize to demonstrate the idea that Colón did not know how to measure latitudes is the following: “*I was at the Castle of San Jorge da Mina of the King of Portugal, which is under the equator, and I am a good witness that it is not uninhabitable, as some believe.*” This has been classified as an error because the Castle at Elmina (in today’s Ghana) is not south of 0° but 5° North of it. Colón, however, was not utilizing this to say that the castle was below (south) of the Equator, but that it was *under the Equatorial Sun* and that it was not uninhabitable, as he himself witnessed.

The most commonly utilized “error” historians use to show Colón was lost and inexperienced is a measurement attributed to the island of Cuba. Colón wrote in the Ship’s Log that Cuba was 42° North as opposed to its actual location of 21° North:

Friday 2 November: The Admiral took the height with a quadrante tonight and found that he was 42 degrees from the equinoctial line... he had traveled from Hierro Island (Canaries) a thousand one hundred and forty-two leagues.

Wednesday 21 November: Here the Admiral found himself to be 42 degrees north of the equinoctial line. But here he says that has suspended the quadrante until he reaches land... To deem that the quadrant was good, he jiggles it. He says he is as far north as Spain.

These measurement has been utilized as the scientific proof that the Admiral could not even read the most basic nautical instruments, such as the quadrant, which consisted of nothing more than a 90° section of a circle (a quarter circle) marked out with degree lines and a hanging plumb line (SEE FIGURE 10-11). Saying that Cuba was located 42° North is an obvious lie, like many others that he propagated, to maintain the necessary confusion required to keep the upper hand over these territories. To make the lie more believable, Colón wrote that he believed the quadrant to be flawed and that he moved it back and forth to ascertain if it was working correctly, as if an instrument, whose only moving part was a dangling piece of string with a weight on it, could somehow become flawed.

When something does not fit, instead of taking it at face value we must seek the truth that it hides.



Figure 10-11: The quadrant is shaped from a quarter-circle. A weight hung on a string, from the center, creates a plumb line that crosses the lower graduated edge. The navigator sights the celestial body along the top edge, and the string crossing the lower arch shows the altitude, or angle, above the horizon where the measurement is being taken, which with the North Star gives you the latitude of your location.

It is easy to prove that both Admiral Colón and his friend King João II passed false information to the public, while they kept the truth hidden from us. The 42-degree latitude that Colón gave for Cuba’s location was an intentional lie. How can one prove this? It is easy. After returning to Spain, Cristóbal Colón was quickly sent by the Spanish Monarchs on the return voyage to the New World. However, the Admiral left behind a letter with secret instructions for his brother Bartolomé Colón, who was residing at the court of France.

Las Casas says that after Bartolomé arrived from France, “*the Admiral was already gone with his 17 ships; he found however instructions that the Admiral left for him.*”

Having read the secret instructions that Cristóbal left, Bartolomé Colón left Seville for the court. There they named him *Don* Bartolomé Colón and he was ordered to serve them by helping the Admiral. Bartolomé captained a ship from Spain to the New World that arrived at La Española (Haiti) on April 14, 1494.

Logically Bartolomé, without ever having sailed to Haiti and, following the secret instructions left by the Admiral, did not wander lost in the Atlantic and did not go to 42° North (around New York City), instead Bartolomé sailed straight to Haiti. This could only be because Bartolomé had received the true and correct leagues, degrees, latitudes and longitudes from his brother Cristóbal.

No better evidence could be provided to prove that Admiral Colón and his cronies kept the true information secretly hidden between themselves, while passing false information to those they wanted to mislead. However, their actions can’t be as easily falsified as can their letters. From his actions and those of his brothers, the truth of their treachery is crystal clear.

Likewise, we can understand the deception in the Admiral's actions during the Second Voyage: *Monday, 7 October, the Admiral began his journey to India, having given beforehand an envelope closed and sealed, to all the ship [captains], which he ordered to not be opened unless the wind separated them from him. This was because, in that letter, he gave notice of the route they should follow to the town of Natividad at Española, and he did not want, without dire need, that any one have knowledge of that route.*

Note that the accurate directions were sealed in such a way that it was possible for Colón to know immediately whether the envelope had been opened or not when he collected them at the end of the voyage. No one else knew where they were sailing to and needed to follow the Admiral blindly. Admiral Colón controlled everything. Although he allowed sailors to draw maps during the voyages, just before he reached port he confiscated all maps. Only by using these deceptive tactics could he manage to maintain the deception in place.



By understanding the Time Zones that Don Cristóbal Colón had traveled across the Atlantic and matching up the leagues that he had calculated to the actual miles we know that distance to be. By carefully examining the environment that he encountered compared to what one would expect to find in the real India. By understanding that our Sphere has always been measured with 360 degrees. By understanding that India was known to be located to the East of Spain and well within the known 180 degrees of Ptolemy. And by the fact that his brother, Don Bartolomé Colón, never having sailed to Haiti before, managed to sail to Haiti following the Admiral's secret instructions and didn't get lost, it becomes evident that the reality of what Don Cristóbal Colón was doing is very different from what the world had come to accept in these last 500 years.

Admiral Cristóbal Colón, by possessing a great deal more knowledge than the others who could not confirm his claims, was like a fish in water. He misled the committee of Spaniards, who held less knowledge of the Atlantic, fooling them with the extensive experience he had acquired while working for the King of Portugal, for whom he claimed in his own letters to have sailed "all the East, and all the West and I have sailed [the routes of] Guinea."

He included impressive quotes from Toscanelli, Ptolemy and Marino and others like Pierre d'Ailly, Pliny and Joachim de Fiore to impress the Spaniards into sponsoring him. Nevertheless, the Spanish committee rejected his proposals for seven years, saying that it seemed to be a "burla"—a deception—against Spain. The Spanish suspected from the beginning that the Colón brothers were trying to deceive them, and indeed it was true. Even suspecting the ruse ahead of time, Don Cristóbal Colón was able to deceive them with "India" until his death, as evidenced by the letter presented at the beginning of this chapter.

Furthermore, the Admiral's family continued deceiving the crown of Spain, as well as the public, for centuries, making it very difficult for us to tell what was fact from what was fiction. Today, we are glimpsing behind the wall of lies for the first time in an attempt to expose the truth in the hopes that Don Cristóbal Colón may never be seen as an ignorant and lost sailor ever again but as the secret Portuguese double-agent he looks to have been.