

The Knights of Columbus chose well to model their organization after such a man as Cristobal Columbo. He must have been a man directed by Divine intervention. He did not tolerate profanity among his men and he had a very admirable goal of promoting international trade and capitalism. Today capitalism is closely associated with the term freedom.

Students of history overlook how the two worlds of Europe and the Americas were such opposites and how his exploration united these two worlds. The ten years and four trips of sailing between these worlds caused changes that we take for granted today. Many think that Columbus was looking for gold and silver, but he discovered things and commodities and territories much more valuable.

Modern Americans fail to contemplate the ludicrous possibility of a common Italian merchant approaching the king of England, France, Russia, Portugal, and the Netherlands and Spain to ask for a valuable armada of ships to explore unknown territory to find a better trade route. Only a Catholic queen with possible ulterior motives would have granted such a financial risk to a foreigner, likely at the objection of her husband.

Cristobal can safely be labeled as the father of international commerce. Note that since the discovery of the Americas 500 years ago, the following food commodities were discovered in the Americas and exported to Europe:

Tomatoes	(Maya/Aztec)	Chili Peppers	(1544)
Potatoes	(Andes mountains)	Tobacco	
Corn	Chocolate	(Honduras)	

The Jesuits once banned Chocolate, but recanted after near mass defections from the brotherhood.

The following foods were exported from Europe or Africa to the Americas:

Cheese	(Egypt 3000 B.C.)	Olive Oil	
Onions/Garlic		Oregano	(Mediterranean)
Wheat		Spinach	
Zucchini		Artichokes	
Cucumbers		Dates	
Melons	(Arab World)	Peanuts	(Africa)
Rice	(Arab World)	Bananas	(Africa)
Eggplant	(Arab World)	Watermelon	(Africa)
Citrus Fruit	(Arab World)	Rice	(Africa)
Sugar Cane	(New Guinea)	Yams	(Africa)
Grapes/Wine	(Northern Iran)	Okra	(Africa)
Coffee	(Ethiopia)		

India was the original producer of rice before China and also before the Arab World. Of all these foods, coffee has the greatest value today. Its world value nearly rivals oil.¹

Most domestic animals that now exist in the Americas were imported. Exceptions include the dog, llama, alpaca, guinea pig, Muscovy duck, turkey and the reindeer. These 6 or 7 species were the only domestic animals in the Americas.

In the 1840's a fungus transmitted by aphids, imported to Europe from the Americas nearly destroyed the European grape/wine industry. The grape plant was saved by disease resistant roots exported back to France from America.

Sugar cane could be identified as the most detrimental item imported to the Americas. Europe had a sweet tooth, and the Caribbean along with the southern U.S. were the best places in the world to grow sugar cane. Because cane is a very labor-intensive crop, slaves were needed to grow it.

Maize or corn is probably the most detrimental item exported to the Old World since it was needed in Africa to feed potential slaves due to a famine there. All the original natives in Cuba, and Puerto Rico had died, so the African native eventually replaced the former race of natives for slave labor.

One of Christopher's attributes was that he was truly a great navigator. Many people assume he was great because he "found" America. This is logically ridiculous. Any brave bumbling fool would have found America by sailing generally west. Chris was partly genius because he discovered magnetic variation. This term applies to the difference between true north, and magnetic north. In most parts of the world there is not a significant difference. In the Atlantic and North America there is a significant difference.

To further understand why the old mariners were confused, they thought the magnetic compass of the day was pointing to the North Star. If they had been just a little more knowledgeable they would have erroneously thought it pointed to the North Pole (oblivious of magnetic North).

As Chris sailed west, he began to notice this difference between the North Star and his compass. He charted this difference each day, and then applied this difference on his return trip. He missed his return point by 13 miles. This is fantastic navigational accuracy.

Although Christopher has been criticized for being politically incorrect and racist, his total contribution for improving of the standard of living for the human race far exceeds that contributed by any other man except for Jesus Christ.

If the PC crowd wants to blame Christopher for diseases and slaves, shouldn't they blame the Spanish (i.e. Isabella, and Ferdinand) or the Europeans for their sugar cravings? Never forget that the most important thing that Columbus brought to America was Christianity.

As a food for thought, I would like to relate a story concerning my own discovery. In 1995 I was working in Altus, Oklahoma. I met two dark-haired strangers and established a friendship. They told me they were crew members from Turkey being trained to fly on KC-135 air refueling tankers. They were of the Muslim faith. Later that day they asked me if I was familiar with any of the local Indian tribes. I told them, "no".

They were curious because they had spent some time in one of the downtown bars on the previous evening and discovered that some of the native Americans used some of the same words that they used such as, "fire", "house", and "fish". They had possibly been in contact with decedents from the Pottawattamie tribe.

¹ Information on the foods: "What We Eat" Burt Wolf, Tehahi Books, San Diego, CA. 2002 A.D.

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