

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS,  
HIS SON, AND THE QUEST TO BUILD  
THE WORLD'S GREATEST LIBRARY

"Like a Renaissance wonder cabinet, full of surprises and opening up into a lost world."

—STEPHEN GREENBLATT,  
author of *The Swerve*

# THE CATALOGUE

OF

# SHIPWRECKED BOOKS

EDWARD WILSON-LEE

*The*  
**CATALOGUE**  
— *of* —  
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*for Kelcey*

Achilles' shield is therefore the epiphany of Form, of the way in which art manages to construct harmonious representations that establish an order, a hierarchy. . . . Homer was able to construct (imagine) a closed form because he . . . knew the world he talked about, he knew its laws, causes and effects, and this is why he was able to *give it a form*. There is, however, another mode of artistic representation, i.e., when we do not know the boundaries of what we wish to portray, when we do not know how many things we are talking about and presume their number to be, if not infinite, then at least astronomically large. . . . The infinity of aesthetics is a sensation that follows from the finite and perfect completeness of the thing we admire, while the other form of representation we are talking about suggests infinity almost *physically*, because in fact *it does not end*, nor does it conclude in form. We shall call this representative mode the *list*, or *catalogue*.

UMBERTO ECO, *The Infinity of Lists* Como todos los hombres de la Biblioteca, he viajado en mi juventud; he peregrinado en busca de un libro, acaso del catálogo de catálogos; ahora que mis ojos casi no pueden descifrar lo que escribo, me preparo a morir a unas pocas leguas del hexágono en que nací.

JORGE LUIS BORGES, “El Biblioteca de Babel”

The use of letters was invented for the sake of remembering things, which are bound by letters lest they slip away into oblivion.

ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *Etymologies* I.iii So if the invention of the Shippe was thought so noble, which carryeth riches, and commodities from place to place, and consociateth the most remote regions in participation of their fruits: how much more are letters to be magnified, which as Shippes, passe through the vast Seas of time, and make ages so distant, to participate of the wisdome, illuminations, and inventions the one of the other?

FRANCIS BACON, *Advancement of Learning*

PART IV

**SETTING  
THINGS**

*in*

**ORDER**



## XIV

# Another Europe and the Same

Exactly two years after leaving Spain, in the autumn of 1531, Hernando was returning from the Low Countries in a small party that would pass back across France to Spain. As the party moved from Louvain and Antwerp to Cambrai and on to Paris, they made a remarkable gathering: Hernando, the seasoned traveler on horseback, was joined by two Dutchmen he had recruited to help him in his library—Jean Vasaeus, and the corpulent and jovial Nicholas Clenardus, who quickly gave both themselves and their horses painful sores by sitting awkwardly in the saddle, using neither their feet in the stirrups nor their hands on the crupper to displace their weight. Though Clenardus, whose letters recount the journey in vivid detail, admits it was usually his lolloping and wincing that drew attention as they entered the towns, he recalled with some amusement the time his companion Vasaeus had stolen the show, becoming so unsteady in the saddle that he had been forced to cling to the horse’s mane with his teeth. At Paris they were joined by Jean Hammonius, a French legal expert who was also recruited for the library project, making up a party of ten or so, which also included Hernando’s companion Vincentio de Monte, who was hired in Rome early in the journey, and who would be with him for the rest of his life.<sup>1</sup>

Hernando had met Clenardus in Louvain, at the Collegium Trilingue, where Hernando had gone to look for those with the necessary skills to help him bring order to the growing chaos of the library. Communicating his requirements to a Portuguese humanist at the college, André de Resende, Hernando had promptly been taken to the room where Clenardus was lecturing on a Greek text by John Chrysostom to a group of students. Though Clenardus had only been made a

doctor by the Collegium a few years previously, he was already winning a reputation as a revolutionary teacher of language, and not simply because of the flamboyant hats he had taken to wearing after a period of living in Paris. Clenardus was pioneering an Erasmian approach to language learning, determined to prove language was best taught not by sitting bent over dense books of grammar and vocabulary, but rather through conversation and play. He claimed to be able to teach even the dullest child a classical tongue in a matter of months, simply by making Latin or Greek part of their daily conversational habits, though he would later also introduce to his classrooms two “Ethiopian” slaves (more likely from west Africa), to whom he had taught Latin and who would perform dialogues for the astonished students. The two language-learning manuals, for Greek and Hebrew, that he had published in Paris during a year teaching there were already becoming runaway successes, and he was gaining a popular reputation as a teacher at the Collegium in Louvain. Hernando approached him as soon as the lecture was finished, and the two soon came to terms.

Clenardus was later to write to Hernando expressing admiration for his patron’s endurance of the scarcely bearable privations during his recent travels through Europe, and though Clenardus does not go into detail, it is possible to put together the pieces of Hernando’s odyssey across the charred and altered landscape of the Continent. He followed the same crescent-shaped route he had a decade earlier in 1520–22, from northern Italy to Basel and up the Rhine through lower Germany to the Netherlands. The similarities between this voyage and the earlier one must have brought the differences even more starkly home. Lutheranism was no longer a sporadic protest movement against an overmighty Rome, a spiritual energy that Hernando could sympathize with or ignore as the feeling took him. It was now in the ascendant through much of Charles’s German lands, and indeed in many areas the grounds of Luther’s arguments had been taken to their logical conclusions, far beyond the comfort of the fathers of the movement. If, as Luther—and, in the view of some, Erasmus before him—had argued, the only crucial thing was a spiritual relationship with God through faith, then surely there was no need for the mighty princes of the Church (popes, cardinals, and bishops) to act as intercessors between man and God; no need,

perhaps, for a Church at all. In the spiritual map of the universe, as in the new maps being made by Hernando, all points were equidistant from God. Indeed, while Luther had helped his own cause with the German princes by insisting that true believers should leave all political matters to their sovereign leaders, the poorest sort in some parts of Germany were easily persuaded by charismatic preachers that the revolutionary logic applied to secular rulers as well as the heads of the Church. In 1524 the radical preacher Thomas Müntzer, who captivated the Saxon mining town of Allstedt with his message of open season on the wicked and the rich, had preached before a gathered audience of inspectors a new interpretation of Nebuchadrezzar's dream of the statue of gold, bronze, iron, and clay. The smashing of the clay feet did not, he proclaimed, symbolize the beginning of a Last Kingdom but the end of *all forms of government*. Though Müntzer himself did not survive long after this, tortured and killed as the Peasants' Revolt got under way, a more stable (though hardly less antiauthoritarian) movement emerged in the Anabaptists, and Hernando would have had a taste of their ideas during his stay in their temporary home, Strasbourg, in late June 1531.

This was a very different vision of the End of Days to that conceived of by Columbus and Charles and Hernando, one in which the consolidation of universal rule in a single, supreme emperor was replaced by the flattening of all earthly hierarchies, with a difference being recognized only between the Elect and the Damned. It was also not a vision Charles could choose to ignore, even if his temptation might have been to focus on the more traditional threat to the east, where Suleiman's Ottoman forces had returned to continue their advance through Hungary and had laid siege to Vienna in September 1529, just as the imperial party was crossing over to Italy. So great were the joint threats in Germany and Austria that Charles had been forced to abandon, in the end, plans for a triumphal coronation ceremony at St. Peter's in Rome, settling instead for Bologna, which was closer to these theaters of action even if it was a poor substitute in terms of imperial symbolism. Charles's advisers had hurriedly prepared a case that the imperial coronation was valid no matter where it took place, as long as the pope was present, and (to further diminish the embarrassment) Bologna was decorated to look as much as possible like the

Eternal City, with a wooden set of triumphal arches sporting images of Roman emperors, and the Basilica of San Petronio dressed up to look like the Vatican. Charles may have found some consolation for these half measures by choosing for the date of the coronation 24 February 1530, the fifth anniversary of his defeat and capture of Francis I at Pavia.<sup>2</sup>

If Charles's thoughts were elsewhere, so were Hernando's, and he may have departed before the coronation itself after seeking an audience with Charles. At this audience Hernando made a rather astonishing announcement: after opening by reminding the emperor he had now been in service with the royal household for almost forty years, he declared he had never sought reward for his employment because he had always assumed that one day the suit concerning his father's rights would be resolved, and his livelihood would be finally guaranteed. Seeing as he did now that the case was, in his lovely turn of phrase, *immortal*, he had decided because of age and poverty to take up holy orders, in part because the current pope had always had him in mind for such a path. Hernando begged the emperor not to stand in his way, but to allow him to spend his last thousand florins in traveling to Rome.<sup>3</sup>

It is hard to believe this was much more than a ruse on Hernando's part. Although Columbus had included a cardinal's hat among his demands upon his return from the first voyage in 1493—meant for Diego rather than Hernando and ultimately unsuccessful—and a career in the Church was a common choice for younger (and especially illegitimate) children, little mention is made in Hernando's writing either before or after about joining the Church. His petition to Charles may suggest Hernando had got to know Giulio de' Medici reasonably well during his years in Rome, but it is hard to find evidence that he pursued a life in the Church with any conviction. His pleas of poverty may also have rung false in the ears of a sovereign who paid Hernando a pension of two hundred thousand maravedís a year, even if this may have been his only source of support and was quickly depleted by his ambitious projects.

If Hernando ever did intend to join the Church, the idea did not last long, and his supposed poverty seems to have been short-lived as well, as by September he was once again purchasing books in huge quantities, first at Rome and then up through northern Italy at Perugia, Milan, Turin, and Venice. He seems to have

resolved his financial difficulties in part by deciding, after a lifetime of begging his portion from his brother, to turn the tables on his brother's family, repeatedly drawing loans from the Grimaldi merchant-banker family and telling them to present the bill to the family estates in Hispaniola and the widow Virreina María de Toledo, whose agents denied they had funds of Hernando's with which to pay the creditors. This was something of a dangerous game, but evidently by now Hernando felt the need to buy books, and the fear of leaving his great library incomplete, more keenly than the threat from the great and powerful merchant-banker families of Europe. Perhaps this desperate ploy was provoked in part by the sight of Marin Sanuto, the historian-recorder of Venice, whom Hernando found (during a visit to Venice in April 1530) reduced to dire poverty and forced to sell many of the books from his magnificent library—some of which Hernando bought, out of either charity or book lust, with the funds he borrowed from the Grimaldis.<sup>4</sup>

Sanuto had once again been passed over for the post of official historian of the city, this time in favor of Pietro Bembo, and was living off a pittance paid to him by the state in return for his making his life's work—scores of volumes recording each detail of the city's affairs—available to Bembo for his use. In the will he drew up shortly after Hernando's visit, Sanuto pitifully describes the catalogue of his “rare and beautiful” books—replete, like Hernando's, with details of cost and date of purchase—with the following note: “Those marked with a red cross I sold in my time of need.” The sight of Sanuto's famous library being sold off to pay debts can only have provoked sympathy in Hernando for that particular horror, familiar to the impoverished bibliophile, combining both the sharpness of parting from books and the sadness that things so prized by the collector should fetch such a meager price. The bibliomaniac Walter Benjamin recounts that even the *thought* of having to sell his books drove him to buy more to soothe the pain he felt, and Hernando's acquisitions in these years have something of this flavor. The Biblioteca Malatestiana, which he must have visited when passing through Cesena in October 1530, offered something of a consoling vision. While in so many ways this library, founded by the local magnate and given to his city, was unlike Hernando's—stocked mostly with manuscripts from its own scriptorium and filled with book pews to which the volumes were chained—it nevertheless

managed at once to be a public library and to maintain a policy on lending so strict it lost only six volumes over the next five hundred years. This could not be a direct model for Hernando: his library contained so many books that one could not possibly chain each of them to a desk. But it may have set him thinking about how to safeguard his own collections without turning a key upon his library and turning it into a sepulchre for books.<sup>5</sup>

\* \* \*

Hernando had not come to the Collegium Trilingue in Louvain at the end of his sweep through south-German book territory to look for Erasmus himself: the idol was no longer to be found in that sanctuary. As the Reformation had advanced, perceptions that Erasmus's ideas had led to Lutheranism (and its more radical successors) had hardened. As the common joke went, "Erasmus laid the egg that Luther hatched." This became less of a joke when the Inquisition in Spain and the Faculty of Theology in Paris reviewed Erasmus's works and condemned sections of them as unorthodox; while defending himself against these charges, Erasmus had nonetheless withdrawn from the European scene, first to Basel and then (when the Reformation followed him there) to Freiburg, which Hernando visited in June 1531. But if Erasmus was no longer at Louvain, it was still a stronghold of Erasmian thinkers, and Hernando had come there in search of assistants for his library. In part, this may have been driven by the loneliness of his work, but the library presented Hernando with greater needs than this, as suggested by his first recruit, Nicholas Clenardus.

Clenardus's readiness to leave Louvain and cross the Continent with this stranger shocked many of his colleagues, especially given that Hernando was not able to offer him better terms than he had at the Collegium. But the two clearly sensed in each other a kindred spirit, and Hernando knew exactly how to tempt the Dutchman. During his doctoral studies Clenardus had come across an edition of the Psalms that printed each of these sacred songs in five languages—Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldean, and Arabic—and he had fallen in love at first sight with the swooping, fluid curls of the Arabic script. The language was entirely unknown in Flanders at the time, and while Clenardus claims the impressive feat of having decoded the Arabic alphabet (by looking at how proper names were written in that script), there was no way for him to progress further

in his love affair with the tongue. Hernando had only to dangle in front of Clenardus the Arabic riches of Spain—both the fluent speakers who could be recruited to teach him, and the treasury of Arabic manuscripts locked away in Spanish libraries, including the dispersed remains of the famous Umayyad library in Córdoba (and a few in Hernando’s own)—to induce this glossophile to up stakes and follow him into the unknown.<sup>6</sup>

The recruitment of Clenardus promised to solve for Hernando a growing problem of the library—namely that as his ambitions grew from merely an unparalleled library to a truly universal one, and he set his sights on the world outside Christendom as well, there would inevitably be innumerable books in languages he could not read. Although they were few in number, there was already a problem with transferring the Arabic volumes in his register over to the alphabetical list, for the simple reason that they were in a different alphabet. To all intents and purposes, these books simply disappeared when they entered the library, as there was no way of putting them on the map. And there was no chance of including these titles in the *Epitomes* or *Materials*, given that their contents were a mystery to his *sumistas*. This problem could only expand: Hernando had already bought books in Greek, Hebrew, and the Ethiopian language of Geez, and many more were beginning to appear in Armenian and Arabic, with some now even being printed in north Africa and beyond. While as early as 1484 the Ottoman sultan had prohibited Turks from using the printing press, Jewish refugees from Europe had nonetheless taken the technology with them and begun printing in the Levant. In addition to the growing number of printed books, there were also the treasure hoards of manuscripts brought back to Spain as the spoils of conquest, such as the two thousand volumes rumored to have been brought back to Spain after the capture of Tunis in 1536. Between these foreign scripts and the growing number of invented languages—such as the pictographic books being developed in Seville by Jacobo de Testera to aid universal proselytization—it was clear the alphabetical lists for the library might soon become obsolete. Worse than this, large parts of the library might become unreadable to *any* extent by the librarians, making them unsortable, unshelvable, and threatening ultimate chaos. This was not only a danger for non-European languages: that Hernando had almost no books in English, despite his visit to

London, is likely because few even of the most learned outside of the British Isles understood anything of the language. Clenardus's coming promised to stem the flood, at least for the time being, by making the Greek, Hebrew, Chaldean, and Arabic tomes more manageable, and perhaps to provide a longer-term solution, given his interest in finding a universal key to language, looking for the common ground that underlay them all.<sup>7</sup>

This threat facing the library is wonderfully captured in a book that first appeared in these years and was purchased by Hernando soon after. It does not appear under its author's name in the alphabetic catalogue, perhaps because the name—Alcofribas Nasier—appears to be one of those Arabic words that caused a problem for that mode of order. Yet the *title* of the book does appear—*Pantagruel, Son of Gargantua: His Deeds and His Prowess*—alerting us that, though unknown at the time, the arabesque name on the title page is actually an anagram of the author's real name: François Rabelais. Rabelais's uproarious tale, addressed to the “Illustrious Drinkers” of Europe, recounts the adventures of the giant Pantagruel, son of the king of Utopia (Gargantua), who reverses the direction of European travel narratives by coming from afar to Europe in search of knowledge. At Paris he finds the Library of St. Victor, a magnificent collection whose extensive (and imaginary) catalogue Rabelais provides. The list, which contains both real books and made-up volumes, is a parody of the contemporary book market, as this small sample of titles suggests:

- A Testicle of Theology*
- The Mustard-Pot of Penitence*
- On Farting Discreetly in Public*, by Mr. Winegarden
- Tartaraeus, *On Ways to Shit*
- Pasquino, Doctor of Marble, *On Eating Venison with Artichokes during Lent*
- Bede, *On the Excellence of Tripe*
- Fourteen Books on Serving Mustard after Dinner*, by Our Master  
Rostocostojambedanasse
- On the Arses of Widows*
- Ramon Llul, *The Bumtickle of Princes*
- A Perpetual Almanac for Sufferers of Gout and Pox*

*The Foolishness of Italian Things*, by Mr. Firebreaker

*The BO of the Spanish, Distilled by Brother Inigo*

. . . and so on, for many pages. While hilariously puncturing the insufferable pomposity of contemporary writers and scholars, Rabelais is echoing Hernando's more serious point that book titles are often gibberish, telling us almost nothing about their contents, and so providing a list is no better than putting together a compendium of nonsense. Luckily, however, Pantagruel meets soon after this his soul mate and companion for life, Panurge, who wins his heart by greeting him with scurrilous and lewd speeches in fourteen different tongues: German, Hispano-Arabic, Italian, Scots, Basque, "Laternese," Dutch, Castilian, Danish, Hebrew, classical Greek, Utopian, Latin, and (finally) French. It is entirely possible Rabelais had the polyglot and glutton Clenardus—wearer of remarkable hats—in mind when creating this character. Panurge, a whorehound and bon viveur, is a glorious parody of the Renaissance universal man, who (after escaping from Turkish captivity) has a career as an urban planner and as a humanist, designing new city walls for Paris out of the genitals of its ladyfolk and defeating an English scholar who has developed a *perfect language* of gestures by waggling his codpiece at him. Panurge offers to Pantagruel, as Clenardus did to Hernando, the promise of cutting through the linguistic fog of the world, and doing so with a certain flair.<sup>8</sup>

\* \* \*

Hernando and his party had no possibility to visit England on his way back, as he had a decade before. Relations between England and Spain, which were difficult enough when Henry sided with France after the Battle of Pavia, were now at an even lower ebb, given that Henry was attempting to divorce Charles's aunt, Queen Catherine. To make matters worse, the emperor's control of Pope Clement following the Sack of Rome meant there was little chance of Henry's getting rid of his wife through the traditional channels of the Church. Wolsey had fallen after failing to deliver the divorce, and Henry had begun to listen to those who argued the pope had no authority over the English king's marriage arrangements. Henry, whose 1521 tract against the Lutherans was a treasured text in the Vatican Library, was not yet breaking with Rome, but he was starting to

sound a lot like those who had. Though famous throughout Europe as the author of the radically skeptical *Utopia*, Thomas More now found himself overtaken by events and increasingly isolated in his public defense of the traditional powers of the Church. And Juan Luis Vives, the Spanish humanist who had been sent to England to give Princess Mary an Erasmian education, was expelled from the country after a brief house arrest for siding with his countrywoman Catherine.



A satire on gluttony by Hans Weiditz (number 1743 in Hernando's picture inventory). During his tour of Europe in 1529–31, Hernando recruited the corpulent and jovial Nicolas Clenardus, a wearer of extravagant hats, to work in his library.

If visiting England was not an option, France was now open to Spanish travelers for the first time in Hernando's adult life. The 1529 Peace of Cambrai had ended the thirty-five-year war that played out between France and Spain in northern Italy, and Hernando could finally travel through the country he had circled during much of his life. Clenardus narrates the journey through France to Spain, with Hernando and his other new recruits, with his usual charisma and focus on things of the body. The well-fed Dutchmen were horrified by the hostelries along the way, which Clenardus claimed were infinitely worse than those of which Erasmus had complained in southern Germany, especially when they reached Spain, where they found (after the good French dinners) virtually nothing to eat. They were forced to form scavenging parties to scrape together enough bread, wine, fish, and raisins to make up a homely meal, and struggled to find a single stick of kindling to light a fire against the frozen winds of northern Castile. They were also shocked to find they often had to share a single drinking glass among the whole table—and sometimes even with a neighboring table of complete strangers. On one occasion, near Vitoria, the communal glass slipped out of Vasaeus's hand and shattered on the floor, and after that they were forced to drink their wine “in the manner of Diogenes”—from their own cupped palms. With wonderful gallows humor, Clenardus took this as a prompt to label Hernando their Prophet—a playful title by which he addressed him thenceforth—because Hernando had, after all, warned them before arriving in Spain that a time would come when they would lack even vessels from which to drink.<sup>9</sup>

After passing through Burgos and Valladolid, which were wholly frozen, against all of the Dutchmen's expectations, they arrived at the court in the slowly regrowing Medina del Campo, where the sumptuous household of the Dowager Virreina, María de Toledo—still almost sovereign of Hispaniola during her son's minority—provided at long last sufficient comfort for Clenardus's taste. Hernando had evidently reached some accommodation with his sister-in-law by this point, though the party departed soon after on urgent business to Salamanca, where for the time being Hernando agreed to leave Clenardus to study the Arabic

manuscripts held there. In a letter written to Hernando soon after, it is clear Clenardus had become something more for him than an amiable companion and a linguistic wonder: the Dutchman appears to have been the first truly to understand what Hernando's library meant to the world and to its owner. In his letter, Clenardus remarked that, in drawing from the most distant corners everything that authors had to the present produced, Hernando had, like his father, reached beyond the limits of our world to make another: just as Columbus had, *by a prodigious act, planted Spanish power and civilization in another world, so he Hernando had gathered the wisdom of the universe to Spain.* *Sons often resemble their fathers in appearance, his new Dutch friend remarked, but some also bear a resemblance in spirit and moral qualities.* High praise indeed given that the first part of the letter argues Columbus's deeds had made him like a god among men. It is, Clenardus concludes, just this resilience inherited from his father that has allowed Hernando to build in Seville the greatest library of all time. Unlike his father, Hernando had made few grand claims for his master project, and Clenardus's reaction is the first on record. It is hard not to share the broken gratitude and swelling pride Hernando must have felt when, after a lifetime struggling in the wilderness, someone finally saw what he was doing and spoke openly of it.<sup>10</sup>

Clenardus's fulsome praise of Hernando and of his father may, however, have been prompted by something more than friendship or admiration; it may have been meant to provide comfort for Hernando in a time of great difficulty and pain. In part, this was caused by Hernando's growing awareness that his father's reputation was being formed out there, in the world of print and public conversation, in ways hardly complimentary to the man he loved so much. In fact, it may have been Clenardus who first drew Hernando's attention to this: the Psalter in five languages, which the Dutchman had spent so many years poring over in detail to learn the basics of the Arabic alphabet, contained one of the first biographical descriptions of Columbus to reach print, in the form of a note to Psalm 19 that spreads over five pages, written by its editor, Agostino Giustiniani. Columbus had used this psalm to prop up his claim that his discoveries were not just random events but rather a key part of God's plan, but now his interpretation was part of the official fabric of Europe's most sacred text,

contained in one of the most prestigious editions of the Psalms being read across Europe: Columbus's discoveries had become the *meaning* of this psalm, the fulfillment of its prophecy. Here the life of the explorer was being used to explain the psalm's words about God's message having traveled to the Ends of the World. Yet for all that it made Hernando and his father's *Book of Prophecies* part of mainstream European thought, the account of Columbus's life in the note on Psalm 19 was riddled with errors and (worst of all) opened with the damaging allegation that Columbus was *vilibus ortus parentibus*, "born of low stock." The *Psalterium* had been published as long before 1516, and this note had appeared separately as a short pamphlet on Columbus, but this crucial document seems to have passed Hernando by in the flood until around this time.<sup>11</sup>

However, the version of Columbus's life in the Psalms was hardly Hernando's biggest problem. The "immortal" case between the crown and the Columbus family over New World rights had taken a surprising and potentially catastrophic turn. An agent in the case, Villalobos, acting for the emperor, had dramatically asserted that Columbus did not have the right to be called the sole discoverer of the New World—because parts of it had been discovered by Martín Alonso Pinzón, the captain who had accompanied Columbus and who had raced him back to Spain in an attempt to claim the glory all for himself. This was an entirely cynical ruse on the part of the emperor, as the Pinzóns had long since sold to the crown any rights they might claim over the discoveries in return for a small consideration up front. In addition to these attempts to chip away at the Columbus claim, wild rumors were circulating that several pilots had sighted the same islands years before he had, and that he was acting on their information when he sailed; the rumors would have meant little if they hadn't potentially played into the interests of the emperor. But even this was not the worst in store: Charles, it seems, had also been pursuing another line of inquiry, following up on a theory that Columbus not only was not the sole discoverer of the New World, but could claim none of it at all—that he had been beaten to the punch by *sixteen hundred years*. The theory, the main proponent of which was none other than Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo—Hernando's fellow page at the court of the Infante Juan, who had written so scornfully of those he felt were of too lowly birth to be there—claimed Columbus's Indies must be none other than the

Islands of the Hesperides, mentioned by the classical author Statius Sebosus as being “forty days sail west of the Gorgonas Isles.” Oviedo further asserted that these islands had been conquered by an ancient Spanish king, Berosius, and were therefore *already* a Spanish possession when Columbus went there in 1492, meaning he had discovered nothing at all and had no claims whatsoever. This story was backed up by claims, first published in the 1533 history of Spain by Lucius Marinaeus Siculus (another figure from the court of the Infante Juan), that in the gold mines of the Americas coins had been found with the image of Augustus Caesar, which had been sent to the pope as proof of contact between Europe and those parts in classical times. Staggeringly, the courts agreed with the arguments of the crown, and on 27 August 1534 they issued the *Sentencia de las Dueñas*, stripping the Columbuses not only of their right to the title of viceroy of the Indies but also of any right to a share in the gold and other goods of those lands.<sup>12</sup>

۱ p̄fetia mea. Filii populoꝝ cōsumetur  
 & migrabunt de pretoriis suis. Vuit  
 DEVS ipse, & benedictus fortis,  
 quoniam ante eum dabitur mihi  
 fortitudo & redemptio, & exaltetur  
 DEVS fortis redemptio mea.  
 DEVS qui vltus est me,  
 & prostrauit populos, qui exurgunt  
 ad offensionem meam sub me.  
 Eripuit me de p̄onis inimicitie mee,  
 isup plusq illos q exur. vt noceat mihi  
 valētiorē me efficies, ab gog at& ab  
 pplor̄ rapaciū, q stcū illo (exercitib⁹  
 eripics me. Propterea  
 laudabo te in populis  
 DEVS & nomini tuo laudes dicam.  
 Magnifico vt faciat redēptionem  
 cum rege suo, & facienti bonum  
 MESSIE suo Dauidi,  
 & seminie eius usq in eternum.  
 XIX. In laudem.  
 Laudatoria Dauidis.  
 Qui suspiciunt celos enarrant  
 gloriam DEI, & opera manuum eius  
 annunciant qui suspiciunt inaera.  
 Dies diei apponit, & manifestat  
 verbum & nox nocti  
 diminuit & nunciat scientiam.  
 Nō est verbū lamentationis, & nō sunt  
 sermones tumultus & non  
 audiuntur voces eorum. In omnem  
 terram extensi sunt effectus eorum,  
 & in fines orbis omnia verba eorum,  
 soli posuit tabernaculum,  
 illuminationē aut i illos. Et ipse i mane  
 tanq sponsus procedēs de thalamo suo  
 pulcherrime, & dum diuiditur dies  
 letatur vt gigas, & obseruat  
 ad currēdam in fortitudine viam  
 occasus vesptini. Ab extremitatibus  
 celorum egressus eius,

F. Libromidras testimoniis in calce huius psalmi  
שְׁמַע־בָּרוּךְ־תְּהִלָּה  
שְׁמַע־וּרְדֵם בָּרוּךְ־מִשְׁחָה  
בָּרוּךְ־שְׁמַע־בָּרוּךְ־יְהֹוָה  
וְתִּמְכְּרוּ־עַל־שְׁמָה־בָּרוּךְ־  
רַב־צָדֶקְ וּמִשְׁמָךְ  
Et quod est castrum, uel que est turris, que facta est eis? Rex MESSIAH, quædam modum dictum est turris salutis, & scriptum est turris fortitudinis nomen DEI in ipsum currit iustus & sustuleretur.  
A. Secundum ex scriptis nominibus quibus hebrei celum significant, impositum versus ab extendendo quam a firmando.  
B. Non auditur vox eorum, Iuxta illud. Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed spiritus patris vestri quoqueatur in uobis. Et hic lateralis ille sensus, qui cum spiritali coincidit, ut scripsit Faber principio commentarium suarum.  
C. In omnem terram exiuit filium sive litteram eorum. cointellectu quo linea proprie significat filium illud, quemate riarum utitur fabriad signandam materiam, perinde ac si dixisset propheta. exiuit stru ctura sine edificiū contum.  
D. Et in fines mundi uerba eorum, Saltem tēporibus nostris quo mirabiliter auctu Christophori columbi genuensis, alter pene orbis repertus est christiana norumque cetui aggregatus. At uero quoniam Columbus frequenter pdcabat se ad Deo electum ut per ipsum adimpleretur hec prophetia, non alienum existimauit utram ipius hoc loco inserere. Igitur Christophorus cognomento columbus patria genuensis, uulibus ortus parentibus, nostra estate fuit qui sua industria, plus terrarum & pellagi explorauerit paucis mensibus, quam pene reliqui omnes mortales uiueris retro actis seculis. Mira res, si ta

A copy of the psalms in five languages (Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, Chaldean, and Latin), which played a key part in the spread of the Columbus legend.

Hernando's world was in pieces. Before his eyes, the image of his father was slowly being transformed into a shrunken and grotesque parody of the one Hernando had always kept in mind. His certain sense of the events of his childhood, when forty years before his father had found a new world and triumphed over mutiny and ingratitude to live to see himself vindicated, was crumbling away, assailed by contending and slanderous accounts, in which the lands his father had wrestled out of myth and legend into the light of day were slowly disappearing back into these mists. Everything that Hernando had spent his life learning, from ancient history and the labyrinth of the law to the use of ancient coins and inscriptions for understanding history, was now being turned against him. Faced with the annihilation of all he held dear, he turned to the only weapon he had left—his library, and in it the papers left to him by Columbus—in an attempt to make solid the father who was quickly slipping from his grasp.

## XV

# The King of Nowhere

How does one make a life out of words and paper? Capturing the essence of another person using the crude tools of narrative is a challenge at the best of times: out of the myriad events a pattern must be discerned, a structure created in which the life makes sense, and words must be found that resurrect the subject, conjuring for the reader the experience of being in their presence. How much greater, then, the challenge faced by Hernando in these years: to write about a father of whose memory he was infinitely jealous, and to do so with that father's fate, of fame and of fortune, hanging in the balance. Hernando began this task as he did almost all others. He gathered about himself the papers he would need, those he had inherited from his father, the letters and charters, logbooks and collections of notes, and all the books in which his father had written as he read. Making a life out of paper is infinitely easier if the subject has already begun to cross over into the written world by himself. The physical features of these documents are tantalizingly present as Hernando writes about his father: he mentions the phrase Columbus used to test whether his pen was working properly—*Jesus cum Maria sit nobis in via* (Jesus and Mary accompany us)—and the moment at the end of June 1494 when, even as his father was writing in his log, the ship ran aground on a shoal south of Cuba. These absentminded marks of the Admiral's pen—the words he wrote without thinking, the jag of his nib as the ship shunts into the sand—transport us to the moment of their creation, like a needle tracing the tremors of that world. They are eloquent testimonies to the arduous task of the biographer: using only pen

strokes, to break down the distance between language and the world; to turn the paper and words back into something real.<sup>1</sup>

The reverential attachment to Columbus's writings that can be seen in Hernando's biography has something to do with the son's devotion to his father and something to do with his profound affinity for written things, but it is also a product of the special circumstances in which Hernando was writing. As the opening chapters make clear, the immediate and practical reason for Hernando writing is to respond to the assertions—about Columbus, about the New World discoveries—that were swirling around Europe and the law courts of Spain as well as among the entourage of the emperor. Giustiniani's slander regarding the Admiral's parentage, the claims to equal credit made for the Pinzón family, and Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's strange assertions about ancient contacts with the western Atlantic threatened, singly or collectively, to blot Hernando's father's name from the Book of History, to bankrupt his family, and to put paid to Hernando's plans for a library the likes of which the world had never seen. Yet Hernando's life, with years at the Sacra Rota in Rome and leading the Spanish delegates to Badajoz, had amply prepared him for high-stakes games of assertion and counterassertion. And, as at Badajoz, his library gave him an immense advantage: within its holdings he could find the books Oviedo was citing and all of Giustiniani's publications. He could use them to show Giustiniani's account not only contradicted the Columbus version of events but even contradicts itself, while Oviedo has misunderstood what he was reading because of his poor command of Latin. Each of these arguments could be checked, by anyone who cared to, against any of the copies of these same works. The library formed the perfect witness: objective in the fullest sense of the word, of nearly faultless memory, and open to simple verification. The appetite with which Hernando pursued his advantage over these adversaries was occasionally unattractive and may hint at some lingering disdain for his schoolmate Oviedo, but was wholly understandable given the circumstances.<sup>2</sup>

While the farragoes of Oviedo and Giustiniani were easily dismissed, the claims of the Pinzón family were not so simple. Hernando could, and did, reproduce the text of the *Capitulaciones de Santa Fe*, and the confirmation of these terms from 1493, always reminding the reader he was copying documents

word for word that could be checked against official archives if necessary. These documents made clear that Columbus had rights over everything discovered on the expedition (and not just discovered *personally*), and that this extended from the Tordesillas Line westward to the Indies—as Hernando had asserted—rather than simply halfway around the world. But the lengths to which Hernando goes to show Columbus not only captained the first expedition across the Atlantic, but was the first person to see the fire lights on the island of Guanahani on the night of 11 October 1492, makes clear Hernando knew this was about something more than mere legal technicalities. It was Columbus, in Hernando’s words, *who saw the light in the midst of darkness, in token of the spiritual light that he would bring to these benighted lands*. As we move from the question of Columbus’s legal rights to his role in ordering the world, we enter the realm of biography proper.<sup>3</sup>

Hernando’s library held many models for biography, many volumes telling the life stories of various kinds of people highly prized by European culture. There were saints’ lives, in which the blessedness of the individual is marked out by precocious piety, inhuman feats of endurance, a disregard for earthly things, calm in the face of pain and death, and miracles surrounding the saint’s remains; there were biographies of authors, written as prefaces to their books, which sought to flesh out the person who had written the works that followed—such as the life of Pico della Mirandola, written by his nephew and translated by (among others) Thomas More. Then there were collections of lives, mostly of political figures, such as the *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans* by Plutarch or Boccaccio’s *On the Fall of Illustrious Men*. Some political leaders merited separate biographies, including the life of Agricola by Tacitus or the life of Richard III that Thomas More had written but not yet published. Yet though life writing presents itself as focusing on the actions and motives of an individual, biography is a literary ruse, a sleight of hand that uses the personal story to say something about the world beyond that person, to arrange (in a sense) the world around them. The saints prove the existence of heaven by their special awareness of it and the divine rewards they reap; the literary biography explains the author’s writings according to the manner of life he or she is shown to have led; the life of a political figure demonstrates the workings of society and

history by revealing what kinds of character and policy succeed or fail within it. The point of a life is to make sense of the world in which it is lived, and Hernando's biography of his father is just such a project, an act of ordering and interpreting that strikingly—and perhaps inevitably—bears close relation to his obsessive thought about order in his library.

The relation of Hernando's *Life and Deeds of the Admiral* to the world belongs to one of the most powerful and enduring versions of biography: the assertion of *primacy*. Who was the first to discover, invent, create? Primacy is such a powerful and fundamental way of structuring the world that we rarely pause to examine its underlying assumptions, to question why it should matter if someone was first or the thirty-first to do a thing. Beneath these claims to primacy lies a notion of the world as sequence: it matters who did something because everything afterward follows from that, not just in the sense of being later than but also of being caused by. When God speaks to Job out of the whirlwind, His assertion of omnipotence is founded precisely on His being there *before everything else*: he is the first cause, the Prime Mover. Although this goes against one of the first principles of logic—*post hoc non est propter hoc* (“after” is not the same as “because of”)—it is nonetheless a fundamental part of how many cultures understand the world. The deep European attachment to this principle was shown in Clenardus's letter suggesting Columbus was a god among men, and that Hernando could be one, too. In this Clenardus was following a popular way of understanding pagan religion in the Renaissance, which argued (after the classical writer Euhemerus) that the pagan pantheon was simply homage to famous ancestors, and that the great inventors and discoverers of the past had slowly been transformed into gods as their mortal forms and lives faded from memory. If Columbus was the first discoverer of the New World, he was a god, a figure in the pantheon of history; if not, he was nothing, one of those to whom history had merely happened. Chronological lists of those who have invented, found, or discovered things provide us with one way of ordering the world.<sup>4</sup>

This method of arranging the world on the basis of primacy presented one of the first means of ordering the new libraries of the Renaissance. In the 1490s, Johannes Zeller of Tritheim (Trithemius)—whose library in Würzburg

Hernando may well have visited in 1522—had created a list of around a thousand writers, placed in chronological order, drawing on even older, medieval models. (Hernando had owned a copy of this list since his trip to Florence in 1516.) Trithemius's work was part of a broad and complex project of chronology in the Renaissance, which engaged all available evidence to try to establish exact dates for historical texts and events. If confidence in major historical dates is something we largely take for granted, this is because of the painstaking and horrendously complex efforts of scholars such as Trithemius, who spent lifetimes sorting through a thicket of contradictory evidence about when precisely key events had happened—centrally, the birth of Christ, and everything else radiating out from this. The task became so maddening that in later life Trithemius took to inventing chronicles allowing him at last to put the unsettling lack of certainty to rest, eventually causing his exposure and disgrace. But even secure chronology has obvious limitations when one begins to apply it to the books in a library: books will appear to be bizarrely unrelated to books written the year before or the year after them, or even in the same year; books will not appear next to the titles to which they are responding or to which they inspired in turn—they won't even appear next to their own sequels in a properly chronological list of titles. Any attempt to be properly chronological quickly fails: other categories—form, genre, geography—must be introduced to make sense of it all, and before long chronology is not the major principle of order.<sup>5</sup>

The limitations in ordering the library chronologically are much the same as for thinking of history in that way: just because something is first does not mean that what comes after follows from it. Arguments can be made for Hernando's own primacy in various fields: the first to record magnetic variation; head of the first team to undertake a map on modern, "scientific" principles; the first to conceive of and attempt to create a truly universal library. Indeed, one might even suggest his life of Columbus is the first modern biography—not an exposition of theology (like a saint's life) or of national history (like the chronicles of kings), but taking a private individual as its subject, and attempting to understand not the example he provides for others but rather his uniqueness, and doing so moreover not using received traditions but documentary evidence and eyewitness report. The credibility of these claims, however, always rests on

how they are framed—what do we consider evidence of “recording,” what is “scientific” and “universal,” what is the essence of a “modern” biography? More interesting, perhaps, is the question that will increasingly pose itself in the final parts of Hernando’s life: What relationship do invention and discovery have with that which comes after?

The impossibility of proving *definitively* that his father was the first to cross the Atlantic meant Hernando had another, infinitely subtler task: to move beyond the establishment of simple primacy to the assertion of a *natural order*. He needed to demonstrate his father’s extraordinary feat was in keeping with Columbus’s character, something that convinced by its *probability* where he had failed to do so by proof. This is the focus of many modern biographies: it would not do for the great achievements of a celebrated figure’s life to seem to come from random happenstance, so they must proceed inevitably from that person (and only ever from that person). In biographies written after the Enlightenment, this would take the form of narrating the events that led up to the crucial moment: if the mind was a blank slate, written upon by the world in which it lived, then the person was necessarily the sum total of the experiences leading up to that moment. Without this notion of internal development, however, the event must have some *external* cause: it is just as important, then, that we know nothing of the childhood of Jesus or of Galahad, because they were not formed into the Messiah or the Grail Knight by experience but were chosen for it by Providence or Destiny.

This distinction, between ways of ordering the world that are internal, that come from within us, and those that exist outside and simply await discovery, lay at the heart of another possible way of organizing the library. Just before returning to Spain from the Netherlands in 1531, Hernando had purchased at Antwerp a new book, *On the Disciplines* by Juan Luis Vives, the Spanish follower of Erasmus who served as tutor to Princess Mary Tudor until his stance on Henry VIII’s divorce saw him expelled from England. In this book, Vives proposed a way of seeing knowledge that was entirely different to the thorny and abstract ideas of theologians and scholastic philosophers. Placing man himself at the center of things, Vives suggested the natural structure of knowledge is the one that comes from the order in which real people learn things. To explain

what he means, he tells the story of a primitive man who leaves his dwelling and narrates the things he encounters: he must find food, learn to protect himself against his environment, and develop relationships with other human beings; eventually, he will have time to consider things such as beauty and to contemplate the heavens and the origins of things. Each of these things properly understood, Vives argues, is a field of knowledge, a discipline—agriculture, military science, politics, the liberal arts, theology—and meant that even the humblest men could know as much about the world as philosophers, given that all knowledge began in and was built from basic experiences. This, in a sense, reversed the ordering in medieval monasteries' libraries, in which the Things of God came first and everything else followed after. It is also similar to, though not the same as, the chronological way of organizing the library: instead of placing the books, and the thoughts they contain, in historical order—the sequence in which they occurred to humanity as a whole—Vives suggests we should place them in the order that they would occur to a particular person, as he or she builds from basic experience to complex constructions. This *psychological* way of ordering knowledge—though Vives would not have used that term—fits the order of the world within the span of a human life.<sup>6</sup>

The decision whether to portray Columbus as someone who grew into his knowledge of the world, or one of those who gained it by inspiration from above, was (in a sense) made for Hernando because his father did not *have* an early life that led up to the years of discovery. It is unclear whether to give credit to the strange and painful confession Hernando makes early on in the biography, namely that he did not know many of the details of his father's early life, having been too full of filial piety during their years together to pry into a past that was not volunteered. In truth, even if Hernando had known, he would have been forced to draw a veil over the youth of his father. What we know now of Columbus's early life—descended from humble weavers, unlearned if not unlettered, caught up in the expansion of Genoese shipping networks as they pushed west to make up for the rise of the Ottomans in the East—would not combine, in most sixteenth-century minds, to produce a major player in the history of the world and of mankind. In response to this need, Hernando chose for his father a form of life similar to that provided for other figures of destiny,

such as Jesus or Galahad. Hernando even suggests Columbus consciously chose to be vague about his parentage and early life—so as to be like the other Apostles, or like Christ himself, who, despite being descended from the royal line of Jerusalem, preferred to be known as the son of Mary and Joseph.

But Hernando also found for his father, buried in the library, an origin story out of the pages of chivalric romance. The volume that helped him to stitch this together still survives in his library today and provides us not only with proof that Hernando wrote the biography, but also with clues as to when and how and why. He records that he began reading the *Enneads* by the historian Sabellicus in 1534, on 3 August—that eventful date in the Columbus story, which marked both the beginning of his father’s First Voyage and the start of Hernando’s dictionary. On the page of this epic history that records Columbus’s First Voyage, Hernando has marked out a passage in a way he reserved for those about his father: with a delicate and detailed drawing of a hand, its index finger pointing to the section in question, and the label “Christopher Columbus, my father.” This symbol, known as a manicule, was commonly used by Renaissance readers to identify passages in text they thought important, but Hernando hardly ever used it. He has drawn another, similar mark a few pages earlier, however, next to a passage dealing with a man who shared his father’s name: “Columbus junior, the Illustrious Archpirate.”

From the pages of Sabellicus Hernando drew a wholly new story of Columbus’s arrival in Portugal, at the beginning of his career as an explorer. Columbus (Hernando writes) was prompted to leave Genoa and take to the sea to join up with another man bearing the Columbus name, a member of the family who was a corsair in the western Mediterranean involved in the daring capture of four Venetian galleys off the coast of Portugal. Hernando writes for Columbus a role in this sea battle and departs from his usually fastidious accounts of the explorer’s life to insert a scene of pure romance: it tells of how, when the ships closed on one another, hand-to-hand combat broke out, of such ferocity and daring that from morning until the hour of vespers the sailors fought without pity using sidearms as well as bombards and other explosives. At the climax of the battle Columbus’s ship is set alight by one of the Venetian vessels, and the flames grow so quickly that those aboard can more easily bear the

thought of drowning than the torment of the fire, and they leap overboard. Columbus, being a great swimmer and seeing land only two leagues distant, avails himself of an oar that fate presents to him and reaches shore, from where after many days of recovery he makes his way to Lisbon in the confidence that he will find others there of his Genoese nation. God, the biography suggests, preserved Columbus that day for greater things.<sup>7</sup>

This description is so starkly different from the rest of the serious, documentary biography that it has left many Columbus experts with the conviction it could not have been written by his son. Indeed, if Hernando had not marked these passages in their source and drawn a link there between Columbus the Pirate and his father (who in reality were unrelated), it would seem out of keeping with his usually reserved and fastidious character. But in the light of this evidence, the scene reveals itself as central to Hernando's personality, though perhaps a part he kept hidden almost all his life: a moment in which the boy who lost in his father the source of his pride finds a secret place of fantasy to give that father a little more life. Resurrection is among the most powerful narrative devices ever invented, and this, I suppose, is just such a thing.

\* \* \*

If Hernando could not *prove*, using documentary evidence, that his father was the first to discover the New World and could not provide him with a life that led naturally toward the act of discovery, what was left to him? The answer to this is related to a third way of organizing the world of knowledge, one to which we are led by the increasing diminutions of scale we have been following: from the chronological order, which arranges things on the scale of history, to the psychological, which takes the progress of a human life as the foundation of order, to the *physiological*, which takes the human body itself as the best model for how to understand the structure of the universe. Hernando had always been intensely interested in the body and in medicine, as is suggested by the large number of medical books among his early purchases, and this may have been part of the reason why during this climactic period of his life he traveled to France, where as well as visiting Montpellier (a center of medical science) and buying thousands of books, he sought out and met at Lyons the only modern

author to join Erasmus in having his own section at the back of the alphabetical catalogue: Dr. Symphorien Champier. Champier is barely known today even among specialists of the period, but in his time he was a celebrated author on philosophy, history, and the occult sciences, the mystical attempts of which to unearth a hidden structure to the world drew strenuous objections from Champier. His main interest, however, was in medicine, and he presided over the medical college at Lyons alongside—among others—François Rabelais. Rabelais had lovingly mocked his senior colleague in *Pantagruel*, including in the chaotic Library of St. Victor many volumes by Champier, as well as in the episode in which the author takes a journey into Pantagruel’s innards after being sheltered during a rainstorm by the giant prince of Utopia’s tongue. Rabelais’s jocular suggestion that the real worlds awaiting discovery actually lay *within* the human body was part of a fundamental concept at the time; namely that the body reflected the same structure as the world outside—it was a microcosm, or small universe, reflecting the big one. Erasmus himself had translated several short treatises by the leading figure of classical medicine, Galen, and was a close supporter of many of the leading medical figures of the day, including Paracelsus (a pioneer in using cadavers for teaching and research, opening the secrets of man’s insides to the same scrutiny Hernando had given to the manatee) and Champier himself. Given the relation between microcosm and macrocosm, Erasmus reasoned, the true physician was also a philosopher. The reverse was also true: anyone interested in philosophy, in how knowledge *works*, would be mad not to take as their road map the human body, giving one as it did a local laboratory in which to investigate that God in whose image man had been created. In an oration, *In Praise of Medicine*, which Hernando had bought in Bruges at the end of his first European tour, Erasmus had declared that medicine *comprises not one or two branches of science but an encyclopedic knowledge of all the arts*, that it brought together “countless disciplines, an infinite knowledge of things,” and, quoting Galen, that the physician was *a man of universal knowledge*.

On just these grounds Hernando founded the central claim of his biography of Columbus. Time and again during the *Life and Deeds of the Admiral*, he suggests his father had succeeded where others failed because of his superhuman

discipline, endurance, and self-control, which allowed Columbus to ignore the many signs in the ocean that his crews were scrabbling to interpret and to focus instead, calmly, on the threefold argument that had convinced him he would find land in the west—reason, the authority of ancient writers, and the reports from other sailors in the Atlantic. Hernando considered the proof of this levelheadedness to be the logs his father so assiduously kept, meticulous records demonstrating that the path to discovery was through the slow and methodical compilation of measurements, records, and observations. In his biography Hernando even sets up an antagonist, a rival who represents the opposite approach—none other than Martín Alonso Pinzón, who in Hernando’s telling is endlessly scheming, paranoid, and capricious, and who (as his reward) dies of a broken heart when Ferdinand and Isabella deny his attempt to announce the discovery.

This image of Columbus, which has, since Hernando created it, been central to the legend of the explorer, required Hernando to perform considerable acts of historical revision to make it work. Gone from Hernando’s life of his father are Columbus’s beliefs that he had in 1492 reached the Far East—Cipangu and the outskirts of Cathay—and many of the wilder theories about the places he had visited, which survive in his letters to the *Reyes Católicos*. *The Book of Prophecies*, with its argument that Columbus’s discoveries were part of God’s plan for mankind, with its divine revelations that Columbus and Hernando used to guide them on the Fourth Voyage, is nowhere mentioned. Hernando is also silent on the series of visions his father experienced from 1498 onward, which were felt by Columbus to be guiding him in his ventures and to be proof of his election by God for the task. Hernando similarly fails to mention his father’s attempt to make his discoveries profitable by starting a trade in Arawak Indian slaves, and instead emphasizes the great affection Columbus had for the New World natives and his attempts to save them from Christian brutalities. As with so much in Hernando’s biography of Columbus, this narrative constructs the character that was needed in the 1530s—when it was clear America was not part of the Asian continent, when the providential character of Columbus’s discoveries was less clear, and when the railing of Bartolomé de Las Casas had begun to open European eyes to the atrocities of the conquistadores—and bears

little resemblance to the Columbus who comes out of his own writings. If anything, the Columbus portrayed in the *Life and Deeds of the Admiral*—the calm and methodical compiler of information, sympathetic to the ideas of Las Casas—looks a lot more like Hernando himself.<sup>8</sup>

Hernando's extended tour of southern France, where he was once again amassing large numbers of books—particularly medical tomes and the printed music for which Lyons was beginning to be famous—was cut abruptly short when, in mid-1536, he was summoned from Avignon to the Spanish court at Valladolid. That the queen had ordered comfortable lodgings to be prepared for him against his arrival may have alerted him that the tide, flowing for so long against the Columbus family fortunes, had finally turned in their favor. Ten days before he was summoned to court, the judges who had been assigned to arbitrate between the Columbus family and the crown had pronounced their verdict, one that reinstated Diego's son Luis as hereditary Admiral of the Indies and also conferred upon him the titles of Marquis of Jamaica and Duke of Veragua. Though the verdict did not reinstate the Columbuses to the governorship of Hispaniola or the vice-regency of the Indies and denied them the vast financial claims over the riches of the New World promised to Columbus in the *Capitulaciones de Santa Fe* in 1492, it nevertheless awarded the heir the not inconsiderable annual pension of ten thousand ducados, as well as a series of smaller pensions for other members of the family. The judges seem, mercifully, to have overlooked Hernando's self-inflicted wound when he gave away his rights to his patrimony at La Coruña in 1520 and awarded him a pension of a thousand ducados for life, to which the emperor added a further five hundred gold pesos to help with the work on the library.<sup>9</sup>

While we cannot be certain what role Hernando's biography had in this final victory for the Columbus legacy, its timing and its direct address to the case against his father suggest the *Life and Deeds of the Admiral* was designed to play a decisive part at a key moment in the history of his family and of Spain. Whatever the immediate effect upon the Columbus fortunes, Hernando's biography of his father was to have an immense and lasting impact upon European history, both through the image of his father that arose from it and by creating a model for future narratives of European superiority, narratives

founded on the qualities of discipline and technical mastery Hernando put at the center of his portrait. Like the *Life and Deeds of the Admiral*, these narratives would quietly ignore the religious zealotry and pure serendipity that often drove European expansion. But for the moment Hernando must have swelled with the knowledge that the onslaught on his father's reputation, which had continued almost without pause for nearly forty years, was finally in retreat and had been put to flight in large part by his own efforts.

With Columbus's legacy now more secure than at any other time since Hernando was a boy, he was able at last to turn his mind to perfecting his own creation. For this mammoth and unprecedented task, time was running short, and Hernando could no longer rely on the help he had scoured Europe for during his tour of 1529–31: the Burgundian doctor Jean Hammonius had been ill-suited to the heat of southern Spain and had quickly succumbed to a fever upon arriving in Seville, dying shortly afterward; Clenardus was too entranced by the Arabic riches on offer elsewhere to be tied down to Hernando's library in Seville. Soon after Hernando left him in Salamanca, Clenardus had also lured away his friend from Louvain Jean Vasaeus to join him there, before setting off himself to Portugal, from where he would plan a linguistic crusade into North Africa, using his beloved Arabic to set in motion a universal conversion of the Barbary Muslims. Hernando helped his friend occasionally during these years, scouring the markets of Seville with him in search of a Moor to help with his studies of Arabic. In the end, though, Hernando would have to face his library and its gargantuan challenges alone.<sup>10</sup>

## XVI

# Last Orders

With the settling of the family suit, Hernando could finally turn his full attention to his masterwork, though it was gradually becoming clear he was working against the clock. He seems to have suffered constantly in his final years from mysterious fevers similar to those that deprived his father of sight and of sense; his books increasingly record him being read to rather than reading himself, and his choice of titles shows a mind turning more and more toward Last Things. If his own fragile health were not enough to sharpen his focus on the imminent end, something else soon provided a definite and swiftly approaching moment of closure. In June 1537 Charles gave permission for Columbus's remains to be exhumed from the Capilla de Santa Ana at las Cuevas, where they had lain since 1509, and for them to be reinterred in the new cathedral nearing completion in Hispaniola. It is doubtful Hernando even paused before deciding to accompany his father's remains to this final resting place, and soon he was acquiring the relevant permits for this crossing. Among these documents are many indications that he did not imagine he would ever return from the New World: not only did he gain permission to transport four black slaves as the foundation of a household in Hispaniola, but the will Hernando drew up made specific provision for his remains should he die at sea or in foreign lands, and he even wrote an epitaph for himself that mentioned *three* voyages to the New World. This renewed funeral procession, thirty years and more after the Admiral's death, was to be a kind of pilgrimage in reverse: a journey that would make the destination more sacred and would bring

Columbus and the world he had discovered together, creating a center on what had once been the edge of the world.<sup>1</sup>

The journey would end in the cathedral of Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación in Santo Domingo. In the town Bartholomew Columbus named for their father, the grid of streets had slowly been encompassed with stone, moving inland from the earthworks at the river Ozama and the Calle de Damas, which was now strung with stout Castilian mansions between the Fortaleza and where it ended in the Alcázar de Colón, a New World palace like those in which Hernando and Diego had been billeted as pages of the court. The cathedral was a block farther from the shore and had been under construction since 1523, under the direction of Alessandro Geraldini, who had left his post as confessor to Catherine of Aragon to serve as bishop of Santo Domingo. The original wooden structure had been replaced by a Gothic nave in dressed stone, where, in a crypt under the altar, the Admiral's body would lie. As the only Gothic building in the New World, the cathedral with its ribbed vaulting and stone tracery is an isolated memory of the Europe from which Columbus had set out, an island forgotten in the river of time. It was, in a sense, the perfect resting place for Columbus's remains, with its willful attempt to make the New World in the image of the Old, even as the Caribbean trees erupting into the square outside protest in silent eloquence against this fantasy.

The prospect of this journey seems to have convinced Hernando, who was ever the master of beginnings but not of endings, that the time had come to make final the form of his library. By this point, at over fifteen thousand volumes, it was by far the largest private collection in Europe and also contained the largest collection of printed images and printed music in the world; yet it was far from satisfying Hernando's ambitions. He had been putting together elements of his design throughout his life—in the travels he had made across Europe and to the New World, in the libraries and bookshops he had visited, in the parts of the Caribbean he had traveled and the things he had seen there; in a sense, the design is no more or less than a summary of his life. But only in these final years could he bring himself to describe what had been gathering in his mind for so long. In four documents—a letter to Charles V, his last will and testament, and notes left by his executor and librarian—we begin to see the

lineaments of this thing, born of a lifetime spent in the print markets of Europe. As he reveals his plan, it becomes clear the Biblioteca Hernandina (as he wished it to be known) would be not simply a building or a set of books but an engine for extracting the writing of all mankind, an organism adapted to living in the new world of print. “It is one thing,” he wrote in his letter to the emperor, “to build a library of those things found in our time: but entirely another, to order things in such a way that all new things are sought out and gathered forever.”<sup>2</sup>

Hernando’s design began with a root system that tapped into the core of print, using existing trade networks to draw books to the library. The major arteries would start in five cities central both to print and to Hernando’s life: the great Italian book cities of Rome and Venice, where Hernando’s project had first taken shape, and through which flowed new works from Greece, Byzantium, and the missionary ventures; Nuremberg, Dürer’s city, where Hernando first began to amass tomes from the German kingdoms and the lands to their east; Antwerp, the great book emporium for the Low Countries, Scandinavia and Britain; and Paris, the center of French publishing, to which Hernando had only gained access late in life after decades of warfare. Each year in April, a bookseller chosen in each of these five cities would send twelve ducados’ worth of newly printed books to Lyons—itself a center of musical and medical publishing—where a sixth bookseller would gather them and add a further twelve ducados’ worth from his own city. All these books together would then be sent overland by a merchant to Medina del Campo, at the time of the May fair Hernando knew so well, and from there on to Seville and the library at the Puerta de Goles. Every sixth year, an agent from the library, carrying with him the catalogues of the Hernandina, would sweep through a series of smaller cities, seeking out titles that had been missed. The itinerary, which Hernando lays out in detail, is a voyage through his own memory, following routes he knew intimately: starting in Naples, the book hunter should then take the Sunday *percacho* (stagecoach) to Rome, proceeding from there to Siena, Pisa, Lucca and Florence, Bologna, Modena, Arezzo, Parma, Piacenza, Pavia, Milan—all cities (he notes) a half day’s journey from each other—Lodi, Cremona, Mantua, Venice, and Padua. The harvest from these places would be gathered at Venice, where the Genoese merchants could send the books on to Cadiz.

Hernando's next instruction would have been astonishing to other collectors of the day: he ordered that they should not seek to recruit the help of grand booksellers in these cities, because these places would never deign to look outside their own stockrooms for the pamphlets and one-sheet ballads that Hernando was determined to have in his library. Owners of small bookshops, he reasoned, were much more likely to go out into the city and learn what was on offer there. In fact, the instructions for buying were exactly the reverse of those followed by other famous libraries of the day. The humble bookseller chosen to gather books in each of the six major cities should *first* buy as many of these ephemeral pamphlets as he could with the twelve ducados, only then moving on to larger printed books, and finally—if anything remained after all of this—buying those manuscript works that were the objects of lust to other librarians of the day. The buyers were, furthermore, forbidden from paying more for manuscripts than they did for printed books, and even the more expensive printed books were not to be bought but merely noted in a list sent to the library for further consideration. At the heart of Hernando's extraordinary instructions is a profound intuition, one that almost no other person yet shared—namely that the invention of print had upended the world of information, replacing one in which a few authoritative and venerable manuscripts held sway with one flooded by an endless supply of the new. Each of these novelties by itself might seem slight and of little value, but taken together they made up the giant mass of what the world had committed to writing. No engine had yet been conceived to harness this flood of words, to make this plenitude knowable to individuals rather than simply a source of confusion and revulsion. That Hernando believed he had succeeded in doing so is reflected in the verses he asked to be inscribed near the door of the library:

The wise care little for widely held views  
As most people are easily swayed  
And that which they throw from their houses  
Is later thought to be of highest value.

*The meaning of this inscription, he says, is that I have founded my house upon the shit that others once threw upon the dunghill.* The wry humor with which Hernando draws attention to this fact—that his house is both built upon a dunghill and filled with things thought by many to be of little worth—is born of the supreme confidence of the visionary, who no longer cares that others aren’t seeing what he is. Whether or not he knew it, Hernando had by his last days succumbed in some measure to the visionary madness he had removed with such painstaking care from the record of his father’s life.<sup>3</sup>

If Hernando’s contemporaries would have been baffled by his decision to favor cheap print, many might have been scandalized by what came next. In a phrase he repeated often in these final documents, Hernando stated the library would collect *all books, in all languages and on all subjects, which can be found both within Christendom and without*. While it is not entirely clear how he hoped books from outside of Christendom would arrive at the library—though he might reasonably hope global trade would bring them through his book hubs at Seville, Venice, and Antwerp—his refusal to privilege particular languages, subjects, or even the knowledge of Christian authors represents a radical transformation of how knowledge was understood to work—what, in a sense, knowledge was understood *to be*. The focus of most medieval European libraries on works by Christian authors was driven by the simple idea that the highest kind of knowledge was revealed by God, and that therefore you must be dealing with the right god for true knowledge to be revealed—everything from other gods would simply be false revelation. Medieval and then Renaissance humanist readers, enraptured by the thinking and writing of ancient Greek and Roman writers (and, less often but no less importantly, writers in Arabic and Hebrew), managed sometimes to bring them into the libraries of monasteries and universities, though their arguments that these authors had a partial form of revelation, allowing them to contribute to the understanding of God’s world, did not always convince everyone. The humanist libraries Hernando would have known in Rome and Venice replaced the authority of Christian knowledge with that of classical knowledge, using the notion of “the translation of empire” to argue a resurrection of classical knowledge would bring with it a return of the glories of the classical empires. But *all* of these libraries, whether Christian or

humanist, retained a hierarchy of knowledge: some knowledges were simply better than others, and the library should put its energies into collecting those. The same is true for languages and subjects: without exception, other libraries of the day privileged some languages and some subjects over others, usually reflecting their social status—the languages used by elites (the classical tongues, and increasingly Italian and French) were more valued than less well established vernaculars, and the literature of elite occupations (theology, law, medicine) was favored over writings that dealt with more mechanical crafts. The idea that Hernando's library would not be bounded by language, subject, or religion once again marks a profound shift in European conceptions of knowledge. This does not, it should be said, mean his idea of knowledge was without prejudices of class, nation, or faith—far from it. Nothing in these documents indicates he had stopped thinking of the library, in these final days, as a counterpart of the universal, Christian, Spanish empire he believed his father had set in motion, and which he hoped would one day submit to Charles V and his heirs. But the notion that the power to subdue the world might come not from a few, privileged sources of knowledge, but from a distillation of all that the world had to offer, regardless of origin, represents an imaginative leap of immense proportions.<sup>4</sup>

If the channels flowing into the library were more voluminous and diverse than any previously imagined, the arrangements made for the materials once they arrived at the library were scarcely less surprising. The single, enormous room that Hernando was intent on constructing for his books may not have looked that different from some of the great libraries of Europe—similar, perhaps, to the great Laurentian Library that Michelangelo was even then constructing for Pope Clement in Florence—even if the bookshelves lining the walls would have been an unusual sight, with their books standing vertically and displaying their call numbers and titles on their spines. More striking, however, would have been the metal grate standing six feet from the bookshelves and trapping the readers in the center of the room, like divers in a shark tank. The gauge of the crisscrossed metalwork was designed to be large enough for readers to stick their hands through to turn the pages of books, which librarians would place in front of them on lecterns, but too small for them to pull the books back

through. Hernando expected many readers would object to this bizarre and draconian arrangement, but on this matter he was insistent. Perhaps still flinching from the fate of the Roman libraries during the sack of that city, he mused that even a hundred chains were not enough to keep a book safe. And the grate was not the only measure taken to ensure the collection's safety. Hernando set down a strict code of penalties to be imposed upon the librarians—who were to live in the library, and whose accommodation was specified down to their bedding—if any books were to go missing. He also ordered a monastery should be found—perhaps las Cuevas across the river—where in a sheltered place any duplicate titles could be kept in large wooden chests, set upon runners to keep them from the dampness of the floor. These chests were to be opened two or three times a year, and the books turned to prevent their warping, but would otherwise be kept safe as insurance for the library against the violence of man and nature. Readers who protested against being kept at arm's length from their books were to be told the library's primary purpose was not for it to be used by the public. They might, at least, console themselves in the shop of unwanted books, stocked with titles that the library had in three or more copies—which would still, Hernando expected, be the greatest bookstore in all of Europe, drawing as it did from such a huge network of suppliers.<sup>5</sup>

That the library was not for public consultation did not mean it was not meant to be useful to the public. Part of Hernando's jealousy in guarding the collections was to ensure a place existed in which all writings could be kept safe forever, a doomsday vault that would prevent human culture from being lost again on the scale it had at the end of the classical period. This central, read-only data bank would also guarantee there was somewhere in which matters of great doubt could be resolved: a complete library, with a copy of every book by every author, would allow assertions to be checked against the originals, rooting out contradiction and error as Hernando had done at Badajoz and in his biography. Yet it would be wrong to assume Hernando thought of the library primarily as a place of last resort, a sanctuary that guarded against the loss of books by making them inaccessible. Confusing as it initially sounds, Hernando declared the library's central purpose to be the compilation of the three great catalogues that served as guides to its collections—the *Book of Epitomes*, the *Book of Materials*,

and the final project, the *Table of Authors and Sciences*, the form of which will become clear shortly. This sounds at first like madness—the gathering of these infinite collections only to lock them away and make lists of them—until it emerges that Hernando intended copies of these catalogues to be distributed throughout Spain. As the testimony of his last librarian shows, the imagined reader of the *Book of Epitomes* and the *Book of Materials* is not sitting in the library at all, but in some remote location, without access to many books. The distribution of these catalogues would allow an unlimited number of readers to navigate through the collections of the library from a distance, using the *Book of Materials* to search for key words and the *Book of Epitomes* to digest many volumes at a sitting, sorting relevant material from irrelevant. As a counterpart to his global memory vault, Hernando had created a search engine.<sup>6</sup>

It is hard to capture fully the excitement of Hernando’s creation. Whereas many libraries of the age—and of the ages directly succeeding this—were little more than boxes for holding the books of their founders, Hernando had engineered a system to draw the knowledge of the world to the banks of the Guadalquivir, to process it into indexes and epitomes that would make it useful, and then to redistribute it, creating a network that could access the immense realm of print. Extraordinary as this was, though, Hernando realized these measures helped only those who already knew which book they were looking for, enabling them to search for a title in the catalogue or a key word in the *Book of Materials*. Using the library to discover new things, however, was a different matter altogether. This requires an act of browsing, which may seem like the most casual and undirected of acts, but is in truth where the library works most powerfully upon the mind of the reader. It both suggests certain categories and links they have little choice but to accept and puts other things far apart, out of sight and out of mind. In these final years, Hernando and his assistants were busy rearranging his library to conform to the *Table of Authors and Sciences*, his last catalogue, which provided a subject order that attempted to divide the library into manageable sections.

The underlying architecture of this was simple enough, following the basic divisions of medieval knowledge into the Trivium (grammar, rhetoric, logic), the Quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy), and the three

professional fields of medicine, theology, and law. But these categories were no longer enough to navigate the world of print—many already contained, as they began to be arranged on the shelves of Hernando’s library, hundreds if not thousands of titles, and the problem would only get worse as the network he had designed began to draw books to the collection. The category of rhetoric, for instance, covered every sort of writing (in verse and prose) that did not belong to other categories, from works of ancient history to bawdy ballads and reports of recent battles. Within these larger categories, then, Hernando began to divide the books, to assemble the things that belonged together in his mind: rows of orations and saints’ lives, a section of sermons and another of Roman history. The logic of these gatherings, which have never before been reassembled, is not always clear: often it is like staring at a tablet in a lost language, beautiful but wholly impenetrable. After following Hernando through his life, however, many sections are instantly recognizable as reflections of his own experiences. The first section of his library is given over to dictionaries, tables, and catalogues; he puts geographical writings with philosophy but also with chess, after spending a lifetime trying to know the world by plotting it on a grid. The library and the librarian cannot help but reflect each other, endlessly forming and being formed in each other’s image.

If the order of the books seems in danger of solipsism, of telling us nothing about the world outside the library but only about the librarian himself, the *Table of Authors and Sciences* had one last trick to perform. Unlike the other catalogues designed to guide the book hunter through the collection, the *Table* was not a thick and weighty tome. In fact, it was not a book at all. Rather, the *Table* consisted of more than ten thousand scraps of paper, each having an “annotation” including Hernando’s book hieroglyphs, which gave access to a vast amount of information about the book at a glance, as well as a wealth of other details, from title and author to subject matter and publication details. What is instantly recognizable to us as a form of card catalogue would have been an inexpressible mystery in a world where decades would pass before this system began to be used elsewhere. We should not let our own experience of card catalogues—of filing cabinets exuding the vanilla odors of decaying paper, long since neglected for the computer terminals nearby—distract us from the wonder

and the novelty of this thing. For the promise heralded by this card index—the *Table of Authors and Sciences*—was essentially one of infinite orders, of a catalogue that could eternally rearrange itself to suit the needs of the searcher, shuffling and sorting to make first one thing and then the next the main principle of order. It was a century and a half before the philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, attempting to organize the Royal Library at Hanover, was similarly struck by how “a single truth can usually be put in many different places,” creating a machine he called a note closet that allowed him to rearrange his index cards at will to suit the purpose of his present chain of thought.<sup>7</sup>

\* \* \*

Yet even as Hernando’s miraculous library reached its greatest moment of triumph, a storm was building on the horizon. Although the first ten thousand books had been ordered, sorted into subject categories and subcategories, the system begins to break down in the numbers above ten thousand. With the rising sea of books, it may have become impossible even to *look at* each one for long enough to understand what it was about, to know where in the library to put it. Above ten thousand, the books begin for the first time to be divided by language—long runs of books that share nothing more than being written in Italian or in French. While the sections of the library up until that point had blended the languages together, aiming to order all the gathered knowledge of humankind without regard to where it came from, the sheer scale of the task seems to have forced certain compromises on Hernando and his assistants toward the end. Perhaps there was not time to do anything more than simply glance at the title and the first few pages before putting the book with others in the same language. This seems an eminently practical solution, and a choice made in good faith—maybe even something they might have hoped to correct at some time in the future, even though the number of books was likely to continue to expand at an alarming rate. It was, however, a solution that was to have disastrous historical consequences.

The problems of scale were being compounded by the problems of finance. Who on earth was going to *pay* for this gigantic thing, this enterprise that grew exponentially in size and complexity? Hernando’s letter to the emperor,

explaining the form of his library and the marvelous benefits it promised to its enlightened patron, was merely a preamble to a request that the pensions Hernando had been allocated for life be allowed to outlive him, to be granted in perpetuity to the upkeep and expansion of the library. Even if the wealth Hernando could himself claim was sufficient to make a start—and there is reason to doubt it was—it was nevertheless tied up in a complex set of annuities and debts owed to him for various things, many in the New World, assets he had struggled to lay his hands on during his lifetime and that would almost certainly be even more elusive after his death. The fabric of the library was far from complete: outside his window two “blacks” were still employed with their beasts, dredging the waterlogged earth after the massive landscaping Hernando had undertaken, creating a vista of the place where his father’s remains were being prepared for departure. Fifty days before his death, and knowing the end was not far away, Hernando began to draw up a final inventory of all the things around him, right down to the pewter mugs and cups of his household, just as in his days as a page with the *Book of Everything* at the court of the Infante Juan. A price was put on each of these things, the accumulated detritus of a life, in a document to be appended to his will. The estate was to be made over, in its pieces and its entirety, to his nephew Luis, Diego’s son and heir, along with 15,370 books, over 3,000 printed images, the Casa de Goles, a garden of plants never before seen together, the maps and papers of Columbus, and the most sophisticated piece of information technology ever designed. In return for his life’s work and the legacy of their great progenitor, Hernando asked that the young Columbus scion commit one hundred thousand maravedís a year to the upkeep and expansion of the library—a mere fifteenth of what Hernando had once been promised as his inheritance.<sup>8</sup>

For all the singularity of Hernando’s purpose in his final days, seeking to ensure his beloved library would be safe after he left it, the will he drew up shows that lives cannot be so easily and neatly tied together. Many things still clearly weighed on his mind as he prepared to die: the Basque mule driver he had mistreated on his return from England in 1522, a tile maker from Triana in Seville with whom he was in dispute, the relatives of Jean Hammonius, who had joined him in Paris only to die quickly and in strange circumstances. In a break

from the silence of the preceding decades, when his father's name alone was on his lips, Hernando does ask for his mother to be remembered in his funeral prayers. In this light, among the many minor bequests he made, one perhaps stands out more than others: a bequest to one Leonor Martinez, daughter of an innkeeper in Lebrija—a town between Seville and the seaport at Sanlúcar—explaining the payment of three thousand maravedís only by saying it was “for the discharge of his conscience.” These words might mean little if not for the fact that it was the same phrase his brother had used when offering to pay off his mistress Isabel de Gamboa, and that his father had used when leaving a pitiful inheritance to Hernando’s mother, Beatriz Enríquez. Hernando’s compulsion to list every detail may have betrayed him into revealing that, along with his father’s singleness of purpose, he had inherited Columbus’s blindness to all other claims upon his life. But even with his characteristic completeness in this last list, his will, Hernando struggles to sum the pieces of his life, confined as it is to a list of credits and debts. Who knows what may have lingered in his conscience to the end, but have been beyond the scope of this list, like the girls who came aboard the ship in Cariay, naked but for the gold pendants over which his father obsessed, and whose bravery he admired so much.<sup>9</sup>

But even to the end, the father he had lost (as he noted precisely) thirty-three years before held the place of honor in his mind. The funeral monument he designed for himself, which interrupts the dense writing of his will with a glorious illustration, is a striking symbol of this: it centers on Columbus’s coat of arms, with its picture of islands, and his motto

A Castilla y Léon  
Nuevo mundo dió Colón

To Castile and Leon  
Columbus gave a New World

Yet the supporters of the shield—which in heraldic terms are the pillars of the dead man’s fame—transformed its meaning. While these would usually be heraldic beasts or symbolic figures representing the virtues of the deceased,

Hernando has placed the four principal catalogues of his library as his claim to a place in history equal to his father's:

*The Book of Authors*  
*The Book of Sciences*  
*The Book of Epitomes*  
*The Book of Materials*

At eight o'clock in the morning, on 12 July 1539, Hernando called for a bowl of soil to be brought to his bedside and painted his face with the mud of the Guadalquivir, from which his father was being removed on the other bank.

## XVII

# Epilogue: Ideas on the Shelf

The glorious world that Hernando had woven out of the strands of his life began to unravel shortly after he died. Luis Colón, Diego’s son, who was now Marquis of Jamaica and Duke of Veragua as well as the third Admiral, showed little interest in the library left him by his uncle; the only further role he would play in Hernando’s story was when, late in life and imprisoned in Oran (North Africa) on charges of bigamy, he may have given (or sold) Hernando’s biography of Columbus to a Genoese merchant, who financed its publication in Venice. After five years of abandonment, in 1544 María de Toledo had the books transferred to the monastery of San Pablo in Seville, where during the following decade Bartolomé de Las Casas used them to write his monumental histories of the New World discoveries and of the brutal genocide inflicted upon its native inhabitants. After a legal challenge by the Cathedral of Seville—Hernando’s second choice to inherit the books—the library was moved there in 1552, where it has remained to this day.

Yet the cathedral proved anything but a sanctuary. Many of the books fell prey to the Inquisition, which identified certain of them as proscribed, including the works of Erasmus, next to whose name, in the volume he gave to Hernando, is written the phrase “*auctor damnatus*”—a condemned author. In 1592 the Spanish historian Argote de Molina was to lament that the library was now “incarcerated in an attic room off the nave, and used by nobody.” The custodian who at the beginning of the eighteenth century looked after the library along with the candles and wall hangings of the cathedral would record that, when a child, he and his friends used to play among the books, leafing through the

illuminated manuscripts to look at the pictures. Though an interest would again begin to be taken in the library at the end of the nineteenth century and (still more so) at the end of the twentieth—around the fourth and fifth centennials of 1492—almost five centuries of neglect, poor storage, and pilfering have reduced the collection from its original glory to a state that, though still infinitely precious, is also a painful reminder of how much has been lost. Of the original fifteen thousand to twenty thousand volumes, fewer than four thousand remain. Some of the rest can be found scattered among the world’s great antiquarian book collections, instantly recognizable by Hernando’s characteristic notes on where he bought the book and how much he paid; many more simply decayed to pulp and dust. Hernando’s collection of images, the greatest of the Renaissance, has disappeared in its entirety, likely destroyed by water damage and simply thrown away. The originals of Columbus’s logs, recording the discovery of the New World, have vanished, leaving historians to rely on transcriptions by Bartolomé de Las Casas and accounts by Hernando. Hernando’s card catalogue to his library, containing the final order of his library and the potential to make his collection infinitely sortable, is likewise lost. The remaining portion of the library continued to be damaged by flooding, with significant disasters in 1955 and again in the 1980s. Although miraculously amid this destruction most of the catalogues survive, providing us with a map of his collection at a level of detail unparalleled for its day, the priceless *Book of Epitomes*, which summarized thousands of books from the library including many that now exist nowhere in the world, is currently missing and presumed lost, though at least part of it has recently resurfaced.<sup>1</sup>

Hernando’s dream of a universal library, bringing together every book without distinction of creed or language or subject matter, similarly went with him to the grave. Though others in the age to come also recognized the need to harness the powerful flood of information they saw around them, none had the maniacal ambition Hernando had inherited from his father, and all those who followed in Hernando’s wake set much narrower bounds for their projects. The great Swiss polymath Conrad Gesner, who in addition to making important contributions in botany and zoology attempted to sketch a complete map of knowledge in his *Bibliotheca universalis*, nevertheless confined himself to learned

works in classical languages and satisfied himself with making catalogues without ever attempting to actually gather the books together in one place. Francis Bacon imagined a place of universal knowledge (in his utopian *New Atlantis*) that may have been modeled on Hernando's vision for the Casa de Contratación, and though this "House of Salomon" served as a blueprint for London's Royal Society, it was by then cut off from the idea of collecting books and images on a universal scale. In the mid-sixteenth century several European countries—Spain, France, England—founded (or attempted to found) national libraries, and Philip II's Escorial library may have taken materials and ideas from Hernando's creation, including building the oldest surviving bookshelves on Hernando's model. With a few exceptions, the great library projects in the following centuries did not collect the flimsy pamphlets that captured contemporary events and popular culture, leaving later collectors to scrabble to save what could still be found of these precious things. The national libraries, and the national bibliographies that went along with them, were also increasingly focused on building collections that captured the publications and spirit of the nations that built them, and had no aspirations toward the universal. The solution Hernando had been forced into during his final years, of dealing with the excess of printed information by sorting it into different languages, became widespread, effectively walling the thought of one culture off from another and giving the impression that each had a unique and independent existence. More often than not books from different languages and cultural traditions were simply excluded, as European nations responded to the cornucopian world by turning their backs and stopping their ears. Perhaps unsurprisingly, from the bowels of these libraries antiquarians emerged, in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth centuries, to articulate ideas about distinct (and superior) national characters, ideas that were to become increasingly hard-set during the rise of nationalism in the late nineteenth century and its attendant horrors in the twentieth.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, just as the thought and writing of different nations became increasingly separate within the space of the library, so the disciplines into which books were divided became more distant from one another, making it harder and harder for anyone to work in fields as varied and disparate as Hernando did.

The later Renaissance and the Age of Enlightenment presented many examples of polymaths—Conrad Gesner, Athanasius Kircher, Gottfried Leibniz—but in many ways these men embodied a fantasy of universal knowledge in a world to which the possibility of knowing everything was lost, a world in which labor was increasingly divided and knowledge increasingly specialized. This fantasy, which lingers today, is prompted in part by the alienation brought on by the fragmentation of knowledge, one that asks each mind to be content with knowledge of only a few small pieces in the whole puzzle.

Some of Hernando's ideas were to be taken up later, by other people in ages better equipped to carry them through to completion. Emperor Charles's son, Philip II of Spain, was in the 1570s to set in motion a project to survey Spain (*the Relaciones Topográficas*) that bore a striking resemblance to the *Description* Hernando had been ordered to halt in 1523. The concept of magnetic variation or magnetic declination, which Hernando may have been the first to record in his arguments for the Badajoz conference and in his biography of his father, were later to be put on a firmer footing by Edmund Halley in the eighteenth century when he produced a map showing the contours of magnetic variation. The eventual solution to the problem of accurately measuring longitude, when it came in the form of John Harrison's marine chronometer, bore a certain resemblance to what Hernando had imagined in his *instrumento fluente* in 1524. But Hernando's grandest ambition—to create a repository of all of the written knowledge of the world, searchable by key word, navigable through short summaries, and sortable by different criteria, all accessible from points widely dispersed in space—represents an extraordinary premonition of the world of the internet, the World Wide Web, search engines, and databases that was to emerge almost five centuries later. While Hernando's efforts were astounding and his plans were a marvel of conception, the project he envisioned was in truth not possible without digitization, the ability of machines to read and transcribe texts, and search algorithms that could be run through the Boolean logic of computers. When these technologies did become available, the information behemoth Google was able in the Google Books project to complete in a few short years much of the work that had been stalled for the five centuries since

Hernando's death (even if that revolutionary project was again quickly mired in legal difficulties over copyright and to this day remains half-hidden).

If Hernando's dream of a universal library was for him impossible to realize, his tireless labors are nevertheless immensely instructive to this generation, which has the same dreams and faces the same challenges. Confronted with the constant and exponential growth of information in the digital age, the digital search companies seeking to chart this sphere know (as Hernando did) that all this information is useless—*dead*—unless it can be divided up, sorted and searched effectively. Understandably, much effort has been focused on attempting to predict what the wanderer in the library (or the internet) is most likely to want, and presenting this in response to his or her queries. This, perhaps, is to some extent inevitable, as people will necessarily be drawn to a map that leads them to what they desire. But it also leads, inevitably and perhaps inexorably, to a world in which the library provides nothing more than an infinite series of mirrors, giving people back that which they already know and already think. Hernando clearly saw this problem with his initial catalogues—that they only worked if you already knew the author, title, or subject you were looking for—and he was, at the time of his death, working to provide a universal schematic of the library (and, by extension, of knowledge) that would allow people to wander in places they did not know, perhaps had not even dreamed existed. There is, as yet, no such map to enable us to wander in unfamiliar realms of the new information age, and without it we are in danger of hemming ourselves into ever smaller enclaves, increasingly oblivious to the infinite and varied worlds that we simply no longer see. As with the walling off of national cultures in different sections of the library and the nationalism that followed, this shortcoming will likely have vast and almost certainly catastrophic consequences.

Some comfort can be taken from the fact that, even when worlds very different from ours are obscured by new information revolutions with their new sorting tools—so hidden that we can no longer see how they are similar as well as different—these worlds are not entirely lost to us and can (like Hernando's) be dredged up from where they have long lain. The great Renaissance historian Flavio Biondo—whose guidebook to Roman antiquities Hernando read as a

youth—likened this process, of bringing hidden parts of the past back into view, to the act of bringing up planks from a shipwreck, making visible what once was drowned in oblivion, submerged beneath the waters of time. Though most of Hernando's great vessel has been wrecked, the pieces we are able to gather tell a story of someone who set out before us into the unknown. They are relics of a vision that is with us once again.<sup>3</sup>

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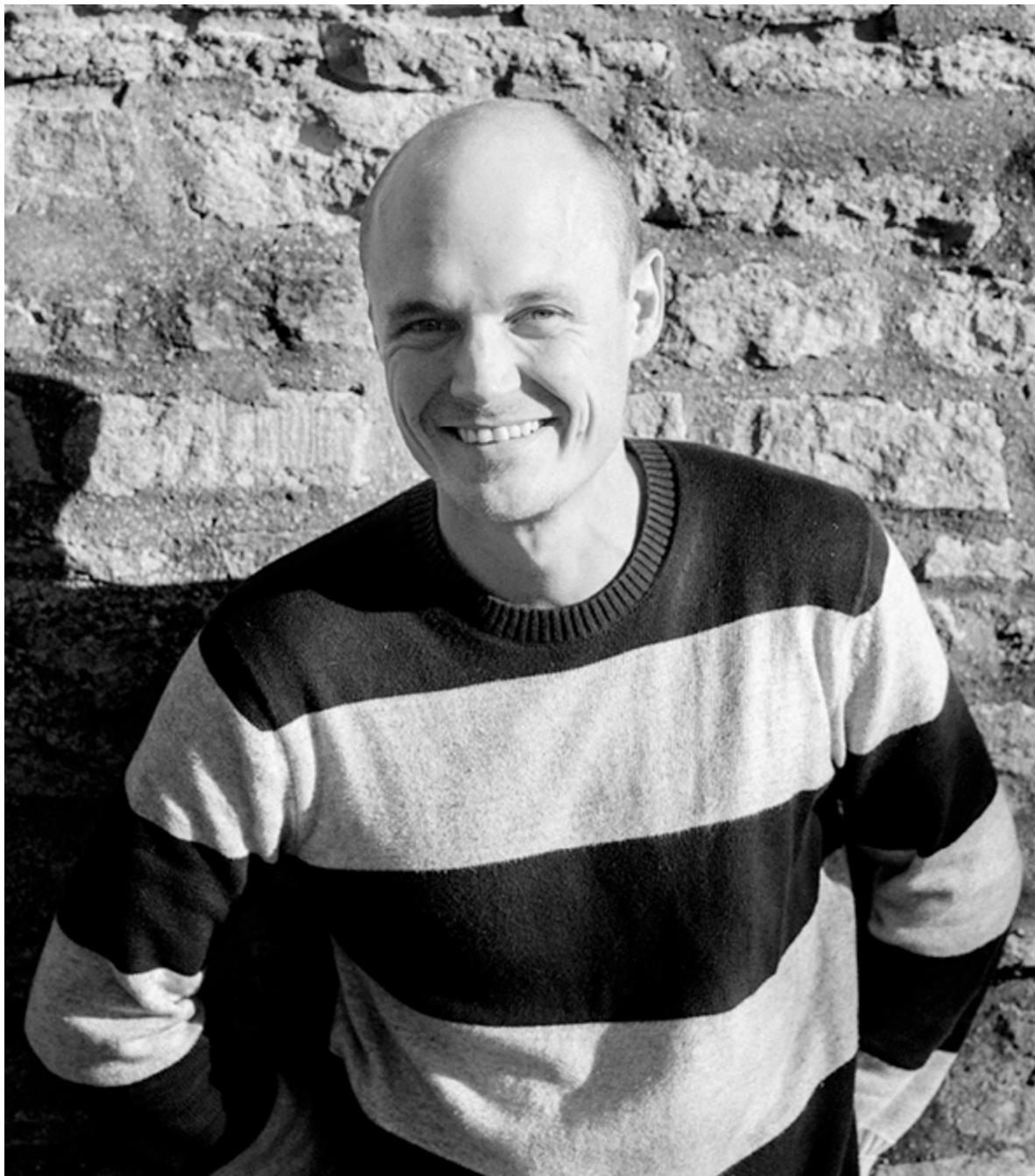
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This book is dedicated to my wife, Kelcey, who has put aside her own writing on many occasions to read mine, whose insights have improved the book immeasurably, and who has patiently borne the many lengthy absences occasioned by research. Though dedicating the book to her by no means discharges my conscience in the matter (as Columbus and Hernando would put it), I suppose it's a start.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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## A NOTE ON THE *LIFE AND DEEDS OF THE ADMIRAL*

This appendix is provided to summarize some of the historical controversies surrounding the *Life and Deeds of the Admiral*; while discussion of the biography occupies chapter 15 of this biography, this outline is intended for those wishing to know the historiography in greater detail.

Hernando's biography of his father was first published in Venice in 1571 as the *Historie del S. D. Fernando Colombo . . . della vita, & de fatti dell'Ammiraglio D. Christoforo Colombo, suo padre*, printed by Francesco de' Franceschi Sanese and translated by the Spanish humanist Alfonso de Ulloa. The prefatory letter by Giuseppe Moleto informs the reader that the manuscript of the biography was given by Luis Colón, the third hereditary admiral (Hernando's heir and nephew), to the Genoese merchant Baliano di Fornari, who in turn passed it on to another Genoese patrician, Giovanni Battista di Marino, to see through the press under the guidance of the humanist Moleto and the translator Alfonso de Ulloa.

The text was, for more than three hundred years, accepted unproblematically as a biography of Columbus by Hernando. In 1875, Bartolomé de Las Casas's monumental *Historia de las Indias* was published, having until then remained in manuscript, and the parallels between the two texts quickly came to light, with many scholars noticing Las Casas's heavy reliance on a biographical work by Hernando that he cites or refers to at least thirty-seven times. The fantastical imaginings often prompted by historical figures of great significance, however, led in the early twentieth century to various theories that Las Casas had in fact falsified the biography (or at least its source) to serve as a foundation for his work. These conspiracy theories were slowly and methodically disproved by the work of scholars including Rinaldo Caddeo, Miguel Serrano y Sanz, and (finally) Antonio Rumeu de Armas, whose magisterial *Hernando Colón, Historiador del*

*Descubrimiento de América* (1972) remains the authoritative work on the subject (and from whom this account of the earlier scholarship is largely drawn). While Rumeu painstakingly outlines the overwhelming evidence that the vast majority of the biography was written by Hernando, he nevertheless posits that those parts of it not about the voyages (but rather about Columbus's life before the First Voyage) were not by Hernando but rather by a pseudonymous impostor. While otherwise Rumeu is entirely methodical, his argument in this regard is wholly impressionistic, based largely on a conviction that a scholar and humanist such as Hernando could never have engaged in the vituperative rhetoric and opportunistic fudging of the historical record that is witnessed in this part of the biography (Rumeu, 71–73). This is a strange conviction, not only given that humanists as a group frequently did engage in vituperative rhetoric (and historical fudging) in their pamphlet wars, and that Hernando himself can specifically be shown to have done so in many of his unquestionably authentic writings (in Rome and for Badajoz, for instance), but also given the likely sources available for the biography outside the voyages and what was at stake in writing it. Yet most significantly, Rumeu considers the decisive passage the (purely fictitious) scene in the biography linking Columbus to a Mediterranean pirate and a sea battle off Lisbon, a scene, he insists, that Hernando could never have written (Rumeu, 99–103). As detailed in chapter 15, however, marginalia in Hernando's library not only shows that he was reading the source for this scene (the *Enneads* of the historian Sabellicus) at the time the biography was believed to have been written (1534), but also places two identical manicules (the only ones in the volume, and a device he used only rarely) next to two scenes —one describing his father, and the other describing the Mediterranean pirate and the sea battle. This newly discovered evidence (as well as more circumstantial evidence laid out in chapter 15) seems to remove the last remaining reasonable doubts that the biography of Columbus was in all parts substantially written by Hernando, for all that one must allow for the vicissitudes in translation and printing.

## NOTES

**Abbreviations** The following frequently used sources are referred to using the abbreviations listed below; any other works by these same authors are given as standard references.

Bernáldez—Andrés Bernáldez, *Memorias del Reinado de los Reyes Católicos*, ed.

Manuel Gómez-Moren and Juan de M. Carriazo (Madrid, 1962) Caddeo—*Le Historie della Vita e dei Fatti di Cristoforo Colombo per D. Fernando Colombo suo figlio*, ed. Rinaldo Caddeo, 2 vols. (Milan, 1930) Cartas—Juan Gil and Consuelo Varela, eds., *Cartas de particulares a Colón y Relaciones coetáneas* (Madrid, 1984) Descripción—Descripción y Cosmografía de España por Fernando Colón, facsimile of the edition by the Sociedad Geográfica (1910) (Seville, 1988) Fernández-Armesto—Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *Columbus* (Oxford, 1991) Guillén—Juan Guillén, *Historia de las Bibliotecas Capitular y Colombina* (Fundación José Manuel Lara, 2006) HoC—The History of Cartography: Cartography in the European Renaissance, ed. David Woodward, vol. 3, pt. 1 (Chicago, 2007) Obras—Tomás Marín Martínez, “Memoria de las Obras y Libros de Hernando Colón” del Bachiller Juan Pérez (Madrid, 1970) Rumeu—Antonio Rumeu de Armas, *Hernando Colón, Historiador del Descubrimiento de América* (Madrid, 1972) Rusconi—Roberto Rusconi, ed., *The Book of Prophecies*, ed. Christopher Columbus, trans. Blair Sullivan, *Repertorium Columbianum*, vol. 3 (Oregon, 1997) Testamento—Hernández Díaz and Muro Orejón, eds., *El Testamento de Hernando Colón y Otros Documentos para su Biografía* (Seville, 1951) Textos—Cristóbal Colón, *Textos y documentos completos*, Prólogo y notas de Consuelo Varela (Madrid, 1982) In addition, the following abbreviations are used when referring to the main archival sources: AGI—Archivo General de Indias, Seville AGS—Archivo General de Simancas

ASV—Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Rome BCC—Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Seville Following established convention, and for ease of understanding, I have used these terms to refer to Hernando's main *repertorios* (catalogues) in the notes: *Registrum B* for the *Índice Numeral de los Libros* (Colombina 10–1–14); *Abecedarium B* for the *Índice General Alfabético* (10–1–6); *Descripción* for the *Itinerario o Descripción y Cosmografía de España* (10–1–10, 10–1–11); *Materias* for the *Libro de las Materias o Proposiciones* (10–1–1, 10–1–2, 10–1–3); *Diccionario* for the *Diccionario o vocabulario latino* (10–1–5). The *Memoria de los dibujos o pinturas o Registrum C* is referred to using the catalogue of Mark P. McDonald, and the other catalogues (where used) are given as full references.

# Prologue

1. The deathbed scene is recorded in an eighteenth-century copy of a letter to Luis Colón (AGI, Patronato, 10, N.2, R.3, fol. xx), attributed to the Bachiller Juan Pérez by Harisse and Jos; see *Obras*, 27n; it is transcribed in Fernández de Navarrete, *Noticias para La Vida de D. Hernando Colón*, in *Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España*, vol. 16 (Madrid, 1850), 420–24. Columbus's landing at Cadiz in chains on 20 November 1500 and his deathbed request is noted in Caddeo (2; 173), though he questions whether Columbus kept the chains about him during the rest of his life. The prophecy, discussed below at pages 69 and 248, is taken from Seneca's *Medea* and is recorded in the *Book of Prophecies* (59v, in Rusconi, 290–91), but also mentioned in other Columbian writings, most importantly the *Lettera Rarissima* or *Relación del Cuarto Viaje*, a report on the last voyage written on 7 July 1503 (*Textos*, 323).
2. The most authoritative edition of the will is Hernández Díaz and Muro Orejón, *El Testamento de Hernando Colón y Otros Documentos para su Biografía* (Seville, 1951), which collects all the *protocolos notariales* (notarized documents) concerning Hernando from the Archivo Provincial in Seville. The probatory copy of the will occupies pages 123–61, and it is followed by a facsimile of the document; another copy is in Seville Cathedral, though it has a number of errors (Guillén, 132). As is conventional, the will begins with a description of the circumstances in which the will is read, “quel dicho señor don fernando colon puede aver una ora mas o menos que fallescio desta presente vida” (the said gentleman Don Hernando Colón having left this life more or less an hour ago), as well as giving details of those present at the reading of the will. Instructions for the library begin at page 144 and occupy most of the rest of the will. Hernando's intentions for the contents of the library are repeated in various places, most succinctly in his executor Marcos Felipe's clarificatory document (*Testamento*, XCII, 227), but also in greater detail in the will itself and in the “Memoria” of the Bachiller Juan Pérez. Evidence for the various claims

regarding the size of the library, picture collection, and garden is discussed below on pages 158, 262, and *Obras*, 595–610. The library at Celsus in Ephesus was independently endowed, as recorded by its inscription (James Campbell, *The Library: A World History* [London, 2013], 49–51), but its ruins were not reconstructed until the end of the nineteenth century; I have not been able to find similar endowments from the postclassical period.

3. The bookshelves are described in the will (*Testamento*, 148), which also mentions Hernando’s plans for ordering the books on the shelves, discussed below on pages 322–23; the claim that these are the earliest modern bookshelves is first made in Anthony Hobson, *Great Libraries* (London, 1970), 14; see also Campbell, *Library*, 23 and 113, on the “stall” system and the “wall” system and the histories of their development.
4. The instruction that Marcos Felipe and Vincenzio de Monte should open the chest only when together is in the will (*Testamento*, 160); the inventory of these documents is also given in *Testamento*, XCIII, 262–66, and is followed by a facsimile of the document. Marín Martínez (*Obras*, 171–72) suggests that the “Bocabulario” here relates not to Hernando’s Latin dictionary but to the topographical vocabulary projected as part of the *Cosmografía*.
5. The outline of Hernando’s travels, drawn from his book annotations as well as legal records, is available in Klaus Wagner, “El Itinerario de Hernando Colón segun sus Anotaciones: Datos para la biografía del bibliófilo sevillano,” *Archivo Hispalense* 203 (1984): 81–99; digital databases of Hernando’s surviving work have, however, allowed some details to be added to this. As Wagner writes (83), that Hernando specifically notes the few occasions on which he sent someone else to purchase a book allows one to infer that the other purchases were made by him personally.

**I. The Return from Ocean** 1. See Caddeo, 1:259. The most detailed description of the scene is given in the letter of Guillermo Coma (*Cartas*, 182–83), but see also the letter of Dr. Chanca (*Cartas*, 155) and Columbus’s own report in his letter of 30 January 1494 (*Textos*, 146–62). The estimate of thirteen

hundred men comes from Fernández-Armesto, 102; the *Life and Deeds* suggests fifteen hundred, and Bernáldez gives twelve hundred (279).

2. The *Historie* estimates the crew of the first voyage as ninety (Caddeo, 1:124), though Fernández-Armesto gives the most likely number as eighty-eight (72).
3. Hernando's copies of the letter are listed in his *Abecedarium B*, col. 369, where he lists the 1493 Catalan edition (now surviving in a single copy) and the Basel edition of 1533, as well as listing "de insulis nuper inventis" but without attributing it a registry number. See also Bernáldez, 251–56. Hernando may well have learned of the discoveries first when another letter from Columbus was read out in the Cathedral of Córdoba on 22 March 1493; see Guillén, 108.
4. See *Textos*, 139–46, as well as Caddeo, 1:176, and Bernáldez, 272.
5. For lists of what Columbus brought back on the First Voyage see Fernández-Armesto, 89, Bernáldez, 277–78, and the account of the First Voyage in the *Historie* (Caddeo, 1:121–245). On the collection of Jean, duc de Berry, see Guiffrey, *Inventaire de Jean, Duc de Berry* (Paris, 1894–96), and Umberto Eco, *Art and Beauty in the Middle Ages* (New Haven, 1986). There is some disagreement over the exact number of indigenous people Columbus brought back with him to Spain on the First Voyage and their eventual fate: Bernáldez (278) records that Columbus brought ten in total, leaving four in Seville and bringing six to Barcelona as a gift to the Monarchs; but Dr. Chanca suggests that seven were taken on the Second Voyage, with five dying during the Atlantic crossing (*Cartas*, 171); Las Casas, on the other hand, records seven being lodged with Columbus in Seville on his return from the New World (Guillén, *Hernando Colón: Humanismo y Bibliofilia* [Seville, 2004], 34–35). On the fate of one of these captives, who was rebaptized Juan de Castilla, see below on page 36.
6. Fernández-Armesto, 93; Pedro Martir de Angleria, *Cartas Sobre el Nuevo Mundo* (Madrid, 1990), 25; Bernáldez, 269–70. According to Marín Martínez and Ruiz Ascencio, *Catologo Concordado de la Biblioteca de Hernando Colón* (Seville, 1993), 1:203, Bartholomew Colón later lived with Bernáldez. As Peter Burke points out in *A Social History of Knowledge*

(London, 2000), shipbuilding and navigation were also considered “mechanical” arts, so it is unclear that Hernando was saving his father from this charge by outlining his nautical past.

7. We are largely reliant on Columbus’s own later claims that he had been sailing for twenty-three years before attempting the crossing in 1492, and that he had visited among other places the Greek islands, Tunisia, Guinea, the Canary Islands, England, and “Thule” (possibly meaning Friesland or Iceland). There is often little corroborating evidence for these claims, which are sometimes hard to fit into the chronology of his life, and he almost always had an ulterior motive for mentioning them, a need to prove his authoritative knowledge of something or other. His familiarity with Greek mastic allows him to attest to its presence in the New World; boasts about his part in a sea battle off Tunisia show his ability as a soldier; his visit to the Portuguese fortress of La Mina in Guinea backs up his assertion that people were indeed able to live in the torrid zones, which were once thought too hot for human settlement.
8. On the Perestrellos/Palastrelli, see Hugh Thomas, *Rivers of Gold* (London, 2004), 47–48. The transcription of the Toscanelli letter in the *Historie* can be found in Caddeo, 1:55–63, with the description of Zaiton on page 58. On Toscanelli’s life and reading of medieval travelogues, see Rumeu, 263–87. See Fernández-Armesto, 30, for a discussion of the likely date of Columbus’s acquaintance with Toscanelli’s writings.
9. Caddeo, 1:91–95; Fernández-Armesto, 46; assertions of opposition to and support for Columbus’s claims are also complicated by later narratives of those who wished themselves to be seen as early supporters of the project. As Fernández-Armesto suggests, the later legend that traces Columbus’s support to an early and fateful meeting with the queen’s confessor Fray Juan Pérez at the monastery of La Rabida is wholly unsubstantiated, even if there is evidence for the part of La Rabida in the immediate run-up to the voyage.
10. For the summary of these arguments see *Historie*, chs. 6–9 (Caddeo, 1:61–80); Rumeu, 296. Manzano Manzano, *Cristóbal Colón: Siete años decisivos de su vida* (Madrid, 1964), 193–213, provides further details of a meeting in 1489 in Jaen; see also Fernández-Armesto, 190. Columbus drew heavily on

the early-fifteenth-century work *Imago mundi* ('The picture of the world) by the French theologian Pierre d'Ailly, from which he was able to extract the arguments of Marinus of Tyre, Strabo, Ctesias, Onescritus, Nearchus, Pliny, and Ptolemy that the Eurasian landmass extended for two-thirds of the circumference of the world (or fifteen of the twenty "hours" in another measuring system), leaving only one-third to be sailed going west from Lisbon toward the Indies (i.e., India and China). This distance had been closed farther by the Portuguese exploration of west Africa and by the discovery of the Canary Islands off Africa's western flank. For all the weight of this argument, however, it simply displaces the question: If only a fraction of the world, between the west of Europe and the east of Asia remains unexplored, how big exactly *is* that fraction? The difficulty of estimating the circumference of the earth given the methods available at the time was crucially to make arguments about this distance, during Columbus's lifetime and even more so during Hernando's, a matter for rhetorical ingenuity as much as scientific measurement. Drawing on Portuguese reports, emerging from Bartholomeu Dias's successful rounding of the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, about the southern extension of Africa, Columbus made the case that the distance between the Canary Islands and Cipangu (Japan) off the east of the Eurasian continent had been reduced to a mere 45°. He also willfully rejected the claims of Marinus of Tyre and others that each of the 360° of the earth measured  $66\frac{2}{3}$  miles at the equator, instead siding with the Arabic cosmographer Alfragan (al-Faragani) that the real figure was  $56\frac{2}{3}$  miles, and arguing by extension that they could expect to find Asia at 700 to 750 leagues west of the Canary Islands. To back this up he was able to cite Aristotle, Averroës, Seneca, Strabo, Pliny, Solinus, Marco Polo, John Mandeville, Pierre d'Ailly, and Capitolinus in support of the idea that the eastern lands were no more than a few days' sail away from Spain.

11. Mark P. McDonald, *The Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus (1488–1539): A Renaissance Collector in Seville* (London, 2004), 19, places Filipa Moniz's death around 1484. There are differing testimonies on the exact date of Hernando's birth in 1488; most sources give 15 August (Guillén, *Hernando Colón*, 25; Rumeu, 5n1; the Repertorium tome of the *Historie*,

2:8), while Fernández-Armesto, usually infallible, gives November (52), though the source of this variant date is unclear. Importantly, however, Marcos Felipe's notarized clarifications to Hernando's will records (which show signs of following Hernando's direct instructions) that he was fifty years, ten months, and twenty-six days old on the day of his death, and that his birthday was 15 August 1488; this, it seems likely then, is at least what Hernando believed his birthday to be (*Testamento*, 92:229). On Columbus's meeting with Beatriz Enríquez, see Paolo Taviani, *Christopher Columbus: The Grand Design* (London, 1985), 185–86, and Fernández-Armesto, 52. On Diego and Hernando in Córdoba in 1492–93 under the protection of Beatriz, see Caddeo, 1:223, and Rumeu, 114.

12. For the letter see Navarrete, *Documentos Inéditos*, 1:363–64; on the copying process see Rumeu, 127.

**II. In the Chamber of Clean Blood** 1. The *Historie* puts the arrival of Hernando and Diego at court as occurring in March/April 1494, as it says the dispatch of Diego (on 14 April) was “no sooner than they had arrived” (Caddeo, 2:16); this is echoed by Bartolomé de Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, ed. Augustín Millares Carlo, 3 vols. (Mexico, 1951), 1:402. *Descripción*, 1:34; this is in the part of the *Cosmografía* in Hernando’s own hand. See *Obras*, 205n, 211.

2. Hieronymus Munzer, *Viaje por España y Portugal: 1494–1495* (Madrid, 1991), 53–57; see Fernández-Armesto, *Ferdinand and Isabella* (London, 1975), 58–59, for a list of prominent figures in Juan’s court.
3. The *Memoria* mentions specifically that Hernando did not spend his time and money on hunting, though others expected this of him; see *Obras*, 50.
4. On Deza, see Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, 2:269, 3:82.
5. Munzer, *Viaje por España*, 275.
6. Fernández-Armesto, 56–58; Caddeo, 1:284–85; *Cartas*, 152–76; Paolo Taviani, ed., *Christopher Columbus: Accounts and Letters of the Second, Third and Fourth Voyages* (1994), 12–32. Among those returning in the first fleet along with Chanca and Antonio de Torres are Fray Boil, the lead missionary, Gorbalán, Pedro Margarit, and Juan de Aguado (though there is some disagreement over who returned in this first convoy). On this and future

occasions Columbus chose to send (rather than, or as well as, a letter) a trusted emissary with a list of news to be communicated and petitions to be submitted orally. The advantage of this mode of operating was that not only did it provide a checklist to ensure that individual requests were not lost in a thicket of prose, but the items on the list could be rearranged or omitted in response to the evolving narrative in the court in Spain.

7. A digitized nineteenth-century copy of the list of inhabitants of La Navidad can be found at the Archivo Histórico Nacional, Diversos-Colecciones, 41, N.19; the original is ES.41091.AGI/10.5.11.583//CONTRATACION, 5575.
8. Munzer, *Viaje por España*, 45.
9. Rumeu, 216; Caddeo, 1:308–9.
10. Umberto Eco, *The Infinity of Lists* (London, 2009), 133. See also Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters with the New World* (New Haven, 1993), ch. 2; Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvellous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Oxford, 1991).
11. Caddeo, 2:34–54; Eco, *Infinity of Lists*, 153–54.
12. On the complaints of Father Buil, the lead missionary on the Second Voyage, and Pedro Margarit, as well as the dispatch in October 1495 of Juan de Aguado, see Caddeo, 2:55–56, Fernández-Armesto, 104–14.
13. Bernáldez, 376–77.
14. *Textos*, 307; Poliziano, *Panepistemon*, which was among Hernando's purchases in September 1512 (Colombina, 15–6–8). See Christopher Celenza's introduction to Angelo Poliziano's *Lamia* (Leiden, 2010).
15. See J. Manzano, “La legitimación de Hernando Colón,” *Anales de la Universidad Hispalense* 21.2 (1960): 85–106. As Hugh Thomas points out, the *mayorazgo* also required the heir to look after younger brothers: *Rivers of Gold*, 38. On rates of inheritance for the Spanish gentry, see José María Monsalvo Antón, *Torres, Tierras, Linajes* (Salamanca, 2013), 171–72.
16. Caddeo, 2:162–63; Emiliano Jos, *Investigaciones sobre la vida y obras iniciales de don Fernando Colón*, Anuario de Estudios Americanos, Tomo 1 (Seville, 1944), 527–698.

- 17.** It is unclear whether Bobadilla was actually going further than his instructions here, as the *juez de residencia o de visita* was specifically charged both with gathering written accusations and providing a forum for spoken accusations against the official being audited. A first inquest into Columbus's governorship was led by Juan de Aguado in 1495, with inconclusive results.

**III. The Book of Prophecies** **1.** Rusconi, 5, 8. As Rusconi points out, the title *Book of Prophecies* is first used by Hernando in the “memorial de las cosas que hay que de hacer y dezir en Castilla,” though he assumes that this was drawn up in 1526 rather than 1509 upon Hernando’s return from Hispaniola. On the correct dating of this to 1509, see Rumeu, 6, and Guillén, 117. My account of the book in most respects follows here the account provided by Rusconi in his excellent edition and study.

- 2.** Fernández-Armesto, 150; Caddeo, 2:173–75.
- 3.** Caddeo, 2:80–81, 92, 98–101; *Textos*, 236–38. The figure of sixty-five leagues west is provided in the account of the Third Voyage extracted by Las Casas (Taviani, *Accounts*, 90). For the letters, see *Textos*, 224–42, 270.
- 4.** *Textos*, 213–18; Fernández-Armesto, 129–31.
- 5.** Rusconi, 18; Fernández-Armesto, 132; *Textos*, 243, 263, 270.
- 6.** *Textos*, 171–76; Rumeu, 80. See also below Hernando’s continuation of this argument, in his arguments to the king on 1511, and in his *Declaración* after the Badajoz conference.
- 7.** *Textos*, 308, 360.
- 8.** Rusconi, 120. It is worth noting that at the beginning of the manuscript a note from Columbus records his intention to collect references to Jerusalem with a view to later looking them over and “ponerlas en rrima,” though scholars disagree about whether this means that he intended to write a verse epic using them (“to put them in rhyme/verse”) or simply to put them in order (as in the sense of “number”). Though Columbus did undoubtedly write verse (Fernández-Armesto, 180), the lack of further evidence means this question will likely remain unsettled.

9. Rusconi, 60–62, 66–67, 140–41. The spelling of *lunbre* here seems to be part of Columbus’s idiosyncratic version of the Castilian language, which is on display throughout *The Book of Prophecies*.
10. Rusconi, 64–65.
11. Ibid., 20–21, 120, 124–31. As Marín Martínez notes (*Obras*, 358), a manuscript version of Rabbi Samuel of Fez’s “de adventu Messie in hispanico” was entry 1584 in the *Libro de Epitomes*.
12. Rusconi, 18, 70–73.
13. Ibid., 290–1; see also Caddeo, 1:49–50; *Textos*, 323.
14. Rusconi, 28, 337–47. I am grateful to Andy Niggemann for his help with the Hebrew here.
15. Ibid., 197, 249.
16. Ibid., 316–17, 108–9.
17. The lost “tragedie en español de mano” appears in *Abecedarium B*, col. 1616, and is *Registrum B* entry 3291; a surviving, mid-fifteenth-century Latin manuscript contains the *Medea* (Colombina 5–5–17), which a previous librarian has confused with the Spanish translation, recording there in a note that the Spanish translation was likely an early gift or an inheritance from Columbus. In a later edition of Seneca’s tragedies, the 1510 Venetian edition by Philippo Pincio (Colombina 1–4–19), Hernando has written against this passage, “prophecia . . . per patre[m] . . . cristoforo . . . almirante . . . anno 1492” (fol. XCII<sup>v</sup>, sig. q ii<sup>v</sup>), and it is possible that he was copying this note from an earlier, superseded edition.
18. Rusconi, 354–57.
19. Ibid., 9. Rusconi attributes this intervention to the historian Ambrosio de Morales and dates it to the late 1560s, though the ultimate source of this attribution is the rather unconvincing, offhand assertion of Bartolomé José Gallardo in 1866 that the writing “appeared” to him to be that of Morales. Given that the “inventorial note” on the first folio, used to identify Morales’s hand, uses the shelf reference developed by Hernando for his library (7816, the number given for *Registrum B* number 2091 in *Registrum B*, fol. 200), it seems certain that this entry—and therefore the note about the removal of

the missing leaves—was made while this shelf-referencing system was still in place, i.e., before *The Book of Prophecies* left Hernando's house in 1542.

20. Ibid., 6–7; *Textos*, 323. The passages on the eclipse of 29 February 1504, recorded in the book (Rusconi, 292), may well have been written at the time of the eclipse; this is on the same page of the book that contains the passage from Seneca, suggesting that these passages were added after Gorricio's work, perhaps during the voyage itself.

**IV. Rites of Passage** 1. On the names and naming of the ships, see the note in Caddeo, 2:188; the supplies for the voyage are contained in the *Memorial a los Reyes* (*Textos*, 275–76). For the conversion of early modern Spanish measures of volume and weight I have relied on the *Diccionario de la Lengua Española* definitions; I have used the Aragonese *cahiz*, as this seems most likely to be what was meant here. The presence of *oruga* (rocket) on the list likely describes a paste made from the leaves.

2. Caddeo, 2:181–82.
3. Ibid., 1:142. As Caddeo points out (2:182), Columbus's *Lettera rarissima* puts the crossing at sixteen days (*Textos*, 316), a figure repeated in later writings.
4. *Textos*, 232; Taviani, *Accounts*, 82; Rumeu, 156; Fernández-Armesto, 78–80. See J. H. de Vaudrey Heathcote, “Christopher Columbus and the Discovery of Magnetic Variation,” *Science Progress in the Twentieth Century* 27/105 (1932): 82–103. Hernando himself provides an excellent summary of the problems with dead reckoning in his “Parecer que dio D. Hernando Colón en la Junta de Badajoz sobre la pertnencia de los Malucos” (AGI, Patronato, R.48, 16), which is also transcribed in Navarrete, *Expediciones al Malucco*, vol. 4 of the *Colección de los Viages y Descubrimientos* (Madrid, 1837), 333–39.
5. It is possible that Matinino was not modern Martinique but rather St. Lucia (see Caddeo, 2:182n).
6. Ibid., 2:182–85; *Textos*, 317; Fernández-Armesto, 163–64. For Ovando as part of the household of the Infante, see Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 37, and the

*Libro de la Cámara Real del Príncipe don Juan*, ed. Santiago Fabregant Barrios (Valencia, 2008), 83.

7. Caddeo, 2:187: “E, anchor che l’Ammiraglio nel suo interno sentisse quell’istesso dolore . . .”
8. Rusconi, 228–29; Caddeo, 2:190. Caddeo (2:186n) points out that a schedule of 1505 suggests that Roldán, at least, was not among those to have perished in the storm.
9. Caddeo, 1:191, “il primo fu un pesce chiamato schiavina, grande come un mezzo letto . . .” Caddeo declines to provide an identification for the *schiavina*, but in Taviani, *Life and Deeds*, 272, it is translated as a ray.
10. On Aristotelian zoological classification, see for instance *Historia Animalium*, Book VIII, §589. Gesner, in his *Historia Animalium*, still classified aquatic mammals with the fish (in Part IV, order XII), following the hexameral scheme of medieval zoology (sorted into the six days of creation), rather than with the viviparous land animals of Part I.
11. Caddeo, 2:192–97; Taviani, *Life and Deeds*, 274; Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 196. See Matthew Restall, “Maya Ethnogenesis,” *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* 9/1 (2004): 64–89, for details on the formation of a discrete Mayan identity under colonial influence.
12. Caddeo, 2:197. For a comparison, see the Portuguese observations of the shell-based currency in the Kingdom of Kongo: Malyn Newitt, *The Portuguese in West Africa, 1415–1670: A Documentary History* (Cambridge, 2010), 62, 103.
13. In addition to Benedetto Bordone’s famous *Isolario* of 1528, there was also a manuscript *Isolario* by Alonso de Santa Cruz, though possibly from after his period of overlap with Hernando at the Casa de Contratación. See George Tolias, “*Isolarii*, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Century,” in *HoC*.
14. Caddeo, 2:195. The map in question may be one of those included in the *Claudii Ptolomei . . . Geographi[a]e opus* printed in Strasbourg in 1513 (Colombina 15–8–19), which Hernando has annotated heavily, including adding the label “insula anthropophagorum” to the Islas de Las Onze Mil Virgenes (Virgin Islands).
15. Caddeo, 2:198–216.

16. *Textos*, 318.
17. Caddeo, 2:220–25.
18. Ibid., 2:243–44.
19. *Textos*, 322–23.

## V. A Knowledge of Night

1. *Textos*, 325–26; Caddeo, 2:199.

2. See Michael R. Waters et al., “Geoarchaeological Investigations of St. Ann’s Bay, Jamaica: The Search for the Columbus Caravels and an Assessment of 1,000 Years of Human Land Use,” *Geoarchaeology* 8/4 (1993): 259–79.
3. Caddeo, 2:263–65.
4. Ibid., 1:25, 1:311–12.
5. Umberto Carrara, *Columbus*, ed. and trans. Francisca Torres Martinez (Madrid, 2000), Book X.
6. Caddeo, 2:269–72.
7. See José Chabás and Bernard R. Goldstein, *Astronomy in the Iberian Peninsula: Abraham Zacut and the Transition from Manuscript to Print*, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 90/2 (2000): 2, 6–15, 153–54. For the prediction of the eclipse by Zacuto, see *Tabule tabula[rum] celestiu[m] motuu[m] astronomi zacuti* (Lerida, 1496), fol. 168; Hernando’s copy is Colombina 12–1–9, and his note on how to calculate the first day of each month is on the rear flyleaf of the same volume.
8. Rusconi, 292–93, 80–81.
9. Caddeo, 2:287–89.
10. *Textos*, 339, 344, 354, 362; Guillén, 111–13. On Ovando making Columbus pay for the costs of the return journey, see La Duquesa de Berwick y Alba, *Autógrafos de Cristóbal Colón y Papeles de America* (Madrid, 1892), 44–46. On Las Casas, see *Historia de Las Indias*, 2:119.
11. The idea that what weighs on Columbus’s conscience is Beatriz’s infidelity (Guillén, 111–12; refuted by Jos) is confusing and unconvincing. As Guillén points out, Beatriz is also remembered in Diego’s wills of 1509 and 1523; Guillén further provides an overview of arguments for why Columbus never married Beatriz.

**VI. Shoes & Ships & Sealing Wax** 1. “Memorial de las Cosas que hay de Hazer y Dezir en Castilla,” in La Duquesa de Berwick y Alba, *Autógrafos*, 77–79. The suggestion that this document was drawn up at Diego’s death in 1526 (Rusconi, 8) is plainly wrong, given the ephemerality of most of the items in the list; Rumeu is clearly right in assigning this to 1509 (Rumeu, 6), a date also followed by Guillén (117).

2. *Obras*, 256.

3. Further confidence in this method of reconstructing a list of Hernando’s books in 1509 can be taken from the fact that none of these volumes (i.e., ones bearing a location of purchase but no date) was printed after 1509.
4. On the importance of Crastonus’s *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* for Greek language learning, see John Considine, *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2008), 27. Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 84–85.
5. Hernando bought his volume of Pico della Mirandola’s *De rerum praenotione libri novem* (Colombina 12–5–9, *Registrum B* 3782) and Lorenzo Valla’s translation of Thucydides (Colombina 2–6–15, *Registrum B* 2816) in Toledo in 1509, likely when the court was there in February. One of the alchemical treatises is a manuscript of *Sedacius totius alchimie*, and the note of gift from Cristóbal de Sotomaior, son of the Countess of Camiña, is recorded as *Registrum B* 3785 (Guillén, 116); Guillén, *Hernando Colón*, 118, claims Sotomaior also gave a printed alchemical work, but his source is unclear. See Troy S. Floyd, *The Columbus Dynasty in the Caribbean* (Albuquerque, 1973), 123–30, for the state of gold mining in 1509.
6. Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 84–85. Hernando would eventually own many copies of Angelo Poliziano’s treatise on universal knowledge, the *Panepistemon*, included in the *Annotationes veteres* of Sabellicus that he bought in 1512 (Colombina 15–6–8), the *Opera omnia* of Poliziano purchased in 1515 (Colombina 6–5–15), and a lost separate edition of 1532 (*Abecedarium B*, col. 99; it provides an incorrect *Registrum B* number, so further details are unavailable). Hernando’s copy of the 1498 Suda is listed in *Abecedarium B*, col. 1708.
7. See Luis Arranz, *Diego Colón* (Madrid, 1982), 97–102, and appendix documents XV and XVI, which give the letter of nomination and the

official conferral of the governorship. The transfer of power to the Duke of Alba's factor Juan de la Peña is given in Muro Orejón, *Pleitos Colombinos*, 8 vols. (Madrid, 1964–89), 1:191–93. See also Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 228. On the payments to Hernando, see Navarrete, *Documentos Inéditos*, 529, and Guillén, 111.

8. For details of the party that crossed in 1509 see Floyd, *Columbus Dynasty*, 137. The jewel is described in *Testamento*, xviii.
9. Caddeo, 2:193–95; Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 414.
10. For Diego's will see Arranz, *Diego Colón*, 194–95; see also the “Instrucción del almirante D. Diego Colón para Jerónimo de Agüero,” in La Duquesa de Berwick y Alba, *Autógrafos*, 61–63, where Hernando begs the Duke of Alba to come to his brother's aid, and Guillén, *Hernando Colón*, 109–10; Guillén also suggests that this document was from 1511, but as Aguilar was at that point considered missing, it seems more likely that this was from 1509. Las Casas's later claim that Hernando returned to continue his studies (Guillén, 116) does not explain the precipitousness of his departure or the long delay between his return and the resumption of his formal studies.
11. The “Proyecto de Hernando Colón en nombre y representación del Almirante, su hermano, para dar la vuelta al mundo” is now preserved in the New York Public Library as Obadiah Rich Collection, Rich num. II.i, 6, and is transcribed in Arranz, *Diego Colón*, 338–43.
12. See Navarrete, *Documentos Inéditos*, 16:383, and Rumeu, 27, 48–49; Guillén, *Hernando Colón*, 87. Hernando describes the *Colón de Concordia* in the opening of the *Declaración del derecho . . .* (Real Biblioteca II/652 [3], fol. 1r–v), which is available online and transcribed in Navarrete, *Documentos Inéditos*, 16:383.
13. At this point Hernando may already have been aware of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, in which a well-ordered ship is seen as the model for the proper functioning of a household and indeed the state; the contents of the ship, in turn, are known by Xenophon's sailor “just as well as a man who knows how to spell can tell how many letters there are in *Socrates* and in what order they come” (*Oeconomicus*, §8.11–16, trans. E. C. Marchant [Loeb], 463).

14. The copy of the Qur'an is *Registrum B* entry 2997; Hernando purchased François Tissard's *Grammatica Hebraica et Graeca* in Seville in 1511 (Colombina 12–3–23[5]), which is bound together with further guides to Greek by Tissard (12–3–23[1]) and by Manuel Chrysoloras (12–3–23[4]) purchased that year.
15. On Peter Martyr's embassy to Egypt, see *Una Embajada de los Reyes Católicos a Egipto*, ed. and trans. Luis García y García (Simancas, 1947). The *Hieroglyphica* is contained in a Greek miscellany volume (*Habentur in hoc volumine haec...* [Venice: Aldus Manutius, 1505]), of which Hernando's copy survives as Colombina 118–6–19 (*Reg B* 5615); it has no purchase note of any kind, which may mean an early purchase or simply a lost purchase note. A useful introduction to early-modern linguistic thought is provided in Umberto Eco, *The Search for a Perfect Language* (London, 1997).
16. For the quotation, see page 116 (sig. [hvii<sup>v</sup>]). Early-modern Egyptologists were unaware of the phonetic values of the hieroglyphs, which awaited the discovery of the Rosetta Stone and Champollion's decryption; the key text on Renaissance hieroglyphs is now available in English: Karl Giehlow, *The Humanist Interpretation of Hieroglyphs in the Allegorical Studies of the Renaissance*, trans. Robin Raybould (Leiden, 2015). On the discoveries on the island of Mona, see Jago Cooper, Alice V. M. Samson, et al., “‘The Mona Chronicle’: The Archaeology of Early Religious Encounter in the New World,” *Antiquity* 90/352 (2016): 1054–71; quotation from page 1062. An example of Jacopo de Testera’s work can be seen in the Codex Testeriano Bodmer, *Cod. Bodmer*, 905. On the pillars discovered by Charles Cottar at Sevilla la Nueva, see [https://www.academia.edu/978498/The\\_Frog-legged\\_Lady\\_of\\_New\\_Seville\\_European\\_Motif\\_or\\_Evidence\\_of\\_Spanish-Indigenous\\_Syncretism\\_in\\_Early\\_Colonial\\_Jamaica](https://www.academia.edu/978498/The_Frog-legged_Lady_of_New_Seville_European_Motif_or_Evidence_of_Spanish-Indigenous_Syncretism_in_Early_Colonial_Jamaica).
17. *Testamento*, x, 8–9.
18. Hernando was granted an *encomienda* of three hundred Indians as part of the settlement of the *Pleitos* (AGI, Indiferente, 418, L.3, fol. 97v), but a further document of 23 August grants Hernando permission to pass the *encomienda* on to someone, but also suggests that he intends to travel to

Hispaniola at the end of five months (AGI, Indiferente, 418, L.3, fol. 154r–154v). The first part of the process started by Isabel de Gamboa, in the diocesan court of Burgos, cannot be followed in detail, as the records of processes in the diocesan court prior to 1813 were destroyed during the Peninsular War. The substance of the case, however, is repeated in the Sacra Rota trial detailed in chapters 6 and 7.

19. Hernando's volume of Flavio Biondo's *De Roma triumphante* (13–4–7) was bought in Seville in 1511; the date comes from the *Registrum B* (3092), as the book itself does not bear a purchase date, further confirming the suggestion that the volumes with a location of purchase but no date are early purchases. It is only sparsely annotated, but it is annotated all the way through, perhaps suggesting that he was using it to prepare for his entry to the Eternal City. He also owned a copy of Biondo's *Ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii*, similarly purchased in Seville and with no date supplied (either in purchase note or *Reg. B*, suggesting an early purchase date), though it is hardly annotated at all.

**VII. The World City** 1. Charles L. Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome* (Bloomington, 1998), 21; Rumeu, 29.

2. Stinger, *Renaissance in Rome*, 32–38. The assumption here that Hernando stayed at San Pietro in Montorio is based on the reading of Hernando's will, following McDonald, 35, and Guillén, 83, where his bequest to the “convento de señor san francisco de observancia” (*Testamento*, 130–31) is taken to indicate that he stayed there when in Rome; San Pietro in Montorio was the major recipient of Spanish patronage at the time, which would make sense of the fact that Hernando highlights its Spanish connections in his will. Hernando's copy of the *Mirabilia urbis Roma* is Colombina 14–1–4(2), which is bound with several other guides to Rome also bought in 1512, including one in German and one in Italian. It is worth noting the printing date of Hernando's copy of the *Mirabilia*—1493—as it gives a sense of how long printed volumes could remain on booksellers' shelves after printing, even when the volume in question was (like this one) ephemeral.

3. On Albertini's guides, see Roberto Weiss, *The Renaissance Discovery of Classical Antiquity* (Oxford, 1969), 84–86. Hernando's copy of Albertini's *Opusculum de mirabilibus nouae et veteris urbis Romae* (Rome, 1510) is Colombina 4–2–5(5); his copy of Giuliano Dati's script for the mystery play, *Incomincia la passione de Christo historiata in rima vulgari* (Rome, 1510), is Colombina 6–3–24(1). Both were bought between Hernando's arrival and the end of 1512.
4. Mitchell Bonner, *Rome in the High Renaissance* (Norman, 1973), 42–43, 51; Jacques Le Saige, *Voyage de Jacques Le Saige, de Douai à Rome* (Douai, 1851), 26.
5. On the Tempietto, see Jack Freiberg, *Bramante's Tempietto, the Roman Renaissance, and the Spanish Crown* (Cambridge, 2014), 144, 151. Giorgio Agamben has recently provided an excellent summary of the concept of universal empire and its links to apocalyptic thought in his *The Kingdom and the Glory* (Redwood City, 2011).
6. The records are contained in ASV, *S. R. Rota, Manualia Actorum*, 83, in about two hundred pages of entries between fols. 150r and 933v. I am immensely grateful to Christine Grafinger of the Vatican Archive and Kirsi Salonen for their help in locating these documents, and to Kirsi and Patrick Zutshi for help in decoding them. Kirsi Salonen's *Papal Justice in the Late Middle Ages: The Sacra Romana Rota* (Oxford, 2016) is the indispensable guide to the workings of the court, and I rely entirely on it here; see page 18 on the court's importance, page 43 on the process of referral to the SRR, pages 56–66 on the day-to-day workings of the court, and page 76 on the location of sessions.
7. Isabel de Gamboa's life can be reconstructed through a series of documents in the Archivo General de Simancas, including Consejo Real de Castilla, 80/2, which details a suit between Isabel de Gamboa and relatives of her first husband, Martín Ruiz de Arteaga of Guernica, over the custody of their children and the goods belonging to them; this document also mentions her second husband, one Captain Salazar, whom Diego's will vaguely identifies as "Petisalazan" (Arranz, *Diego Colón*, 195). Isabel's daughter with Salazar (also called Isabel), who was a lady-in-waiting to Germaine de Foix, is the

plaintiff in a further suit (AGS, Consejo Real de Castilla, 666, 23).

Hernando's name first appears on ASV *Man Act* 83, fol. 207v.

8. Angela Nuovo, *The Book Trade in the Italian Renaissance*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Leiden, 2013), 389–420; and Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writers and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge, 1999), 112–18.
9. The list of those lecturing at the Studium Urbis in 1514 is published as an appendix to Filippo Maria Renazzi, *Storia dell'Università degli Studii di Roma* (Rome, 1803), 235–39. Hernando's reference, in his volume of Silvestro da Prierio Mazzolini's *Clarissimi sacre theologie* (Colombina 12–6–35), to hearing lectures on the text by one “magistro sebastiano” (“prima novembris 1515 incepi hu[n]c libru[m] exponente eu[m] magistro sebastiano Rome i[n]mediate post 24 am. horam octoq[ue] prima folia tantu[m] in octo lectionibus exposuit”) is widely agreed to be a reference to Sebastianus Veteranus, who is shown to be lecturing at the Studium Urbis in the 1514 list; see Guillén, *Hernando Colón*, 84, citing Wagner.
10. Nothing is known about the first holder of the chair of natural history at the university (Paul F. Grendler, *Universities of the Italian Renaissance* [Baltimore, 2003], 59). On the relations between mercantile practice and information exchange in general, see Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 155. On Luca Pacioli, see Argante Ciocci, *Luca Pacioli e la Matematizzazione del sapere nel Rinascimento* (Bari, 2003).
11. Gabriel Naudé, *Advis pour dresser une bibliothèque* (Paris, 1627), 130–31; see Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 105. On the Medici library and the Vatican Library, I have closely followed the chapter by A. Rita, with tables by C. Grafinger, “Per la storia della Vaticana nel Primo Rinascimento,” 237–307, in Antonio Manfredi et al., *Storia della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, vol. 1, *Le Origini della Biblioteca Vaticana tra Umanesimo e Rinascimento (1447–1534)* (Vatican City, 2010). On Parentucelli's *Canone*, see Maria Grazia Blasio, Cinzia Lelj, and Giuseppina Roselli, “Un Contributo alla lettura del Canone Bibliografico di Tommaso Parentucelli,” in *Le Chiavi della Memoria: Miscellanea in Occasione del i Centenario della Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia Diplomatica e Archivistica* (Vatican City, 1984), 125–65. The division of Roman libraries into Greek and Latin rooms is

mentioned by Isidore of Seville; see Lionel Casson, *Libraries in the Ancient World* (New Haven, 2002), 97. The notion of canonicity is derived from biblical scholarship, but Parentucelli was pioneering in applying it to a wider selection of learning.

12. Hernando bought the *Respecti d'amore* (Rome, 1506; Colombina 6–3–24[13]) in Rome in 1512, in a note that does not include a month, and the *Storia della Biancha e la Bruna* (6–3–24[19]) also in Rome, with no date at all; this may suggest that the estimate of 1520 for the printing of this text is wrong, as Hernando's undated purchases tend to come from 1512 and before. The other pamphlets bound with these two (such as the *Storia de Fuggir le Puttane* [Colombina 6–3–24(18)], bought in June 1513 for two quatrines), which all treat erotic subjects, were printed in 1513 or before, suggesting these may have been bought at the same time, either already bound or bound soon after.
13. Hernando's copy of the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* was the 1500 Venice edition and is listed as *Registrum B* entry 3872; the entry in the *Abecedarium B* might be missed as it is listed with the title reversed (as “Poliphili Hypnerotomachia en toscano,” col. 1344). Hernando's list of the “Pasquili carmina” is given on *Abecedarium B*, col. 1268, made up of twenty-two titles covering most years between 1509 and 1526, as well as including other works attributed to Pasquino.
14. The story about the cost of raising the roof of St. Peter's is in Condivi's life of Michelangelo (*Michelangelo Buonarroti: Life, Letters, and Poetry* [Oxford, 2008], 26–33). On the 1507 Jubilee Pardon see Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 155.
15. Argote de Molina's description of Hernando's ambassadorial mission to Julius is discussed in E. Jos, *Investigaciones*, 609–14.
16. Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 57–58; Manfredi et al., *Storia della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, 1:263.
17. Hernando notes in his copy of Dionisio Vázquez, *Oratio habita Rome in apostolica sacri palatii capello i[n] die cinerum nona februarii Anno domini 1513* (Colombina 8–2–38[38]), that he heard the sermon in person (“viva voce”) by the author in Rome. Passages from the *Julius Exclusus* are taken

from *The Erasmus Reader*, ed. Erika Rummel (Toronto, 1990), 216–38, 218, 228.

**VIII. The Architecture of Order** 1. Michael Bury and David Landau, “Ferdinand Columbus’ Italian Prints: Clarifications and Implications,” in McDonald, *Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus*, 189–90.

2. Piers Baker-Bates, *Sebastiano del Piombo and the World of Spanish Rome* (Oxford, 2016).
3. Bonner, *Rome in the High Renaissance*, 65–76; Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 97–98. The menu is taken from Paolo Palliolo, *Le Feste de Conferimento del Patrizio Romano* (Bologna, 1885), 76–88.
4. Suetonius *Tranquillus cum Philippi Beroaldi et Marci Antonii Sabellici commentariis* (Colombina 2–5–11) contains the index as well as the note that Hernando was being lectured to on this by “Mag[ist]ro Castrensi” between 23 July and 5 August 1515. The Lucretius index is in *In Carum Lucretiu[m] poeta[m] Co[m]me[n]tarii a Joa[n]ne Baptista Pio editi . . .* (Colombina 6–4–12). Alison Brown, *The Return of Lucretius to Renaissance Florence* (Cambridge, MA, 2010), 77–78.
5. McDonald, *Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus and Ferdinand Columbus: Renaissance Collector*, ch. 3; *Obras*, 253–318.
6. Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 76, 121. Hernando’s book purchases from late 1515 and early 1516 closely track the movements of the papal court in this period; he purchased the *Compendium rerum decennio in Italia* by Niccolò Machiavelli (1506) in Viterbo during a visit in October 1515 (*Registrum B* 2241).
7. Caddeo, 1:13. On the dispute over Diego’s rights in the New World and his recall in 1514, see Floyd, *Columbus Dynasty*, 146–48.
8. AGS, Consejo Real de Castilla, 666, 23, from 26 May 1516, refers to both Captain Salazar and Isabel de Gamboa as “difuntos,” giving a latest possible date for her death.

**IX. An Empire of Dictionaries** 1. The manuscripts of the *Cosmografía* consist of a ms. of 678 folios in the Biblioteca Colombina (Colombina 10–1–10), and a

separate two gatherings of 41 folios now held at the Biblioteca Nacional de España (BNE ms. 1351). Crespo points out that while the entry numbers go up to 6,477, only 4,043 entries are found in the surviving manuscripts (*Los Grandes Proyectos* [Madrid, 2013], 42), and he follows Laborda's count of 4,245 entries, with a total of thirteen hundred towns receiving a full treatment (62–64), and a further two thousand only featuring in distance measurements. Though Martínez (*Obras*, 242) points to the entry number 9,967, suggesting that a further third of the project may have been lost, he suggests caution in making this assumption, given that there are no entries between 6,635 and 9,967. Martínez discusses the relationship between the Colombina manuscript and the detached gathering in the BNE in *Obras*, 225–26. Crespo suggests the rather fitting name of the “libreta de campo” in *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 49.

2. For useful discussion of the distinctions between “information” and “knowledge,” or “data,” “information,” and “knowledge,” see Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 11, and ch. 5, and Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know* (New Haven, 2011), 1–2. For the instructions on mapmaking, see *Descripción*, 1:22–24, and *Obras*, 47–48, 217–18.
3. See *HoC*, 9–10; Anthony Grafton, *Leon Battista Alberti* (London, 2002), 244; and *Worlds Made by Words: Scholarship and Community in the Modern West* (Harvard, 2009), 41; Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 65–69; Jessica Maier, *Rome Measured and Imagined* (Chicago, 2015), 25–26. Hernando bought the 1493 *Quatrispartitus ptolomei* (Venice: Bonetus Locatellus) in Medina del Campo at an unregistered date for 170 maravedís (*Reg. B* 3152; lost); the 1508 *Geographia* (Rome: Bernardinum Venetum de Vitalibus) in July 1512 (*Reg. B* 3527, Colombina 119–8–5) for twenty-eight *carlines*; and the 1513 edition (Argentinae: Ioannis Schotti) in April of 1516 (*Reg. B* 3558, Colombina 15–8–19) for twenty-three *julios*. The 1478 edition supposedly inherited from Columbus is mentioned in Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 35, though no source is given; Guillén also mentions it (115) but again provides no evidence that it was inherited from Columbus.
4. Hernando probably encountered the mapmaking ideas of Ptolemy before he went to Italy, perhaps in the form of the *Introduction to Cosmography* published by the leading light of Spanish humanism, Elio Antonio de

Nebrija, in 1498. A copy of Nebrija's treatise, which expounded Ptolemy's ideas for a *graticula* (a little grate, or grid) on which maps should be laid out, was among Hernando's undated and probably early purchases. From his early youth Hernando would have known Nebrija at least by reputation and perhaps much more intimately, as Nebrija seems occasionally to have taught at the court of the Infante Juan. Hernando may also have heard Nebrija lecture when the court visited Salamanca, where the eminent scholar presided not only over the intellectual life of the university but also over its printing industry, with the most groundbreaking Spanish editions of classical texts emanating from Nebrija's house on the Calle de los Libreros. Whatever Hernando's relationship with Nebrija was in the 1490s, he would certainly have become close to him in the new century, when Nebrija was (among many other things) involved in the production of Peter Martyr's monumental history of the New World, the *Decades*. Indeed, it may have been Nebrija himself who prompted Hernando to begin the project of the *Description*: the pair were both in Alcalá de Henares in the summer of 1517 when Hernando made his first entry, as recorded in a copy of Nebrija's newly published treatise on chronology, which he gave Hernando as a gift. Nebrija's volume, once again drawing on the observations of Abraham Zacuto, produced tables of the different day lengths in cities throughout Spain—a curious undertaking, though more understandable when one realizes that these observations could be used to produce the longitudinal measurements required for Hernando's map. Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 48–49.

5. See Jerome's commentary on Daniel, and Daniel DiMassa, "The Politics of Translation and the German Reception of Dante," in *Translation and the Book Trade in Early Modern Europe*, eds. José María Pérez Fernández and Edward Wilson-Lee (Cambridge, 2014), 119–20.
6. *Obras*, 48; On the use of the Alphonsine and Nebrija's parallels, see Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 48.
7. Jean Michel Massing, "Observations and Beliefs: The World of the Catalan Atlas," in *Circa 1492*, ed. Jay A. Levenson (Yale, 1991).

8. *Descripción*, 1:18, 20, 25, 29, 30, 39–41, 43, 44, 55; 3:35–36. These are the sections attributed to Hernando by Martínez (201–4, 224–26). Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley, 1984), 120.
9. Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 54, notes that dates noted on various entries by the emissaries range between 1517 and 1520. On the Republic of Letters and its collaborative scholarly practices, see Grafton, *Worlds Made by Words*. Though there is no evidence that a formal questionnaire was provided to the gatherers of information for the *Description*, the conventional form of the information amounts to the same thing and provides an antecedent for the questionnaires later used as instruments of state. See Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, ch. 6.
10. See *HoC*, 10, on the resistance of landlords to later sixteenth-century surveys, and 1081 on Maximilian I. Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 52, suggests Hernando would have had to have royal blessing for the project from the start and suggests that Gattinara, Cobos, Granvelle, or Cisneros might have sanctioned the project before Charles's arrival; however, no evidence is available for this.
11. Though we cannot be certain that Hernando wrote this anonymous treatise, it was attributed to him at an early stage and was bound together with other writings undoubtedly by Hernando, and it certainly bears all the hallmarks of Hernando's thought. The “Coloquio sobre las dos graduaciones que las cartas de Indias tienen,” Real Biblioteca II/652 (7), is contained in the same manuscript as the “Declaración del Derecho” and the “Memoria” by the Bachiller Juan Pérez. The attribution of the colloquy by Ursula Lamb and others to Pedro Medina seems extremely unlikely, as Medina would have been in his early twenties when it was written (as it says the *Padrón Real* is a decade old) and would not publish anything on cartography for two decades afterward. See Ursula Lamb, “Science by Litigation: A Cosmographic Feud,” *Terrae Incognitae* 1 (1969): 40–57; and “The Sevillian Lodestone: Science and Circumstance,” *Terrae Incognitae* 19 (1987): 29–39. Marín Martínez (81) includes the colloquy as potentially by Hernando.
12. Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 437–39; “Portuguese Cartography in the Renaissance,” *HoC*, 994; on Reinel in Seville in 1519, *HoC*, 987. There is

precedent for Hernando's cartographic espionage in the “Cantino planisphere,” which Duke Ercole d'Este sent his servant to steal from the Portuguese in 1502. The idea that Hernando's espionage was cartographical is supported by his mention of cartographic espionage in his report from Badajoz: see below at page 253. See A. Texeira de Mota, “Some Notes on the Organization of Hydrographical Services in Portugal,” *Imago Mundi* 28 (1976): 51–60, on the 1504 laws forbidding the export of Portuguese maps; also Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 144. Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 55, cites M. M. Delgado Pérez, *Hernando Colón*, as saying that this is accompanying the court of Leonor of Portugal, though this would not explain his going incognito.

13. *Tragedie Senece cum duobus commentariis* (Venice, 1510; Colombina 1–4–19), flyleaf verso: “Sábado seis de marzo de 1518 comencé a leer este libro y a pasar las notas dél en el índice en Valladolit y distraído por muchas ocupaciones y caminos no lo pude acabar hasta el domingo ocho de julio de 1520 en Bruselas de Flandes en el qual tiempo las annotaciones que ay desde el numero 1559 en adelante aún no están pasadas en el índice porque quedó en España.”
14. *Diccionario o Vocabulario Latino* (Colombina 10–1–5), fol. 6r; “A: prime littere nomen est ta[?m] graecis qua[m] ceteris gentibus vel quia omnes littere hebream a qua [?e]manaru[n]t imitantur vel quia est prima infa[n]tiu[m] nescentiu[m] [v]ox vel quia in pronu[n]ciatione prius et interius more qua[m] reliquae sonat.” The last part of the entry is rather difficult to transcribe, so the translation provided here is an approximation of the likely sense, though the literal translation is “because in pronouncing it sounds earlier and more deeply by custom than the others.” I am grateful to Richard Flower for his advice here. *Obras*, 665–84; Nebrija, *Gramatica castellana* (Salamanca, 1492), aii<sup>r</sup> (“siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio”), expanded upon in the prefatory letter that follows. The definition quoted here uses Isidore's *Etymologiae* (1:iii–iv) as one of its sources—including the claim (at 1:iv: 17) that *A* is the first letter as it is the first sound made by babies—though it is unclear if directly or indirectly.

15. Ann Moss, *Renaissance Truth and the Latin Language Turn* (Oxford, 2003), 15–17. See also Considine, *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe*, and Byron Ellsworth Hamann, *The Translations of Nebrija* (Amherst, 2015). Hernando is using Nebrija’s monumental Spanish–Latin dictionary of 1495 as well as Niccolò Perotti’s encyclopedic commentary on the poet Martial, the *Cornucopiae*, as the foundations for his dictionary; see *Obras*, 681. (Incidentally, this was probably the first European book to use Arabic numerals on both sides of the page; see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 49.) Hernando’s method does seem to aim for authoritative definitions from his historical examples, but also allows for historical variation. Although he owned a copy of the *editio princeps* of the *Suda* (Colombina 1–4–11, *Lexicon Graecum Souida*, Milan 1499, no date of purchase), he does not appear to have used it; likely his Greek was not good enough for this purpose.
16. Erich Peterson has pointed out the link between census taking, of which Hernando’s *Description* is a form, and millenarianism, drawing on a tradition in which the fact that the Incarnation occurred during Augustus’s census of the Roman Empire is theologically significant; see Agamben, *Kingdom and the Glory*, 10.
17. A good account of the election wrangling is given in Manuel Fernández Alvarez, *Charles V: Elected Emperor and Hereditary Ruler* (London, 1976), 28–32.
18. This volume of pamphlets bound together (“sammelband”) is Colombina 4–2–13, mostly acquired in Rome in September and November 1515; Hernando’s reading notes show that he read them between 28 September and 15 October 1519 in Seville. He did not strictly read the pamphlets in the current order, which may indicate that he flicked back and forth, or that they were originally bound in a different order.
19. Floyd, *Columbus Dynasty*, 198–99; Rumeu, 83; *Testamento*, 14–15. Las Casas, *Historia de las Indias*, 3:359. This *Capitulación de Coruña* was ratified by the crown on 3 March 1525 (*Testamento*, xv).

- X. The Devil in the Details**
- 1. Jeffrey Ashcroft, *Albrecht Dürer: Documentary Biography* (New Haven, 2017), 1:560; Thomas, *Rivers of Gold*, 425, 431.
  - 2. Ashcroft, *Albrecht Dürer*, 1:563–64.
  - 3. *Ioan. Goropii Becani Origines Antwerpianae* (Antwerp: Christophe Plantin, 1569), 178–79.
  - 4. *A. C. Mery Talys* (London, 1526).
  - 5. Considine, *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe*, 19. Hernando's copy of the *Antibarbarorum* survives as Colombina 12–2–26; on page [2], Hernando has written as follows: “Este libro medio el mesmo autor como parece en la octava plana.” Hernando's copy of Valla's commentary on the Donation of Constantine is *Registrum B* 295, and was purchased in Nuremberg in December 1521. Erasmus, “The Antibarbarians,” in *The Erasmus Reader*, ed. Erika Rummel (Toronto, 1990), 62.
  - 6. Hernando's (no longer extant) copy of the *Psalterium David et cantica aliqua in lingua Chaldea* is listed in *Abecedarium B*, col. 1405, as “Psaltarium in lingua chaldica . . . R[ome] 1513,” and is given *Registrum* number 5967. On this text and Johannes Potken's mistake about its Chaldaic origin, see Donald F. Lach, *Asia in the Making of Europe* (Chicago, 1977), 2:510–11. Alphabetization was in use from the time of the *pinakes* of works drawn up for the Library at Alexandria; see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 16. On the invention of the author, see Michel Foucault, “What Is an Author?,” in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow, 101–120, and Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books* (Redwood City, 1994), ch. 2. See Erasmus's discussion of the letter to the cardinal of Mainz and its leaking in the 1520 letter to Cardinal Campeggio, in *Correspondence of Erasmus, Letters 1122 to 1251, 1520 to 1521*, trans. R. A. B. Mynors (Toronto, 1974), §1167, 108–21.
  - 7. Hernando's copy of Budé's *De Asse et partibus eius* is Colombina 118–7–39 and was purchased in Florence in January 1516. Maximilian I granted Friesland independent sovereignty with the caveat that Austria could redeem it for one hundred thousand guilders (George Edmundson, *History of Holland* [Cambridge, 1922], 14).
  - 8. Gertrude von Schwartzenfeld, *Charles V: Father of Europe* (London, 1957), 53–54; Fernández Alvarez, *Charles V*, 38; Rainer Kahsnitz and William D.

Wixom, *Gothic and Renaissance Art in Nuremberg, 1300–1550* (New York, 1986), 305–6.

9. The official bull of excommunication was issued on 3 January 1521; on this, and the successive steps by which Luther felt he was released from the Church, see Richard Rex, *The Making of Martin Luther* (Princeton, 2017), 156–57, 250n. See also discussion of the inflationary logic of indulgences, pages 12–13.
10. On Reformist books in Hernando's collection, see Klaus Wagner, "La reforma protestante en los fondos bibliográficos de la Biblioteca Colombina," *Revista Española de Teología* 41 (1981): 393–463. Hernando purchased Melanchthon's *Epistola Philippi Melanchth. ad Job. Oecolampodium de Lispica disputatione (Registrum B* 1525) for two maravedís in Cologne in late November and is said by Wagner to have read it there (396), and Luther's *Acta apud D. Legatum Apostolicum Augustae recognita* in Mainz on 26 November (no. 913 in the *Memorial de los Libros Naufragados/Reg. A*).
11. Rumeu, 83–84; *Testamento*, 28–29. A further document of 4 March 1523 suggests that these two thousand ducats had still not been paid (AGI, Indiferente, 420, L.9, ff. 126v–127).
12. Andrew Pettegree, "Centre and Periphery in the European Book World," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6/18 (2008): 101–28; Christopher Hare, *A Great Emperor: Charles V, 1519–1558* (London, 1917), 65; Karl Brandi, *Emperor Charles V*, trans. C. V. Wedgwood (London, 1939), 131. On Hernando's endurance as a rider see the letters of Clenardus (*Correspondance*, 3:181–82). Hernando's first book purchase in Venice is on 9 May; Sanudo records news of Luther's condemnation as a heretic on 11 May (*Diarii*, xxx, 217), and on 12 May Gasparo Contarini was writing from the Imperial Court to the Signory of the kidnap (*CSP Venetian*, §209), which Sanudo records on the eighteenth.
13. Marin Sanudo, *Venice: Città Excelentissima: Selections from the Renaissance Diaries of Marin Sanudo*, ed. Patricia H. Labalme and Laura Sanguineti White, trans. Linda L. Carroll (Baltimore, 2008), 54–58, 208–9. The

*relazione* gives Suleiman's age as twenty-three, but he would actually have been twenty-seven at the time.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 59; a good account is also provided in Peter Martyr's report on his Egyptian embassy, *Una Embajada*, 34–36.

<sup>15</sup> Sanudo, *Citè Excelentissima*, 21–22.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 27–30.

<sup>17</sup> *Obras*, 738–42.

**XI. No Place Like Home** <sup>1</sup>. Hernando's copy of the 1518 Basel edition of More's *Utopia* (*De optimo reip. statu deque noua insula Utopia libellus . . .* [Basel: Johannes Frobennius, 1518]) survives as Colombina 12–2–39; Hernando notes on page 167 “Hu[n]c libru[m] perlegi Bruselis 26 et 27 diebus mensis martij 1522.”

<sup>2</sup>. The expense of cutting the Utopian type is confirmed by the printer of the English translation by Ralph Robinson, Abraham Veale, who explains the absence of the alphabet from his edition by citing the expense of the type. See Émile Pons, “Les Langues imaginaires dans le voyage utopique,” *Revue de Littérature Comparée*, October–December 1930, 589–607 (my translation).

<sup>3</sup>. On Dürer's design, see Ashcroft, *Albrecht Dürer*, 2:661–70.

<sup>4</sup>. A detailed description of materials for the pageant is found in SP 1/24 f. 226, “The Emperor's Visit,” 5 June 1522, *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, vol. 3, §2305. See D. E. Rhodes, “Don Fernando Colón and his London book purchases, June 1522,” *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, vol. 52 (New York, 1958).

<sup>5</sup>. Caddeo, 2:196–97, 236–37.

<sup>6</sup>. Hernando mentions the “forma de navegación p[ar]a su alta y felicisima pasaje de flandes en españa” on fol. 2r of the “Declaración del derecho” of 1524; see Real Biblioteca II/652 (3).

<sup>7</sup>. *Testamento*, 133–34.

<sup>8</sup>. Hernando's copy of the *Carta de Relación* is *Registrum B* entry 272, which notes that Hernando purchased it in Valladolid “on 2 December 1521,” an

evident mistake for 1522 as it notes just previously the publication in Seville on 8 November 1522.

9. *Obras*, 687–765, 715.
10. On the *cedula*, see *Obras*, 163, and Crespo, *Los Grandes Proyectos*, 58. On the relationship of knowledge gathering to empire in the Spanish context, see Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, ch. 6; Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge* (Princeton, 1996); and Barbara E. Mundy, *The Mapping of New Spain* (Chicago, 1996).
11. Considine, *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe*, 29. Hernando appears not to have known Calepino's dictionary when he began his dictionary in 1518, as Calepino is not among the sources for which he develops a shorthand (Nebrija, Palémon, and Perotti, as well as the *Grammatica ecclesiastici*; see *Obras*, 681); the close similarities between many of his entries and those of Calepino would, then, seem to stem from their synthesizing many of the same sources. The catalogues provide somewhat confusing evidence on the matter: the *Abecedarium B* lists only a 1530 edition of Calepino, though the *Registrum B* entry at 1963 appears to have overwritten a previous entry, showing a purchase of a copy at Medina del Campo in July 1519. It is possible that the 1519 purchase was lost or that it was simply read to death: it seems that Calepino was (toward the end, at least) a significant presence in the library, as the Bachiller Juan Pérez uses his name to illustrate a point in the *Memoria* (regarding the treatment of pseudonyms; *Obras*, 66).

**XII. Cutting Through** 1. For the note in the Seneca, see Colombina 1–4–19, *Tragedie Senece cum duobus commentariis* (Venice: Philippo Pincio, 1510), fol. XCII<sup>v</sup>, sig. q.ii<sup>v</sup>. Diego's arrival in Spain on 5 November 1523 is recorded in AGI, Patronato, 10, N.1, R.15.

2. AGI, Patronato, R.48, 12; Guillén, *Hernando Colón*, 123.
3. Hernando's opinion, signed 13 April 1524, is contained in the “Parecer que dio D. Hernando Colón en la Junta de Badajoz sobre la pertinencia de los Malucos,” AGI, Patronato, R.48, 16; it is transcribed in Navarrete, *Expeditiones al Malucco*, 333–39. His further opinions submitted to the

emperor (on 27 April and after the Badajoz conference) are also contained in Navarrete, 342–55.

4. See the “Declaración del derecho,” Navarrete, *Documentos Inéditos*, 16:391–92.
5. AGI, Patronato, R.48, 16, 1<sup>r</sup>–2<sup>v</sup>. See Crespo, 48–49. Hernando is credited as the first to have suggested this solution in Julio Rey Pastor, *La Ciencia y la Técnica en el Descubrimiento de América* (Buenos Aires, 1942), 96–97.
6. This story is recounted in Jerry Brotton, *History of the World in Twelve Maps* (London, 2013), 200; Brotton’s account of the conference is on pages 200–217.
7. Hernando is referring to Arcangelo Madrignano’s translation, the *Itinerarium Portugallensium e Luistania in Indiam*, “q[ue] fue impreso año de 1508” (Milan: Giovanni Antonio Scinzenzeler, 1508), which he bought in Rome in 1512 (*Reg. B* 2163); the passage “en el cplo [i.e., capítulo] 6[0] se cuenta 3800 leguas desde lisbona a calicut” is at f[v]<sup>v</sup>. The *Abecedarium B* suggests that Hernando’s copy of Pedro Margalho’s *Margellea logices vtrivsq[ue] scholia* (Colombina 118–5–48[2]) was not acquired until 1536, though this may be replacing an earlier copy; it is one of only two copies of the work noted on the Universal Short Title Catalogue. On the development of numbering and layouts to aid reference and memory, see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 36–40; and Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge, 2008), ch. 7.
8. On Hernando’s arguments for the rights of the Spanish, dated by Rumeu (78) to the end of the Badajoz conference, see the “Declaración del derecho que la rreal corona de Castilla tiene a la conquista de las provincias de Persia, Arabia e Yndia, e de Calicut e Malaca,” Real Biblioteca II/652 (3).
9. On the development of textual locators in printed books, see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 49–51. Though similar arguments for “fixity,” first made by Elizabeth Eisenstein in her influential *Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, have been subject to much criticism and revision (see, for instance, *Agent of Change*, eds. Sabrina A. Baron et al. [Amherst, 2007]), it is nevertheless clearly the case that contemporaries *thought* this allowed for secure referencing.

10. The passage in question, on fol.[v]<sup>v</sup> of the 1508 *Itinerarium Portugallensium e Luistania in Indiam*, actually occurs in chapter 58; but farther down on the same page, chapter 59 is actually labeled 61, so counting backward from that must have caused Hernando's mistake. On the length of the epitomes, see *Obras*, 344–47. On the theme of the excess of books, see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, esp. 55–61.
11. *Obras*, 53.
12. Juan Pérez's statement that there should be "at most four" books of laws is not further explained, though it may be predicated on the division of law into canon, ecclesiastical, and common laws; see *Obras*, 51. On classical and medieval projects of compilation and condensation, see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, esp. ch. 1.
13. On the codicil, see Rumeu, 83. Hernando's letter to Charles is AGS, Estado, 13, fol. 333. Hernando's defense of his brother's rights is given in the "Papel de Fernando Colón," Navarrete, *Documentos Inéditos*, 16:376–82. On the madness of the infinite library, see Jorge Luis Borges, "The Total Library," in *The Total Library: Non-Fiction, 1922–1986*, ed. Eliot Weinberger (London, 1999), 214–16.

**XIII. The Library without Walls** 1. *Testamento*, 36–37. On Hernando's failed attempt to buy another property from the Conde de Orgaz earlier in 1526, see Guillén, 125.

2. *Testamento*, 138–40. For the late-sixteenth-century descriptions, see Juan de Mal Lara, *Recibimiento que hizo la muy noble y muy leal ciudad de Sevilla a la C. R. M. del Rey D. Philipe N. S.* (Sevilla, 1570), fol. 50; and Guillén, 126.
3. *Testamento*, 77–79 (for the contract with Alonso de Zamora and his wife, María Rodríguez), and the inventory of Hernando's papers, XCIII, 263, item 29, "... dize memoria de plantas e ortelanos"; this is clearly distinct from the various documents related to the acquisition of the Huerta de Goles contained in the same inventory. It should also be remembered that Hernando's Arana relatives were tied to the circle in Córdoba around the apothecaries of the Esbarrova family, in which Columbus is thought to have first encountered the uncle of Hernando's mother, Beatriz; see Guillén, 108.

4. Caddeo, 1:174; 2:30, 193.
5. *Testamento*, 75–77. Brian Ogilvie, “Encyclopaedism in Renaissance Botany,” in *Pre-Modern Encyclopaedic Texts*, ed. Peter Binkley, 89–99; and Brian Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing* (Chicago, 2006), 30–34 et passim; Alix Cooper, *Inventing the Indigenous* (Cambridge, 2009); Hubertus Fischer, Volker R. Remmert, and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds., *Gardens, Knowledge and the Sciences in the Early Modern Period* (Basel, 2016).
6. Antonio de Villasante may have been the discoverer of *guayacán* from his Taino wife. On Hernando’s attempt to recruit the potter-physician to be Clenardus’s Arabic instructor, see *Correspondance de Nicolas Clénard*, 1:151–52, 2:93–94.
7. *Obras*, 55, 365–427, esp. 396–402. On the use of indexes to subject matters in medieval *florilegia*, see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 36.
8. *Obras*, 55.
9. AGI, Indiferente, 421, L.12, fols. 40r–40v; Rumeu, 81n. *HoC*, page 1101, gives this as the first date when such an order was issued. Guillén, *Hernando Colón* (134), suggests that Hernando’s appointment as acting *pilot mayor* explains his three-year stay in Seville between 1526 and 1529.
10. *HoC*, 1100. The letter sent from the Consejo de Indias thanking Alonso de Chaves, on behalf of the king, for his work in teaching the pilots to use the astrolabe and quadrant and maps, “según relación de Hernando Colón” (AGI, Indiferente, 421, L.13, fol. 295v), suggests that this is apparently going on in the Casa de Goles; see Guillén, 127. Eustaquio Navarrete, *Noticias para la Vida de D. Hernando Colón*, in *Documentos Inéditos*, 16:357–60, notes a mention by Loaisa regarding a college for mariners that Hernando proposed setting up in the house in the Puerta de Goles in 1526, as mentioned in various histories of Seville (Luis de Peraza, *Origen de la Ciudad de Sevilla*), though this likely refers to a later period. The maps corrected in Hernando’s hand are in Ptolemy, *Claudii Ptolomei . . . Geographi[a]e opus* (Colombina 15–8–19); the example of the *insula anthropophagorum* is on the second map in the “Tabula Moderna” section.
11. *HoC*, 22.

12. The letter of 1528 instructs Diego Ribeiro to come to the Consejo to fill them in on the “bombas” that are being made in La Coruña (AGI, Indiferente, 421, L.13, fol. 295r–295v). Hernando’s note on the ineffectiveness of Spanish artillery is in Colombina 4–2–13(9), sig. [Aii]r.
13. Brandi, *Charles V*, 242.
14. Luigi Guicciardini, *The Sack of Rome*, trans. James H. McGregor (New York, 2008), 114–15; J. Hook, *The Sack of Rome* (London, 2004), 176–78; Stinger, *The Renaissance in Rome*, 320–22; André Chastel, *Le sac de Rome, 1527* (Paris, 1984).
15. Manfredi, *Storia della Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana*, 311. The Ostrogoth destruction of Roman libraries is recorded in Cassiodorus; see Casson, *Libraries in the Ancient World*, 74–75; and Pedro Mexia, *Silva de Varia Lección* (Seville, 1540). Although more recent studies have suggested that the Library of Alexandria disappeared slowly over centuries, early modern accounts almost always figure a catastrophic destruction: see, for instance, Francesco Patrizi, *A moral methode of ciuile policie contayninge a learned and fruictful discourse of the institution*, trans. Richard Robinson (London, 1576), sig. T[1]r–v.
16. There is some confusion regarding the date of Hernando’s departure, as Chapman (“Printed Collections of Polyphonic Music Owned by Ferdinand Columbus,” 41) notes Hernando making purchases from the end of August 1529, though Wagner’s itinerary still has Hernando in Seville on 30 August. Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 86; A. Salmond, “Theoretical Landscapes: On Cross-Cultural Conceptions of Knowledge,” in *Semantic Anthropology*, ed. D. Parkin (London, 1982), 65–87.

**XIV. Another Europe and the Same** 1. For Clenardus’s letters, see *Correspondance de Nicolas Clénard*, ed. Alphonse Roersch, 2 vols. (Brussels, 1940), 1:55–6, 200–201, 218–20; 2:33–35, 156–57, 180–83; and Joseph Klucas, “Nicolaus Clenardus: A Pioneer of the New Learning in Renaissance Portugal,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 29/2 (1992): 87–98.

2. Konrad Eisenbichler, “Charles V in Bologna: The Self Fashioning of a Man and a City,” *Renaissance Studies* 13/4 (1999): 430–39.

3. AGS, Estado, leg. 21, fol. 22. “Don Hernando Colon Dizeque ha mas de quarenta años q[ue] sirve al Casa Real de V. Mt. y que por no ser molesta nole ha suplicado lehagame[n] por sua s[er]vise y esperando esse determinase/el pleyto de su padre y que agora viendo que aquel es ynmortal hallandose biejo y pobre ha determinado seguir la yglesia porque el papa le ha prometido [???] porella . . .”
4. There is no small tragic irony in that Hernando’s mother, Beatriz, seems also to have been put to the exigency of borrowing from the Grimaldis at the end of her life against the promise of what she was owed by Diego and Hernando; see Guillén, 112. On Sanuto’s book sale see Sanuto, *Citè Excelentissima*, introduction, xxvi, and 39–40.
5. Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (Pimlico, 1999), 30.
6. On the Umayyad library of Córdoba, see Padover in James W. Thompson, *The Medieval Library* (New York, 1967), 360–62.
7. The Qur'an that Hernando had acquired in 1510, for instance, is listed as “Elalcora[n] en linda letera arabica” in the *Registrum B* (2997), but in the *Abecedarium B* as “Alcoran en arabigo” (col. 65). The first book in Geez is lost, but is in *Abecedarium B*, col. 1405, as “Psaltarium in lingua chaldica . . . R[ome] 1513” and is given a *Registrum* number of 5967. On the manuscripts brought back from Tunis by Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, see Anthony Hobson, “The *Iter italicum* of Jean Matal,” in *Studies in the Book Trade in Honor of Graham Pollard*, Oxford Bibliographical Society Publications, NS 18 (1975), 33–61; Hobson points out that this number is likely an exaggeration, as Mendoza’s collection of Arabic manuscripts only numbered 268 when they reached the Escorial in 1571.
8. François Rabelais, *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Jacques Boulenger and Lucien Scheler (Paris, 1955), 194–202, 207–13. These translations are my own, though I have often relied on the commentary of Screech’s translation for guidance.
9. *Correspondance de Nicolas Clénard*, 1:55–56, 200–201, 218–20; 2:33–35, 156–57, 180–83.
10. Ibid., 1:25–28, 2:6–10.

11. The biographical note occupies the margins of five pages starting from Psalm 19 in *Psalterium Hebreum, Grecum, Arabicum, & Chaldeum cum tribus Latinis interpretationibus & glossis* (Genoa, 1516). Hernando's (lost) copy is given the *Registrum B* number 5095; see *Abecedarium B*, col. 1405.
12. The *Life* attributes this rumor to Oviedo as well, though as Caddeo points out, Oviedo's *Historia general*, while recounting the claim, suggests that it is false (Caddeo, 1:76–80 and n.). See Rumeu, 71–72, on Charles's commissioning Oviedo to develop this line of argument.

## XV. The King of Nowhere

1. Caddeo, 1:23; 2:5.
2. Ibid., 1:14–20, 80–91.
3. Ibid., 1:161–62. I am grateful to Professor Fernández-Armesto for pointing out that this scene of Columbus sighting land first is cribbed from a version of the *Alexander Romance*.
4. For related discussions of the genealogy or tree-of-knowledge model, see Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari on the “rhizome” in *Mille plateaux* (Paris, 1980) and Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 86–87.
5. Hernando's copy of *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis* (Paris, 1512) is Colombina 3–3–28 and appears as 2156 in the *Registrum B*; it was purchased unbound in January 1516 at Florence for 116 old quatrines and was later bound in Rome for 40 quatrines. On Renaissance chronology, see Anthony Grafton, *Joseph Scaliger* (Oxford, 1993) and *Defenders of the Text* (Cambridge, MA, 1994) and *Worlds Made by Words*, chapter 3, in particular on Trithemius: though Grafton calls Trithemius's library ambitions “encyclopaedic” and “universal,” it is clear from the corresponding passage that this was limited to works in ancient languages from within Christendom.
6. Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 15. Juan Luis Vives, “De Tradendis Disciplinis,” in *De Disciplinis: Savoir et Enseigner*, ed. Tristan Vigliano (2013), 273–86.
7. Caddeo, 1:34–35. The manicules appear in Sabellius, *Secunda pars enneadum Marci Antonii Sabellici ab inclinatione romani imperii . . .* (Colombina 2–7–11), Decade X, Book 8 (f. CLXVIII, sig. [x.v]<sup>r</sup>). Hernando places next to the phrase “(quas Columbus iunior archipirata

“illustris cruento proelio oppresserat” a marginal note, “Columbus iunior archi/pirata illustris,” together with a large, prominent manicule. Though Rumeu de Armas (99–100) mentions the note that Hernando was reading this in 1534, Rumeu has clearly taken it from the *Registrum B* and has not looked at the original volume and therefore seen this clearly significant note. Hernando places a further manicule against a mention of Columbus’s further discoveries, in identical handwriting, on fol. CLXXI, sig.x.viii<sup>r</sup>, with the note “Christophorus colu[m]bus pater meus.” A good comparison for the handwriting is Hernando’s copy of Pico della Mirandola’s *Opera* (Colombina 12–5–10, A[x]<sup>r</sup>), which contains similar preliminary capital C’s.

8. Hernando may well have had a more conscious notion of this than he anywhere formulates, drawing perhaps on Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* (a lost edition of which—*Registrum B* 94—he purchased in 1521), which demonstrates the order that arises out of a calm, methodical way of proceeding, using as its foremost example a well-managed ship. See *Oeconomicus*, 8, 23, and Agamben, *Kingdom and the Glory*, 18.
9. *Testamento*, xxxvi; Rumeu, 17/84; Rumeu, 84, and *Obras*, 86, confirm that this is a life pension. An order of 20 November 1536 requires the royal officers of Santo Domingo to pay Hernando a pension of one thousand ducados for life (AGI, Santo Domingo, 868, L.1, ff. 14r–14v); it is unclear whether this is part of the arbitration arising from the *pleitos colombinos*, though it would seem unlikely that it came unprompted by the generosity of the emperor; it is also unclear whether this includes or is supplemental to his existing pension. See also Guillén, 129.
10. *Correspondance de Nicolas Clénard*, 1:151–52; 2:93–94.

**XVI. Last Orders** 1. Among the books Hernando noted he was reading or having read to him in these final years are Aymar Falconaeus, *De tuta fidelium nauigatione inter varias peregrinoru[m] dogmatu[m]* (Colombina 15–3–5[1], reading October 1536); the *Expositio noue[m] lectionum que pro defunctis decantari solent* (Colombina 14–3–12[3], November 1537), a meditation on death; and a medical treatise by Gaspar Torella, Obispo de Santa Justa, *Pro*

*regimine seu preservatione sanitatis. De ioculente & poculente dialogus* (Colombina 15-4-26, November 1538). The order to exhume Columbus is found on 2 July 1537 in the *Viajes del Emperador*. Hernando's license to transport household slaves to the New World is AGI, Indiferente, 423, L.19, ff. 4v-5r (31 March 1539), and the provision for burial while abroad in his will is found in *Testamento*, 128; on the epitaph see Guillén, 132–33.

2. The *Memorial al Emperador* is transcribed in *Testamento*, 241–43, which also contains the “testamento” (123–61) and the further notes by Marcos Felipe (226–46); the *Memoria* of the Bachiller Juan Pérez is transcribed in *Obras*, 47–76. On Hernando’s music collection, see Catherine Weeks Chapman, “Printed Collections of Polyphonic Music Owned by Ferdinand Columbus,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 21/8 (1968): 34–84.
3. *Testamento*, 139.
4. It is also clear from Hernando’s collecting practices that he did not mean “books” in a narrow sense here, so the library was not necessarily restricting its ambitions to those cultures that produced written codices. An interesting parallel to Hernando’s conception can be seen in the *Speculum Maius* of Vincent de Beauvais (composed 1244–55), a popular medieval encyclopedia, though there are enormous differences in the scale of books available and the breadth of acceptable texts; see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 41–43.
5. The Bachiller Juan Pérez mentions in the *Memoria* a “Sala de Teología,” which may indicate that the library was still in multiple rooms at the time of Hernando’s death and that the plan to establish a single library room was still in progress; *Obras*, 47. On the belief that the works of the ancients would not have been lost if they had had printing, see Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 47.
6. *Obras*, 53: “The great usefulness of this book of epitomes is clear, because in it one can know in brief the substance of what is treated diffusely, and anyone who does not have many books to read, at the least will have this one that will show them what is treated of in many” (my translation).
7. Blair, *Too Much to Know*, 92.

8. As Guillén (129) and others suggest, this petition to the emperor was likely never sent.
9. *Testamento*, 138–40, 210.

**XVII. Epilogue: Ideas on the Shelf** 1. *Obras*, 23–25; Guillén, 120 (on the Inquisition marks in the *Antibarbarorum*, Colombina 12–2–26, title page and page 9).

2. The best introduction to these other library projects is Roger Chartier's *Order of Books*; see Burke, *Social History of Knowledge*, 46, on Salomon's House and the Casa de Contratación.
3. This passage from Biondo is beautifully captured and analyzed in Grafton, *Worlds Made by Words*, 137–38.

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Impressions of many of the images used as illustrations in this book were owned by Hernando himself; references are provided here to the inventory numbers they bear in his *Memoria de los dibujos o pinturas o Registrum C* (Colombina 10-1-16), as well as to their entries in Mark P. McDonald's *Print Collection of Ferdinand Columbus, 1488–1539*, 3 vols. (London, 2004).

### Maps

The four maps in the prelims are reproduced courtesy of the British Museum © The Trustees of the British Museum.

### In-Text Illustrations

A Drawing of the City of Cadiz, 1509 (España, Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, Archivo General de Simancas MPD, 25, 047).

Illustration from *De insulis nuper in mari Indico repertis* (Basel, 1494, ee [1]<sup>v</sup>; photo by MPI/Getty Images).

Giovanni Battista Palumba, *Diana Bathing with Her Attendants*, c.1500; (Hernando's inventory number 2150; see McDonald, 2:386; public domain from the Metropolitan Museum of Art).

Native Americans ride on a manatee, 1621 (courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University, 04056; JCB Open Access Policy).

A page showing an eclipse from the Mayan *Dresden Codex* (Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden, Mscr.Dresd.R.310, <http://digital.slub-dresden.de/werkansicht/dlf/2967/55>; CC-BY-SA 4.0).

*Principium et ars totius musicae*, Francesco Ferrarese (Hernando's inventory number 3097; see McDonald, 2:559; “The Guidonian hand,” Italian School, [16th century]/Civico Museo Bibliografico Musicale, Bologna, Italy/© Luisa Ricciarini/Leemage/Bridgeman Images).

Anonymous printmaker, after Jan Wellens de Cock, c.1520–30, *The Ship of St. Reynuit* (Hernando's inventory number 2808; see McDonald, 2:518; image reproduced is Rijksmuseum RP-P-1932-119).

Illustration of Rome by Pleydenwurff and Wolgemut in *The Nuremberg Chronicle*, 1493 (Hernando's inventory number 433; see McDonald, 2:566; reproduced by kind permission of the Syndics of Cambridge University Library, Inc.0.A.7.2[888]).

Andrea Palladio's sketch of Bramante's Tempietto (PRISMA ARCHIVO/Alamy Stock Photo).

Giovanni Battista Palumba, *Mars, Venus, and Vulcan (Vulcan forging the arms of Achilles)*, c.1505 (number 2032 in Hernando's inventory; see McDonald, 2:364; © The Trustees of the British Museum).

Leonardo da Vinci illustrations in Luca Pacioli, *Divina Proportione* (Venice: Alessandro Paganini, 1509).

Raphael's sketch of the elephant Hanno, c.1516 (Kupferstichkabinett Berlin, KdZ 17949; Wikimedia Commons).

Map of Tenochtitlan, from Hernán Cortés (Biblioteca Colombina 6–2–28, BCC Sevilla).

Albrecht Dürer, sketch of Antwerp harbor, 1520 (Albertina Museum Vienna; World History Archive/Alamy Stock Photo).

Anonymous, c.1470–80, the relics, vestments, and insignia of the Holy Roman Empire (Hernando's inventory number 2959; see McDonald, 2:541; © The Trustees of the British Museum).

The Utopian alphabet, from Thomas More, *De optimo rei Statu deque nova insula utopia libellus vere aureus . . .* (Basel: Johannes Froben, 1518, sig. b3<sup>r</sup>); “Signes Employés par Fernand Colomb dans son bibliotheque,” p. 59 in Guy Beaujouan, “Fernand Colomb et le marché du livre scientifique à Lyon en 1535–1536,” in *Lyon: Cité de savantes, actes du 112<sup>e</sup> Congrès national des sociétés savantes* (Lyon, 1987), section “d'Histoire des sciences et des techniques,” tome I (Paris: Éditions du CTHS, 1988), 55–63 (reproduced by kind permission of the CTHS).

Illustration of Franciscan friars burning the sacred treasures of the Aztecs, Hunter ms. 242, fol. 242r. Reproduced by permission of University of

Glasgow Library, Special Collections.

Hans Weiditz, *Two shipwrecked men clinging to the same plank*; the figure at left dressed as a fool; various drowning figures, cargo, and parts of the boat floating in the sea; illustration to Cicero, *Officia* (Augsburg: Steiner, 1531), woodcut (© The Trustees of the British Museum).

World map by Diego Ribeiro, produced under Hernando's supervision during his time as *pilót mayor*, 1529 (photo by Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images).

A perspective of Seville, showing Hernando's house at the Puerta de Goles, from *Civitates orbis terrarum* (Cologne: Petrum à Brachel, 1612–18, vol. 1).

"Horti Publici Academiae Lugduno-Batavae cum areolis et pulvillis vera Delineatio." by Jan Cornelisz van 't Woudt (Willem Isaacsz. van Swanenburg, 1610). From the Rijksmuseum, RP-P-1893-A-18089.

Instruction in an apothecary's shop, from Hieronymus Brunschwig, *Liber de arte distillandi de Compositis* (Strasburg, 1512), Aaa.vv (from *Das Buch der Cirugia* published Strasbourg in 1497; litho, Hieronymus Brunschwig [1450–c.1512]; after/Private Collection/The Stapleton Collection/Bridgeman Images).

Hans Weiditz, *Winebag and wheelbarrow; satire on gluttony with a fat peasant facing right spitting and resting his large belly on a wheelbarrow*, c.1521 (Hernando's inventory number 1743; see McDonald, 2:311; engraving, Hans Weiditz [c.1500–c.1536]/Private Collection/Bridgeman Images).

*Psalterium Hebreum, Grecum, Arabicum & Chaldeum* (Genoa, 1516), c.vii<sup>v</sup>.

## Plates

Sebastiano del Piombo, *Portrait of a Man, Said to Be Christopher Columbus* (portrait of Christopher Columbus, 1519. Found in the collection of Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Artist: Sebastiano del Piombo, [1485–1547]; photo by Fine Art Images/Heritage Images/Getty Images).

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Tommaso Inghirami [Portrait of Fedra Inghirami], c.1514–16, by Raphael Sanzio [1483–1520], oil on wood, 90 x 62 cm; photo by DeAgostini/Getty Images).

Charlemagne by Albrecht Dürer, 1511–13 (Emperor Charlemagne [742–814], king of the Franks, whose conquests formed the basis of the Holy Roman Empire. Painting by Albrecht Dürer c.1512; Bettmann/Contributor).

Vista de Sevilla, Alonso Sánchez Coello (atrib.). Museo de América, Madrid.

## **Endpaper**

Índice numeral or Registrum B; Biblioteca Colombina 10-1-4 (BCC Sevilla).

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