RACE, DISCOURSE, AND THE ORIGIN OF THE AMERICAS

A NEW WORLD VIEW

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1492: A New World View

The dispute over 1492 is in full spate. We are overwhelmed by an avalanche of arguments between the celebrants and the dissidents. The celebrants are intellectuals of Western European and Euroamerican descent, and the dissidents are intellectuals mainly of indigenous or Native American descent, joined by Euroamerican allies such as Hans Koning, the writer, and Kirkpatrick Sale, the environmentalist.

How, the argument runs, is the 1492 event to be perceived? Should it be seen from the celebrant perspective—as a "glorious achievement," a "heroic and daring deed" of discovery and exploration, a triumph for the Christian West that was to liberate the indigenous peoples from their Stone Age, deprived existence without the wheel (Hart 1991)?[1] Or, is it to be seen from the dissident perspective—as one of "history's monumental crimes," a brutal invasion and conquest that led to a degree of genocidal extinction and of still ongoing ecological disaster unprecedented in human history?[2]

Amid the rising clamor, one of the most impressive attempts to reconcile these opposing views has been put forward in a 1991 special issue of *Newsweek* that was prepared jointly by the magazine's editors and by the staff of the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History for the Columbian quincentenary exhibition *Seeds of Change,* together with its accompanying publication. The introduction to the issue concluded:

> The true story of Christopher Columbus is not the encounter of the Old World with the New: it is the story of how two old worlds were linked and made one: Columbus' voyages changed the ethnic composition of two continents, revolutionized the World's diet and altered the global environment. His legacy is the "Columbian exchange," the crucial *intermingling of peoples,* animals, plants, and

> diseases between Europe, Africa and the Americas. This is the theme of seeds of change . . . [which] we think holds the key to *the meaning of Columbus's voyage*. (*Newsweek*, Fall/Winter 1991)[3]

The central question that remains unresolved, however, is *which meaning*, for *what* group, and from *which* perspective—celebrant or dissident? Some, like Gregory Cerio (1991), are concerned with deconstructing the "black legend" *(la leyenda negra)* of Spanish atrocities against the indigenous peoples that the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Protestant states of northwestern Europe had used for propaganda purposes in their competitive struggle to establish colonies and slave plantations in the Caribbean and the Americas. The principal "meaning" that Cerio attributes to the event and its aftermath therefore reflects this concern, which is one that springs from an essentially Euroamerican historical-existential perspective:

> Whilst there's no reason to print up "I Love the Conquest" stickers, and whilst the Spanish did commit "horrifying atrocities," if one *looks at the world, as the Spanish did in the fifteenth century*, they acted by *their standards*, with moderation. Consequently, whilst when the English and French arrived in the Americas, they systematically drove the natives from their land, the Spanish accepted the Indians into their society—however rudely—and sought to provide a *philosophical and moral foundation* for their actions in the New World. (Emphasis added)

As a result, whereas in Latin America "the marriage of blood and cultures created *La Raza*, the new *Mestizo* peoples who compose most of today's Latin Americans," North America, "where the natives were excluded, driven off their land, and eventually hunted down," remained white.

In this context, Cerio continues, sixteenth-century Spaniards "appear no worse than the nations who castigated them for their sins." Even if Spain "committed terrible deeds in bringing the 'light of Christianity'" to the New World, "history offers no shortage of acts performed in the service of religious, social and political ideals."

From the historico-existential perspective, however, it is irrelevant whether the ongoing subjugation experienced by Native Americans is imposed by *white* North America or by *mestizo* Latin America. Rather, as Susan Shown Harjo (1991) argues, for the native peoples of Americas what needs to be brought to an end is the entire history of these past five hundred years. Harjo, who is herself Cheyenne and Muskogee, and is also the national coordinator of the 1992 Alliance (a coalition of Native American groups), outlines the dissident perspective on 1492. The history that it ushered in, she writes, "led to a feeding frenzy that has left native peoples, and this red quarter of Mother Earth in a state of emergency." For native people, "this half millennium of land-grabs and one-cent treaty sales has been no bargain." As she further implies, the effects of the original severe imbalance of the *terms of exchange*—which formed the basis of the "seeds of change" and set it in dynamic motion—can be seen today in the empirically dispossessed and marginalized situation of the contemporary descendants of one of the partners to that exchange. In the United States, for example, the terms of that exchange have led to a situation that is far from equal. Only about two million indigenous peoples have survived, and even now they only barely manage to do so, despite the surrounding abundance.

"Most of us," Harjo writes, "are in an economic survival mode on a daily basis and many of us are bobbing about in the middle of the mainstream just treading water." From this perspective, 1492 was the prelude to a mode of exchange in which "genocide and ecocide" were traded off for "the benefits of horses, cut-glass beads, pickup trucks and microwave ovens." The only possible response to such an event, Harjo suggests, is to bring an end to the initial terms of the exchange and to the history to which these terms led, by joining together in order "to begin an era of respect and rediscovery, to find a new world beyond 1492."

But can there be, besides these two, a third perspective? Is it possible to go beyond what Gregory Bateson (1969) calls "the old conflicts and the old premises, in which we just go round and round without resolution," that is, beyond the premises of both celebrants and dissidents? Can there emerge a new and ecumenically human view that places the event of 1492 within a new frame of meaning, not only of *natural* history, but also of a newly conceived *cultural* history specific to and unique to our species, because the history of those "forms of life" gives expression to a third level of hybridly organic, and—in the terms of the Chilean biologists Maturana and Varela (1987)—*languaging* existence?

Michel Foucault (1973) has argued that a history of the specifically human needs to take its point of departure from the differing ways in which each individual and the human group to which he or she belongs represent to himself or herself, and to themselves, the life that they live. The linguist Philip Lieberman (1991) has recently provided us with the outlines of how such a new history could be conceptualized. Lieberman points out that the biological evolution in early humans of the modern supralaryngeal vocal tract, together with the brain mechanisms necessary to produce human speech and syntax, generated a new type of evolution: we developed a cognitive capacity related to our new ability to construct linguistically encoded moral or ethico-behavioral systems. These developments enabled us to induce the modes of altruism that bond us together as groups. In consequence, as I propose here, in place of the genetic programs that regulate the behaviors of all organic species, we developed our own culture-specific programs by which our human behaviors—cognizing, affective, and actional—came to be rule-governed and lawfully regulated.

Lieberman (1991:172) further argues that, although "the development of human cultures of which moral sense is arguably the highest form, has obviously progressed in the last 100,000 years, with slavery, for example, although once universally common to all peoples, having now come to be universally outlawed" (in spite of being practiced *de facto* in a few remaining pockets), and although "we have

populated and changed continents, harnessed the forces of nature, and subjugated every other form of life," we ourselves have not yet attained those behavioral attitudes of altruism, empathy, and moral sense in our dealings with each other that he calls the "markers of fully modern human beings." Can we place the event of 1492—both its *undoubled* "glorious achievement" aspect and its equally documented atrocities aspects—within such a newly conceptualized moral evolutionary history? As Théophile Obenga (1987) and both molecular biologists and linguists (for example, Cavallo-Sforzi 1991; Vigilant et al. 1991) have pointed out, it is a history that began in Africa, with the emergence of humans *out* of the animal kingdom. Yet, it is also a history that can now be projected backward from the contemporary imperative of our global interhuman and environmental situation in which the attaining of Lieberman's markers of what should constitute fully modern human beings is now the necessary condition, at this conjuncture, both of our species survival and, concomitantly, of our interaltruistic co-identification as a species.

Can we therefore begin Harjo's new history from a new view of 1492 based upon this still-to-be-written history of how the human represents to itself the life that it lives, and therefore, the history of what Melvin Donald (1991) recently called the "symbolic representational systems" on the basis of which our species-specific cognitive mechanism (the mechanism to which we give the name *mind*) has been instituted, transformed, and reformed? Such a view, although able to go beyond, as Cerio wants us to, the one-sided aspect or black legend of Spain's conquest and settlement of the Caribbean and the Americas, also begins, as Harjo also insists, with today's empirical situation of the ongoing subjugation, marginalization, and displacement of the indigenous peoples. Such displacement is perpetuated not only by the whites of North America and by the mestizos of Latin America, but also by new waves of external immigrants of all races, cultures, religions, from all parts of the world—all in search of the higher standards of living not to be had in that 80 percent of the world that must make do with 20 percent of the world's resources while our 20 percent disposes of 80 percent and is responsible besides for 75 percent of the earth's pollution.[4] In Brazil, for example, more and more internal land-hungry immigrants now threaten not only to wipe out the rain forest but also to displace today's remnants of the indigenous Amazonian peoples from the last ecosystemic niches that sustain their millennial traditional way of life.

Can we therefore, while taking as our point of departure both the ecosystemic and global sociosystemic "interrelatedness" of our contemporary situation, put forward a new world view of 1492 from the perspective of the species, and with reference to the interests of *its* well-being, rather than from the partial perspectives, and with reference to the necessarily partial interests, of both celebrants and dissidents? The central thesis of this essay is that we can.

The Third Perspective: On Supraordinate Goals, Subjective Understanding, and the Rules that Govern Perception

This third perspective is so invisibilized within the logic of our present order of discourse and its system of symbolic representations, however, that it tends to be reflexly erased by both celebrants and dissidents alike, by the Harjos as well as by the Cerios. Nor is it included as a third perspective in its own right, with the other two, in spite of insightful discussions on the centrality of the enslavement of the African ancestors of today's black Americans to the economic development of the post-1492 societies of the Americas and the Caribbean. Yet, as Tom Morgenthau (1991) and Susan Miller (1991) have made clear, it is the African-descended (and Afro-mixed) population group who formed, with the other two, at the very origins of the post-1492 Caribbean and the Americas, the integrally triadic model rather than the dyadic social-existential model presupposed by the Harjo/Cerio conflictual perspectives. It was on the basis of this triadic model and its dually antagonistic and interactional dynamic that the new syncretizing cultural matrix of the now-emerging world civilization of the Caribbean and the Americas was first laid down.

The basis of this triadic model was itself established some half a century *before* the voyage of 1492. For, as historian Daniel Boorstin (1983:157) emphasizes, Columbus's 1492 voyage cannot be detached from the overall sequence of historical events that began with the Portuguese state's dispatching, during the first half of the fifteenth century, of several expeditions, whose goal was to attempt to find a sea route around the hitherto nonnavigable Cape Bojador on the bulge of West Africa—a cape that had been projected, in the accounts of the earth's geography given by medieval Christian geographers, as being the *nec plus ultra* line and boundary marker between the habitable temperate zone of Europe and the inhabitable torrid zones. The Portuguese finally rounded the cape in 1441, landing on the shores and in the lush green territory of Senegal, and with that landfall setting in motion the deconstruction of mainstream Christian geography that had been based on the authority of the classical doctrines of the ancient Greco-Roman authorities (see Taviani 1991). That first empirical disproof of earlier represented certainties was to be the prelude to Columbus's own challenge to what we shall later define as the categorial models of the earth's geography, as prescribed by the Scholastic order of knowledge of feudal-Christian Europe and, therefore by its rules of representation (figure 1-1). For Columbus was to visit the trading fort built by the Portuguese at El Mina on the west coast of Africa in or around 1482, and his empirical experience of the habitability of that torrid zone against the then learned premise of its uninhabitability was to lie at the origin of his own "grand design" (Taviani, 1991).

The central point to note here, however, is that, as the historian Fernández-Armesto (1987) emphasizes, the attraction that had impelled the Portuguese state to round the hitherto nonroundable Cape Bojador had been the lure of circum-

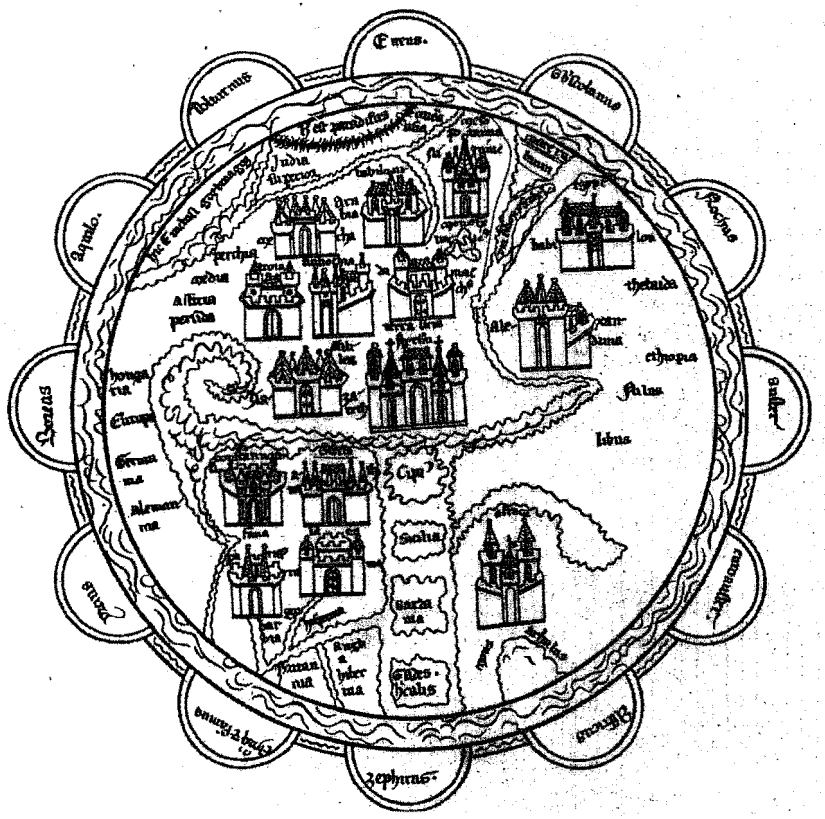

Figure 1-1. World map, 1364–1372—St. Denis. From M. F. Santarem, *Atlas composé de la mappemonde*, plate 21. Courtesy Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress

venting, by a newly discovered sea route, the Islamic trans-Saharan monopoly over the rich gold trade. The hitherto closed-in world of feudal-Christian Europe had only begun to suspect the existence of the source of this trade in the ostensibly uninhabitable torrid zone areas, below the Sahara Desert, following on the fabled pilgrimage of the Islamized African emperor of Mali, Mansa Musa, to Mecca in 1324. News of the prodigality with which he had lavished gold upon his hosts had sent ripples of rumors of undreamed of affluence throughout a still-poor and—in relation to the then still-dominant world of Islam—backward Latin-Christian Europe.

Consequently, the Portuguese landing on the shores of today's Senegal and their drawing of areas of West Africa into a mercantile network and trading system, on the basis of the exchange of their goods for gold or slaves, were the necessary and indispensable prelude, not only to Columbus's own voyage but also to the specific

pattern of relations of which Cerio speaks between Christian Europe and the non-Christian peoples of the world to which Columbus and his crew had newly arrived. This Fernández-Armesto makes clear in his documentation of the pattern of conquest and colonization that Europe had begun to establish starting some two-and-a-half centuries before 1492, with its expansion into the western Mediterranean and then into the eastern Atlantic.

If it was to be Europe's earlier encounter with the peoples of Neolithic Berber stock in the Canary Islands and their conquest and exploration of these people on the ostensibly "just" grounds of their idolatry—with their lands being therefore perceived as legitimately expropriable (Fernández-Armesto 1987:230–43) and with this pattern, when extrapolated by the Portuguese to West Africa, being validated by the pope (Mudimbe 1988)—it was to be in the terms of the same system of symbolic representations, related to this original pattern, that two of the events founding to the instituting of the post-1492 Caribbean and the Americas were to be effected. For it was to be within the terms of the same discourse of legitimation that, first, Columbus would, on landing, at once take possession of the islands at which he had arrived, expropriating them in the name of the Spanish state, while offering in his first report home to ship back some of the indigenous peoples as slaves for sale on the "just" grounds that they were idolaters.

Second, it was also to be on the initial basis of the same mode of juro-theological legitimation, that, under the auspices of the slave-trading system out of Africa that had been established by the Portuguese in the wake of 1441, large numbers of peoples of African descent would be transshipped as the substitute slave labor force whose role would be indispensable to the founding of the new societies.

Not only would they be used, as Morgenthau (1991) points out, as the totally disposable, coercible, and unpaid labor force that alone made possible the accelerated economic development of the Americas. They would also play a central role in the instituting of the bases of the new social structure. In this role they would not only serve to free the indigenous peoples from the outright slavery to which many had been reduced in the immediate decades after 1492, when a flourishing intra-Caribbean and Caribbean-mainland slave trade in *cabezas de indios y indias* (heads of Indian men, as in *heads* of cattle)(Pastor 1988:58–59) and one that had been initiated by Columbus himself, had made the fortunes of some of the founder families of the Spanish-speaking Caribbean (Wynter 1984:30). As the liminal category whose mode of excluded *difference,* based on the hereditary slave status of its members as the only *legitimately enslavable* population group, they would also generate the principle of similarity or of conspecificity that would come to bond, if on the terms of sharply unequal relations, the incoming Spanish settlers with the indigenous peoples. From the mid-sixteenth century on, this principle would come to bond the latter as members of a category whose status was that of *hereditarily free* subjects of the Spanish state.

This third population group, therefore, would come to embody the new symbolic construct of *Race* or of innately determined difference that would enable the Spanish state to legitimate its sovereignty over the *lands of the Americas* in the

postreligious legal terms of Western Europe's now-expanding state system. It would do so by instituting by means of the physical referent of the group's enslaved lives and labor the empirical basis, of, in Cerio's terms, the "moral and philosophical foundations" on which the Spaniards "accepted" the indigenous peoples "into their societies, however rudely."

This sharp contradiction—between (a) the historical centrality of this third population group to the clearly triadic model founding of the post-1492 Americas and the Caribbean and (b) the reflex marginalization of its perspective by most of the major participants, whether celebrants or dissidents, with respect to the debate over what meaning is to be given to 1492 and its aftermath—provides us with a question able to serve as a point of departure from which to elaborate a view of 1492 that encompasses the historico-existential perspectives of the descendants of the conquerors and the conquered, the legally free and the legally enslaved. What, this question asks, are the rules that govern our human perceptions? What are the processes that do so? How, in effect, do we perceive and know the specific social reality of which we are always participatory subjects and agents? More pertinently, what are the rules that govern the shared and integrating conception of the past that we *normally* or even dissidently—since our dissidence must necessarily be couched, as Valentin Y. Mudimbe (1988:x) reminds us, in the very terms of the normalcy from which we dissent—hold of the reality in which we participate as actors at the same time as we attempt to observe it, whether as scholars or as lay men and women? So if we now need to put aside once and for all the notion that "Columbus discovered America," seeing that only its indigenous people *could have* discovered it, what rules of perception have enabled the "idea that Columbus discovered America" to remain so central for so long to both the scholarly interpretation of 1492 by a range of European and Euroamerican historians and thinkers (see O'Gorman 1951), as well as to the folk perception. In other words, rules that enable those who participate in its celebratory activities to perceive Columbus Day as the day on which "Columbus discovered America" in the teeth of the empirical evidence that what the real-life Columbus did indeed set out to discover, and what he did indeed "discover," were conceived and carried out within a system of symbolic representations that were culturally different from our now-hegemonically techno-industrial own.

To answer this question, I have borrowed the concept of "subjective understanding" from the artificial intelligence theorist Jaime Carbonnell. Carbonnell suggests that, because humans always know and perceive their everyday world in relation to specific behavior-orienting supraordinate goals and their sets of subgoals or *goal-trees*, aspects of these perceptual-cognitive processes can be simulated by computer programs that are themselves oriented about such *goal-trees*.[5] These goals therefore determine what is to be perceived and what not perceived, *with invariable* reference to one single criterion—that of their own realization as such goals. Given that since our human behaviors are invariably oriented in the forms of the specific perceptual-cognitive processes by which we know our reality, then the behaviors

that we normally display, as well as the empirical social affectivities to which our behaviors, taken collectively, lead, can "give" us access to the specific mode of "subjective understanding" in terms of which we normally, even when dissidently, perceive our contemporary sociosystemic reality as well as conceive the past that led to it. Such is the case with our present liberal Positivist conception that what Columbus did in 1492 was to "discover" America.

This formulation is the basis of my proposed human view of 1492. This view is that both the undoubted "glorious achievement" of the processes that led up to Columbus's realization of his long dreamed-of voyage and the equally undoubted horrors that were inflicted by the Spanish conquistadores and settlers upon the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and the Americas, as well as upon the African-descended Middle Passages and substitute slave labor force, are to be seen as the effects of Western Europe's epochal shift. That shift—out of the primarily supernaturally guaranteed modes of "subjective understanding" (and, therefore, of their correlated symbolic-representational and ethico-behavioral systems) that had been *common* to *all human* cultures and their millennial traditional "forms of life"—was a product of the intellectual revolution of humanism. Elaborated by humanists as well as by monarchical jurists and theologians, this revolution opened the way toward an increasingly secularized, that is, degodded, mode of "subjective understanding." In the context of the latter's gradually hegemonic *political* ethic, not only would the earlier religio-moral ethic then common to all cultures be displaced, but a reversal would take place in which the *Christian* church, of which the earlier feudal states of Latin Europe had been the temporal and military arm, would now be made into the spiritual arm of these newly emergent absolute states. It was to be the global expansion of those states that would bring into being our present single world order and single world history.

If the symbolic representational system of Judaeo-Christianity has continued to provide the "ultimate reference point" for Western societies, whatever the transformations of their modes of production (see Mudimbe 1988:142) and therefore of their historical "system-ensembles" (Hubner 1983:52), the political historian J. G. A. Pocock provides us with the key to the process by which Western Europe was to effect its shift from the founding religious form of the "ultimate reference point" of the Judaeo-Christian symbolic representational or cultural system to its later secular variants. And where he refers to the first variant as a "Christian heresy," it is in the terms of the second as a now purely biologized form of this "heresy" in whose global hegemonic forms, conceptual-cognitive categories, and modes of "subjective understanding" that we all, as humans, would now come to live.

Pocock (1975) points out that the West's epochal shift was to be based on the transfer of the central behavior-regulating "redemptive process" formerly centralized in the church under the direction of the celibate clergy. That process had been oriented about the *other-worldly* supraordinate (or metaphysical) goal of attaining to the eternal salvation of the Augustinian *civitas dei* and was prescribed to be effected through a life primarily aimed at securing one's spiritual redemption from

the negative legacy of Adamic Original Sin, as inscribed in the founding original narrative of the biblical Genesis. It was this process that was now transferred together with its earlier goal to that of the new *this-worldly* goal of the growth, expansion, and political stability of each European state in competitive rivalry with its fellow European states.

The earlier supraordinate goal as encoded by the origin narrative and cosmogonic schema of the Judaeo-Christian version of the original Hebrew Genesis had served as the ethico-behavioral schema of the feudal-Christian and pre-Renaissance order of Europe. The latter had therefore oriented its systemic ensemble of collective behaviors in terms of the mode of "subjective understanding" of that schema. In contrast, the new behavior-orienting goal of the state, that of the *civitas saecularis*, was conceptualized as a transumed this-worldly variant of the original feudal-Christian goal, as well as of its encoding cosmogonic schema. In this transformation, the Genesis narrative of mankind's enslavement to Original Sin was no longer interpreted primarily in sexual and therefore binarily opposed spirit/flesh terms, as it had been in the feudal order. Instead it was in terms of mankind's alleged enslavement to the irrational or sensory aspects of its human nature, that the earlier supraordinate goal of spiritual redemption and eternal salvation of the feudal order was replaced by that of rational redemption, through the state as intermediary. This new goal was to be achieved primarily through the individual's actions, as a rational citizen, in ensuring the stability, growth, and competitive expansion of the state. It therefore called for a new behavior-orienting ethic. This new ethic was that of reasons of state, as articulated by the discourse of civic humanism and of a mode of political absolutism that would take the place of the earlier theological absolutism on which the feudal order, as a still supernaturally guaranteed system ensemble, had been based.

In what ways were both the "glorious achievement" and the interhuman atrocities of the aftermath of 1492 to be the Janus-faced effects of the new mode of "subjective understanding" and supraordinate goal of rational redemption of the state, of its new mode of political rationality? In answer to that question, I propose that an ecumenically valid meaning is to be found as an imperative guide for our action in a present that confronts us with a dimension of change even more far-reaching than the one effected in the context of Western Europe's epochal transfer of the other-worldly goal of the *civitas dei* to the this-worldly goal of the *civitas saecularis*.

Rational Redemption/The Flow of Life, Supraordinate Goals, and a Realm beyond Reason

The Latin American scholar Miguel León-Portilla has devoted his life to the study of the pre-Columbian civilizations of Mesoamerica in their own culture-centric terms rather than in ours. His work has enabled us to see the way in which both

the brilliance and extraordinarily creative innovations of the Aztec Empire (which stunned and amazed the incoming Spaniards), and therefore in effect *their* "glorious achievements," as well as the ritual acts of physical sacrifice that were central to their statal polytheistic religions (in effect, *their* atrocities), were both the effects of the same (in our terms adapted from Carbonnell) supraordinate goal, and of the mode of "subjective understanding" to which that goal rule-governedly gave rise.

This goal, he writes, was to maintain "the flow of life" within the logic of a cosmogonic schema and origin narrative that was as instituting of Mesoamerica (León-Portilla 1990) as our present purely secularized variant of the Judaeo-Christian narrative of evolution is of ours (Isaacs 1983:509–32). Within this cosmogony, the "world had been established four times during four ages" (León-Portilla 1990). Because each time it had been only by the self-sacrifice of the gods, who had done it for the first time in primeval Teotihuacan, that the "sun, moon, earth and man" had been reestablished, a debt had been imposed on the Aztecs that had to be repaid. The debt from the sacred origin therefore prescribed rules for the collective behavior of the Aztecs that were based upon an "essential relation" that, as human beings, they had with the Divine; and, therefore, in effect, with a still-divinized nature. This founding symbolic contract then imposed the obligation that because man had been "deserved" by the gods' self-sacrifice, he would have to pay his debt by his rigorous "performance" of *Tlamacehualitzi*, that is, penance, or the act of deserving through sacrifice, *including the bloody sacrifice of human beings*." It was only by the Aztec's performance of these penitential acts—by reenacting the primeval actions of the gods and giving back what he owed through sacrifice—that "the *flow of life on earth, in the heavens and in the shadows of the underworld" could be maintained"* (León-Portilla 1990:9).[6]

This act of sacrifice, seen by the incoming Judaeo-Christian Spaniards with genuine horror as "atrocities," was therefore a central part of the same symbolic representation system and mode of "subjective understanding" in whose logic and regime of truth the profusion of the varieties and excess of domesticated agricultural products, as the seeds of change that were to change the dietary habits of all humans were to be provided by the people whom Jack Weatherford (1988) has recently renamed the "Indian-Givers."

The central parallel here with 1492 is that Columbus was to be no less governed in his actions by a mode of "subjective understanding" than were the Aztecs. Consequently, the sequence, on the one hand, of admirable behaviors that led him to persevere over many long years in putting forward the intellectual rationale, in spite of the mockery and derision of the learned scholars of his time, and that led him eventually to carry out his successful voyage "against," as he later wrote, "the opinion of all the world"[7] and the sequence, on the other hand, of ruthless behaviors that followed his landfall were both motivated by the same countermode of "subjective understanding" oriented about the then-emerging statal-mercantile and this-worldly goal of rational redemption.[8] The new ethico-behavioral system of "reasons-of-the-state" and its new mode of political rationality led him, on

arriving, not only to take immediate possession of the new lands in the name of Spain, but also to deal with the peoples of these lands as a population group that could be justly made to serve three main purposes. One of these purposes was to expand the power of the Spanish state that had backed his voyage. The second was to repay his financial backers, as well as to enrich himself and his family with all the gold and tribute he could extort from the indigenous peoples, even from making some into *cabezas de indios y indias* (heads of Indian men and women), who could be sold as slaves, in order to support the acquired noble status that was part of the contract he had drawn up with the Crown before the voyage (as a psychosocial status drive that was to also impel his behaviors). His third purpose was to help accelerate the spread of Christianity all over the world, in time for the Second Coming of Christ, which he fervently believed to be imminent.

Consequently, Columbus's behaviors were not unlike the ritual acts of sacrifice of the Aztecs. Their behaviors, too, were impelled by an ethico-behavioral system based on securing what seemed to them to be the imperative goal of "ensuring the good of the Commonwealth,"[9] and to do this by maintaining, as their founding supraordinate goal prescribed that they should do, "the flow of life." Columbus's equally Janus-faced behaviors were to be no less prescribed by the emergent religio-secular political and mercantile goal of the state, which Columbus would come to see as the vehicle both for the spread of the faith and for the advancement of his own status. So the Aztecs' "flow of life" imperative would become for Columbus and the Spaniards (to the Aztecs' horror and astonishment) the imperative of maintaining a "flow of gold." In an inextricably tangled web of motives, for him this flow would serve *not* only to secure the good of the state and his own personal enrichment, but also to finance the reconquest of Jerusalem from its Islamic occupiers, in order to prepare the world for the imminent Second Coming of Christ.[10] It was a coming in which many members of the new socially mobile merchant/artisan-cum-mapmaker category (in a world in which the nobility was still hegemonic) fervently believed. This was the category to which Columbus belonged.

The paradox here was that the current of millenarian belief running through Europe at the time, whose protest was directed at the Scholastic orthodoxy of the church, was to be an ally of the emerging state. Both favored transferring the church's goal of an eventual attaining to the Augustinian *City of God*—a goal that the new religious currents now set impatiently at a certain date and time as one to be realized very soon on earth—to the state's own this-worldly goal of attaining to a new *civitas saecularis*, that is, Secular City, as expressed in the stability, growth, and expansion of the modern and essentially postreligious state (see Pocock 1975). Nevertheless, this process of transfer, together with its first partial secularization of the religious supraordinate goals regulating hitherto all human behaviors, was to be itself effected within the terms of the "general upheaval" of the cultural revolution, both of humanism proper and of its precursor, the movement of Christian humanism. The apocalyptic millenarian movements were a fringe-component of this humanism.

In the context of this "general upheaval" (and therefore of the transformation of the divinely ordained feudal order into the new one of the modern state), Europe, by means of its return to its hitherto stigmatized pagan Greco-Roman systems of knowledge and learning, was to remake itself anew in all the forms of its existence. Through the synergistic interaction of a new group of lay (that is, nonclergy, nonmainstream) intellectuals, including "men of the sea" like Columbus, it was also to bring in, for all humans, a new image of the earth and conception of the cosmos (see Obenga 1987; figure 1-2). I shall propose here that this new image would gradually displace the culture-systemic mode of cognition by which the subjects of all human orders had known their physical environment *only* in the terms prescribed by their modes of "subjective understanding." In consequence, each culture's representation of its physical environment, like that of the feudal-Christian order, had been made into a function of the ethico-behavioral schemas by which all humans regulated their collective ensembles of behaviors, until the revolution of humanism made it possible for these representations to be replaced with a scientific and transculturally verifiable image of the earth and conception of the cosmos.

Because of the specific terms on which the state transferred to its new, essentially mercantilist-political goal, the energies that had formerly been attached to the other-worldly goal of the church—thereby changing the earlier imperative of eternal salvation into that of securing above all else the good of the state in competitive rivalry with all other European states—all non-Christian peoples and cultures (Pocock 1971) became perceivable only in terms of their usefulness to the European states in securing their this-worldly goal of power and wealth. Consequently, the collective behavior of Columbus and his crew, as well as of all the later Spanish settlers who poured in after 1492 to seek their own personal enrichment and new landed status, would—within the Spanish state's overall goal of expansion—give expression to this new goal in exactly the same way as the Aztecs had given expression to their equally metaphysical goal of maintaining the "flow of life."

The Aztecs had been governed by the supernaturally ordained goal, prescribed by their indigenous cosmogonic schema, of maintaining the "flow of life" within a still-divinized conception of Nature. That conception had once been common to all humans, until the priests of the exiled and dominated Jews in Babylon, had, as a central intellectual challenge to their conquest and subordination by the mighty Babylonians and their divinized nature God, Marduk, counterposed the new cosmogonic schema of Genesis, whose Creator-God—represented as having created *all* the forces of Nature, in the wake of Egypt's Akhenaton's first brilliant but eventually aborted monotheism—had led to the epochal "degodding" of Nature (Hyers 1987); a degodding that had logically put an end to the sacrifice of humans, and to which the invading Judaeo-Christians of Europe had fallen heir. However, in spite of their degodding of nature, the Judaeo-Christians had continued to be no less regulated in their behaviors by the new surparodinate goal set by their monotheistic religion, than had the polytheistic Babylonians by those set by the

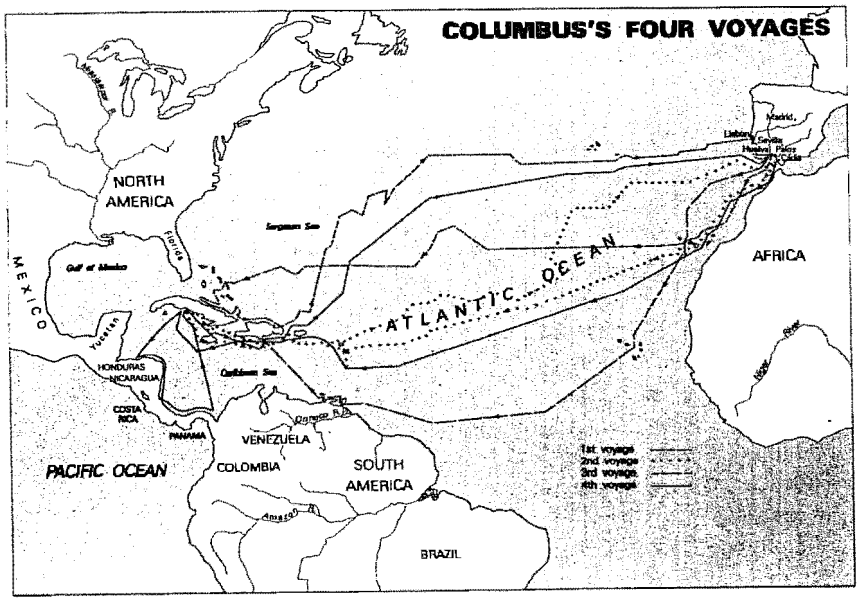

Figure 1-2. Columbus's four voyages. Map reproduced from William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips, *The Worlds of Christopher Columbus* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992)

divinized natural forces that were their gods. In a parallel manner, the invading Europeans were to continue to be as regulated in their behaviors by their statal culture's supraordinate imperative of maintaining the flow of gold and wealth, both for the "good of the state" and for their own personal enrichment, as the imperial Aztecs, whom they defeated and displaced, had been regulated by that of maintaining the still-divinized "flow of life."

However, the mercantile imperative that drove Columbus cannot be disentangled from his apocalyptic millenarian belief in the imminent Second Coming of Christ, which led him to that countertrain of reasoning that was to break with Scholasticism's arbitrary model of divine creation—a model in which late feudalism's Aristotelianized conception of an omnipotent God who could arbitrarily intervene to change the rules governing the everyday process of nature, *cursus solitus naturae* (even to "restore virgins after they have been ruined!") (Blumenberg 1983:327), and to posit in its place a new *rule*-governed model of divine creation. This new model would enable him to call into question the categorial models of feudal-Christian geography—categorial models in whose a priori classificatory logic the earth of the Western Hemisphere (as the nonexistent antipodes to a tripartite earth imagined as an island in an encircling ocean) had to be entirely submerged under water.

In his novel *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, Etc.*, Robert Pirsig (1974) broke with the notion that what Columbus did in 1492 was to "discover" America. He argued instead that notwithstanding the schoolbook stereotype Columbus has been made into, we must be aware that whereas today's moon exploration is now "just a branch of what Columbus did" since "existing forms of thought" are "adequate to handle it," Columbus's first voyage could only have been effected on the basis of a "root expansion of thought." It was this "root expansion" that enabled him to move outside the limits of the conventional reason of his time, and therefore in Foucault's terms, outside the "ground" of the feudal-Christian episteme or order of knowledge, or, in our terms, outside the feudal order's symbolic representational system and its mode of "subjective understanding." Pirsig, in further proposing that we, too, are now confronted with the task of effecting an analogous "root expansion of thought," then argued that "any really new exploration" comparable to Columbus's that would be undertaken today, at a time when our "conventional reason has become less and less adequate" to handle our mounting problems, would have "to be made in an entirely new direction," would have "to move into realms beyond reason."

Asmarom Legesse (1973:290–91) has pointed out, that because of the "technocultural fallacy of our present order of knowledge" we fail "to distinguish the purposive aspects of human behavior (as reflected most clearly in revitalization [or millenarian] movements) and the unconscious structure in human culture (as reflected in the language and cognitive basis of social life) *from the non-conscious empirical processes that link man directly to animal societies* and to ecosystems." So whereas science and technology are mainly relevant to the latter, "they are not to the former."

In this context, both Obenga and Pirsig's interpretations of the "glorious achievement" aspects of 1492, not only contradict the Positivists' purely "technological" interpretation, but also coincide largely, if put forward in more secular and modern terms, with the "epistemological conception" that Columbus himself had of a voyage whose navigational feat for him was inseparable from the countertrain of reasoning with which he had challenged the paradigms of mainstream geography. In the logic of that geography—as he himself quoted his scholarly antagonists as affirming—"God could not have placed land there," that is, in the nonexistent antipodes of the Western Hemisphere, where, according to the rules of representation of that geography, the land there would had to have been submerged, as the heavier element in its Aristotelian *"natural place"* under the sea and the lighter element of water (Thorndike 1934:4:166).

How did Columbus come to "move beyond the reason" of his time and to think contrary truths (as the major Spanish dramatist Lope de Vega's portrayal of him in his 1614 play, *The New World Discovered by Christopher Columbus*, would dramatize his hero-figure as doing) to those permitted by the still largely hegemonic, and divinely guaranteed, Scholastic order of knowledge? Here, the perceptive analysis given by the historian Paulo Fernando Moraes-Farias (1980:115–31),

of medieval Islam's geographic accounts of the nonmonotheistic indigenous peoples of Africa below the Sahara, is illuminating. It uncovers the rules of representation that governed feudal Christianity's orthodox accounts of the earth's geography, as they also governed medieval Islam's geographic accounts of the lands and peoples of Africa below the Sahara. These rules of representation, and the a prioristic categorial models of the earth's geography to which they gave rise, were the rules that Columbus would have had to challenge, as the condition of convincing his intended backers of the feasibility of his proposed voyage. That challenge is where we must look for the ecumenically valid and human view of 1492.

On Categorial Models: Notions of Order, the Earth Intended for "Life and the Creation of Souls," and the First Poetics of the *Propter Nos*

The analysis of Moraes-Farias (1980) mentioned above is based on Daniel Sperber's central distinction between two types of human cognition. Sperber defines the first of these as "knowledge of the world as it is." Because its purpose is scientific, it must set out to make logical representations of empirical reality in such a way that they can be independently verified. The second type is the "knowledge of categories." Its purpose is to make use of empirical reality *as well as of factual data concerning that reality* (data that are meticulously and rigorously secured), in order to validate the a prioristic classificatory schema on whose basis each order's mode of "subjective understanding" is secured as the mode of perception and cognition shared by its subjects. It is on the basis of that mode that the subjects of each human order are enabled to experience themselves as symbolic kin or interaltruistic conspecifics.[11]

Consequently, because the medieval Islamic accounts of the lands and people of non-Islamic black Africa sprang from the logic of this second type of cognition, the operational strategies of their discourse functioned according to rules of representation that called for the then current names of some of the indigenous peoples of black Africa, such as *Zanj, Habasha,* to be made into interchangeable mobile classificatory labels. These labels then served to detach the peoples and lands of empirical indigenous Africa from their "moorings in reality" in order to convert them into "stereotyped images" able to function in the dually descriptive *(denotative)* and behavior-prescriptive (deontic) modes that Jean-François Lyotard (1984) has identified as being characteristic of all customary or narrative modes of knowledge. As "stereotyped images," their primary function was to *induce* the specific mode of perception needed by a culture-specific order, and to thereby orient the prescribed behaviors needed by that order.

In this way, the peoples of black Africa were made to play a dual function within the mode of "subjective understanding" of medieval Islam. As stereotyped images, they were not only perceivable as a group whose members (including at times even those already converted to Islam) could be legitimately enslaved, but also, correlatedly, as *the* group that served, within the "triadic formal model" of the order's auto-instituting classificatory schema, as the extreme term that embodied the absolute lack of the optimal criterion of being as well as of rationality that defined the medieval Islamic way of life.

In sum, these "stereotyped images" or *labels* served as boundary markers that represented the transgressive chaos that ostensibly awaited those who either acted outside the limits of the behavioral norms of the order or thought (or perceived) *outside* the parameters of its mode of "subjective understanding." Thus, their central systemic function of representing, through their total negation, the medieval Islamic way of life and mode of subjective understanding as being *the* only possible divinely sanctioned manner of behaving *humanly,* knowing *rationally,* and perceiving according to an ostensible absolute standard of right perception meant that what Moraes-Farias calls the categorial models in which they were encoded as interchangeable labels and stereotyped images were necessarily, in Wittgenstein's fine phrase, "impervious to philosophical attack" (see Wheeler 1984).

Because the mainstream accounts of the earth's geography of Columbus's era also still functioned, in spite of the Portuguese voyages, mainly within the same "knowledge-of-categories" mode of cognition as did that of medieval Islam's accounts of black Africa's geography, their rules of representation and operational strategies followed a similar logic. The transgressive chaos in medieval Islam's trading and monotheistic way of life and "mode of subjective understanding" had been signified by a binary opposition between (as the extreme ends of a triadic model) people who traded like Muslims and peoples who—unlike either the Muslims or the intermediate category of other peoples who traded in a rudimentary manner—did not trade at all and necessarily lived like "beasts," that is, conceptually other peoples like the *Zanj,* the *Habasha.* These latter were paralleled in the geographic account of the earth by feudal-Christian geography and its rules of representation, by a binary opposition that also functioned as the extreme terms of a triadic formal model. This phenomenon was specific to the a prioristic classificatory schema, on whose basis the mode of "subjective understanding," integrating the feudal-Christian way of life, had also been generated. This binary opposition was then inscribed in an ostensibly unbridgeable separation between the *habitable* areas of the earth (which were within the redemptive grace of the Scholastics' God and His only "partial providence for mankind"), and the *uninhabitable* areas of the earth (which were outside His grace). Both the torrid zones (such as the lands that lay beyond the bulge of Cape Bojador) and the Western Hemisphere (the allegedly nonexistent site of today's America and the Caribbean) were therefore discursively made into mobile labels, so as to detach them from their "moorings in reality" and to convert them into the "stereotyped images" whose function was exactly the same as that of the *Zanj, and the Habasha* in medieval Islamic geography. These images indeed served as the boundary markers or the *nec plus ultra* sign of the transgressive chaos that awaited outside the mode of rationality of the behavioral norms and therefore of "subjective understanding" of the feudal-Christian order—in the

same way as, incidentally, the Aztecs' "abode-of-the-dead" label attached to the ocean also served the same function (see Kandel 1988:76–77).

The two boundary markers, Cape Bojador (for the torrid zone) and the Straits of Gibraltar (or the Pillars of Hercules), had been deployed to represent being outside of God's redemptive grace and *outside* the behavioral norms of the feudal order itself. Thus, in Dante's great poem Odysseus and his crew are punished with shipwreck for having transgressed the *nec plus ultra* habitable/uninhabitable sign of the Pillars of Hercules: and for sailing out into the open ocean, spurred on by a vain curiosity. That curiosity drew them away from the only true other-worldly goal of eternal salvation and spiritual redemption, in reckless disregard of the limits of the Scholastics' omnipotent God's "only partial providence for mankind" (Blumenberg 1983:239). As a providence, therefore, it was limited to the habitable temperate zone and the "Eastern" Hemisphere of an earth whose center, both physical and symbolic, was Jerusalem, and whose outside limits were the limits of the feudal order and its symbolic representational system itself.

The theoretical physicist David Bohm (1987) has pointed out that each human order bases itself on a specific notion of order. The ancient Greeks, for example, held that one progressed from the earth at the lowest point of the structure to higher and higher levels of perfection. Similarly, the feudal order had mapped its own hierarchy of spiritual degrees of perfection onto the physical universe. The criterion of perfection in this case arose from an ontological division between the clergy as the bearers of the new "life" of the spirit, effected through baptism, and lay men and women as the bearers of the post-Adamic legacy of Original Sin, who therefore perpetuated the "fallen" and "degraded" life of "natural man." Such a life was therefore constantly in need of the "redemptive process" presided over by the category of the clergy, who were also the orthodox guardians of a mainstream order of knowledge of which theology (like economics in ours today) was the master discipline and "queen of the sciences."

At the lay level of the order, the status-organizing principle of a represented difference of ontological caste substance between *noble and nonnoble* (like that between *clergy and laity*) was encoded in an a prioristic classificatory schema. This schema gave expression to the physico-spiritual notion of order consisting of the "stereotyped" images of the torrid zone (as an area of the earth in which life was impossible because of the excessive heat) and the Western Hemisphere (as an area in which not only had St. Augustine said that the waters of the Flood had been gathered up, but also in which, in the terms of Christian-Aristotelian physics, the more spiritually degraded and heavier element of earth, *had* to be submerged in its *natural place* under the element of the lighter element of water). It was only by the intervention of God, that the earth of the temperate zone and Eastern Hemisphere, whose center was Jerusalem, was itself held up by an Aristotelian "unnatural" and Christian "miraculous" motion, as the widespread current belief had it, above its "natural place" below the water (Thorndike 1934:166). In this way, it was made into that part of a nonhomogeneous earth that *alone* was providentially habitable for mankind.

At the end of his first letter back to Spain after his landfall, Columbus wrote that his voyage had been one of those "things which appear impossible," yet over which "the Eternal God, our Lord can give victory to all those who walk in his way." "For although," he then concluded, "men have talked or written of these lands, all was conjecture, without getting a look at this but amounted only to this, *that those who heard it for the most part listened and judged it more of a fable than there was anything in it, however small*" (see Morrison 1957:14–15).

In his play, Lope de Vega laid great emphasis on the mockery and derision that Columbus received from all, especially from the king and his experts at the court of Portugal. But it is the Portuguese court chronicler Barros, whose account of Columbus's dismissal by the Portuguese enables us to see the challenge that Columbus's religious apocalyptic millenarianism would enable him to make to the premise of a nonhomogeneous and arbitrarily divided habitable/uninhabitable earth—and therefore to the rules of representation to which this premise gave rise.

As Barros wrote, reporting on Columbus's countertrain of reasoning:

> He came to the conclusion that it was possible to sail across the western Ocean to the island of Cipangu and other unknown lands. For since the time of Prince Henry, when the Azores were discovered, it was held that there must be other islands and lands to the west, for Nature could not have set things on earth so out of proportion that there should be more water than land, which was intended for life and the creation of souls.
>
> [A]nd all . . . found that Cristovao Colom's words were empty, for they were based on fantasy, or on such things as Marco Polo's island of Cipangu. (Cited in Landstrom 1967:31)

Columbus's readings of Marco Polo's famous account of the East had helped convince him that Asia was only a short distance away from Spain sailing west, and that the voyage was therefore feasible. (Thus, the Caribbean would always be for him the *Indias Occidentales,* the West Indies, and the island of Japan just around the corner from one or another of the islands.) However, the principal "fantasy" with which he would challenge the categorial models of feudal-Christian geographic accounts came from two other driving forces. One was his messianic apocalyptic fervor. The other, allied to the first, was his psychosocial motivation as a lowly born cartographer and occasional merchant to better his social status in the relatively more democratizing order of the postfeudal and monarchical state.

The mode of *virtù* based on warlike prowess had served as the status-organizing criterion that had enabled the nobility of the feudal to legitimate its socially exclusive and hegemonic role.[12] However, the rise of the monarchical state had opened up new avenues of social prestige based on a more inclusive mode of *virtù*. One of these avenues was termed, in the contracts handed out by the sovereigns, "discover-and-gain deeds" (that is, deeds and enterprises by which the sovereigns could commission an aspiring applicant to find and expropriate, in the name of the state, any territories occupied by non-Christians that could be militarily con-

quered). Such discover-and-gain deeds had become a new route, therefore, to an acquired mode of meritocratic noble status, as well as a route to the enrichment needed to support this status.

The power of the first—the apocalyptic millenarian drive—was revealed in the letters-cum-reports that Columbus wrote to the sovereigns over a period of several years in order to regain some of the privileges that had, in the wake of his decline from favor, been taken away or altogether not accorded him. These letters reveal that the concept of a *"discovery"* was specific to the new statal order in the context of a crusading Christianity: specific privileges were granted to individuals of the state *if* they could prove that they were the first of its vassals to have landed on a portion of non-Christian territory *and expropriated* it. The claim to have "discovered" it was thus a form of land-grant within the *culture-specific* judicial terms of the Spanish monarchy. In addition, the letters make it clear that in Columbus's view, it had been his own intellectual "discovery" of the fact that "God could *indeed* have placed land there in the West" (one verified by his empirical arrival at this land), that had led the papacy to, in effect, adjudicate to Spain sovereignty over the lands and peoples of the New World. Also at that time the papacy saw itself, within its mode of "subjective understanding" then, as legitimated to divide up the territories of the non-Christian parts of the globe, according to *which* the Christian state had first *arrived at* a part of the world hitherto unknown to Europeans and had therefore "discovered" it. Indeed, the pope had referred to Columbus as his "dilectus filius Christophorus Colon" (that is, our beloved son Christopher Columbus) and as the one who had "discovered" the lands whose jurisdiction and territorial ownership he was awarding to Spain (Varela 1982:269).[13]

But before being "discovered," their existence had to be made conceptualizable, for Latin-Christian Europe and its mode of subjective understanding then. From these letters it is clear that, as was also the case in Lope de Vega's (1614) later dramatic portrayal of him, Columbus, too, saw the greatness of his 1492 feat as lying as equally in the challenge that he had made to the "stereotyped images" of the mainstream geography of his time (inspired to do so by divine revelation and Providence) as in the event of the empirical voyage itself. As he insisted again and again in these letters, during the long years that he had tried to put forward his proposal, all who had heard it, whether learned experts or practical men of the sea, had deemed it a *burla* (a joke) that there could be land to the west on the way to the Indies, "seeing that God had not apportioned any land to be there" *(que Dios nunca habia dado ali tierra),* and that therefore such a voyage was "foolish and impossible" *(era burla y imposible).* He had to undertake his voyage, for the most part, therefore "against the opinion of all the world," with only divine inspiration enabling him to stand firm in his contrary truth.

Seeing that the central point he would have to challenge was the premise of the *habitable/uninhabitable* line, and the nonexistence of lands above their ostensible "natural place" when they were not held up above the water by the unnatural motion of God's miraculous and only partly bestowed grace, it was to be precisely

the counterthrust of his religious and apocalyptic fantasy, or countercosmogony, that would enable him to call in question the arbitrary model of divine creation that had sustained the feudal image of a nonhomogeneous earth.

The central thrust of Columbus's challenge was based on his projection of the religious goal of the restoration of Jerusalem to Christianity. It was this goal, he wrote the sovereigns, that had empowered him, although a mere layman and only self-taught, not only to see himself as divinely chosen to sail to the Indies—in order to accelerate the capture of Jerusalem in time for the prophesied end of the world, the Second Coming of Christ, together with the immediate realization of the city of God, with one sheepfold and one flock, on earth—but also to challenge all established "truths" that stood in the way of the new "truths" needed to carry out this mission. As a result, not only had not one of the sciences that he had studied helped him with his voyage, but because his countertruth was one based on divine inspiration and revelation, the accusations hurled against him—that is, that of being unlearned in letters *(non doto en letras),* of being a lay seaman and profane man of the world—as well as the mockery and derision that had been hurled at him during the long years before his voyage, had all been of no account.

All such charges could be answered by the fact that the Holy Spirit had filled his mind with "secret things hidden from the learned." Thus, in carrying out his enterprise of the Indies, neither reason, nor mathematics, nor maps helped him, only divine guidance and the knowledge that because the end of the world was at hand, the preaching of the gospel in many lands in order to ensure the conversion of all idolaters in time for the Second Coming, was prophecy that *had* to be fulfilled: he was clearly the one appointed by God for the task at hand (Varela 1982; Watts 1985).

Within the counterlogic of his apocalyptic millenarian belief in the imminent Second Coming of Christ, and therefore of *all* the peoples of the world having to be converted to the Christian faith, Columbus put forward the hypothesis of an earth that had been intended for "life and the creation of souls." I propose that this was a central part of the wider phenomenon that Frederick Hallyn (1990) has defined as that of the generalized poetics of the *propter nos.* It was the means by which the intellectual revolution of humanism was effected and our modes of human being thereby eventually degodded or secularized.

This poetics was to call in question the mainstream order of knowledge of Scholasticism, and with it, the arbitrary model of divine creation in whose theocentric system of inference the earth's geography had been logically represented as being divided between *habitable* and *uninhabitable* realms. These realms—one within God's arbitrarily bestowed redemptive grace, the other outside it—were necessarily nonhomogeneous. At the same time, the universe of the pre-Copernican astronomers had, within the same classificatory schema, been also divided between the *spiritually redeemed* supralunar celestial realm of the moving heavens and the post-Adamic *"fallen"* terrestrial realm of the nonmoving earth (Hallyn 1990). Consequently, the representation, before Copernicus, of the unchallengeable a priori

of a nonmoving earth was also as *predetermined* by the same overall totemic schema based on a physico-spiritual notion of order that functioned to legitimate the status-organizing principle of *caste* about which the feudal order autoorganized its structuring hierarchies. In the same way, therefore, the empirical reality both of the torrid zone and of the Western Hemisphere had been equally subordinated to their roles as interchangeable classificatory labels and "stereotypical images" of the boundary marker between the habitable and the uninhabitable. Consequently, in the case of the latter, this role had *predetermined* that its lands should be represented as necessarily submerged in its "natural place" as the heavier element of earth, *under* the lighter (and by implication, more spiritually redeemed), element of water. And analogically, the realm of "fallen" natural man, that is, the layman, was necessarily represented as also being ontologically inferior to the increasing spiritual perfection of the celestial realms. Therefore, lay scholars were considered innately, cognitively incapable, except they adhered to the theological paradigms of Scholasticism.

Hans Blumenberg (1983:176–79) has shown that the binary schema based on the opposition *habitable/uninhabitable* (as exemplified in the figure of Dante's shipwrecked Odysseus, "justly" punished for his breaching of the *nec plus ultra* sign of the Pillars of Hercules), as well as on the opposition between the *terrestrial* and the *celestial*, was generated from the conception of God specific to late Scholasticism. This conception, that of an Aristotelianized Unmoved Mover, and totally omnipotent God who had created the universe for the sake of His own glory rather than specifically for mankind's sake, had given rise to a *theocentric* view of the relation between God and man. This relation had become the central premise of the "mode of subjective understanding" of the Scholastic order of knowledge.

In this view of the divine/human relation, the former's total omnipotence was contrasted with the total helplessness and cognitive incapacity of "natural man" as the fallen heir of Adam's sin. Consequently, the view that such a God, being able to intervene arbitrarily in the everyday functioning of nature, could thereby alter the rules that governed its accustomed course *(cursus solitus naturae)* anytime He chose to do so, had led to two consequences. One of these had been the production of an astronomy and geography whose rules of representation and categorial models had to "verify" the a prioristic premise of a founding ontological divide between the divine/celestial realms and the human/terrestrial (at the level of astronomy), and between the *habitable-within-God's arbitrary grace*, and the *uninhabitable outside it* (at the level of the earth's geography). The second consequence had been that of a generalized "epistemological resignation" with respect to the cognitive capacity of "fallen man," being able to come *to know the rules* that governed the everyday processes of nature. These rules, because they belonged to the realm of God's absolute power *(potentia absoluta)*, could not be known by a humankind unable to depend upon the regularity of the rules governing nature in order to obtain access to their organizing or anagogic principles (Hallyn 1990:21ff.).

However, it was to be precisely this theocentric and arbitrary mode of divine creation central to the Scholastic order of knowledge that was to be challenged by the intellectual revolution of humanism, specifically, by its generalized *poetics* of the *propter nos*—that is, by the counterpremise to Scholasticism's theocentric view (Hallyn 1990:56–57). This premise was that the Creation had indeed been made by God *on behalf of* and for *the sake of* humankind *(propter nos homines)*. Since by the latter's redefining of the relation between God and man on more reciprocally egalitarian terms, the way had been opened for Copernicus, for example, to move beyond the epistemologically resigned and purely technical calculations of Ptolemaic-Christian astronomy, in order to put forward a new "anagogical thrust" (Hallyn 1990:54). The intellectual thrust, that is, which, by making possible human inquiry into *the organizing principles* behind the Creation, would make possible the eventual development of a science of astronomy.

Hallyn here quotes the counterpremise of a world created *for us* that is central to Copernicus's assertion that, because of his divinely created origin, man could come to know a creation whose processes of functioning were rule governed, because created "for our sake" and bound *by this end*. As Hallyn cites Copernicus:

> For a long time, then, I reflected on this confusion in the astronomical traditions concerning the derivation of the notions of the universe's spheres. I began to be annoyed that the movements of the world machine, created for our sake *(propter nos)* by the best and most systematic artisan of all, were not understood with greater clarity by the philosophers, who otherwise examined so precisely the most insignificant trifles of this world. (Quoted in Hallyn 1990:54)

Yet this counterpoetics of the *propter nos* was also common to the range of humanist thinkers, among them writers such as Ficino and Lorenzo Valla. It was, in effect, the generalization of this poetics that was to make possible the positing of a *rule-governed model of divine creation*, in which the end or cause of the Creation had necessarily bound the Divine Creator with respect to *what* the organizing principles of his ostensibly, *potentia absoluta* (absolute power), would necessarily *have to be*. In this context, Columbus's fervent apocalyptic millenarian belief in Christ's imminent return to realize his kingdom and to do so on an *earth* that had been divinely predestined for this eventual and yet imminent end, therefore itself formed part of the generalized poetics of the *propter nos* or countersystem of symbolic representation. On the basis of such representation, the feudal order of Latin Christian Europe and its supernaturally guaranteed model of "subjective understanding" would be transformed into that of the secularizing and rapidly expanding modern European state, and its new and post-theological mode of "subjective understanding."

In the context of this revolution in the conception of the relation between God and man, and therefore in the mode of representing being, the apocalyptic and

messianic projection of the Second Coming of the reign of Christ on earth, of one sheepfold and one flock, provided Columbus with an eschatological schema in whose countersystem of inference all the descendants of Shem, Ham, Japhet, would now be converted, given that all religions were to give way to one. For such an earth, therefore, there could be no longer *habitable* and *inhabitable, inside* the sheepfold or *out*. All was now one sheepfold, and if not, was intended to be *made* so. Above all, the seas that would make this possible *all* had to be navigable *"Mare."* On the margin of one of his books Columbus jotted *"Totum navigabile"*; that is, all seas are navigable (cited in Granzotto 1986:41).

The Incomplete "True Victory" of 1492 and the Nonhomogeneous Human: Toward a New Poetics of the *Propter Nos*

Columbus's apocalyptic conviction of a providential destiny for the spread of Christendom to be effected through the vessel of the earthly state and *its* quest for territorial expansion would therefore impel him to call in question the "categorial models" and "mobile classificatory labels" of the "normal" paradigms of the geography of his time. However, it would be the same dynamic that would also impel him—once he arrived in an *antipodes* where for his learned antagonists *there should have been no land*—to see the non-Christian peoples of his newly found world as "idolaters," *within* the terms of the emergent state's equally juridico-theological categorial models. He therefore saw their lands and original sovereignty as legitimately expropriable (that is, gainable), and they themselves as even enslavable, within the overall logic of the mode of "subjective understanding" that was now to be instituting of the state, as that which he had challenged had been of the feudal order.

Both Columbus and his fellow-Spaniards therefore behaved toward the Tainos or Arawak peoples in ways prescribed by the term *idolator;* and therefore, as to a group who were legitimately put at the service of securing the well-being of the particularistic *nos* of Christendom. At the same time, this *nos* was represented *as if* it were the *propter nos* of the human species itself, and was so believed to be within the logic of the apocalyptic dream of "one sheepfold, one flock, one shepherd." In point of fact, the term *idolator* was as meaningless *outside* the mode of subjective understanding of Judaeo-Christianity in its statal variant as had been the term *Zanj* of medieval Islamic geography outside that of medieval Islam. Instead, both were classic cases of the deployment of mobile classificatory labels whose "truth" depended on their oppositional meaningfulness within their respective classificatory schemas. I propose here that such schemas are normally unchallengeable because they enable human orders both to enact the role allocations of their social structures (including the division of labor) and to legitimate them as they do so, at the same time as they induce the specific modes of *generalized altruism* on whose basis they are integrated as dynamic living systems of a unique level of existence—that

is, as a hybridly *bios* and *logos,* organic and "languaging" level, the behaviors of whose subjects are regulated by the narratively instituted "programs" that are the conditions both of *humanness,* the mode of the *nos,* and therefore of the cognitive phenomenon defining of the human, in other words, the mind.

Columbus would therefore "see" the New World peoples in the way his earlier learned antagonists had "seen" the "uninhabitable" torrid zones and the submerged-under-water Western Hemisphere. Specifically, he would see them within the triadic formal model of the Judaeo-Christian perception of non-Christians. That is, he would see them as one category of a human population divided up into Christians (who had heard and accepted the new word of the gospel), infidels like the Muslims and Jews, who, although monotheists, had refused the Word after having been preached the Word (and who were therefore *inimici Christi*) enemies of Christ, and *idolators,* those pagan polytheistic peoples who had either ignored or had not as yet been preached the Word.[14] Columbus therefore fitted the Tainos or Arawak peoples whom he confronted on October 12, 1492, into the third categorial model, and under the "mobile classificatory label" *Idolator.*

Here, however, the religious classificatory schema would have interacted with the emerging juridical classificatory schema of the modern state, enabling Columbus in addition to categorize the peoples he encountered in terms of the pattern laid down in the "discover-and-gain" clause of his commissions. Those terms had come to be commonly used in the commissions handed out over several centuries by European sovereigns and other potentates (Washburn 1962). Because they were linked to the psychosocial motivation and commercial imperative that had also impelled his voyage, those terms would powerfully dictate his behaviors toward the newly encountered peoples.

The model for this "discover-and-gain" pattern had been laid down over several centuries by earlier contracts drawn up during Western Europe's mapping and occupying of the eastern Atlantic (that is, the Canary Islands, the Madeira Group, the Azores) (Fernández-Armesto 1987:14–31). In this pattern, it had become customary for the sovereigns of European states to hand out commissions to aspiring discoverers and gainers on the basis of specific contractual terms. In all cases, the reward to the licensee, in exchange for his deed of expanding the wealth and power of the licensing state, was that of a vice-regal administrative position in the governance of the expropriated territory, as well as a percentage of the tax on trade goods and all other forms of tribute. Also, as would be the case for the nonnobly born in a social structure still instituted about the status-organizing principle of noble blood and birth, and therefore on the warrior deed mode of prowess or *virtù* that was the correlate of this principle (see Bauman 1987), the new possibility of statally commissioned deeds of discovering and gaining now offered the opportunity of a new type of reward—that of elevation to an acquired (rather than purely hereditary and ascriptive) noble status, and to the prestige of its aristocratic prerogatives.

This latter clause on which Columbus insisted was to be one of the two central motivations that drove his behaviors both before and after, as in Adam Smith's (1869) fine phrase, the "delusion" that nature imposes upon us by impelling us to seek to realize status within the terms of the "economy of greatness" of our specific orders, thereby inducing us to display those collective behaviors needed by our respective orders, to secure *their* overall good.

In this context, Lyotard's concept of the dually descriptive and behavior-prescriptive role of terms, if extended to Moraes-Farias's concept of classificatory labels and "stereotyped images," enables us to see how the specific "knowledge of categories" mode of cognition that led Columbus to see the Tainos or Arawak peoples as idolators, and therefore, in the still hybridly religio-juridical terms of the classificatory schema of the emergent state, as well as of the new mercantile order based on the ongoing commercial revolution of his times, would enable him to see and to behave, overall, toward the peoples of these small stateless societies, *only in terms* of securing the good of himself, the state, and of Christendom.

In other words, Columbus would behave prescriptively within the limits of a *propter nos* whose primary reference was that of securing the well-being of himself and his fellow Christians. At the same time, as the represented universality of his Christian apocalyptic millenarianism, as well as of the new *statal,* yet still Judaeo-Christian concept of *Man,* also enabled him to perceive the well-being of himself and of his fellow Judaeo-Christian statal subjects, *as if* this well-being were isomorphic with that of mankind, including the Tainos/Arawaks (who would pay the price of extinction for this belief), in general.

Here Lieberman's concept of the evolution of our moral behavior can be linked also to the evolution of our models of interaltruistic behaviors—to, in effect, the limits of *our propter nos,* and therefore of the *us* for whose sake, and in whose name we act. Whereas the behaviors of all organic species, including those altruistic or selfless behaviors essential to their respective modes of aggregation of conspecific sociality are *genetically* regulated, our human behaviors are *dually* regulated, that is, both *genetically and verbally.* At one level, our own animal type, or genetically programmed mode of altruism and therefore, of conspecificity, is activated, like that of all organic species, *only in response* to the imperative of helping the narrow circle of those who can transmit similar copies of our genes to future generations.

However, at the second level, the level, in effect, of the symbolic representational systems of our cultural programs, we behave in rule-governed response to the more "generalized modes of altruism" that are encoded and induced by these systems, and, therefore, in response to the moral-ethical criteria that they put into play. At this second level, therefore, the imperative to which we respond is that of helping those with whom we are languagingly co-identified; those with whom we are made symbolically conspecific by our orders of discourse, and their systems of symbolic representation, both of which I shall further propose here, are generated from the templates of the origin narratives that are universally common, to all human cultures, including our contemporary own (Isaacs 1983:509–43). Given

that, as I shall further propose, humans as a third level of hybridly organic and *languaging* life and therefore as a species, can be made conspecific with others of the group to which we belong *only* through these founding narratives. In effect, we are co-identified only with those with whom our origin narratives and their systems of symbolic representations, or cultural programs, have socialized us to be symbolic conspecifics of, and therefore to display altruistic behaviors toward those who constitute the *nos* on whose behalf we collectively act.

The sociologist D. T. Campbell (1982) also gives a valuable insight into the roles of these founding origin narratives and their systems of representations in the "conditioning and inducing" of our culture-specific modes of "generalized altruism." He points out that humans, although they live in complex large-scale societies like those of the social insects, have not, as primates, been evolutionarily selected to be genetically aggregated on a large-scale basis. Nor are the role-allocating mechanisms specific to our human orders (which decide which groups go to the top of the social structure and which to the bottom), nor those inducing of cooperation, genetically, as they are in the case of organic species, *predetermined.*

Instead, it is our primary and genetically determined mode of primate competitiveness and its correlated "animal-type" mode of instinctual and narrowly exclusive modes of kinship, that *must* be overridden by the processes of conditioning effected by each order's culture-specific system of symbolic representation—as the mechanisms that can alone induce the artificial modes of affective altruism or empathy and, therefore, the symbolically induced modes of conspecificity, as the *nos* on which our complex human orders can alone be based.

Consequently, as Campbell (1982; see also 1972:21–38) further argues, the role of our religious traditions is to "condition" the subjects of their order, so as to inculcate in them tendencies that are in direct opposition to the temptations representing for the most part the directly "oppositional tendencies" produced by our instinctual animal-type mode of altruism. Such, indeed, is the role of *all* our modes of discourse and symbolic representation systems, religious and nonreligious, with the exception of the natural sciences that arose precisely on the basis of their rupture from this role.

Because the truths or modes of subjective understanding of each such order necessarily serve to induce both the mode of interaltruistic symbolic conspecificity and of the *propter nos* on which each human order is based, and are a function, therefore of the socialization of each order's subject, as well of the regulation of their modes of perception and correlated behaviors, all such "truths," once put into place, must necessarily be not only "impervious to philosophical attack" but impervious also to empirical counterevidence. Given that each such mode of "subjective understanding" and of the "truth of solidarity" (Rorty 1985:15), the truth of what it is good for us to believe is itself only a proximate mechanism of what it is good for each form of life and its mode of symbolic conspecificity (or speciation), and generalized altruism, to *have* its subjects believe as the condition of *its* own stable institution and replication as such a specific form of life, or, auto-

poetic living system (Francisco Varela 1979). This can occur even in those cases where these modes of "subjective understanding" and the limits of the modes of altruism, or of the *propter nos* that they impose, have become dangerous and dysfunctional for the individual subjects of their orders.

This was to be true not only of Columbus and the Spaniards, but of the peoples whom they confronted. And it is this historical fact, one conceived in the terms of a new cultural history proposed earlier, that can enable us to interpret the Janus-face paradox of 1492 from a transcultural and therefore human point of view.

What becomes clear from Lieberman's and Campbell's theses is that although for each human ethnocultural group our narratively inscribed and symbolically induced mode of altruism is normally activated or triggered in response to the imperative of helping *only* those who have been socialized within the same cosmogonic categories as ourselves, and who therefore are a part of the same "we," we also normally experience *no such altruism toward, or genuine co-identification with,* those whom our founding origin narratives have defined as the oppositionally meaningful markers of otherness to the "us." As for Columbus, the mobile classificatory label *idolator* was to the *propter nos* of Christendom. As such, the Arawak-Caribbean peoples were legitimately for him *a function* of Christendom and the Spanish states's realization—whether as slaves, as gold-tribute givers, or as *encomienda* serfs, or even as converts who could bear witness to the power of the state, to the truth of the faith, and to their respective "economies of greatness."

Consequently, what Cerio calls the moral and philosophical foundations on which Spain would integrate the indigenous peoples of the continent into its society would be effected only on the basis of the indigenous people's dually physical and metaphysical group subordination—one in which their lives would be, from henceforth, merely a function of the realization of the *propter nos* of the post-Columbus settlers.

But why were they so integratable? Once again, the issue here has to do with the limits of a specific mode of symbolic conspecificity, the limits therefore of a specific system of symbolic representation and mode of subjective understanding. From as early as the time of Western Europe's first expansion into the eastern Atlantic and its conquest of the Neolithic peoples of the Canary Islands, the royal secretary at the court of Spain, Hernán de Pulgar, had noted that the indigenous peoples had fought with such tenacity and courage as well as military skill that they would have been invincible had it not been for one factor—that of the fierce intergroup rivalries between them (Fernández-Armesto 1987:1107–8). These rivalries had enabled the Spaniards to use one faction as their allies in order to defeat the others, one by one. As Richard Rodriguez (1991:47–56) recently points out, although Mexico's fierce anti-Spanish nationalism led it to refuse to raise a public monument to Hernán Cortez, this nationalism also led it to erase from its historical memory any suggestion of the documented fact of the "complicity of the other Indian tribes in overthrowing the Aztec Empire."

Yet, seen from a transcultural perspective, it was the symbolic representational system instituting of the tightly knit models of lineage-clannic identity (models of identity grounded in their cosmogonic schemas and origin narratives) that was at the root of these disastrous group rivalries. From here the paradox was that this system, which, within the terms of their own autocentric cosmogonic schemas, had provided the building blocks of the creative flowering of the large empires such as those of the Aztecs and the Incas, had also set unbridgeable limits to the degrees of interaltruistic behaviors that would have enabled the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and the Americas to unify against the invaders—that is, by positing the "good" or *propter nos* of *all* the indigenous peoples (the *indios* in the Spanish terminology), as the primary focus of their loyalty, rather than the "good" of their lineage-clannic unit.

Here a parallel point must be made with respect to the third population group: the peoples of Africa and their equally millennial and traditional lineage-clannic models of identity and modes of the *propter nos*. If Afrocentric scholars, like Mexican nationalists, have attempted to erase the fact that some of the peoples of Africa were active participants with the Europeans in effecting the slave trade and dispatching slaves to the New World, their antagonists, Positivist historians, have taunted them with trying to erase all memory of the fact that, in their words, "Africans sold Africans."[15] There were, of course, no "Africans" then. Indeed, it is only within the "mode of subjective understanding" of liberal humanism that "Africans" could have existed. Rather, here, too, the traditional lineage-clannic model of identity, and what the historian Joseph Miller (1976) calls the "particularistic worldview," or in our terms, mode of subjective understanding, to which this model gave rise, served to make it legitimate for one co-identified group to sell and enslave, normally, the members of those who were *outside* the affective limits of their *propter nos*.

Even more, so centrally pervasive was the idiom of lineage-identity that the first slaves sold to the Europeans were, as Miller (1976:n.77) points out, all taken from the specific social category that was defined as legitimately enslaved—that is, those who were termed, within the logic of the Congolese symbolic-representational system, *lineageless men and women*. These were men and women who, because they had fallen out of the protection of their own lineages (in which metaphysically normal being was *alone* possible), had come to be represented—as had been the Zanj for medieval Islam, and as the category of the *Negro and Negra* would come to be perceived by the Europeans within their culture-specific representational system as the only legitimately enslavable category—outside the limits therefore of the real "we."

Consequently, if the numerous peoples of the West African states and acephalous societies were no more able to see and experience each other as conspecifics and interaltruistically kin-related "Africans," given the system of symbolic representation that co-identified them on the basis of their lineage-clannic groupings, as the

primary focus of their loyalty, and if, in addition, the indigenous peoples were no more able to see each other as conspecific and interaltruistically related "Indians" within the logic of *their* equally lineage-clannic system of representation and its related mode of subjective understanding, Columbus and the run of Spanish settlers were to be no more able, within the logic of *their* monotheistic statal model of identity and its system of symbolic representation and mode of subjective understanding, to see and behave toward the indigenous peoples (even after the latter's conversion to Christianity) as subjects of the Spanish Crown and fellow Christians who shared equally in the *propter nos* of either the state or of Christendom.

If at first the stereotyped image of "idolator" that had regulated Columbus's own behaviors toward the indigenous people had, in the beginning, been the obstacle to a more inclusive *propter nos*, it was soon to be replaced with a new "stereotyped image" based on the Aristotelian concept of *natural slaves*. This concept was generated from a new and powerful symbolic construct that would come to take the place, in the now-secularizing Judaeo-Christian cultural system, that religion and the sanction of the supernatural had earlier taken for the role-allocating structures of the feudal-Christian order, one that had been based on the principles of *caste*.

The new symbolic construct was that of "race." Its essentially Christian-heretical positing of the *nonhomogeneity of the human species* was to provide the basis for new metaphysical notions of order. Those notions provided the foundations of the post-1492 polities of the Caribbean and the Americas, which, if in a new variant, continue to be legitimated by the nineteenth-century colonial systems of Western Europe, as well as the continuing hierarchies of our present global order. Such legitimation takes place within the mode of subjective understanding generated from a classificatory schema and its categorial models, which, mapped onto the range of human hereditary variations and their cultures, would come to parallel those mapped onto the torrid zone and the Western Hemisphere *before* the voyages of the Portuguese, and that of Columbus.

Historian Anthony Pagden (1982) explains why this symbolic construct would, in Cerio's terms, lay the "moral and philosophical foundations" on whose "terms of exchange" the sociosymbolic contract of the post-1492 polities of the Caribbean were originally laid down. He points out that as the Spanish state began to rationalize the institutions of its new empire, it was no longer content to remain dependent on a system of legitimation based on terms that still conceded temporal power to the papacy. A series of juntas were therefore called from 1512 onward, comprising both royal jurists and theologians. These juntas would make use of Aristotle's *Poetics* in order to displace the theological mode of legitimation that had granted sovereignty to Spain on the condition that it carry out the work of evangelizing the peoples of the New World and of converting them to Christianity.

In the place of the category of the *idolaters*, the juntas adapted the category of *natural slaves* from Aristotle, in order to represent the indigenous peoples as ones who were *by nature different from the Spaniards*. This difference was one expressed in degrees of *rationality*, with the symbolic-cultural distance between the two groups

being seen as an *innately* determined difference. This difference, they then argued, made it clear that the "Indios" had been as intended by natural law to be "natural slaves," as the Spaniards had been also intended to be natural masters. Once the *right* of Spanish sovereignty had been located *in "the nature of the people being conquered"* (Pagden 1982:39), a "knowledge-of-categories" system of discourse would set out to represent *all* the cultural differences that had been geopolitically and socioenvironmentally determined, as part of a "stereotyped image" of innate differences predetermined by Natural Law. This was the image put in play in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (I.ii), where Miranda accuses Caliban of belonging to a "'Vile race' who 'good natures' could not abide to be with." It is at this conjuncture that the triadic model of what has been called the racial caste hierarchy of Latin America based on the ideal of *mestisaje* (Rodriguez 1991:24) was first laid down.

Natural slaves are not like civil slaves, who can be bought and sold, but are legally free whatever the de facto breaches of the law. Although attached to the Spanish settlers as *encomienda* serfs, the *Indios* and *Indias*, unlike the *negros* and *negras*, had a moral and philosophical claim on their *natural masters*, however tenuously. Even more, in the formulations of the theologian Vitoria that followed soon after, and that set out to interpret the natural slave formula within a more Christian framework, a reconceptualization took place. The *Indios*, Vitoria argued, while potentially as rational as the Spaniards, nevertheless could enjoy the use of their reason only *potentially*, as in the case of children. As "nature's children" to the Spaniards' "nature's adults," the new system of symbolic representation ran, they were a people who, while free vassals of the Crown, had to be kept under the wardship or tutelage of the Spaniards, just as children were kept under that of their parents (Pagden 1982:104–6).

For this legitimation to be congruent, the indigenous peoples could therefore no longer be made into a totally disposable slave labor force. And since the land-labor ratio in which the former was in such excess supply called for a totally disposable slave labor force, the transported slaves of African descent, who, in the new statally determined triadic model were defined as *civil slaves* and therefore as legal merchandise, would now function as the *only* legitimately enslavable group of the three.

The construct of a *by nature/Natural Law* difference was also used in the case of *negros* and *negras*, if in tandem with a biblical system of representation. On the basis of their lineal descent, they, too, were represented as legitimate civil slaves. As the descendants of the biblical Ham and the inheritors of his curse, it was clear that they were also "disobedient by nature" and intended by Natural Law to be controlled by their slave masters, the Spaniards. This "stereotyped" representation—which detached them from their "moorings in reality" and allowed them to be perceived and treated as legitimately enslavable—not only constituted their *actual* enslavement, but also created the empirical conditions in which the moral and philosophical foundations of the post-1492 polities would be laid down.

The central point in this context, however, is that the triadic model between

free men and women, "nature's children," and civil slaves, was now legitimated on an essentially postreligious premise, that of the *nonhomogeneity of the human species*. That premise is still encoded in the white/nonwhite, and the European/non-European line, just as the premise of the nonhomogeneous earth and universe had been encoded in the habitable/uninhabitable and celestial/terrestrial lines. Although the Portuguese and Columbus's voyages, as well as Copernicus's *De Revolutionibus*, had initiated the deconstruction of those lines, their empty signifying slots were to be reoccupied from thereon by two variant population groups within the context of a nonhomogeneous image of the human, on whose basis Western Europe was to secularize all human existence in the terms of what Foucault calls its "figure of Man."

Jacob Pandian (1985:3) points out that this secularization was instituted, among other discourses, by that of anthropology. This discourse emerged in the sixteenth century as a concomitant of Western Europe's expansion into the Americas, as well as into areas of Africa and Asia, and served to reconceptualize the original "True Self" of the Judaeo-Christian model of being (for which all non-Christians were necessarily the Non–True Self) in its first, partly secular form. This form was that of the true Rational Self of "Man," who was now embodied in the subject of the expanding state, the empirical referents of whose represented Human Other were the ostensibly "savage" and irrational peoples of the Americas. Although the latter were represented as the Other to Man conceived of as the Rational Self, the "disobedient-by-nature" category of the *civil slave* (that is, the *negros* and the *negras*) were represented as the Other to both; and they were pictured as ambiguous on the chain of being of the new notion of order based on degrees of rationality (in place of the earlier degrees of spirituality) between the status of the human, as the special creation of God, and that of the totally nonrational animal species. As with Columbus's behaviors that were prescribed by the otherness of the *idolator*, so the behaviors of the Spanish settlers—who were represented in the new discourse as *gentes humaniores*, as the *more human* people to the *less human* of the indigenous peoples represented as a "native" and secondary mode of humanity—were designed both to maintain the displacement and subjugation of the indigenous peoples and to make the now racially (that is, innately otherized "civil slave") category into a mere tool and instrument for the social realization of the *propter nos* of all peoples of Spanish descent, whether *peninsulares* or *criollos*. It was within the structure of this social hierarchy that the *racial* caste hierarchy of Latin America would now emerge. In this hierarchy, the differing degrees of mixtures were designated as *more human* the more they bred in the European and bred out *Indio* and *Negro*, while the latter category came to serve as the *nec plus ultra* sign of rational human being, as the Cape Bojador or Pillars of Hercules that had marked the outermost levels of God's redemptive grace and only partial providence for mankind.

The millenarian dream of Columbus's "one sheepfold and one flock" had been based on the limits of a *propter nos* that had nonconsciously represented its own culture-specific Judaeo-Christian and European statal *nos, as if* it were the *nos* of humankind in general. Others could therefore only be the lack of this *nos*, infidels or idolators. As this True Self was secularized into the first secular model of being "Man," these others were to be transformed into its lack, that is, into *natives* and, most absolutely in the nineteenth century, into the nonwhite *native* and its extreme form of Otherness, *the nigger*.

This term, which reduces the human to pure object, was to become central in the wake of the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century. As Jacob Pandian (1985) further points out, the True Self of the original Judaeo-Christian model of being was (in the wake of the intellectual revolution of liberal humanism) resemanticized in terms of the new narrative of evolution (as well as, in our terms, of the new bioevolutionary notion of order that was now mapped onto human hereditary variations in place of those of the physical universe of Christian-feudal geography and astronomy). In this shift, all peoples of African descent (as well as Africa itself, its culture, way of life, and so on) were now elaborated by the discourse of nineteenth-century anthropology, as well as by a related complex of discourses, into the "stereotyped image" and ostensibly empirical referent of a represented nonevolved, and therefore, genetically inferior, human Other. These discourses were all to function according to the same rules of representation as those that Moraes-Farias has shown to be at work in the contemporary Western geographic accounts of the peoples and lands of black Africa, that were given by the geographers of medieval Islam (see Mudimbe 1988).

So rigorous are these rules—since they are, as Wittgenstein points out in another context, a function of our "forms of life"—that when Professor Ivan Van Sertima challenges the tacit supposition that peoples of ancient Africa could not have made voyages to this continent before Columbus, even though other nonwhite groups are admitted, if still rarely, to have done so, what he will be up against, are rules of representation that are as much the condition of our present "form of life" as were those that predetermined that the torrid zones and the Western Antipodes had to be uninhabitable as a function of the instituting of the feudal order.

If, as Aimé Césaire (1960) has shown, the same rules of representation were also at work in the systemic stigmatizing representations by means of which the ways of life, history, and cultures of all colonialized peoples, because represented as the *Native Other* to the figure of "Man" (now conceived of as the eugenic and optimally evolved and selected mode of the True Self), Edward Said (1978) would later reveal the same rules of functioning to be at work in representations of the peoples of Islam as were at work in the representation of the torrid zone and the Western Hemisphere by feudal-Christian geographers before Columbus's voyage. Feminist scholars have revealed the same rule-governed stereotyping to be at work, and in the same terms of opprobrium, in the representation of women as have, recently, gay liberationists with respect to the stigmatization of homosexuality.[16] Thus, the path toward that really new exploration—one able, as Pirsig challenged, to effect a dimension of change that can parallel that of Columbus's move beyond the conventional reason of his time—now opens before us.

As the biologists Riedl and Kaspar (1984) point out, the cognitive mechanism specific to the human species, the mechanism to which we give the term "mind," is only "the most recent superstructure in a continuum of cognitive processes as old as life on this planet." Because these processes are therefore the "least tested and refined against the real world," it is only with the natural sciences that any true "victory" has been won in the ongoing "testing and refining" of the human cognitive capacity against the real world. This point enables us not only to put forward an ecumenically human interpretation of 1492—one that can place it as an event in the context of a "vaster notion of history" (Jameson 1991), one I shall propose, that can be conceived of as the history of the evolution of the human cognitive mechanism in the process of its "testing and refining of itself against the real world"— but also to grasp the contours of the new path, as well as the dimensions of the challenge that now confronts us.

Therefore, in our new world view of 1492, both Columbus's and later Copernicus's "root of expansions of thought" would, within the wider context of the political and cultural revolution of humanism, in time make possible that mutation at the level of human cognition that led to the rise of the natural sciences. This in turn led to the autonomy of such cognition (that is, outside its earlier role as an imperative function of verifying each order's mode of "subjective understanding") with respect to the earth and physical reality in general. However, if the winning of this autonomy would gradually displace the notions of a nonhomogeneous earth and universe, both of whose *nec plus ultra* lines *(habitable/uninhabitable, celestial/terrestrial)* had served to encode the physico-spiritual notion of order on whose totemic "categorial models" the feudal order had mapped both the role allocating mechanisms of its order and the representations that served to stably induce the mode of interaltruistic symbolic conspecificity that integrated it, the new order of the secularizing modern state would map its own role-allocating mechanisms and unifying code of symbolic conspecificity onto a new notion of order. This new notion was to be based on a *by-nature difference* between Europeans, on the one hand, and peoples of indigenous and African descent, on the other. That difference was represented as having ostensibly been ordained by God's intentions, as reflected in the Book of Nature, and specifically, in the ordered differential design of the organic species, from which, however, rational man was, as the effect of a separate divine creation, unbridgeably divided.

Within the context of the intellectual revolution of liberal humanism in the nineteenth century, however, Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* would shatter the "knowledge-of-categories" account of the created origins of all organic species, including man, and utterly demolish the argument from divine design on which the earlier notion of order and social hierarchies of the preindustrial landed orders had been based.

However, in the same way as in the aftermath of Columbus's arrival in the new world—where his perception of the indigenous peoples and cultures as "idolators" and "idolatrous" had legitimated his expropriation of their territories to the Spanish state, his enslavement of some of them, and relentless extortion of gold from all—the same paradox would emerge in the aftermath of Darwin's winning of that second "true victory." That paradox was that although as humans we would gradually come to secure our autonomy of cognition with respect to organic nature and thereby with respect to the biological basis of our enculturated humanness, both the pure biologization of such cultural modes of being together with the putting in place of a system of representations instituting a bioevolutionary notion of order—one mapped onto the range of human hereditary variations, instead of, as earlier, on the physical and organic universe—logically led to the enacting of a new *nec plus ultra* line that W. E. B. Du Bois was the first to identify and define as the *color line* (1903).[17] Like its medieval counterpart that is the *habitable/unhabitable, celestial/terrestrial* line mapped onto the physical universe and that had served to absolutize through the analogy of a nonhomogeneous earth and universe that it inscribed, the feudal order's ostensibly immutable status-organizing principle of *caste* based on the allegedly also divinely ordained nonhomogeneity of ontological substance between the hereditary line of noble descent and those of the nonnobles (whose extreme Other was the peasantry), the color line has come to serve a parallel function for our contemporary world-systemic order and its nation-state units. For as the line that was now mapped onto the empirically differentiated physiognomic features of human hereditary variations, within the terms of our contemporary mode of "subjective understanding" as generated from the origin narrative of evolution that had been made to reoccupy during the nineteenth century, the earlier slot of Genesis (Isaacs 1983; Landau 1991), the color line had come to inscribe a premise parallel, if in different terms, to that which had been encoded in the feudal Christian order, by the line of caste that had been mapped onto the physical universe as well as onto the geography of the earth. This premise is that of a bioevolutionarily determined difference of genetic value substance between *one* evolutionarily selected *human hereditary variation* and therefore *eugenic* line of descent (the line of descent *within* genetic Grace), and a series, to varying degrees, of its nonselected and therefore dysgenic Others. This conception, which is inscribed in the white/nonwhite global-systemic hierarchies, is nevertheless anchored in its extreme form, on the *white* (unmixed peoples of Indo-European descent) and the *black* (peoples of wholly or of partly African descent) opposition, with the latter hereditary variation or phenotype coming to reoccupy the earlier signifying place of the earlier torrid and Western Hemisphere, within the logic of the contemporary globalized and purely secular variant of the Judaeo-Christian culture of the West. Where the earlier temperate/torrid, "Eastern"/Western Hemisphere opposition had served to totemically absolutize the represented status-organizing principle of *caste,* that of the white/black opposition now serves to absolutize the represented generic status-organizing principle to which we have given the name *class.* In other words, by making conceptualizable the representation, in the earlier place of a line of noble hereditary descent, of a bioevolutionarily selected line of eugenic hereditary descent, the symbolic construct of "race" mapped onto the color line

has served to enact a new status criterion of *eugenicity* on whose basis the global bourgeoisie legitimates its ostensibly bioevolutionarily selected dominance—as the alleged global bearers of a transnational and transracial line of eugenic hereditary descent—*over* the global nonmiddle (or "working") classes, with its extreme Other being that of the "jobless" and "homeless" underclass, who have been supposedly discarded by reason of their genetic defectivity by the Malthusian "iron laws of nature."

In consequence, where the color line premise of bioevolutionarily determined differentials and degrees of genetic value between human hereditary variations—whether those defined by "race," "class," "ethnicity," "religion," "nation," "economic bloc," or "ways of life"—has since the nineteenth century served to enable the stable functioning of the status-organizing principle or criterion about which the "ism" hierarchies of our contemporary world-systemic order, as well as those of its nation-state units, have organized themselves, the deep-seated belief in the *genetic* nonhomogeneity of the human species, and therefore in the immutability of "race" as well as in the innately predetermined value differential of "class" that it analogically founds, has come at a high cost. As the underside of the nineteenth and twentieth century's remarkable and dazzling achievements, this belief system has been responsible not only for innumerable atrocities that were to climax in Auschwitz, but also for a sociosystematically produced series of savage inequalities. Nowhere more pronounced than in the still-subordinated and largely impoverished situation of the descendants of the idolators/Human Others, whether indigenous or of African and Afro-mixed ex-slave descent, these inequalities are graphically expressed in the illogic of the present 20/80 ratio of the global distribution of the world's resources. This ratio, as Du Bois ([1903] 1961, 1953) also presciently saw, was and is causally correlated with the color line as *the* problem of the twentieth century.

Just as the Janus-faced nature of 1492 cannot be understood outside the incomplete nature of the "true victories" that we have won with respect to our autonomy of cognition as a species, so it is with the Janus-faced nature of our world of 1992. Because the mutation by which we have gradually come to secure the autonomy of the mode of cognition specific to our species in the wake of the voyage of 1492 has been only partial, and its true victory therefore remains incomplete, the completion of that first true victory is necessarily the *only* possible commemoration of 1492. Such a completion would call therefore for another such conceptual move into a "realm beyond reason"—one able to take our present mode of reason itself, and its system of symbolic representation and mode of subjective understanding that orient the perceptual matrices that in turn orient our behaviors—as the object of a new mode of inquiry.

I propose that such a "move beyond reason" has already begun, even if still marginally so. It began in the context of a "general upheaval" whose dimensions were, and will be, as far-reaching as that of the intellectual revolution of Christian humanism and humanism out of which Columbus and Copernicus's challenge to

the representation systems and categorial models of geography and astronomy was to be effected.

This parallel "general upheaval" of our time was the one that began during the 1950s and 1960s, born out of the conjunctural phenomena both of the anticolonial movements (the uprising of the intermediate category of the nonwhite colonial *natives*) and their challenges to the structures of the global world order that had been put in place over the centuries in the wake of 1492. In this context, the black Civil Rights movement that followed on the Montgomery bus boycott and the collective refusal, by the extreme category of an ostensibly dysselected Otherness, of its proscribed apartheid and categorial (that is, torrid zone, Western Hemisphere) role and place, triggered a sequential series of such movements by other nonwhite groups, including, centrally, that of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. These latter would now begin the process of co-identifying themselves, transethnically, as, self-definingly, *Indians*. It was to be their counterperspective on 1492, as a perspective arising out of, and developed in the new area of Native American studies, that would, for the first time, challenge the "stereotyped images" of the official account of the "Columbus-discovered-America" legend of 1492, a legend that represented as transculturally "true" (rather than as only culture-specifically so) has served, since the fourth century, as a central variant of the "evolutionary" origin narrative of "Progress" founding to our present techno-industrial order. Hence, the paradox that their question "How could Columbus have discovered America, when we were here first?" has the same resonance for *our* times as Columbus arguing against his learned antagonists—that yes, indeed, God could have put land there in the Western Antipodes! In fact He *had* to!—had for his.

With their challenge to the "stereotyped images" of their ancestors and therefore of themselves as a "passivized" object waiting to be "discovered" by the only subjects of history, the American Indians have changed the monologue of the fourth into the conflictive dialogue of the fifth. Moreover, they have begun that collective deconstruction of the system of symbolic representations that are instituting of our present "form of life" and of its model of being "Man," whose extreme human Other is the black or "nigger" (Pandian 1987). The origin of this deconstruction is to be found not in the neoliberal humanist piety of *multiculturalism* of the 1980s, but in the poetics of a new *propter nos* that began with the "general upheaval" of the 1960s. Then, given that, it is the peoples of African and Afro-mixed descent who have paid the greatest price for keeping in being this system of symbolic representations and its model of being and behaving, made to serve as they have been, as the extreme term of the nineteenth-century sociological variant of the formal triadic model of medieval Islamic and feudal Christian geography; and analogically therefore, to the Zanj as the "stereotyped image" of an ostensibly atavistic nonevolved mode of the human, outside the realm of bioevolutionary genetic selection, its "Grace."[18] As in the case of the feudal geography's representation of the torrid zone/Western hemisphere, therefore, and in that of medieval Islamic geography's Zanj, so the rules of representation of the historical

accounts of this group's past, as accounts necessarily antonymic to those that trace the historical genealogy of the genetically selected model of being *Man* (and, therefore, of the Indo-European population group that has been made to totemically embody its eugenic criterion, a genealogy that Bernal [1987:vol. 1] recently identified as that of the Aryan model of the past put in place in the nineteenth century), logically predetermined *how* this past or "history" had to be represented (Woodson, 1933). These rules determined that the account of this group's past should be antonymic, too, to the normative mainstream account of the history of the Americas; hence, the logic of its reflex exclusion by both Cerio's and Harjo's interpretive versions of 1492.[19]

At the end of his *The Order of Things,* Foucault points out that the figure of *Man* only emerged as a recent invention "of European culture since the sixteenth century." Specifically, he notes that our contemporary variant of this "figure of *Man*" only appeared "a century and a half ago," as an effect of a change in the "fundamental arrangements of knowledge" that has led to our present disciplinary complexes. In the same way, the first variant of *Man* had led to the earlier order of knowledge that he analyzes as that of the Classical episteme (1973:386–87).

As a now purely secularized model of being that could no longer be guaranteed by the supernatural realm—as had still been partly the case with the earlier variant of "Man"—the new variant would be all the more dependent on the function of its *Other* as the extreme term of an ostensibly genetically nonselected, because nonevolved, mode of biologized being. This mode of the Other was therefore now made to play a central role. In the same way that the "stereotyped image" of Zanj otherness had served to suggest that the medieval Islamic way of life and order of rationality was the only way of behaving humanly and thinking rationally, the stigmatized physiognomy and the mode of biogenetic being of all peoples of African and Afro-mixed descent (as well as Africa itself, its cultures, and its way of life and "voodoo" model of nonrationality) would now serve to suggest that our present model of being "Man," as totemized in the Indo-European middle-class physiognomy (together with European cultures, ways of life, and rationality) was and is the only possible model of biologically (that is, eugenically) selected "normal being," and therefore of a "way of life."

From this ultimate mode of otherness based on "race," other subtypes of otherness are then generated—the lower classes as the lack of the normal class, that is, the *middle class;* all other cultures as the lack of the normal culture, that is, *Western culture;* the nonheterosexual as the lack of *heterosexuality,* represented as a biologically selected mode of erotic preference; women as the lack of the normal sex, *the male.* So, while serving as units of an overall totemic system, all were themselves generated from the central and primary representation of the black physiognomy as "proof" of the represented evolutionarily determined degrees of genetic perfection, on whose basis the structuring hierarchies of the social order had, ostensibly, been allocated. Above all, as the proof of a *biogenetic nonhomogeneity of the species* whose function is the exact analogue of the function played in the feudal order by the represented nonhomogeneity of the earth and the cosmos.

If the function of that earlier represented nonhomogeneity had been to suggest that the culturally and institutionally determined status hierarchies of the feudal order—including its role-allocated division of labor, and, therefore, the status-organizing principle of caste about which these hierarchies had autoorganized themselves—were as based on an *ontological difference of substance* between clergy/laity, nobility/nonnobility, peasantry that had been supernaturally ordained by God in his Creation, as, *equally,* had been that of the parallel ontological difference of substance, represented as existing between areas of the physical universe (that is, between *habitable/uninhabitable* realms, between the *celestial* and the *terrestrial*), our present represented nonhomogeneity of the species functions to the same effect. In other words, the culturally instituted status hierarchies of our global order and its nation-state subunits, as well as their role allocation/division of labor, and *their* represented *genetically determined* status-organizing principle encoded in Du Bois' "Color Line," is as, ostensibly, evolutionary and therefore *extraculturally* determined, as is the genetic/racial difference of degrees of genetic perfection (eugenicity) between our present model of being (and therefore of behaving) and its antonymic human Other; between the middle-class model of being "Man" and its nigger Other.

Consequently, if the torrid zone and the Western Hemisphere had served as the *nec plus ultra* sign and marker of the outside of God's redemptive grace, the physiognomy, black-skin, way of life, culture, historical past of peoples of Africa and Afro-mixed descent has to be represented consistently as the liminal boundary marker between the inside and the outside of the ostensibly genetically determined and evolutionarily selected mode of "normal being" encoded in our present model of being, Foucault's "Figure of Man." In this context, the stereotyped physiognomic, cultural, and historical image of the peoples of the black diaspora can be seen to play a central Zanj-type role in a powerful rhetorical strategy. This role is designed to suggest that two nouns, *man* and *human,* in which the near similarity of their "morphosyntactic and segmental-phonological structure" is apparent, also share the *same meaning* (Valesio 1980:147). Therefore, the culture-relative term *Man*—as the desupernaturalized *conception of the human* that evolved out of the Judaeo-Christian origin narrative and its cosmogonic schema that had given rise to two variant models (the first hybridly religio-secular and specific to sixteenth-century Europe, the second now purely secular and global in its scope), and that is therefore a *member* of the *class of all possible* conceptions of the human—is represented as isomorphic with the class itself, that is, with the class of all the varied modes of being human generic to our uniquely hybrid *(bios* and *logos)* species.

This misequation then functions strategically to absolutize the behavioral norms encoded in our present culture-specific conception of being human, allowing it to be posited *as if* it were the universal of the human species, and ensuring thereby that all actions taken for the sake of the well-being of its referent model continue to be perceived *as if* they were being taken for the sake of the human-in-general: *propter nos homines.* This belief, in the face of the mounting evidence of its costs to the planetary environment (physical and organic), as well as to the world-systemic

sociohuman one, was called in question by Pope John Paul II, in his recent audience with the Amazonian Indians, when he spoke of the "vicious cycle of joblessness and poverty" in which land-hungry immigrants to the Amazon Basin were as trapped as were the Amazonian Indians themselves, in a "picture of pain."[20]

It was in the overall context of this systemic misrepresentation and its effects that the uprising of black America against its imposed empirical segregation and lack of voting rights, as well as against its torrid zone/Western Hemisphere signifying role of liminal Otherness, would merge with the ongoing anticolonial movements around the globe; and, therefore, with the multiplicity of challenges by varied colonized peoples to their respective *native* (if not quite *nigger*) roles of signifying Otherness. In this merging of movements, the slogans of the political and literary-aesthetic movements of black America—that is, "black power," and "black is beautiful"—would have had the same resonance for the categorial models and conventional social reason of our times as Columbus's cartographer's recognition during his visit to Elmina on the coast of West Africa, that the torrid zone was *not* uninhabitable but was rather densely populated *(populatissima)* would have had for that of the orthodox "knowledge of categories" geography of his.[21] While it was to be precisely at the historical conjuncture of the anticolonial and black Civil Rights movements that Frantz Fanon, the black Francophone Caribbean psychiatrist and pro-Algerian political activist, because situated at the crossroads of both, was to be enabled to make a parallel anagogical thrust to those made by Columbus and Copernicus and, also, within the frame of a parallel "general upheaval"—that of the 1960s to that of the earlier intellectual revolution of humanism, and its then-empowering poetics of the *propter nos*.

For where Columbus and Copernicus had been compelled to dispute the theocentric premise of Scholasticism's arbitrary model of divine creation—the first as the condition of his voyage, the second as that of his new astronomy—and to thereby propose a "new image of the earth and conception of the cosmos" (Obenga 1987), Fanon would find himself as compelled to dispute liberal humanism's biocentric premise of the human as a natural organism and autonomous subject that arbitrarily regulates its own behaviors. And to do this as the condition of *his* newly projected image of the human. In consequence, where the biocentric premise of our present epistemology represents the individual human subject as a genetically defined (and therefore *acultural*) agent who, in accord with its "natural" feelings, randomly and therefore arbitrarily decides how to feel desire, prefer, choose, and therefore how both to know and act upon its social and physical reality, Fanon was to call this premise and its mode of "epistemological resignation" sharply into question. On the basis of his empirical experience as a practicing psychiatrist, with both his "native" colonial and his black Caribbean patients, Fanon proposed instead—in his *Black Skin, White Masks* (1964) a radically new and rule-governed model of our human behaviors. Using as his psychoaffective data the regularity of the reflexly autophobic behavioral responses of his patients, he sought to identify the transindividual and systemic organizing principle that lay behind both the reflex and autophobic nature of these behaviors.

Fanon noted the extent to which all *native* and colonialized subjects had been conditioned to experience themselves *as if* they were, in fact, as *genetically inferior* as the hegemonic "learned discourse" of contemporary scholars ostensibly represented them (as obsessively as those of Columbus's times had as negatively represented the torrid zone/antipodes). In his interaction with his black patients, he also became aware that he was witnessing this autophobic reaction in its most extreme form. It would therefore be on the basis of the dependable regularities of his black patients' reflex aversion to the *nec plus ultra* sign of their own physiognomic features that Fanon was to make a parallel "thrust" to that made by Columbus and Copernicus on the basis of their then-counter poetics of the *propter nos*. Against the "epistemological resignation" of orthodox Freudian psychology, which sought explanations for his patients' behaviors in their ostensibly individually autonomous psyches (or if not purely autonomous, merely familially oedipalized ones), Fanon sought to relate the "aberration of affect" that led to these behaviors, to a specific sociosystemic organizing process that had, in turn, induced the "aberration of affect" itself.

Freud, said Fanon, had placed the emphasis on the individual. He had therefore based the discipline of psychology on an ontogenetic perspective. But *"besides ontogeny, there is sociogeny"* (Fanon 1964:10–17). The problem of the black man and of the colonial native's self-aversive reactions was clearly *not* an individual problem. Rather, it was that of the processes of socialization by which alone these patients could have been instituted as such reflexly self-aversive subjects. The organizing principle of which the behavioral aberration was a law-likely dependable effect was therefore that of the *mode of the subject,* of which the empirical individual subject was, and is, normally (as the condition hitherto of his or her accepting its role as such a mode of the subject) *a heteronomously* acting, thinking, and feeling expression. This was so even where the price of this was the "aberration of affect" displayed reflexly by Fanon's patients as a function of realizing selfhood in the terms of our present optimal model of being, that of Foucault's "Man." This was also the price paid for the "aberration of affect" displayed by all nonblacks, for whom, too, the African physiognomy, culture, way of life, and traditional modes of rationality have come to signify, as they had been discursively instituted to do, the outermost limits and *nec plus ultra* sign of barely human being.

The central mechanism at work here, therefore, was and is that of *representation*. Its role in the processes of socialization, and therefore, in the regulation both at the individual and at the collective levels of the ensemble of behaviors—affective, actional, and perceptual-cognitive—is central. For it is by means of the strategies of representation alone that each human order and its culture-specific mode of empirical reality can be brought into being as such a "form of life" and third level of human, and therefore languaging existence.

What Fanon recognized was the central role played in our human behaviors by our always linguistically constituted criteria of being (that is, our human *skins*, represented *masks*). For it is on the template of these masks/criteria and the governing codes of symbolic life and death (the only life that humans live, as Peter Winch [1964] insists), which they express, that all individuals can alone be socialized as

the condition of their realization not only as culture-specific subjects, but also as ones able to experience themselves as symbolically conspecific with the other members of the "we" with whom they are narratively/linguistically bonded as they are biologically preprogrammed to be.

Descartes had, in the wake of the original *poetics* of the *propter nos* by which the premise of the lawful dependability of the functioning of the processes of nature had been secured, modified that poetics by keeping the premise of lawful dependability while suggesting that, because these lawfully dependable rules were not *necessarily providential for our human sake,* then knowledge of the rules that govern these processes could enable us to alter them to more directly suit our purposes (Blumenberg 1983:206–12). Here the experience of Fanon with his colonized "native" and black patients, and with his recognition that our present model of being *Man* was *not necessarily* providential for the sake of his black, nor indeed of his "native" patients, opens us onto a parallel proposal.

What Fanon had revealed was that, given the *criterion* of our present mode of being—one of genetic perfection encoded in the middle-class ideal as totemized in the Greek ideal type—Teutonic physiognomy (see Mosse 1978), according to which his black and nonwhite patients had been socialized to desire "being" and encoded as one that called for their reflexly self-aversive response to their own physiognomy as the condition of the stable replication of this criterion (that of *Man*), had been a rule-governed response. That is, it was one based on a misperception induced by the "stereotyped images" by which their physiognomic features (as the Zanj Other to the Indo-European physiognomic features) had been represented within the terms of the categorial models that institute the overall mode of subjective understanding that integrates our contemporary order. Since, like all other subjects of the order, his patients would also have been socialized to *know,* that is, to misperceive their own physiognomic features in the specific terms of the system of symbolic representations enacting of their order's mode of the subject as well as of its mode of interaltruistic nation-state conspecifity; and thereby of our contemporary "way of life." So that where the "stereotyped images" of feudal-Christian geography had served to induce in the subjects of the order an aversion to voyaging into the negatively marked and antonymic regions of the earth, with the reality of these regions therefore having to be "detached from their moorings in reality" in order to serve the behavior-orienting function imposed upon them, the equally negatively marked physiognomic features had also to be detached from their "moorings in reality" for the same end: to induce their bearers, like all the other subjects of the order to be aversive to their own physiognomy as the negatively marked conceptual Other boundary to our present bourgeois conception of "normal" human being.

Fanon's patients' "aberration of affect" would therefore also have been linked to an "aberration of cognition," parallel to that of the "knowledge-of-categories" geography of feudal-Christian Europe and of its theocentric model of arbitrary divine creation that the generalized poetics of the *propter nos* of the intellectual

revolution of humanism had been compelled—as had Columbus at the level of the geography and Copernicus at the level of astronomy—to call into question: at the same time that they called in question the overall system of symbolic representations and mode of subjective understanding enacting of the model of being of the feudal-Christian subject; and, therefore, of its governing code of spirit/flesh symbolic "life" and "death," or sociogenic principle.

Like all such governing codes or models of being whose sociogenic principles take the place, as its analogue, of the genomic principle for organic species, and thereby serve as the determinant of our order-specific human behaviors (once, that is, they have been inscribed by their founding narratives of origin and expressed in our social institutions), the interest of our present middle-class model of being *Man* in *its* own stable replication as such a model logically takes precedence, within the discursive logic of our present "form of life," *over* the interests both of the flesh-and-blood individual subject and of the human species as a whole, together with, increasingly, that of the interests of all other nonhuman forms of life on this planet. Yet, hitherto we have had little knowledge with respect to the functioning of these principles and of the rules that govern them. Thus, the task before us will be to bring into being a new poetics of the *propter nos.* Such a new poetics would, in the wake of Fanon's formulation, have to engage both in a redefinition of the relation between *concrete* individual men and women and in the socializing processes of the systems of symbolic representations generated from the codes that govern all human purposes and behaviors—including those of our present globally hegemonic culture, as at present instituted about in its model of being "Man."

Such a new poetics, if it is to be put forward as the poetics of a post-1960s *propter nos* will have to take as *its* referent subject (in the place of our present referent of the bourgeois mode of the subject and its *conception* of the individual), that of the *concrete individual* human subject. With such a shift, the criterion of its "for the sake of" will now necessarily be (in the place of that of the global middle classes, whose well-being, because they optimally embody the criterion of our *present mode* of the subject has hitherto taken precedence over the well-being of the *human,* as well as over that of its planetary habitat itself) that of the flesh-and-blood human species; as a well-being measurable only by the well-being of each individual subject, and therefore of what Gandhi termed the "last man," the least, in our present order, of us all.

Such a poetics, as the expression of the universalistic conception of the *propter nos,* will therefore, in the wake of Fanon, look for the explanation of our human behaviors *not* in the individual psyche of the ostensibly purely bio-ontogenetic subject, but rather *in the process* of socialization that institutes the individual as a human, and therefore, *always* sociogenetic subject. Fanon's call for a sociodiagnostic of the "aberration of affect" displayed by his patients would therefore also entail the call for a diagnostic deciphering of the system of symbolic representations and their narratively instituted orders of discourse, by means of whose unitary systems

of meanings the processes of socialization are effected, and the subjects of each order, and their "forms of life" brought into existence.

Such an approach based on the concept of a human history as the history of how we represent the life that we live to ourselves, as the condition of living it in that modality, would take our origin narratives—including those that Misia Landau (1991) has recently analyzed as our own founding narrative of evolution, which now takes the place of Genesis—to be central to any inquiry into the processes by which our behaviors are as lawfully dependably regulated as the earth and the cosmos would come to be for Columbus and Copernicus on the basis of their respective versions of the poetics of the *propter nos,* and its new, rule-governed model of divine creation.

Also, by basing our new approach on the premise of an equally rule-governed model of human auto-institution as a third and hybrid (that is, *bios/logos*) level of existence, we would be able to counterpropose, against the contemporary ironic "epistemological resignation" of the postmodernists for whom, as in the case of Rorty (1985), it is impossible for us to have knowledge of our social reality *outside* the limits of our specific culture's self-understanding, that such knowledge and outside these limits, *is* possible. Given that, it is these narratively instituted cosmogonies whose "stereotyped images" and unitary systems of meanings, together with the signaling systems that they encode, function to regulate in the culture-specific "good/evil" terms of each order's sociogenic principle or governing code and, as the biologist Danielli (1980:2) was the first to argue, the biochemical or opiate reward system of the brain. And if in doing so they thereby themselves regulate the genetically determined mechanisms that regulate the behaviors of all organic species (Goldberg 1988), then the taking of the "stereotyped images" of our present categorial models (including that which Herskovits [1941] was the first to identify as the "myth of the Negro past") as the point of departure for an inquiry into the narrative and rhetorical strategies by which the regulation of the biochemical mechanisms that then motivate and induce our culture-specific ensemble of behaviors is effected, should provide an opening onto the gaining of such knowledge *outside* the limits of our present culture's self-conception.

Danielli proposed that the biochemical or opiate reward systems, by means of which, as Candace Peart would also propose later, the members of each organic species are induced to display the species-specific behaviors needed to ensure their own individual well-being or procreative success at the same time that they, together, ensure the stable perpetuation of their species-specific genome, are, in the case of humans, everywhere regulated by discursively instituted systems of behavior-orienting meanings, which, he proposes, should be called "opium of the people discourses," after Marx (Danielli 1988; see also Goldberg 1988). This is because, he argues, the process of social cohesion (Rorty's imperative of *solidarity*) can be induced in humans *only* by means of the semantic-biochemical correlations that are performatively enacted (as in the case of "stereotyped images") by the "army of mobile metaphors" of our orders of discourse, both imaginative and theoretical. These correlations function therefore to induce the supraordinate goals or purposes instituting the criteria of being that govern our behaviors today, just as they governed, in their differing modalities, both the behaviors of Columbus and the Spaniards and those of the Arawaks *(Tainos)* when they first confronted each other on that October day.

If, as a species, we are now to govern consciously, and therefore consensually, the narratively instituted purposes that now govern us, we must set out to open a path, as the only possible *human* commemoration of 1492, that can open us onto the securing of a new "true victory"—one as directed at the winning of the autonomy of our cognition with respect to the social reality of which we are always already socialized subject-observers, as that first *poetics* had made possible that of our cognitive autonomy with respect to physical reality; and after Darwin, with respect to organic reality.

The outline of what would be a possible approach to the effecting of a "second root expansion of thought" has perhaps been put forward best by Heinz Pagels. Pagels (1988:32) argues that the emergence of the new sciences of complexity will have as their most dramatic impact the narrowing of the gap that at present exists "between the natural and the human world." As their impact enables us to begin "to grasp the management of complexity, the rich structures of symbols, and perhaps consciousness itself," it is clear "not only that the traditional barriers—barriers erected on both sides—between the natural science and the humanities cannot forever be maintained," but also that such an erasure of their hitherto *nec plus ultra* line will be the indispensable condition of completing, in my own terms, the hitherto incomplete "true victory" of 1492. That is, a completion imperative to the closing of the dangerous gap that now exists between our increasing human autonomy with respect to our knowledge of the physical and organic levels of reality, and our lack of any such autonomy with respect to knowledge of our specifically human level of reality, and, therefore, with respect to the rules that govern the individual and collective behaviors by which each such mode of reality is brought into existence and replicated; including our contemporary behaviors that are no less heteronomously, because equally culture-systemically ordered, than were those of Columbus and the "Idolators" whom he confronted on that world-fateful day in October 1492.

With this erasure of the line between what Sperber/Moraes-Farias define as "knowledge of the world as it is" (scientific knowledge) and "knowledge of categories" (knowledge *within* the terms of each culture's self-conception, or the cultural knowledge of our contemporary humanities and social sciences), a new image of humanity, will, as it did during the Italian Renaissance, "emerge in the future as science and art interact in their complementary spheres." At the same time, on the basis of this new image, we shall be enabled to make the "narrative order" of our "culturally constructed worlds," together with their "order of human feelings and beliefs, subject to scientific description in a new way" (Pagels 1988).

It was on the basis of *his* new image of a homogeneous earth that was made

possible by his apocalyptic millenarian contestatory vision (against the orthodox theocentric view of an arbitrary model of divine creation) of a nature made for us, and thereby, *bound by this end* to function in a rule-governed manner, that Columbus, both in spite and because of his own flagrant empirical errors and residual medieval beliefs, would effect the paradigm shift in whose terms later geographers would be empowered to place the "order of the earth" "under scientific description in a new way." If not the order of our human behaviors given the negative consequences that were to follow, both in the immediate wake of Columbus's landfall in the Americas and until today, for the two population groups (the *negros* and *indios*) who, as the first major groups to be drawn into the expanding system of the West, were to find themselves categorized as *irrational idolators* and as such behaved toward as beings outside the limits of that first *propter nos;* and who were therefore to find themselves trapped by the partial and incomplete nature of the "true victory" (that of our increasing cognitive autonomy with respect to our knowledge of the physical and biological levels of reality through the medium of the natural sciences, on the one hand, and through the lack of this "victory," with respect to any such autonomous knowledge of the rules governing our human behaviors, on the other), to which the terms of that first poetics of the *propter nos* had led.

This was the case until the general upheaval of the 1960s made possible a new opening—that of the collective challenge made to the symbolic representational systems and their "stereotyped images" by which we have hitherto nonconsciously woven our innumerable modes of the Self and their innumerable Others. For it was to be in the context of this generalized challenge that Frantz Fanon would propose, against our present biocentric natural-instinctual and thereby arbitrary model of human behaviors, a new contestatory image of the human. It was one in which, because human subjects, as the expression of the developmental process of *both* ontogeny and sociogeny, cannot preexist, as they are imagined to do within our present order of knowledge, the symbolic representational modes of socialization specific to each culture's "form of life," and conception of being, their/our behaviors must therefore be as culture-systemically and lawfully dependably ordered *(cursus solitus culturae)* as were and are those of a nature "made for life and the creation of souls" *(cursus solitus naturae)*.[22]

"Nature could *not* have put things so out of *proportion*" and "Mare totum navigabile," Columbus argued as he moved into a realm beyond the conventional reason of his time. "Besides ontogeny, there is sociogeny," Fanon proposed, as he, too, moved, beyond that of ours.

Notes

1. For aspects of the ongoing debate cited here, see, among many others, Tono Martínez (1992) and Vargas Llosa (1990).

2. The dissident perspective has been put forth by, among others, the Association of American Indian Cultures, Kirkpatrick Sale (1990), and Hans Koning (1976, 1990).

3. See the Fall/Winter 1991 special issue of *Newsweek* magazine. That issue—titled *1492–1922, When Worlds Collide: How Columbus' Voyage Transformed Both East and West*—was prepared jointly by the editor of the magazine and the staff of the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History who were in charge of the Columbian quincentenary exhibition "Seeds of Change." See also the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition (Viola and Margolis 1991).

4. These points were made by the Group of 100 in the Morelia Declaration, formulated at the Morelia Symposium "Approaching the Year 2000" and published in the *New York Times*, October 10, 1991.

5. See Wardrop (1987:82) for a discussion of Jaime Carbonell's concept of "goal trees" in the orienting of both human and "artificial" intelligent behaviors.

6. Note, also, that this conception served to absolutize the caste-organizing principle of Aztec imperial society. See León-Portilla (1990:10).

7. For the series of letters in which Columbus recalls how strongly mainstream opinion rejected his proposal, see Varela (1982).

8. See Blumenberg (1983), especially pp. 218–26, where he shows the process by which—through the discourse of Hobbes and others—the discourse of *theological absolutism* (which has been a function of the *telos* of *spiritual redemption* and of the economy of salvation) had been transformed into that of the new discourse of *political absolutism*. This latter had been, I propose, a function of the telos of *rational redemption* on which the preindustrial state had been based. Although he does not use these terms, Blumenberg also shows how, through the Malthusian concept of a law of population, the discourse of economic absolutism (and therefore of the telos of *material redemption*) had, in turn displaced, replaced that of political absolutism with its own discourse and, therefore, the purely political behavioral ethic with that of a purely *economic ethic*. I have also developed this argument more fully in Wynter (1991b).

9. See Wynter (1984:25), which points out that Bartolomé de las Casas, in defending the rationality of the Aztecs' act of sacrifice, antedated by some 450 years Carbonell's point with respect to the functioning of our modes of "subjective understanding." As he argued at the debate held in Valladolid with respect to the justice or not of the conquest: "Clearly one cannot prove in a short time or with a few words to infidels that to sacrifice men to God is contrary to nature. Consequently neither anthropophagy nor human sacrifice constitutes just cause for making war on certain kingdoms. . . . For the rest, to sacrifice innocents for the salvation of the commonwealth is not opposed to natural reason, is not something abominable and contrary to nature, but is an error that has its origin in natural reason itself."

10. This point is made by Pauline Moffit Watts (1985) in a seminal essay on the religious and apocalyptic millenarian impetus of Columbus's enterprise of the Indies.

11. With respect to the imperative nature of these symbolic bonding processes for humans, see Wright (1988:197–98).

12. See also Adam Smith (1869). I use the concept of *virtù*, especially as a culture-specific European form of each human culture's behavior-orienting criterion of optimal behaviors. I have named this criterion, after Fanon, that of the *sociogenic principle*, which is the analogue, at the human level of life, of the code of inclusive fitness that functions at the level of organic life as a behavior-regulating principle based on the single criterion of

reproductive success. The sociogenic principle and Smith's "economy of greatness" are therefore synonyms. For details of this thesis, see Wynter (1991a).

13. See also Sale (1990:123), who cites the pope's reference to Columbus as the "dilectus filius Christophorus Colon" (beloved son Christopher Columbus), as the one who had discovered the lands whose sovereignty he was awarding to Spain.

14. See Pagden (1982) for an analysis of the juridico-theological discourses in which the concept of the *more-human* Spaniards and the *less-human* Indians (based upon a represented *by nature* difference ordained by "natural law" between the two peoples) was first institutionalized as a pervasive belief structure.

15. These charges have been made by historian Gary Nash in the context of the ongoing dispute and controversy over the Houghton Mifflin history textbook series that he coauthored.

16. A bibliography of the books written on the representation of the "totemic system" of the *others* that serves to enact the bioevolutionary notion of order that is instituting of the social structures and role allocations of our present global sociosystemic order, if drawn up, would reveal the *rule-governed* nature of the terms of opprobrium by which *all* of these groups are consistently stigmatized in relation to their antonymic norms. Aimé Césaire's essay *Discourse on Colonialism* (1960) was the precursor of Edward Said's (1978) in-depth study of the contemporary "categorial models" that are instituting of "natives" as the analogue of the Zanj or peoples of black Africa for medieval Islamic geographers, as analyzed by Moraes Farias (1980).

17. W. E. B. Du Bois made his famous declaration that "the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the Color Line—the relation of the darker to the lighter races of men in Asia, Africa, in America and the islands of the sea," in his collection of essays, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903).

18. The role of Ernst Haeckel in creating this "stereotypical image" in his book *Anthropogenie* (1879) is discussed in depth by James Burke (1985).

19. These accounts, and their underlying rules of representations, would begin to be as called in question by the "general upheaval" of the 1960s (and the call for black studies and other nonwhite, feminist, and gay liberationist studies) in the same ways as the rules of representation of the earth's geography as well as those of the overall scholastic order of knowledge had been called in question by the general upheaval of the "lay" revolution of humanism; and by Columbus's apocalyptic millenarian variant of this revolution.

20. See the *New York Times*, "Pope Asks Amends of Brazilian Indians," October 19, 1991, A3.

21. The jotting made by Columbus on the margins of his copy of Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi* read, in his everyday Latin, *Zona torida non est inhabitabilis, quia per eam hodie nagivant Portugallenses, imo est populatissima; et sub linea equinoxialis est castrum Mine Serenissimi regis Portugalie, quem vidimos* (The torrid zone is not uninhabitable because the Portuguese sail through it even today; it is in fact thickly populated and under the equator is the Castle of Mina of his Serene Highness, the King of Portugal, which we have seen).

22. The two Latin phrases translate as "in the normal course of culture" and "in the normal course of nature," respectively. The latter was a phrase common to the learned discourse of Columbus's epoch.

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