Columbus Essay Essay, Research Paper

Columbus Day Essay

Another Columbus Day has past by. And, as with every Columbus Day for the past year, I ask myself

? Why do we celebrate a man who was a murderer?? Columbus sparked many a great western ideal.

Capitalism, science as a religion, the establishment of a global monoculture, the enslavement of other

races, the destruction of the environment, the eradication and abuse of life, and the genocide of America?s

indigenous people are just a few of those ideals. If these are the ideals that he sparked, then why should

we celebrate a power-hungry man, no better than Hitler?

History has always been a powerful storyteller, but not accurate. Often, accounts of injustice, stories of

war, and genocide disappear for the people need to validate their position. History is written by the victors,

the ones who carry out the genocide, the leaders of conquest. lies are sold as truth, and the truth is buried

and forgotten. The truth has been erased and rewritten by generations of killers, ignorant accomplices,

and speechless victims.

Even modern historians identify Columbus? conquest as the birth of racism. Columbus? journey was

fueled by greed, the betterment of his people over others (and not the betterment of themselves as a

people), and a desire to convert all peoples to Christianity. The conquest was the birth of an international

slave trade, the start of the factory system of labor, and the death of an ancient way of life .

Columbus was obsessed by the idea that he could sail to India, and spent years arguing for someone to

finance his voyage. Columbus, whose religious convictions are often not taken into account, promised the

king and queen of Spain that he would convert the ?heathens? to Catholicism and use their gold to fund

their holy war with the Muslims. Besides believing that all people should be Catholic, He wrote in his

diaries that he believed the world was destined to end in 1650.

15th century Spain has been described by medieval scholars as ?a culture of death? . The unbalence in

the monarchal government led to a contentious society. Milton Melton described Columbus? world in his

book ? Columbus and the World Around Him? as: ?Not many children lived to maturity. Landowners

punished poachers. Health care was non-existent. The frequent wars promoted organized violence on a

large scale. People were killed casually in quarrels, for cheating in gambling, over malicious gossip, in

drinking bouts, and in urban riots.? These descriptions are tribute to Columbus and his successors who

successfully duplicated the land they left in the new land.

There were about 100 million people in the new land, as compared to the approximately 60 or 70

million people in Europe. It has been found difficult to describe these natives though, for they had been

destroyed too quickly, and what was written about them was written by the ones doing the killing.

The first culture which Columbus came in contact with were the Tainos. The Europeans described the

Tainos as primitive, but the Tainos lived in small, clean huts, practiced sub stainable agriculture, and they

bathed often, three things that were not seen much in Europe. The two records of their meeting contradict

and clash as violently as the cultures. On October 12, 1492, Columbus wrote ?The people are as naked as

their mothers bore them, but well-disposition .? He went on to say, ?they are a people who can be made

free and converted to our Holy Faith. They ought to make good and skilled servants.?

Columbus was made the first governor of he Indies, but was replaced and arrested in 1945 for inept

administration. His successor, Nicolas de Ovando, continued Columbus? way of governing. His first acts

as governor were to massacre 85 Cubans and begin to trade slaves across the ocean from Africa to

Americas. For many years, the story of Columbus was ignored. Then in 1792, the U.S. celebrated his acts

while searching to justify it?s own history.

The life of Columbus changed the world drastically, his ways of greed, murder, and corruption still live

on today in governments throughout the world. The culture he destroyed may never be realized for it?s

beauty and spirituality. The earth is still bleeding from the destruction he began. Only time will tell us

whether the human race will age gracefully, or continue the cycle that Columbus began. Do not celebrate

Columbus Day if you believe that genocide, racism, and the destruction of the earth is wrong.