

The Columbian Exchange: Biological and Cultural Consequences of 1492, 30th Anniversary Edition

By Alfred W. Crosby Jr.

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Thirty years ago, Alfred Crosby published a small work that illuminated a simple point, that the most important changes brought on by the voyages of Columbus were not social or political, but biological in nature. The book told the story of how 1492 sparked the movement of organisms, both large and small, in *both* directions across the Atlantic. This Columbian exchange, between the Old World and the New, changed the history of our planet drastically and forever.

The book *The Columbian Exchange* changed the field of history drastically and forever as well. It has become one of the foundational works in the burgeoning field of environmental history, and it remains one of the canonical texts for the study of world history. This 30th anniversary edition of *The Columbian Exchange* includes a new preface from the author, reflecting on the book and its creation, and a new foreword by J. R. McNeill that demonstrates how Crosby established a brand new perspective for understanding ecological and social events. As the foreword indicates, *The Columbian Exchange* remains a vital book, a small work that contains within the inspiration for future examinations into what happens when two peoples, separated by time and space, finally meet.

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Review
Crosby put ecological history on the map. His pioneering text has awakened, inspired, and challenged a generation of readers. It will, undoubtedly, become more relevant as the pace of global exchange increases. - **The Sixteenth Century Journal**

The Columbian Exchange is a seminal, educational, and uniquely insightful contribution to Native American, Medical History, and World History Studies reference collections and reading lists. - **Library Bookwatch**

About the Author

Alfred W. Crosby, Jr. is professor emeritus of American studies, history, and geography at the University of Texas, Austin. He is the author of *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900–1900* (1986), *America's Forgotten Pandemic: The Influenza of 1918* (1989), *The Measure of Reality: Quantification and Western Society, 1250–1600* (1997), and most recently *Throwing Fire: Projectile Technology through History* (2002).

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