

## Christopher Columbus's Error or Statement ?

**Weekend of March 19<sup>th</sup> 2022: Disney is apologizing for a school parade which was titled 'Indians'.** [Disney World apologizes for school's 'racist' Indianettes performance \(nypost.com\)](https://www.nypost.com/2022/03/19/disney-world-apologizes-for-schools-racist-indianettes-performance/)

Why would Disney apologize? Were the students out of line? The biggest objection from online feedback was the use of the word 'Indian'.

Let us look at the background of the term 'Indians'

We are all familiar with the story circulated in various versions of history claiming Queen Isabella funded this exploration for a new and shorter path to the land famous for spices and silks for the purpose of trade, which led to the accidental discovery of the Americas. Christopher Columbus was the appointed or volunteer tradesman who made that fortuitous journey for when he reached landfall, and saw the people who greeted him, he thought he had reached India and called them 'Red Indians'. So the story goes.

*Except* India was not called India at that time. It was Bharat. The name 'India' was coined during British imperialism due to the unfortunate strategy of the British to change the name of those whom they conquer. It is part of the victor-vanquished psychology and strategy: the enslaved must be possessed. Changing of their names shows their 'slave' status.

The East India Company came for trade to Bharat, setting themselves up in the mid-1800s, along with the Portuguese who were already in Goa, on the western shores. Vasco Da Gama had already opened the path in May of 1498. This is the same East India Company which was involved with trade and business in America. Both countries were fighting this company at the same time and for the same reasons, unfair taxes, but from the other side of the globe.

The word India did not exist at that time. The correct name for the land now called India is Bharat. In fact, the Constitution of Bharat/India establishes both names. It is the only Constitution I have heard of where such a schism is formally documented. Culturally, today, while speaking or writing in English, the name India is used, and while speaking in the official language Devnagari, the name Bharat is used. Should you go down to the Consulate of India, you will see the script in Devnagari at the entrance announcing that it is the Consulate of Bharat. Devnagari is the official language of Bharat, called Hindi post Islamic rule when the word Hindu was coined by the Muslim invaders to describe the 'people who lived on the other side of the Sindh River' which

runs between what is now Pakistan and India along the western border. 'Sindh' became corrupted into Hindh and so forth, evolving into Hindi and Hindoo, as the Britishers called those who lived there, and Hindu, as it is called today. The very first mention formally of the land as Hindustan (stan means place) was by Guru Nanak when he wrote the Babur Bani (words) in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib around 1470. ( Babur was the great grandson of Genghis Khan.)

Just for fun: a headline from today, March 21, 2022:

[Cash is still 'King' as digital divide between Bharat and India continues - The Hindu BusinessLine](#)

And we are talking about the same country !

To prove my point here is an excerpt from one of the texts:

**Excerpt of Vishnu Purana** ---- *"This country is known as Bharatvarsha since the times the father entrusted the kingdom to his son Bharata and he himself went to the forest for ascetic practices"*

*The date when the Vishnu Purana was compiled is debated:* The actual author(s) and date of its composition are unknown and contested. Estimates of its composition range from **300 BCE to 900 CE**. The text was likely composed and rewritten in layers over a period of time, with roots possibly in ancient BCE.

For our purpose it is proof positive that the name for the region and lands being sought after by the Portuguese, Spanish and British was Bharat, known then for its enormous wealth as "The Golden Bird of the East"

**According to Vishnu Purana—**



उत्तरं यत्समुद्रस्य हिमाद्रेश्चैव दक्षिणम् ।  
वर्षं तद् भारतं नाम भारती यत्र संततिः ॥

**Uttaraṃ yatsamudrasya himādreścaiva dakṣiṇam  
varṣaṃ tadbhāratam nāma bhāratī yatra santatiḥ**

*This shloka / couplet means: "The country (Varsam) that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains is called Bharatam; there dwell the descendants of Bharata.*

Therefore, the name was in existence from the time of the Puranas referring to the land of the region as **Bharata Varsam**.

Of note, before this name, the region was called Aryavarta or the nation of the Arya. 'Varta' is nation. This was the first time the concept of nation ever known to human social construct. It is mentioned in Arthashastra the text which teaches the Art of Governance written about 2,500 BCE. It is hard to exactly pinpoint the dates since many of the texts were destroyed by imperialistic rule of the Muslims and the British.

For our purposes, it is amply clear that when Christopher Columbus made landfall on the land later to be known as Americas there was no land called India in existence.

The word Indian is a contraction of the word Indigenous. However, the word 'Indigenous' was not used in English till much later, the first use being 1640. No reasoning is given for this date, with a possible link to the Dutch East India Company active since 1621, incorporated in 1640.

This date is irrelevant since Christopher Columbus was not English speaking. Queen Isabella was Spanish.

In English etymology:

indigenous (adj.) "born or originating in a particular place," 1640s, from Late Latin *indigenus* "born in a country, native," from Latin *indigena* "sprung from the land, native," as a noun, "a native," literally "in-born," or "born in (a place)," from Old Latin *indu* (prep.) "in, within" + *gignere* (perfective *genui*) "to beget, produce," from PIE root **\*gene-** "give birth, beget," with derivatives referring to procreation and familial and tribal groups.

source of/evidence for its existence is provided by: Sanskrit *antara-* "interior;" Greek *en* "in," *eis* "into," *endon* "within;" Latin *in* "in, into," *intro* "inward," *intra* "inside, within;" Old Irish *in*, Welsh *yn*, Old Church Slavonic *on-*, Old English *in* "in, into," *inne* "within, inside."

Late Latin *indigenus*, from Latin *indigena*, noun, native, from Old Latin *indu*, *endo* in, within + Latin *gignere* to beget

It is the hypothetical source of/evidence for its existence is provided by: Sanskrit *janati* "begets, bears," *janah* "offspring, child, person," *janman-* "birth, origin," *jatah* "born;" Avestan *zizanenti* "they bear;" Greek *gignesthai* "to become, happen," *genos* "race, kind," *gonos* "birth, offspring, stock;" Latin *gignere* "to beget," *gnasci* "to be born," *genus* (genitive *generis*) "race, stock, kind; family, birth, descent, origin," *genius* "procreative divinity, inborn tutelary spirit, innate quality," *ingenium* "inborn character," possibly *germen* "shoot, bud, embryo, germ;" Lithuanian *gentis* "kinsmen;" Gothic *kuni* "race;" Old English *cennan* "beget, create," *gecynd* "kind, nature, race;" Old High German *kind* "child;" Old Irish *ro-genar* "I was born;" Welsh *geni* "to be born;" Armenian *cnanim* "I bear, I am born."

Indian was of that coinage. Indigenous was already in use in Latin.

A further complication is the word 'Native'. Although the word was in existence, the question 'Who is a Native?' remains. Anyone born in a land is native to the land. We cannot exclude any one group of people from our modern American landscape.

If you ask the people being thus nominated, they clearly state: They are American and then may specify the people or tribe of their ancestral history as desired.

While the Spanish and the British may have been the first ones to use the word Indian, the early Americans were not far behind. In the mid-1970s the new term 'East Indian' was coined to differentiate between "India" Indians and 'American' Indians. This term would astonish the people of India since East Indians refers to states of Orissa, Assam, Bengal on the eastern shores of Bharat or India.

Adding humor to the above confusion, the India Indians call the American Indians 'Red Indians' attributed to Columbus.

Why would Disney apologize? Why is Disney questioning American culture and heritage? The students are reflecting American culture which includes the confusion of nomenclature as well as the inclusion of all people from all historic backgrounds into the sum total of America as Americans.

Americans honor the great nation of the Cherokee. The Port Neches-Grove high school incorporates great American traditions with honor and pride as do other schools and communities across America. We cannot amputate sections of our history according to social whim, neurosis, and fashion and neither may this be suggested nor imposed by

anyone. Emphasizing the values that built up the various nations, common to all great nations: integrity, pride, honor, courage, perseverance, respect, trust the school honors American tradition and history. These are the ideals that need to be honored in all students and all Americans.

Coining new words and terms today to keep a people separate is endorsing the victor -vanquished psychology.

Separate to the history of America and how she has evolved, Christopher Columbus came in as an emissary of the Spanish Queen who was hungry. Successful or not, he was there, in 1492 as an invader, not as a businessman or trader.

Was it, indeed an error?

- Narveen Singh Aryaputri  
Independent Scholar.

March 23, 2022, Acedeme.edu letters.  
March 24 2022, at the Independent  
Scholars' Evenings  
The Institute for Cultural and Healing  
Traditions, Ltd.  
[www.qcinstitute.org](http://www.qcinstitute.org)

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A little background of PN-G high school is below:

“Indians” as the PN-G school nickname in 1925 was influenced by local history. Port Neches at one time was the home of the only Indian village in Jefferson County, Texas.

As early as 500 AD, Nacazil, Attakapas, Karankawa and other Indian tribes [once made their home on a high bluff overlooking the Neches River](#) that later became the town of Port Neches.

As noted by local historians, many Native American artifacts have been discovered in Port Neches.

In 1979 Principal Chief [Ross O. Swimmer](#) of the [Cherokee Nation](#) endorsed Port Neches-Groves High School as Ambassadors of Goodwill in recognition of their interest in and contributions towards honoring the Cherokee Nation.

In 1980, Port Neches-Groves High School was presented the official seal of the [Cherokee Nation](#).

This sincere goodwill agreement between the honorable Chief Swimmer, the Cherokee people, and PN-G High school will always be revered, respected, appreciated and honored by Port Neches-Groves High School, it’s alumni and all supporters.

Although controversy surrounds the use of sports mascots or nicknames that reflect Native American culture, Port Neches-Groves ISD respectfully incorporates those rich traditions with great honor and pride, all the while striving to exemplify the great spirit of the Cherokee Nation and all indigenous Americans. Rather than a mascot or logo, the association is a spirit and mindset carried with each generation of PN-G students. Like the Cherokee and other Indigenous tribes, strong individual character, integrity, honesty, perseverance, courage, respect, trust, honor and humility are emphasized and expected of PN-G students. Those are ideals that any group or community should strive for.

