

First Contact Between the Portuguese Explorers and Indigenous People



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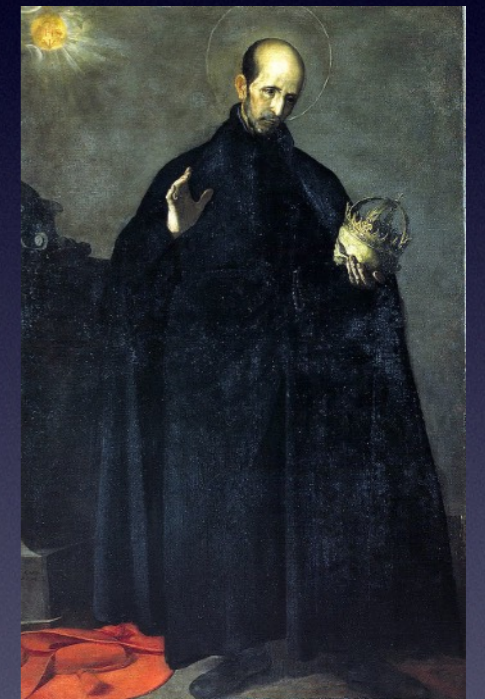
Why did the Portuguese embark on overseas expansion?

Three inter-twined objectives:

1. Ensuring independence

2. Crusading

- historic conflict with Moors in Africa & Levant
- make contact with Prester John
- convert heathens in all discovered lands



3. Commercial

- dominate spice trade to Indies
- restore royal finances



“We came in search of Christians & spices”

European knowledge of Africa & The Indies prior to 1500

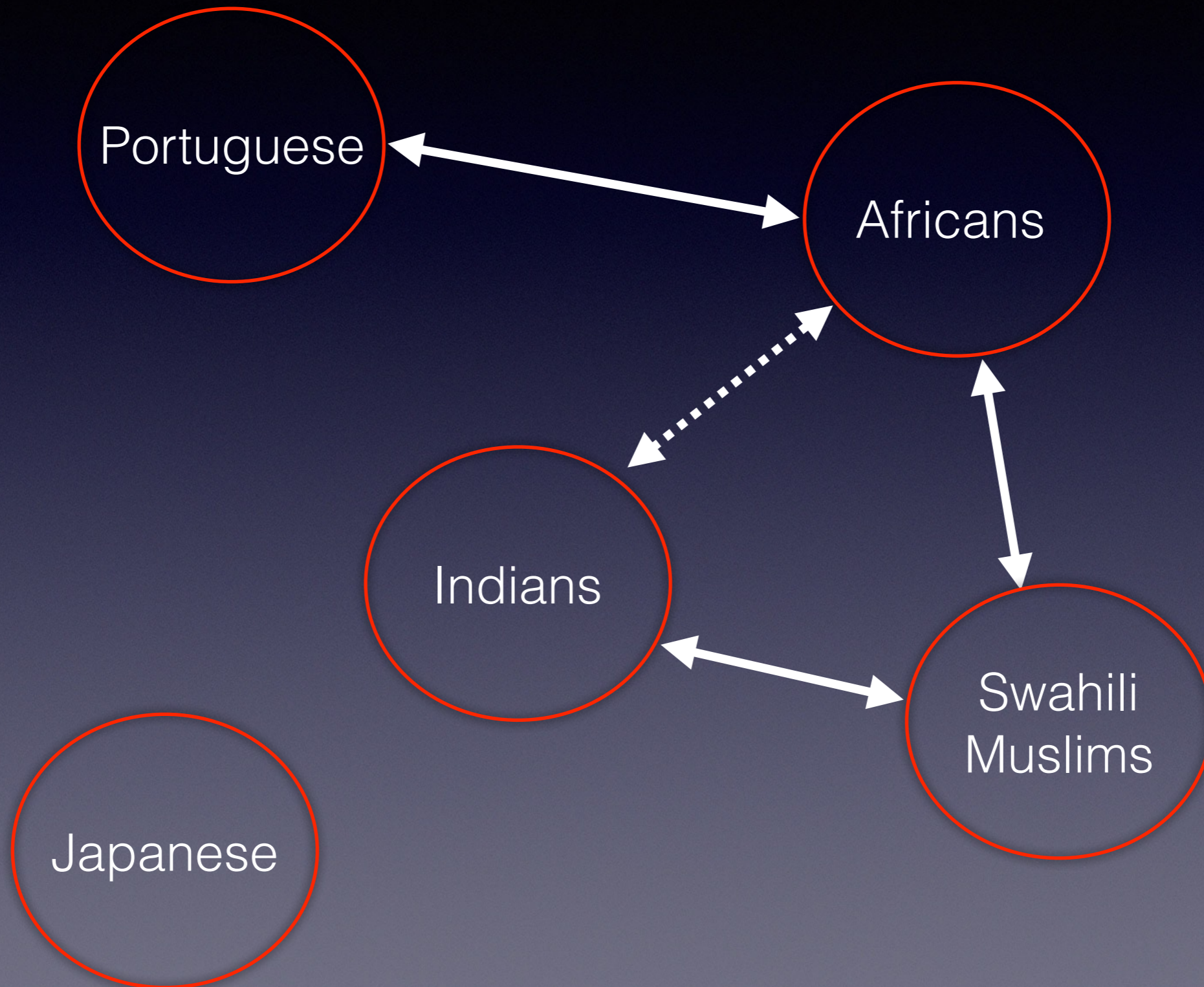


Ptolemy's *Cosmographia* (1482)

Two limiting beliefs:

- World divided into two religions - Christianity & Islam
- Belief in existence of isolated Christian kingdom

What did they know of each other in C16th?



Southern Africa



1488 Bartolomeu Dias rounds the Cape
1489 Vasco da Gama reaches India,
stopping at Mossel Bay & Mozambique
1499 returns via Mozambique

Southern Africa



- Encounters Khoikhoi and Bantu
- Mixed reception
- Careening ships & repairs
- Limited trading opportunities
- Immediate needs met
- Primitive weaponry
- 1st Muslim contact in Mozambique
- Farewell bombast
- Raised a padrao

Claiming new Lands for Portugal



East Africa



- Visits Mombasa & Malindi
- Their reputation precedes them
- Belief in Christian communities along coast
- Surprised by degree of development
- Evidence of rich interior trade
- Locals scornful of Portuguese trade goods
- Rumours of Prester John
- Obtain services of a pilot across Indian Ocean



India

- May 1499 arrived at Calicut
- Mixed Hindu & Muslim city
- Fabulous bazaar
- Initial warm reception sours
- Zamorin struggles to interpret
- Muslims intrigue against them
- Visit ends in a violent skirmish
- Leave in haste early October
- Monsoon season



“These are not things to offer a great & rich king...even the poorest merchants from Mecca gave better gifts”

Reflections on da Gama's voyage

- Astonishing feat of navigation
- Made few friends along the way
- Locals shocked and awed by use of force
- Negligible effect on trading patterns
- Persisted in belief in Asian Christians
- Failed on both strategic objectives:
 - establishing spice trade
 - converting souls to Christianity
- Woefully unprepared:
 - sophistication of Indian Ocean trade networks
 - Portugal produced little of value to India

Opened the route to India and beyond

Japan



- 1544 arrival in Tanegashima
- Daimyo of Bungo's fiefdom
- Socially unimpressed by sailors
- Portuguese impressed by culture
- Japanese realised value of firearms
- First exposure to Shinto
- 1549 Fr. Xavier lands in Kagoshima
- first christian converts, inc. daimyo
- granted rights to Nagasaki
- traded chinese silk for silver bullion

“Apart from in our religion, we are greatly inferior to them”

“We shall never find among heathens another race lo equal the Japanese”



Meeting of two cultures



How did these beginnings play out?



Southern Africa



- Built forts at Sofala & Mozambique Island
- Entry point into Monomatapa
- Unimportant to Portuguese spice trade
- Primarily useful to re-supply *carriera*

East Africa



- Seized the coastal cities by force
- Built a chain of forts along the coast
- Played off local rivalries
eg. Mombasa v Malindi
- Used as base to obtain trade goods for India
mainly, ivory and gold
- Tentative penetration of the interior
- Use of *degradadoes*

India



- ruthless, single minded conquest
- establish base in Goa
- succeed in dominating spice trade
- becomes centre of asian christianity
- established as *Estado da Indies*

Control exerted through mobile, floating fortresses

- Crown control weakens beyond Malacca

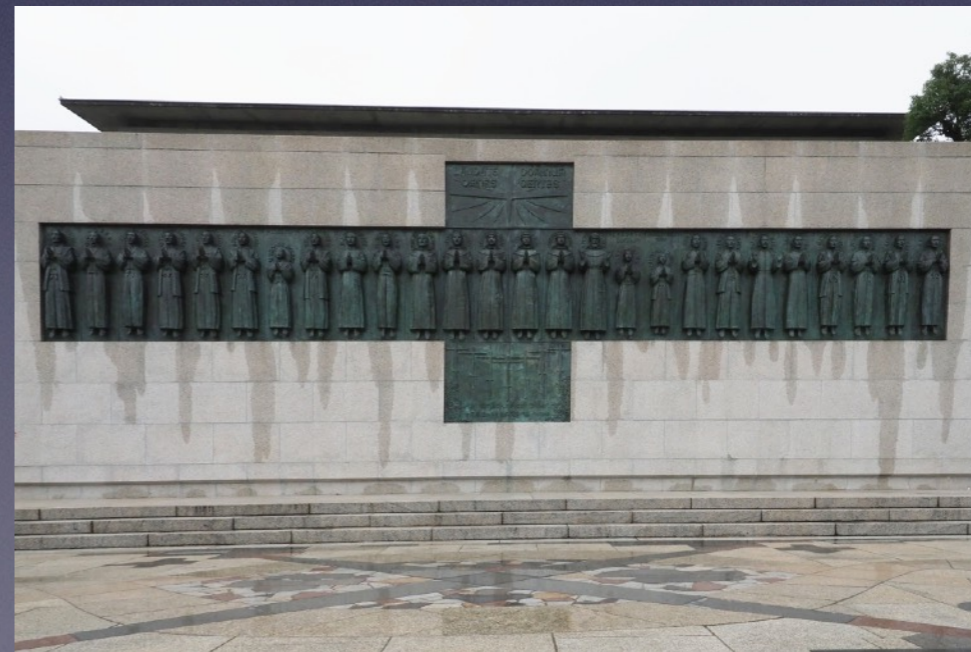
“lawless prowlers of the seas”



Japan



- Trade thrived
- Christianity deemed divisive
- 1588 & 1606 edicts banning christianity
- first martyrdoms of locals and Jesuits
- European confined to Nagasaki & Hirado
- 1616 Shogun issue expulsion order
- European trade through dijima only
- 1639 Portuguese banned; replaced by Dutch



Conclusions

- Massively disruptive impact on trading patterns
- Relative importance of themes varies in each location
- eg naval power crucial, except in Japan
- Shaped European trading relations for centuries
- Contributed to world view of European exceptionalism
- Africans, Indians and Japanese resistant to European diseases
- Gradual growth of *mestizo/mulatto* populations

Pattern of first contact very different from Americas