



- Should Americans celebrate Columbus Day?
- What makes an historical figure worthy of celebration?
- Should we make heroes/villains out of historical figures?
- Is it right to judge historical figures by modern standards?



# Big Things to Think About

- **Voyages of Exploration, Commerce & Conquest**
  - **Happening at the same time as Renaissance, Reformation, New European State Systems**
  - **Globalization Western Civilization**



# Long Term Consequences – with us today:

## – Cultural identity

- Language we speak
- Religious influence/  
institutions
- Philosophy
- Art, Architecture, Music
- Worldview

## – Political institutions

## – Global economy

## – “Third world” today → European Colonies

## – Western History inseparable with World History

## – You’re sitting in this class



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# Why did it happen?

- Europe was not more advanced economically, intellectually or technologically (except for military technology).
  - It was not inevitable
  - Why not China in the 15<sup>th</sup> C.?



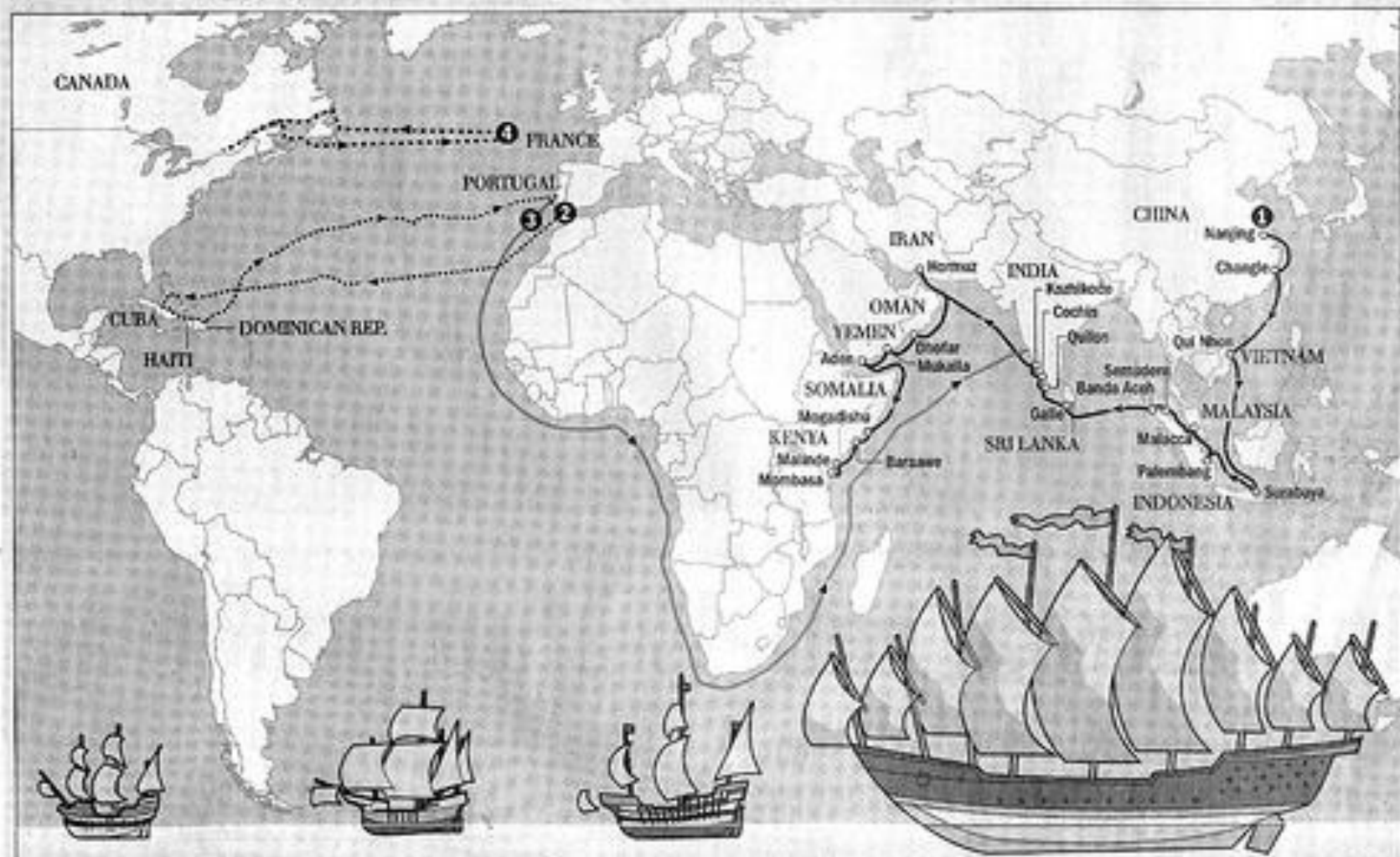


# To boldly go where no man has gone

Fifty-seven years before Christopher Columbus left on the voyage that would take him to the Americas and 62 years before Vasco de Gama sailed around the horn of Africa to India, Chinese explorer Zheng He had already covered all of south Asia's coastline and part of east Africa in a fleet of vessels that would have dwarfed the later explorers' ships.

**Main voyages**

- ① ——— Zheng He (1405)
- ② ..... Christopher Columbus (1492)
- ③ ——— Vasco da Gama (1497)
- ④ ..... Jacques Cartier (1534)



**La Grande Hermine:** 1534-1535  
 Navigator: Jacques Cartier  
 Length: 24 metres  
 Width: 4 metres

**Sao Gabriel:** 1497-1503  
 Navigator: Vasco da Gama  
 Length: 27.5 metres  
 Width: 9 metres

**Santa Maria:** 1492-1504  
 Navigator: Christopher Columbus  
 Length: 27.5 metres  
 Width: 9 metres

**Ming treasure ship:** 1405-1433  
 Navigator: Zheng He  
 Length: 123 metres  
 Width: 48 metres

*G&M AG*  
 2005 JUL 18





# Factors...

- Europe had had indirect commercial contact with Africa and Asia throughout Middle Ages
  - Most were aware of a wider world out there –  
**BUT**
    - Just because you know about it doesn't mean you're going to colonize it
- Ancient geographical writings recovered – Ptolemy (think classicism of the Renaissance)

Imagines

Imagines

Derived from Claudius Ptolemy – 2<sup>nd</sup> C. A.D.  
Cartography - Donnus Nicolaus Germanus 1482  
Available by 1477





# Factors... (GLORY)

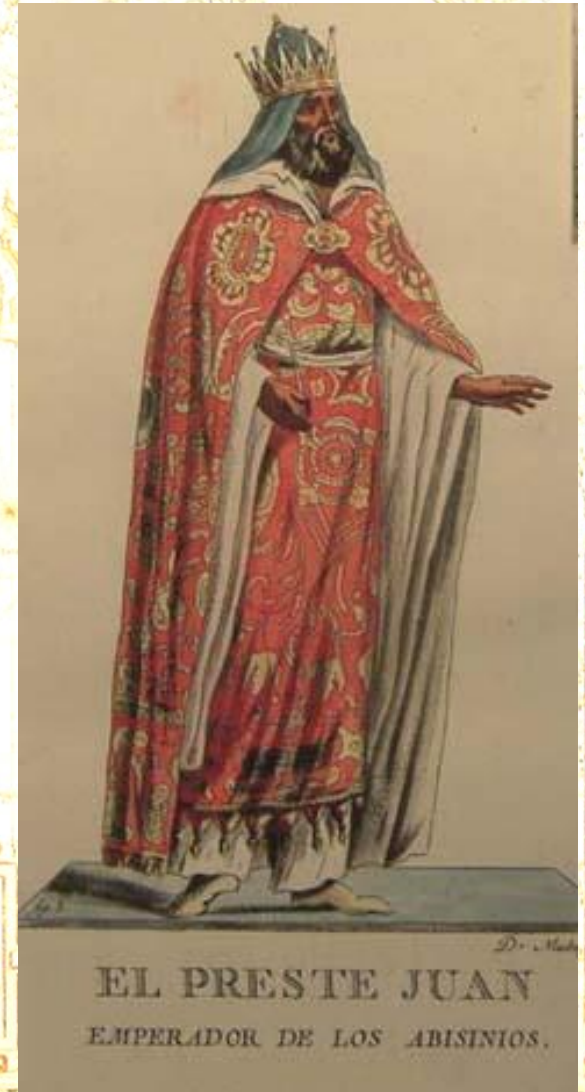
**Genuine and Fantastic stories  
widely read accounts of travels  
abroad**

## GENUINE

- **Marco Polo – Venetian – (13<sup>th</sup> C.)**
- **Italian merchant community  
resident in China – from about 1300**

## FANTASTIC

- **John Mandeville – English – (early  
14<sup>th</sup> C.) may have travelled**
- **Stories of Prester John – rumored  
to have converted far off Christian  
community – idea of uniting them  
with Europe**





# Factors... (GOD)

- Crusading spirit existed – Ignatius of Loyola – militant Catholicism

*“to serve God and His Majesty, to give light to those who were in darkness and to grow rich as all men desire to do.”*

-Bartolomeu Dias



**Reconquista**  
**1492**



# Factors... (GOLD)

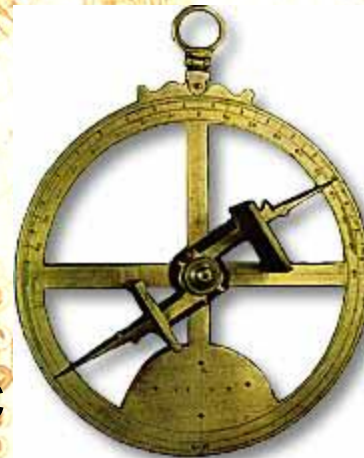
## Diplomatic and Political Scene

- Mongol empire (middle of 13<sup>th</sup> C.) opportunities to trade European travelers from central Asia to further eastern Asia
- Mongols chose Islam (Dominicans and Franciscans tried to convert to Christianity--failed) – became hostile to Christian merchants/travelers
- Mongols later overtaken by Ottoman Turks – (militantly Muslim)
  - Trade with far Asia - difficult, dangerous and sometimes closed Asia to trade w/ Europeans
  - Difficult for Venetians \*especially\*
  - Incentives to find other ways to get to the “orient”



# Factors...

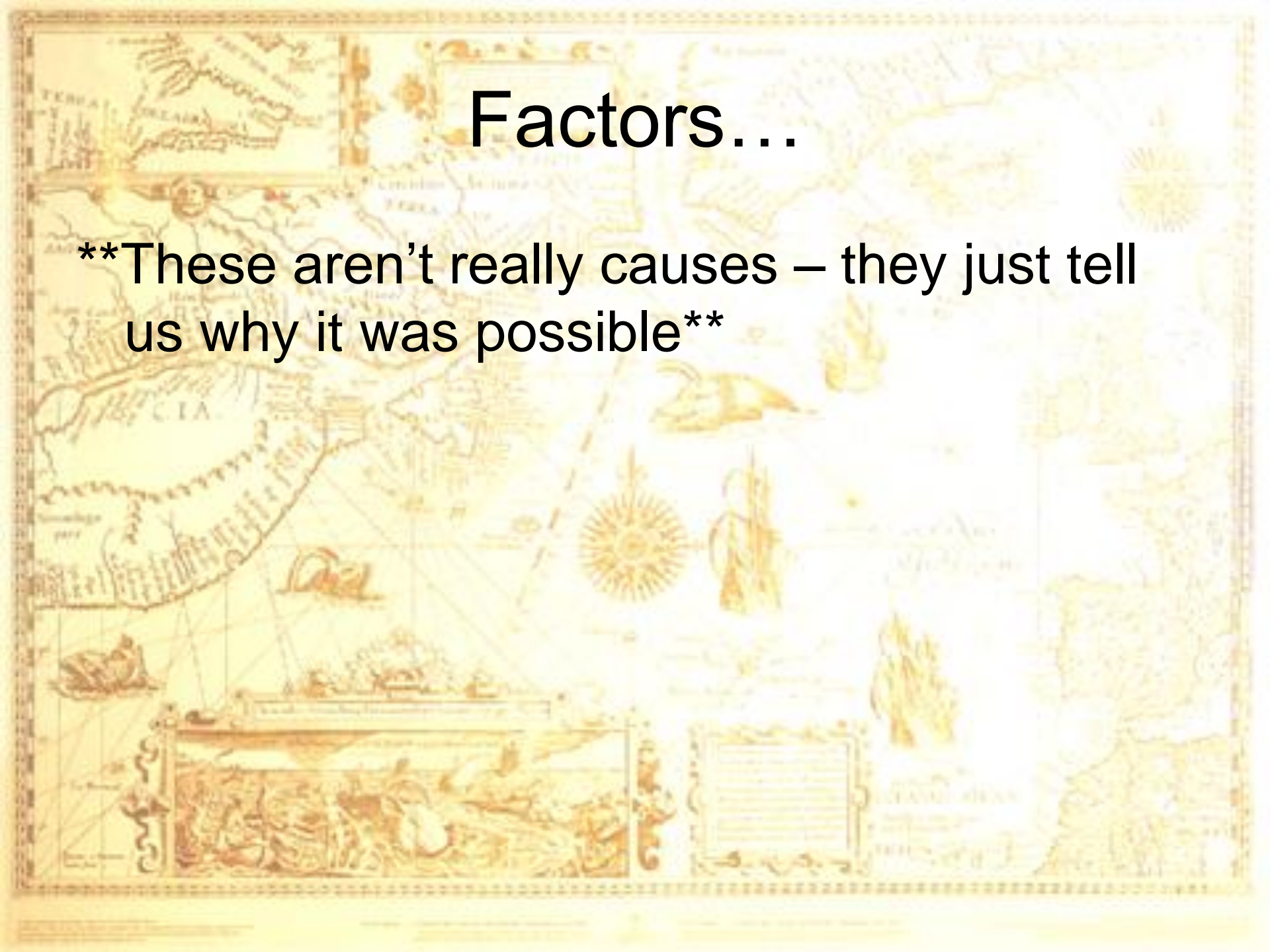
- 14<sup>th</sup>/15<sup>th</sup> C – better maps created
- Technological innovations – needle compass, better astrolabes for latitude prediction, caravel – large ships that could sail long distances w/ substantial hold
- Knowledge of wind patterns in the Atlantic
- Heavy cannon





# Factors...

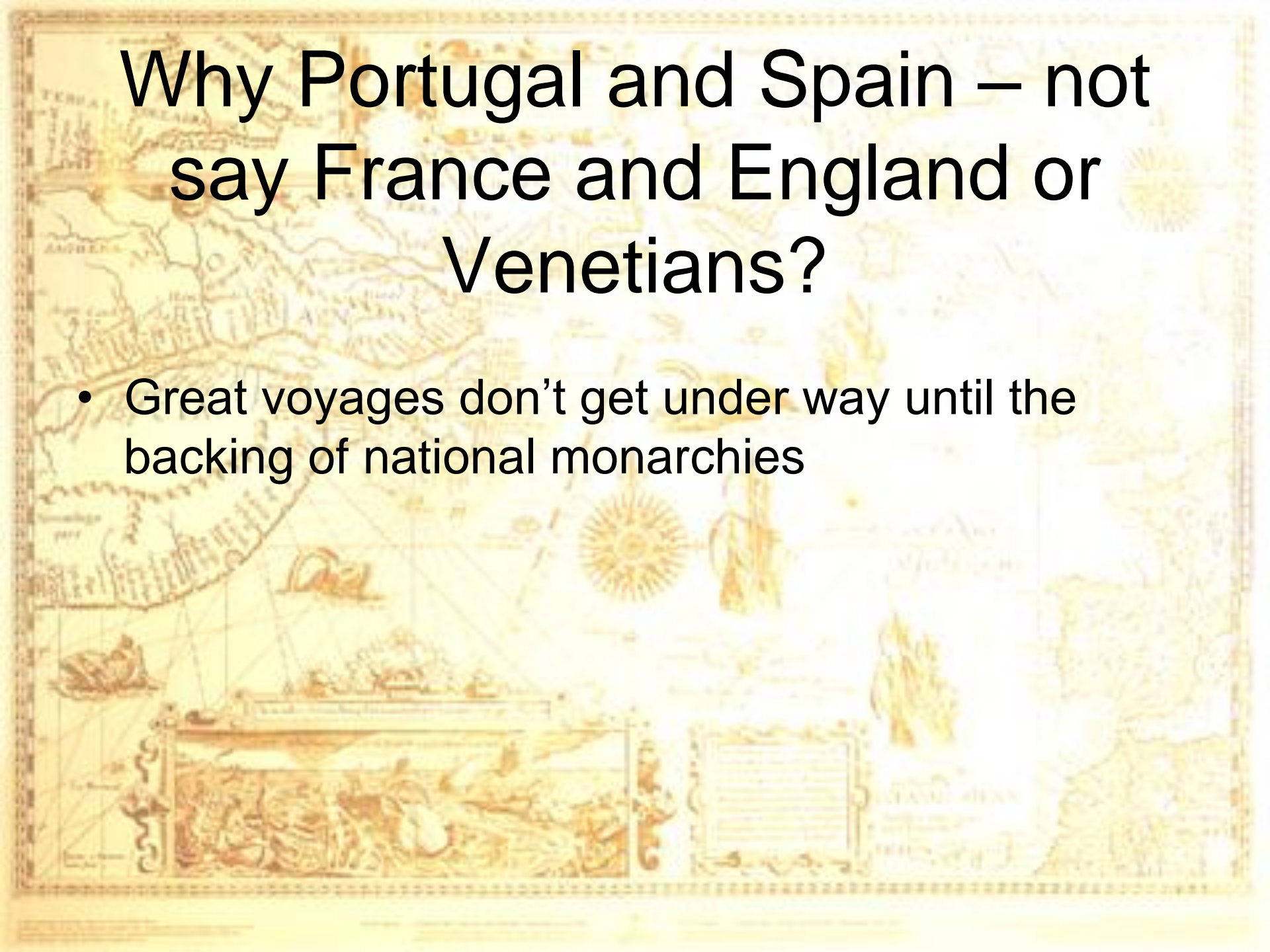
**\*\*These aren't really causes – they just tell us why it was possible\*\***





# Why Portugal and Spain – not say France and England or Venetians?

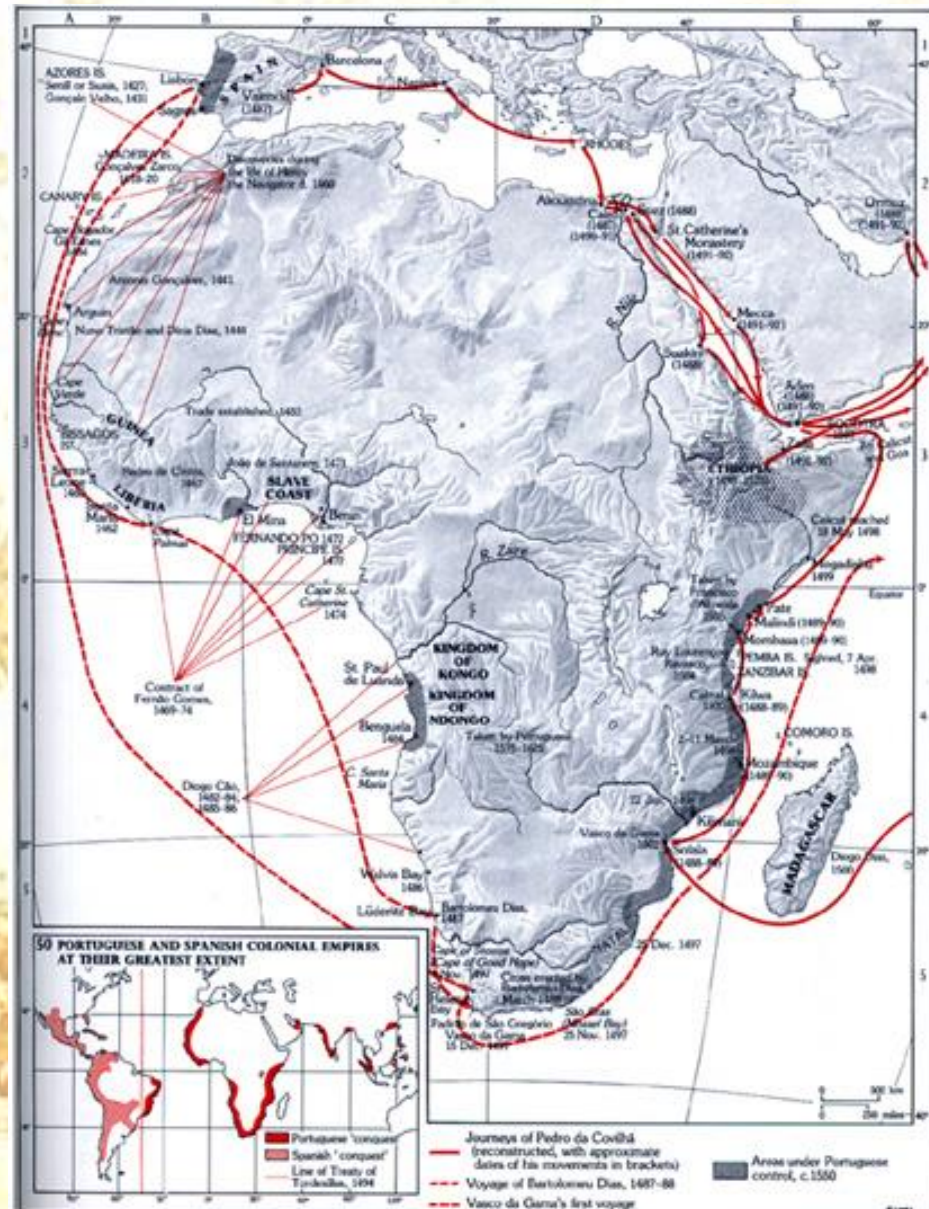
- Great voyages don't get under way until the backing of national monarchies





# Why Portugal?

Gold in the Niger river basin – there had been Iberians who traded over land with African traders (across the Sahara) – Berber tribesmen had cut these trade routes off









# The Portuguese...

- **Bartholomeu Dias** (1450-1500) – pushed further and further down the coast of Africa – discovered an end to “terra incognita”
- **Vasco Da Gama** (1460-1524) – following the wake of Diaz – to Calicut, India – left with 4 ships and 170 men – came back with only a fraction of seaman and a 1 ship – but with a cargo of spices worth **50-60 X cost of voyage**



Mossel Bay Fort –  
South Africa



Da Gama





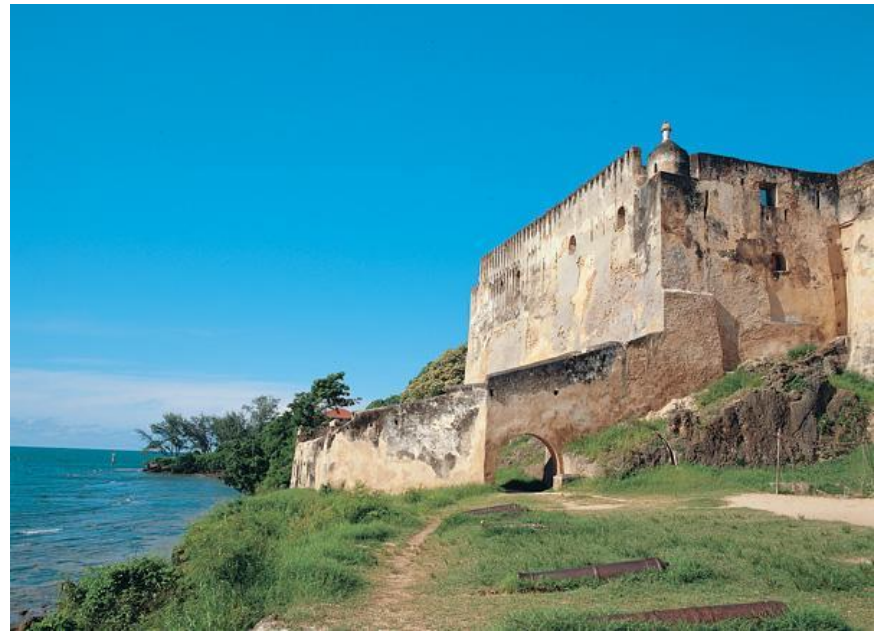
**Alfonso da Albuquerque (1453-1515)** – began arming his ships and secured armed bases in Indian ocean region (series of armed trading posts)

- Spice Trade – competition w/ and brutality toward Arabs
- IRONY – where did Portugal get the idea of cannons from?

» Forgers who made church bells – different sound & different results!

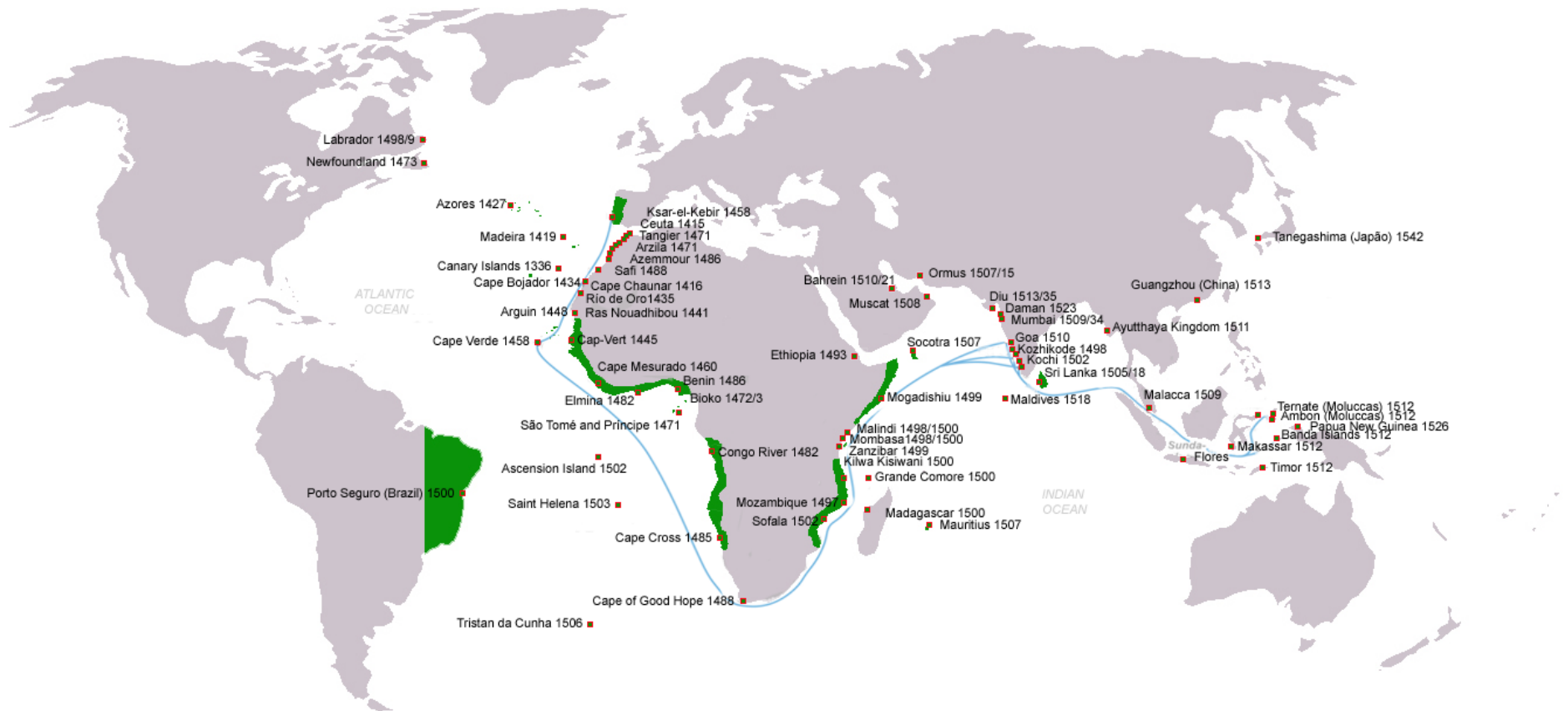
» This was a military technology never seen

- Limited settlement
- Local rulers in some cases eager to trade
- No imperial presence





# Portuguese Empire







Portuguese fort in Malacca



# Why Spain?

- Same incentives as Portuguese
- Distracted by Reconquista – finally fell in 1492
- Only recently began to be unified by marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella
- Concern about Portuguese success
- Commissioned Cristoforo Colombo (1451-1506) – Genoese sailor





# Columbus

- Monarchy - rather stingy
- Expert sailor
- Even better at self promotion
- Geographically deficient – Columbus misunderstood or misrepresented the known size of the globe – part of entrepreneurial skill? Part of success to convince Isabella?
- Shouldn't romanticize him/his voyages – silly things – people thought the world was flat ... men were brave...people had been sailing for a long time
- 3 small ships and 90 men – limited resources
- 1<sup>st</sup> voyage promising enough – sold it to the Spanish monarchy

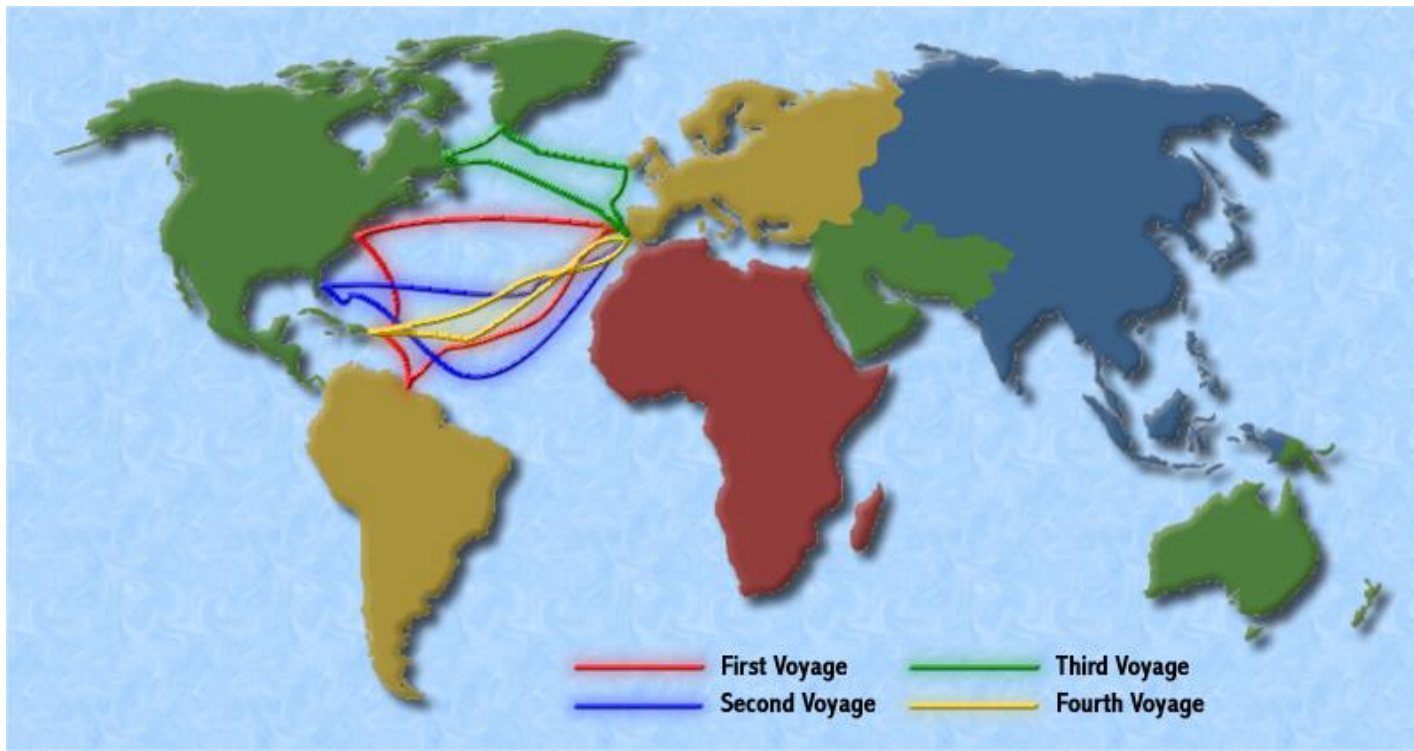




# Columbus (cont.)

## Columbus's Subsequent Voyages

- more voyages: 1493, 1498, 1502 – died wealthy, famous, but far short of his own dreams - unfulfilled – had not found the east, didn't know he had found New World – thought he had reached the islands off the coast of Japan (Cipango of Marco Polo fame...)
- Difference in scale between 1<sup>st</sup> voyage (3 ships, 90 men) vs. 2<sup>nd</sup> voyage (17 ships, 1700 men) – “wait and see attitude”





# Treaty of Tordesillas

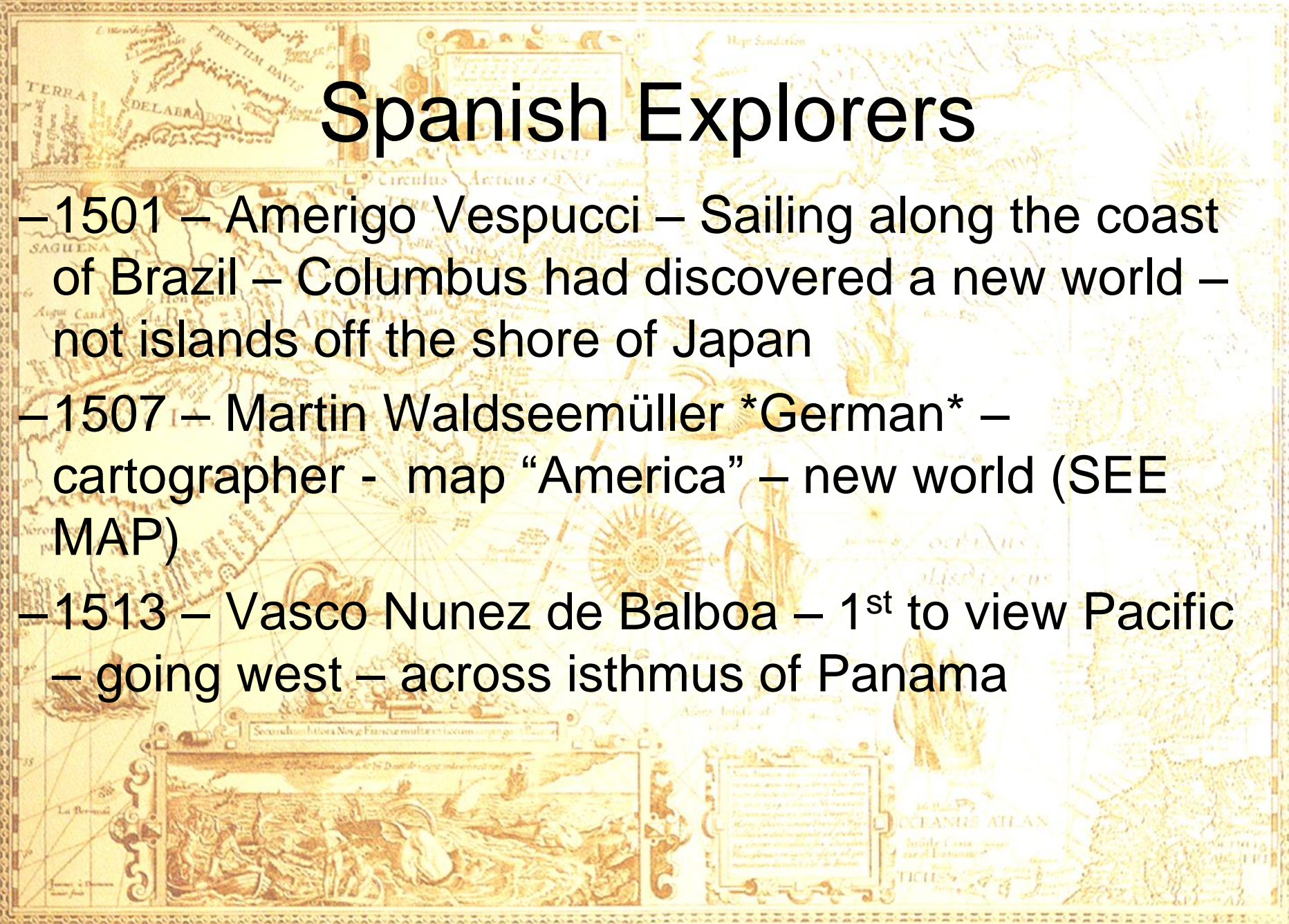
## Pope Alexander VI - 1494





# Spanish Explorers

- 1501 – Amerigo Vespucci – Sailing along the coast of Brazil – Columbus had discovered a new world – not islands off the shore of Japan
- 1507 – Martin Waldseemüller \*German\* – cartographer - map “America” – new world (SEE MAP)
- 1513 – Vasco Nunez de Balboa – 1<sup>st</sup> to view Pacific – going west – across isthmus of Panama

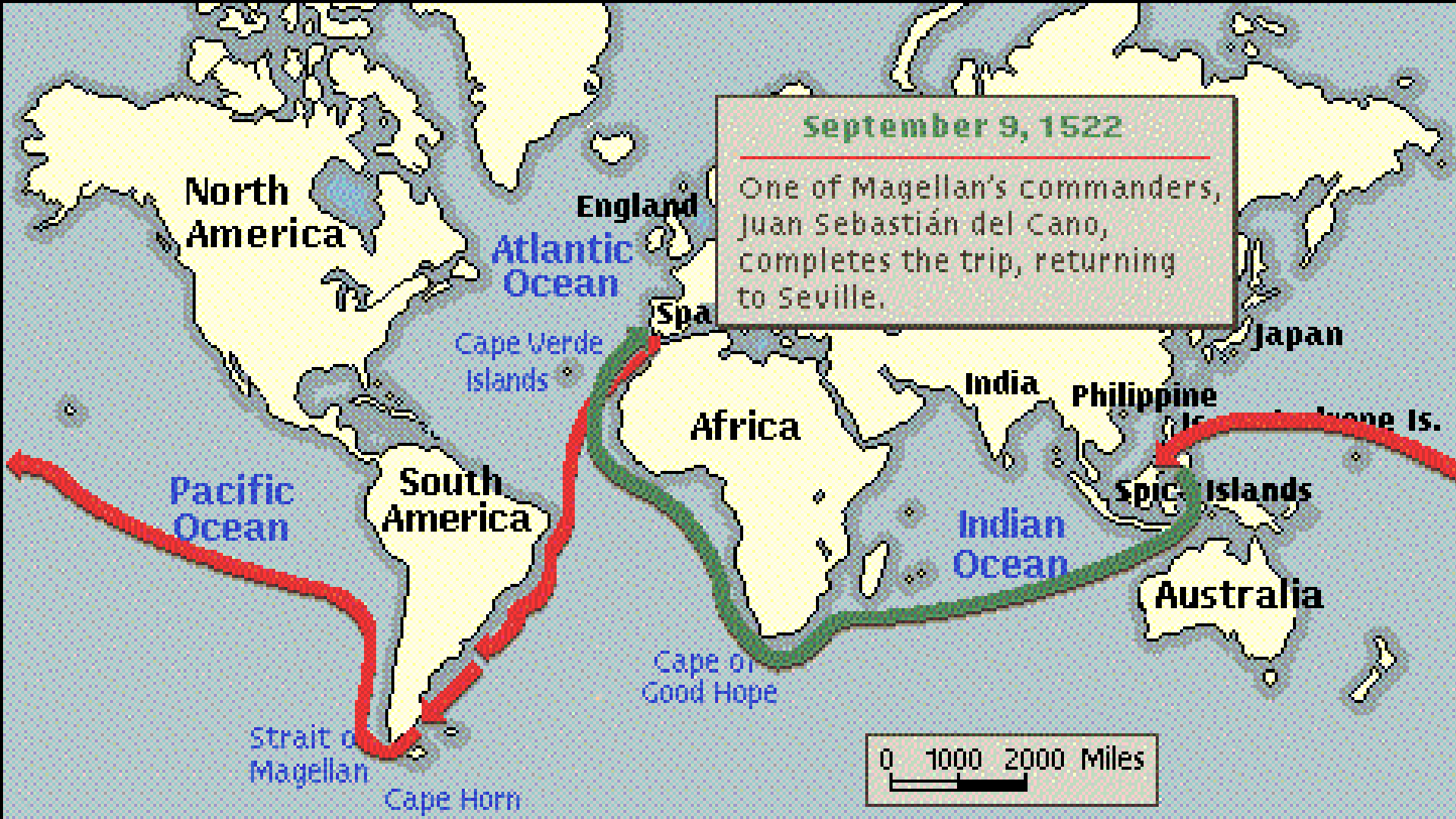






**Martin Waldseemüller Map – 1507**  
**“America”**

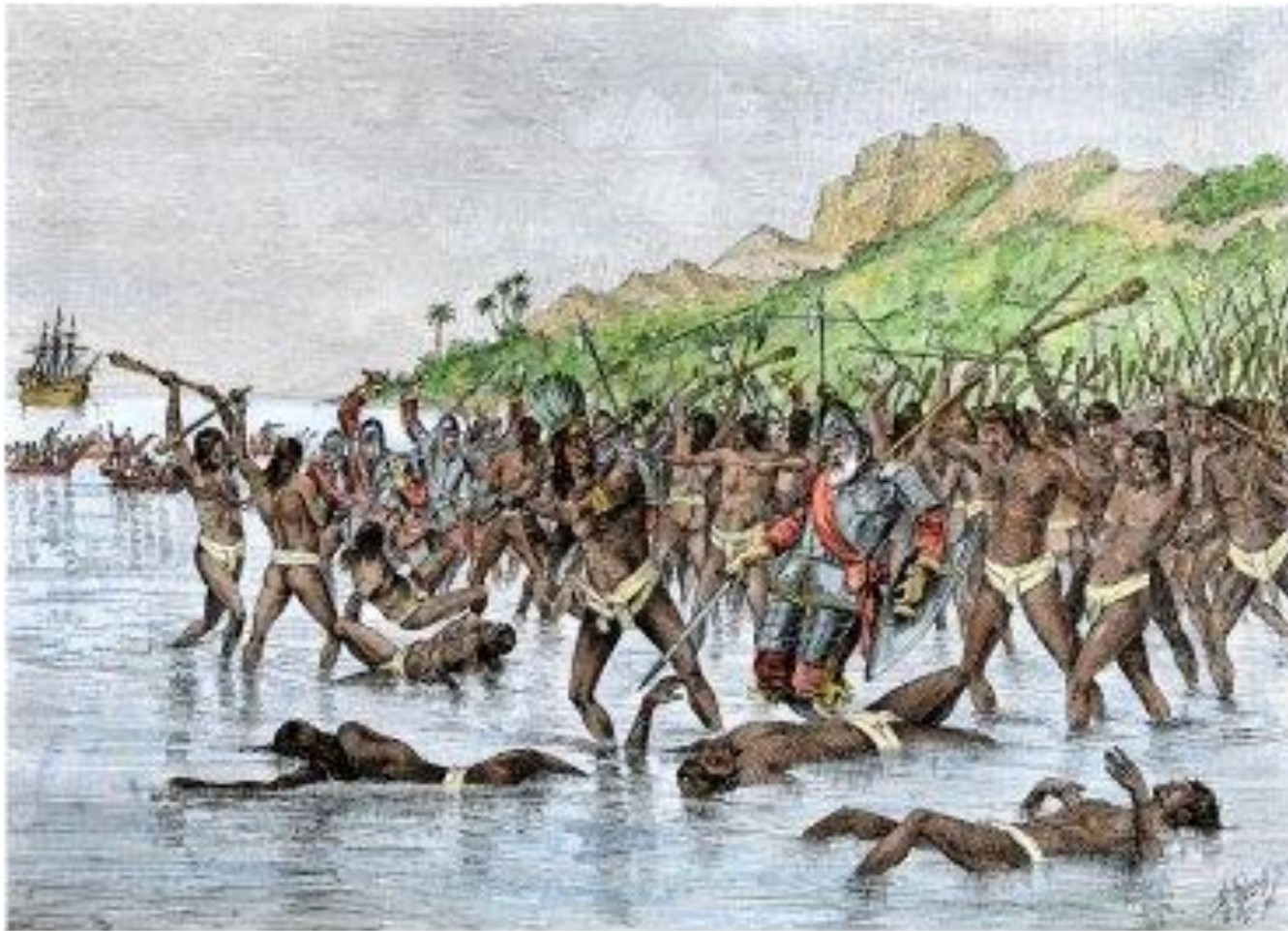




1519 – **Ferdinand Magellan** – set out to circumnavigate the globe – died in 1521 – Philippines – one of his ships made it back 1522 – clear sense of the size of the world and Pacific – and how far America was from Japan



September 9, 1522



“Magellan

Magellan – DEAD



# Later Spanish Explorers: Conquistadors

- » Hernan Cortes (1485-1546) – Initiated conquest of Mexico (1519)
- » Francisco Pissarro (1470-1571) – Initiated conquest of Peru (1531)

## BIG PICTURE...

1492-1600 – 200,000 Spaniards settled in new world

- » Most sophisticated imperial administration since Rome to exploit Spanish empire
- » By 1700 – native population may have decreased from 50 M to 5 M





# CONQUISTADORS

Hernando Cortes – (Spaniard) – Spain – 1st of the Spanish **Conquistadors** (conquerors) - Mexico, South America, US  
**(GOLD/GLORY)**



- Conquering of the **Aztecs** (1519)
  - 600 Spaniards under Cortes reached Tenochtitlan - capital of Aztec Empire
  - Montezuma II – mistook Cortez to be a god
  - Agreed to give Cortes generous supply of gold
  - Enslaved Aztecs to mine for gold/silver
  - 1520 – Aztecs repelled Spanish occupying force
  - 1521 – Spanish force under Cortes retook the empire
    1. Alliance with rival tribal groups
    2. Superior weapons
    3. Spanish aligned w/ local groups that resented Aztec rule
    4. Disease – mumps, small-pox, typhus



BOLCAHIDEHISTO  
AC 2



Handwritten text in a cursive script, likely a historical document or a transcription of a speech, located in the bottom left corner of the painting.



# Collection of 1<sup>st</sup> Hand accounts by Spanish clergyman (massacre at an Aztec religious festival...

*They began to sing again but without warning they were all put to death.*

*The dancers and the singers were completely unarmed. They brought only their embroidered cloaks, their turquoises, their lip plugs, their necklaces, their clusters of heron feathers, their trinkets made of deer hooves. Those who played the drums, the old men, had brought their gourds of snuff and their timbrels.*

*The Spanish attacked the musicians first, slashing at their hands and faces until they had killed all of them. The singers - and even the spectators - were also killed. This slaughter in the Sacred Patio went on for three hours. Then the Spaniards burst into the rooms of the temple to kill the others: those who were carrying water, or bringing fodder for the horses, or grinding meal, or sweeping the floor. . .*



# CONQUISTADORS

- Francisco Pizarro – 1533 – conquistador –  
S. America – conquered Inca Empire
- 200 men – defeated Inca force of 30,000 men
  - kidnapped leader, Atahualpa
  - offered ransom, made good on it, was strangled anyway

**(GOLD/GLORY)**



A D C A P. V.  
Franciscus Pizarrus, contra fidem datam, Atabalibæ  
gulam laqueo frangi iubet.

11



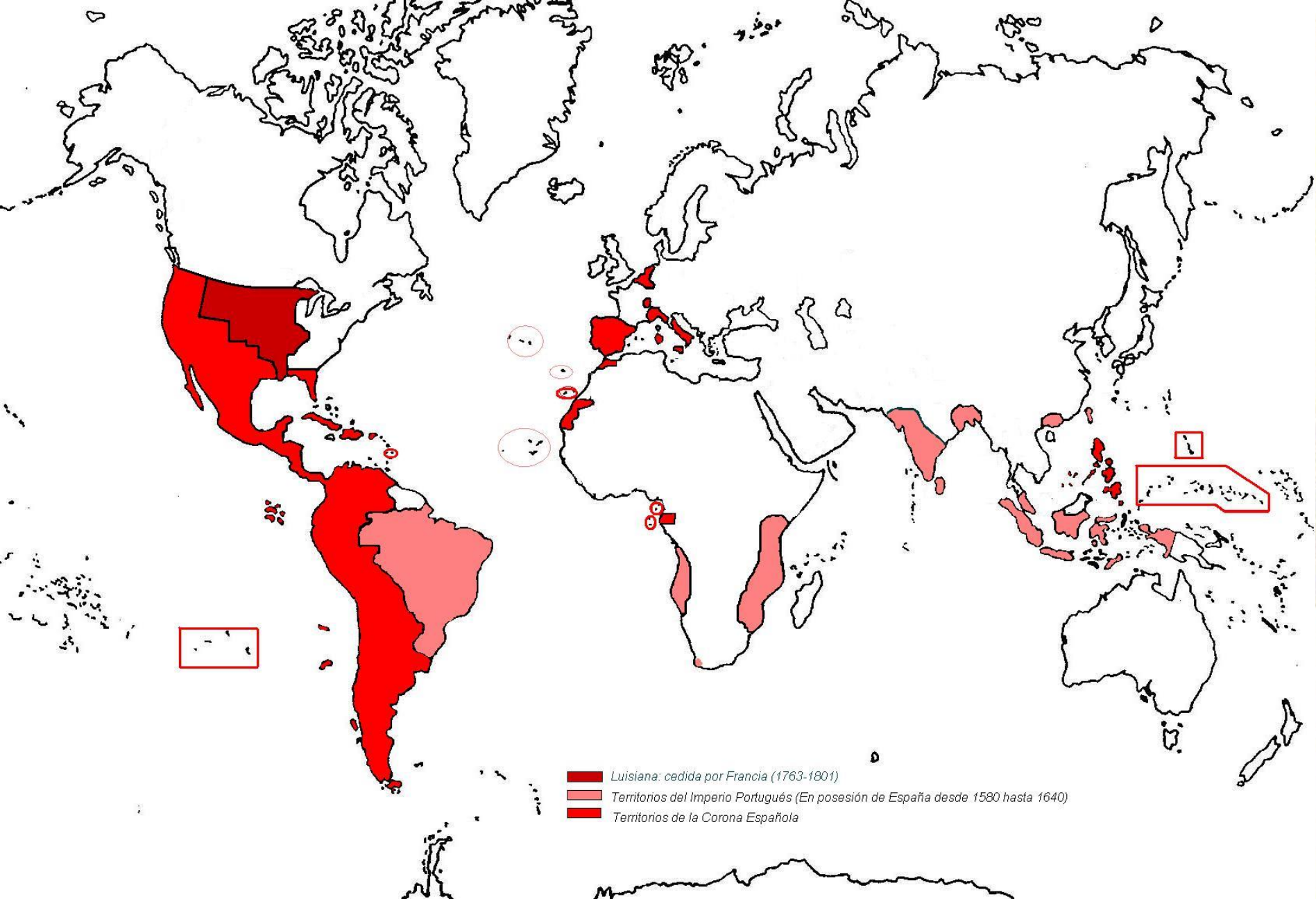
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**gar·rote**

*n.*

1. a. A method of execution formerly practiced in Spain, in which a tightened iron collar is used to strangle or break the neck of a condemned person.









# Spanish model – different from Portugal

- Portuguese – created trade stations
- Spanish – conquered land, introduced settlers, dominated natives, promoted agricultures, extracted raw materials – (tons of Gold/Silver)
  - » Encomienda system – paternalistic plantation and mining labor system
  - » Enormous amount of boullion went into Spain and went into different parts of Europe
  - » Important factor in spurring European economic growth





- Priests were sent (always along with Conquistadors) to colonize (imposition of culture) and convert natives in US  
“**GOD**”
- Priests tended to criticize Conquistadors for the harsh treatment of Native Americans – Spain eventually abolished the Encomienda system



# Abuse of Native Americans

- Medieval Europeans: Did Native Americans have souls?
- Revolts/Resistance by Native Americans
  - Columbus through the end of the 1600s
- Religious Oppression
  - Burned sacred objects
  - Prohibited rituals
  - Physical abuse
- Africans take place of Native Americans



# Disregard of the Treaty of Tordesillas

- Claiming of routes
  - Spain claimed Magellan's route around S. America to Asia
  - Northwest Passage sought through the N. America
  - French, English, Dutch
    - Colonies established



# Other Europeans Follow ...

- Later – North Europeans followed suit – French and English – looking for routes to Asia – NW Passage – northerly route?
  - John Cabot (1450-1499) – Newfoundland – St. Brendan (Ireland) Leif Erickson (NE Canada) –
  - England – bogged down with issues associated with the Reformation – intense political turmoil (century before they seriously got involved)
    - \*1607 – Jamestown, Plymouth/Mass. Bay (1620/1691)
  - Dutch Empire
  - French – Jacques Cartier (1491-1557) – sailed up the St. Lawrence River – potential NW passage – too distracted by political turmoil and religious strife – century later
  - Holy Roman Empire? – Close relations with Spanish \*ties to Reformation\*







# Overall Impact

- 14<sup>th</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup> C. – difficult/complex time for European Economy – growth and development attributed to opportunities outside of Europe – continued for next 4-5 centuries





# Columbian Exchange – Controversial

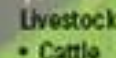
## The Columbian Exchange

NORTH AMERICA

EUROPE



- Disease
- Smallpox
  - Influenza
  - Typhus
  - Measles
  - Malaria
  - Diphtheria
  - Whooping Cough



- Livestock
- Cattle
  - Sheep
  - Pigs
  - Horses

AFRICA

AMERICAS TO EUROPE, AFRICA, AND ASIA

EUROPE, AFRICA, AND ASIA TO AMERICAS





# Columbian Exchange (cont.)

- Diseases – moved in both directions

- Syphilis to Europe ...and...
- Tuberculosis, Small Pox, Diphtheria, measles whooping cough, yellow fever, scarlet fever, bubonic plague, chicken pox, malaria, typhoid, influenza
- 90% died in some areas
- Tragedy (unintended consequence)

- Animals

- To Americas: cattle, sheep, chickens, horses, donkeys, goats, pigs, dogs/cats

- Plants

- To new world: oats, barley, wheat ... and dandelions to new world
- To Europe (maize, potatoes, sweet potatoes to Europe)

**It was Europeans that reached out – enormous consequences**