

Making of the Western Mind

Institute for the Study

Western Civilization

Week 21: Columbus

Nina

Santa Maria

Pinta







1451-1506

Was Columbus important?

Columbus's voyages (plus Vespucci, Magellan, Drake) were some of the most important events in world history, opening up the whole earth to modern global exchange and resulting in major demographic, commercial, economic, social, and political changes. These explorations resulted in the permanent contact between the two hemispheres for the first time **in all of human history**. There was a massive exchange of animals, plants, fungi, diseases, technologies, mineral wealth and ideas and the creation of one world for the first time in history.

President Barack Obama on Columbus;

"Columbus's historic voyage ushered in a new age, and since, the world has never been the same."

“Columbus's historic voyage ushered in a new age, and since, the world has never been the same. His journey opened the door for generations of Italian immigrants who followed his path across an ocean in pursuit of the promise of America. Like Columbus, these immigrants and their descendants have shaped the place where they landed. Italian Americans have enriched our culture and strengthened our country. They have served with honor and distinction in our Armed Forces, and today, they embrace their rich heritage as leaders in our communities and pioneers of industry. On Columbus Day, we reflect on the moment the world changed. And as we recognize the influence of Christopher Columbus, we also pay tribute to the legacy of Native Americans and our Government's commitment to strengthening their tribal sovereignty. We celebrate the long history of the American continents and the contributions of a diverse people, including those who have always called this land their home and those who crossed an ocean and risked their lives to do so. With the same sense of exploration, we boldly pursue new frontiers of space, medicine, and technology and dare to change our world once more.”

OTHER MODERN EARTH SHATTERING MOMENTS

1. Galileo-Copernicus



2. Van Leeuwenhoek microscope



3. 1628 William Harvey circu blood=heart "de motu cordis" circu blood



The Great Transition (1300-1600)

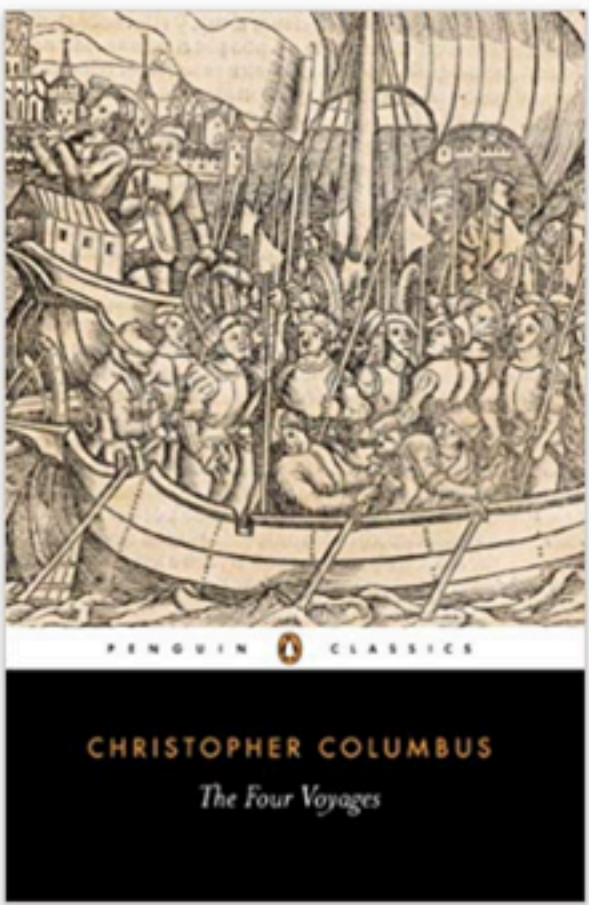
1. The emergence of the modern state. (justice / army / taxes)
2. The emergence of modern diplomacy.
3. The creation of the modern standing army. (vs feudal levy)
4. The creation of modern taxation. (vs feudal)
5. The creation of vernacular literary culture. (vs internat. Latin)
6. The creation of a secular culture. (vs church: Petrarch. Humanists)
and of idea of secular virtue. (vs Christ.) Petrarch.
7. The creation of modern vision-perspective. (Brunelleschi / Mas)
8. The creation of modern religion. (national / Protestant / democratic)
9. The creation of modern democratic ideas of republican government in Europe and the theoretical literature that accompanies the experiments. Italy & England (Machiavelli / Guicciardini).
- 10 The creation of modern science (Galileo, Harvey, Van Leeuwenhoek)

The Four Voyages of Christopher Columbus (Classics Book 217) New Ed Edition, Kindle Edition

by [Christopher Columbus](#) (Author), [J. Cohen](#) (Translator)

★★★★☆ 35 customer reviews

[Look inside](#)



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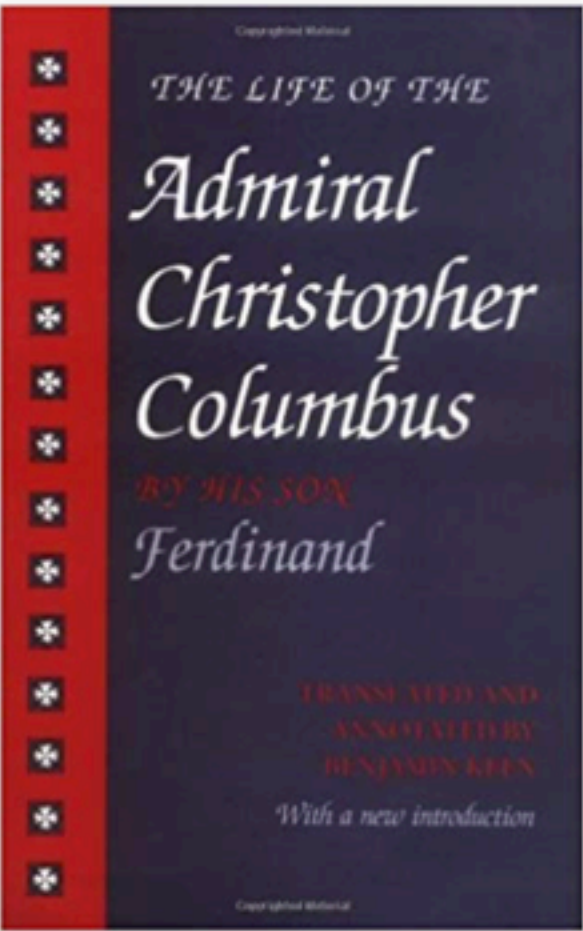
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The Life of the Admiral Christopher Columbus: by his Son Ferdinand Revised Edition, Kindle Edition

by Benjamin Keen (Editor)

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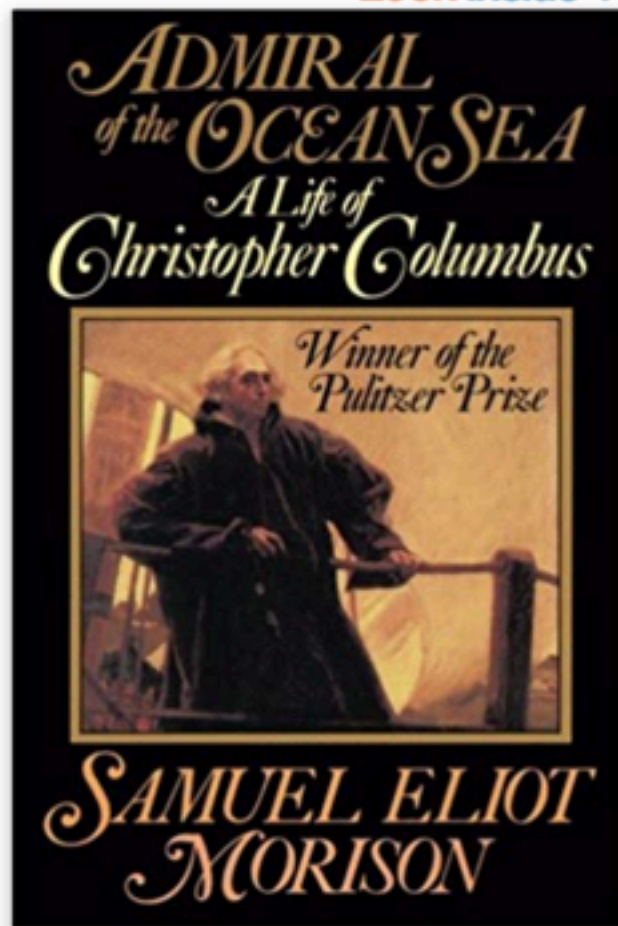
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Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Christopher Columbus

Paperback – October 12, 1991

by [Samuel Eliot Morison](#) (Author)

★★★★☆ [56 customer reviews](#)

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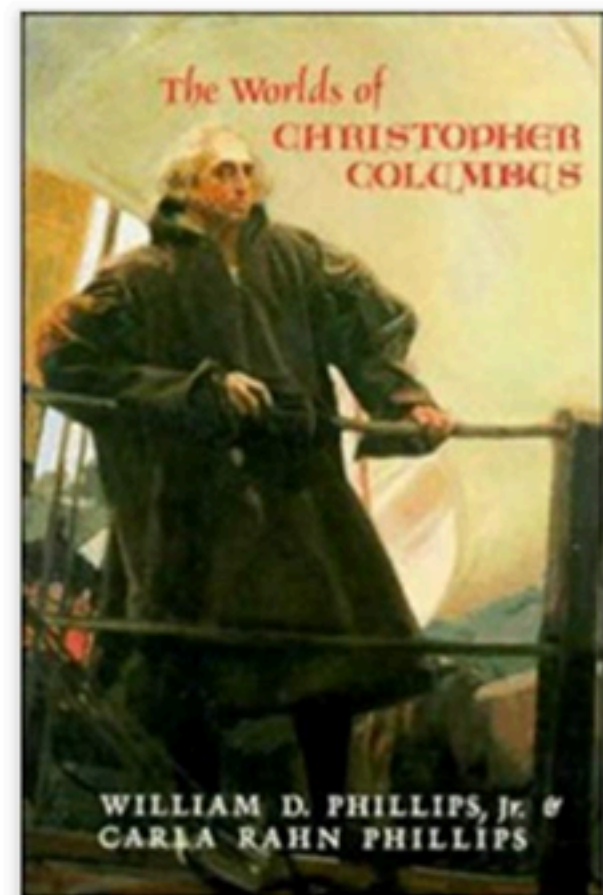
William H. Phillips and Carla Rahn Phillips

The Worlds of Christopher Columbus 1st Edition Edition

by [William D. Phillips Jr](#) (Author), [Carla Rahn Phillips](#) (Author)

★★★★☆ 7 customer reviews

[Look inside](#)



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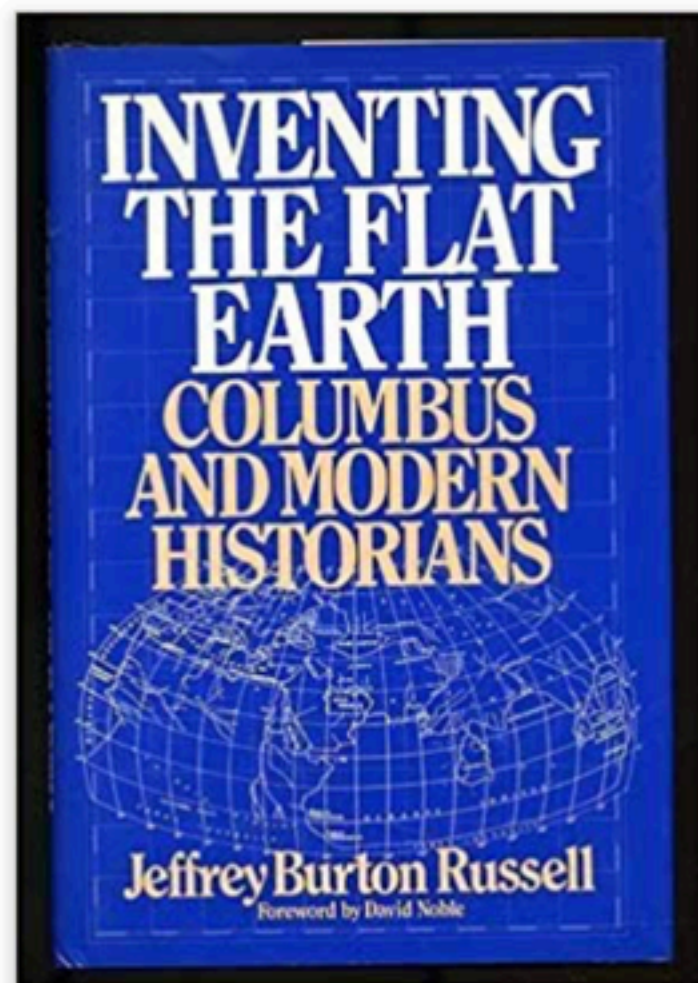
[Why is ISBN important?](#)

Books › Science & Math › Earth Sciences

Inventing the Flat Earth: Columbus and Modern Historians 1st Edition Edition

by [Jeffrey Burton Russell](#) (Author)

★★★★★ 6 customer reviews



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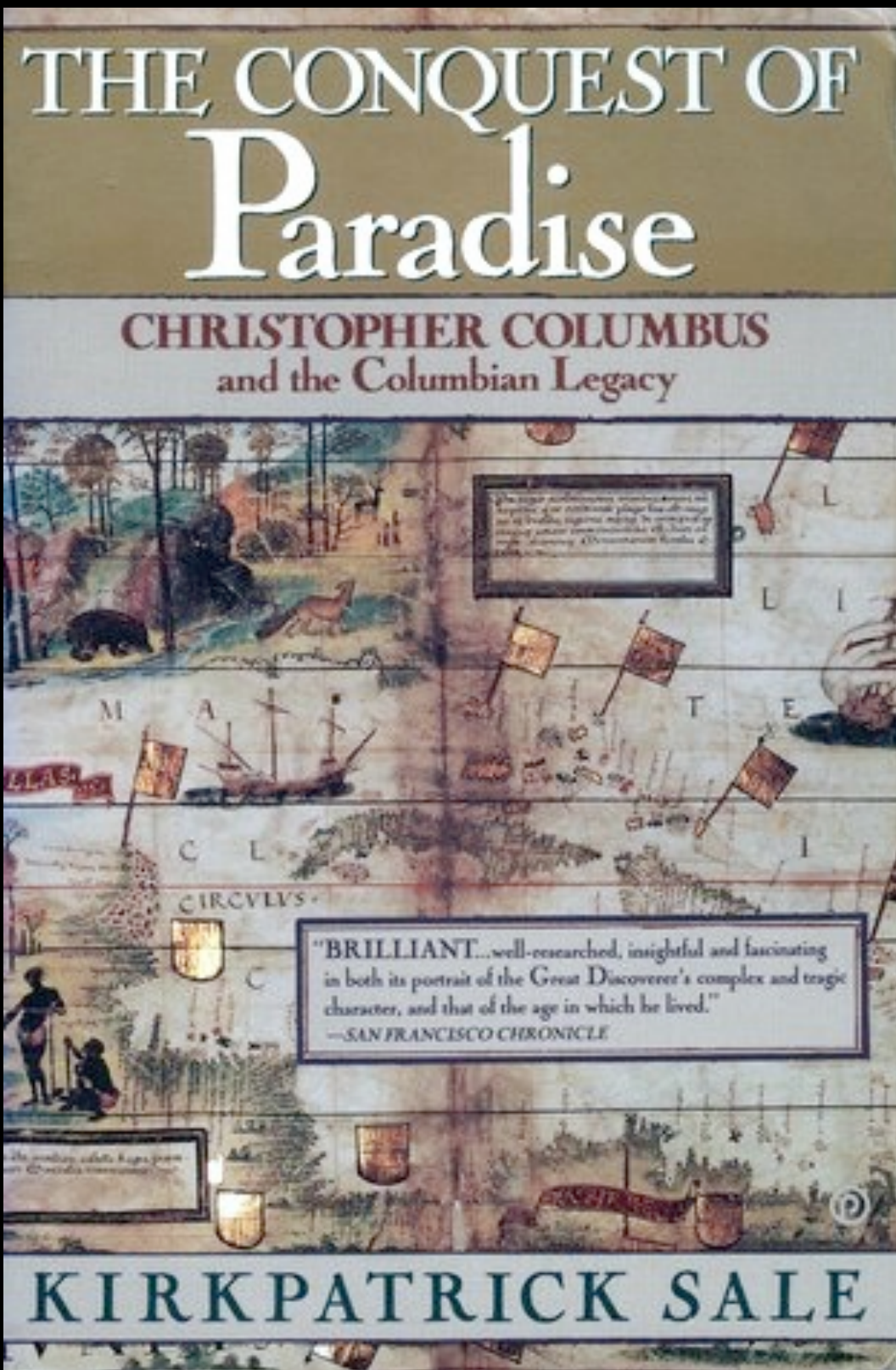
ISBN-13: 978-0275939564

ISBN-10: 0275939561

[Why is ISBN important?](#)

Neither Christopher Columbus, nor his contemporaries, believed the earth was flat. Yet the curious illusion persists today, firmly established with the help of the media, textbooks,

Columbus: 1992-2019



"A unique storytelling and musical experience."
—USA Today

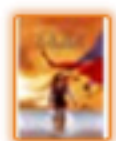
audible ORIGINAL
JAMES TAYLOR
BREAK SHOT



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1492: Conquest of Paradise (1992)

[Gerard Depardieu](#) (Actor), [Sigourney Weaver](#) (Actor), & 1 more

| Rated: **PG-13** | Format: DVD

★★★★☆ 617 ratings | **IMDb** 6.5/10

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The 21st Century Attack on Columbus, that he should never have come to the American continent is an attack on Western Civilization itself.

The critics think that Western Civ is evil, bad, oppressive, misogynist, homophobic, etc

In essence this attack is an attack on
1. science 2. progress 3. intellectual exploration.

It is essentially static. Everything should stay the same. It is regressive. The opposite of Progress, the driving force of Western Civilization.



July 25(?), 1451 to May 20, 1506 (55)



Genova



Christopher Columbus and Genova







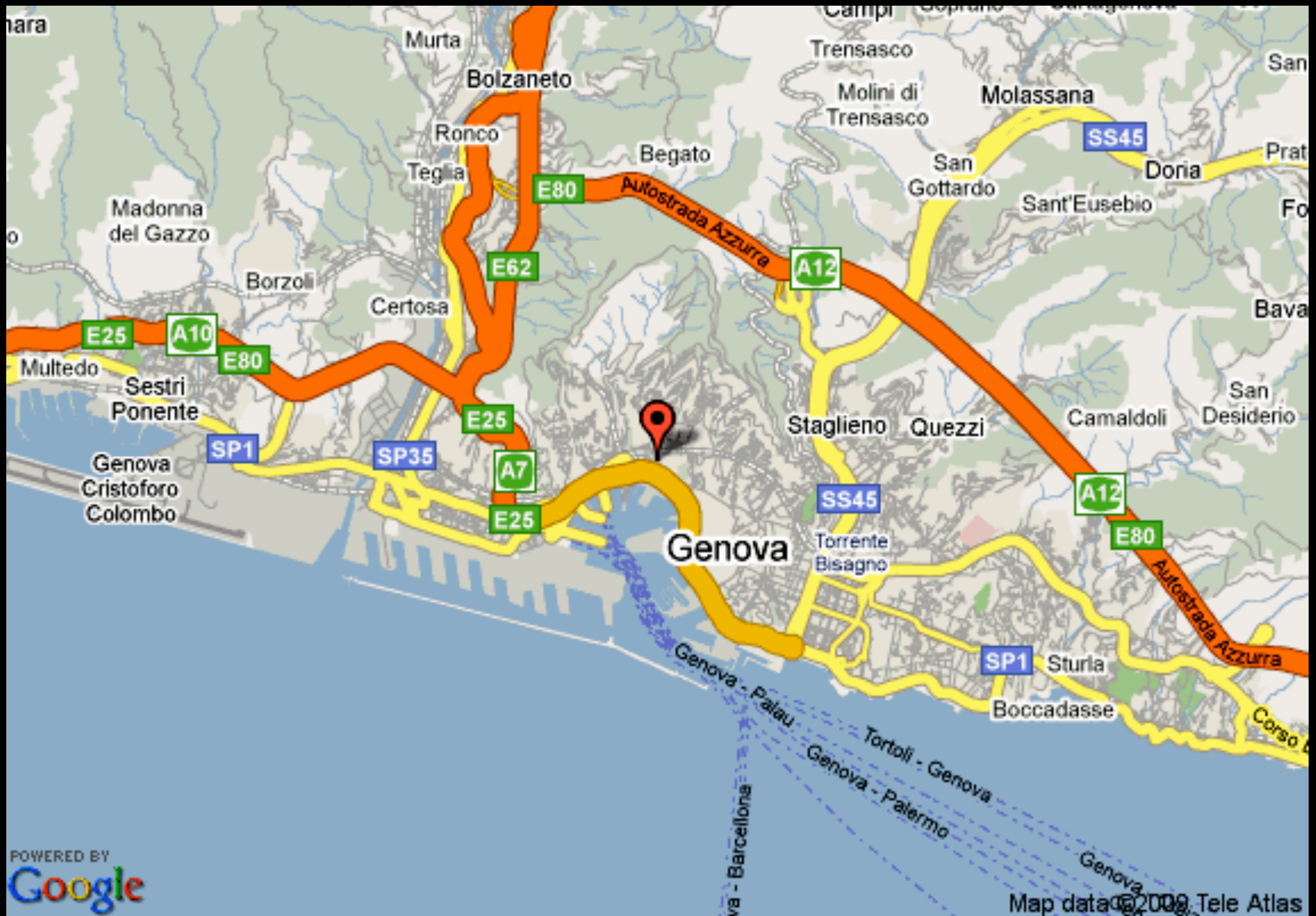
GENOA





Geographically, Liguria holds little meadowlands, with most of its terrain rising from tropical coastline sharply up to mountainous areas. The forested hills grow wild with pine trees, providing the fresh tang of pine nuts for Ligurian dishes. Mushrooms and chestnuts abound in the hills, as do rabbits and other wild game, making the region ideal for producing hearty and rustic country flavors. The warm Mediterranean air helps create good conditions for growing olives (producing exceptionally light flavored oil), wine grapes, corn, herbs (particularly basil), garlic, chickpeas, zucchini (especially the blossoms, which cooks stuff), potatoes, onions and artichokes. Because of its wide coastline, fish and shellfish are the predominant proteins used in Ligurian cooking.





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Map data © 2009 Tele Atlas





Genova, Liguria

The city cemetery, dating from the 6th and 5th centuries BC, testifies to the occupation of the site by the Greeks, but the fine harbor probably saw use much earlier, perhaps by the Etruscans

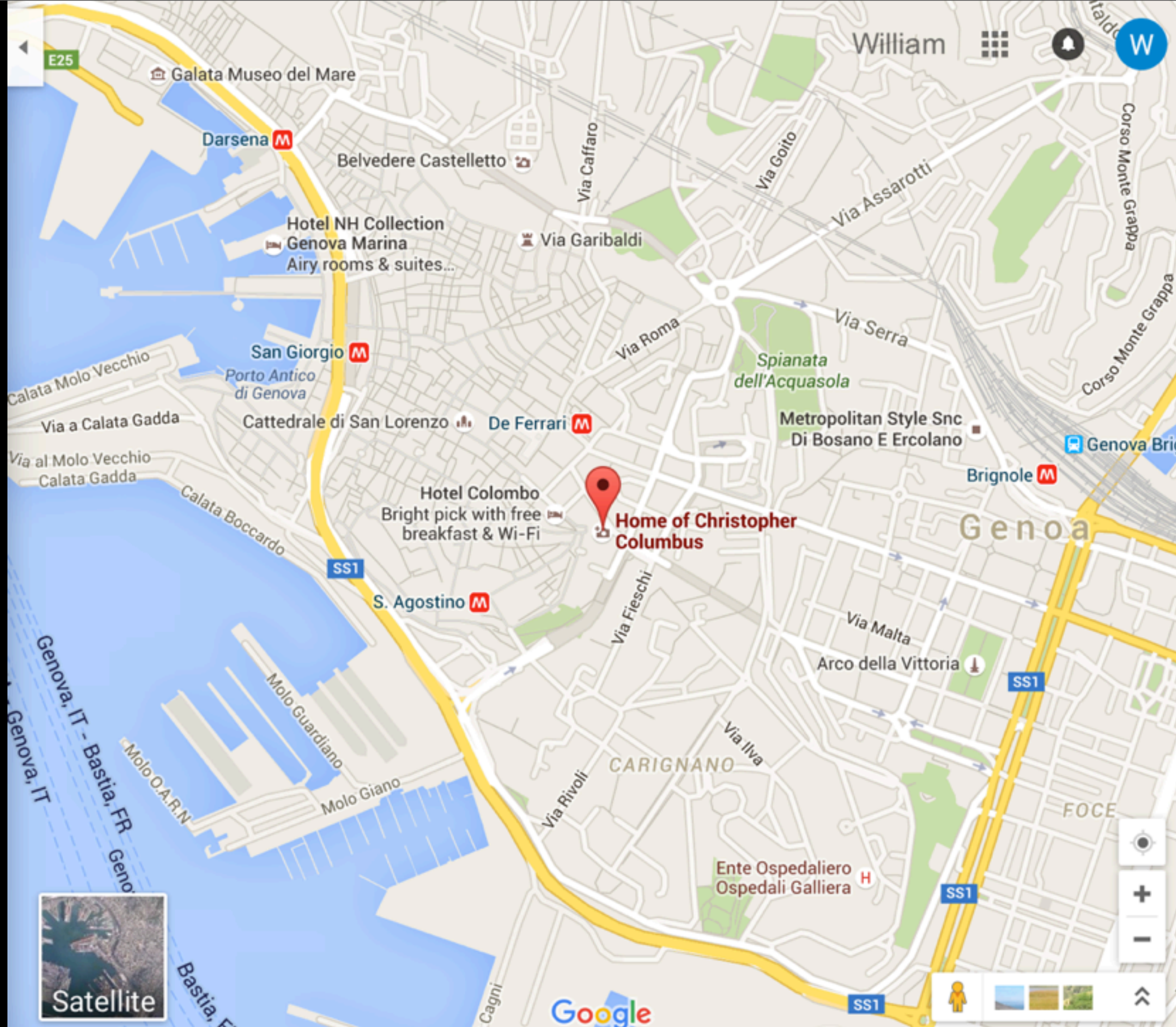


The city's current name derives from the Latin word meaning "knee" (*genu*; plural, *genua*), from its geographical position at the centre of the Ligurian coastal arch.

Columbus Neighborhood in Genova









COLUMBUS AS ITALIAN NAVIGATOR AND THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE COLUMBIAN DISCOVERIES





About 1000, Genoa emerged as an independent city-state, one of a number of Italian city-states during this period. Nominally, the Holy Roman Emperor was overlord and the Bishop of Genoa was president of the city; however, actual power was wielded by a number of "consuls" annually elected by popular assembly. Genoa was one of the so-called "Maritime Republics" (*Repubbliche Marinare*), along with Venice, Pisa, and Amalfi and trade, shipbuilding and banking helped support one of the largest and most powerful navies in the Mediterranean



Emergence of
the Italian
Maritime
Republics:
900-1300

1. Venice
2. Genoa
3. Pisa
4. Amalfi
5. Ancona

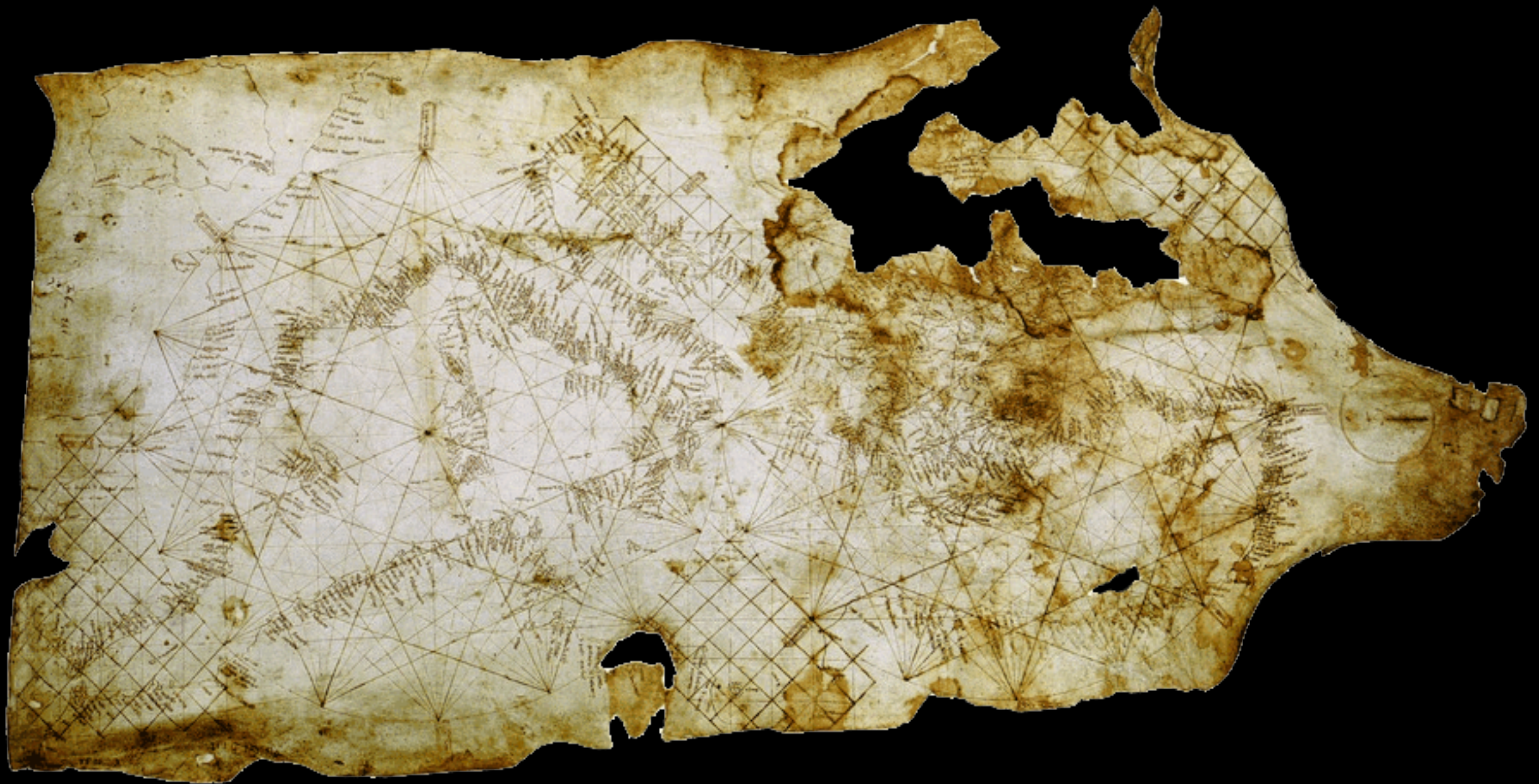


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Pisa: MAPS





Carta Pisana, 1275

The ***Carta Pisana*** is a map made at the end of the 13th century, about 1275-1300. It was found in Pisa, hence its name. It shows the whole Mediterranean, the Black Sea and a part of the atlantic coast, from the north of present-day Morocco (down to roughly the 33rd parallel north, with the town of Azemmour to the present-day Netherlands, but the accuracy of the map is mostly limited to the Mediterranean. It is the oldest surviving nautical chart (that is, not simply a map but a document showing accurate navigational directions). It is a portolan chart, showing a detailed survey of the coasts, and many ports, but bears no indication on the topography of the inland. On the map, North is on the top, in contrast to other maps of the same period such as the Hereford Mappa Mundi (ca. 1300), where East is on the top.

Now navigators have maps plus the compass.

The Compass: Amalfi

1. earth is giant magnet

2. Chinese discover magnetism in rocks

3. **Chinese** do NOT develop magnet
as navigational tool til 1116

earlier they use for divination

4. compass first mentioned in **West** 1187

5. marine compass in West: **Italians**

6. marine compass invented in Amalfi
portable, covered (box), N S E W indication

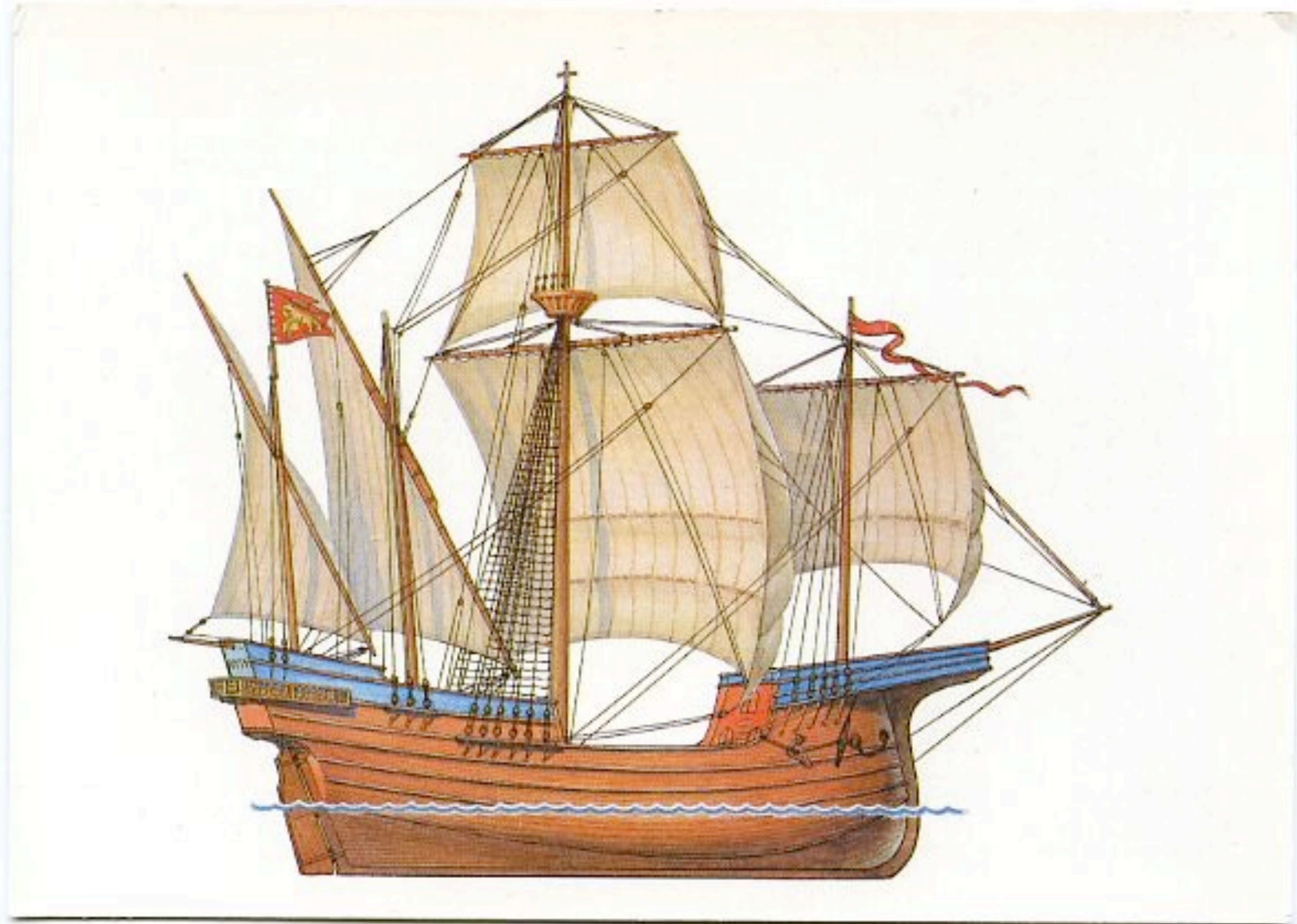
7. allows all weather sailing, night

8. **we are certain compass in use 1275-1300**

9. compass works with speed & time
for “dead reckoning” ie straight path set
with compass



THE SHIPS



Ships: Portugal, La Caravela



“Lateen” sail (Latine from word meaning Latin)



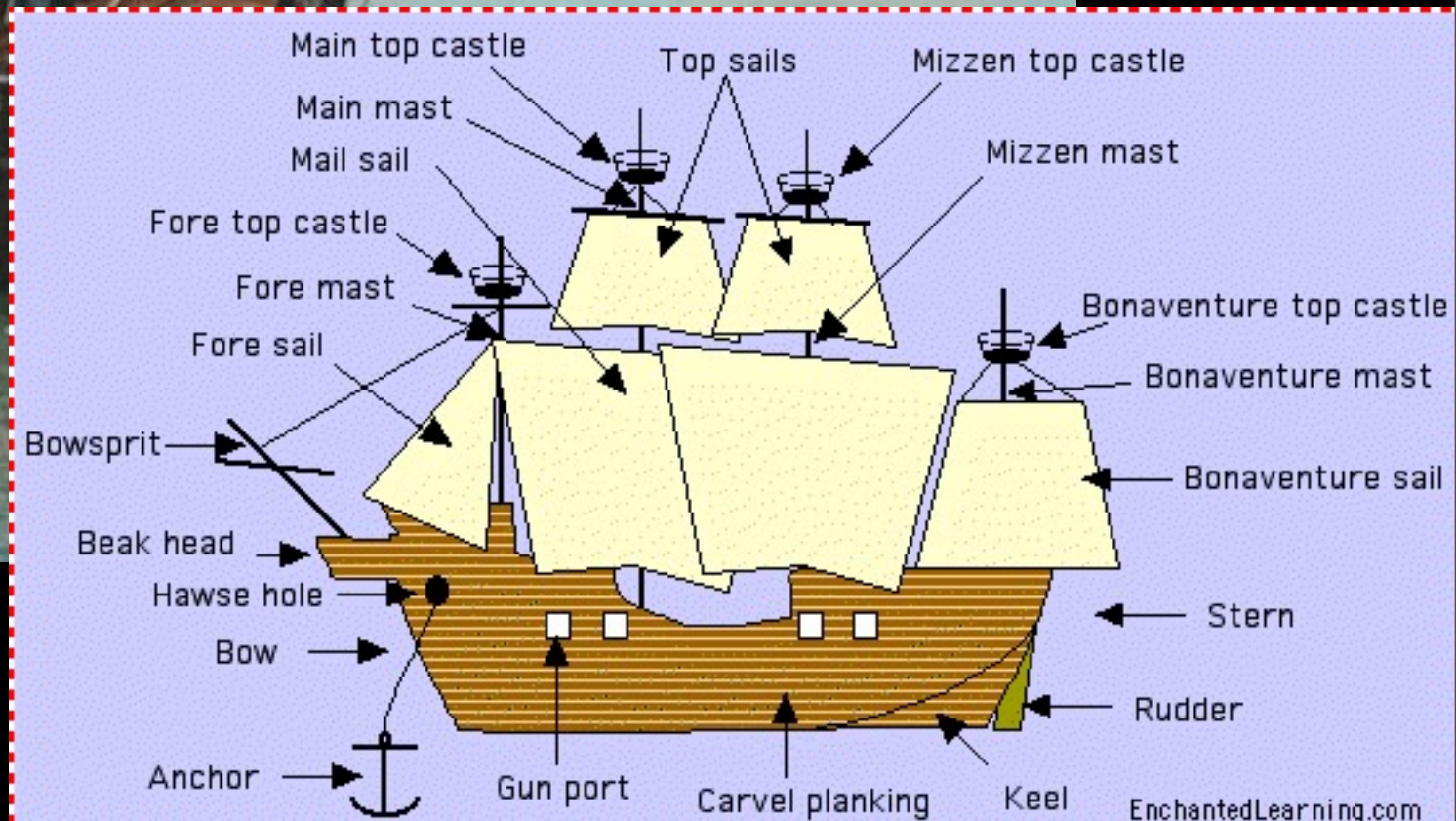
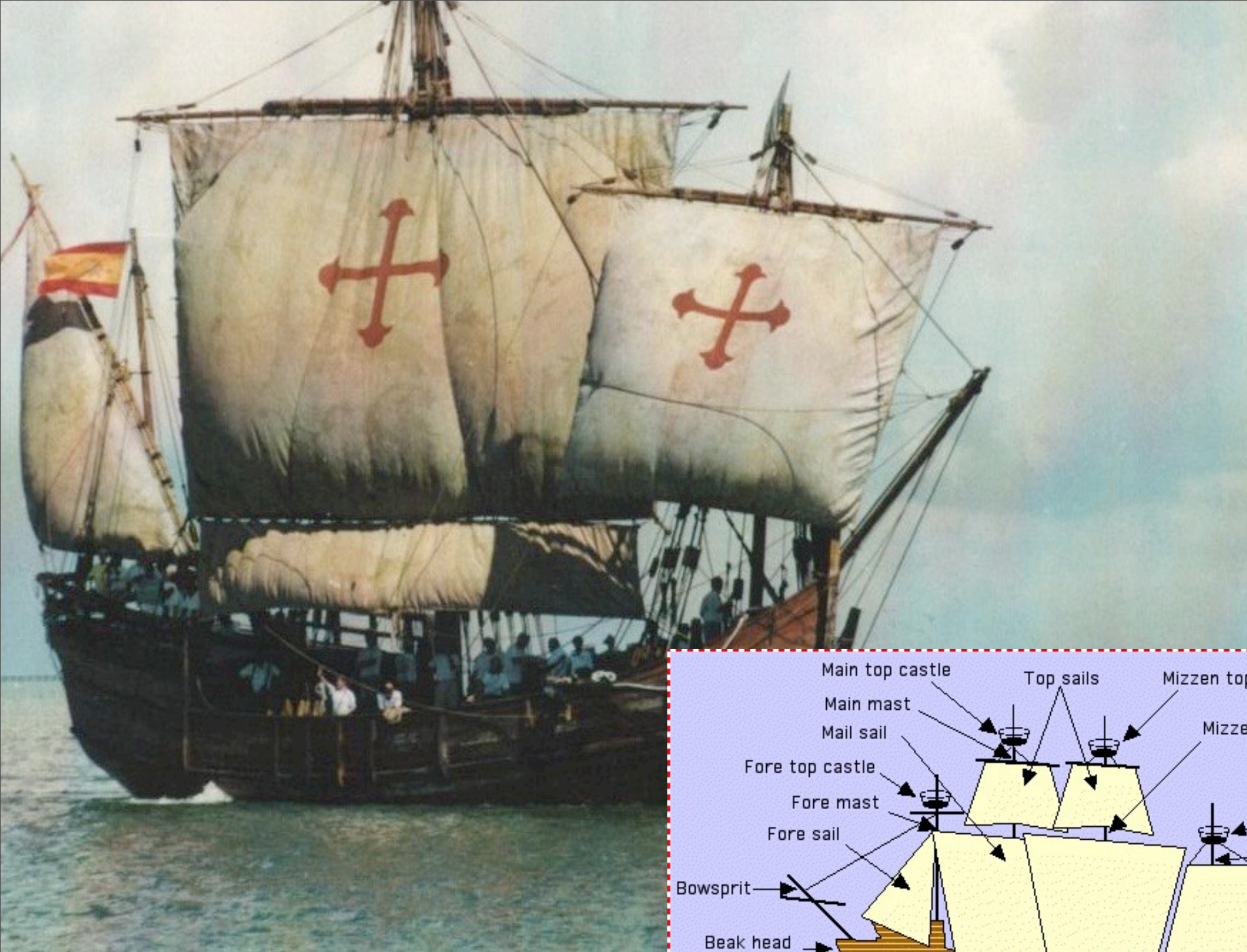
“La Caravela” Columbian caravel, square and lateen sails



Santa Maria, medium sized 150 tons, 60 ft long



Columbus' La Nina



Columbus' La Nina



Columbus' La Nina

COLUMBUS AS ITALIAN NAVIGATOR AND THE INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND OF THE COLUMBIAN DISCOVERIES



COLUMBUS AND FLORENCE



Christopher Columbus' map based on Ptolemy

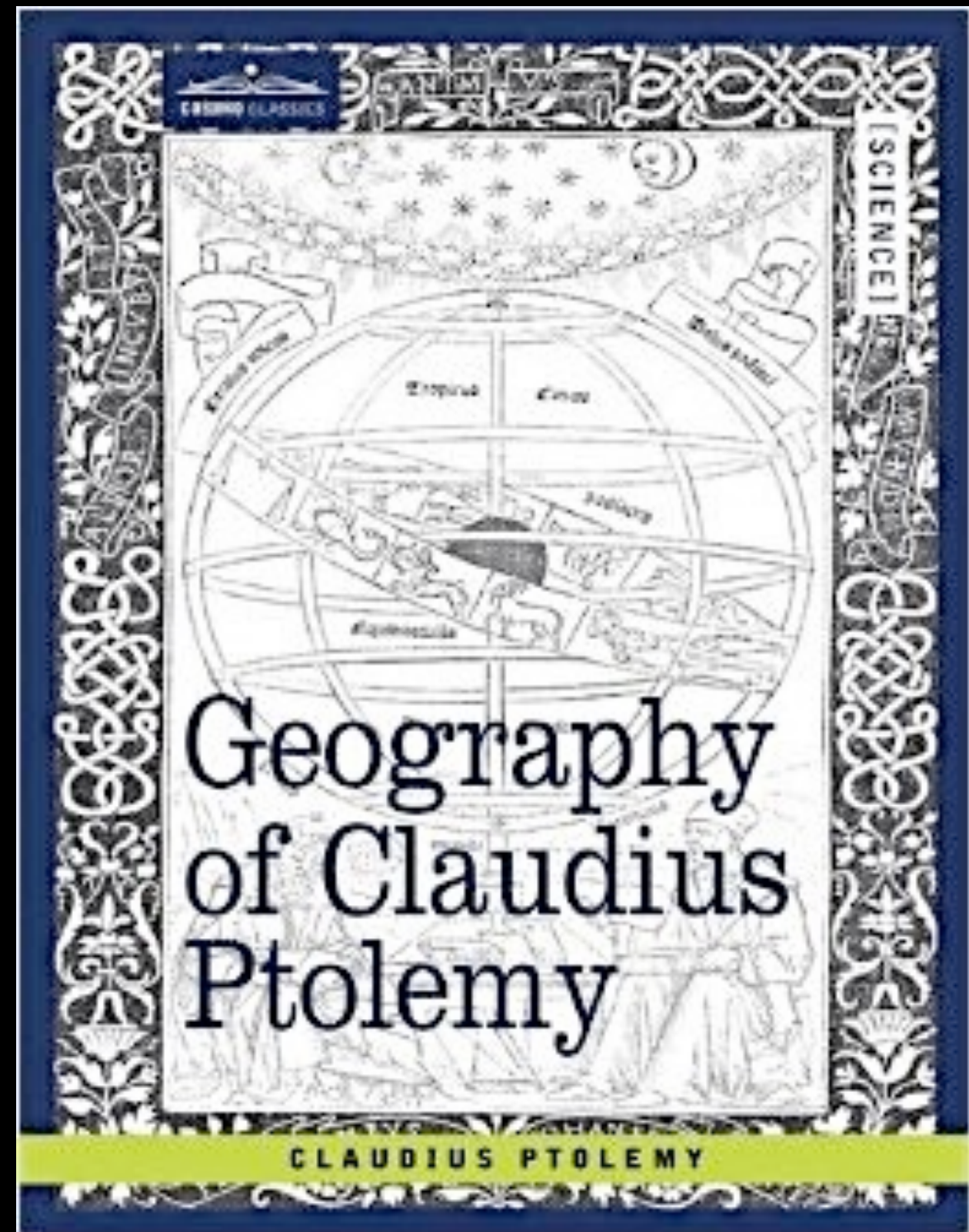


Florence 1400



Manuel Chrysoloras
1355-1415







Ptolemy of Alexandria
100 - 170 AD
The Almagest
and
The Geography
The Geography gives us
a complete version
of latitude and longitude.
It posits a
**GEOCENTRIC
UNIVERSE.**
Columbus carried copy
of the Geography maps
with him.



**DAMAGED GREEK MANUSCRIPT MAP
ACCORDING TO PTOLEMY,
CONSTANTINOPLE. 1300**



Manuel Chrysoloras
1355-1415

1395 Chrysoloras in Venice
Meets Guarino and others



Jacopo
d'
Angelo
di
Scarperia
1360-1411

Jacopo d' Angelo di Scarperia
1360: born in Scarperia
1380: Florence meet Salutati
1395: Venice meet Chrysoloras
1396: Constantinople with Chrysoloras
1397-1400: Florence
1406: Translate Ptolemy
1411: death in Rome







Scarperia, Mugello, Tuscany

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1400

Ptolemy Comes to Flo

1406

Jacopo trans. Geographia

1410

Studies of Ptolemy

Florence, Rome

1477

Print Ptolemy

Geographia

1492

Columbus

Carries

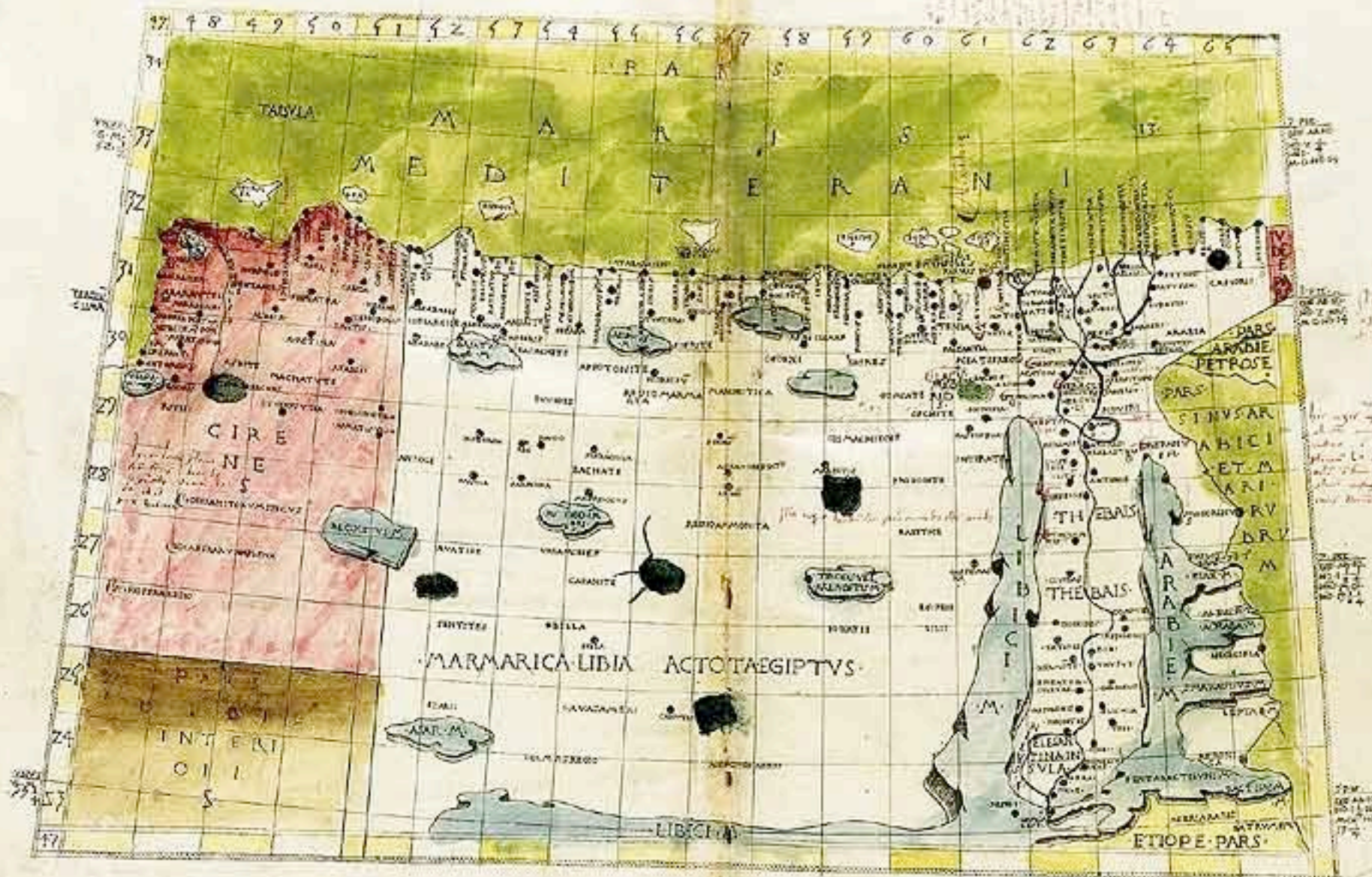
Ptolemy

with him.



This is a Byzantine Greek world map according to Ptolemy's first (conic) projection. From Codex Vaticanus Urbinas Graecus 82, Constantinople c. 1300. Parchment 575 x 418 mm. Probably assembled by Maximus Planudes; later in possession of Palla Strozzi (1372-1462) then with Federico da Montefeltro,





FIRST PRINTED ED. OF PTOLEMY'S GEOGRAPHIA BOLOGNA, 1477 WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

CLAVDII PTOLE
MÆI ALEXANDRINI
GEOGRAPHICAE ENAX.
NATIONIS
LIBRI OCTO.

EX BILIBALDI PIRCKEYMHERI
translatione, sed ad Græcæ & præcæ exemplaria à Mi-
chæle Villanovano iam primum recognita,
Adiecta insuper ab eodem Scholia,
quibus exoleta urbium no-
mina ad nostrum secu-
li more expo-
nuntur.

*

QUINQUAGINTA ILLÆ QUOQUE CUM
notis suis recentioribus additis, præter
inscriptiones veteris et novi
seculi.



LYGDVNI
EX OFFICINA MELCHIORIS ET
GASPARIS TRECHSEL FRATRVM
M. D. XXXV.

TITLE PAGE OF PRINTED ED. OF PTOLEMY 1535



MERCATOR'S PRINTED EDITION OF THE GEOGRAPHIA 1584



Ptolemy of Alexandria

100 - 170 AD

The Almagest

and

The Geography

The Geography gives us
a complete version
of latitude and longitude

It posits a

GEOCENTRIC

UNIVERSE.

Columbus carries copy of
the Geography maps with
him.



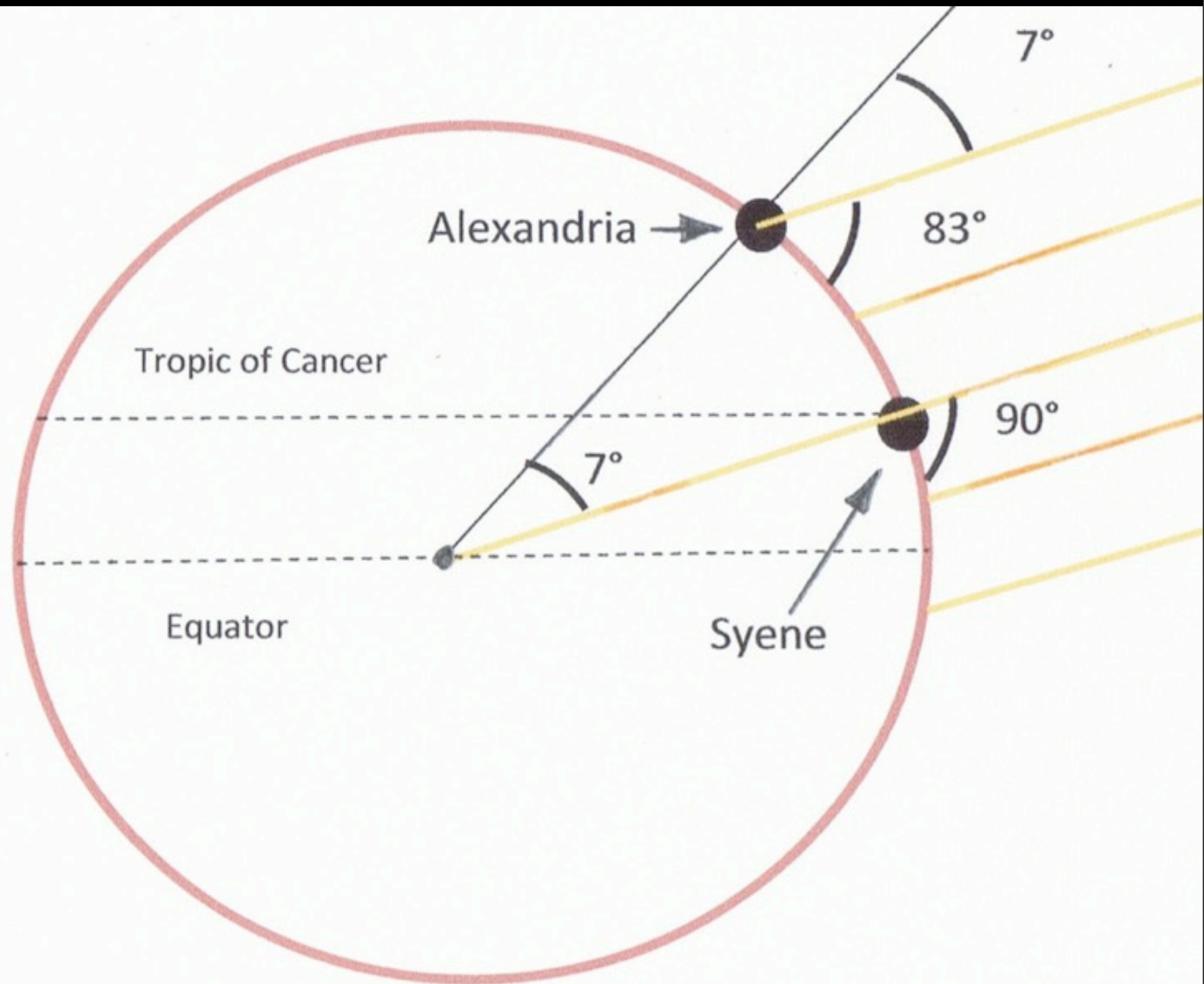
Euclid, c. 300 BC

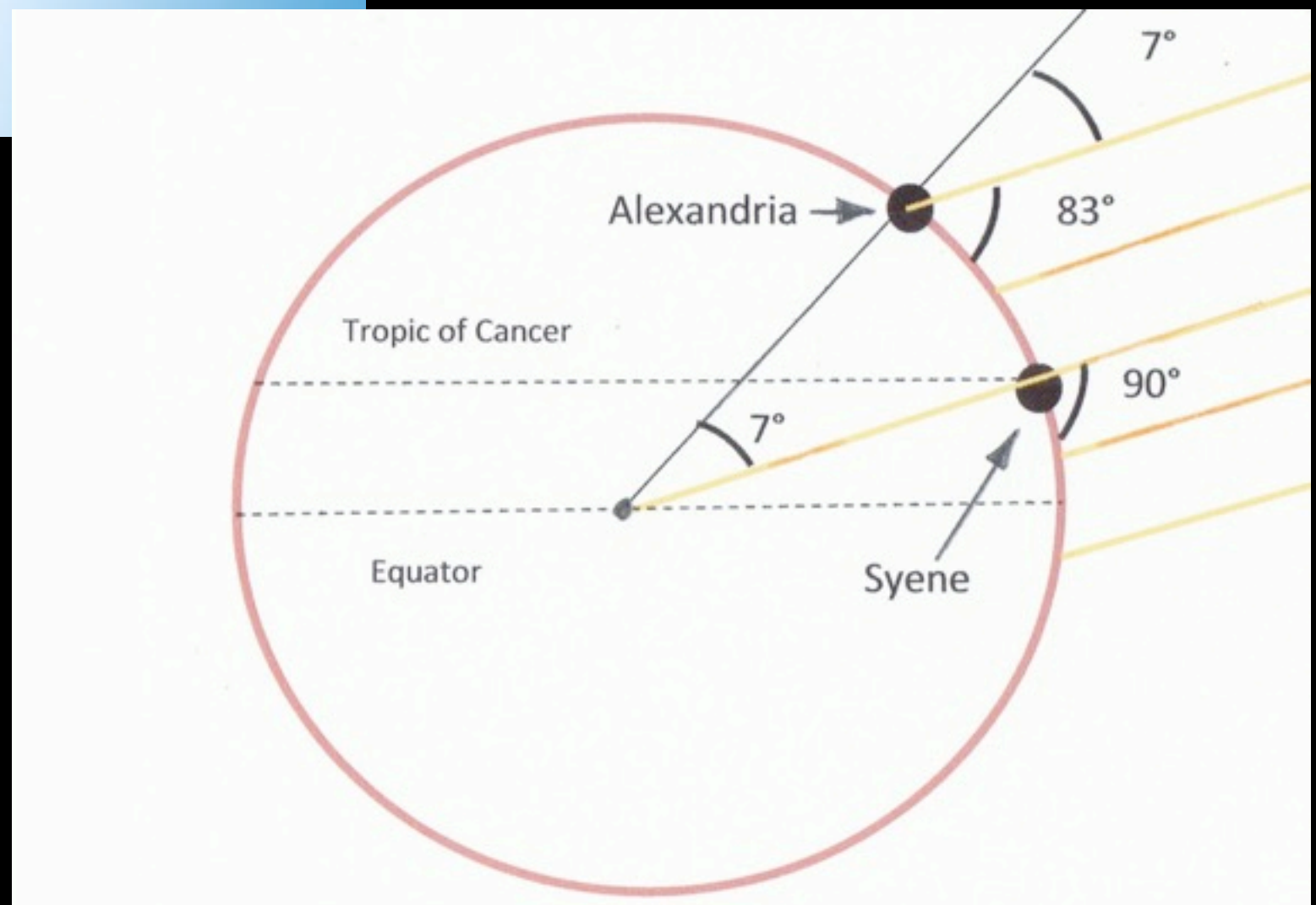
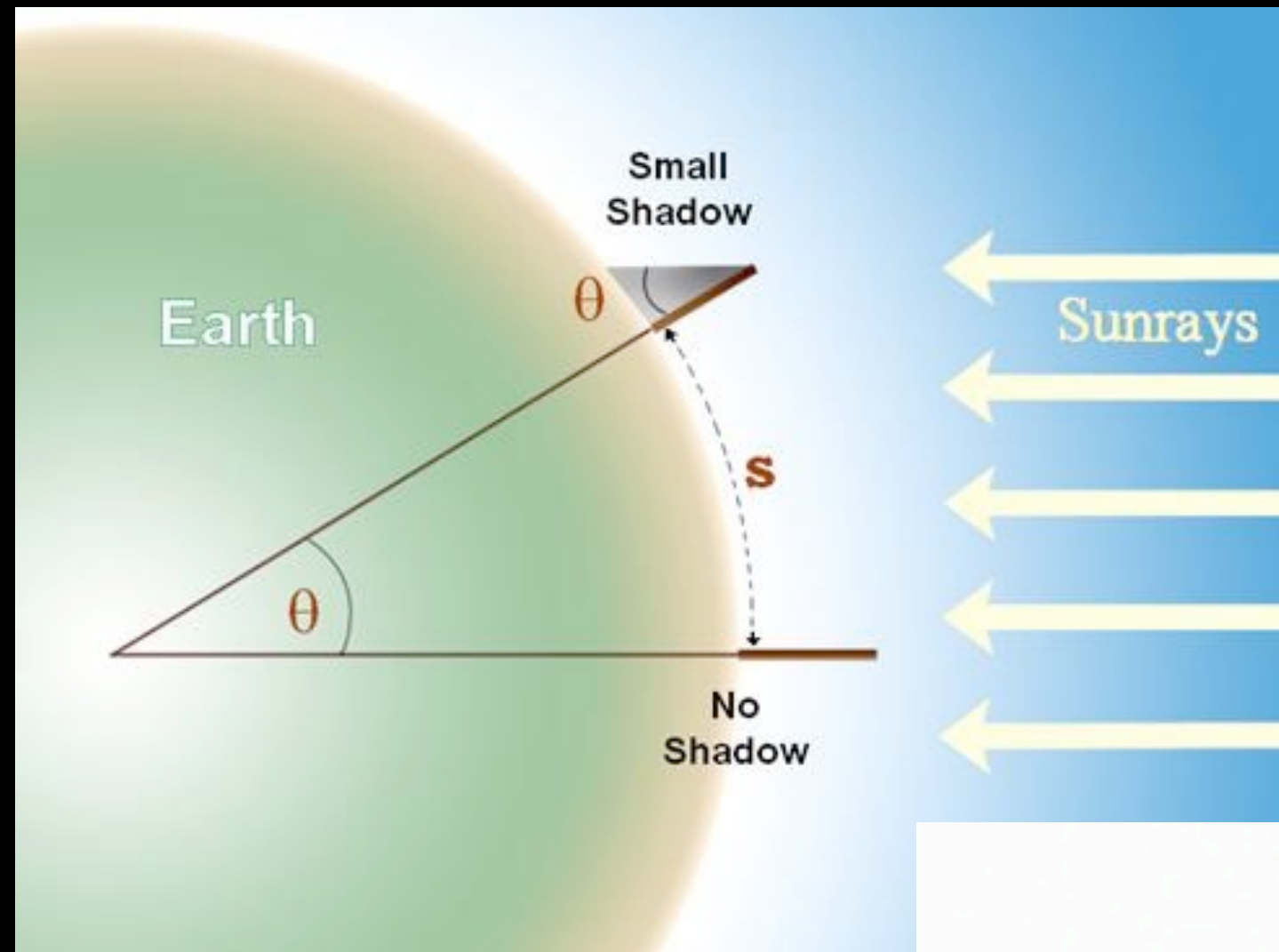


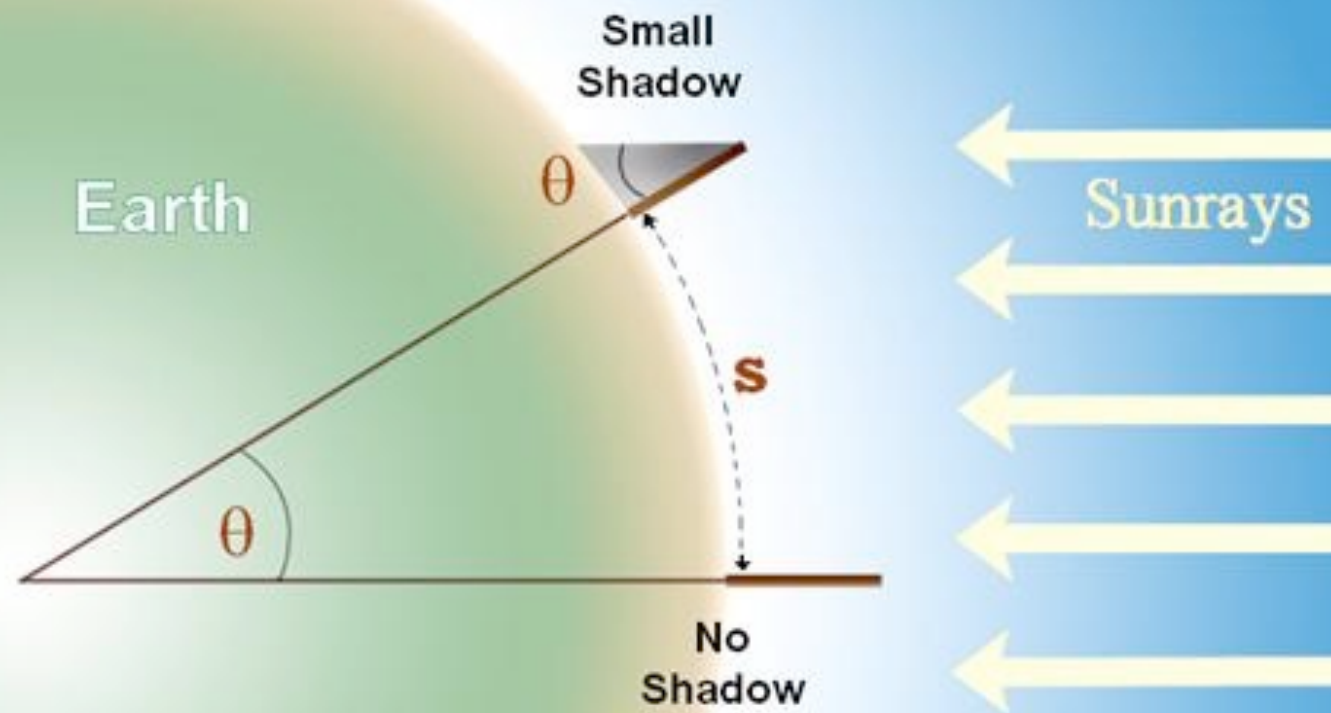
Eratosthenes
276-194 BC



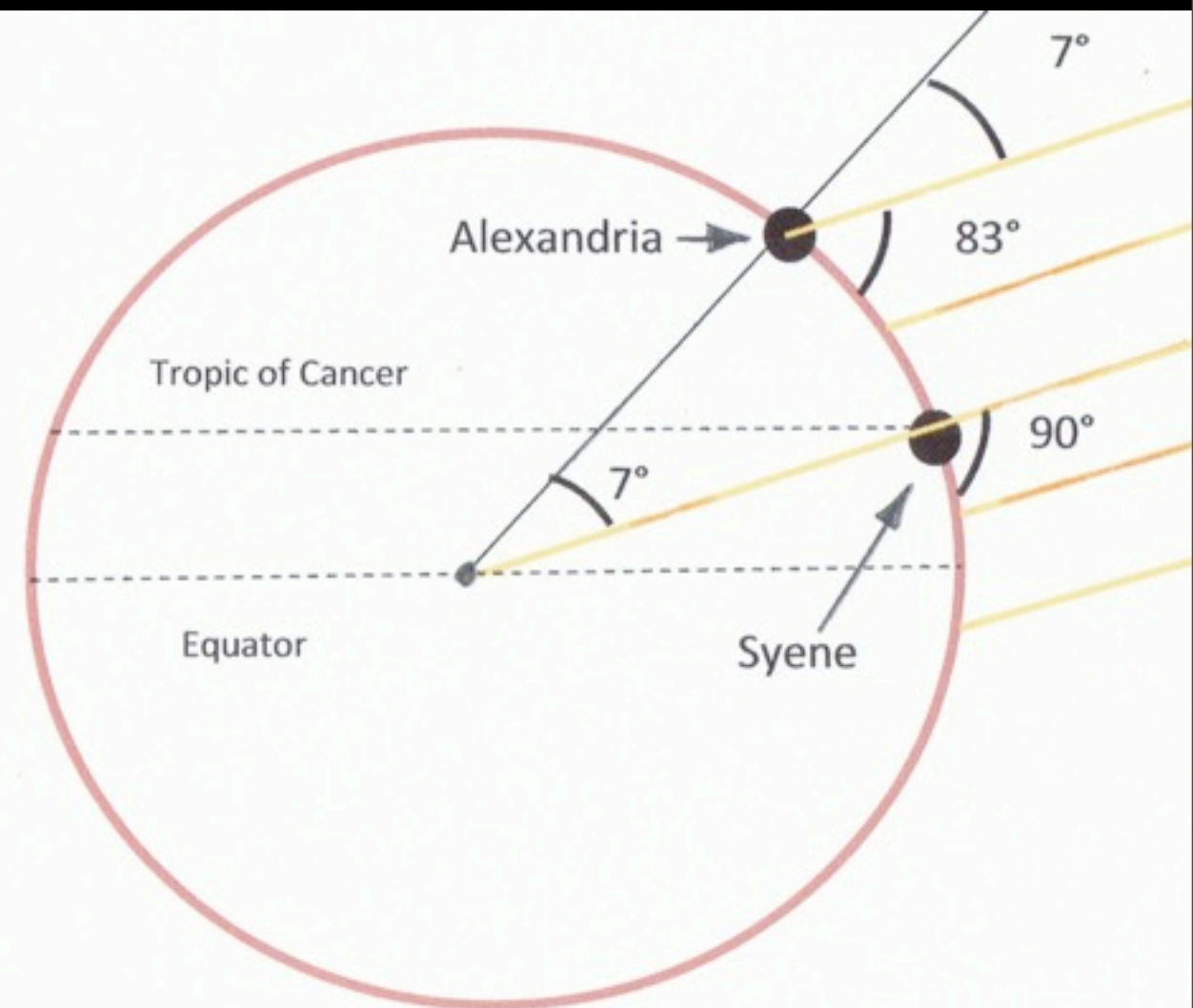
Ptolemy of Alexandria
100 - 170 AD





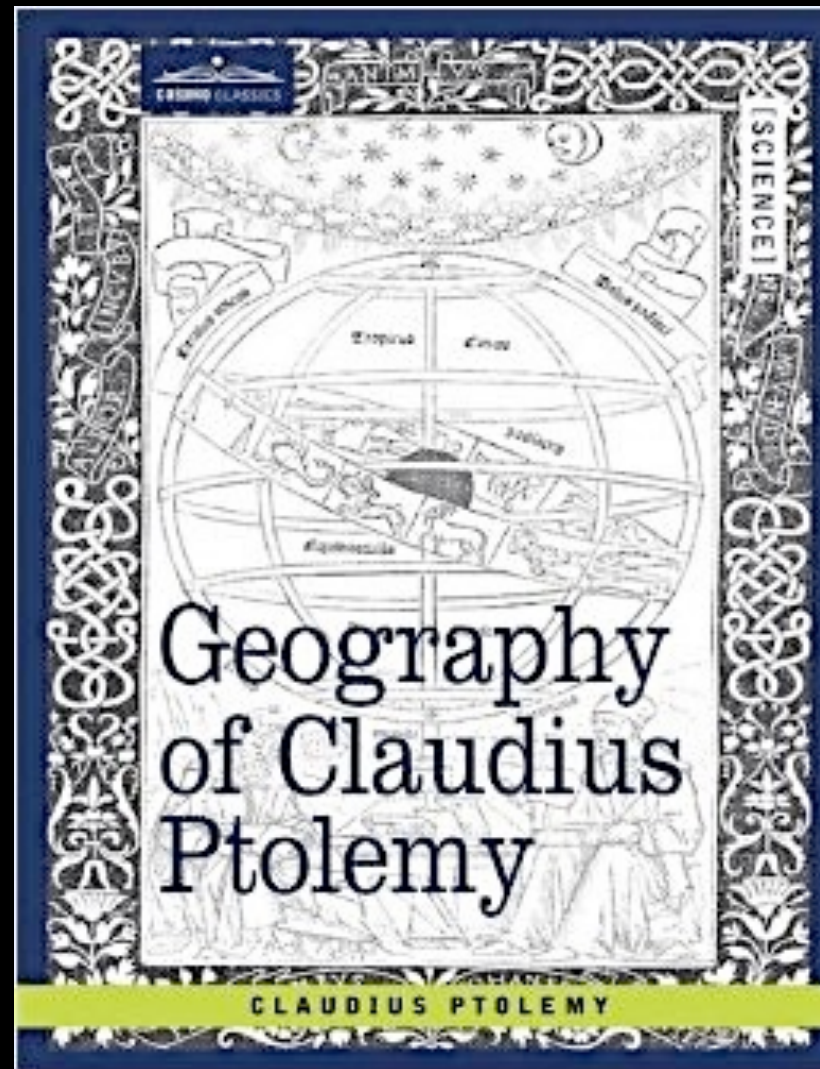


1. think globally, universal
2. mathematics
(800 year old tradition)
3. geometry
4. experiment

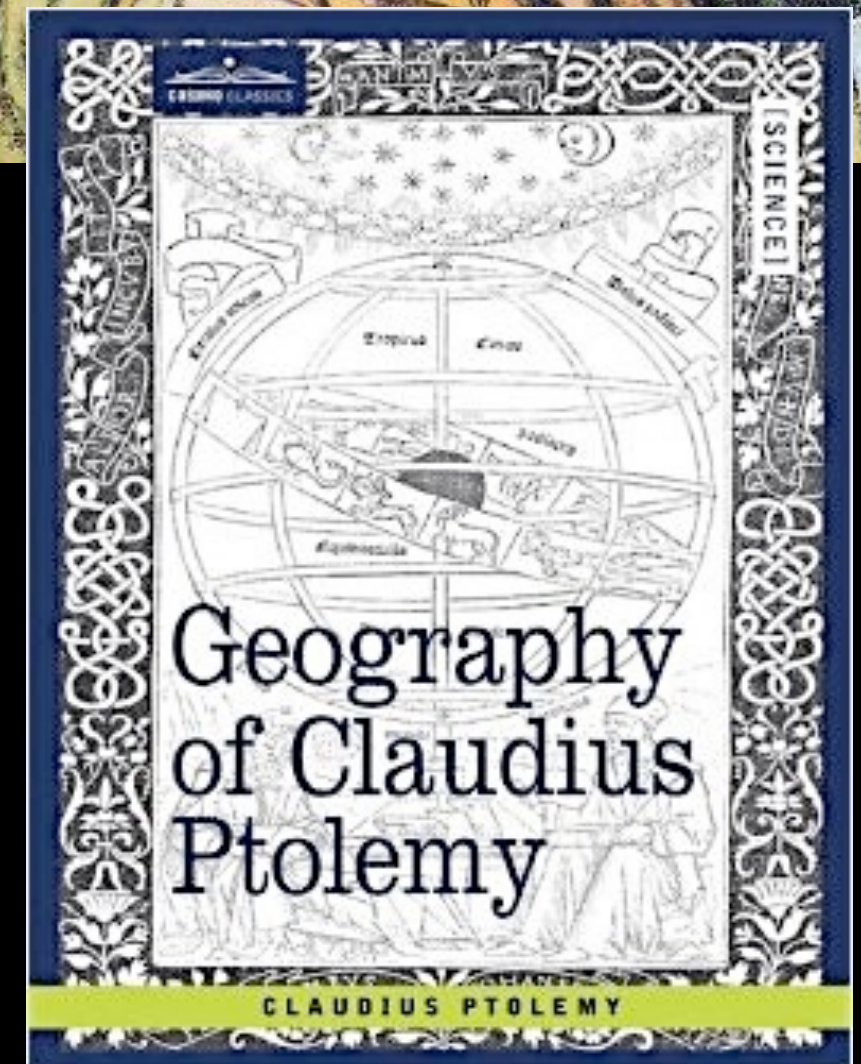
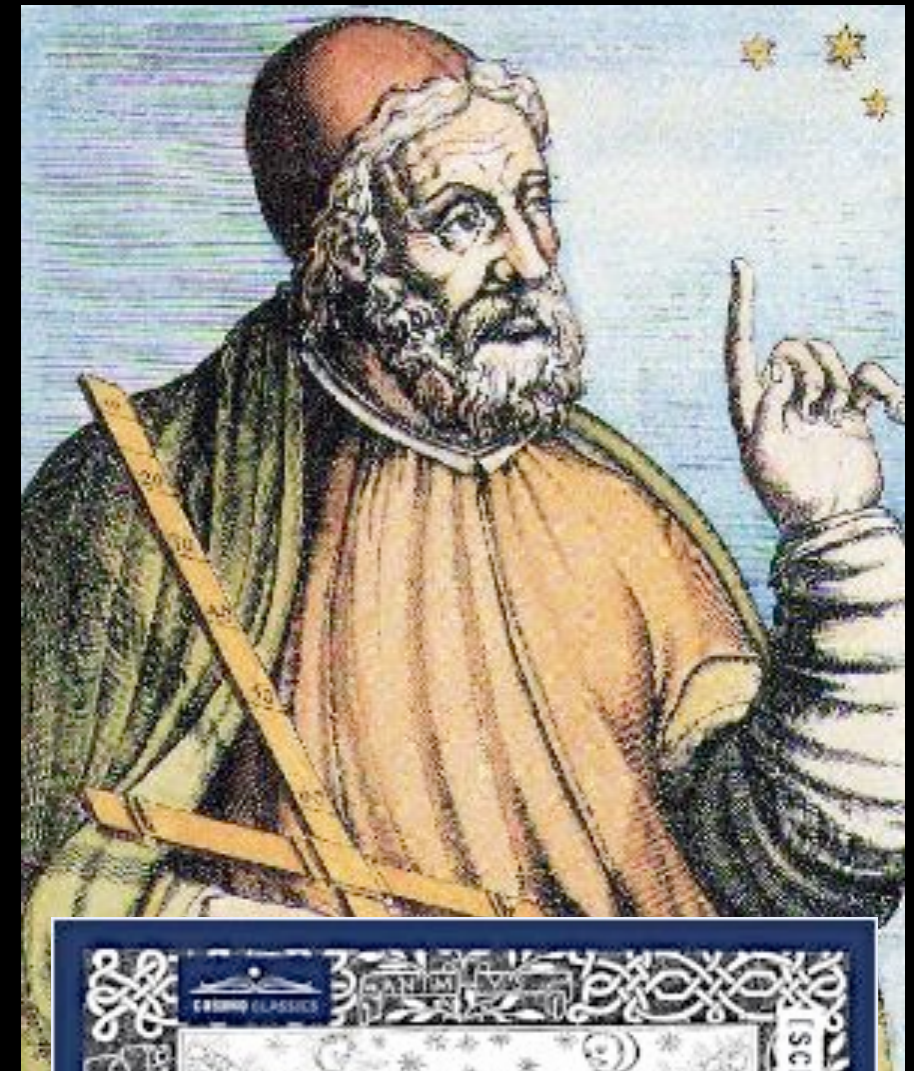


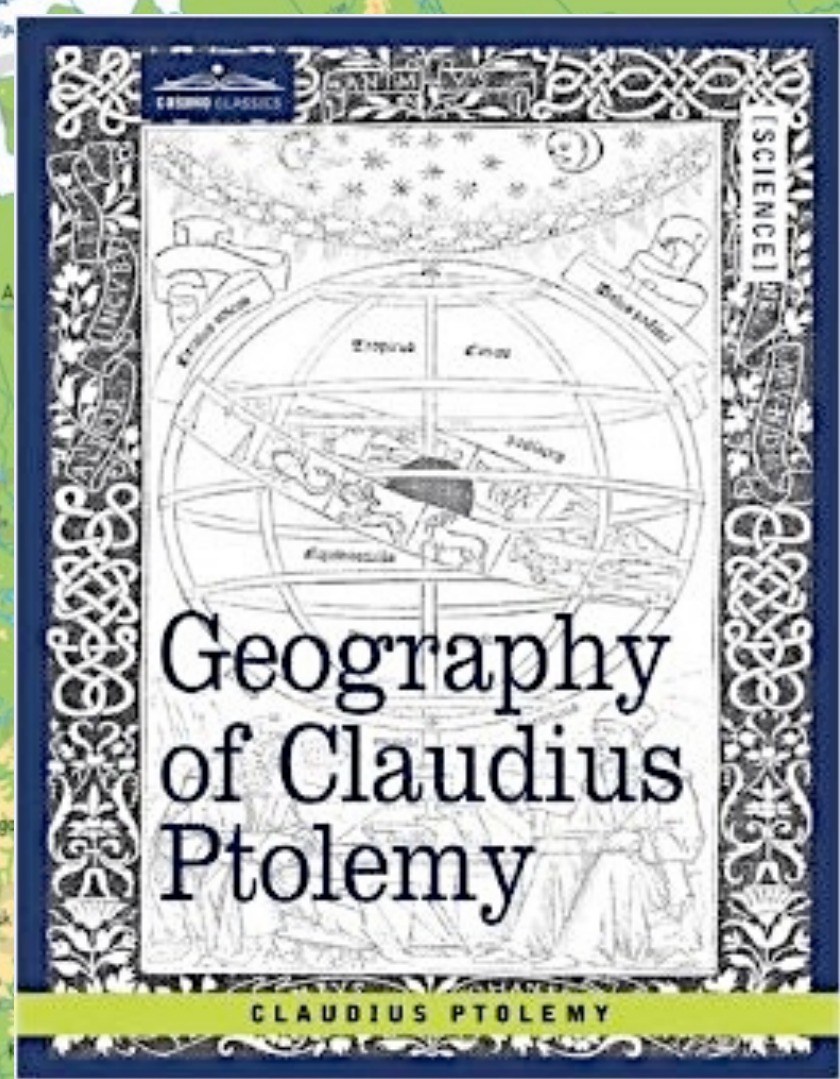


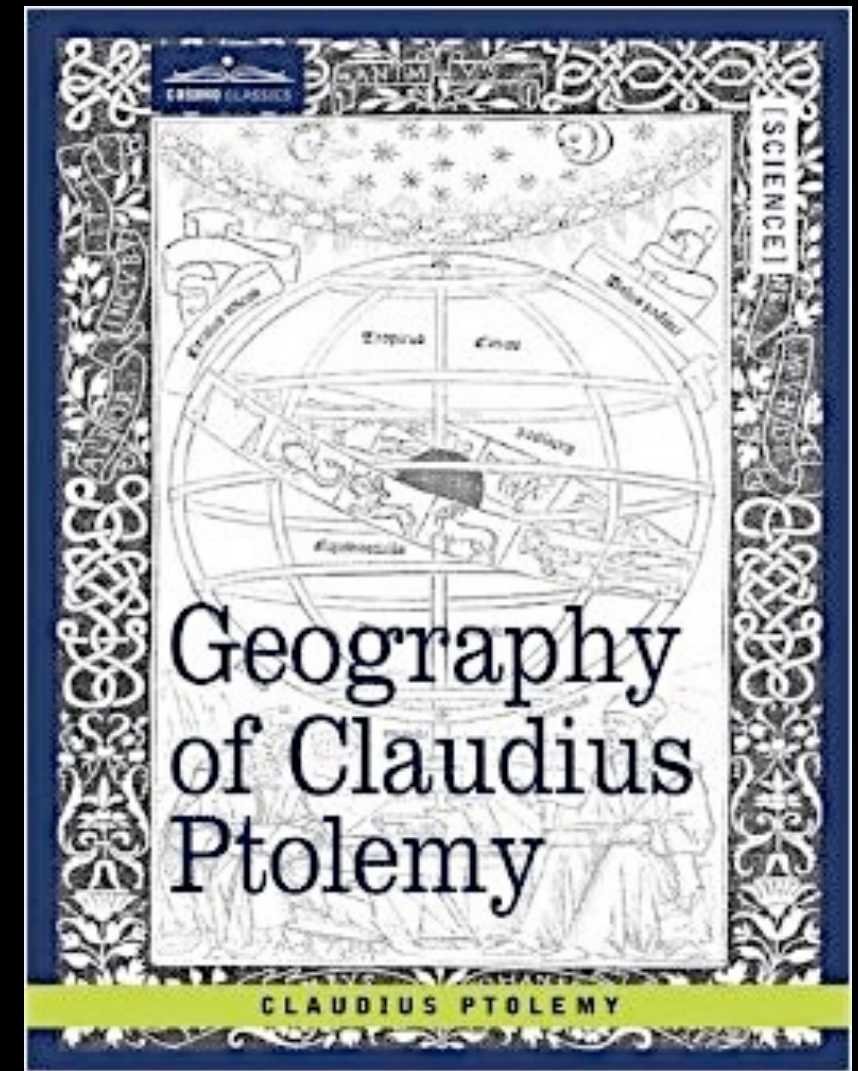
Florence 1400



1406: Latin translation of Ptolemy's Geographia made in Florence thanks to the early Florentine Renaissance & rediscovery of Greek



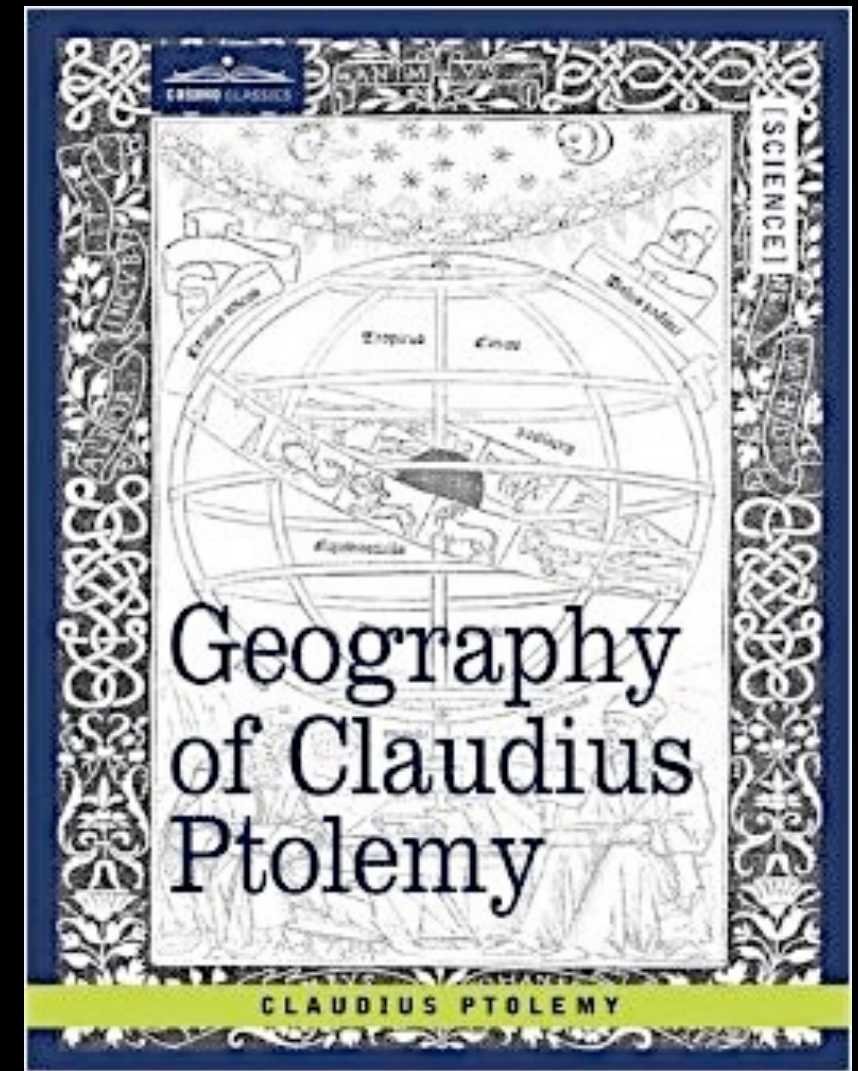




15th Century Europe
Mapping the World
The Geometrization of the World
The Power of Abstraction
Ptolemy Leads to Columbus



Catalan Atlas by Abraham Cresque, 1375, Bib Nat Paris
Created in Palma, Majorca, (Catalan)



15th Century Europe
Mapping the World
The Geometrization of the World
The Power of Abstraction
Ptolemy Leads to Columbus



Florence 1400

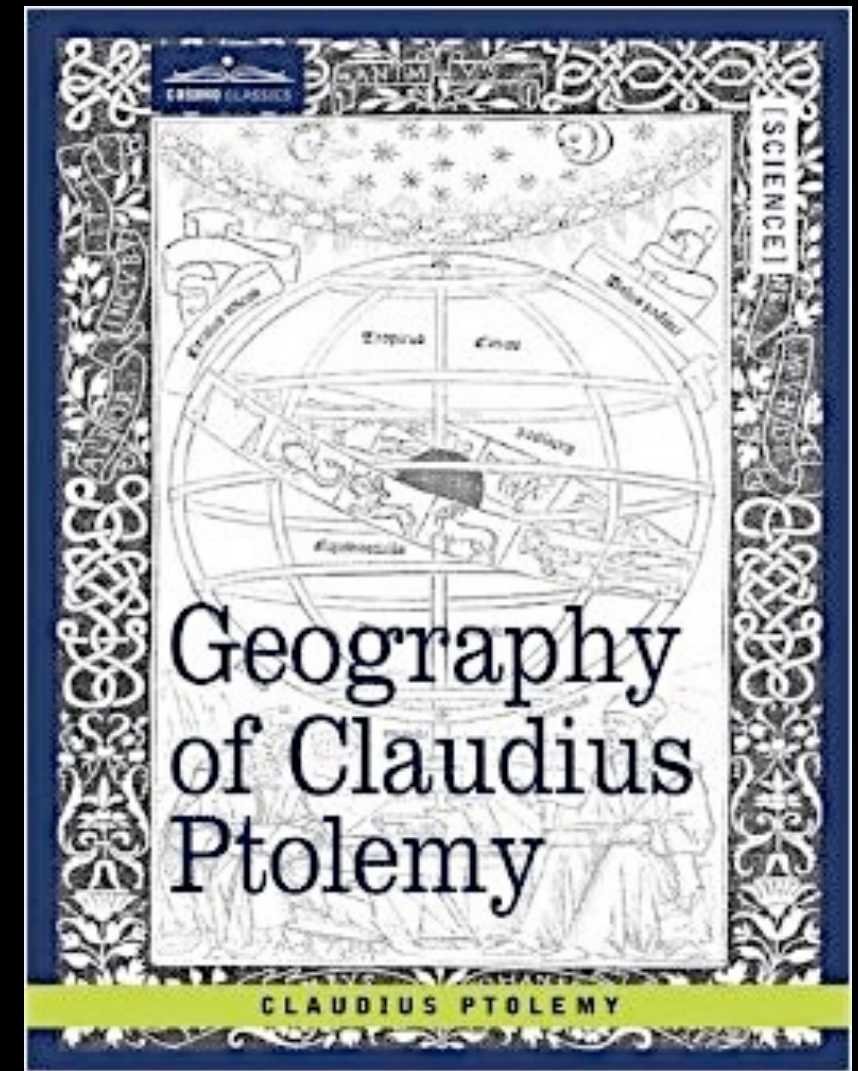




World map (woodcut) within 1486 Ulm Latin printed edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*



Christopher Columbus' map based on Ptolemy



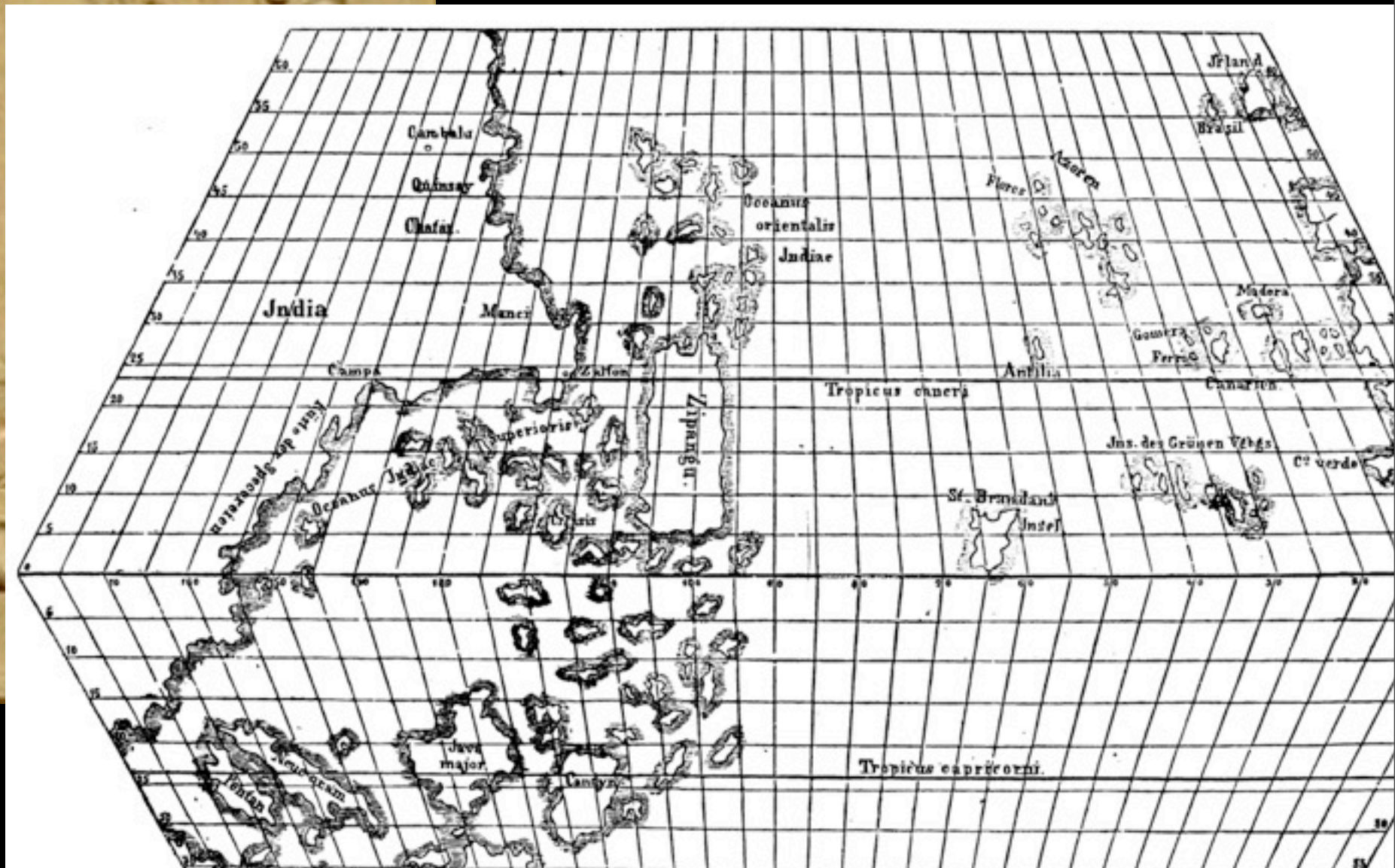
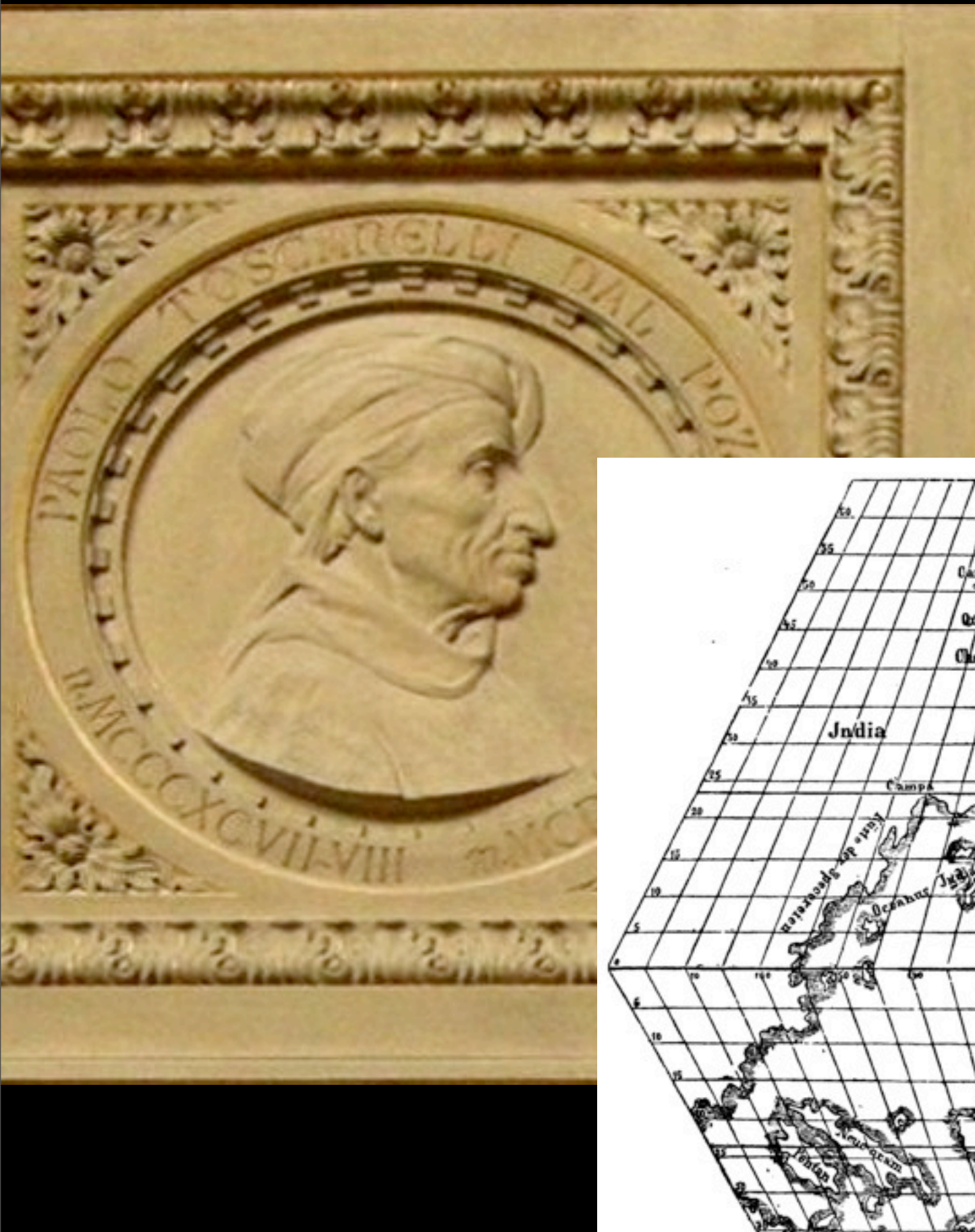
15th Century Europe
Mapping the World
The Geometrization of the World
The Power of Abstraction
Ptolemy Leads to Columbus



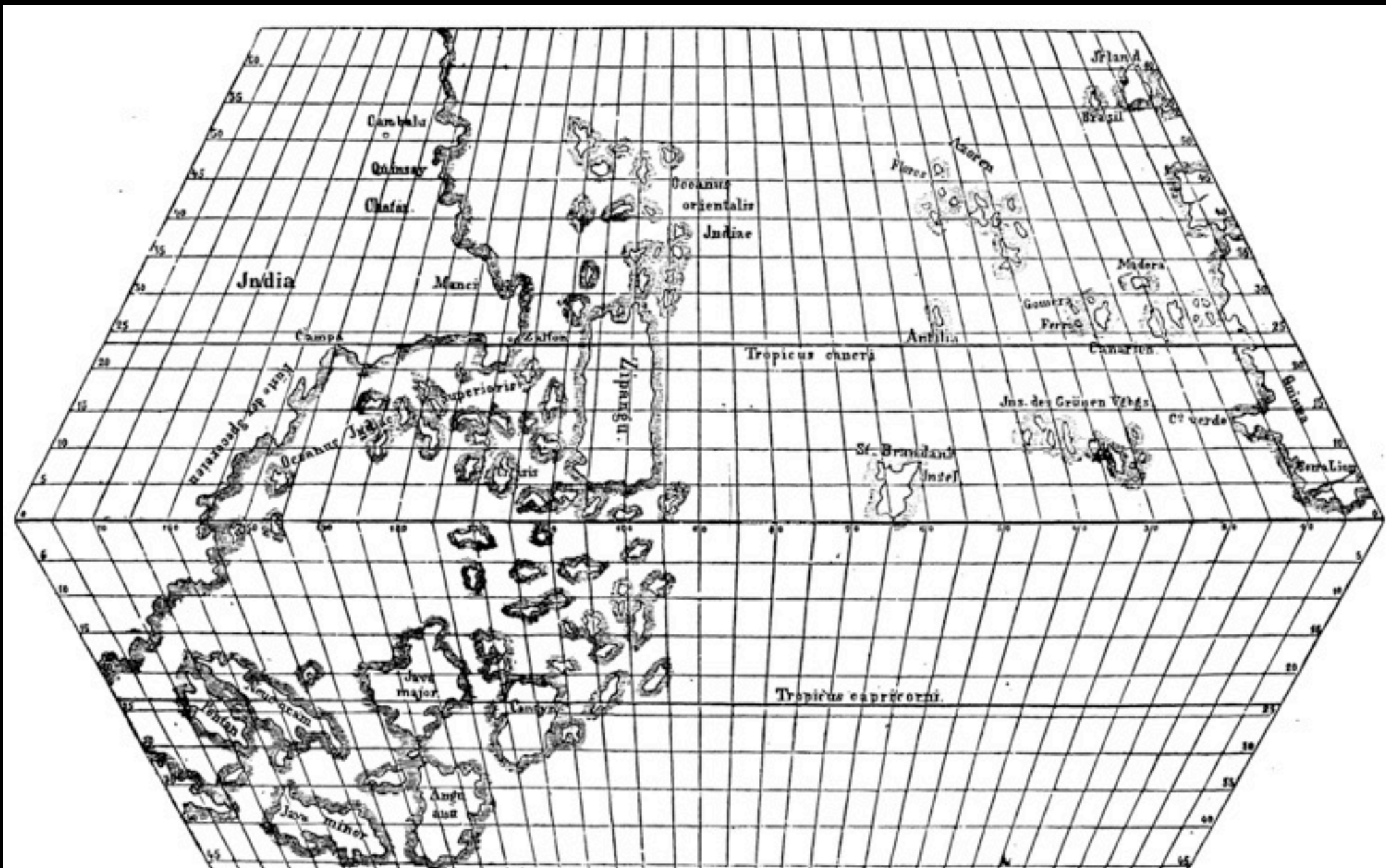
HOW DOES THE GENOVESE
NAVIGATOR
LIVING IN PORTUGAL HEAR
ABOUT FLORENTINE
RENAISSANCE RESEARCH
INTO PTOLEMY?

Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli
1397-1482 (85)
Italian astronomer,
mathematician, and
cosmographer.
mapmaker
expert on Ptolemy.

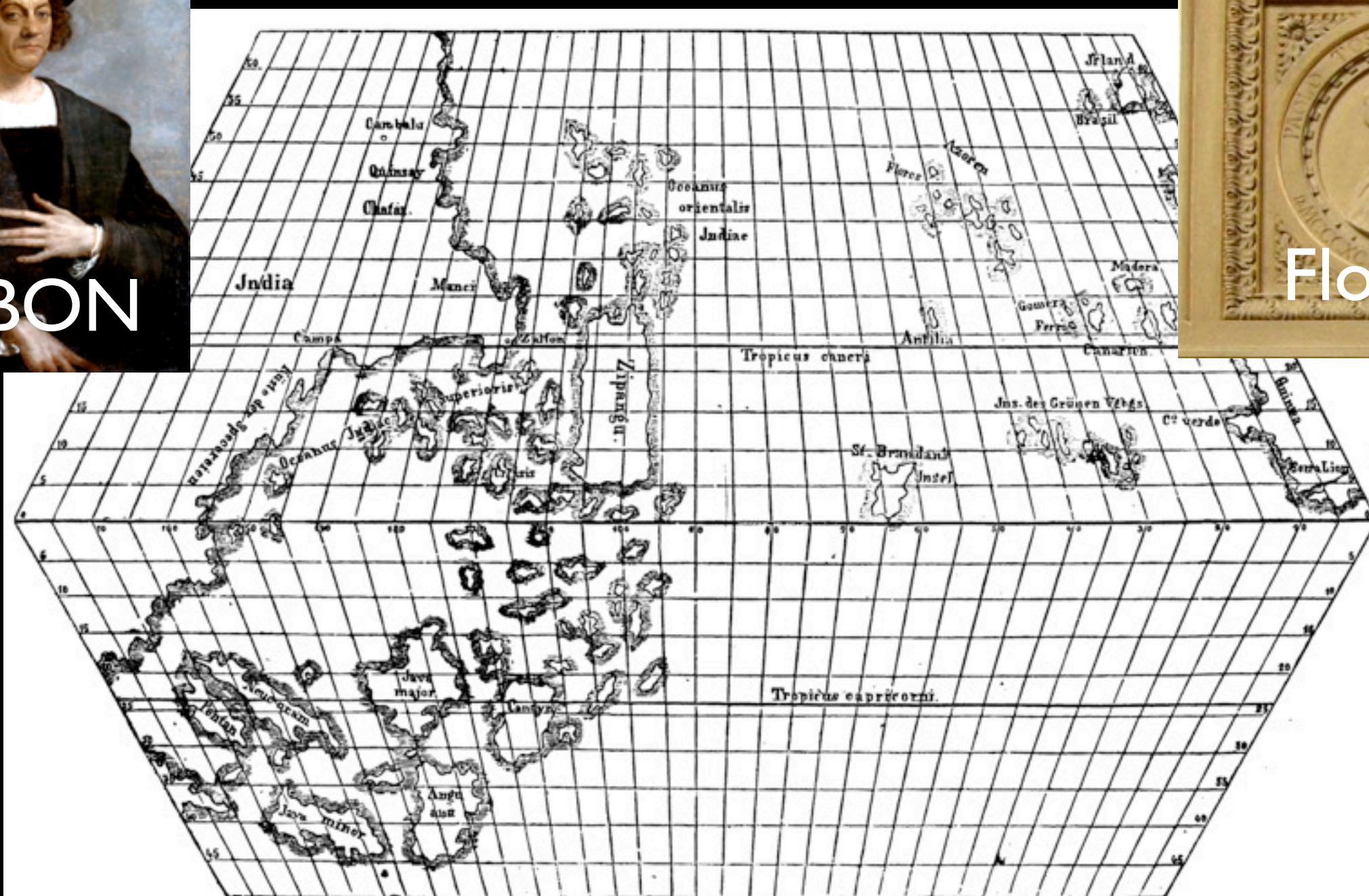
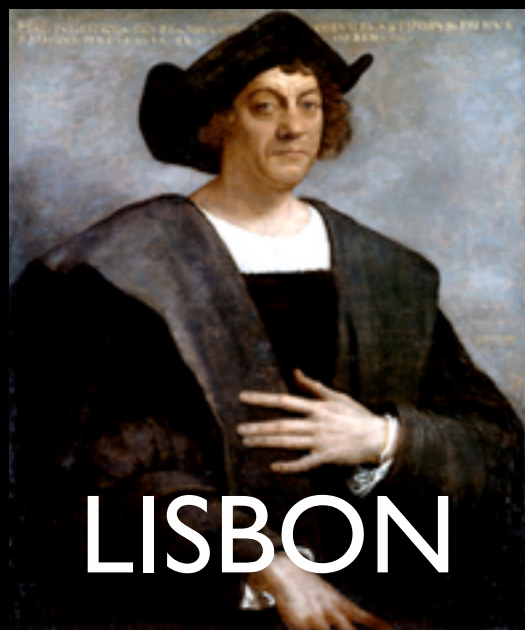
Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli
1397-1482 (85)
Italian astronomer,
mathematician, and
cosmographer. mapmaker
expert on Ptolemy.



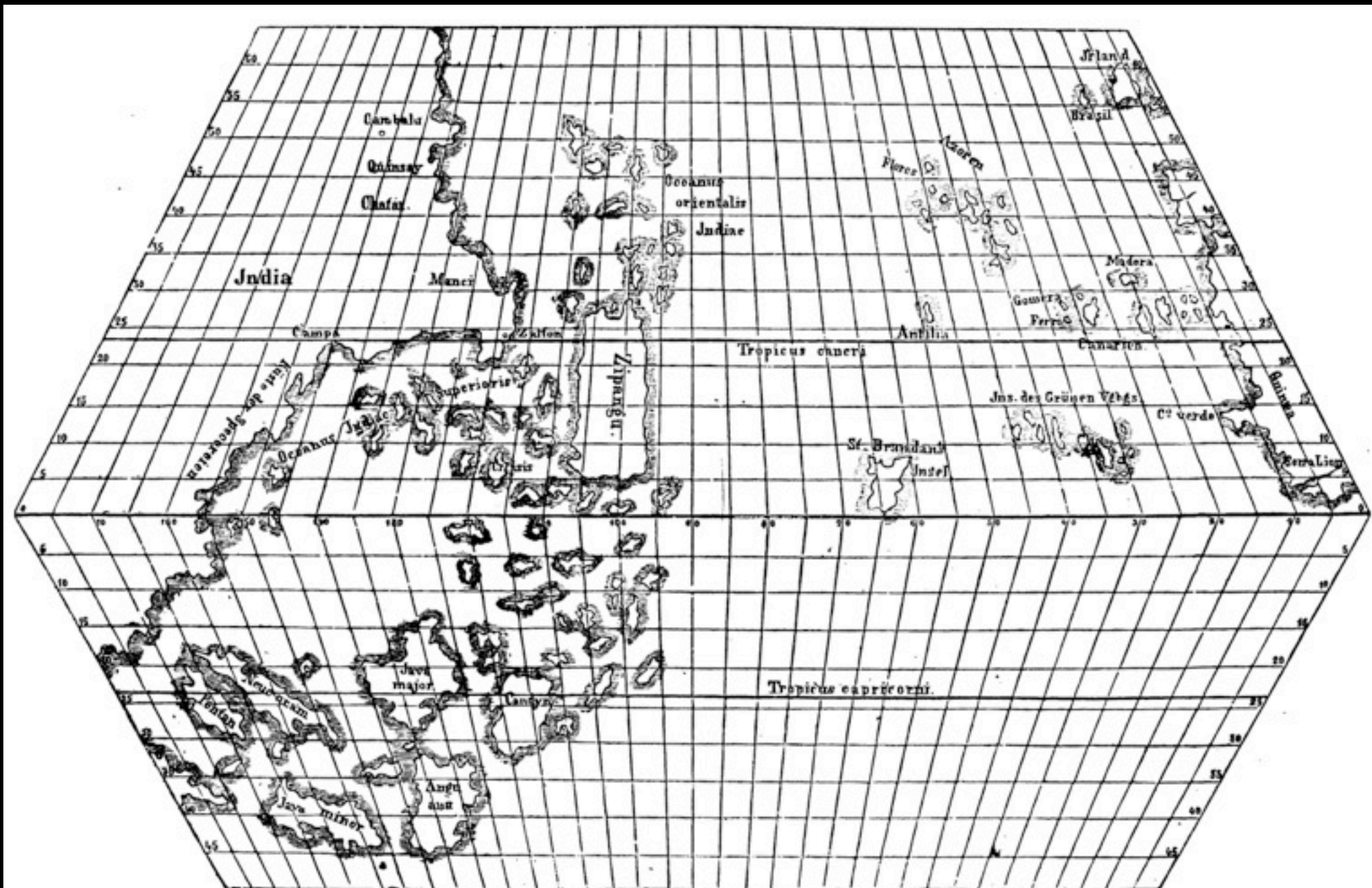
In 1474 Toscanelli sent a letter and a map to his Portuguese correspondent Fernão Martins, priest at the Lisbon Cathedral, detailing a scheme for sailing westwards to reach the Spice Islands and Asia. Fernão Martins delivered his letter to the King Afonso V of Portugal, in his court of Lisbon.



Columbus In Lisbon, saw the letter and map and wrote to **Toscanelli**. The original of this letter was lost, but its existence is known through Toscanelli himself, who later transcribed it along with the map and sent it to Christopher Columbus, who carried them with him during his first voyage to the new world.



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Toscanelli:

"Also in the time of Pope Eugenius one of them [of CHINA] came to Pope Eugenius, who affirmed their great kindness towards Christians, and I had a long conversation with him on many subjects, about the magnitude of their rivers in length and breath, and on the multitude of cities on the banks of rivers. He said that on one river there were near 200 cities with marble bridges great in length and breadth, and everywhere adorned with columns. This country is worth seeking by the Latins, not only because great wealth may be obtained from it, gold and silver, all sorts of gems, and spices, which never reach us; but also on account of its learned men, philosophers, and expert astrologers, and by what skill and art so powerful and magnificent a province is governed, as well as how their wars are conducted."

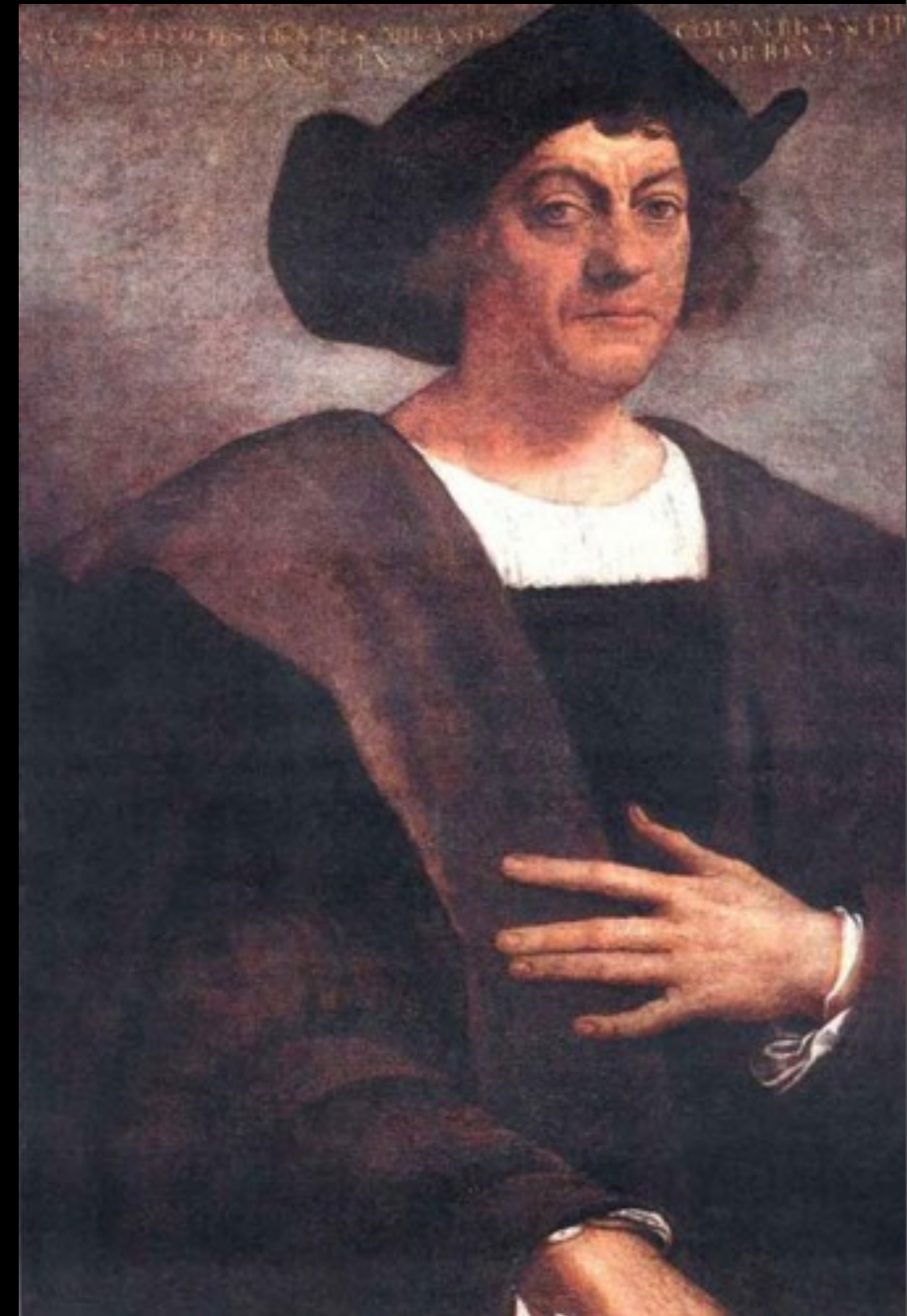
— Extract of the First Letter of Paolo Toscanelli to Columbus.

Toscanelli:

"The said voyage is not only possible, but it is true, and certain to be honorable and to yield incalculable profit, and very great fame among all Christians. But you cannot know this perfectly save through experience and practice, as I have had in the form of the most copious and good and true information from distinguished men of great learning who have come from the said parts, here in the court of Rome, and from others being merchants who have had business for a long time in those parts, men of high authority."

— Extract of the First Letter of Paolo Toscanelli to Columbus.

FLORENCE 1400



Greek Astronomy, maps, exploration and art



A Byzantine Greek world map according to Ptolemy's first (conic) projection. From Codex Vaticanus Urbinas Graecus 82, Constantinople c. 1300. Parchment 575 x 418 mm. Probably assembled by Maximus Planudes; later in possession of Palla Strozzi (1372-1462) then with Federico da Montefeltro,



Te A Byzantine Greek world map according to Ptolemy's first (conic) projection. From Codex Vaticanus Urbinas Graecus 82, Constantinople c. 1300. Parchment 575 x 418 mm. Probably assembled by Maximus Planudes; later in possession of Palla Strozzi (1372-1462) then with Federico da Montefeltro,



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Genova:
Location
Maps
Ships

Pisa:
Maps

Florence
Intellectual
Revolution

Amalfi:
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Maps
Ships

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES OF MID CENTURY FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE 1453

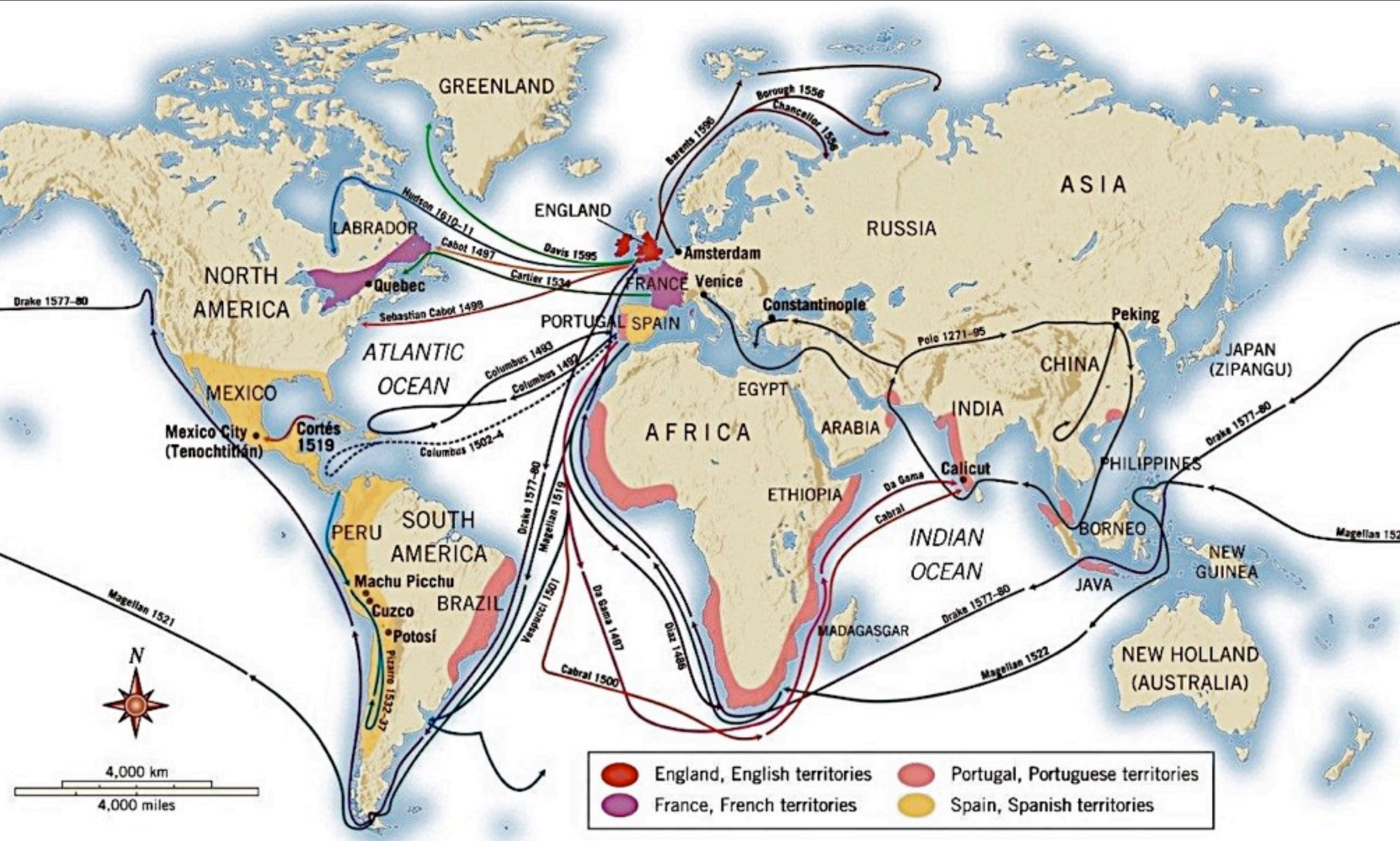


Suddenly Italy less important
Spain and Portugal more important

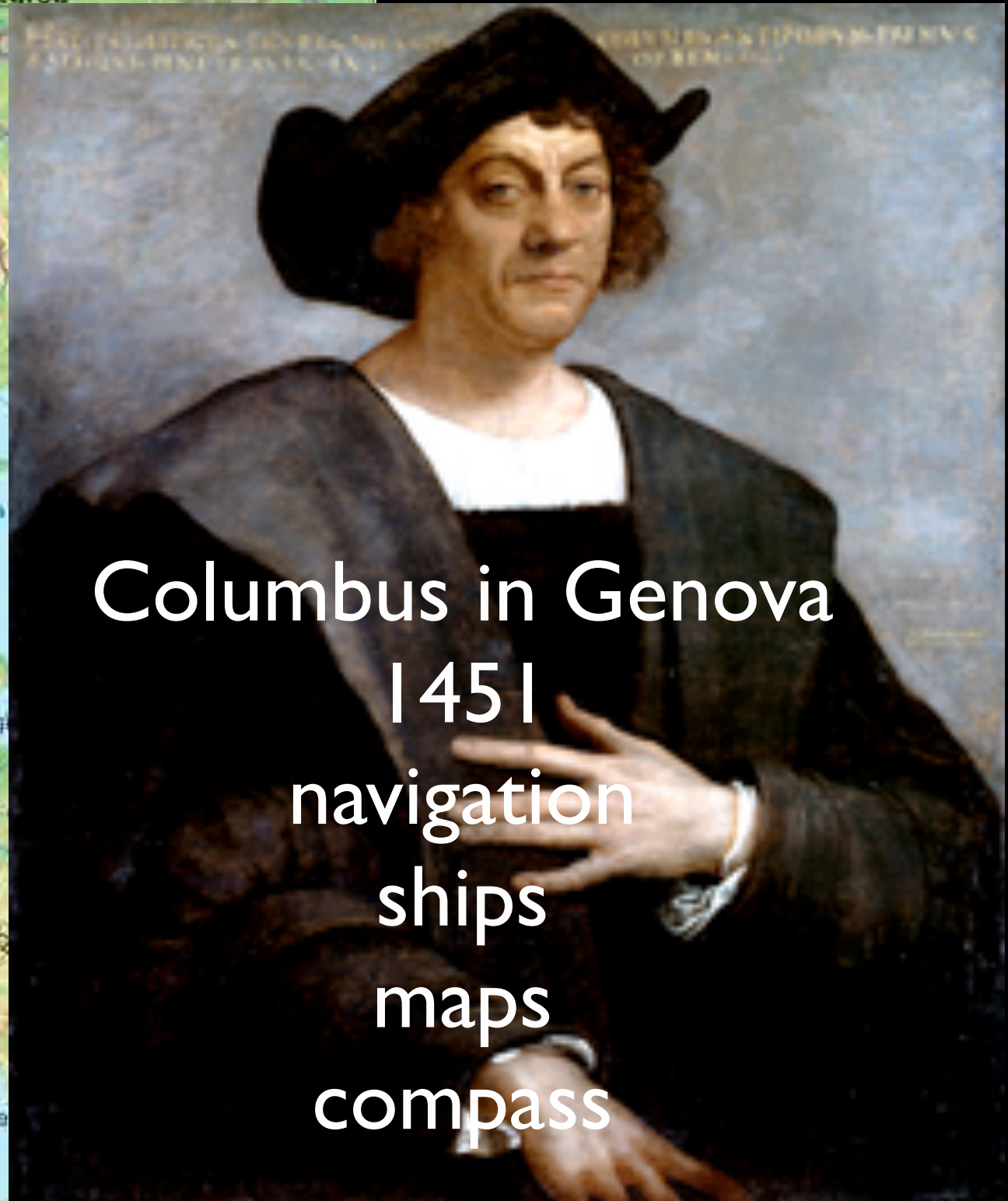
1453: Suddenly Europe is cut off from its traditional trade routes to the East.



ROUTES OF EXPLORATION: Columbus, Cabot, De Gama,



Genova



Columbus in Genova
1451
navigation
ships
maps
compass



Columbus 1470-1485 Portugal

In 1473, Columbus began his apprenticeship as business agent for the important businessmen, Di Negro and Spinola families of Genoa. Later, he made a trip to Chios, an Aegean island then ruled by Genoa. In May 1476, he took part in an armed convoy sent by Genoa to carry valuable cargo to northern Europe. He docked in Bristol, England and Galway, Ireland. In 1477, he was possibly in Iceland. In the autumn of 1477, he sailed on a Portuguese ship from Galway to Lisbon, where he found his brother Bartolomeo, and they continued trading for the Centurione family.



Columbus and Porto Santo, Madeira Islands



Madeira Islands





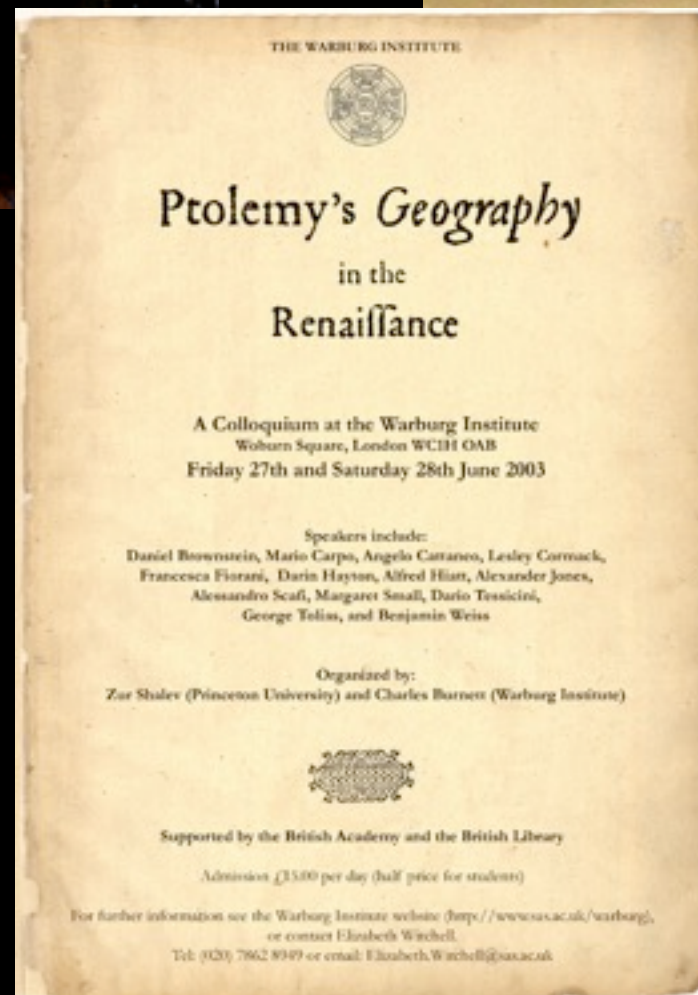
Columbus 1477-1485 Portugal

Columbus married Filipa Moniz Perestrello daughter of the Porto Santo Governor and Portuguese nobleman of Lombard origin
Bartolomeu Perestrello



Very advantageous marriage to highest Portuguese nobility
father-in-law expert of navigation with one of greatest
libraries in the field. And Governor of Porto Santo
that will be important in 1492 expedition.

Columbus corresponding with Toscanelli in Flo





Columbus in his study in Lisbon. He learned Latin, Portuguese, and Castilian. He read widely about astronomy, geography, and history, including the works of Claudius Ptolemy, Cardinal Pierre d'Ailly's *Imago Mundi*, the travels of Marco Polo and Sir John Mandeville, Pliny's *Natural History*, and Pope Pius II's *Historia Rerum Ubique Gestarum*.

tissimū bz qui nulli tributari⁹ ē. Dolēs insule ydolatre sūt
et oēs nude ābulant mares et femine s; quilibz verecūda
opit pāno vno. Nullū bladū bñt excepto riso. Carnib⁹ ri
so et lacte viuūt babūdanciā bñt seminū solūmō de quib⁹
oleū faciūt bñt biricios meliores mūdi qui ibi crescūt. Ni
nū eciā bñt de arborib⁹ de quib⁹ dñm ē sup in regno sama-
rā. In hac isula lapides p̄ciosi iueniūt qui dicūt. Rubini
qui i regionib⁹ alijs nō inueniūt vel bñt. Multi enī eciā
saphiri et topacij et amatiste ibi sunt multiq; alij lapides p̄-
ciosi. Rex huius insule habet pulchriorē rubinū qui vnq;
fuit visus in hoc mūdo habet enim vni⁹ palme longitudi-
nē et ad mensurā grossicie brachij boīs. Est at splendi-
dū sup modū omni macula carens adeo vt ignis ardens vide-
atur esse. Bagn⁹ kaam. Kublay nuncios suos direxit ad
illū rogans vt prefatū lapidē illi donaret et ip̄e donaret ei
valorē vnus ciuitatis. Qui rñd it q; lep̄s ille suoz erat an-
cessorū nulli eū vnq; homini daret. Qui⁹ insule boiēs bel-
licosī non sunt sed valde viles. Quando autē bella cū alijs
bñs habent de alienis p̄tibz stipendiarios vocant et spe-
cialiter sarracenos.

De regno maabar Capitulū xxiij.

Utra insulā seylā ad miliaria xl iuenit maabar q; ma-
ior india nūcupat. Nō aut ē insula s; terra firma. In
hac puincia quiq; reges sūt. Proincia ē nobilissimā et ditis-
sima sup modū. In pmo hui⁹ puicie rex ē noīē Sendeba
i quo regno sūt margarite i copia maxiā. In mari enī hui⁹
puicie ē maris brachiū seu sinus inē firmā terrā et insulā
q; dā vbi nō est aquaz p̄fūdites vltra decem vel duodeci
passus et alicubi vltra duos. Vbi inueniūt margarite sup
decē. Mercatores enī diuersi societates adinūc faciunt et
bñt naues magnas et puas boiēsq; cōducunt qui descen-
dūt ad p̄fundū aquarū et capiunt cōchilia in quibus sunt

margarite. Nō autē hī piscatores sustinere nō pñt ascen-
dunt rursūq; descendūt in mare et sic pagūt tota die. Sūt
aut in sinu illo maris p̄sces ita grandes qui occiderēt des-
cendentes in mare sed per negociatores hoc modo illi pi-
culo puidetur cōducunt negociatores magos quosdā qui
dicūtur Abrayanna qui cū incārationibus suis et arte dy-
abolica cogunt et stupefaciunt p̄sces illos ita vt neminē
possint ledere. Et quia huiusmodi piscacio de die et nō de
nocte fit magi illi de die incārationes faciunt quos sero p
nocte dissoluunt. Timent enim quis furtim sine negotiato-
rū licencia mare descendat et accipiat margaritas. Fures
aut metuentes in mare ascendere nō attemptant nec alijs
alijs inuenitur qui sciat huiusmodi incantaciones facere
nisi illi abrayanna qui a negociatorib⁹ sūt cōducti. Dec at
piscacio i mari fit p totū mensem aprilis vsq; ad mediū mē-
sis may et tūc de margaritis illis bētur innumera multitu-
do quas negociatores postmodū diffundūt p orbem. Ne-
gociatores aut qui hanc piscacionē faciūt et emunt a rege
de omnibus margaritis solūmō decima p̄tē solumit. In-
cantatoribus aut qui stupefaciunt dant de omnibus vige-
simā p̄tē piscatoribus eciā optime puidetur. A medio
vero may vlteri⁹ nō recipiuntur ibidē sed in loco alio qui ab
isto pccc miliaria distat bñtur margarite in mari p totum
mensem septēbris vsq; ad mediū mensem octobris. Totus
huius puicie p̄p̄lus omni tempore nudus incedit pāno
tñ vno verecūdia opit. Rex eciā huius regni nudus vadit
vt alij sed ad collū defert torquē aureā saphiris smaragdō
et rubinis alijsq; p̄ciosissimis lapidibus vndiq; coop̄ā
q; torques est maximi p̄cij supra modū. Similiter eciā ad
collū eius torda de serico pendet in qua sūt centū et q̄tuor
lapides p̄ciosi margarite videlicet grossissime et rubini.
Oportet enim cū singulis diebus centū et quatuor ordēs
dicere de mane ad deorū suorum reuerenciā et de sero si

hic inuenit
Saphiri / topaci /
hic ē Rubinū
vni⁹ palmi
p̄fūdites / mirabili



hic inuenit mar-
garite i copia maxi-
maru badiu su /
vni⁹ mag

in cantu /

1 q tpe p̄sces
p̄sces /

Stabunt
tallio tpe

tot q̄tū auct
lapidū p̄ciosissim

p̄sces / 10 q / may
rubini /

1480, birth of son Diego,
1485 death of Filippa

In 1480, his son Diego Columbus was born. Between 1482 and 1485, Columbus traded along the coasts of West Africa, reaching the Portuguese trading post of Elmina at the Guinea coast (in present-day Ghana). Some records report that Filippa died around 1485, while Columbus was away in Castile. He returned to Portugal to settle her estate and take his son Diego with him to Spain. Inherits a huge library of nautical documents from his wife's family.





1485, Columbus
to Spain.
On his way to seek
out the King &
Queen of Spain
to interest them in
his expedition to
the "Indies."



1485, Spain, Palos

Franciscan monastery
Santa Maria
de La Rabida

Meet
Antonio de Marchena.

Offers an
intro to his friend
Medinaciel



Ferdinand, Isabella and Columbus Sign the Deal, Jan 1492







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J. M. COHEN, born in London in 1903 and a Cambridge graduate, was the translator of many volumes for the Penguin Classics, including versions of Cervantes, Rabelais and Montaigne. For some years he assisted E.V. Rieu in editing the Penguin Classics. He collected the three books of Comic and Curious Verse and anthologies of Latin American and Cuban writing. With his son Mark Cohen he also edited the Penguin Dictionary of Quotations and the two editions of its companion Dictionary of Modern Quotations. He frequently visited Spain and made several visits to Mexico, Cuba and other Spanish American countries. J. M. Cohen died in 1989. The Times' obituary described him as 'the last great English man of letters', while the Independent wrote that 'his influence will be felt for generations to come'.

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS's four voyages of discovery to the New World were recorded in a number of letters and dispatches written by him and the officers who sailed with him.

The story was taken up by a talented writer of newsletters to the great, Peter Martyr, and later by the royal historian Captain Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo and by **Fray Bartolomé de las Casas**, in particular, both of whom knew the Indies, and by Columbus's own son Hernando, who accompanied his father on his fourth voyage and wrote his biography.

A great library of documents was collected in the Casa de las Indias at Seville (where American affairs were initially handled) and afterwards taken to Hispaniola, and in addition Hernando himself had many papers which were read also by Bartolomé de las Casas, who was a friend of the Columbus family. During the litigation concerning that family's claims to wealth and governorship, facts were discussed and interpreted in a variety of ways.

When Oviedo published his official *Historia general y natural de las Indias* in 1547 - fifty-six years after Columbus's landfall - it might have seemed that everything relevant to the voyages had been read and written.

Gonzalo Fernandez de Oviedo, with whose narrative this book begins, accepted Columbus as a Genoese of no great lineage, education or attainments, one who had sailed on various commercial voyages, and who conceived and tirelessly advocated from court to court a scheme for crossing the ocean from Spain to China and opening up a direct trade route to the west, by which the gold, jewels and spices of the Orient could be brought to the ports of Castile: a reasonable trading venture, which he made more attractive to the Catholic sovereigns Ferdinand and Isabela, by offering them the prospect that the inhabitants of the intervening lands, perhaps of China and Japan themselves, might be converted to Christianity on the way. The royal pair were enthusiasts for the conversion of Jews and Moslems, and Columbus carried on his first voyage a converted Jew with a knowledge of Arabic, who would be able to expound the Christian mysteries to the Chinese, Japanese and Indians, who were presumed to speak Arabic

DIGEST* OF COLUMBUS's
LOG-BOOK ON HIS FIRST VOYAGE MADE
BY BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

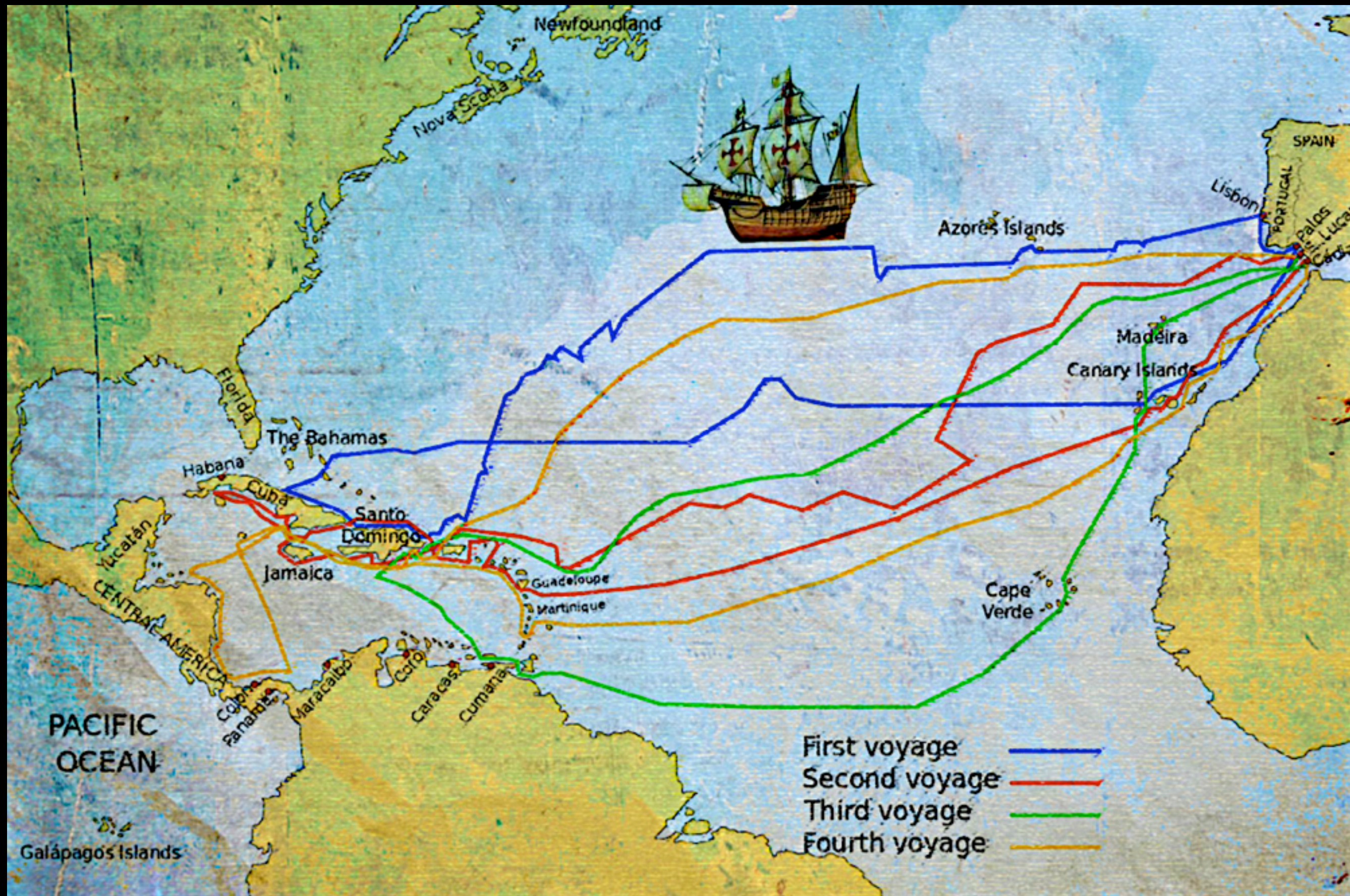
On 2 January in the year 1492, when your Highnesses had concluded their war with the Moors who reigned in Europe, I saw your Highnesses' banners victoriously raised on the towers of the Alhambra, the citadel of that city, and the Moorish king come out of the city gates and kiss the hands of your Highnesses and the prince, My Lord. And later in that same month, on the grounds of information I had given your royal Highnesses concerning the lands of India and a prince who is called the Great Khan - which means in Spanish 'King of Kings' - and of his and his ancestors' frequent and vain applications to Rome for men learned in the holy faith who should instruct them in it, your Highnesses decided to send me, Christopher Columbus, to see these parts of India and the princes and peoples of those lands and consider the best means for their conversion. For, by the neglect of the Popes to send instructors, many nations had fallen to idolatry and adopted doctrines of perdition, and your Highnesses as Catholic princes and devoted propagators of the holy Christian faith have always been enemies of the sect of Mahomet and of all idolatries and heresies.

I departed from the city of Granada on Saturday, 12 May, and went to the seaport of Palos, where I prepared three ships very suitable for such a voyage and set out from that port well supplied both with provisions and seamen. Half an hour before sunrise on Friday, 3 August, I departed on a course for the Canary Islands, from which possession of your Highnesses I intended to set out and sail until I reached the Indies, there to deliver your Highnesses' letters to their princes and to fulfil your other commands. I decided therefore to make this careful daily report of my voyage and of everything I should do, see or experience. In addition to a report of the day's events recorded each night, and of the night's sailing recorded each morning, I decided to make a new chart for navigation, giving the correct disposition according to their bearings of the land and water in the ocean sea. I intended also to compile a book which would contain everything mapped by latitude measured from the Equator and by longitude from the west. Though all these things will be a great labour it is essential that I should neglect sleep and carefully watch my course.



Palos

THE FOUR VOYAGES



FRIDAY, 3 AUGUST.

We set out at eight o'clock from the bar of Saltes near Palos and travelled with a strong breeze sixty miles, that is to say fifteen leagues, southward, before sunset. Afterwards we changed course to south-west by south, making for the Canaries.

SATURDAY, 4 AUGUST.

We continued south-west by south.

SUNDAY, 5 AUGUST.

We continued on this course and covered more than twenty leagues in the day and night.

MONDAY, 6 AUGUST.

The rudder of the Pinta ,† whose captain was Martin Alonso Pinzón, jumped out of position; this was said to be the doing of one Gomez Rascón, and Cristóbal Quintero, the owner of the ship, who disliked the voyage. The Admiral says that before they sailed these men had been grumbling and making difficulties. The Admiral was much disturbed, since he could not help the caravel without danger to himself, but comforted by his knowledge that Martin Alonso Pinzón was a courageous and an intelligent man.

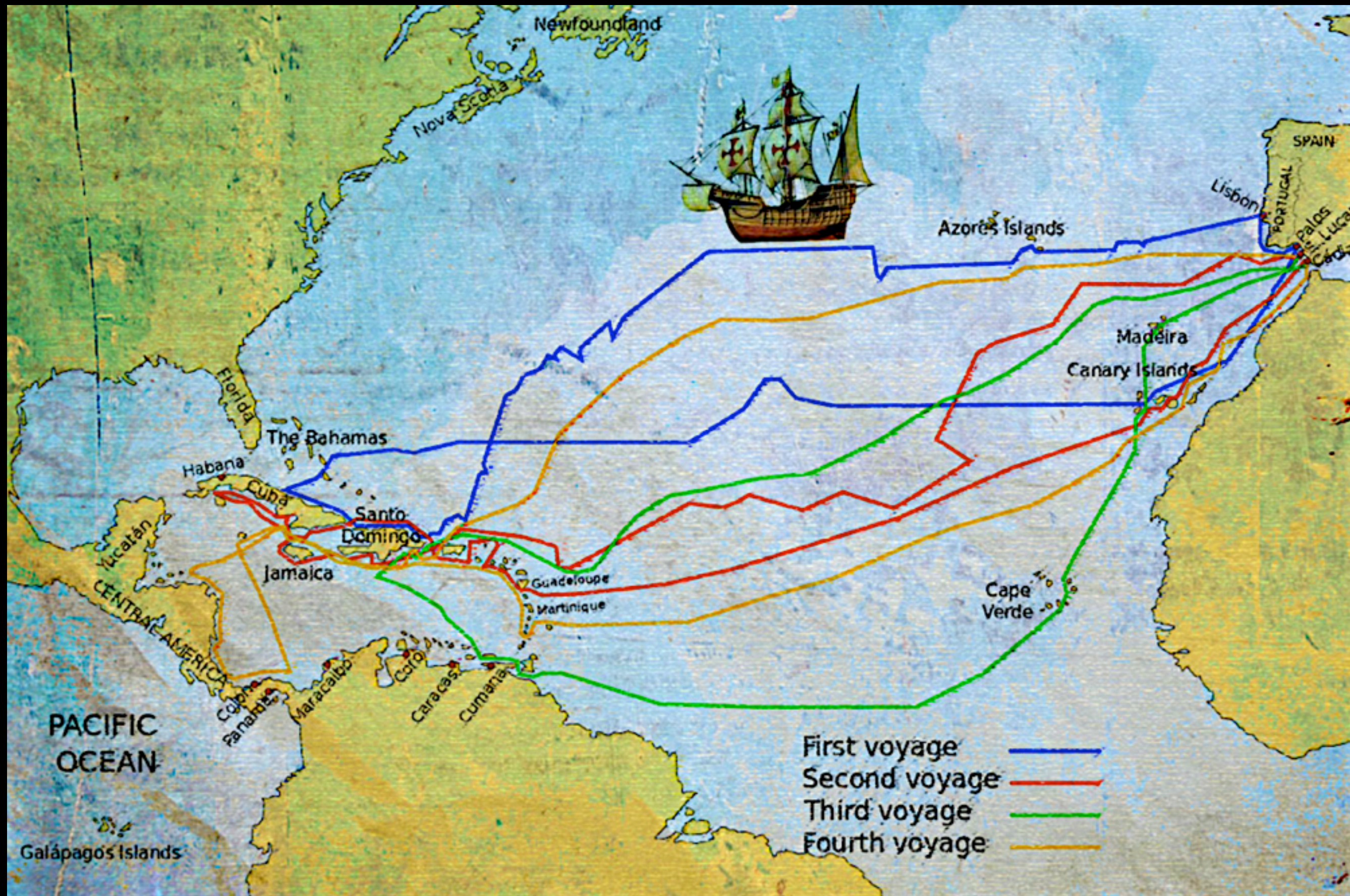
WEDNESDAY, 8 AUGUST.

The pilots of the caravel differed as to their position and the Admiral proved to be the most correct. He was anxious to go to Grand Canary and leave the caravel Pinta there, since she was steering badly and shipping water. He wished to get another caravel there if one were to be found.

THURSDAY, 9 AUGUST.

The Admiral could not make Gomera until Sunday night, and by the Admiral's command Martin Alonso remained off the coast of Grand Canary, being unable to steer. The Admiral went to Canary or Tenerife, and thanks to the diligent work of himself, Martin Alonso and the others, the Pinta was very well repaired. Eventually they reached Gomera, on the island of Tenerife, which is remarkably high, and there saw a great fire. The Niña, which had been lateen rigged, was fitted with square sails. They returned to Gomera on Sunday, 2 September, with the repaired Pinta. The Admiral says that many trustworthy Spaniards from the island of Hierro who were at Gomera with Dona Ines Peraza, the mother of Guillen Peraza, afterwards the first count of Gomera, swore that every year they saw land to the westward of the Canaries in the direction of the setting sun, and some men of Gomera also affirmed this story under oath.

THE FOUR VOYAGES





THURSDAY, 6 SEPTEMBER.

He set out that morning from the harbor of Gomera and set course to continue his voyage. He learnt from a caravel which came from the island of Hierro that three Portuguese caravels were cruising there with the intent of capturing him. The reason for this must have been the King of Portugal's annoyance at his having gone to Castile. He sailed all that night and day in a calm and in the morning found himself between Gomera and Tenerife.

FRIDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER.

All Friday it was becalmed.

SATURDAY, 8 SEPTEMBER.

At three o'clock in the morning it began to blow from the north-east, and he shaped his course to the west. Much water broke over the bows which made progress slow. That day and night they went nine leagues.

SUNDAY, 9 SEPTEMBER.

He made fifteen leagues that day and decided to score up a smaller amount so that the crews should not take fright or lose courage if the voyage were long. In the night he went 120 miles, which is thirty leagues, at ten miles an hour. The sailors steered badly, falling off to west by north and even to west-north-west; the Admiral scolded them many times for this.

MONDAY, 10 SEPTEMBER.

That day and night he went sixty leagues at ten miles (2½ leagues) an hour. But he reckoned only forty-eight leagues so as not to alarm the crew.

TUESDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER.

That day they sailed on their course westward and made more than twenty leagues. They saw a large fragment of the mast of a 120-tonner, but could not secure it. That night they went about twenty leagues, but he reckoned only sixteen.

WEDNESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER.

During that night and day they kept to their course and made thirty-three leagues. The Admiral again reckoned somewhat less.

MONDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER.

He continued his course westwards for fifty leagues and reckoned only forty-seven. They were helped by the current. They saw much weed, which was very fine and had grown on rocks; it came from the west. They decided that they were near land. The pilots took and marked the north and found that the needles declined a full point to the north-west. The sailors were frightened and depressed, and did not say why. On observing this the Admiral gave orders that they should take the north again at dawn, and the needles were found to be true. The cause of this was that the star apparently changes its position and not the needles. That Monday morning they saw much more weed, which was like the weed from rivers, and in it they found a live crab which the Admiral kept. He says that this is a certain sign of land, for such weed is not to be found eighty leagues from land. They found the water less salt after they left the Canaries, and the breezes always more gentle. All now sailed on very happily, and whichever ship could sail fastest went ahead. They saw many dolphins and the crew of the Niña killed one. The Admiral says here that all these signs* came from the west, 'Whence I trust that the high

TUESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER.

During that day and night they made more than fifty-five leagues but he reckoned only forty-eight. On these days the sea was as smooth as the river at Seville. That day Martin Alonso sailed ahead in the Pinta, which was a fast ship: because, as he called to the Admiral from his ship, he had seen a great flock of birds flying westwards and hoped to sight land that night; this was his reason for not holding back. To the north there appeared a great bank of clouds, which is a sign that land is near.

WEDNESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER.

The Admiral continued on his course and, since it was calm, made twenty-five leagues, but reckoned only twenty-two. At ten o'clock that morning a booby approached the ship and in the evening they saw another. These birds are not accustomed to fly more than twenty leagues from land. A little rain fell without wind, which is a certain sign of land. The Admiral didn't wish to stop and beat to windward in order to make sure that there was land there, but he was certain that there were some islands both to the north and south, as in fact there were. He sailed between them because he was anxious to press on to the Indies. 'There is plenty of time,' he says, 'for God willing we shall see everything on our return voyage.' These are his actual words. Here the pilots set down their positions.

THURSDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER.

This day he sailed west by north and west-north-west, because in the prevailing calm the winds were very variable. They made about seven or eight leagues. Two boobies flew to the ship and later a third, a sign that they were near land, and they saw much weed, although they had seen none on the previous day. They caught with their hands a bird like a tern; it was a river-bird, not a sea-bird. It had feet like a gull. At dawn two or three small land-birds came to the ship singing, and afterwards towards sunset they disappeared. Later a booby came from the west-north-west and flew away to the south-east, a sign that it had left land to the west-north-west, for these birds sleep on land and fly out to sea in the morning to look for food and do not fly further than twenty leagues.

FRIDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER. Most of that day was calm, but there was some wind later. That day and night they must have gone about thirteen leagues on their course and off it. At dawn they found so much weed that the sea seemed to be thick with it. It came from the west. They saw a booby. The sea was as smooth as a river and the breezes the sweetest in the world. They saw a whale, a sign that they were near land, for whales always remain near land.

SATURDAY, 22 SEPTEMBER.

He sailed west-north-west, more or less, veering a little to one side or the other, and making roughly thirty leagues. They saw hardly any weed. They saw some petrels and another bird. Here the Admiral says: 'This head-wind is very necessary, because my crew were much agitated by the thought that no winds blew in these seas that could carry them back to Spain.' For part of the day there was no weed, but afterwards it was very dense.

SUNDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER.

He steered north-west and at times north-west by north and sometimes along his course westwards. He made some twenty-two leagues. They saw a pigeon and a booby and a small river-bird and other white birds. The weed was plentiful and they found some crabs in it. As the sea was calm and smooth the crew grumbled, saying that since there were no heavy seas in these parts no wind would ever blow to carry them back to Spain. But later the seas rose high without any wind and this astonished them. The Admiral says at this point: 'I was in great need of these high seas because nothing like this had occurred since the time of the Jews when the Egyptians came out against Moses who was leading them out of captivity.'

TUESDAY, 25 SEPTEMBER.

Much of this day was calm, but later there was wind and they followed their western course until night. The Admiral had a conversation with Martin Alonso Pinzón, captain of the Pinta, about a chart which Columbus had sent three days before to his caravel and on which - as it seems - were drawn certain islands supposed to be in that sea. Martin Alonso said that they must be somewhere near them. The Admiral replied that he was of the same opinion and that the reason why they had not reached them must be that the currents had driven the ships north-eastwards and they had not gone as far as the pilots said. Having reached this conclusion the Admiral asked him to return the chart, which he did on a line. The Admiral then began with his pilots and sailors to fix his position on it. At sunset Martin Alonso went up into the poop of his ship and called most joyfully to the Admiral claiming a present,* since he had sighted land. (false alarm) The Admiral says that when he heard this positive statement he fell on his knees to give thanks to God, and Martin Alonso and his men said the Gloria in Excelsis Deo. The Admiral's men did the same and the whole crew of the Nina climbed the mast and rigging and all affirmed that it was land. The Admiral believed so too and that it was about twenty-four leagues away. Until nightfall they all continued to claim that it was land. The Admiral ordered the course to be changed from the west to the south-west where the land had been sighted. They had sailed four and a half leagues westwards that day.

WEDNESDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER.

He followed his course westwards until midday and then sailed south-west until they discovered that what they had taken for land was no land but cloud. They made thirty-one leagues in the day and night and he reckoned twenty-four. The sea was like a river and the breezes sweet and very gentle.

THURSDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER.

He continued on his westward course. That day and night he made twenty-four leagues and told the men twenty. Many dorados came to the ship and they killed one. They saw a tropic-bird.

FRIDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER. He kept on his western course and owing to calms made only fourteen leagues and reckoned thirteen. They did not find much weed, and took two dorados; the other ships took more.

MONDAY, 1 OCTOBER.

He kept on his westward course. They made twenty-five leagues and he reckoned twenty. They ran into a great storm of rain. At dawn the Admiral's pilot calculated that since leaving the island of Hierro they had gone 568 leagues westwards. The lower figure which the Admiral had shown to the men made it 584. But the Admiral's true calculation, which he kept to himself, was 707.

TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER.

That day and night he followed his course westwards for thirty-nine leagues, which he reckoned as thirty for the men. The sea was always smooth and calm. 'Great thanks be given to God,' the Admiral writes here. The weed was floating from east to west, which was unusual. Many fish appeared and one was killed. They saw a white bird, apparently a gull.

WEDNESDAY, 3 OCTOBER.

He followed his usual course and went forty-seven leagues, reckoning forty to the men. Petrels appeared; there was much weed, some very old and some very fresh, bearing something like fruit. The Admiral believed that they had passed the islands which were depicted on his chart. The Admiral says that although he had some information about islands in this region he had not wished to beat about on those days in the past week when there had been so many signs of land, since he did not want to linger, his purpose being to journey to the Indies. He says that he would have been foolish to delay.

SUNDAY, 7 OCTOBER.

He continued on his westward course and for two hours made twelve, and afterwards eight miles an hour. Up to an hour after sunrise he went twenty-three leagues, but told the men eighteen. All the ships sailed at the utmost speed in order to be the first to sight land and to secure the reward promised by the sovereigns to the first man who should sight it, and at sunrise that day the caravel Niña, which was the fastest sailer and ahead of the others, hoisted a standard at the masthead and fired a lombard as a sign that they had sighted land, for these were the Admiral's orders. He had also ordered that at sunrise and sunset the other ships should join him, since at these two periods the mists clear and visibility is greatest. In the evening they did not see the land which the crew of the Niña thought they had sighted, and a great flock of birds came from the north and flew south-west. The Admiral concluded that either they were going to roost on land or they were flying from the winter, which was about to set in in the lands from which they came. The Admiral knew that the Portuguese had discovered most of the islands in their possession by observing the birds. He decided therefore to abandon his westward course and steer west-south-west an hour before sunset. They made five leagues that night and twenty-three in the day; thus going twenty-eight leagues in all in the day and night together.

THURSDAY, 11 OCTOBER. He sailed west-south-west. They ran into rougher seas than any they had met with on the voyage. They saw petrels and a green reed near the ship. The men of the Pinta saw a cane and a stick and picked up another small stick, apparently shaped with an iron tool; also a piece of cane and some land-grasses and a small board. Those on the caravel Nina saw other indications of land and a stick covered with barnacles. At these signs, all breathed again and were rejoiced. That day they went twenty-seven leagues before sunset and after sunset he resumed his original western course. They made twelve miles an hour and up to two hours before midnight had gone ninety miles, which are twenty-two leagues and a half. The caravel Pinta, being swifter and sailing ahead of the Admiral, now sighted land and gave the signals which the Admiral had commanded. The first man to sight land was a sailor called Rodrigo* from Triana, who afterwards vainly claimed the reward, which was pocketed by Columbus. The Admiral, however, when on the sterncastle at ten o'clock in the night, had seen a light, though it was so indistinct he would not affirm that it was land. He called Pero Gutierrez,† butler of the King's table, and told him that there seemed to be a light and asked him to look. He did so and saw it. He said the same to Rodrigo Sanchez of Segovia, whom the King and Queen had sent in the fleet as accountant,‡ and he saw nothing because he was not in a position from which anything could be seen.

FRIDAY OCT 12, 1492

After the Admiral spoke this light was seen once or twice and it was like a wax candle that went up and down. Very few thought that this was a sign of land, but the Admiral was quite certain that they were near land. Accordingly, after the recitation of the Salve in the usual manner by the assembled sailors, the Admiral most seriously urged them to keep a good lookout from the forecastle and to watch carefully for land. He promised to give a silk doublet to the first sailor who should report it. And he would be entitled also to the reward promised by the sovereigns, which was an annual payment of ten thousand maravedis.* Two hours after midnight land appeared, some two leagues away. They took in all sail, leaving only the mainsail, which is the great sail without bonnets, and lay close-hauled waiting for day. This was Friday, on which they reached a small island of the Lucayos, called in the Indian language Guana-hani.† Immediately some naked people appeared and the Admiral went ashore in the armed boat, as did Martin Alonso Pinzón and Vicente Yanez his brother, captain of the Niña. The Admiral raised the royal standard and the captains carried two banners with the green cross which were flown by the Admiral on all his ships. On each side of the cross was a crown surmounting the letters F and Y‡ (for Ferdinand and Isabela). On landing they saw very green trees and much water and fruit of various kinds. The Admiral called the two captains and the others who had landed and Rodrigo Esco-bedo, recorder of the whole fleet, and Rodrigo Sanchez de Segovia, and demanded that they should bear faithful witness that he had taken possession of the island - which he did - for his sovereigns and masters the King and Queen. He further made the required declarations, which are recorded at greater length in the evidence there



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He further made the required declarations, which are recorded at greater length in the evidence there. Soon many people of the island came up to them. What follows are the Admiral's actual words in his account of his first voyage and the discovery of these Indies. 'In order to win their friendship, since I knew they were a people to be converted and won to our holy faith by love and friendship rather than by force, I gave some of them red caps and glass beads which they hung round their necks, also many other trifles. These things pleased them greatly and they became marvellously friendly to us. They afterwards swam out to the ship's boats in which we were sitting, bringing us parrots and balls of cotton thread and spears and many other things, which they exchanged with us for such objects as glass beads, hawks and bells. In fact, they very willingly traded everything they had. But they seemed to me a people very short of everything. They all go naked as their mothers bore them, including the women, although I saw only one very young girl. All the men I saw were young. I did not see one over the age of thirty. They were very well built with fine bodies and handsome faces. Their hair is coarse, almost like that of a horse's tail and short; they wear it down over their eyebrows except for a few strands at the back, which they wear long and never cut.

They are the color of the Canary Islanders (neither black nor white). Some of them paint themselves black, others white or any colour they can find. Some paint their faces, some their whole bodies, some only the eyes, some only the nose. They do not carry arms or know them. For when I showed them swords, they took them by the edge and cut themselves out of ignorance. They have no iron. Their spears are made of cane. Some instead of an iron tip have a fish's tooth and others have points of different kinds. They are fairly tall on the whole, with fine limbs and good proportions. I saw some who had wound scars on their bodies and I asked them by signs how they got these and they indicated to me that people came from other islands near by who tried to capture them and they defended themselves. I supposed and still suppose that they come from the mainland to capture them for slaves. They should be good servants and very intelligent, for I have observed that they soon repeat anything that is said to them, and I believe that they would easily be made Christians, for they appeared to me to have no religion. God willing, when I make my departure I will bring half a dozen of them back to their Majesties, so that they can learn to speak. I saw no animals of any kind on this island except parrots.' These are the Admiral's own words.

SATURDAY, 13 OCTOBER.

At daybreak many of these men came to the shore - all young, as I have said, and all of a good height - a very fine people. Their hair is not curly but straight and as coarse as horse hair. All have very broad brows and heads, broader than those of any people I have seen before. Their eyes are very fine and not small. They are not at all black, but the color of Canary Islanders, as could be expected, since this is in the same latitude as the island of Hierro in the Canaries. They have very straight legs and no bellies, but well-formed bodies.* They came to the ship in boats which are made from tree-trunks, like a long boat all cut out of a single log. They are marvellously carved in the native style and they are so big that forty or fifty-five men came in them. There are others smaller, so small that some carried only a single man. They row them with a paddle like a baker's shovel and they go wonderfully fast.

They bale it out with gourds which they carry with them. They brought balls of cotton thread and parrots and spears and other things which it would be tedious to mention, and exchanged them for anything that was given them. I watched carefully to discover whether they had gold and saw that some of them carried a small piece hanging from a hole pierced in the nose. I was able to understand from their signs that to the south, either inland or along the coast, there was a king who had large vessels made of it and possessed a great deal. I tried hard to make them go there but saw in the end that they had no intention of doing so. I decided to remain till the afternoon of the next day and then to sail south-west, for according to the signs which many of them made there was land to the south, south-west and north-west. They indicated that men from the north-west often came to attack them. So I resolved to go south-west to seek the gold and precious stones.

This island is fairly large and very flat. It has very green trees and much water. It has a very large lake in the middle and no mountains and all is delightfully green. The people are very gentle and anxious to have the things we bring. Thinking that nothing will be given them, however, unless they give something in exchange, and having nothing to give, they take anything they can, jump into the water and swim away. But they will give all that they do possess for anything that is given to them, exchanging things even for bits of broken crockery or broken glass cups. I saw one give sixteen balls of cotton for three Portuguese ceotis, the equivalent of the Castilian blanca* and in these balls there was more than an aroba † of cotton thread. I should like to forbid this and let no one take any cotton except at my command; then if there were any quantity I would order it all to be taken for your Majesties. It grows here on this island, but owing to shortage of time I can give no exact account of it. And here too the gold is found that they wear hanging from their noses. But in order not to waste time I wish to go and see if I can strike the island of Chipangu.

SUNDAY, 14 OCTOBER.

At dawn I ordered the ship's boat and the boats of the caravels to be made ready, and coasted the island in a north-easterly direction in order to see the other and eastward part and to look for villages. I saw two or three, whose people all came down to the beach calling to us and offering thanks to God. Some brought us water, others various sorts of food, and others, when they saw that I did not intend to land, jumped into the sea and swam out. We understood them to be asking us if we came from the sky. One old man got into the boat, and all the others, men and women alike, shouted, 'Come and see the men who have come from the skies; and bring them food and drink.' Many men and women came, each bringing something and offering thanks to God; they threw themselves on the ground and raised their hands to the sky and then called out to us, asking us to land. But I was afraid to do so, seeing a great reef of rocks which encircled the whole island. Inside there is deep water which would give sufficient anchorage for all the ships in Christendom.

Columbus Among the People of the New World (Mundo Novo)



What Columbus finds on the islands: not much



Columbus' principal illusion, that he had made the voyage to Asia, was fostered by his need to provide rapid successes or victories in order to get renewed backing for his explorations. The islands that he discovered were not rich. The quantities of gold he claimed to be just about to discover were always on the next island. The Arawak fishermen and the Carib cannibal raiders who preyed on them had only a few gold ornaments; the inhabitants of the South American coastlands alloyed such gold as they had with copper, which they in fact valued more highly.



Despite Columbus's frequent lists of valuable plants discovered, he was no botanist and made frequent mistakes. The islands had some gums, but no valuable spices. They had timber, it is true, suitable for shipbuilding, and parrots. In future, the sugar-cane, the banana palm and tobacco would thrive there. But for the present they had little but fish and maize, sweet peppers, yucca and sweet potatoes, the food of the natives - and when European crops were planted there, they speedily shot up and withered. The only wealth of the country lay in its human inhabitants, who could be made to work as slaves either in Spain or at home.

SOME OF THE MAJOR THEMES OF THE CRITICS OF COLUMBUS

I. like all of Western civ all Columbus cared
about was gold silver.

Corruption of Capitalism-money.

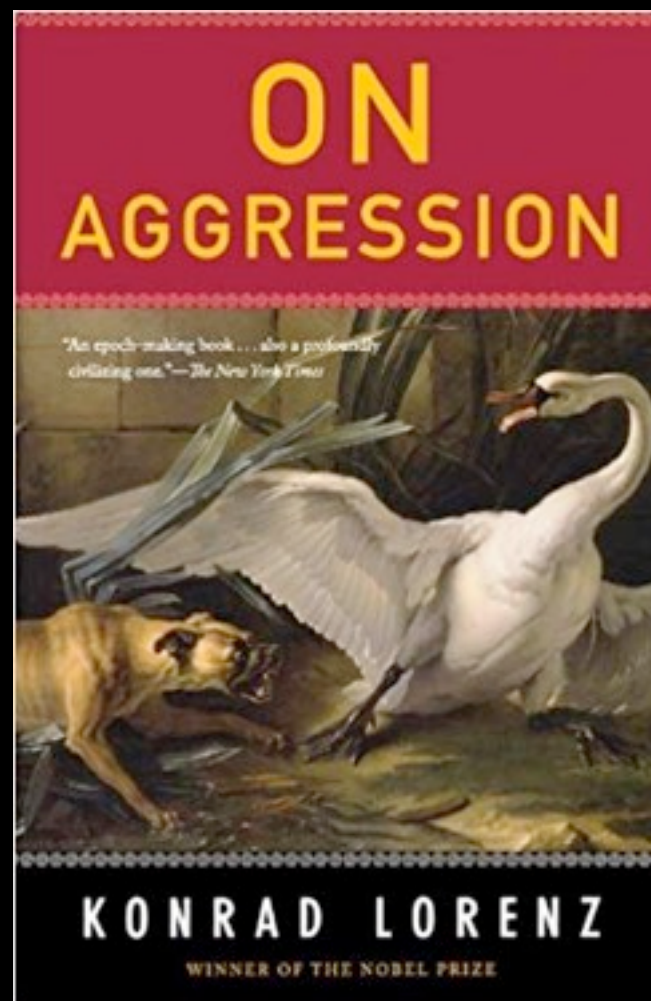
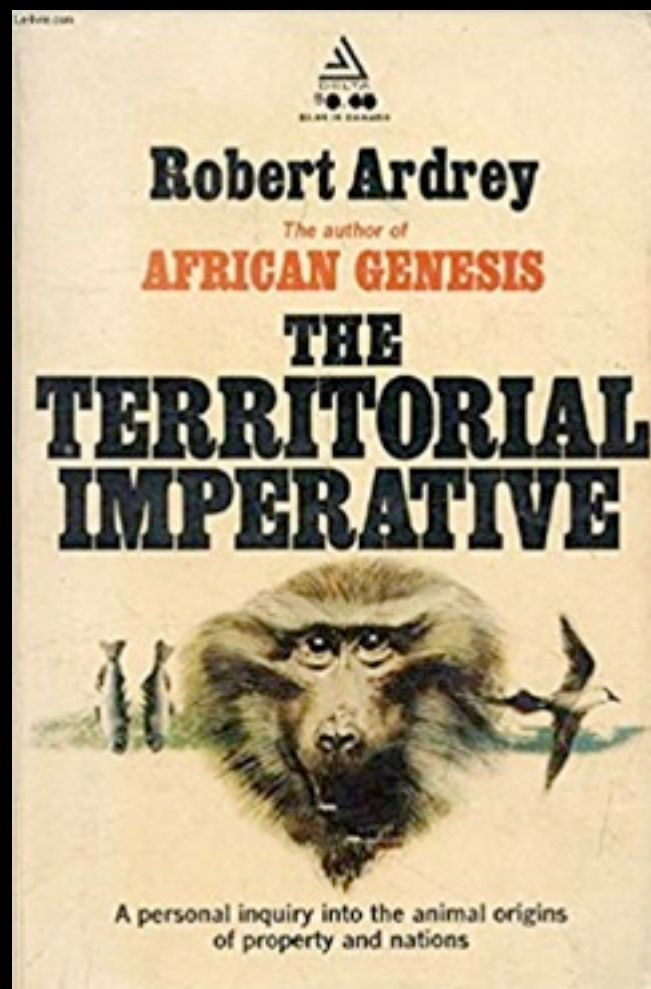


ANSWER: totally untrue. Columbus was a navigator, scientist, a researcher, a cartographer, a book collector. The passage to the Indies had been his fascination for years and years. Financial gain came in first flush of fame, but it did not last. His son was like the father: a book collector, scholar who acquired the largest personal library in Europe by his death.

Columbus and the Native Peoples

I. Should he have stayed home?

Have other peoples moved around the globe and pushed other peoples out of their land? Indo Euro Barbarian Invaders, Celts, Goths, Vandals, Alemanni, Burgundians, Normans, Angles, Saxons, Danes, Vikings, Turks, Persians, Assyrians, Huns, Muslims, Mongolians etc.



The critics think that everyone should just stay "home." But what is home?

The Critics:

"Columbus displaced the indigenous peoples now celebrated in Berkeley holiday
"Indigenous Peoples Day."

But the "Native Americans" are NOT indigenous people to North America.

Who exactly are these "indigenous people"

Webster's dictionary defines "indigenous" as "produced, growing, living, or occurring natively or naturally in a particular region or environment".

Well unless the "cradle of civilization" was in North America instead of Mesopotamia and Ethiopia, there were no "peoples" produced, growing or living natively or naturally in North America

Archeologists and linguists (Joseph Greenberg SU) best guess is that the first people – most definitely not "indigenous" – appeared in North America some 15,000 years ago by migrating over the Bering Land Bridge – a solid passage that led from Siberia to Alaska and down into Canada.

So the very idea that Columbus was pushing out the indigenous peoples is false. They themselves had pushed into this land from somewhere else.

Columbus and the nature of the Native Peoples

2. Were the native peoples pacific peace loving native peoples unfamiliar with war and aggression?

No. The Aztecs were the most brutal rapacious native peoples in all the world. They organized their whole culture around the conquest of fellow tribes. And then they used the conquered peoples as live sacrifices on the high pyramids as sacrifices to their gods. There is no doubt to any of this. The skeletons, and skulls have been found buried in Zócalo, the central plaza of Mexico City and former center of the Aztec civilization. Aztecs not the only brutal tribes. The Caribs ate their victims (origin of word "cannibal")

3. Were the Spaniards as a group unusually harsh to the conquered peoples? There was a huge variety of treatment. Some Spaniards were brutal, some like Bartolomé de las Casas spent his entire life working to improve and protect the natives. He became the King of Spain's #1 advisor on native conditions and wrote a best selling book denouncing his own people. The King agreed with him.

MEXICO

The only reason Cortes was able to conquer the huge powerful Aztec people and their capital in Mexico City was that all the other tribes hated the Aztecs so much that they were willing to league with anyone who promised to dethrone the hated conquerer of other tribes.

None of this suggests that Cortes was a nice gentle humanitarian. He was not. BUT his culture at home in Spain was. The King of Spain once informed of the violations of human rights in the best selling book by Bartolomeo de las Casas immediately ordered the authorities to stop the violations. The King nominated De las Casa to be his #1 advisor on the new Americas and so it continued to his death.

PS: the King's efforts to reign in the violations failed because he was so far away no one feared him.

Ferdinand, Isabella and Columbus in Barcelona 1493



Life After 1492: fame then scandal, failure

Following his first voyage, Columbus was appointed Viceroy and Governor of the Indies under the terms of the Capitulations of Santa Fe. In practice, this primarily entailed the administration of the colonies in the island of Hispaniola, whose capital was established in Santo Domingo. By the end of his third voyage, Columbus was physically and mentally exhausted, his body wracked by arthritis and his eyes by ophthalmia. In October 1499, he sent two ships to Spain, asking the Court of Spain to appoint a royal commissioner to help him govern. By this time, **accusations of tyranny and incompetence** on the part of Columbus had also reached the Court. Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand responded by removing Columbus from power and replacing him with Francisco de Bobadilla, a member of the Order of Calatrava. Bobadilla, who ruled as governor from 1500 until his death in a storm in 1502, had also been tasked by the Court with investigating the accusations of brutality made against Columbus. Arriving in Santo Domingo while Columbus was away during the explorations of his third voyage, Bobadilla was immediately met with complaints about all three Columbus brothers: Christopher, Bartolomeo, and Diego. Bobadilla reported to Spain that Columbus regularly used torture and mutilation to govern Hispaniola.

Life After 1492

A 48-page report, found in 2006 in the national archive in the Spanish city of Simancas, contains testimonies from 23 people, including both enemies and supporters of Columbus, about the treatment of colonial subjects by Columbus and his brothers during his seven-year rule. According to the report, Columbus once punished a man found guilty of stealing corn by having his ears and nose cutoff. Testimony recorded in the report stated that Columbus congratulated his brother Bartolomeo on "defending the family" when the latter ordered a woman paraded naked through the streets and then had her tongue cut out for suggesting that Columbus was of lowly birth. The document also describes how Columbus put down native unrest and revolt: he first ordered a brutal crackdown in which many natives were killed, and then paraded their dismembered bodies through the streets in an attempt to discourage further rebellion. "Columbus's government was characterized by a form of tyranny," Consuelo Varela, a Spanish historian who has seen the document, told journalists. "Even those who loved him had to admit the atrocities that had taken place." Because of their gross misgovernance, Columbus and his brothers were arrested and imprisoned upon their return to Spain from the third voyage. They lingered in jail for six weeks before King Ferdinand ordered their release. Not long after, the king and queen summoned the Columbus brothers to the Alhambra palace in Granada. There, the royal couple heard the brothers' pleas; restored their freedom and wealth; and, after much persuasion, agreed to fund Columbus's fourth voyage. But the door was firmly shut on Columbus's role as governor.

May 20, 1506, Death of Columbus



THE DEATH OF COLUMBUS.

Columbus died May 20, 1506, at a poor bed of Valladolid, Spain. His last words were, "In the name of God, I commend my soul." He died 18 months after leaving the Queen of Spain. His remains, which were a great treasure, in 1595 Columbus' remains were taken to the Holy World, and they were at present.

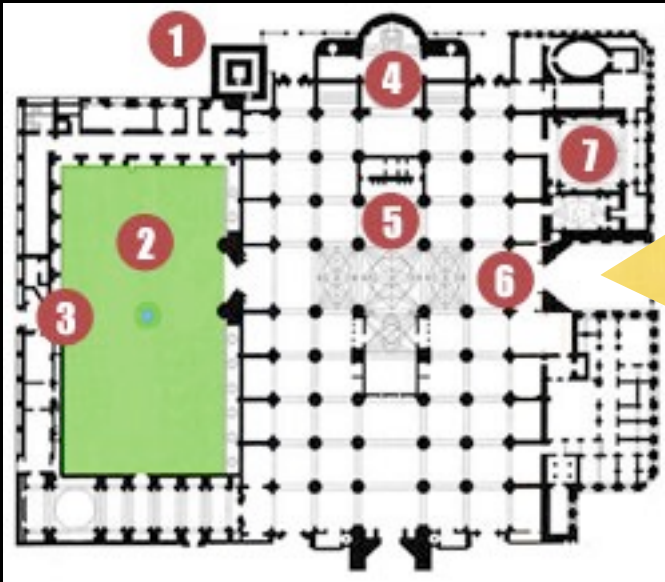
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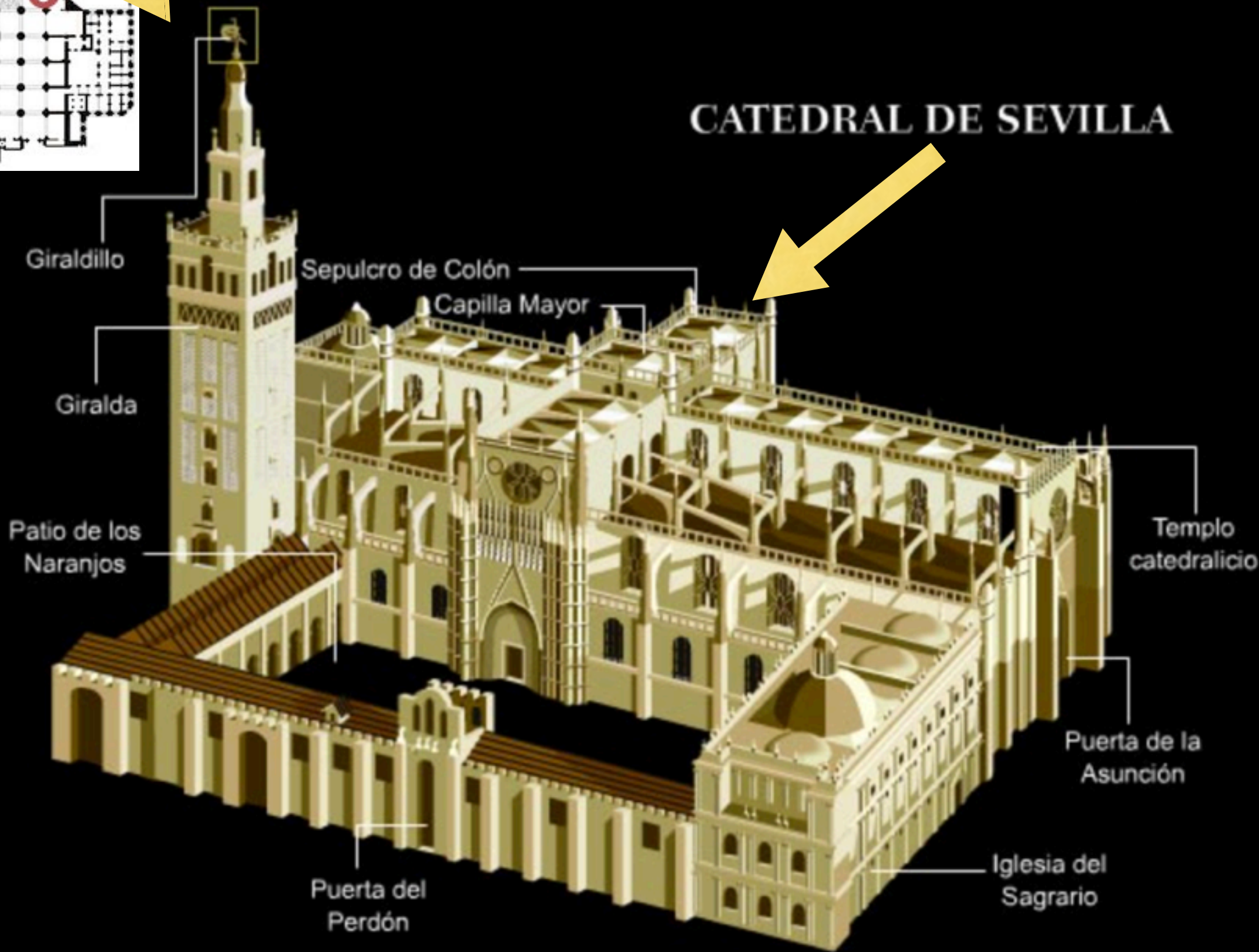


Cathedral of Seville





CATEDRAL DE SEVILLA



High Altar of Cathedral of Seville

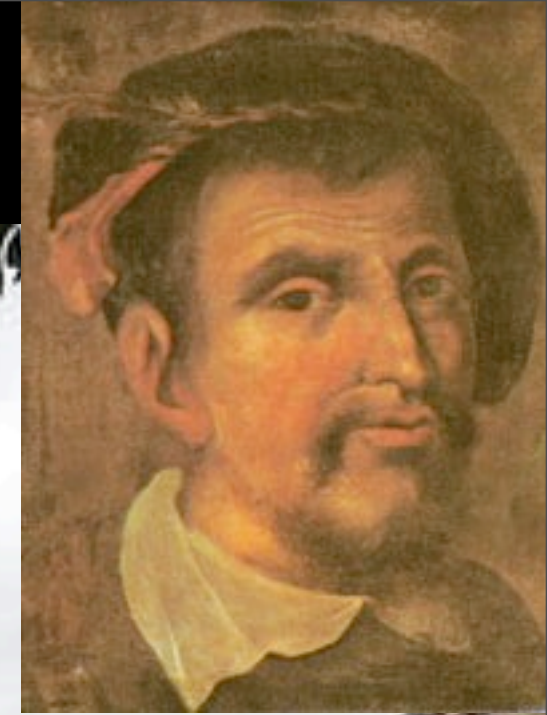








Christopher
Columbus,
1451-1506



La Biblioteca Colombina



Fernando had a generous income from his father's New World properties, and used a sizable fraction of it to buy books, eventually amassing a personal library of over 15,000 volumes. This library was patronized by educated people in Spain and elsewhere, including the Dutch philosopher Erasmus. Apart from its size, the library was unique in several ways. Fernando personally noted each and every book that he or his associates acquired by listing the date of purchase, the location and how much was paid.



Archivo General de Indias

Tuesday April 7, 2020



Christopher Columbus
1451-1506





Christopher Columbus
1451-1506

What was the most important accomplishment of Christopher Columbus?

He was a research scientist exploring the nature and size of the globe.

His research (books, travel) told him the globe was round (everyone knew that) and that the size of the globe could be managed, circumnavigated by human beings.

His own discoveries were flawed
BUT in essence true.

Vespucci, Magellan De Gama,
Drake filled in the blanks.

Columbus is the Galileo of the globe.
He was a bad administrator. Bad Governor.
Bad humanitarian. But a brilliant courageous
scientist, like Galileo, Harvey, Leeuwenhoek.



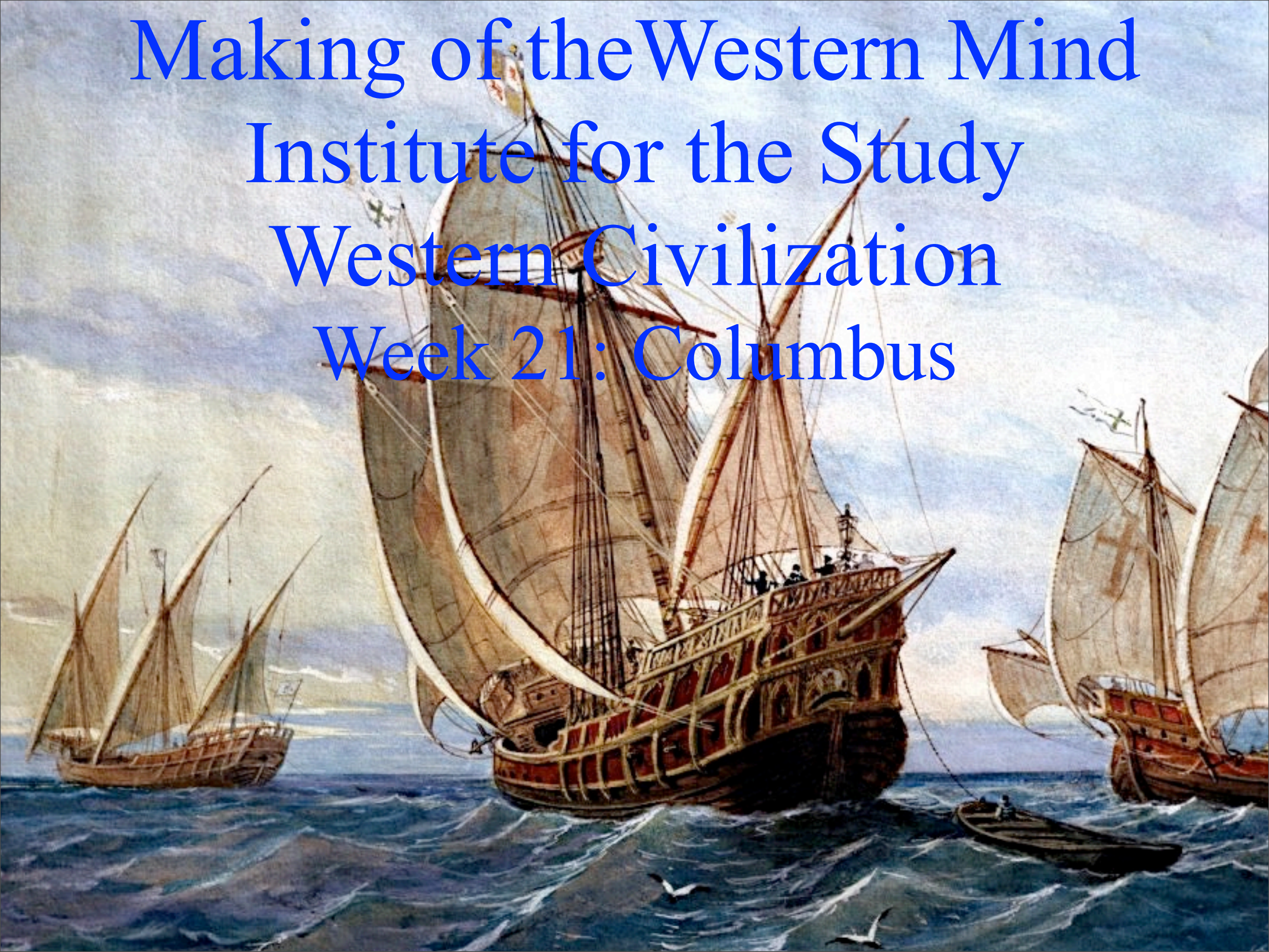
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Making of the Western Mind

Institute for the Study

Western Civilization

Week 21: Columbus



Renaissance Style Sacristy 1530 totally different than rest of Gothic Cathedral

