

Maritime Exploration

THE EARLY MODERN WORLD (1450 – 1750)



- An important theme of 1450-1750 (*The Early Modern World*) will be the effects of European exploration on the world.
- However, there were maritime expansions taking place in the Pacific, Indian, and Atlantic oceans prior to 1450.



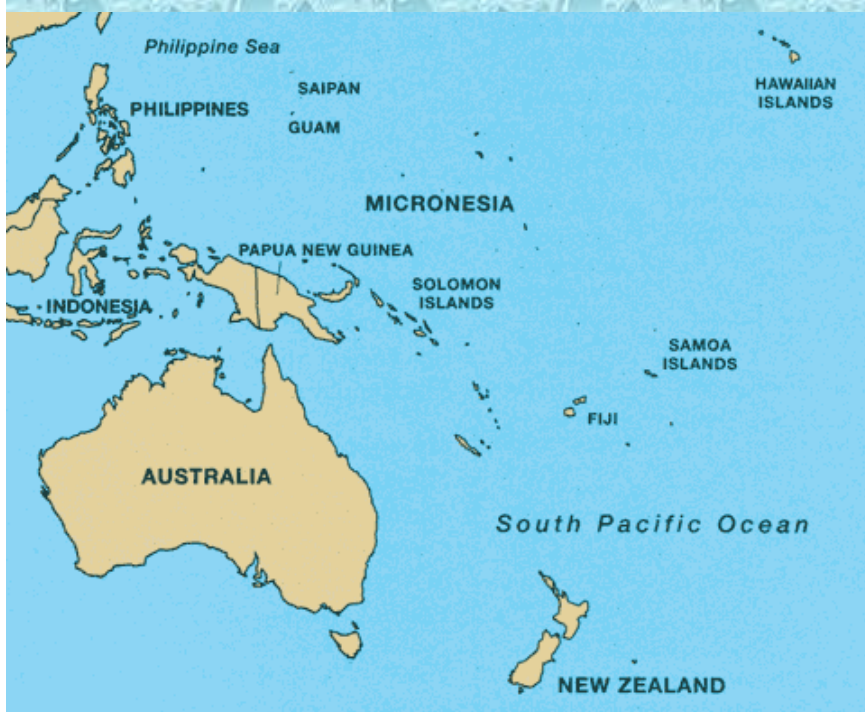
Pacific Ocean

- Even before the common era (B.C.E.), mariners from Southeast Asia were venturing into the waters around the many islands of Indonesia.
- This was followed by additional waves of migration / expansion into the Pacific, to such places like Fiji and even the Polynesian islands.
- Mariners used canoes (sometimes 100 ft. long) and primitive sailing vessels.

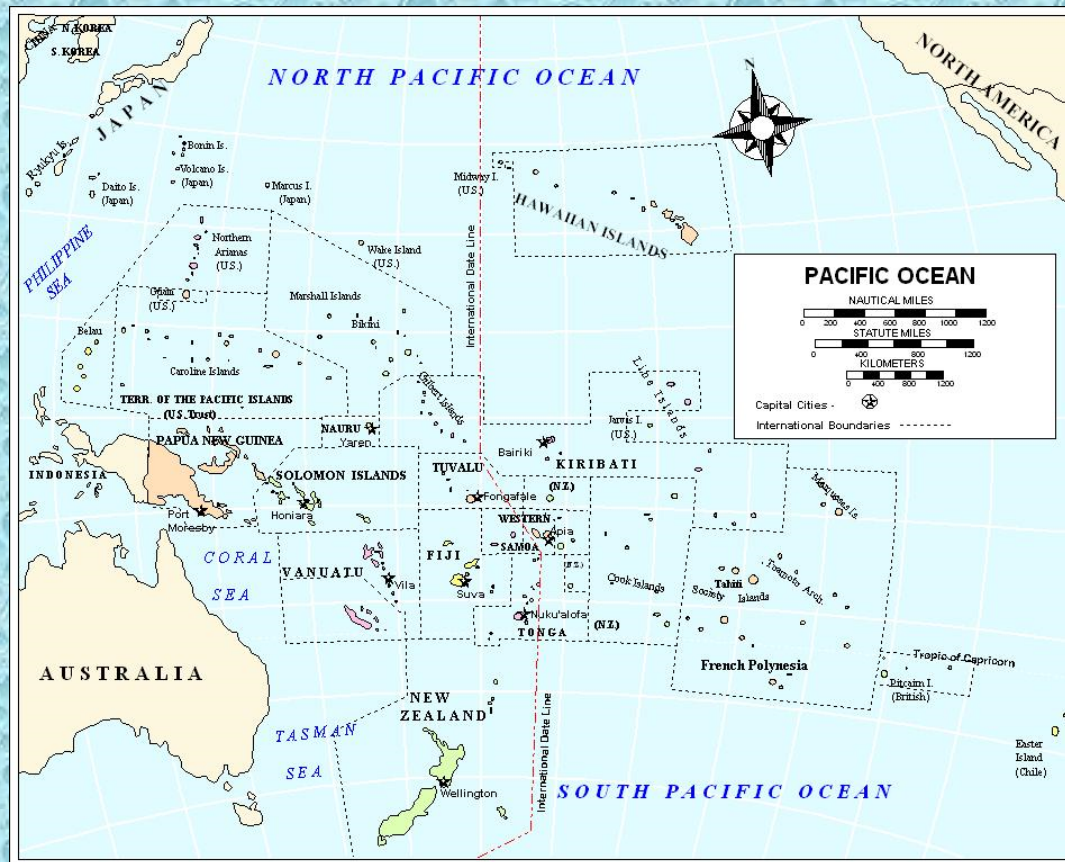


Catherine Buchanan 2008

- Polynesian sailors sailed to the Hawaiian Islands as early as 500 C.E., and over the next several hundred years more and more settlers made their way across the Pacific to settle there.

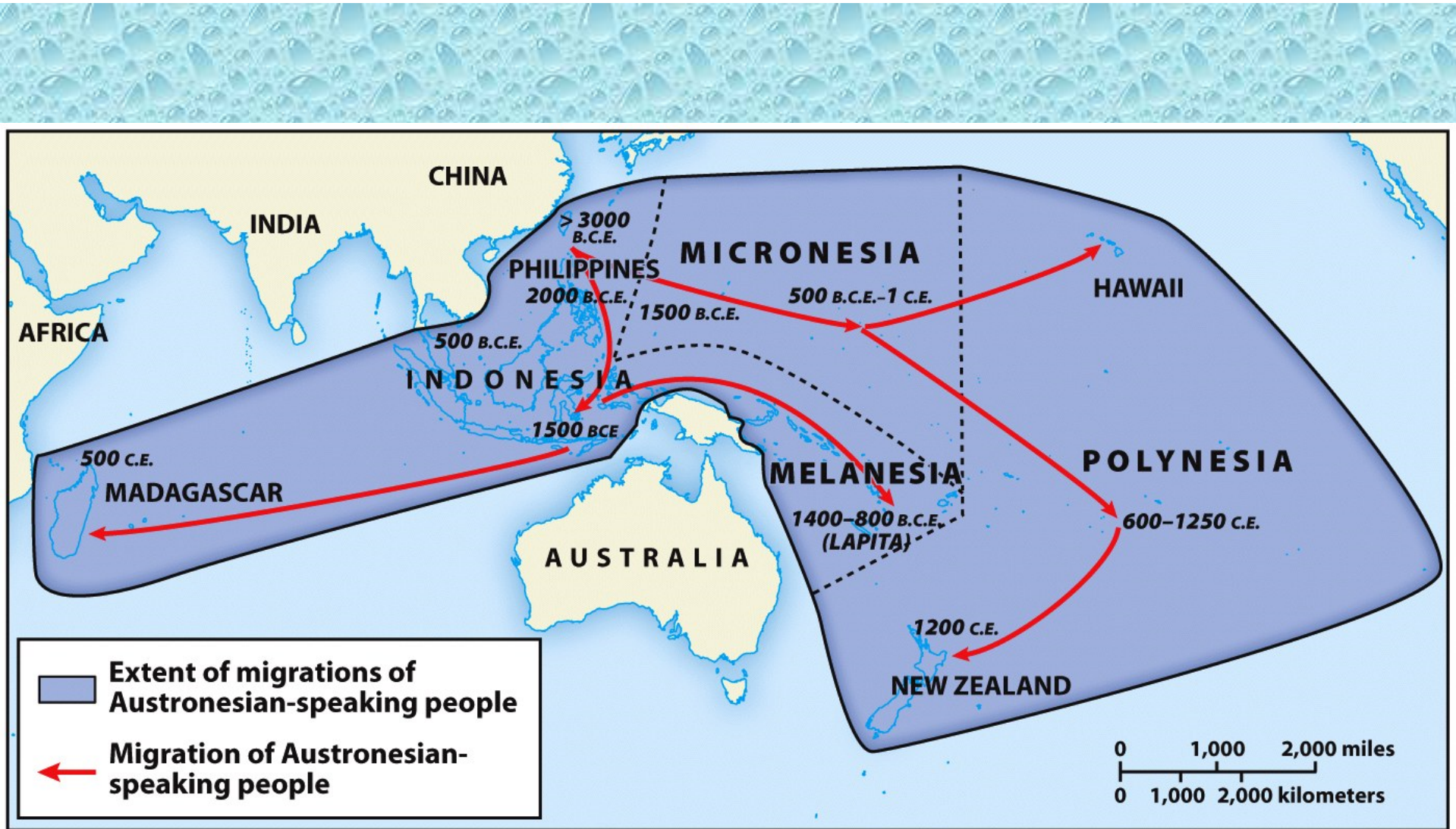


- Also around 500 C.E., Polynesians reached Easter Island far off the coast of South America.
- By 1200, people were settling New Zealand.



- Although it would appear this expansion was by accident, historians think these voyages were planned because of the sufficient number of men, women, animals, and plants that made these journeys to form colonies.

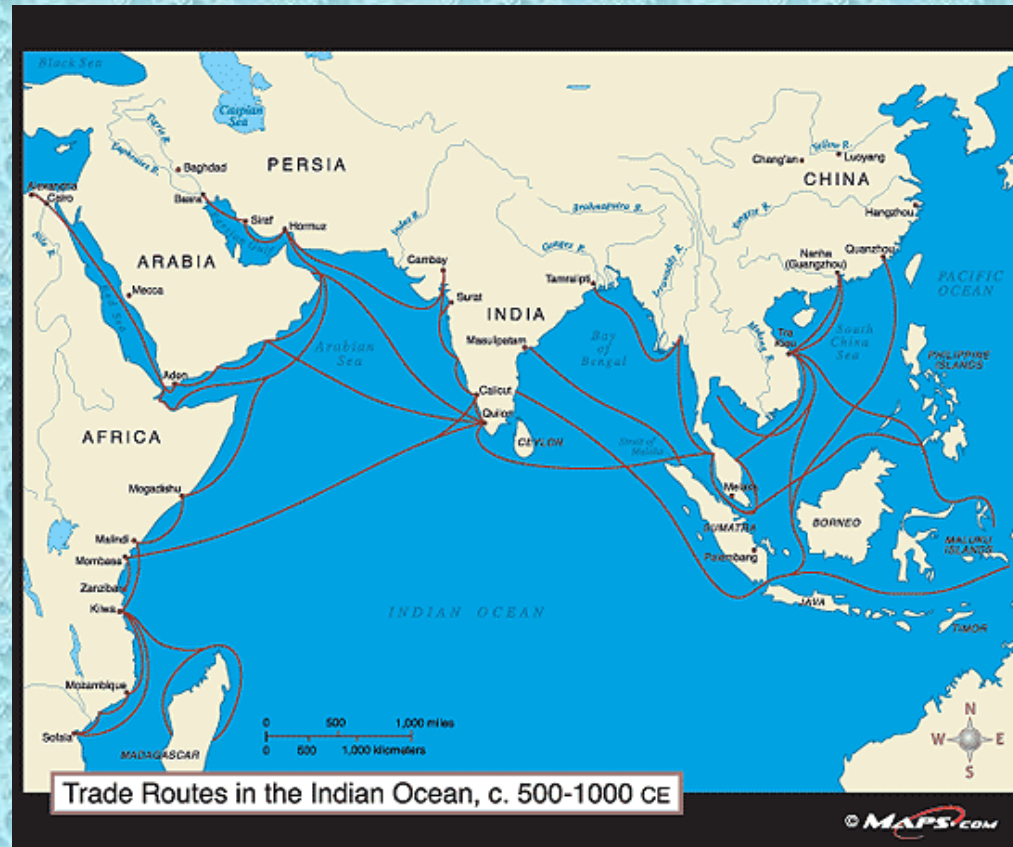




Map 1-2
Ways of the World, First Edition
 © 2009 Bedford/St.Martin's

Indian Ocean

- Meanwhile, the Indian Ocean had been the grounds of a large trading network, which greatly benefited from the rise of Muslim cities.



- Most impressive of Indian Ocean activity was that of the Chinese treasure ships (Although most merchants in these waters acted independently of state control, the Ming Dynasty did sponsor expeditions led by Zheng He).
- There are also accounts of Africans sailing to China (even presenting the emperor with a giraffe).



A MING TREASURE SHIP
Perhaps 400 ft (122 m) long,
170 ft (52 m) wide

**VASCO DA GAMA'S
SÃO GABRIEL**
About 74 ft (23 m) long,
18 ft (5 m) wide

Atlantic Ocean

- During the Middle Ages Vikings ventured around the North Atlantic settling various islands (Iceland 770, Greenland 982; in 1001 Leif Ericsson made landfall in Canada).
- There are accounts that Mansa Musa's predecessor of the Mali Empire sent hundreds of ships across the Atlantic.
- By 1000, the Arawaks (a group of Amerindians) were voyaging from South America northward colonizing the West Indies.

- However, it was the sea expeditions of the Portuguese and Spanish that ultimately connected the Americas to communication and trading networks that existed with the rest of the world.



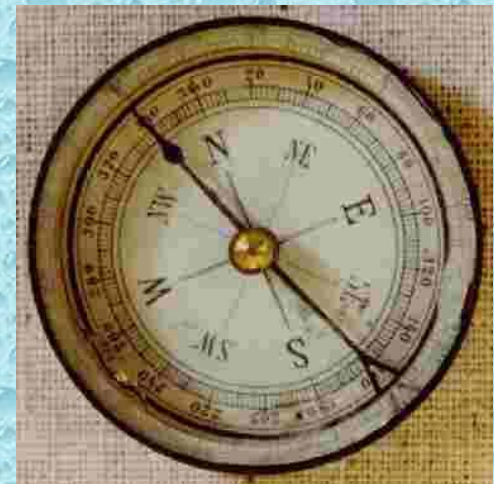
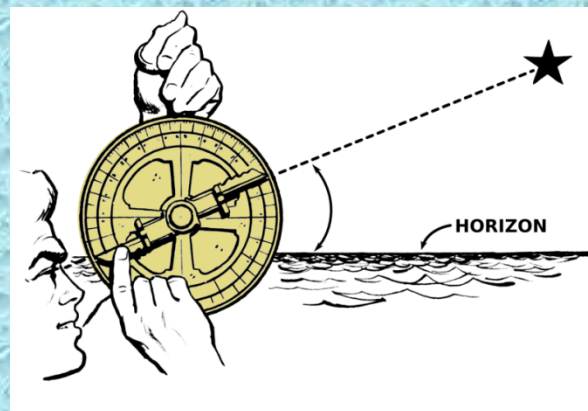
- The Spanish and Portuguese were motivated to find new trade routes in order to avoid Italian merchants and conflict with Muslims (The Italians were content with the way things were benefiting from Mediterranean trade; also their oar powered ships were not suitable for ocean travel).



- The Prince of Portugal, Henry obtained the nickname Henry the Navigator (although he was never a mariner) for his efforts to expand his nation's knowledge of the seas.
- It is often said that he established a "school" or research institute for sailors. This is only partly true. In reality, he had a villa along the sea coast where mapmakers and sailors would meet and share their navigational skills. Many of these people he sponsored / employed.



- The addition of new technology would further benefit Portuguese exploration:
 - Triangular sails (from the Arabs – made sailing into the wind possible)
 - Astrolabe for navigation (from the Arabs)
 - Magnetic compass (from China)
 - Caravel ships (small enough to sail up rivers, but seaworthy too for ocean travel)



- Before long the Portuguese were sailing down the Atlantic African coast and engaging in the gold and slave trade.



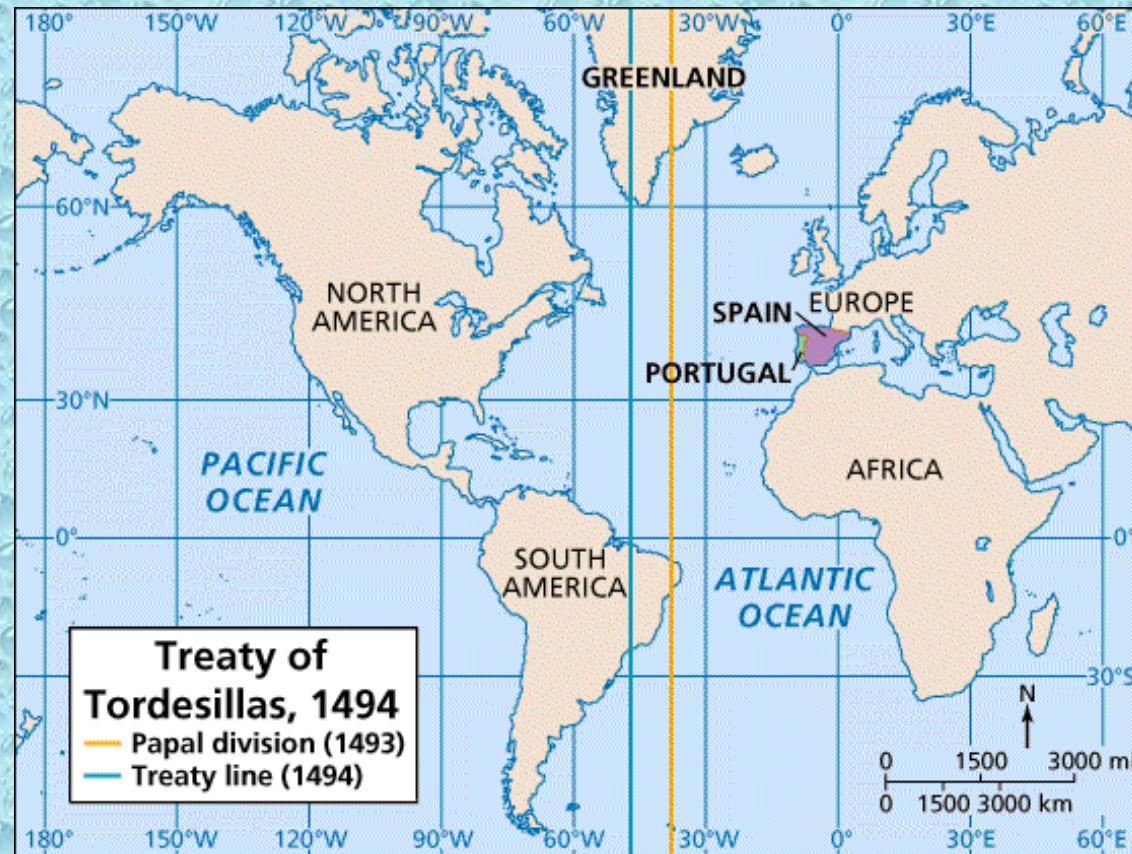
- In 1488, Bartolomeu Dias became the first explorer to round the southern tip of Africa.
- In 1497-1498, Vasco da Gama sailed around Africa and reached India. The profits made from the returned cargo was worth 60 times as much as the cost of the trip! (The investments made by Henry the Navigator were paying off).



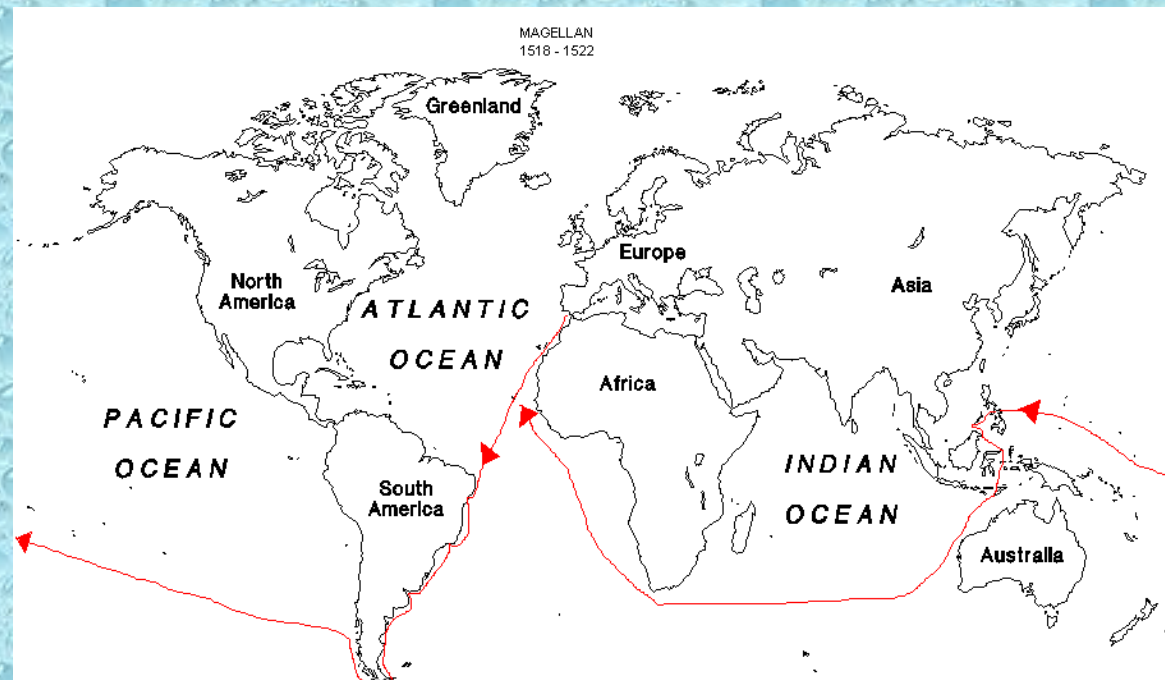
- In October he landed in the Bahamas. He referred to the people as Indians because he thought he was in the East Indies of the Pacific.
- Even up until his death, he thought he found a shortcut, not a giant new landmass unknown to Europeans.



- In effort to prevent disputes between them Spain and Portugal had asked the Pope to divide these newly discovered lands. In 1494, the Treaty of Tordesillas was formalized.



- Exploration would continue.
 - Nunez de Balboa crossed the Atlantic and the isthmus of Panama, setting sights on the Pacific.
 - Ferdinand Magellan's 1519 expedition was the first to circumnavigate the globe (although he himself died on the journey).



- Exploration into the 1500s was fueled by . . .
 - The desire to spread Christianity
 - To obtain wealth
 - To seek adventure

**God, Gold,
and Glory!**



Quick Video



Polynesian Discovery Part I

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tuJk_a4iWj0