

Christian-Muslim Relations A Bibliographical History

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Africa and South America (1500-1600)

Edited by
David Thomas and John Chesworth
with John Azumah, Stanisław Grodź,
Andrew Newman, Douglas Pratt



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Introduction: Christians, Muslims and empires in the 16th century

Martha Frederiks

The fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks in 1453 had far-reaching consequences that not only stretched through the rest of the 15th century but also reverberated through the greater part of the 16th century, too. With their power consolidated on the European side of the Bosphorus, the Ottomans quickly extended their territory through south-eastern and central Europe, and threatened regions much further west. Their defeat of the Mamluks in 1517 brought the heartlands of Islam under their rule and opened up routes to the Indian Ocean, gaining them connections with Muslim rulers in western India and influence along the African seaboard.

The Muslim Ottomans were a matter of pressing concern in royal courts throughout Christian Europe, though they were not perceived as the only major problem. Within Catholic Christendom itself, the fear of rupture under the pressure of claims from Protestant reformers, and dissensions over questions of succession in Hungary and Poland meant that public appeals for unity against the common foe went unheeded. Without a united and strong opposition, Ottoman power in eastern Europe rapidly spread, and the map was changed for centuries.

In the west, the powers of Portugal and Spain planned direct confrontation with the Ottomans in the Mediterranean, and also sought indirect means of circumventing their hold on trade routes. The discovery of sea passages into the Indian Ocean offered routes to unimaginable wealth, and also opened new theatres of confrontation with Ottoman interests and a new arena for hostilities between Muslims and Christians.

As a period of expansion of Muslim and Christian rule, the 16th century is a time of unprecedented confrontation far away from the old sites of contest, but with many of the same attitudes and prejudices, as well as the same accusations and recriminations.

The Ottoman Empire

In the 16th century, the Ottoman Empire was at the height of its power. In the east, Ottoman warships challenged the Portuguese in the Indian Ocean, while in the west all the Muslim rulers of North Africa except Morocco submitted to Ottoman suzerainty and thus brought Muslim naval power into the western seas and even to the Atlantic, where corsairs from North Africa raided as far as the British Isles.¹

The Ottoman invasion of Europe had started as early as the 14th century, and even at that time Murad I (1362-89) used his control over large parts of the Balkans to institute the *devşirme* system – an annual ‘levy’ of Christian boys who were forcibly converted and trained for absolute loyalty to the sultan and life-long service in one of the imperial institutions. The *devşirme* system, which lasted until the early 17th century, generated much resentment against the Ottomans.²

Under Murad’s later successors, Murad II (1421-51) and Mehmed II (1451-81), the Ottoman state developed into an international empire. Mehmed made conquests in the Balkans in order to curb Habsburg expansion and block a possible corridor for Christian crusading expeditions. Among his many military triumphs, the siege and capture of Constantinople in 1453 was his most memorable feat, an event of great symbolic and religious significance whose consequences reverberated through both the eastern and the western worlds.³ Mehmed transformed the impoverished city into the bustling centre of his empire, renaming it Istanbul (though it continued to be known by its old name for centuries).⁴

Mehmed II was succeeded by his son Bayezid II (1481-1512), who consolidated his father’s conquests. Bayezid’s son, Selim I (1512-20), made treaties with the nobility in the Balkans to ensure their allegiance, and

¹ B. Lewis, *The Muslim discovery of Europe*, London, 1982, p. 23.

² D. Goffman, *The Ottoman Empire and Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, 2002, pp. 67-69; G. Yilmaz, ‘Becoming a *devşirme*. The training of conscripted children in the Ottoman empire’, in G. Campbell and S. Miers (eds), *Children in slavery through the ages*, Athens OH, 2009, pp. 119-32. Goffman (*Ottoman Empire*, p. 68) argues there is evidence that a number of the boys taken in the *devşirme* maintained contact with their places of origin, and offered protection and financial assistance, thus binding Christian areas to the Ottoman Empire.

³ R. Armour, *Islam, Christianity and the West. A troubled history*, Maryknoll NY, 2004, pp. 114-21.

⁴ S.J. Shaw and E.K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey*, vol. 1: *Empire of the Gazis. The rise and decline of the Ottoman Empire 1280-1808*, Cambridge, 1978, p. 60.

concentrated on curbing the growing Safavid influence in the eastern part of his empire.⁵ Ottoman-Safavid confrontations in the Caucasus region eventually ended in the Peace of Amasya (1555) between Selim's son and successor, the great Sultan Süleyman I, 'the Magnificent' (1520-66), and the Safavid Shah ʿṬahmāsp I (1524-76), which resulted in the partitioning of the Caucasus buffer zone between the two empires.⁶ The Safavid and Ottoman usurpation of this area, which was home to large Orthodox Christian communities, was remembered by Georgian and Armenian Orthodox churches as a period of martyrdom. Although active persecution was rare, individuals resisted Ottoman and Safavid control out of religious motives. They were often executed and were later declared martyrs by their churches.⁷ Meanwhile, Ottoman conquests in Europe came to a temporary halt.

Selim I not only waged war on the eastern borders of his empire, but also fought on the western frontiers, attacking the Mamluks in an attempt to gain control of the silk and slave trade. Military expeditions against the Mamluk Empire had already begun in the 1480s, but under Selim I they resulted in the conquest of Syria and Palestine in 1516, and in the defeat of the Mamluks in 1517. This victory not only brought about the incorporation of Egypt, the Levant and the Arabian Peninsula into the Ottoman Empire, together with the much-coveted holy cities of Islam, but also secured Ottoman control over the overland spice route.⁸ The Ottoman conquests of Palestine, Egypt and other areas with large non-Muslim communities led to the production of a great quantity of legal documents and royal decrees (*firmans*) pertaining to the status of non-Muslims in the empire, regulating conversion, the *jizya*, the permissibility of changing churches into mosques, the rights of non-Muslims in court, the right to celebrate non-Muslim religious festivals, the rights of pilgrims and so on.⁹

⁵ Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 1, pp. 55-79.

⁶ A. Brisku, *Bittersweet Europe. Albanian and Georgian discourses on Europe 1878-2000*, New York, 2013, p. 22.

⁷ M. Vaporiš, *Witnesses for Christ. Orthodox Christian neomartyrs of the Ottoman period 1437-1860*, New York, 2000; S. Nobel and N. Treiger (eds), *The Orthodox Church in the Arab world 700-1700. An anthology of sources*, DeKalb IL, 2014, pp. 112-35, 308-12.

⁸ Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, p. 99.

⁹ U. Heyd, *Ottoman documents on Palestine, 1552-1615. A study of the firman according to the Mühimme Defteri*, Oxford, 1960; M. Gervers and R.J. Bikhazi (eds), *Conversion and continuity. Indigenous Christian communities in Islamic lands*, Toronto, 1990; M. Winter, *Egyptian society under Ottoman rule 1517-1798*, London, 1993; R. Jennings, *Christians and Muslims in Ottoman Cyprus and the Mediterranean world 1571-1640*, New York, 1993;

Selim's successor, Süleyman I, followed in his great-grandfather Mehmed II's footsteps. After consolidating his power in Egypt, he turned his attention to Central Europe, capturing Belgrade in 1521, defeating the Hungarian armies at the Battle of Mohács in 1526 and unsuccessfully laying siege to Vienna in 1529. In 1532, he made a second attempt to capture Vienna but was waylaid by the Croatian commander, Nikola Jurišić at Köszeg, near Sopron in present-day Hungary. A third attempt to capture the city, again unsuccessful, was not made until 1683, and this marked the end of Ottoman expansion in Central Europe and the rise of Habsburg control over Hungary and Transylvania.¹⁰

Ottoman advances in Europe were facilitated by the absence of any united resistance. Complaints that Hungarian nobles were more concerned with petty squabbles among themselves than with the advancing enemy were common in the 16th century, while it became almost routine for prominent scholars and writers from threatened areas such as Croatia to address often elaborate speeches to the pope or the emperor, or to gatherings of national leaders. They had little apparent effect. One of the main impediments to resistance against the Ottomans was the contest over the Hungarian throne. After King Louis II was killed at the battle of Mohács in 1526, two candidates emerged, John Zápolya, a leading Hungarian general, and Archduke Ferdinand of Austria, brother-in-law of Louis II and brother of Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor. Both had themselves proclaimed king, dividing the loyalties of the Hungarian nobles, and in 1527 Ferdinand's forces moved against John Zápolya's. Zápolya was forced to flee, and in 1529 he sought the help of Sultan Süleyman, ceding Hungary as an Ottoman vassal state. He was thus enabled to take his throne, but never secured it against the Habsburg threat, and at one point was forced to name Ferdinand as his successor. He died in 1540, leaving an infant son, John Sigismund. Ferdinand came forward to claim his throne, and Süleyman advanced against him, taking possession of central Hungary. The dispute over the rightful ruler continued for years, with the Habsburgs and Zápolya's successors fighting against each other, rather than against the Ottomans.

During the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, the Ottoman armies acquired a reputation for unrivalled cruelty, both to their enemies in the

A. Lopasič, 'Islamization of the Balkans with special reference to Bosnia', *Journal of Islamic Studies* 5 (1994) 163-86; B. Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab world. The roots of sectarianism*, Cambridge, 2001, pp. 1-40.

¹⁰ Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, pp. 80-111; Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, pp. 89-109, 145-54.

field and to their captives, including women and children. They were portrayed as savage and unrestrained in their actions, given to breaking their oaths and to physical excesses, most typically sodomy. At the same time, they were envied as a disciplined fighting force, and as fearless against any odds. Visitors to the empire commented on the just way in which Ottoman society was run, with a fairness and consideration for others that they were often compelled to admire. Christians living within the empire could not imagine themselves as equal to Muslims, though they could appeal to the law to support their demands, and under such a pragmatic chief judge as *Şeyhülislâm* Ebussuud Efendi (see the entry in this volume) they were accorded treatment that approached equality with Muslims.

At sea, the increasingly versatile Ottoman navy successfully challenged Venice for its strongholds in the Aegean Sea in a series of wars, and quickly expanded its hold over both the eastern and parts of the western Mediterranean, capturing the strategic locations of Rhodes (1522) and Cyprus (1571). In response to the Ottoman conquest of Cyprus, the Holy League assembled a fleet under Don Juan of Austria to oust the Ottomans from the island. During the ensuing clash in the Gulf of Corinth in 1571, the Battle of Lepanto, the Holy League won the first victory over the Ottomans since the 15th century. This victory was widely celebrated in Europe as the tide finally seemed to be turning.¹¹ However, it would take yet another century before Ottoman hegemony over the Balkans and central Europe was decisively challenged.

Ottoman occupation of the Balkans and central Europe evoked a flood of pamphlets and publications in Europe dedicated to the ‘Saracen scourge’ or ‘Turkish threat’, vilifying the Turkish ‘other’ and calling for crusading campaigns against the ‘Turks’ (a corpus known as *Turcica*).¹² The writings of people such as Desiderius Erasmus and Martin Luther also reflect on this Ottoman threat to the heart of Europe.¹³ David Blanks

¹¹ A.C. Hess, ‘The Battle of Lepanto and its place in Mediterranean history’, *Past and Present* 59 (1972) 58-78; H. Bicheno, *Crescent and cross. The Battle of Lepanto 1571*, Phoenix AZ, 2004.

¹² In addition to the entry in this volume, see, e.g. C. Göllner, *Die Türkenfrage in der öffentlichen Meinung Europas im 16. Jahrhundert. Turcica Band III*, Bucharest, 1978; A. Höfert, ‘The order of things and the discourse of the Turkish threat. The conceptualisation of Islam in the rise of occidental anthropology in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries’, in A. Höfert and A. Salvatore (eds), *Between Europe and Islam. Shaping modernity in a transcultural space*, Brussels, 2004, pp. 39-70; P.T. Levin, *Turkey and the European Union. Christian and secular images of Islam*, New York, 2011, pp. 79-123.

¹³ Armour, *Islam, Christianity and the West*, pp. 114-21; K.R. Stow, ‘The “De Judaeis et aliis infidelibus” of Marquardus de Susannis. A key to understanding papal Jewry policy

and Michael Frassetto summarise European attitudes in the 16th century as follows:

Thus the Western need to construct an image of the Muslim, of the 'other,' was a twofold process that came to dominate the pre-modern discourse concerning Islam. On the one hand, it created an image of the Saracen, Moor, or Turk that was wholly alien and wholly evil. (...) On the other hand, the creation of such a blatantly false stereotype enabled Western Christians to define themselves. Indeed, the Muslim became, in a sense, a photographic negative of the self-perception of an ideal Christian self-image...¹⁴

Yet despite military clatter and verbal vilification, people living on the various sides of the borders shared a Mediterranean cultural heritage and merchants were weaving their webs of trade across the borders of empires.¹⁵ Venetian and Genoese merchants had already settled in Alexandria, Aleppo, Constantinople and the like in the late medieval period, acting as middlemen between the Middle East and Europe in the trade in slaves, silk and spices; occasional visits by ambassadors, such as the Venetian emissary Domenico Trivisan's visit to the Mamluk Sultan Qānṣūh al-Ghawrī in 1512, were intended to underscore and enhance the privileges granted to the mercantile community.¹⁶

Trade concessions were regulated via the so-called 'capitulations'.¹⁷ Initially (1352-1517) Italians, and chiefly Genoese and Venetians, had an exclusive monopoly on trade with the Ottoman Empire, but after

and Catholic thought about Jews in the sixteenth century', New York, 1980 (PhD Diss. Columbia University); L. Hagemann, *Martin Luther und der Islam*, Altenberge, 1983; M.J. Heath, *Erasmus and the infidel. Twelfth annual Bainton Lecture* (Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook), s.l., 1996; F. Konrad, *From 'Turkish menace' to exoticism and orientalism. Islam as antithesis of Europe, 1453-1900*, Mainz, 2011, pp. 1-18; N. Berman, 'Ottoman shock-and-awe and the rise of Protestantism. Luther's reactions to Ottoman invasions of the early sixteenth century', *Seminar. A Journal of Germanic Studies* 41 (2005) 226-45; A.S. Francisco, *Martin Luther and Islam. A study in sixteenth-century polemics and apologetics*, Leiden, 2007.

¹⁴ D.R. Blanks and R. Frassetto (eds), *Western views of Islam in medieval and Early Modern Europe. Perception of other*, New York, 1999, p. 3.

¹⁵ See e.g. Blanks and Frassetto, *Western views of Islam*, pp. 1-53; A. Contadini and C. Norton (eds), *The Renaissance and the Ottoman world*, Farnham, 2013.

¹⁶ Z. Pagani, *Viaggio di Domenico Trivisan, ambasciatore Veneto al gran sultano del Cairo nell' anno 1512*, ed. N. Barozzi, Venice, 1875; A. Wolff, *How many miles to Babylon. Travels and adventures to Egypt and beyond, 1300-1640*, Liverpool, 2003, pp. 94-96.

¹⁷ See e.g. H. Inalcik, *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 1: 1300-1600, Cambridge, 1998, pp. 180-217; M.H. van den Boogert and K. Fleet, *Ottoman capitulations. Text and context*, Nallino: Istituto per l'Oriente, 2003; M.H. van den Boogert, *The capitulations and the Ottoman legal system. Qadis, consuls, and beraths in the 18th century*, Leiden, 2005.

the conquest of Egypt in 1517, Selim I renewed the Ottoman capitulations to include Mamluk concessions to the French and Catalans. From 1581 onwards, other European nations were also given trade concessions, although under strict conditions.¹⁸ A wealth of material in Venetian, Genoese, Ottoman, British and other archives attests to the way in which the practicalities of these trans-religious commercial ventures and capitulations were regulated, stipulating taxes, the legal status of resident traders, bankruptcy and inheritances, and so on.¹⁹

The capitulations also provided a base for the activities of diplomats, missionaries, scholars and travellers. Letters and journals of diplomats and their staff (e.g. Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq and Jean Thenaud) as well as travelogues, such as Giambattista Ramusio's *Racolta de navigazioni et viaggi* (1550-59) and Nicolas de Nicolay's *Les quatre premiers livres des navigations et peregrinations orientales* (1567), which became 16th-century bestsellers, also provide rich material on European representations of the Muslim other.²⁰

After 1453, commercial enterprises became a joint affair, with Ottoman merchants beginning to trade outside the empire. Armenian and Greek Orthodox Christians, Turkish Muslims and Jews from Egypt, the Levant and Istanbul used the Ottoman Empire as their linchpin to connect east and west. Trading in fabrics, silk, merino and spices, they linked Istanbul and Izmir with Venice and Marseilles, and travelled as far as Antwerp and Amsterdam to conduct their business.²¹

¹⁸ H. Goddard, *A history of Christian-Muslim relations*, Edinburgh, 2000, p. 112.

¹⁹ S. Faroqhi, 'Venetian presence in the Ottoman Empire 1600-30', in H. Islamoğlu-Inan (ed.), *The Ottoman Empire and world trade*, Cambridge, 1983, pp. 311-45; M. Pia Pedani and A. Bombaci (eds), *I 'documenti turchi' dell'Archivio di Stato di Venezia. Inventario della miscellanea a cura di Maria Pia Pedani Fabris*, Venice, 1994; Inalcik, *Economic and social history*, pp. 179-380; G. Migliardi O'Riordan, 'Présentation des archives du baile à Constantinople', *Turcica* 33 (2001) 339-67; Maria Pia Pedani (ed.) *Inventario of the Lettere e scritture Turchesche in the Venetian State Archives (based on the materials compiled by Alessio Bombaci)*, Leiden, 2010; State Archives of Venice. Guide to the Archival Holdings, <http://www.archiviodistatovenezia.it/siasve/cgi-bin/pagina.pl?Tipo=home&Lingua=en>.

²⁰ O.G. de Busbecq, *The life and letters of Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, seigneur de Bousbecque, knight and imperial ambassador*, 2 vols, ed. J.T. Foster and F.H. Blackburne Daniell, London, 1881; J. Thenaud, *Le voyage d'outremer (Egypte, Mont Sinay, Palestine), suivi de la relation de L'Ambassade de Domenico Trevisan auprès du Soudan d'Egypte 1530*, Geneva, 1971; R. Irwin, *For lust of knowing. The orientalisists and their enemies*, London, 2006, pp. 62-66; Wolff, *How many miles to Babylon*; S. Brentjes, *Travellers from Europe in the Ottoman and Safavid empires, 16th and 17th centuries. Seeking, transforming, and discarding knowledge*, Farnham, 2010.

²¹ Goffman, *Ottoman Empire*, pp. 15-20; S. Faroqhi, 'Ottoman textiles in European markets', in Contadini and Norton (eds), *The Renaissance*, pp. 231-44.

European maritime expansion

When Christopher Columbus embarked on his voyage to America in 1492, the year of the final overthrow of Islamic rule in the Iberian Peninsula, he was intent on fuelling the direct confrontation against the Muslims in the Mediterranean. In his diary, he framed his voyage as a continuation of the *Reconquista*, aimed at spreading Christianity in Asia and at accumulating enough gold and spices to finance a crusade to 'conquer the Holy Sepulchre' (entry for 26 December 1492).²² Portuguese explorers were driven by the same ambition. At the instigation of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), wherever they went they inquired after Prester John, the fabulously rich Christian ruler who was believed to be a potential powerful ally in the struggle against Islam. The narrative of this priestly king, whose kingdom was thought to be in places as diverse as India, China, Central Asia and Africa, had circulated in Europe since the 12th century and stirred European imaginations. By the 15th century, the location of his kingdom had been narrowed down to Africa, and accounts about Prester John's Empire form a recurrent theme in 15th-century Portuguese navigation reports. In the early 16th century, the legend was connected to a geographical location in East Africa. Contacts between the Portuguese general Afonso de Albuquerque and the Ethiopian Dowager Queen Āleni resulted in an Ethiopian delegation being sent to Lisbon in 1513, followed by a Portuguese embassy to Ethiopia in 1520-26, the latter documented by Francisco Álvares in his *The Prester John of the Indies*. These events fulfilled a longstanding medieval European ambition to form an alliance with this Christian ally against the Muslim enemy, while simultaneously realising more contemporary Ethiopian and Portuguese political ambitions.²³

²² *The diario of Christopher Columbus' first voyages to America 1492-1493. Abstracted by Fray Bartolomé de las Casas*, trans. O. Dunn and J.E. Kelly, Norman OK, 1989, pp. 16-21; C. Lowney, *A vanished world. Muslims, Christians and Jews in medieval Spain*, Oxford, 2005, p. 249; C. Delaney, *Columbus and the quest for Jerusalem*, New York, 2011.

²³ Álvares's book is also an important source on life in Ethiopia shortly before Muslim Somalia invaded Ethiopia in the mid-16th century, as narrated in the Gālawdewos chronicle. For the Prester John narrative, see C.F. Beckingham, *The achievements of Prester John*, London, 1966; F. Álvares, *The Prester John of the Indies. A true relation of the lands of Prester John, being the narrative of the Portuguese embassy to Ethiopia in 1520*, trans. Lord Stanley of Alderley, rev. and ed. with additional material by C.F. Beckingham and G.W.B. Huntingford, Nendeln, 1975; C.F. Beckingham, *Between Islam and Christendom. Travellers, facts and legends in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, Aldershot, 1983; L.N. Gumilev, *Searches for an imaginary kingdom. The legend of the kingdom of Prester John*, Cambridge, 1987; C.F. Beckingham and B. Hamilton, *Prester John, the Mongols and*

Portuguese and Spanish explorations in the 15th and 16th centuries were motivated by a potent mix of religion, commerce and desire for power. The quest for Christian allies and resources to defeat the Muslim enemy and the desire to spread Iberian Catholicism vied with more profane motives such as a share in the slave trade, the rush for gold and control over the silk and spice routes. A plan conceived by Afonso de Albuquerque (d. 1515), as improbable as it was ruthless, embodied this mix entirely and exhibited its power. This was to divert the course of the River Nile in order to deprive Mamluk Egypt of water and so reduce the Mamluks' power and strangle their trade links, and then to go on to capture Jeddah and raze Mecca itself (see the entry in *CMR* 6 on Afonso de Albuquerque).

In this quest, the Portuguese had a comfortable head start. By the early 15th century, they had already established themselves in North Africa, capturing Ceuta in 1415 and briefly occupying Tangier and Casablanca.²⁴ They gradually expanded their sphere of influence, colonising Madeira (1433), the Azores (1439) and Cape Verde (1462) and mapping the coast of West Africa. By the late 15th century, Portuguese and Cape Verdeans had also established colonies on the Guinea Coast mainland, earning a living as middlemen in the trade in slaves, Malagueta pepper and indigo.²⁵ Portuguese navigation reports, as well as the letters and diaries of these settlers, form the key sources for the study of Early Modern West African Islam and provide the oldest known Christian representations of Islam in the region (e.g. Diogo Gomes, Valentim Fernandes and André Álvares

the ten lost tribes, Aldershot, 1996; C.M. Newitt, *A history of Portuguese overseas expansion, 1400-1668*, London, 2008, pp. 101-2; C. Baldrige, *Prisoners of Prester John. The Portuguese mission to Ethiopia in search of the mythical king, 1520-1526*, Jefferson NC, 2012; P. Jackson, 'The letter of Prester John', in D. Thomas and A. Mallett (eds), *Christian-Muslim relations. A bibliographical history*, vol. 4 (1200-1350), Leiden, 2012, pp. 118-23.

²⁴ The Spanish followed suit in the 16th century, first occupying the North African strongholds of Orán, Tripoli, Peñón de Vélez and Bougie, followed – after Columbus's journey – by the colonisation of South America and the Philippines; M. de Cervantes, *The Bagnios of Algiers' and 'The Great Sultana'. Two plays of captivity*, ed. and trans. B. Fuchs and A.J. Ilika, Philadelphia PA, 2010, pp. xii-xiv. See also J.M. Francis (ed.), *Iberia and the Americas. Culture, politics and history*, vol. 1, Santa Barbara CA, 2006. For Portuguese expansions, see J.C. Boyajian, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia under the Habsburgs. 1580-1640*, Baltimore MA, 1993; M. Newitt, *A history of Portuguese overseas expansion, 1400-1668*, London, 2005, pp. 1-174; M. Newitt, *Portugal in European and world history*, London, 2009, pp. 49-82; M. Newitt (ed.), *The Portuguese in West Africa 1415-1670. A documented history*, Cambridge, 2010; S. Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia 1500-1700. A political and economic history*, London, 2012².

²⁵ Newitt, *History of Portuguese overseas expansion*, p. 90; L.A. Newson and S. Michin, *From capture to sale. The Portuguese slave-trade to Spanish South America in the early seventeenth century*, Brill, 2007, pp. 1-22.

de Almara). Though permeated by a spirit of *Reconquista*, they describe Islamic practices such as circumcision and maraboutism, document the progression of Islam among the various ethnic groups, and relate Portuguese attempts (usually unsuccessful) to convert West African Muslim rulers, such as the Wolof prince, Bemoy, to Christianity.²⁶

When Bartolomew Dias discovered the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, Portugal transferred the focus of its commercial ventures to Asia. Columbus's commission to reach India via the western route was, in fact, a Spanish attempt to thwart the imminent Portuguese maritime supremacy in Asia. The treaty of Tordesillas, signed in June 1494, endeavoured to regulate the competition, effectively dividing the non-European world between Portugal and Castile.²⁷

Columbus's western route brought him to the Americas and heralded 16th-century Spanish empire-building in South America. Vasco da Gama's fleet reached the Indian Malabar coast in May 1498, thus ushering in an era of Portuguese hegemony in Asia. Between 1490 and 1520, the Portuguese charted the routes to India, Indonesia and China and traced the nodes in the spice trade.²⁸ During one of these journeys, in 1500, Pedro Cabral, slightly off route, 'discovered' Brazil, leading to its colonisation by the Portuguese and its evangelisation by Jesuits from the mid-16th century onwards.²⁹ Here, surprisingly, old world attitudes towards Islam were still evident as late as the end of the century in accusations of 'Moorish' practices and sympathies among Spanish settlers that were recorded by Heitor Furtado de Mendonça, the bishops' official *visitador*, whose task was to root out violations of Counter-Reformation doctrine (see the entry on Heitor Furtado de Mendonça in this volume).

²⁶ M. Frederiks, *We have toiled all night. Christianity in The Gambia 1456-2000*, Zoetermeer, 2003, pp. 124-28; M.A. Gomez, *The black crescent. The experience and legacy of African Muslims in the Americas*, Cambridge, 2005, pp. 3-47. Missionary sources from this period are rare. Organised Christian mission to the Guinea Coast did not commence until the early 17th century. For missionary sources, see A.P. Kup, 'Jesuit and Capuchin missions of the seventeenth century', *Sierra Leone Bulletin of Religion* 5 (1963) 68-72; P.E.H. Hair, 'Guides to the records of early West African missions', *Journal of religion in Africa* 1 (1968) 129-38; Frederiks, *We have toiled all night*, pp. 159-82; C. Recheado, 'As Missões Franciscanas na Guiné (Século XVII)', Lisbon, 2010 (MA Diss. Universidade Nova de Lisboa).

²⁷ S.E. Dawson, *The lines of demarcation of Pope Alexander VI and the Treaty of Tordesillas AD 1493 and 1494*, Ottawa, 1899.

²⁸ Newitt, *Portugal in European and world history*, pp. 49-82; M. Newitt (ed.), *The Portuguese in West Africa 1415-1670. A documented history*, Cambridge, 2010.

²⁹ D. Alden, *The making of an enterprise. The Society of Jesus in Portugal, its empire, and beyond 1540-1750*, Stanford CA, 1996, pp. 41-78; A.C. Metcalf, *Go-betweens and the colonisation of Brazil, 1500-1600*, Austin TX, 2005.

On their way to India, Portuguese *armadas* were in the habit of stopping regularly on the East African coast. Thus, they attempted to establish cordial relations with rulers of strategic harbours such as Sofala (Mozambique), Kilwa (Tanzania), Mombasa (Kenya) and Malindi (Kenya), as well as to link up with traders of the Indian Ocean trading network.³⁰ Portuguese accounts of these encounters, such as Duarte Pacheco Pereira's *Esmeraldo in situ orbis* and João de Barros's *Décadas*, as well as archival materials, such as letters from Portuguese officials on the coast, form important sources for the pre- and Early Modern history of East African sultanates, such as Sofala, Kilwa, Mombassa and the Maldives, and the way they interpreted Islam; De Barros, for example, transmits one of the oldest known versions of the *Kilwa chronicle*.³¹

Generally speaking, the Portuguese were pragmatic in their dealings with the East African and South-East Asian sultanates, prioritising commercial interests over issues of religion. Payments made by Portuguese factors to local Muslim rulers, and to the Muslim pilot from Malindi hired to navigate da Gama's fleet across the Indian Ocean, evidence this.³² The Portuguese conveniently distinguished between indigenous Muslims, who were potential allies, and Arab Muslims, who were the economic, political and religious 'other'. Sanjay Subrahmanyam aptly summarises the early 16th-century Portuguese strategy in East Africa and Asia as 'to trade where possible and make war where necessary'.³³

In the first two decades of the 16th century, the Portuguese succeeded in capturing most of the strategic locations along the spice and silk route: in 1507, Tristão da Cunha and Afonso de Albuquerque conquered Socotra in the Gulf of Aden, followed by Hormuz in the Persian Gulf in 1508. Portuguese control of Aden and Hormuz at once obstructed the overland spice and silk trade via Egypt and Venice and secured domination of the all-water trade route via Africa. With the conquest of Goa in 1510, the Portuguese effectively gained a monopoly over the pepper trade. Thus, they successfully thwarted the hegemony of Arab traders in the Far East, causing, according to Shaw and Shaw, 'a permanent crisis in

³⁰ A. da Silva Rego, *Documents on the Portuguese in Mozambique and Central Africa 1479-1840*, vol. 1: 1497-1506, Lisbon, 1962; M.N. Pearson, 'The Portuguese in India', in *The new Cambridge history of India*, Cambridge, 1988, pp. 5-39; Newitt, *Portugal in European and world history*, pp. 49-82; Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, pp. 55-80.

³¹ N. Chittick, 'Kilwa and the Arab settlement on the East African coast', in J.D. Fage and R.A. Oliver (eds), *Papers in African pre-history*, Cambridge, 1974, pp. 239-56.

³² Da Silva Rego, *Documents on the Portuguese*, 366-69; Armour, *Islam, Christianity and the West*, p. 125.

³³ Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, p. 60.

Mamluk economy and the state budget', as well as circumventing Venetian trading monopolies.³⁴

After Goa, Aden and Hormuz, next Diu (North India, 1509), Malacca (Malaysia, 1511) and Ternate and Tidore (Moluccas, 1522) became Portugal's most strategic factory locations. However, the Portuguese presence in the Gulf of Aden and Asia was rarely uncontested.³⁵ Both European rivals and local rulers continuously – and at times successfully – disputed Portuguese control, occasionally giving religious motives for their revolts. For example, Aḥmad Zayn al-Dīn al-Ma'barī, a Malabar expert in Islamic law, justified retaliation against the Portuguese for their invasion of Muslim territory and violations of Muslim persons and property as holy war.³⁶

The money and energy spent on empire-building in Asia and the Americas made Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq, ambassador for the Austrian monarchy in Istanbul, writing in a letter dated 1555, complain that 'Europeans were squandering their efforts in seeking spoil and gold in "the Indies and the Antipodes over vast fields of oceans", while the very existence of European Christendom was threatened by the Turk'.³⁷ However, the unknown author of *Tārīkh al-Hind al-gharbī* (c. 1580) made a different assessment: he was convinced that, in the long run, European settlement in Asia and especially the Americas would pose a threat to the economic and political viability of the Ottoman Empire.³⁸ Both authors foresaw the consequences of the new discoveries for the stability and survival of familiar political structures, though neither realised that, on both sides, attitudes towards the other that had been bred by proximity and grown familiar through use would be exported and put to service in these new regions.³⁹

³⁴ Shaw and Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire*, vol. 1, p. 83; see also J.S. Olsen, *Historical dictionary of European imperialism*, Westport CT, 1991, pp. 288-90. In addition to silk, the main commodities of interest were pepper from the Malabar coast, nutmeg and cloves from the Moluccas and cinnamon from Sri Lanka.

³⁵ Boyajian, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia*, p. 5; K.S. Matthew, *Portuguese and the Sultanate of Gujarat. 1500-1573*, Dehli (Mithal Publishers), 1986; M. Murrin, *Trade and romance*, Cambridge, 2014, pp. 83-182.

³⁶ E. Ho, 'Custom and conversion in Malabar. Zayn al-Din al-Malabari's *Gift of the Mujahidi*. Some accounts of the Portuguese', in B.D. Metcalf (ed.), *Islam in South Asia in practice*, Princeton NJ, 2009, pp. 403-8; see also the entry on al-Ma'barī in this volume.

³⁷ Lewis, *The Muslim discovery of Europe*, p. 41.

³⁸ Irwin, *For lust of knowing*, p. 62.

³⁹ Goddard, *History of Christian-Muslim relations*, p. 113.

The Mughal Empire and Jesuit encounters

At the same time as the Portuguese were building their Asian maritime empire, a major Muslim empire was emerging on the Indian subcontinent. This was the Mughal Empire. Starting with the conquest of the Punjab in 1526, Ẓahīr al-Dīn Muḥammad, more commonly known as Bābur, laid the foundation for an empire that would endure in India until 1858. Under his successors, the empire developed into the third major Muslim empire of its time (alongside the Ottomans and Safavids), with illustrious rulers such as Akbar the Great (1556-1605) and his son Jahangir (1605-27). Portuguese traders and imperialists, who had their strongholds along the coastal areas, initially had little interaction with the Mughal rulers, who in turn focussed their international relations on the Safavids and Ottomans.⁴⁰ In later times, however, the Portuguese approached the Mughal emperors to make treaties delineating commercial concessions.

European interest in Asia was broader than commercial. In the person of Francis Xavier, the Society of Jesus (founded as recently as 1540 by Ignatius of Loyola) had started mission work in the Portuguese stronghold Goa in 1541. In the 1570s, Jesuit efforts in India attracted the attention of the Emperor Akbar, a mystic and deeply interested in religious diversity, and in 1579 he invited the Jesuits to his court. From the late 1570s onwards, he organised regular discussions with representatives of a variety of religious traditions, such as Jainism, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Islam and Christianity.

In 1580, three Jesuits, Rodolfo Acquaviva, Francisco Henriques and Antonio Monserrate, arrived in Akbar's capital Fatehpur Sikri, and spent three years there teaching and discussing religion (see the entry on Antonio Monserrate in this volume). A second Jesuit mission reached the court in Lahore in 1591 and, although it lasted less than a year, one Jesuit remained as a teacher to Akbar's second son Murad (see the entry on Rodolfo Acquaviva in this volume). A third visit took place between 1595 and 1601, when Akbar invited a group of Jesuits, among them Francis Xavier's grand-nephew Jerome Xavier, to establish schools and churches

⁴⁰ For studies on the Mughal Empire, see J.F. Richards, 'The Mughal Empire', in *The new Cambridge history of India*, Cambridge, 1993; A. Schimmel, *The empire of the great Mughals. History, art and culture*, London, 2004; M. Alam and S. Subrahmanyam, *Writing the Mughal world. Studies on culture and politics*, New York, 2012; I. Copland, *A history of state and religion in India*, Hoboken NJ, 2013; R. O'Hanlon, *Religious cultures in Early Modern India. New perspectives*, Hoboken NJ, 2014.

in Agra and Lahore.⁴¹ Although the Jesuits were each time hospitably and courteously received, and extensive discussions on religion took place, the Jesuit hope of converting Akbar to Christianity proved vain. In 1582, Akbar founded his own religion, *Din Ilahi*, drawing on a variety of religious traditions. Nevertheless, the religious discussions at the Mughal court can be counted among the first genuine attempts at exchanges between Muslims and Christians known in India.⁴²

⁴¹ P. de Jarric, *Akbar and the Jesuits. An account of the Jesuit missions to the court of Akbar*, London, 1926 (repr. New Delhi, 1996); J. Correia-Afonso, *Letters from the Mughal court. The first Jesuit mission to Akbar 1580-1583*, Anand: Heras Institute for Indian History and Culture, 1980; A.A. Powell, *Muslims and missionaries in pre-Mutiny India*, London, 2003, pp. 6-42; P. Madhok, 'Christian-Islamic relations in the court art of Mughal India', *International Journal of the Arts in Society*, 4 (2010) 67-78.

⁴² J. Long, 'Hinduism and the religious other', in D. Cheetham, D. Pratt and D. Thomas (eds), *Understanding interreligious relations*, Oxford, 2013, p. 52; Powell, *Muslims and missionaries*, p. 9.