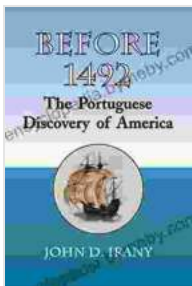


Before 1492: The Portuguese Discovery of America

In 1492, Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain in search of a westward route to Asia. He stumbled upon the Americas instead, and his discovery forever changed the course of history.



Before 1492: The Portuguese Discovery of America

by Ace Atkins

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 2225 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Lending : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Print length : 214 pages



But what if Columbus was not the first European to reach the Americas? What if Portuguese explorers had already discovered the New World decades earlier?

This is the provocative thesis of *Before 1492: The Portuguese Discovery of America*, a groundbreaking work by historian Charles Mann. Drawing on extensive research, Mann argues that Portuguese explorers had reached the Americas as early as the 1420s, and that they played a significant role in shaping the history of the continent.

The Evidence

Mann's evidence is both circumstantial and documentary. Circumstantial evidence includes the presence of Portuguese artifacts in the Americas, such as pottery, coins, and weapons. Documentary evidence includes accounts of Portuguese voyages to the Americas, such as the logbook of Pedro Álvares Cabral, who is credited with discovering Brazil in 1500.

One of the most compelling pieces of evidence is a map drawn by the Portuguese cartographer Diogo Ribeiro in 1529. The map shows the Americas in great detail, including features that were not known to Europeans until after Columbus's voyages. This suggests that Portuguese explorers had already explored the Americas and mapped them.

The Impact

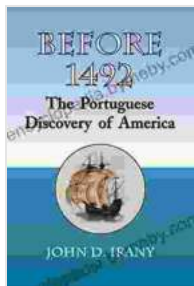
If Mann is correct, then the Portuguese discovery of America had a profound impact on the history of the continent. Portuguese explorers introduced new diseases to the Americas, which decimated the native population. They also brought with them new technologies, such as firearms and horses, which gave them a military advantage over the natives.

The Portuguese also established trading posts and settlements in the Americas, which led to the exchange of goods and ideas between Europe and the New World. This exchange had a lasting impact on both cultures.

The Legacy

The Portuguese discovery of America is a complex and controversial topic. Mann's book has reignited the debate over who first reached the Americas, and it has challenged the traditional narrative of European exploration.

Regardless of whether or not one agrees with Mann's thesis, Before 1492 is a valuable contribution to the historiography of the Americas. It is a well-researched and thought-provoking book that sheds new light on an important chapter in human history.

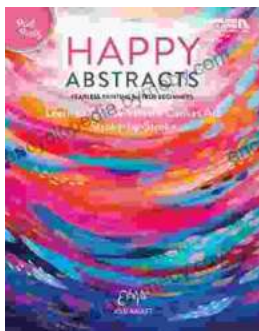


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