

1. 15th and 16th Centuries - Portuguese and Azorean Navigators and Others in Canada

The pioneering spirit of Portugal in the discovery of the unknown world for Europeans, is undoubtedly unquestionable.

In terms of Portuguese navigators, who sailed the North Seas, and / or explored Canada in these times, we must highlight three names: João Fernandes Lavrador, Gaspar Corte-Real and João Álvares Fagundes, but others also deserve to be mentioned:

- **Diogo de Teive:** although some argue that this navigator would have reached Newfoundland in 1452, what is certain is that the same from Faial sailed to the west, and without discovering islands, turned back, and on the way discovered the islands of Flores and Corvo. It is extremely unlikely that he has reached Newfoundland.

- **João Vaz Corte-Real:** Gaspar Frutuoso indicates that he received the captaincy of Angra on the island of Terceira and S.Jorge after discovering the Terra Nova dos Bacalhaus. This statement, that João Vaz Corte-Real received the captaincy of Angra after discovering the Terra Nova of the codfish, appears only and exclusively in this testimony of Frutuoso, and no other documents have been found, at least to date, that prove this statement, and even the hypothesis that has already been raised about the collaboration with the Danes who would have arrived in Terra Nova, there is a lack of documents to support this hypothesis, and there are other documents that indicate that João Vaz Corte-Real was in other places and with other people at that same date. According to Ernesto do Canto, Gaspar Frutuoso has made confusion between the findings of his son Gaspar Corte-Real, with his father João, because Frutuoso does not dwell on the achievements of Gaspar, besides that Canto indicates, that the expression "Terra Nova do Bacalhao, shows a confusion of terms corresponding to different times, because this territory was generally called Terra Nova, and after the travels of Gaspar and Miguel Corte-Real also came to be called "Terra dos Corte-Reais", appearing the expression "terra do bacalhau" only later. Thus, we conclude that, with the existing data, the presence of João Vaz Corte-Real in Newfoundland in the 1470s, lacks sufficient evidence to establish itself as a historical fact.

- **João Fernandes Lavrador:** João Fernandes Lavrador, who lived on the island of Terceira in the Azores, sailed in the North of the Atlantic Ocean, arriving in Greenland for sure, however, his possible arrival in the current Labrador, does not get a unanimous point of view, however, it is undeniable that in these travels that he did, Azoreans were with him, and that Fernandes Lavrador has also been a pioneer of what would become the English colonial empire.

- **Gaspar Corte Real:** was the third son of the aforementioned João Vaz Corte-Real, was born before 1455, only coming to the Azores with his parents in 1474, but lived most of his life in the Azores, on the island of Terceira, and even took the post of

captain of Angra and San Jorge, on behalf of his older brother, Vasco Anes Corte-Real. On May 12, 1500, he received a letter of donation, in which the Portuguese king D. Manuel I donated the captaincy of any land or islands that Gaspar Corte-Real discovered, keeping the civil and criminal jurisdiction, leaving that land to his heirs, and it is assumed that in 1500, Gaspar would have made a journey to reconnoiter and explore the prospects of opportunity in the territory. In 1501, Gaspar Corte-Real, departing from Lisbon, prepared a new voyage, and in October of that same year, 2 of the ships from Gaspar Corte-Real's fleet arrived, and in both of the 2 ships from Gaspar Corte-Real's fleet that returned, there were natives taken prisoner, and probably made slaves. Gaspar is said to have stayed to explore the coast of present-day Canada, but no news of him was ever heard from again. According to historian Samuel Morison, in his work, *Portuguese Voyages to America*, "Gaspar Corte-Real must be considered the true discoverer of Newfoundland.

- **Miguel Corte-Real:** asked King D. Manuel I for permission to go look for his brother Gaspar, since the expected time of his arrival had already passed. King D. Manuel I, on January 15, 1502, grants him the land and islands that he discovered on the journey in search of his brother, in addition to those that Gaspar had found, but after Miguel Corte-Real left Lisbon with 2 ships, on May 10, 1502, there was never any news of him again.

- **João Álvares Fagundes:** Born in Viana, he tried to make a colony in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia in Canada, with people from Viana and the Azores, but there is not much information about this colony. This Azorean colony, led by João Álvares Fagundes, would have survived between 12 and 18 months, because after that, the Indians became hostile when they noticed that the Europeans had come to stay and not only to trade fish, and also faced the enmity of the Breton fishermen, who even burned the houses of the Lusos, and cut their fishing lines, so Fagundes sailed further south in search of a better location, unintentionally discovering and mapping the Bay of Fundy, but the Portuguese colony in what is now Nova Scotia would have no future, as support from the metropolis never arrived, and from 1526 (more certainly), there was no more colony. Samuel Morison indicates that Jean Alfonse, chief pilot of the voyage of Roberval, in the voyage of 1541-1542, mentioned in the work *Les voyages aventureux du Capitaine Ian Alfonse*, that indeed the Portuguese had tried to colonize the place, but the natives did not allow it, eventually killing those who arrived, and, according to French sources, Fagundes has also reached Penobscot Bay, in the current state of Maine, USA. Winius points out that João Álvares Fagundes "(...) became the only Portuguese to make a settlement in the northern waters, albeit temporary. "On the other hand, he points out that around 1525 or 1526, the Portuguese gave up and returned to Europe. A few years later, the Frenchman Jacques Cartier inaugurated the supremacy of France in Canada until the 18th century.

- It is possible that there were other attempts of Portuguese colonization in Canada in the 16th century, since the documentation shows an effective interest, as well as the fishing in the Newfoundland banks, probably of codfish, was already relevant.

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