

## The Portuguese Discoveries

### The encounter with other cultures

Voz off -

Vasco da Gama -

Fernão Veloso -

Sailor 1 -

Sailor 2 -

Sailor 3 -

Music and wardrobe -

**(Voz off)** – The portuguese, on board of the naus S. Gabriel, S. Rafael e Bérrio, commanded by Vasco da Gama, renowned captain from the sixteenth century, sail towards the East with a mission at hand: finding the maritime way to India.

**Vasco da Gama** – Bravery/courage, sailors! Despite all the terrible obstacles that we overcame, in this journey, since we left Bethlehem, almost a year ago, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July of 1497, we are almost reaching our goal. From Lisbon, going to Cabo Verde with a friendly stop in Melinde and, now, aiming to Calecute.

**Sailor 1** – Thank you, sir, for this unmatched adventure, never before imagined. To serve Portugal, our nation and our captain is a true honor!

**Vasco da Gama** – Thank you for the kind words, my dear sailor! I want you to be proud for all the unique experiences that you lived: getting to know the fauna and flora unknown to our people, travelling through seas never seen before, connecting with other civilizations.

**Sailor 2** – Yes, captain, how glorious was contacting, in Santa Helena, with the native tribes that ate sea lions, whales, gazelles and herbs roots. A strange world or, I should say, with a different reality.

**Sailor 1** – And, as we heard from ancient Portuguese people, they wore animals' fur and their weapons were simple spears made of zambujo wood and animals' horns. It looked like pre-

history. But it wasn't easy to communicate with the tribes that, as we know, were aggressive to us.

**Sailor 2** – Our Fernão Veloso can attest to that, since he acted like a smartass, thinking that he had found the secret to communicate with the natives, but it cost him dearly.

**Fernão Veloso** – You guys are very funny! Someone had to try something in order for them to understand us, before they killed us.

**Sailor 3** – Yes, of course... Was really to save us or was it because you think you are the best?

**Sailor 2** – And the arrows that almost hit you, my friend, right on the ass!

**Vasco da Gama** – Alright, let's settle down. The most important thing is that, in spite of all adversities of a journey of this dimension, all the crew kept and keeps the curiosity and the will to accomplish the feat of reaching India.

**Fernão Veloso** – We learned, as well, that, after the horizon, there is a world to discover and various languages that make it hard to communicate between their speakers, as we now know.

**Sailor 1** – And we don't lack conquests. There have been already 5 standards that show, to the whole world, that those lands are ours: São Rafael, in river of the Good Sines; São Jorge, in Mozambique; Santo Espírito, in Melinde; Santa Maria, in the islands; and, soon, we will leave another padrão in São Gabriel, in Calecute.

**Sailor 4** – I apologize for what I'm about to say, my captain, but there is one thing I can't accept in our adventure.

**Vasco da Gama** - Don't be scared, man! Say what you feel...

**Fernão Veloso** – Worst case scenario, you won't eat for a whole day!

**Sailor 3** – There you go again with your jokes, Veloso!

**Sailor 1** – It hurts me to see the basements full of black people, doing the hard and dangerous work and being traded, when we need other services.

**Vasco da Gama** – That is the law, sailor! In Mombaça, in exchange of christian pilots needed to guide us to a friendly territory, I had to leave a few black prisoners. Otherwise, we wouldn't be here.

**Sailor 1** – But they are human being like us that deserve all of our respect. This is, in my point of view, the dark side of the Portuguese Discoveries.

**Sailor 3** - Land in sight, sailors! *(everyone jumps of joy)*

**Voz off** – And this is how, on the seventeenth of May of 1498, the Portuguese saw Calcutte, the desired land, surprised by their traditions and by the richness of the natives (the spices, like cinnamon, ginger and pepper, as well as the precious stones). From this, it was established the rout in the Indian Ocean and open, to all Europeans, the maritime way to India. The negotiations with the local governor, Samorim, were difficult because of the cultural differences.

**Dina Sarabando**