

The Right of Communication and Early Modern Globalisation

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The Paper

Francisco de Vitoria's thought on the right of communication, discussed most powerfully in his *De Indis*, has seen many applications, criticisms, and interpretations. Recent contributions have addressed Vitoria and his legacy in the contexts of the right of hospitality (Cavallar 2002), borders within and without polities (Brett 2011), and imperialism and the formation of international law (Anghie 2007). The general framework of the project, for which this paper serves as background, is to examine the Spanish and Portuguese approaches to empire and communication as two different globalising models in the early modern world. More specifically, the paper argues that there is much tension in Vitoria's simultaneous embrace of the right of communication and his open support for the Portuguese empire. To be sure, it was a commercial and seaborne empire, but also based on policies of maritime conquest, monopoly, and exclusion.