



Tanegashima-The Arrival of Europe in Japan

Olof G. Lidin, Olaf G Lidin

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The year 1543 marked the beginning of a new global consciousness in Japan with the arrival of shipwrecked Portuguese merchants on Tanegashima Island in Southern Japan. Other Portuguese rapidly followed and Japan became aware of a world beyond India. The Portuguese brought with them the musket, which was quickly copied and began to change Japanese warfare and influence their unification process. After the merchants had opened the way, the first missionary, Francis Xavier, arrived in 1549 and the Christian century began. The arrival of the Portuguese was recorded in the "Tanegashima Kafu", the "Teppoki" and the "Kunitomo Teppoki", which are here translated and presented together with European reports. Special attention is given to the role of Tanegashima Island and Mendes Pinto, who wrote his famous picaresque account of Japan, the "Peregrinacam".

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