

# Asian Encounters

**Directions:** Analyze the documents and answer the questions that follow.

**"If they were only to take Malacca out of the hands of the Moors (referring to the Muslims), Cairo and Mecca would be entirely ruined, and Venice would then be able to obtain no [spices] except what her merchants might buy in Portugal."**

—Afonso de Albuquerque, Portuguese admiral

1. Why does Albuquerque want to take over Malacca?
2. Based on what you know about the spices trade routes, why does Albuquerque say that conquering Malacca would have such an impact on Mecca, Cairo, and Venice?

**"And the Franks (referring to the Portuguese) engaged the men of Malacca in battle, and they fired their cannons from ships so that the cannon balls came like rain. And the noise of the cannon was as the noise of thunder in the heavens and the flashes of fire from their guns were like flashes of lightning in the sky, and the noise of their matchlocks was like that of groundnuts popping in the frying pan."**

—Malaysian account  
of the Portuguese massacre in Malacca



3. Based on the account, why were the Portuguese able to conquer Malacca?

**"As to your entreaty to send one of your nationals to be accredited to my Celestial Court and to be in control of your country's trade with China, this request is contrary to all usage of my dynasty and cannot possibly be entertained... I have but one aim in view, namely, to maintain a perfect governance and to fulfill the duties of the State: strange and costly objects do not interest me... Our dynasty's majestic virtue has penetrated unto every country under Heaven, and Kings of all nations have offered their costly tribute by land and sea. As your Ambassador can see for himself, we possess all things. I set no value on objects strange or ingenious, and have no use for your country's manufactures."**

—Qing Emperor Qianlong, letter to British King George III

4. Based on Qianlong's response to Britain's request for more trading rights and permanent ambassadors, how do you think the Chinese emperor views Britain in comparison to China?



5. Examine the two pictures on page 458 in your textbook. Both pictures show scenes of Europeans meeting South Asian rulers. How do the Europeans deal with the ruler in the first picture? In the second picture?
6. The picture on the left is the work of a South Asian artist. The picture on the right is the work of a European artist. What differences between the two images show the differences in the way both sides viewed their relationships?

**Summary Question:** How did Asian nations differ in their response to European attempts to gain access to trade in their lands?