

an enlightenment ideologist in modern China wrote: "Only few number of grand navigators in the history of the world can match Zheng He." Sun Yat-sen (1866–1925), the driver of the Chinese democratic revolution, praised Zheng He's voyages to the western oceans highly as "a miracle in the history and future of China" in his book *The International Development of China*. Zheng He's voyages to the western oceans also received high praise and a great deal of attention from scholars of all countries. J.J.L.Duyrendak (1889–1954) in the Netherlands described the voyages as "great sea trips of the Chinese people in early 15<sup>th</sup> century." Joseph Needham (1900–1995) from the U.K. praised the voyages as the greatest navigation ventures in Chinese history. Terada Takanobu (1931– ) from Japan says: "the voyages completed by Zheng He were really a great undertaking. They were not only the biggest offshore activity in the history of China, but also the largest one among similar undertakings completed by human beings till early 15<sup>th</sup> century. The voyages started in the so-called Great Era of Navigation dozens of years later paled by comparison with Zheng He's voyages to the western oceans." Zheng He's voyages to the western oceans started in 1405, 87 years earlier than Christopher Columbus' (1451–1506) arrival in America in 1492, 83 years earlier than Bartholomeu Dias' (1455–1500) crossing the Cape of Good Hope in 1488, 92 years earlier than Vasco da Gama's (1469–1524) arrival in Calicut, India, in 1497, and 114 years before Ferdinand Magellan (1480–1521)