

A Close Circle of Friends

Cardinal **Nicholas of Cusa** (1401-64) was a close friend of Italian astronomer, mathematician, and geographer **Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli** (1394?-1482). The latter in turn was an intimate of the representative of the Portuguese royal house in Florence, **Dom Gomes Ferreira da Silva**, who worked with the circles of Cusa to organize the historic Council of Florence.

Dom Gomes returned to Portugal, becoming the head of the Camaldolese Order. His successor in that post was **Fernão Martins**, who was greatly esteemed by both Cusa and Toscanelli. Upon Cusa's death, Martins and Toscanelli were both named as executors of his estate.

In 1474, the two men corresponded on the possibilities of sailing west to reach the Indies, and Toscanelli sent Martins a map explaining his idea. The original of this letter was lost, but Toscanelli later transcribed it, along with the map, and sent it to



Christopher Columbus



Nicholas of Cusa

Christopher Columbus, whom it guided on his historic voyage.

EIR's Timothy Rush, who told the story in [EIR](#), Nov. 20, 1998, summed up: "It was not a question of the *influence* of the Cusa-Toscanelli circle on the Portugal of Henry the Navigator, but of *one single circle of personal collaborators*."