

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Teacher Background

This lesson will guide students to understand Cabrillo by looking at sources that tell about the period in which he lived. By Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's time, expeditions were not just exploration. They involved exploration, conquest, settlement, and empire building. Who would go with those commissioned by the Crown to the new lands? Often they were men who sought a chance at fortune: "[s]ome were . . . foot-loose ex-soldiers, broken noblemen, adventurers, peasants."¹ Friars and priests came hoping to extend the domain of their Catholic faith. Once conquerors took possession of or established new cities, they needed to be governed. The Spanish Crown appointed royal officials and sent them. Few rose to the level of a Francisco Pizarro, former pig-herder, who became the principal *conquistador* in South America for Spain. Some, like Cortés, seemed to have higher ambitions than simply land acquisition. In 1540 Cortés wrote in a letter after refusing a land grant: "I came to get gold, not to till the soil like a peasant."²

A few writers have said that explorers were motivated by gold, glory, and the gospel. Whatever their original ambition, most labored in varying degrees of anonymity. If they survived the hardships of travel and battles, they might be fortunate enough to receive the land promised to them or perhaps be awarded a role in town government.

Both the Portuguese and the Spanish "claim" that Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo was born in their country. Historians have offered complex circumstantial arguments for both sides. While there are no definitive sources as to his origins, the evidence does indicate that he was one of many who, likely inspired by the legends and reports from explorers who had gone ahead, traveled to and made the "New World" their home, labored and survived battles, and received recompense in the form of a land grant (*encomienda*) and native labor. Cabrillo would likely have remained one of now little remembered settlers had it not been that the shipbuilding skills he developed put him in a position to be called upon to lead the expedition after Pedro de Alvarado had died. As such, an understanding of the 'everyman' who participated in European exploration and settlement of the Americas lends to an understanding of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo.

¹ Lewis Hanke, *Bartolomé de las Casas: An Interpretation of His Life and Writings* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1951), 3.

² Letter to the king dated February 20, 1559. Archivo General de Simancas, Sección de estado, legajo 138, fol. 360.

Activity One: Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's World: Myths and Exploration Legends

Background

Legends popular during Cabrillo's time infused the dreams of new lands and riches. "The tradition of a fair and distant city, an island, a country, pervades the literature and folklore of the world. Atlantis, the lost continent of Mu, the Fortunate Islands, the many wondrous cities of the great Kubli Khan, which Marco Polo beheld, Zanadu, the Seven [Cities of Civola, and] Quivar, give magic to dreams."³

Students will read excerpts from the following legends. Explain to students the story of each legend before giving the group reading assignments.

Legends:

Cuatro Libros de Amadís de Gaul (Four Books about Amadís of Gaul)

One legend that rose to popularity around the time Cabrillo was a young man, was the story of Amadís. Like the "Harry Potter" or "Chronicles of Narnia" books, the story was in four books. In the legend, Amadís is a man in love with a princess, but he must prove himself worthy. He and his companions then embark on a series of adventures such as fighting monsters, encountering enchanted islands, and rescuing people. In the second book (called "Book the Second") begins the tale of an island with great riches that Amadís will eventually conquer.

The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandían; The Legend of Queen Calafia

A sequel to the four popular "Amadís" books, a fifth tale was published as the story of his son, Esplandían. Esplandían also had many adventures to strange lands. One of his adventures takes him to the island of California where he meets Queen Calafia.

The Letter of Prester John

During Cabrillo's time, legends about a man named Prester John had been popular for centuries. Prester John was said to rule over a lost Christian nation full of wonders and riches. Depending on the version of the legend, he lived somewhere near India, Central Asia, or Ethiopia. At first the legend was passed on by word of mouth. Eventually, someone came up with a 'letter' from a 'Prester John.' This was widely copied and spread over Europe, influencing many other versions of the story.

- A. **Introduction:** Divide into small groups or pairs and have students discuss the following questions:
1. Write "explore" on the board and have students define the word. [possible answers: *travel for the purposes of discovery; investigate something unknown*] Save their answers for later discussion.
 2. Which explorers have they already studied? What were they looking for? Did they explorers find what they were seeking?

³ Verne Bright, "Quivira, A Legendary City of the Northwest Coast," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 52:2 (June 1951), p. 114.

3. Why would someone want to travel somewhere completely unknown to them?
- B. Distribute the group assignments (Groups One-Six) in **Document 2-A**. Instruct students to highlight parts of the stories that might inspire exploration.
 - C. Have the groups share the parts they highlighted. Then have them compare elements of these older myths and legends to the movies and stories they have seen or read.
 - D. As an individual writing or group poster presentation, instruct students to create their own myth or legend about an unknown place. Discuss what elements their unknown place should have in order to inspire others to risk dangers to try to get there.
 - E. Extension: Discuss with students modern-day unexplored areas such as the planet Mars and the bottom of the ocean.

Activity Two: Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's World: Reports from Explorers

Background

Once explorers began to return from their journeys, they brought back reports from their journeys of the “new” lands. These had the potential to introduce new stories and enticements as well as elements of the realities of the dangers travelers would face.

Exploration reports:

Christopher Columbus' Journal

Christopher Columbus kept a journal on his 1492 journey. The journal was meant for others to read—a report of what he was sent to “discover.”

Hernán Cortés: Instructions to his relative Francisco Cortés

Hernán Cortés was one of the principal European conquerors of Mexico. In 1524 at Colima [Mexico] he gave his relative Francisco Cortés instructions to continue the exploration. The instructions indicate his reasons for continuing exploration.

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, The True History of the Conquest of New Spain

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who served as a shieldbearer in Hernán Cortés' army, collected narratives from other soldiers and recorded those as well as his own accounts in a book *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España* (*The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*).

Fray Marcos de Niza, “Report to Mendoza”

Prior to the 1542 voyage Cabrillo would take, the priest Fray Marcos de Niza went north from Mexico in search of a city of wealth. The following is an excerpt from his report on his return. He did not enter the city, saying that his life was in danger. Rather, he chose to come back and submit his report.

Francisco Coronado, “Letter to Mendoza, August 3, 1540”

When the Franciscan friar, Marcos de Niza brought back reports of the Seven Cities of Cibola with its vast riches, New Spain’s viceroy, Don Antonio de Mendoza was inspired. Mendoza then commissioned the explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado to follow de Niza. After very many difficulties, Coronado arrived at the place Fray Marcos had designated the seven cities of Cibola. However, his report differed from that of Niza.

- A. Distribute the group assignments (Groups One-Seven) in **Document Set 2-B**, “Exploration and Conquest Reports.” Give each group one of the selections. They should answer the following questions:
 - Who wrote this report?
 - Who do you think would be reading this report?
 - What valuable things did they see?
 - What valuable things did they hear about, but not see?
 - What other interesting details did they include?
 - What problems did they have?
- B. Once they answer their questions, groups should create either a new report or a news article reporting on the explorer. They should include an opinion about whether they believe the reports were accurate.
- C. Discussion: Why would a young man like Cabrillo participate in a conquest expedition?

Activity Three: Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo’s Skills: Crossbowman and Shipbuilder

- A. Review with the class **Document 1-K** (Group Eight), the excerpt from a history by Bernal Díaz del Castillo which not only shows Cabrillo as a crossbowman, but one with the skill to “construct” the crossbow as well.
- B. Distribute **Handout 2-C**, “A Sixteenth-Century Crossbow.” Discuss with students how the weapon worked. What technological improvements did the crossbow have in comparison to a bow and arrow? What skills were needed to make a crossbow? As an extension, you could also have them research the various types of crossbows used in the sixteenth century.
- C. Distribute **Document 2-D**, “Cabrillo, the Shipbuilder.” Tell students these are excerpts from the trial they reenacted in Lesson One. What was Cabrillo’s role with Alvarado’s fleet?
- D. Distribute **Handout 2-E**, “Sixteenth-Century Shipbuilding.” Students should answer the questions on the worksheet.
- E. Since Cabrillo was initially a crossbowman, what crossbow skills might he have translated into shipbuilding?

Exploration Legends and Myths: Group One

Cuatro Libros de Amadís de Gaul (Four Books about Amadís of Gaul)

[Amadís and his men] sailed till they came to the Firm Island. There Apolidon landed not knowing what country it was and pitched a tent upon the shore and placed a couch there for his lady who was weary of the sea. Presently there came down a fierce giant who was lord of the island. According to the custom of the place Apolidon was to do battle with him for the preservation of his lady and himself and his company. It ended in such sort that the giant lay dead on the field and Apolidon remained master of the island. . . .

[T]here he and Grimanesa [*his love*] being greatly beloved by the islanders whom he had delivered from their oppressor dwelt in all happiness for sixteen years. During that time many rich edifices [*buildings*] were made as well with his great treasures as with his surpassing wisdom such as it would have been difficult for any emperor or king how rich soever to have completed.

The Greeks call Apolidon back to be their emperor. At Grimanesa's request, he makes the island so that no one can re-enter except those who have been true to their first love.

Then Apolidon made an arch at the entrance of a garden wherein there were all kinds of trees and also four rich chambers but it was so surrounded that none could enter except by passing under the arch. . . . And in one of the chambers within he placed two statues that looked so much like him and his lady that they seemed alive. Near them he placed a bright stone of jasper. . . Henceforward said he no man or woman who hath been false to their first love shall pass here. . . . But if knight or dame or damsel come worthy by virtue of true loyalty to finish this adventure they shall enter without let and the image shall make a sound so sweet that it shall be delightful to hear and they shall see our images and behold their own name written in the jasper.

Garciordonez de Montalvo, Robert Southey, trans., *Amadís of Gaul: Book the Second, Chapter I* (London: John Russell Smith, 1872), 252-53.

Exploration Legends and Myths: Group Two***Cuatro Libros de Amadís de Gaul (Four Books about Amadís of Gaul)***

Amadís was the only one who could raise the outermost glass door of the tomb; the inner one, colored sky blue, was guarded by a lock of pure emerald in which was inserted a key of diamond stone. The hinges were of very precious rubies. And when he had opened the tomb he saw within an idol of solid gold, all inlaid with enormous precious stones and a huge mother-of-pearl. And it bore a crown so marvellously wrought that it was regarded as a wonder by one who saw it later. On it were letters of burning rubies which read: 'Jupiter, the greatest of the gods.'

Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, William Thomas Little, tran., *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandían* (New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts, 1992), 310-11.

Exploration Legends and Myths: Group Three***The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandían; The Legend of Queen Calafia***

Now I wish you to know about the strangest thing ever found anywhere in written texts or in human memory. By means of this dangerous wonder, the next day, when the city was on the verge of being lost, its salvation came from the new danger itself. I tell you that on the right-hand side of the Indies there was an island called California, which was very close to the region of the Earthly Paradise. This island was inhabited by dark women, and there were no males among them at all, for their lifestyle was similar to that of the Amazons. The island was made up of the wildest cliffs and the sharpest precipices found anywhere in the world. These women had energetic bodies and courageous ardent hearts, and they were strong. Their armor was made entirely out of gold—which was the only metal found on the island—as were the trappings on the fierce beasts that they rode once they were tamed.

Garciordonez Rodríguez de Montalvo, William Thomas Little, tran., *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandían* (New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts, 1992), 456-457

Exploration Legends and Myths: Group Four

The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandían; The Legend of Queen Calafia

On this island called California, there were many griffins, because these beasts were suited to the ruggedness of the terrain, which was a perfect habitat for the infinite number of wild animals that lived there and that were not found in any other part of the world . . . At the time . . . there reigned on California Island a queen in the flower of her youth who was bigger and more beautiful than the other women on the island.

Queen Calafia and her women left the sea wearing their golden armor that was studded all over with very precious stones, which were found on California Island as abundantly as rocks in a field.

Queen Calafia . . . said these words 'I am the queen of a large seigniory, where there is a vast abundance of what the whole world prizes most, which is gold and precious stones.'

Garciordonez Rodríguez de Montalvo, William Thomas Little, tran., *The Labors of the Very Brave Knight Esplandían* (New York: Medieval and Renaissance Texts, 1992), 458-459; 461; 502.

Exploration Legends and Myths: Group Five***The Letter of Prester John*****THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF THE ACCOUNT OF THE LAND OF BLESSED JOHN**

This is a Book that the King of India sent to the Emperor of Constantino-ple, in which many diverse strange things are understood, and in it there are new things that have never been found in other books, and never shall be found. And this is the force of that book.

I, John the priest, by the might and strength of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, King of earthly kings, and Lord of lords, send to him that stands in the place of God, namely, the Ruler of Rome, joy and greeting by the grace of poetry. . . .

IV. In our country are born animals—elephants, dromedaries, camels, hippopotami, crocodiles, metagalinarii . . . white and red lions, white bears, white ousels, silent grasshoppers, gryphons, tigers, ogresses, hyenas, wild buffaloes . . . the bird that is called phoenix, and almost all the kinds of animals under heaven. . . . And here are found natural stones; these are their names, smaragdi, saphiri, carbunculi, topazion, crysoliti, onichini, berilli, amethysti, sardinæ, and many other precious stones.

VII. This is another marvel that is there; hard by the desert near the mountains, where no one dwells, there is a river beneath the earth, and no one can find a road to it, except by chance; sometimes the earth trembles, and whoever then happens to be passing by . . . must travel in haste, lest perchance the earth close upon him; and whatever sand he brings with him will be precious stones and jewels. . . .

Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscript. Preserved in the Peniarth Library. Williams, Robert, ed. & trans. (London: Thomas Richards, 1892). Available: <http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/presterjohn.html> [October 2010]

Exploration Legends and Myths: Group Six

The Letter of Prester John

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This is a Book that the King of India sent to the Emperor of Constantino-ple, in which many diverse strange things are understood, and in it there are new things that have never been found in other books, and never shall be found. And this is the force of that book.

I. John the priest, by the might and strength of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, King of earthly kings, and Lord of lords, send to him that stands in the place of God, namely, the Ruler of Rome, joy and greeting by the grace of poetry.

VIII. In gold, silver, precious stones, in dromedaries and camels, is the abundance of our greatness. No one is poor among us . . . No thieves, no oppressors, no misers are found in our midst; there is no envy in our midst.

IX. Our men have abundance of all kinds of riches . . . We liken none on the face of the earth to us in riches. When we go to war in force against our enemies, we carry before us fifteen large, magnificent crosses made of gold and silver, with precious stones therein . . . and behind each one of them twelve thousand men of arms, and a hundred thousand foot soldiers, without counting the five thousand who have to do with bearing food and drink. . . . [a]nd other vessels, full of gold, are borne before us, that all may understand that we are lord of lords.

X.—In all the kinds of riches that are in the world our greatness abounds and excels. No one tells a lie among us, and no one can tell one. . . . All of us follow after truth, and all love one another mutually; no kind of sin reigns there.

Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscript. Preserved in the Peniarth Library. Williams, Robert, ed. & trans. (London: Thomas Richards, 1892). Available: <http://www.maryjones.us/ctexts/presterjohn.html> [October 2010]

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group One***Christopher Columbus' Journal, 1492***

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13.

At dawn many of these men came to the shore, all young men as I have said and all of good height, a very handsome people. Their hair is not curly but hanging and coarse like horsehair, and all the forehead and head is very wide, more than any other race seen until now, and their eyes are very handsome and not small. . . . They came to the ship with canoes, which are made from the trunk of a tree, like a long boat and all in one piece, and very wonderfully fashioned for the country. . . . They brought balls of spun cotton and parrots and spears and other small things which it would be tedious to write about . . . And I was attentive and sought to learn whether they had gold and I saw that some of them wore a small piece suspended from a hole they have in the nose: and I was able to understand by signs that, going to the south or going around the island to the south, there was a King who had large vessels of gold and who had a great deal of it. I tried to have them go there and afterward saw that they were not interested in going. I determined to wait until afternoon of the next day and then leave for the south-west . . . in search of gold and precious stones. . . .

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15.

I had been standing off and on this night for fear of not reaching land to anchor before morning . . . it was about mid-day when I reached the said island . . . I gave [the island] the name of the Isla de Santa Maria de la Concepción, and almost at sunset I anchored near the said Cape to learn if there was gold there, because the natives whom I had caused to be taken on the island of San Salvador told me that the people there wore very large golden bracelets on the legs and arms.

John Boyd Thacher, trans., "The Log of Columbus," In Keith A. Pickering, ed., *The Columbus Navigation*. Available: <http://www.columbusnavigation.com/diario.shtml> [October 2010].

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group Two

Christopher Columbus' Journal, 1492

TUESDAY, JANUARY 15.

He says that he wishes to depart because nothing is gained by remaining here now on account of the disagreements which have taken place. He must mean the trouble with the Indians. He says also that to-day he has learned that all the bulk of the gold was in the vicinity of the Villa de la Navidad of their Highnesses, and that on the island of Carib there was a great deal of copper and in Matinino, although it would be difficult to obtain it in Carib because he says the people eat human flesh: and he says the island of the Caribs appeared from where he was and that he had determined to go there, since it is on his course and to the island of Matinino which he says was all inhabited by women without men, and he says he wished to see both these islands and to take some of the inhabitants. The Admiral sent the boat to land and the king of that country had not come because he says the village was a long way off, but he sent his crown of gold as he had promised and many other men came with cotton and with bread and *ajes* [insects], all with their bows and arrows.

John Boyd Thacher, trans., "The Log of Columbus," In Keith A. Pickering, ed., *The Columbus Navigation*. Available: <http://www.columbusnavigation.com/diario.shtml> [October 2010].

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group Three

Instructions that Hernando [Hernán Cortés] gave to His Lieutenant Francisco Cortés in the Town of Colima, the Year of 1524

. . . because I am informed that down the coast which borders the said villa there are many provinces thickly inhabited by people and containing, it is believed, great riches, and that in these parts of it there is one which is inhabited by women, with no men [like] the ancient histories ascribe to the Amazons, and because by learning the truth regarding this and whatever else there is on said coast, God our Lord and their Majesties will be greatly served.

"Instrucciones Dadas por Hernando Cortés a Francisco Cortés su Lugarteniente en la Villa de Colima. Año de 1524," in Pacheco y Cárdenas, *Colección de Documentos Inéditos de Descubrimientos, Conquistas ... en América* (Madrid, 1864-1884; 42 vols., vol. 26), p. 153.

In Irving A. Leonard, *Books of the Brave: Being an Account of Books and of Men in the Spanish Conquest and Settlement of the Sixteenth-Century New World* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1992, p. 49.

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group Four**Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain***

[1519] When we saw so many cities and villages built in the waters [of the lake] and other large towns on dry land, and that straight, level causeway leading into Mexico City, we were amazed and we said that it was like the enchanted things related in the book of Amadís because of the huge towers, temples, and buildings rising from the water and all of masonry. And some of the soldiers even asked whether the things we saw were not a dream. It is not to be wondered that I write it down in this manner, for there is so much to think of that I do not know how to describe it, seeing as we did things never heard of or witnessed before.

A. P. Maudslay (tran.), Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1908-1916), 2:37.

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group Five**Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain***

Bernal Díaz del Castillo wrote about Cortés: “he highly praised the captains and companions who had been with him in the conquest of Mexico, saying that they were able to suffer hunger and hardship, that wherever he summoned them he could do heroic deeds with them, and that, even when they were wounded and in rages they never failed to fight and to capture every city and fortress, however great the risk to their lives.”

Bernal Díaz del Castillo, *Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España* (204, folio 268).

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group Six

Fray Marcos de Niza, "Report to Mendoza"

Original Translation from Spanish

. . . they told me, that . . . at the foote of the mountains . . . were many great Townes . . . when I shewwed them certaine metals which I carried with mee, to learne what riche metals were in the Lande, they tooke the mineral of Golde and tole mee, that thereof were vesselles among the people of the plaine, and that they carried certain round greene stones hanging at their nostrilles, and at their eares, and that they have certaine thinne plates of that Golde, wherewith they scrape off their sweat, and that the walles of their Temples are covered therewith, and that they use it in all their household vessels. . . .

. . . a man borne in Civola* . . . told me that Cevola was a great Citie, inhabited by great store of people, and having many streets and market-places: and that in some parts of this Citie there are certaine very great houses of five stories high . . . and that the gates, and small pillars of the principal houses are of Turqueses, and all the vesseles wherein they are served, and the other ornaments of their houses were of golde: and the other sixe Cities are like onto this, whereof some are bigger. . . .

Modern Version

. . . they told me, that . . . at the foot of the mountains . . . were many great Towns . . . when I showed them certain valuable metals which I carried with me, to learn what rich metals were in the Land, they took the mineral of Gold. They told me that the people of the plains have containers and wore certain round green stones hanging from their nostrils their ears. They have thin plates of that Gold, which they use to scrape off their sweat, to cover their temples, and to use in their household containers. . . .

. . . a man born in Civola . . . told me that Cevola* was a great City and that a lot of people lived there. He said that it has many streets and market-places and large houses five stories high . . . and the gates, small pillars of the main houses are made out of turquoise, and all of their containers and other household objects were made of gold. The other six cities are like this, some even bigger. . . .

. . . I came within sight of Civola, which is situate on a plaine at the foot of a round hill . . . The houses are builded in order, according as the Indians told mee, all made of stone with divers stories, and flatte roofes, as farre as I could discerne from a mountaine whither I ascended to viewe the citie. The people are somewhat white, they weare apparell, and lie in beds, their weapons are bowes, they have Emeralds and other jewels, although they esteeme none so much as turqueses wherewith they adorne the walles of the porches of their houses, and their apparell and vessels, and they use them instead of money through all the Countrey.

. . . I came close enough to see Civola, which was on a plain at the foot of a round hill. . . . From what I could tell from the mountain that I climbed to see the city, the houses were built in order, all made of stone with many stories and flat roofs just as the Indians had told me. The people are somewhat white, wear clothes, lie in beds, and use bows as weapons. They own emeralds and other jewels, but they do not value those as much as the turquoise that they use to decorate the walls of the porches of their houses and their clothes. They use the jewels instead of money throughout the Country.

*NOTE: The author uses both "Civola" and "Cevola" as a name for the place he found.

Fray Marcos de Niza, "Report to Mendoza;" see George P. Hammond and Agapito Rey, eds., *Narratives of the Coronado Expedition, 1540-1542* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1940), 65, 72, 78-79.

Exploration and Conquest Reports: Group Seven

Coronado, Letter to Mendoza, August 3, 1540

It now remains for me to tell about this city and kingdom and province, of which the father provincial gave Your Lordship an account. In brief, I can assure you that in reality he has not told the truth in a single thing that he said, but everything is the reverse of what he said, except the name of the city and the large stone houses. Although [the houses] are not decorated with turquoises, or made of lime nor of good bricks, nevertheless they are very good houses, with three and four and five stories, where there are very good apartments and good rooms with corridors, and some very good rooms underground and paved, which are made for winter, and are something like a sort of hot baths. The ladders which they have for their houses are all movable and portable, which are taken up and placed wherever they please. They are made of two pieces of wood, with rounds like ours.

The Seven Cities are seven little villages, all having the kind of houses I have described. They are all within a radius of five leagues. They are all called the kingdom of Cevola, and each has its own name and no single one is called Cevola, but all together are called Cevola.

Richard Flint and Shirley Cushing Flint, eds., *Documents of the Coronado Expedition, 1539-1542* (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 2005).

A Sixteenth-Century Crossbow

The medieval crossbow was a heavier weapon than other forms of bows and arrows that had long been in use. Its accuracy of aim led to its popularity for both battle and hunting in Spain and other parts of Europe. Spanish soldiers also used firearms (guns) called “arquebus”, but these were not as accurate as the crossbow. Cabrillo was known to have been a skilled crossbowman, and the type likely used by him was made of heavy wood and fired a metal bolt rather than a wood arrow. Once Cabrillo and other Spanish soldiers were in the New World, copper was sometimes the metal of choice for bolts when other metals could not be found.

The crossbow’s design consisted of a bow mounted on interlocking pieces of wood and a metal devise which kept the bowstring intact. Its length was usually two to three feet. Resin was used as a type of glue to hold the interlocking wooden pieces and the bolts together. The tip of the crossbow bends, so that knowledge and skill to manipulate wood was needed.

In addition to the wooden structure, the crossbow shot bolts (think arrows) made of brass or other materials. The crossbow’s “trigger system” was made of steel or iron, and was used to hold the string in the bolt projectile until the string was released. Once the string was released, the bolt would spin and the bowstring would project it towards the intended target. Oftentimes crossbows also had a compass attached to help with aiming the direction of the bolts.

Crossbows made as weapons would likely have a slightly curved stock as this was favorable to more accurate aim. This made the crossbow one of the earliest weapons capable of shooting an enemy accurately at long range.

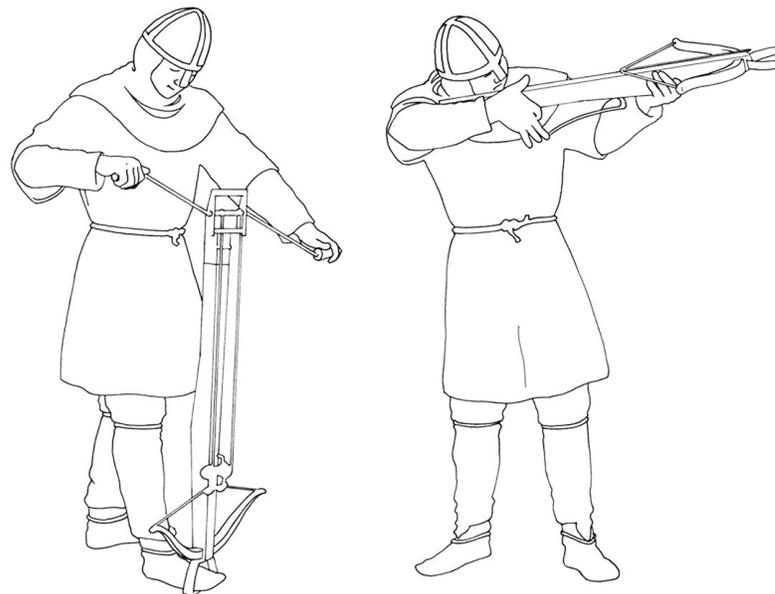


Upper Left: Roger Crawford, Cabrillo National Monument Living History Volunteer demonstrates how to use the crossbow.

Upper Right: Replica of a sixteenth-century crossbow (Cabrillo National Monument).

Lower Left: Illustration of loading the crossbow with a two-handed windlass and a stirrup. Note the “bolt” on the ground.

Available: <http://marq.wikispaces.com/heavy+crossbow>



Loading and shooting a crossbow with a windlass

Available: <<http://www.edupics.com/coloring-page-loading-and-shooting-crossbow-i9455.html>>

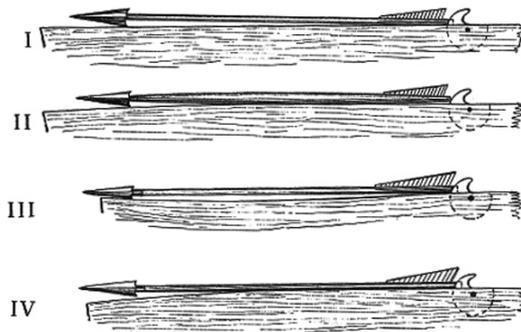


FIG. 29.—BOLTS FOR CROSSBOWS, AND HOW THEY WERE ARRANGED ON THE STOCK.

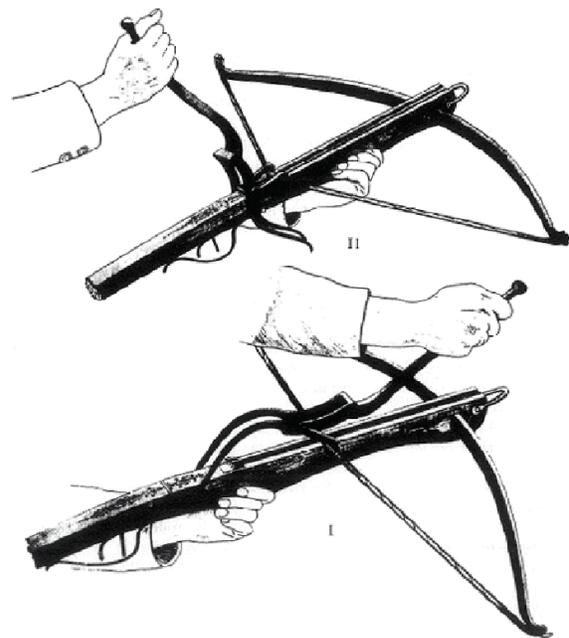


FIG. 43.—HOW THE GOAT'S-FOOT LEVER WAS APPLIED TO BEND A SMALL CROSSBOW.

Left: Bolts for a crossbow on the stock. **Right:** The goat's foot lever mechanism for stretching the bow. This style was common with the soldiers who served in the Americas.

Source: Ralph Payne-Gallwey. *The Crossbow: Mediaeval and Modern Military and Sporting. Its Construction, History and Management* (London: Longmans, 1903). Reprint available: <http://www.crossbowbook.com> (Trebuchet Store: www.trebuchet.com).

Cabrillo the Shipbuilder

Testimony of Francisco de Vargas

To the 14th question he said he knows it as contained in the question. Questioned as to how he knows it, he said that because it must be more or less twenty-five years ago that the testifier saw Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo in Iztapa in charge of building the fleet and that he was with the fleet for overhauling at the shipyard of Quevaltique. He saw the Governor embarking in the flagship of the fleet for the discovery. Rodríguez went as admiral of the fleet with a ship which he heard that he outfitted at his expense, and for such, he was esteemed and obeyed.

To the 15th question he said that he, the testifier, knows and saw Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo in charge of building the fleet, as the question states, by order and authority of the Governor. And he has seen that the orders, authorities, and orders of the Licenciado (title given to lawyers) Maldonado, governor for justice of the port of Iztapa. He saw that Cabrillo was building the fleet of ships, and he experienced many hardships in order to make the voyage he did make in furnishing the necessities until the setting of the high masts. This he responds to this question.

Testimony of Gonzalo Ortiz

Juan Rodríguez was in charge of building the fleet, and he had charge of it until it was completed, and he served well His Majesty in this. The testifier knows it because he saw him. Cabrillo left his wife, children, and household in this city so that he could take charge of the fleet construction for which he was ready and fit for it. Thus, this is public and generally-known that he was ordering it all with such justice and as admiral. This he responds to this question.

Testimony of Alvaro de Paz

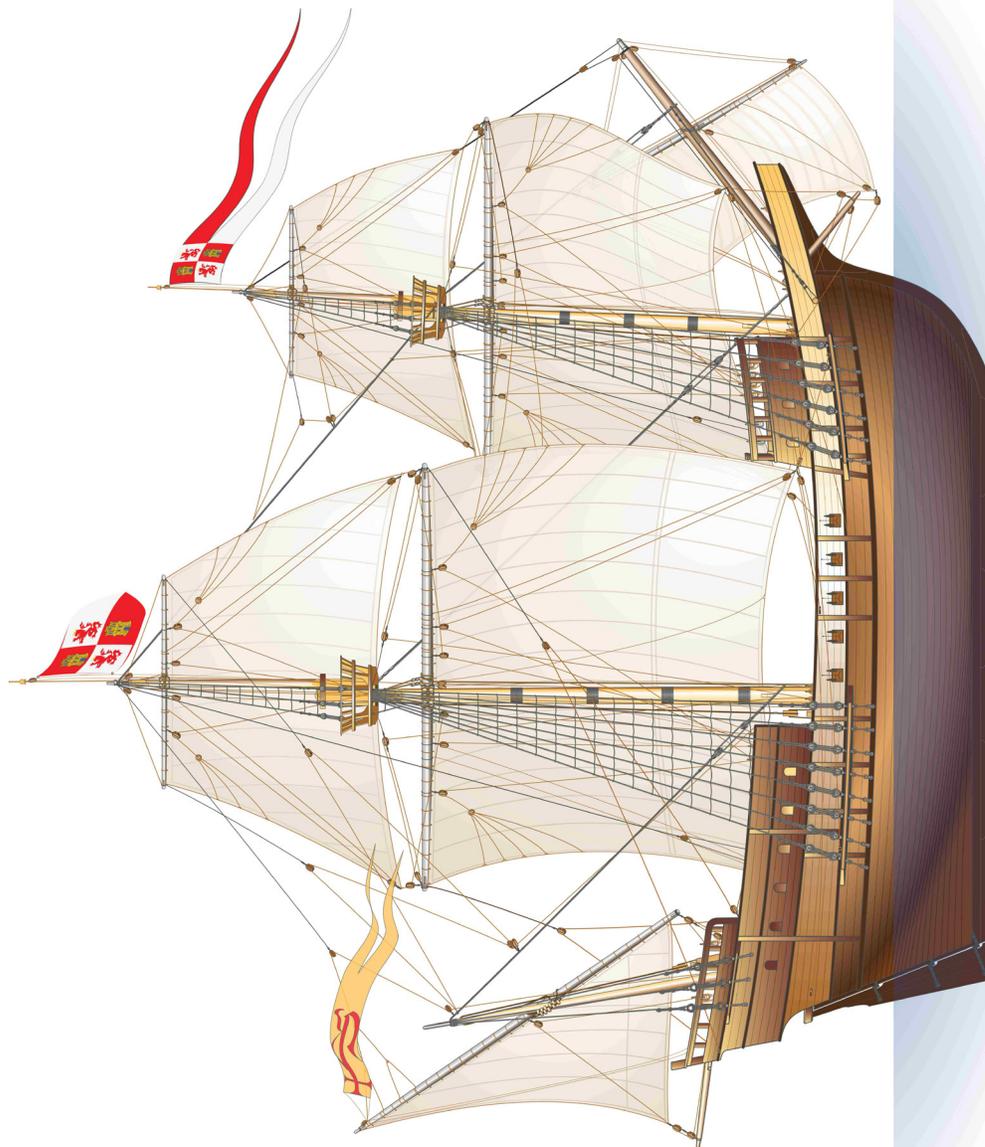
To the 15th question he said that he knows and saw Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo in charge of dispatching the fleet and ships which were built. This testifier, being major-domo of the said Governor and the person who had charge of his estates and said fleet, gave all the necessary supplies to Juan Rodríguez, as stated in the question. He saw that with the aid, Juan Rodríguez worked in it very well. This he responds to this question.

Bernice Beagles, "The Merits and Services of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo, One of the Conquistadores (transcript)," *Western Explorer: Journal of the Cabrillo Historical Association* 5 (September 1967), pp. 1-19.

Sixteenth-Century Ships

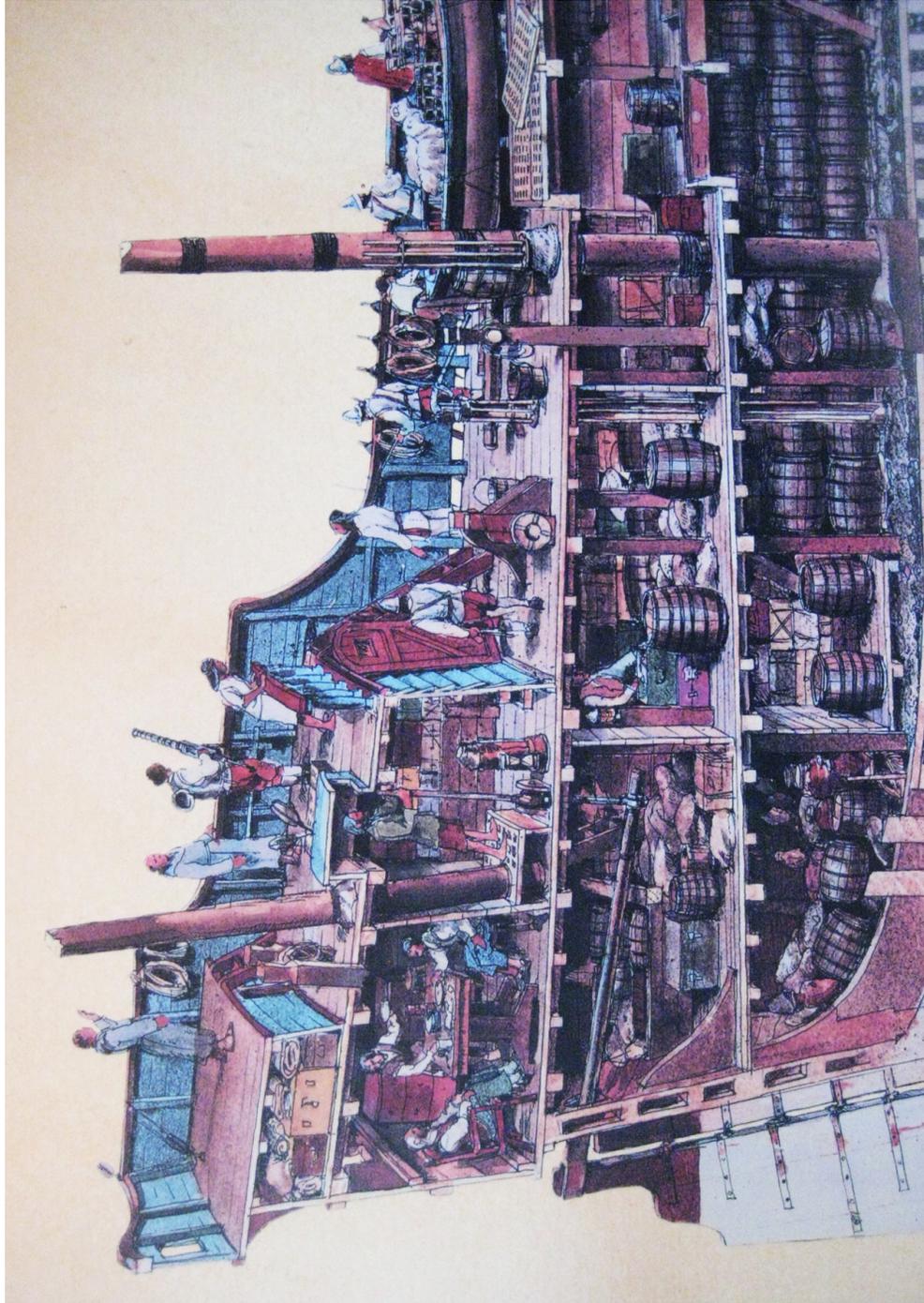
Shipbuilding and innovative navigational technology were booming by the sixteenth-century, despite the fact that production and categorization of certain styles of ships and seafaring items were not yet standardized in style or name. Moreover, the trade of shipbuilding was highly-guarded, with designs being secretly passed down from father to son without any written documentation. What is known about shipbuilding is that the construction was usually led by a master builder, and the quality of the final product was the result of skilled workers, the availability of materials, and the design and durability of the ship. Despite the few existing records in the early New World colonies about Alvarado's fleet, as well as the process of shipbuilding in general, it is still possible to determine what went into building a ship during this time. The process began by selecting a construction site that would have access to an abundant supply of wood. In addition, the site would have to be near a body of water to launch the ship, while still being protected from the open seas during its construction. Shipbuilding knowledge in Cabrillo's time called for blacksmiths who forged nails, spikes, chains, and bolts from iron either brought from Europe or other metal found in the New World; carpenters, shipwrights, and sawyers who had knowledge of woodworking and ship design. Also included in the process were local natives who had knowledge of resources, offered cheap labor, and could transport items needed from long distances. Although it is unknown how Cabrillo gained knowledge of shipbuilding, by the time he was in the New World, he had become a master of the profession, including being recognized as having one of the best fleet on the Pacific.

Maritime Museum of San Diego's *San Salvador* ©, illustrated by Bruce Drago



The Maritime Museum of San Diego is building a full-sized, fully functional, and historically accurate replica of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo's flagship, *San Salvador*. This sketch, by artist Bruce Drago, is based on the research that will inform the reconstruction project. <http://www.sdmaritime.org/san-salvador/>

Model of a Sixteenth-Century Ship, Cross Section



This illustration, which appears in the Cabrillo National Monument exhibit, gives an interior view of the construction of a ship. Note that the shape is similar to the reconstruction model of the *San Salvador*.



This illustration from the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (properly known as *Liber Cronicarum*, 1493) shows men at work building Noah's Ark. Drawn during Cabrillo's time, it gives some idea of the skills, labor, and collaborative process involved in shipbuilding.