Size of the Islands

As Columbus sails around the islands, he is amazed at their extent. As a frame of reference he uses the idea of traveling from Cologna to Fons Rabidus, as these points are at the opposite ends of the Spain-France border. If you traveled from one to the other by sea, you would circle most of the circumference of all Hispania, which Columbus estimates is shorter than the circumference of the island of Hispana. He has claimed all the lands for the king, but he takes a village for himself and builds a fortress there. (See map on p. xx.)

Dixi, quemadmodum sum progressus antea insulam Iohanam per rectum tramitem occasus in orientem miliaria CCCXXII. Secundum quam viam et intervallum itineris: possum dicere hanc Iohanam esse maiorem Anglia et Scotia simul.

Namque ultra dicta CCCXXII passuum milia in ea parte, quae ad occidentem prospectat, duae (quas non petivi) supersunt provinciae, quarum alteram Indi Avan vocant. Cuius accolae caudati nascuntur. Tendentur in longitudinem ad miliaria CLXXX, ut ab his, quos veho mecum, Indis percepi, qui omnis has callent insulas.

Hispanae vero ambitus maior est tota Hispania a Cologna usque ad Fontem Rabidum; hincque facile arguitur quod quartum eius latus, quod ipse per rectam lineam occidentis in orientem traieci, miliaria continet DLXLLLL.

Haec insula est affectanda, et affectata non spernenda. In qua—etsi aliarum omnium, ut dixi, pro invictissimo Rege nostro solemniter possessionem accepi, earumque

imperium dicto Regi penitus committitur—in opportuniori tamen loco atque omni lucro et commercio condecenti cuiusdam magnae villae, cui Nativitatis Domini nomen dedimus, possessionem peculiariter accepi, ibique arcem quandam erigere extemplo iussi, quae modo iam debet esse peracta. In qua homines, qui necessarii sunt visi, cum omni armorum genere et ultra annum victu oportuno reliqui.

Vocabulary

accol•a –ae *m/f* inhabitant, neighbor
affect•o (1) to desire, lay claim to
ambitus ambitus *m* circumference
argu•o –ere –i –tum to prove, demonstrate
call•eo –ere –ui to be experienced, hardened, know
caudat•us –a –um *adj* possessing a tail
Cologn•a –ae *f* Colibre (Spanish *Colivre*; modern French *Collioure*)
condec•eo –ere to be proper for, fitting, suitable
erig•o –ere erexi erectum to build, erect
Fo•ns Rabid•us –ntis –i Fuenterrabia (Spanish *Fuenterravia*), a fishing village in the Basque country near the border of France
lucr•um –i *n* profit
nasc•or –i natus *dep* to be born, emerge
opportun•us –a –um *adj* suitable, convenient (note, Columbus spells with one *p*)
peculiariter *adv* in a personal or singular manner
penitus *adv* thoroughly
percip•io –ere percepi perceptum to learn, perceive
simul *adv* at the same time
spern•o –ere sprevi spretum to scorn
super•sum –esse –fui –futurum to survive, be left over
victus victus *m* provision