

Thirteenth Edition

The **AMERICAN SPIRIT**



David M. Kennedy
Thomas A. Bailey

The American Spirit

Selected and Edited with
Introduction and Commentary by

David M. Kennedy

Stanford University

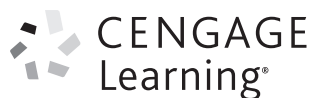
Thomas A. Bailey

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United States History
as Seen by Contemporaries

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**The American Spirit, United States History
as Seen by Contemporaries,
Thirteenth Edition**

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Art and Cover Direction, Production
Management, and Composition: Cenveo®
Publisher Services

Manufacturing Planner: Sandee Milewski

Cover Image: Andrea Gingerich/Vetta/Getty
Images

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WCN: 02-200-203

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2014945090

ISBN: 978-1-305-10177-7

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Boston, MA 02210
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Printed in the United States of America

Print Number: 01

Print Year: 2015

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Thomas A. Bailey (1903–1983) taught history for nearly forty years at Stanford University, his alma mater. Long regarded as one of the nation's leading historians of American diplomacy, he was honored by his colleagues in 1968 with election to the presidencies of both the Organization of American Historians and the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations. He was the author, editor, or coeditor of some twenty books, but the work in which he took most pride was *The American Pageant* through which, he liked to say, he had taught American history to several million students.



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Preface

The documents collected in *The American Spirit* are meant to recapture the spirit of the American past as expressed by the men and women who lived it. Movers and shakers who tried to sculpt the contours of history share these pages with the humble folk whose lives were grooved by a course of events they sometimes only dimly understood, and not infrequently resented. In all cases, I have tried to present clear and pungent documents that combine intrinsic human interest with instructive historical perspectives. Students in American history courses will discover in these selections the satisfaction of working with primary documents—the raw human record from which meaningful historical accounts are assembled.

Taken together, the readings in the pages that follow convey a vivid sense of the wonder and the woe, the passion and the perplexity, with which Americans have confronted their lives and their times. *The American Spirit* seeks especially to stimulate reflection on the richness, variety, and complexity of American history. It also seeks to cultivate an appreciation of both the problems and the prejudices of people in the past. Accordingly, it devotes much attention to the clash of opinions and values, including the unpopular or unsuccessful side of controversial issues. It gives special emphasis to problems of social justice, including the plight of religious, ethnic, and racial minorities; the evolving status of women; the problems of the poor; the health of the American political system; environmental controversies; the responsibilities of world power; and the ongoing debate about the meaning of democracy itself.

I have revised this thirteenth edition of *The American Spirit* to make it fully compatible with its companion text, the sixteenth edition of *The American Pageant*. Every chapter in the *Pageant* has a corresponding chapter of the same title and scope in the *Spirit*. Instructors and students may use the two books together if they choose, but the chronological organization of the *Spirit* and its extensive explanatory materials make it usable with virtually any American history text. It may also be read on its own. Prologues for each chapter, headnotes for each document, explanatory inserts, and questions at the end of each headnote and at the end of every chapter will guide students in learning to appraise the documents thoughtfully and critically.

In many chapters, readers will find visual materials—cartoons, paintings, posters, charts, and tables, for example—that are treated as documents in their own right, fully equivalent in their evidentiary value and their historical interest to the more traditional verbal texts. These visual documents are here presented with the same kind of explanatory and other editorial apparatus that frames the conventional texts. It is my hope that students will thereby be encouraged to interrogate the past in new ways—not only by analyzing the written record, but by developing a critical attitude toward other kinds of historical evidence as well.

Like the sixteenth edition of *The American Pageant*, this edition of *The American Spirit* has been substantially revised to emphasize the interaction of social, economic, and cultural developments with political history. I have given special attention to identifying new documents that reflect the global context in which the American story has played out. Recent editions have incorporated much new material on Native Americans, the slave trade, indentured servants in the colonial era, disputes over governance and authority in the Revolutionary period, the environmental consequences of settlement and industrialization, the westward movement, women's history, diplomatic relations with Latin America and Asia, controversies about immigration, espionage in the Cold War era, the Reagan, Clinton, and both Bush presidencies, and the moral, religious, and political dilemmas confronting modern American society. In addition to those items, the current edition contains many new documents chosen to illustrate the ways in which Americans in past generations took sides—often bitterly opposed sides—in a variety of social, cultural, and political conflicts. In order to help students understand the American past in a global context, this edition also contains many sources that reflect international influences on American behavior, and tables comparing American economic and demographic trends with those in other countries.

In response to suggestions from users, I have made this edition considerably briefer than previous editions, consolidating it into a convenient single-volume format while still covering the full span of American history. Many lengthier documents have been eliminated, and I have compressed others so that their essential significance might be more accessible and useful to students. All this effort has been made with the help of Andy Hammann, whose grace and initiative have been indispensable.

The result of these revisions, I hope, is an up-to-date and more provocative *Spirit* whose documents will enable students to savor the taste and to feel the texture of the American past, while engaging themselves in its frequently emotional and sometimes explosive controversies and also coming to understand something of the planetary stage on which the American drama has unfolded.

D. M. K.
Stanford, California

New World Beginnings, 33,000 B.C.–A.D. 1769

... May it not then be lawful now to attempt the possession of such lands as are void of Christian inhabitants, for Christ's sake?

William Strachey, c. 1620

Prologue: Each ignorant of the other's existence, Native Americans and Europeans lived in isolation on their separate continents for millennia before Columbus's revolutionary voyage in 1492. For the Europeans, the Native Americans were both a wonder and a mystery, unexplained in either the Bible or the classical writings of the ancients that were being revived in the dawning age of the Renaissance. Learned European scholars earnestly debated whether the "Indians" were "true men." For their part, the Native Americans were no less baffled by the arrival of the Europeans, and they looked to their own folklore and traditions in order to understand this new race of people who had suddenly appeared among them. The Europeans, especially the Portuguese and the Spanish, had begun to penetrate and exploit Africa even before they made contact with the New World of the Americas. A fateful triangle was established as Europe drew slave labor from Africa to unlock and develop the riches of the Americas. Spain soon spread its empire over a vast American domain, exciting the jealousy of the English, who began in the late 1500s to launch their own imperial adventure in the New World.

A. The Native Americans

1. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda Belittles the Indians (1547)*

Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda was an outstanding example of the "Renaissance man." A Spaniard who studied in the cradle of the Renaissance, Italy, he achieved fame as a theologian, philosopher, historian, and astronomer. When Emperor Charles V convened a debate in Valladolid, Spain, in 1550–1551 to determine the future of Spain's relationship with the American aborigines, he naturally turned to Sepúlveda as one of the most learned men in his realm. As a student of Aristotle, Sepúlveda relied heavily on the classical distinction between "civilized" Greeks and "barbarians." The selection that follows is not a transcript of the debate at Valladolid but an excerpt

*From *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America*, by Lewis Hanke, pp. 122–123. Copyright © 1949 The University of Pennsylvania Press. Reprinted with permission of the University of Pennsylvania Press.

from Sepúlveda's book The Second Democrates, published in 1547, in which he set forth his basic arguments. What differences does Sepúlveda emphasize between Europeans (especially Spaniards) and the Indians, and on what grounds does he assert the superiority of European culture?

The Spanish have a perfect right to rule these barbarians of the New World and the adjacent islands, who in prudence, skill, virtues, and humanity are as inferior to the Spanish as children to adults, or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference as between savage and cruel races and the most merciful, between the most intemperate and the moderate and temperate and, I might even say, between apes and men.

You surely do not expect me to recall at length the prudence and talents of the Spanish. . . . And what can I say of the gentleness and humanity of our people, who, even in battle, after having gained the victory, put forth their greatest effort and care to save the greatest possible number of the conquered and to protect them from the cruelty of their allies?

Compare, then, these gifts of prudence, talent, magnanimity, temperance, humanity, and religion with those possessed by these half-men (*bomunculi*), in whom you will barely find the vestiges of humanity, who not only do not possess any learning at all, but are not even literate or in possession of any monument to their history except for some obscure and vague reminiscences of several things put down in various paintings; nor do they have written laws, but barbarian institutions and customs. Well, then, if we are dealing with virtue, what temperance or mercy can you expect from men who are committed to all types of intemperance and base frivolity, and eat human flesh? And do not believe that before the arrival of the Christians they lived in that pacific kingdom of Saturn which the poets have invented; for, on the contrary, they waged continual and ferocious war upon one another with such fierceness that they did not consider a victory at all worthwhile unless they sated their monstrous hunger with the flesh of their enemies. . . . Furthermore these Indians were otherwise so cowardly and timid that they could barely endure the presence of our soldiers, and many times thousands upon thousands of them scattered in flight like women before Spaniards so few that they did not even number one hundred. . . . Although some of them show a certain ingenuity for various works of artisanship, this is no proof of human cleverness, for we can observe animals, birds, and spiders making certain structures which no human accomplishment can competently imitate. And as for the way of life of the inhabitants of New Spain and the province of Mexico, I have already said that these people are considered the most civilized of all, and they themselves take pride in their public institutions, because they have cities erected in a rational manner and kings who are not hereditary but elected by popular vote, and among themselves they carry on commercial activities in the manner of civilized peoples. But see how they deceive themselves, and how much I dissent from such an opinion, seeing, on the contrary, in these very institutions a proof of the crudity, the barbarity, and the natural slavery of these people; for having houses and some rational way of life and some sort of commerce is a thing which the necessities of nature itself induce, and only serves to prove that they are not bears or monkeys and are not totally lacking

in reason. But on the other hand, they have established their nation in such a way that no one possesses anything individually, neither a house nor a field, which he can leave to his heirs in his will, for everything belongs to their masters whom, with improper nomenclature, they call kings, and by whose whims they live, more than by their own, ready to do the bidding and desire of these rulers and possessing no liberty. And the fulfillment of all this, not under the pressure of arms but in a voluntary and spontaneous way, is a definite sign of the servile and base soul of these barbarians. They have distributed the land in such a way that they themselves cultivate the royal and public holdings, one part belonging to the king, another to public feasts and sacrifices, with only a third reserved for their own advantage, and all this is done in such a way that they live as employees of the king, paying, thanks to him, exceedingly high taxes. . . . And if this type of servile and barbarous nation had not been to their liking and nature, it would have been easy for them, as it was not a hereditary monarchy, to take advantage of the death of a king in order to obtain a freer state and one more favorable to their interests; by not doing so, they have stated quite clearly that they have been born to slavery and not to civic and liberal life. Therefore, if you wish to reduce them, I do not say to our domination, but to a servitude a little less harsh, it will not be difficult for them to change their masters, and instead of the ones they had, who were barbarous and impious and inhuman, to accept the Christians, cultivators of human virtues and the true faith.

2. *Bartolomé de Las Casas Defends the Indians (1552)**

*The Dominican friar Bartolomé de Las Casas was Sepúlveda's great antagonist in the debates of 1550–1551 at Valladolid. As a young man, Las Casas had sailed with one of the first Spanish expeditions to the West Indies in 1502. A humane, sensitive priest, he was soon repelled by his countrymen's treatment of the native peoples of the New World. He eventually became bishop of Guatemala and devoted himself to reforming Spanish colonial policies, for which he was recognized as the "Protector of the Indians." His vivid and polemical account *The Destruction of the Indies* did much to spread the "Black Legend" of Spain's brutal behavior in the New World—a legend not without substance, and eagerly exploited by the rival English. How are his views of the Indians different from those of Sepúlveda? What ideas did the two debaters share?*

Now if we shall have shown that among our Indians of the western and southern shores (granting that we call them barbarians and that they are barbarians) there are important kingdoms, large numbers of people who live settled lives in a society, great cities, kings, judges and laws, persons who engage in commerce, buying, selling, lending, and the other contracts of the law of nations, will it not stand proved that the Reverend Doctor Sepúlveda has spoken wrongly and viciously against peoples like these, either out of malice or ignorance of Aristotle's teaching, and, therefore, has falsely and perhaps irreparably slandered them before the entire world? From the fact that the Indians are barbarians it does not necessarily follow that they

*From *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America*, by Lewis Hanke, pp. 121–126. Copyright © 1949 The University of Pennsylvania Press. Reprinted with permission of the University of Pennsylvania Press.

are incapable of government and have to be ruled by others, except to be taught about the Catholic faith and to be admitted to the holy sacraments. They are not ignorant, inhuman, or bestial. Rather, long before they had heard the word Spaniard they had properly organized states, wisely ordered by excellent laws, religion, and custom. They cultivated friendship and, bound together in common fellowship, lived in populous cities in which they wisely administered the affairs of both peace and war justly and equitably, truly governed by laws that at very many points surpass ours, and could have won the admiration of the sages of Athens. . . .

Now if they are to be subjugated by war because they are ignorant of polished literature, . . . I would like to hear Sepúlveda, in his cleverness, answer this question: Does he think that the war of the Romans against the Spanish was justified in order to free them from barbarism? And this question also: Did the Spanish wage an unjust war when they vigorously defended themselves against them?

Next, I call the Spaniards who plunder that unhappy people torturers. Do you think that the Romans, once they had subjugated the wild and barbaric peoples of Spain, could with secure right divide all of you among themselves, handing over so many head of both males and females as allotments to individuals? And do you then conclude that the Romans could have stripped your rulers of their authority and consigned all of you, after you had been deprived of your liberty, to wretched labors, especially in searching for gold and silver lodes and mining and refining the metals? . . . For God's sake and man's faith in him, is this the way to impose the yoke of Christ on Christian men? Is this the way to remove wild barbarism from the minds of barbarians? Is it not, rather, to act like thieves, cut-throats, and cruel plunderers and to drive the gentlest of people headlong into despair? The Indian race is not that barbaric, nor are they dull witted or stupid, but they are easy to teach and very talented in learning all the liberal arts, and very ready to accept, honor, and observe the Christian religion and correct their sins (as experience has taught) once priests have introduced them to the sacred mysteries and taught them the word of God. They have been endowed with excellent conduct, and before the coming of the Spaniards, as we have said, they had political states that were well founded on beneficial laws.

Furthermore, they are so skilled in every mechanical art that with every right they should be set ahead of all the nations of the known world on this score, so very beautiful in their skill and artistry are the things this people produces in the grace of its architecture, its painting, and its needlework. But Sepúlveda despises these mechanical arts, as if these things do not reflect inventiveness, ingenuity, industry, and right reason. For a mechanical art is an operative habit of the intellect that is usually defined as "the right way to make things, directing the acts of the reason, through which the artisan proceeds in orderly fashion, easily, and unerringly in the very act of reason." So these men are not stupid, Reverend Doctor. Their skillfully fashioned works of superior refinement awaken the admiration of all nations, because works proclaim a man's talent, for, as the poet says, the work commends the craftsman. Also, Prosper [of Aquitaine] says: "See, the maker is proclaimed by the wonderful signs of his works and the effects, too, sing of their author."

In the liberal arts that they have been taught up to now, such as grammar and logic, they are remarkably adept. With every kind of music they charm the ears of

their audience with wonderful sweetness. They write skillfully and quite elegantly, so that most often we are at a loss to know whether the characters are handwritten or printed. . . .

The Indians are our brothers, and Christ has given his life for them. Why, then, do we persecute them with such inhuman savagery when they do not deserve such treatment? The past, because it cannot be undone, must be attributed to our weakness, provided that what has been taken unjustly is restored.

Finally, let all savagery and apparatus of war, which are better suited to Moslems than Christians, be done away with. Let upright heralds be sent to proclaim Jesus Christ in their way of life and to convey the attitudes of Peter and Paul. [The Indians] will embrace the teaching of the gospel, as I well know, for they are not stupid or barbarous but have a native sincerity and are simple, moderate, and meek, and, finally, such that I do not know whether there is any people readier to receive the gospel. Once they have embraced it, it is marvelous with what piety, eagerness, faith, and charity they obey Christ's precepts and venerate the sacraments. For they are docile and clever, and in their diligence and gifts of nature, they excel most peoples of the known world.

B. *The Spanish in America*

1. *Hernán Cortés Conquers Mexico (1519–1526)**

In 1519 the Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés landed in Mexico and quickly conquered the Aztecs, a powerful people who had long dominated their neighbors in the central Mexican highlands. In the passage below, Cortés, writing to his king in Spain, describes his first encounter with the Aztec ruler Moctezuma, as well as his efforts to suppress the religious practices of the Aztecs, especially those involving human sacrifice. What advantages did Cortés possess in his confrontation with the Aztecs? How did his own cultural background influence his treatment of the native people?

The Second Letter

The Second Despatch of Hernán Cortés to the Emperor: Sent from Segura de la Frontera on the 30th of October, 1520.

Very Great and Powerful, and Very Catholic Prince, Most Invincible Emperor, Our Lord . . .

We were received by that lord, Montezuma, with about two hundred chiefs, all barefooted, and dressed in a kind of livery, very rich, according to their custom, and some more so than others. They approached in two processions near the walls of the street, which is very broad, and straight, and beautiful, and very uniform from one end to the other, being about two thirds of a league long, and having, on both sides, very large houses, both dwelling places, and mosques. . . . When

*Fernando Cortes, *His Five Letters of Relation to the Emperor Charles V*, vol. 1, trans. Francis Augustus MacNutt (Cleveland, OH: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1908), 233–236, 260–262.

I approached to speak to Montezuma, I took off a collar of pearls and glass diamonds, that I wore, and put it on his neck, and, after we had gone through some of the streets, one of his servants came with two collars, wrapped in a cloth, which were made of coloured shells. These they esteem very much; and from each of the collars hung eight golden shrimps executed with great perfection and a span long. When he received them, he turned towards me, and put them on my neck, and again went on through the streets, as I have already indicated, until we came to a large and handsome house, which he had prepared for our reception. There he took me by the hand, and led me into a spacious room, in front of the court where we had entered, where he made me sit on a very rich platform, which had been ordered to be made for him, and told me to wait there; and then he went away.

After a little while, when all the people of my company were distributed to their quarters, he returned with many valuables of gold and silver work, and five or six thousand pieces of rich cotton stuffs, woven, and embroidered in divers ways.

Within this great mosque, there are three halls wherein stand the principal idols of marvellous grandeur in size, and much decorated with carved figures, both of stone and wood; and within these halls there are other chapels, entered by very small doors, and which have no light, and nobody but the religious are admitted to them. Within these are the images and figures of the idols, although, as I have said, there are many outside.

The principal idols in which they have the most faith and belief I overturned from their seats, and rolled down the stairs, and I had those chapels, where they kept them, cleansed, for they were full of blood from the sacrifices; and I set up images of Our Lady, and other Saints in them, which grieved Montezuma, and the natives not a little. At first they told me not to do it, for, if it became known throughout the town, the people would rise against me, as they believed that these idols gave them all their temporal goods, and, in allowing them to be ill-treated, they would be angered, and give nothing, and would take away all the fruits of the soil, and cause the people to die of want. I made them understand by the interpreters how deceived they were in putting their hope in idols, made of unclean things by their own hands, and I told them that they should know there was but one God, the Universal Lord of all, who had created the heavens, and earth, and all things else, and them, and us, who was without beginning, and immortal; that they should adore, and believe in Him, and not in any creature, or thing. I told them all I knew of these matters, so as to win them from their idolatries, and bring them to a knowledge of God, Our Lord; and all of them, especially Montezuma, answered that they had already told me they were not natives of this country, and that it was a long time since their forefathers had come to it, therefore they might err in some points of their belief, as it was so long since they left their native land, whilst I, who had recently arrived, should know better than they what they should believe, and hold; and if I would tell them, and explain to them, they would do what I told them, as being for the best. Montezuma and many chiefs of the city remained with me until the idols were taken away and the chapels cleansed, and the images put up, and they all wore happy faces. I forbade them to sacrifice human beings to the idols, as they were accustomed to do, for besides its being very hateful to God, Your Majesty had also prohibited it by your laws, and commanded that those who killed should

be put to death. Henceforth they abolished it, and, in all the time I remained in the city, never again were they seen to sacrifice any human creature.

The figures of the idols, in which those people believe, exceed in size the body of a large man. They are made of a mass of all the seeds and vegetables which they eat, ground up and mixed with one another, and kneaded with the hearts' blood of human beings, whose breasts are opened when alive, the hearts being removed, and, with the blood which comes out, is kneaded the flour, making the quantity necessary to construct a great statue. When these are finished the priests offer them more hearts, which have likewise been sacrificed, and besmear the faces with the blood. The idols are dedicated to different things, as was the custom of the heathen who anciently honoured their gods. Thus, to obtain favours in war these people have one idol, for harvests another, and for everything in which they desire any good, they have idols whom they honour and serve.

2. Aztec Chroniclers Describe the Spanish Conquest of Mexico (1519)*

The Spanish Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sabagún arrived in Mexico in 1529, swiftly mastered the indigenous language Nahuatl, and proceeded to gather from his Aztec informants a history of their civilization. In the selection that follows, one of Sabagún's witnesses describes the encounter between Moctezuma and Cortés from the Aztec perspective. How does this account differ, either factually or interpretively, from Cortés's description?

The Spaniards arrived in Xoloco, near the entrance to Tenochtitlan. That was the end of the march, for they had reached their goal.

Motecuhzoma now arrayed himself in his finery, preparing to go out to meet them. The other great princes also adorned their persons, as did the nobles and their chieftains and knights. They all went out together to meet the strangers.

They brought trays heaped with the finest flowers—the flower that resembles a shield; the flower shaped like a heart; in the center, the flower with the sweetest aroma; and the fragrant yellow flower, the most precious of all. They also brought garlands of flowers, and ornaments for the breast, and necklaces of gold, necklaces hung with rich stones, necklaces fashioned in the petatillo style.

Thus Motecuhzoma went out to meet them, there in Huitzillan. He presented many gifts to the Captain and his commanders, those who had come to make war. He showered gifts upon them and hung flowers around their necks; he gave them necklaces of flowers and bands of flowers to adorn their breasts; he set garlands of flowers upon their heads. Then he hung the gold necklaces around their necks and gave them presents of every sort as gifts of welcome.

When Motecuhzoma had given necklaces to each one, Cortes asked him: “Are you Motecuhzoma? Are you the king? Is it true that you are the king Motecuhzoma?”

*From *The Broken Spears* by Miguel Leon-Portilla. © 1962, 1990 by Miguel Leon-Portilla. Expanded and Updated Edition © 1992 by Miguel Leon-Portilla.

And the king said: “Yes, I am Motecuhzoma.” Then he stood up to welcome Cortes; he came forward, bowed his head low and addressed him in these words: “Our lord, you are weary. The journey has tired you, but now you have arrived on the earth. You have come to your city, Mexico. You have come here to sit on your throne, to sit under its canopy.

“The kings who have gone before, your representatives, guarded it and preserved it for your coming. The kings Itzcoatl, Motecuhzoma the Elder, Axayacatl, Tizoc and Ahuitzol ruled for you in the City of Mexico. The people were protected by their swords and sheltered by their shields.

“Do the kings know the destiny of those they left behind, their posterity? If only they are watching! If only they can see what I see!

“No, it is not a dream. I am not walking in my sleep. I am not seeing you in my dreams. . . . I have seen you at last! I have met you face to face! I was in agony for five days, for ten days, with my eyes fixed on the Region of the Mystery. And now you have come out of the clouds and mists to sit on your throne again.

“This was foretold by the kings who governed your city, and now it has taken place. You have come back to us; you have come down from the sky. Rest now, and take possession of your royal houses. Welcome to your land, my lords!”

When Motecuhzoma had finished, La Malinche translated his address into Spanish so that the Captain could understand it. Cortes replied in his strange and savage tongue, speaking first to La Malinche: “Tell Motecuhzoma that we are his friends. There is nothing to fear. We have wanted to see him for a long time, and now we have seen his face and heard his words. Tell him that we love him well and that our hearts are contented.”

Then he said to Motecuhzoma: “We have come to your house in Mexico as friends. There is nothing to fear.”

La Malinche translated this speech and the Spaniards grasped Motecuhzoma’s hands and patted his back to show their affection for him. . . .

The Spaniards examined everything they saw. They dismounted from their horses, and mounted them again, and dismounted again, so as not to miss anything of interest. . . .

When the Spaniards entered the Royal House, they placed Motecuhzoma under guard and kept him under their vigilance. They also placed a guard over Itzcuahtzin, but the other lords were permitted to depart.

Then the Spaniards fired one of their cannons, and this caused great confusion in the city. The people scattered in every direction; they fled without rhyme or reason; they ran off as if they were being pursued. It was as if they had eaten the mushrooms that confuse the mind, or had seen some dreadful apparition. They were all overcome by terror, as if their hearts had fainted. And when night fell, the panic spread through the city and their fears would not let them sleep.

In the morning the Spaniards told Motecuhzoma what they needed in the way of supplies: tortillas, fried chickens, hens’ eggs, pure water, firewood and charcoal. Also: large, clean cooking pots, water jars, pitchers, dishes and other pottery. Motecuhzoma ordered that it be sent to them. The chiefs who received this

order were angry with the king and no longer revered or respected him. But they furnished the Spaniards with all the provisions they needed—food, beverages and water, and fodder for the horses. . . .

The Aztecs begged permission of their king to hold the fiesta of Huitzilopochtli. The Spaniards wanted to see this fiesta to learn how it was celebrated. A delegation of the celebrants came to the palace where Motecuhzoma was a prisoner, and when their spokesman asked his permission, he granted it to them. . . .

On the evening before the fiesta of Toxcatl, the celebrants began to model a statue of Huitzilopochtli. They gave it such a human appearance that it seemed the body of a living man. Yet they made the statue with nothing but a paste made of the ground seeds of the chicalote, which they shaped over an armature of sticks.

When the statue was finished, they dressed it in rich feathers, and they painted crossbars over and under its eyes. They also clipped on its earrings of turquoise mosaic; these were in the shape of serpents, with gold rings hanging from them. Its nose plug, in the shape of an arrow, was made of gold and was inlaid with fine stones.

They placed the magic headdress of hummingbird feathers on its head. They also adorned it with an *anecuyotl*, which was a belt made of feathers, with a cone at the back. Then they hung around its neck an ornament of yellow parrot feathers, fringed like the locks of a young boy. Over this they put its nettle-leaf cape, which was painted black and decorated with five clusters of eagle feathers.

Next they wrapped it in its cloak, which was painted with skulls and bones, and over this they fastened its vest. The vest was painted with dismembered human parts: skulls, ears, hearts, intestines, torsos, breasts, hands and feet. They also put on its *maxtlatl*, or loincloth, which was decorated with images of severed limbs and fringed with amate paper. This *maxtlatl* was painted with vertical stripes of bright blue.

They fastened a red paper flag at its shoulder and placed on its head what looked like a sacrificial flint knife. This too was made of red paper; it seemed to have been steeped in blood.

The statue carried a *tebuehuelli*, a bamboo shield decorated with four clusters of fine eagle feathers. The pendant of this shield was blood-red, like the knife and the shoulder flag. The statue also carried four arrows.

Finally, they put the wristbands on its arms. These bands, made of coyote skin, were fringed with paper cut into little strips.

Early the next morning, the statue's face was uncovered by those who had been chosen for that ceremony. They gathered in front of the idol in single file and offered it gifts of food, such as round seedcakes or perhaps human flesh. But they did not carry it up to its temple on top of the pyramid.

All the young warriors were eager for the fiesta to begin. They had sworn to dance and sing with all their hearts, so that the Spaniards would marvel at the beauty of the rituals.

The procession began, and the celebrants filed into the temple patio to dance the Dance of the Serpent. When they were all together in the patio, the songs and