

# The spanish conquest of mexico



On analyzing the Spanish conquest of Mexico, it is important to refer to the primary sources above all because they provide a researcher with detailed factual information about the Spanish conquest, which is provided by eyewitnesses of the conquest. In this respect, it is possible to refer to Hernan Cortes' Letters from Mexico. In fact, in his letters, Hernan Cortes conveys the narration from the first person that creates the impression of a historical chronicle being written down by the witness of the events described by the narrator. In such a way, Hernan Cortes conveys the description of the Spanish conquest of Mexico as the leader of the Spanish army confronting the enemy in a hostile country. In this respect, it is worth mentioning the fact that Hernan Cortes presented the Spanish conquest of Mexico as a heroic struggle of a small army of Spaniards against huge armies of aggressive and hostile enemies. In such a context, Hernan Cortes attempts to show his leadership and talent as a commander-in-chief. In contrast, Aztecs are presented as hostile, hypocritical and deceitful opponents, who were worth slaughtering down as enemies of Christians.

In this regard, the general line of the narration conveyed by Hernan Cortes is supported by Bernal Diaz in his Seven Myths of the Spanish Conquest. At this point, it is worth mentioning the fact that Bernal Diaz describes Spaniards' entering Mexico headed by Hernan Cortes. The narrator describes events as an eyewitness, who saw what happened and attempted to reveal the truth to other, who were not present on the spot. At the same time, the narrator presents the history in a one-sided way because he apparently stands on the Spaniards' ground. Bernal Diaz tends to depict Aztecs and their leader as hostile, who attempted to provoke the conflict with Spaniards from the very

beginning. In contrast, Bernal Diaz depicts Spaniards as friendly people, who brought the enlightenment and assistance to Aztecs. In such a way, the author shows that Spaniards were practically forced to launch the violent actions against Aztecs. At the same time, it is obvious that the author is quite subjective in the description of historical events he witnessed in the time of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. He attempts to highlight the positive aspects of the Spanish conquest and create a positive image of Spaniards, whereas Aztecs were depicted in dark color as hostile and dangerous enemies of Spaniards and opponents of Christianity.

Obviously, the aforementioned primary sources provide the detailed but very subjective information of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. In this regard, it is important to refer to secondary sources, which help to understand better the essence, reasons and effects of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. In fact, secondary sources tend to the critical analysis and evaluation of events described in the primary sources as well as artifacts, historical findings and other sources, where they get the information from. As a result, they do not just gather the information about the conquest of Mexico but they analyze critically all the information available to them. For instance, *Seven Myths of Spanish Conquest* confronts the history and myth, which the author finds in primary sources and other historical evidence related to the Spanish conquest of Mexico. *Seven Myths of Spanish Conquest* attempt to debunk myths created by Spaniards, such as Hernan Cortes and Bernal Diaz in their primary sources. The author evaluates critically all facts and information conveyed by eyewitnesses of the Spanish conquest of Mexico and reveals inconsistencies in their evidences with reasonable analysis and evaluation of

resources of Aztecs, artifacts found in Mexico and objective analysis of the conquest and actions of Spaniards in the course of the conquest.

At the same time, Inga Clendinnen reveals the cruelty of the Spanish conquest and the inhuman attitude of Spaniards toward the native population of Mexico, whom they treated as mere brutes rather than humans equal to them. What is more important, Inga Clendinnen places emphasis on the fact that the cruelty of Spaniards was unmotivated and unjust in relation to the native population of Mexico. The author focuses on the study of actions of Spaniards and attempts to compare the reasons for use force and the extent to which violent actions of Spaniards were justified. The author shows that primary sources present the information about the Spanish conquest of America in a highly subjective way. As the matter of fact, Spaniards were extremely cruel and aimed at the invasion of Mexico even at cost of the physical elimination of Aztecs and other Native Americans inhabiting the territory of Mexico.

Thus, taking into account all above mentioned, it is important to place emphasis on the fact that the Spanish conquest of Mexico was a complex process, which involved a number of controversies. Primary sources provide researchers with quite subjective information because primary sources are Spanish sources mainly. Therefore, they present Spaniards as heroes struggling for the Spanish crown and Christian faith, whereas Native Americans are depicted as aggressive and bloodthirsty savages, who represented a serious threat to Spaniards. In contrast, secondary resources help to reveal inconsistencies in eyewitnesses of primary sources. On the other hand, they have scarce information and need to use complex analysis

to make reasonable and objective conclusions about the Spanish conquest of Mexico.