38. There is little evidence to support this accusation. Bernal Díaz (chap. 3), records finding obscene images at Cozumel. Oviedo (bk. V, chap. 3) speaks of homosexual slaves in Panama and in Yucatan (bk. XVII, chap. 17) and Torquemada (bk. XII, chap. 11), mentions instances of homosexuality in Guatemala. It seems, however, to have been severely punished in most areas. The lord of the Xius was said to have thrown all offenders into a furnace (Landa, p. 124, n. 576).

39. The conspirators had intended to steal a ship and return to Cuba so that Velázquez might be warned in time to prevent Puertocarrero and Montejo from reaching Spain. Bernardino de Coria revealed the plot to Cortés, who promptly hung two of the conspirators, Juan Escudero and Diego Cermeño (Bernal Díaz calls them Pedro and Juan) and cut the feet off a third, the pilot Gonzalo de Umbría [Ungría]. Two sailors were flogged, but Juan Díaz, who had been Grijalva's chaplain, was in orders and could not be touched. This is Díaz's version (chap. 57) but the others differ only slightly (see Torquemada, bk. IV, chap. 25; Cervantes de Salazar, bk. III, chap. 21; and Oviedo, bk. XXXIII, chap. 2).

40. Diego Velázquez was responsible for distributing the Indians to the settlers to be held in *encomienda*. This system of enforced labor first came into being as a means to evade the laws against slavery. It was essentially a compromise by the Crown, which was torn between its Christian conscience on the one hand and economic pressures on the other. The *encomienda* consisted of a group of villages *encomendados*, or entrusted, to individual Spaniards who undertook the obligations of military service, cared for the welfare and religious tutelage of their charges and maintained the local clergy. Villages not assigned to an *encomendero* were made over to the Crown. In the early days of Spanish colonialism the terms *encomienda* and *repartimiento* were used synonymously; later, however, when the *encomenderos* were forbidden to exact labor from their Indians, the *repartimiento* came into force as a distinct system whereby every village supplied to the settlers a certain number of laborers each week. They worked for a fixed wage and were supervised by a magistrate especially appointed for the task (see L. B. Simpson, *op. cit.*, and F. A. Kirkpatrick, "Repartimiento-Encomienda").

41. There are two extant copies of this list. The one I have translated is from the Vienna Codex. The other, entitled *Manuel del Tesorero*, is in the Archivo de Indias at Seville. The variations between the copies are only slight and would appear to be due to copyists' errors. They have not been recorded here but may be found in *CDHE*, I: 461–472, and, in translation, in Marshall H. Saville, *The Goldsmith's Art in Ancient Mexico*, pp. 21–31.

42. *Antiparas*. Saville translates as "leggings."

43. A small copper coin.

44. *Guariques*. See Oviedo, bk. XVII, chap. 13. They appear to have been circular earrings.

45. A measure of weight usually calculated at one half drachm or 179 centigrams, although in the sixteenth century there were considerable regional differences.

46. Not in the Vienna Codex.

47. Not in the Vienna Codex.

48. In place of the above two paragraphs the *Manuel del Tesorero* has: "Of all the aforementioned things, as they have come to us, we are sending with Domingo de Ochandiano, by virtue of a letter, about which His Majesty commanded us to write, dated in Molina del Rey on the fifth of December, 1519: and the aforementioned Domingo brought a decree from His Majesty in which he ordered that the abovementioned things should be entrusted to Luis Veret, Keeper of the Jewels of Their Majesties, together with a receipt from the abovementioned Luis Veret, which is in the power of the aforementioned treasurer."

Notes to the Second Letter

1. Culhuacan was one of the city-states which sprang up in the Mexican valley after the collapse of the Toltec empire about the middle of the twelfth century A.D. The city was supposedly founded by Mixcoatl, the chieftain who first brought the Tolteca to the central plateau, in A.D. 900. The capital, however, was soon moved to Tula, but when, in 1168, this fell to nomadic invaders from the north, Culhuacan claimed the position of ancestral capital, tracing its descent back to Quetzalcoatl himself as lord of Tula; and, although this claim was quite unfounded, it gave Culhuacan enormous prestige. In 1375 the Mexica, in an attempt to establish a dynastic link with the earlier cultures, elected Acamapichtli, son of the ruler of Culhuacan, as their king. From then on they chose to style themselves the Culhua-Mexica. Cortés, however, calls them "Culuans" and "Mexicans" indiscriminately. (Robert H. Barlow, "Some Remarks on the term 'Aztec Empire,'" pp. 346–349. R. C. Padden, *The Hummingbird and the Hawk*, pp. 5 ff. See also E. R. Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth*, pp. 21–129, for an account of Mesoamerican prehistory. For the later period see Friedrich Katz, "The Evolution of Aztec Society," a summary in English of the same author's *Die Sozialökonomischen Verhältnisse bei den Azteken im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert.*)

2. Tenochtitlan: the origin of the name is still a matter for dispute. One interpretation is *tetl*, "stone or rock," *nochtli*, "prickly pear (growing)"

and *titlan*, "near": "Near the prickly pear growing on a rock." Cooper Clark suggests *Tenoch*, the name of the founder of the city, and *titlan*, "in the place of": "In the place of Tenoch" (*Codex Mendoza*, II:1). The glyph is a stone and prickly pear (see George Kubler, "The name 'Tenochtitlan' ").

A mythogenetic legend tells of how Huitzilopochtli (see n. 66) came to a priest in a vision and commanded him to found a city where an eagle was found nesting in a *tunal* (Padden, *op. cit.*, pp. 61–62). Tenochtitlan was in fact a dual city, originally founded (in 1344 or 1345) as part of the older city of Tlatelolco, which has probably been in existence since the early Militarist period. As the two communities expanded, the boundaries between them disappeared, although Tlatelolco remained independent until an effort by the chieftain Moquihuix, in 1473, to gain control of Tenochtitlan was crushed by Axayacatl. Tlatelolco was then reduced to the status of a vassal state. The Tenocha "Prince of the House" became the ruler of the city and the famous marketplace was divided up among the Tenocha lords who each received a 20 per cent tax from the commerce done in their particular area (Robert H. Barlow, ed., *Anales de Tlatelolco*, pp. 3, 59; Wolf, *op. cit.*, p. 131. *Códice chimalpopoca*, pp. 55–56).

3. Motecuçoma II, surnamed Xocoyotzin, the Younger, the son of Axayacatl, was the ninth *Uei Tlatoani* of Mexico. He succeeded to the throne in 1503, and his brother Macuilmalinaltzin, a rival for the kingship, was chosen to be his successor. Motecuçoma, who was a priest of Huitzilopochtli, greatly extended the Mexica empire at the same time as he increased the power of the priesthood and brought about the rigid centralization of government that may have contributed to Cortés's success. The nature and extent of his achievements must, however, of necessity remain hypothetical. His name divides into *Mo*, "he" (reverential); *Tec* (*utli*), "a lord"; and *çoma*, "he is courageous," the ideograph for which is a wig (*tzontli*). His name may therefore be rendered as "Courageous Lord." *Xiuhuitzolli*, a turquoise diadem (the ruler's insignia) on a wig was his personal ideograph. He was the only Mexica ruler or *Uei Tlatoani* ("Great Speaker King") to bear the title *Tlacatectli* or "Master Judge" (see *Codex Mendoza*, I:42). I have chosen the spelling Motecuçoma, used by Sahagún in the Nahuatl version of his work, for this is probably the closest we can come to a correct phonetic transcription. In the text I have followed Cortés's orthography. Moctezuma is the common modern Spanish form, which in English has become Montezuma.

4. Accounts of the grounding of the ships vary. Bernal Díaz (chap. 58) says that it was done by consent of Cortés's supporters; Cervantes de Salazar (bk. III, chap. 22) says that he persuaded the pilots and masters to declare the ships unseaworthy. Five were grounded first and later four. Cortés then offered the remaining one to anybody who might still wish to return; no one accepted and it too was grounded. He did not burn his ships, a myth which seems to have originated in 1546 from another of Cervantes de Salazar's works (the dedication to Cortés of the "Diálogo de la dignidad del hombre," in *Obras que Francisco Cervantes de Salazar a hecho, glosado y traducido*, fol. 4), though he may have burned them later when all the tackle had been removed.

5. Juan de Escalante, *alguacil mayor* and lieutenant of Vera Cruz.

6. Nautla (Veracruz).

7. The Pánuco. Cortés also refers to the local chieftain as Pánuco.

8. Xicochimalco.

9. Ixhuacan.

10. Puerto de la Leña.

11. Most likely the modern Zautla. Gómara (p. 326) refers to it as Zaclotan and says that some Portuguese members of the expedition called it Castilblanco because it reminded them of a Portuguese town of that name. According to Wagner (p. 489, n. 17), by 1570 the name Castilblanco had been transferred to Ixtacamaxtitlan (see Bernal Díaz, chap. 61, and Cervantes de Salazar, bk. III, chap. 26). The chieftain's name was Olintetl, and he was so enormous the Spaniards dubbed him "The Shaker."

12. Ixtacamaxtitlan (Puebla).

13. Tlaxcala (probably "Land of Bread") was a province founded on the remains of the old Olmec civilization sometime in the thirteenth century A.D. The Tlaxcalteca were composed of three main ethnic groups, speaking Nahuatl, Otomi and Pinome. The Nahuas, however, soon established themselves as the dominant race, while the Otomis were ranged along the frontiers, much like march warriors. They were respected for their valor, much prized as captives by the Mexica but regarded as barbarians. The Pinomes probably became assimilated with the Otomis; they were the most backward of the three groups, and their name became a synonym for savage. Tlaxcala was divided into four confederated states, Tepeticpac, Ocotelolco, Tizatlan and Quiahuixtlan, each ruled by a *Tlatoani* (pl., *Tlatoque*) or "speaker." Matters of national importance were decided in conference, but in all other affairs the four states were autonomous. Most Amerindian states were organized on similar lines, a fact which the Spaniards, with their European notions of kingship, failed to understand for some time. When at last they did realize, the divided Indian state became a common feature of colonial rule (Charles Gibson, *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century*, pp. 89 ff.).

The relationship between the emergent Mexica empire and Tlaxcala was at first quite amicable. But Tlaxcala was wealthy—her riches derived from an extensive mercantile network that reached from coast to coast—and the Mexica soon began to make efforts to avail themselves of these resources by conquest. The Tlaxcalteca resisted, and despite their ever-diminishing power managed to remain independent, though hemmed in on all sides by dependencies of the empire. Finally, together with Cholula and Huexotzinco, Tlaxcala reached an agreement with Mexico whereby, on certain prearranged occasions, they fought staged battles known as *Xochiyaoyotl*, or "Flower Wars," with each other. The purpose of these wars was to provide sacrificial victims for the altars of the victors. They also served as a proving ground for young warriors and enabled the Mexica, who invited the chieftains of the "Enemies of the House," as they were called, to witness these sacrifices, to apply diplomatic pressure upon a people they had failed to defeat in war. An appearance of open hostility was maintained for the benefit of the common people, and neither side would have passed over an opportunity such as Cortés offered to overthrow the other.

Main sources for the history of preconquest Tlaxcala are Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Historia de Tlaxcala* (title varies) and the work of Tadeo de Niza, now lost, but used extensively by Ixtlilxóchitl for vol. II, chap. LXXXIII *et seq.* of the *Historia Chichimeca*. A complete bibliography may be found in Gibson, *op. cit.*, pp. 235–291.

14. Lorenzana in his edition of Cortés (pp. V–VIII) locates this wall at a place five or six leagues from Ixtacamaxtitlan, next to a hill called Atotonilco. Traces of it have been found at Peñon (Mitra) between Tlaxco and Terrenate (Gibson, *op. cit.*, pp. 7 ff.). It probably reached between these two points, a distance of some five miles. There were also similar border fortifications at Hueyotlipan and Cacaxtla, in the northwest and southeast respectively.

15. The javelin, or *tlacochtli*, was the most important of these weapons. It was made of cane wood with a flint or obsidian head and thrown by means of the *atlatl*, or throwing stick. Bows and arrows, slings and spears were also common; poisoned arrows, however, seem never to have been used by the Mexica. For fighting at close quarters, the Mexica warrior carried a *macuahuitl*. This was essentially a club three and a half to four feet long and four to five inches wide. It was set with rows of obsidian fragments so sharp that a member of Cortés's army is said to have had his horse decapitated by a single blow. Obsidian is very brittle, however, and was useless against Spanish armor, as the blades broke off after a few blows. Shields were made of bark or netted canes covered with cotton cloth and feathers (see Oviedo, bk. XLII, chap. 3). According to the Anonymous Conqueror they were so strong that only a crossbow bolt could penetrate them (translated by Patricia de Fuentes in *The Conquistadors*, p. 169). They wore a quilted cotton armor called *Ichcahuipilli*, which varied in length from a jacket to the full body covering mentioned by Alvarado in his second letter to Cortés from Guatemala (in De Fuentes, *op cit.*, p. 193). It consisted of cotton lengths soaked in brine and wound tightly around the body twenty times or more; the Spaniards found this so effective that they adopted it as both lighter and cooler than steel armor. (A. F. Bandelier, "Art of War and Mode of Warfare of the Ancient Mexicans"; George Vaillant, *The Aztecs of Mexico*, pp. 219–220. See also Alberto Mario Salas, *Las Armas de la Conquista*, which examines in detail the weaponry of both the Spaniards and the Mexica.)

16. Xicotencatl, the Younger. His father, who bore the same name, was lord of Titzatlan.

17. The reference is to a semimythical hero of the war against Granada who seemed the epitome of reckless bravery, leading raids far into enemy territory with little hope of return. He is also the eponymous hero of a play by Lope de Vega.

18. Maxixcatzin, lord of Ocotelulco. Cortés seems to have had dealings with none of the other *Tlatoque* except Xicotencatl, the Elder. He never mentions the other two, Citlalpopoca and Tlehuexolotzin. Maxixcatzin may have had more influence than his corulers, but he was not "lord" of Tlaxcala.

19. Salt was an important article of commerce on the central plateau, and it came largely from saltpeter mined near Ixtapaluca and Ixtapalapa. Gold, silver, precious stones, feathers and other items were also scarce, although as Gibson suggests (*op. cit.*, p. 15) the province's economic plight may have been exaggerated later (see also Muñoz Camargo, *op. cit.*, p. 111).

20. The bread is the tortilla, the fowl turkeys. Some geese and ducks were also reared domestically but most were hunted wild. Fishing was done with pole and landing nets as well as hooks and lines. Hooks seem to have been used by the Mexica before the arrival of the Spaniards, for Grijalva saw the Maya on Cozumel fishing with gold hooks, and the Maya imported all their metal from Mexico (Sigvald Linné, "Hunting and Fishing in the Valley of Mexico in the middle of the 16th century").

21. Trade was done exclusively by means of barter. There was no money as such, though the cacao bean was used for balancing an exchange. Quills of gold dust and crescent-shaped knives were also used, and among the Maya red shells or beads and copper bells were common (Landa, *op. cit.*, p. 95; Vaillant, *op. cit.*, pp. 138–139. For trade in Mesoamerica see *Trade and Market in the Early Empires*, Karl Polanyi *et al.*, eds., pp. 114–153).

22. Cholula (Puebla).

23. They were more likely to have been awaiting sacrifice. Mexico was a society without prisons. Theft was punished either by slavery until restitution was made or a fine of twice the amount stolen. Highway robbery, theft in the marketplace, theft of gold, silver and jade, as substances used in religious ornamentation, were all punished by death. Theft of corn was likewise a capital offense, though a hungry traveler was permitted to pluck a few ears. Practically every crime that in modern jurisprudence constitutes a felony was made capital and often punished by sacrifice. (Vaillant, *op. cit.*, pp. 130–134; R. B. Gaither, "Government and Jurisprudence of the Mexicans before the Spanish Conquest.")

24. Huexotzinco.

25. "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation." Matt. 12:25.

26. This is Doña Marina. She was, according to Bernal Díaz (chap. 37), the daughter of a chieftain in Vera Cruz and was sold into captivity when her mother remarried in order to leave the succession free for a stepbrother whom Bernal Díaz calls the cacique Lazarus. The place of her origin is uncertain. Bernal Díaz says that she was born in Painala (or Paynala), but there seems to be little evidence for this. The traditional place of her birth is supposed to be Jaltipan (Wagner, pp. 69 ff.), but Juan Xaramillo, the husband to whom she was later married by Cortés, stated that she was the daughter of a chieftain of Oluta in Vera Cruz (in Cuevas, appendix IV). Orozco y Berra (IV: 111 ff.) weighs the evidence and comes to the same conclusion, although he admits the possibility of Jaltipan.

She was given to Cortés with some Indian women after the battle of Cintla, and given by him to Puertocarrero. She returned to Cortés when Puertocarrero was sent to Spain, and acted as his mistress and translator during the conquest. She spoke Nahuatl as her mother tongue and had learned Chontal Maya, the dialect spoken in Tabasco, while in captivity. She translated into Maya for Aguilar, who then translated into Spanish, though later she seems to have acquired enough knowledge of Spanish to translate directly.

There is some dispute over the origin of her name. The explanation provided by José Ramírez is perhaps the most convincing. He suggests that her Nahuatl name was *Malinal* (or *Malinalli*), the name of the twelfth day in the Mexican month. "Malinche"—the term by which she, and often Cortés also, were popularly referred—was a Spanish corruption of the reverential form of this name (*Malinaltzin*), and she was christened Marina, as this was the closest Spanish equivalent (*Archives Paleographiques de l'Orient et de l'Amérique*, I:220. Quoted by Orozco y Berra, *loc. cit.*).

Marina's relations with Cortés have been the subject of a good deal of romanticization (analyzed by Jaime Delgado, "Hernán Cortés en la poesia española de los siglos XVIII y XIX"), but it seems that far from being an obviously devoted couple some of Cortés's soldiers took Marina to be Aguilar's wife (she must certainly have spent much of her time with him), a mistake repeated by Muñoz Camargo (p. 181). She bore Cortés a son, Martín, who seems to have been a favorite child. He was legitimatized by Clement VII in 1529 and left one thousand gold ducats a year for life in his father's will (*The last Will and Testament of Hernando Cortés*, pp. 10, 35).

27. Cortés has been accused, notably by Las Casas (*Brevissima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias* (fol. ci v.), of slaughtering the population of Cholula in order to terrorize the Mexica capital into surrender.

According to Las Casas, it was a matter of policy: a massacre greatly reduced the Indians' determination to resist. There may be some justification in this, for Cortés's agent at his residencia—Cortés himself was away in Spain at the time—admitted that the purpose of the massacre was to "give the law" and make Cortés feared (quoted by Wagner, p. 174). Cortés's tale of a plot, though substantiated by Bernal Díaz (chap. 83) and later Spanish chronicles, sounds like an excuse. Cholula was a religious center and its people were mostly merchants. This does not of course mean that they were incapable of attempting to wipe out the Spaniards, but it seems unlikely that Motecuçoma would have chosen such a place for an ambush: furthermore, the Chololteca had only recently been incorporated into the empire, and it is doubtful therefore that the Mexica would have trusted them very far. Cortés claims that Motecuçoma had a huge army standing by but makes no mention of it after the massacre. Vázquez de Tapia gave a substantially different version of the events at Cortés's residencia (*Sumario*, 1:58–59).

"The witness does not know for what reason the aforementioned Don Fernando Cortés called together the principal persons of the town saying that he wished to leave but wanted to speak with them first. These principal persons then came and he told them to bring bearers, and they brought many, some four or five thousand Indians, in the opinion of this witness. He then put them into the principal mosque [temple], into some courtyards and enclosures that were there. He then ordered the Spaniards who were with him to kill them, and thus they killed them and once they were all dead, he went out into the city with all his people." Vázquez de Tapia, though a witness, was not likely to have been party to Cortés's plans; but then, on the other hand, neither was Bernal Díaz, who gives a very full account of the plot (*loc. cit.*) and has some harsh words for Las Casas. He claims that Motolinía excused the massacre on the grounds that it dissuaded the Indians from their idolatry. This may be true, but his statement that a Franciscan enquiry held at Cholula after the conquest established

that there was a plot is more questionable, and such an inquiry is mentioned neither by Motolinía, Sahagún nor any other Franciscan (Wagner, p. 177). Orozco y Berra (IV:252) thinks that the plot was fabricated by the Tlaxcalteca, possibly with the help of Doña Marina, in order to be able to pay off an old enemy. This is possible, but the most convincing explanations seem to be those of Las Casas and Wagner (p. 173), who suggest that Cortés was securing his lines of communication with the coast. This would explain why he went there in the first place, for the reasons he gives himself are not very satisfactory.

The number of the dead is given by Cortés as three thousand in two hours. Vázquez de Tapia puts it as high as twenty thousand. It was probably somewhere between five thousand and ten thousand.

28. Cholula had once been an "Enemy of the House" and an ally of Tlaxcala. A quarrel between the two areas, skillfully exacerbated by Mexica diplomacy, led to a war in which the Chololteca were forced to seek Mexica aid. This lost them their independence.

29. There is no such word. Cortés was probably given *pinole*, which is toasted ground maize with pepper and cacao (chocolate) added. This mixture might have been referred to by the Spaniards as *pan y cacao* and corrupted into *panicap*. Gayangos suggests (p. 76) *atole*, a kind of corn gruel.

30. Acatzingo and Izucar (Puebla).

31. Popocatepetl ("Smoking Mountain") and Iztaccihuatl ("White Woman") were venerated as man and wife. The volcano is 17,887 feet high. It erupted in 1347 and 1354 and was active from 1519 until 1530. It erupted again in 1665 but has remained dormant ever since. The first person to attempt an ascent, as mentioned here by Cortés, was Diego de Ordaz, for which he was granted a smoking volcano in his arms. The first scientific exploration was undertaken by William and Frederic Glennie in 1827. Although no true concept of retribution after death seems to have existed among the Amerindians, the crater of Popocatepetl was said to contain the spirits of evil rulers.

32. Calpan (?). Antonio Carrión gives Cortés's route from Cholula to Amecameca as Izcalpan (Calpan), Papaxtla, Xalitzintla, Zacatzinco, Zacatelolotl, Tepetolonco, Tepechco, Apatlaco and Amecamecan (Amecameca) (*Historia de la Ciudad de Puebla*, I:45).

33. Amecameca.

34. Ayotzinco.

35. This was Cacamatzin, a nephew of Motecuçoma and lord of Texcoco.

36. Mizquic.

37. Cuitlahuac. The modern town of Tlahuac occupies the same site, although the Chalco lake has since been drained.

38. Itztapalapa. The brother of Motecuçoma to whom Cortés refers was Cuitlahuac, eleventh son of Axayacatl. On Motecuçoma's death, he succeeded his brother but died of smallpox eighty days later.

39. Coyoacan.

40. Mexicactzingo and Huitzilopochco (now called Churubusco). Orozco y Berra (IV: 270) suggests that Niciaca might be a corruption of Coyouhuacan (Coyoacan).

41. Potonchan.

42. Both this speech and the one that follows (pp. 85–86, 98–99) would seem to be apocryphal. Motecuçoma could never have held the views with which Cortés accredits him. Eulalia Guzmán (*Relaciones de Hernán Cortés*, I: 279 ff.) has pointed out the Biblical tone of both these passages and how their phraseology reflects the language of the *Siete Partidas*. Cortés is casting Motecuçoma into the role of a sixteenth-century Spaniard welcoming his "natural lord," who in this case has been accredited with a vaguely Messianic past. Indeed the whole setting has a mythopoeic ring: Motecuçoma is made to raise his garments and to declare, "See that I am flesh and blood like you and all other men, and I am mortal and substantial," words reminiscent of those of Jesus to his disciples, "A spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have" and of Paul and Barnabas to Lystra, "We also are men of like passions with you." (J. H. Elliott, "The Mental World of Hernán Cortés," pp. 51–53). There is evidence, however, that Motecuçoma did believe himself to be the living incarnation of Huitzilopochtli (see Durán, chaps. LIII–LIV; and Sahagún, bk. IV, chap. 10), and certainly such an identification would not have been alien to Mexica religious thought. Despite the absurdity of attributing such words and gestures to an Amerindian, it seems likely that Cortés's account of the events is based on partially understood information about the native mythologies. A number of modern commentators seem to believe the thesis of Motecuçoma's speeches, namely, that the Mexica lived in fear of a vengeful Messiah, who would one day return from the east, and mistook Cortés for his captain. Later this Messiah, who in the words attributed to Motecuçoma is only a legendary tribal chieftain, becomes Quetzalcoatl, the "Plumed Serpent" lord of Tula, whose story as told by Sahagún bears some resemblance to the Cortés-Motecuçoma version of Mexica prehistory. There is, however, no preconquest tradition which places Quetzalcoatl in this role, and it seems possible therefore that it was elaborated by Sahagún and Motolinía from informants who themselves had partially lost contact with their traditional tribal histories.

The identification of Cortés with Quetzalcoatl is also the work of Sahagún (see bk. XII, chap. 4, pp. 11 ff.). Don Antonio de Mendoza, first viceroy of New Spain, however, said that Cortés was mistaken for Huitzilopochtli (Elliott, *op. cit.*, p. 53), traditionally associated with the south, and about whom no Messianic legend is known to exist. It is possible that Mendoza was told this by Cortés himself, and "Uchilobos" was the only Mexica deity Cortés could name.

Cortés may have picked up a local legend and embellished it in an attempt to prove that Motecuçoma was himself an usurper and therefore had no right to the lands he ruled (cf. the Third Letter, n. 3). A like strategy was used in Peru in the 1570s to discredit the Incas. The viceroy Francisco de Toledo collected together an immense body of information to prove that the Incaic dynasties were of recent foundation, and their scions not, therefore, "natural lords." (Lewis Hanke, "Viceroy Francisco de Toledo and the Just Titles of Spain in the Inca Empire." See also Robert S. Chamberlain, "The Concept of the 'Señor Natural' as Revealed by Castilian Law and Administrative Documents.")

Where Cortés first heard the story is uncertain. Cervantes de Salazar (bk. III, chap. 49) and Bernal Díaz (chap. 79) both say that it was in Tlaxcala but both are very vague (see also Muñoz Camargo, pp. 184–185). Professor Guzmán says that a similar legend was common in the Antilles. But perhaps the first contact was made in Yucatán, where a foliated cross appears on a number of Mayan buildings and seems to have been associated with Quetzalcoatl, called Kukulcan in Maya. (The cult, however, appears to have been imported from Mexico, whose priests are often shown wearing white robes, see George C. Vaillant, "A bearded mystery.")

If it is unlikely that Motecuçoma took the Spaniards to be the vicars-on-earth of the "Plumed Serpent," it is even more unlikely that it would have in any way affected his attitude toward Cortés. Besides the improbability of any leader acting on a prophecy, Quetzalcoatl's cult was largely confined to the lowland regions beyond Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl and appears to have held little sway in central Mexico itself (*Códice Borgia*, 1: 67). Its cult center was Cholula, which, when it came under Mexica rule, was granted no special respect and even forced to venerate Huitzilopochtli. Nor, it might be added, did Cholula accord to Cortés the welcome he might be expected to receive as Quetzalcoatl's lieutenant. Motecuçoma was himself a priest of Huitzilopochtli; and, secure in the power of the tutelary deity of his race, it does not seem likely that he would have resigned his powers to the supposed avatars of an apotheosized Toltec chieftain.

The attitude of the Mexica toward the Spaniards can best be explained by the traditional immunity from harm enjoyed by all ambassadors—and Cortés claimed to be an ambassador albeit without an embassy. It is also possible that once Motecuçoma had realized Cortés's intentions, he deliberately drew him inland, not understanding that the sea could be a supply route for the Spaniards: a perhaps similar and equally disastrous tactic was employed by Atahualpa against Pizarro (cf. George Kubler, "The behaviour of Atahualpa." In *HAHR*, 25: pp. 413–427). Motecuçoma may well have underestimated the Spanish powers of diplomacy and the state of unrest within his own empire. It was unfortunate for him, as for Atahualpa, that the Spaniards were in a position to play one Indian against another.

43. As Cortés implies, this was a ruse to imprison Motecuçoma. Juan Alvarez testified that Escalante (the captain mentioned by Cortés) had gone to Nautla with a force of Spaniards and Totonaque to look for gold. The Indians refused to give them any, and a fight ensued in which the Spaniards were defeated, losing two of their men. Bernal Díaz (chap. 94) says that Escalante and six other Spaniards were killed. Gómara (pp. 353–354) says that it was not Escalante but Pedro de Ircio who was killed. He also says that the expedition was sent to prevent Francisco de Garay from settling on the coast (see Wagner, pp. 208–209).

Cuauhpopoca ("Bright Eagle") was lord of Coyoacan: Ixtlilxóchitl (vol. II:378) claims that he was also governor of the north coast. Eulalia Guzmán, however, thinks that this is probably a confusion with Cohuatlpopoca. According to one report, Cuauhpopoca was tied to a stake and shot full of arrows by the Tlaxcalteca and not burned as Cortés claims.

44. These provinces were all tributary towns in the Mixtec-Zapotec region. Cuçula might be Sosola, of which there are three—San Juan, San Mateo and San Jerónimo Sosola. The town appears in the Codex Mendoza as Çoçolan.

45. Tamazulapa. There are three towns with this name in the same area.

46. Malinaltepec. There were several towns with this name, and it is impossible to say exactly which one is referred to here, but it is probably San Miguel de Malinaltepec.

47. Land of the *Tenimes* or barbarians. The capital of the province was Chinantla, and the language spoken Chinanteca (Eulalia Guzmán, *op. cit.*, 1: 259). Although Cortés only mentions "Tenis" as speaking a language other than Nahuatl, all the towns mentioned here must also have used Mixtec or Zapotec dialects.

48. Tuxtepec.

49. The river is the Coatzacoalcos. "Sanmin" is presumably a contraction of San Martín, the name given to a small range of mountains beside the Gulf of Mexico. Mazamalco is a corruption of Coatzacualco (Coatzacoalcos).

50. Chalchiuhcueyecan is the Nahuatl name for the coastal area near the port of San Juan de Ulúa.

51. Coatzacoalcos.

52. Tochintecuhtli, Tochinteuctli or Tuchinteuhctli, "Lord Rabbit" (Eulalia Guzmán, *op. cit.*, p. 262, n. 106).

53. Tetzcoco, Tezcoco, or Texcoco, as it is called today, was the capital of Alcolhuacan and one of the city-states that made up the Triple Alliance of the Mexican valley. Texcoco was founded in the twelfth century by Chichimeca tribes on what is possibly the site of an earlier Toltec settlement. Three other tribes occupied this same area: the Otomi, Tepaneca and the Alcolhua. They were either late-comers granted lands by Xolotl, the Chichimeca chieftain (see Ixtlilxóchitl, vol. II, chap. V, *Códice Xolotl*, pp. 17–119 *passim*), or the autochthonal inhabitants driven to take refuge in and around the lake by invaders from the north. (Chichimeca means, "Sons-of-Dogs"[?]; like Tenime and Pinome it was a term of genetic abuse.) Xolotl first set up his capital at Tenayocan; Quinatzin, his great-grandson, later moved it to Texcoco and married a Culhuan princess in an attempt to assimilate the heritage of Tula. The Chichimeca later came to identify themselves with the Acolhua, changing the name of their kingdom to Acolhuacan. Texcoco flourished under Neçaualcoyotl in the mid-fifteenth century, but was soon subordinated to the rising power of Tenochtitlan, with Neçaualcoyotl being forced to fight a mock battle and set fire to the main temple of the city. Texcoco remained an active member of the Triple Alliance until the arrival of the Spaniards activated political rivalries among members of the ruling family. The city was said to have been the cultural center of Anahuac and it possessed extensive archives which were destroyed by the Tlaxcalteca during the siege of Tenochtitlan.

54. Acolman and Otumba.

55. Cacamatzin. When Neçahualpiltzintli died in 1516, his son Cacama (the *tzin* is an honorific) was chosen to succeed him. In 1518 his brother Ixtlilxochitl broke away and established a separate kingdom with his capital at Otumba. It was Ixtlilxochitl, together with another brother, Coanacochtzin, who was responsible for Cacama's capture. The description given by Cortés, however, sounds too contrived. It is more likely that Cacama was in Tenochtitlan when Cortés seized Motecuçoma and was imprisoned along with him.

56. Cuicuitzcatzin ("Swallow") was one of Cacama's younger brothers, not his son (see the Third Letter, n. 11).

57. Bernal Díaz (chap. 104) says that the sum was estimated at 600,000 *pesos*, without the jewels. Once the royal fifth and Cortés's fifth had been extracted, the remainder was divided among the troops, though Cortés makes no mention of this. Gómara (p. 357), who also speaks of a division, puts the sum at something over 160,000 *pesos*.

58. The blowgun is still in common use today. It measures between four to six feet in length and fires a clay pellet. It is quite effective against small birds but useless for anything larger.

59. MS. reads, *y dióme unas turquesas de oro. Turquesa*, in this context, is evidently a bullet mold and not, as all other translators have rendered it, a turquoise. It is unlikely, however, that Cortés would ever have requested such a thing as a gold bullet mold from Motecuçoma and the text is perhaps corrupt. Gómara's version of this passage (in González de Barcía's edition, *Historiadores Primitivos de las Indias Occidentales*, II:94) reads, *La Red para Bodoques, i Turquesas era de Oro i algunos de Plata:* this translates as, "the bag for the bullets and the bullet molds was of gold and some were of silver," and this is probably what Cortés intended.

60. On the eve of the conquest Motecuçoma's empire included the modern states of Puebla and Morelos, most of Guerrero, Mexico, Hidalgo and Veracruz, and a fair portion of Oaxaca. This "empire" was the creation of a Triple Alliance among the city-states of Tlacopan (Tacuba), Texcoco and Tenochtitlan, built around the Mexican valley lake system. The tribes who occupied these cities were respectively the Tepaneca, the Acolhua and the Mexica. By the time the Spaniards arrived, however, Tenochtitlan had wrested effective control of the empire from its neighbors. Cortés is here referring to Anahuac (*Atl-Nahuac* or "Near-the-Water"), a name which was originally given to the coastal regions and the lands around the lake system, but later seems to have become a metonym for all Mexico. (For the geography of the empire see Robert H. Barlow, *The Extent of the Empire of the Culhua Mexica.*)

61. The lakes are those of Chalco and Texcoco. The first is of fresh water, the second of salt.

62. This was the marketplace in Tlatelolco. As already noted (see n. 2), it was divided up among the Tenocha lords, who each collected a 20 per cent sales tax from all business done within their allotted areas. (For a description of the place, see Vaillant, *op. cit.*, pp. 234 ff., and the Anonymous Conqueror, *op. cit.*, pp. 178–179.)

63. These were called *itzcuintlis* and are now extinct. They were an important article of trade sold mainly in Acolman and were still available as late as 1580 (Durán, chap. XCVIII). They appear frequently on pottery from western Mexico, and seem to have resembled the Chihuahua.

64. Called *tameme* in Nahuatl. The amount they could carry and the distance they could travel was fixed by law.

65. The maguey (*metl* in Nahuatl) is the American aloe or *Agave Americana*. The "wine" referred to here is pulque, a powerful syrupy liquor still popular today.

66. A useful account of Mexica religious practices is given by Alfonso Caso in *The Aztecs, People of the Sun.*

The chief gods of the city were Huitzilopochtli and Tlaloc: of these two Huitzilopochtli was by far the most important. His name means "Hummingbird of the South" (from *Huitzilin*, "hummingbird," and *opochtli*, meaning literally "on the left"), and, although he is generally referred to simply as the war god, he was—or at least had become by the time the Spaniards arrived—the tutelary deity of the Mexica. There is no wholly convincing analysis of his place in the Mexica pantheon, but an interesting intepretation is given by Padden (*op. cit.*). The temple described here, the great *teucalli* of Tenochtitlan, was a truncated pyramid built in tiers of stone laid against an artificial mound. The temple was so constructed that a man standing at the base was unable to see to the top; when the sacrificial victim began to ascend he seemed to be climbing into the sky. The tiers of the temple were equated with the tiers of the universe, and the temple itself with the navel of the world, the Mountain of Snakes where Huitzilopochtli was said to have sprung from the womb of his mother (E. R. Wolf, *op. cit.*, p. 83).

67. The lords of subject provinces were forced to spend a certain part of each year in the capital. They were all hostages, and six hundred of them formed Motecuçoma's personal guard of honor. In this manner the *Uei Tlatoani* was able to keep a firm measure of control over the more distant provinces of the empire.

68. Probably the *Matricula de Tributos*. See the *Codex Mendoza*, which is, in part, a copy of the *Matricula*. The bibliography of the manuscript is dealt with in the introduction to Robert H. Barlow's *The Extent of the Empire of the Culhua Mexica*, pp. 4 ff.

69. The date of Narváez's arrival is uncertain. If Cortés is to be believed, it was sometime in May, but in a complaint made against Narváez and Velázquez by four of Cortés's own men he is said to have arrived in April (in *La Noche Triste*, G. R. G. Conway, ed., pp. 40 ff. *passim*).

70. Coatzacoalcos. The captain was Juan Velázquez de León. The single ship mentioned earlier was presumably that of Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón.

71. Paper was made from the pulp of a species of fig tree (*Ficus Petiolaris*). When this had been beaten flat and dried it was covered with a paste and dusted with a white powder. The result was a thin, hard board that folded to make a screen. Bark and deerskin were also used (V. W. von Hagen, *The Aztec and Maya Papermakers*).

72. Bartolomé de Olmedo, a member of the order of Merced. He was an able diplomat, much praised by Bernal Díaz, who often prevented Cortés from enraging friendly tribes by overturning idols and attempting forced conversion. He died late in 1524 or early in 1525 (see José Castro Seone, "El P. Bartolomé de Olmedo, Capellán del Ejército de Cortés"). Cortés's account of the campaign against Narváez is naturally biased; he gives only the minimum of details and these are not always accurate. The matter is too complicated to be examined here, but a very full account may be found in Wagner, chap. XVIII.

73. The friar was Juan Ruiz de Guevara; the two lay brothers were the notary Alonso de Vergara and someone Bernal Díaz (chap. 111) calls Amaya. They went to Vera Cruz to present their credentials to Sandoval, who promptly arrested them and had them carried to Mexico in hammocks.

74. Velázquez de León had previously been imprisoned by Cortés (Bernal Díaz, chap. 93).

75. Lucas Vázquez de Ayllón was an *oidor* of the *Audiencia* in Santo Domingo.

76. According to Bernal Díaz (chap. 112), Cortés sent no letters with Guevara. He did, however, send some Indian messengers begging Narváez to keep the peace, while Cortés's army was busy trying to bribe Narváez's captains.

77. Ayllón finally succeeded in making the captain take him to Hispaniola. The other ship, with his *alguacil* and secretary on board, reached Santo Domingo some months later. According to Gómara (p. 179), Ayllón was drowned while on a slaving expedition in 1524, "without ever having done anything worthy of recall."

78. Pedro de Alvarado was left in charge. He was born in Badajoz in 1485 and first went to the Indies in 1510 with his brothers Jorge, Gonzalo, Gómez and Juan, all of whom participated in the conquest, although without distinguishing themselves in any way. Alvarado spent eight years in Santo Domingo, then joined Grijalva's expedition in 1518. The following year he sailed with Cortés, whom he served as second-in-command until the massacre in Tenochtitlan. He was said to have been brave but rash, a judgment which the events bear out. He had blond hair, which earned him the name of *Tonatiuh* ("the Sun"). After having conquered Guatemala in 1524, he made an abortive attempt to participate in the conquest of Peru. He was crushed by a falling horse in the Nochiztlan Mountains in 1541 and died shortly after in Guadalajara. (For an account of Alvarado's career see J. E. Kelly, *Pedro de Alvarado, Conquistador.*)

Cortés's figures for the number of men left behind in Tenochtitlan are

obviously incorrect. Three witnesses later testified at an inquiry into the affair that they did not exceed 120, most of whom were disabled or could not be trusted. (The witnesses were Juan Álvarez, Diego de Ávila and Diego Holguín. Their statements may be found in Polavieja, pp. 150–256. See also Wagner, p. 505, n. 19.)

79. Presumably the one whom Bernal Díaz (chap. 119) calls Juan de León. He says also (*loc. cit.*) that Andrés de Duero and Amador de Lares had plotted with Cortés in Cuba to usurp Velázquez's authority and split the profits of the expedition between them. Andrés de Duero seems to have been in contact with Cortés from the moment Narváez arrived on the mainland.

80. This plot sounds like a fabrication. Cortés does not give enough details, and, furthermore, Rodrigo Álvarez Chico and the notary Pedro Hernández appear to have gone to Narváez with Cortés's mandate before the consultations with Andrés de Duero and the two priests, which probably took place in Tepaniquita (Tampaniquita, in Bernal Díaz, chap. 115), some nine leagues from Cempoal. By reordering the sequence of events Cortés has succeeded in making his attack on Narváez seem inevitable. In fact, we know that he had won over many of Narváez's men and must now have felt strong enough to defeat him. According to Bernal Díaz (*loc. cit.*), the messenger mentioned by Cortés was Juan Velázquez.

81. Narváez had founded the town of San Salvador on the site of the present-day city of Veracruz. The *alcaldes* were Francisco Verdugo and Juan Yuste; the *regidores*, Juan de Gamarra, Jerónimo Martínez de Salvatierra, Diego Velázquez and Pedro Velázquez.

82. There seems to have been some truth in this. Seven witnesses testified before the Audiencia in Santo Domingo that Cuba had been emptied in order to provide Narváez with soldiers. Only the infirm and the old remained behind. While it seems that some of them went willingly, some even to join Cortés, many of them were threatened or cajoled. It is also possible that there is some truth in Cortés's reiterated accusation that Velázquez misused his power over the repartimiento (Polavieja, pp. 29–53, Wagner, pp. 267–268).

83. Pentecost fell that year on May 27. Cortés's dates, however, are unreliable, and the attack may have taken place any time between that date and June 18 (see Eulalia Guzmán, *op. cit.*, p. 381, n. 373). Velázquez de León is said to have bribed Rodrigo Martínez, the captain of artillery, to plug the touchholes of the cannon with wax. But this may have been done because of the rain—or not done at all, as Cortés succeeded in using them. Andrés de Tapia (in De Fuentes, *op. cit.*, p. 47) says that Cortés had managed to have the cinch straps on Narváez's horses cut, thus converting the horsemen into foot soldiers. Sandoval had been given orders to kill Narváez if he resisted; he was finally captured by Pedro Sánchez Farfán, after having one eye thrust out with a pike (on Narváez's character see Frank Goodwyn, "Pánfilo de Narváez, a character study of the first Spanish leader to land an expedition in Texas").

84. According to Bernal Díaz (chap. 124), Diego de Ordaz was sent to Guazaqualco (Coatzacoalcos) and Juan Velázquez to the Pánuco River. Two ships were also sent to Jamaica for horses, goats, pigs, sheep and chickens to breed in Coatzacoalcos. He claims that there were only 120 men in each expedition, and that twenty of these were Cortés's own. He states, however, that news of Alvarado's predicament reached Cempoal before they departed. Cortés then offered Narváez's men rich rewards if they would accompany him with a good will; they agreed, but Bernal Díaz remarks that "had they known the forces of Mexico not one of them would have come."

85. The details of Alvarado's massacre of the Mexica nobility are too conflicting to give any clear picture of what happened. All we can be certain of is that some time during the feast of *Toxcatl* a large number of the Mexica nobles were murdered in the precincts of the great *teucalli*, probably because Alvarado, who was in charge during Cortés's absence, suspected them of plotting to kill him and his men at the height of the celebrations. According to James Cooper Clark (*Codex Mendoza*, 1: 24) *Toxcatl* took place on May 6. Other native accounts say that the feast lasted for ten days; as Alvarado must have struck either on the first or second day, this means that the massacre took place some time around May 7. It seems likely that either Motecuçoma persuaded Cortés to allow *Toxcatl* to be performed as usual or that the Mexica went ahead regardless. Sahagún (bk. XII, chap. 19, p. 49) says that Alvarado asked Motecuçoma to celebrate the feast because he wanted to see it. This is repeated by the *Codex Ramirez* (p. 88) but in language so similar to Sahagún's that it is evident both works are employing the same source. If Sahagún's informant is right, then Alvarado must have planned the massacre. The *Codex Ramirez* says that Cortés "ordered it to be done before leaving." It seems an unlikely time to choose. Cortés may have believed that he could crush any resistance once he wiped out the Tenocha lords, but, if he had such a plan in mind, he would surely have acted before leaving Tenochtitlan, rather than entrust the work to Alvarado, whose force was pitifully small (see n. 78).

Some time before the beginning of the feast Alvarado began to hear rumors of a plot, rumors no doubt brought to him if not actually invented by the Tlaxcalteca, who hated *Toxcatl*, which usually meant the slaughter of large numbers of their countrymen captured in the "Flower Wars."

Alvarado said at his residencia that he had been refused supplies by the Mexica, who had also killed one of his Indian women; and when he went to the temple enclosure he had seen a number of staves, and had been told by the Indians that they were to be used for impaling the Spaniards. As these details are not mentioned by the other witnesses, I suspect that Alvarado is repeating what the Tlaxcalteca said they had seen (see *Proceso de Residencia contra Pedro de Alvarado*, pp. 3–4, 36–38). He did, however, go to the temple, where he found two Indians squatting before the statue of Huitzilopochtli and "another idol," undoubtedly Titlacaua (or Tezcatlipoca), in whose honor the festival was being held. Alvarado assumed these to be possible sacrificial victims and had them carried back to his quarters. Under torture they admitted the existence of a plot but gave no details except that it would come within ten days (*i.e.*, at the height of the feast). He then applied the same treatment to a Texcocan and received the same answer. Taking half his men, he marched at once to the temple. The resulting massacre is described by Sahagún's informant:

"They surrounded those who danced whereupon they went among the drums. Then they struck the arms of the one who beat the drums; they severed both his hands. . . . Of some they slashed open the back, and then their entrails gushed out. Of some they split the head. . . . Of some they hit the shoulder; they split open and cut their bodies to pieces. Some they struck in the shank, some on the thighs. Of some they struck the belly, and their entrails streamed forth. And when one in vain would run, he would only drag his entrails like something raw as he tried to flee" (bk. XII, chap. 20, pp. 53–54).

The Spaniards then plundered the dead and retreated to their quarters. The Mexica were not slow in responding; they launched a furious attack against Axayacatl's palace, to which Alvarado replied by forcing either Motecuçoma or Itzquauhtzin, ruler of Tlatelolco, or both, onto the roof to order off their people. Sahagún (bk. XII, chap. 21, p. 55) has only Itzquauhtzin on the roof, the *Codex Ramirez* has "Motecuçoma . . . with a chieftain from among the prisoners." Both say that the Mexica responded with loud cries of abuse. This seems unlikely. Two witnesses at Alvarado's residencia, Nuño Pinto and Alvaro Lopes [*sic*], said that the fighting lasted two days or less (*Proceso de Residencia*, pp. 131, 134). If this was so, only Motecuçoma was powerful enough to have stopped it.

86. Texcoco.

87. On his return Cortés refused to see Motecuçoma because of his alleged complicity with Narváez. According to Clavigero (*Historia Antigua de México*, p. 154), when Cortés did finally see Motecuçoma it was only to order him "with loud threats" to open the market. Motecuçoma is said to have replied that the only people who had sufficient authority to carry out such an order were all in prison with him; he suggested therefore that Cortés release his brother Cuitlahuac. Cortés did so, but as soon as Cuitlahuac was free he launched an attack against the Spaniards. This sounds an unlikely story, but it is certain that Cuitlahuac was in command of the Mexica forces during the siege and was elected *Uei Tlatoani* on his brother's death. Cortés, who appears to have had only an uncertain understanding of Mexica government, may have believed that no one would dare attempt to usurp Motecuçoma's power, and that as long as he held him the Mexica would be incapable of action.

88. The chieftains of Tenochtitlan, Texcoco and Tacuba were probably all seized by Cortés soon after his arrival in the Mexica capital; with them were all of Motecuçoma's family.

89. There are two versions of Motecuçoma's death. The first, that given by Cortés, is corroborated by most of the Spanish writers. Bernal Díaz (chap. 126) and Vázquez de Tapia, both witnesses, say that there were a large number of Spanish soldiers on the roof guarding the *Uei Tlatoani;* if this was so, it is possible that the Mexica were aiming at them rather than at Motecuçoma. Gómara (p. 365) suggests that the Mexica did not see him, and Juan Cano told Oviedo (bk. XXXIII, chap. 54) that "Motezuma died from a stone which those outside threw at him, which they would not have done had not a buckler been placed in front of him, for once they had seen him they would not have thrown." Bernal Díaz says that Motecuçoma died because he refused to eat or to have his wound attended, a story repeated by Herrera (dec. 11, bk. X, chap. 10). If the Mexica did attack him on the roof, this might be true. Bernal Díaz then goes on to say that Cortés and the other soldiers wept at Motecuçoma's death as though they had lost a father, which seems somewhat unlikely.

The second theory is that Motecuçoma was stabbed to death shortly before the Spaniards fled the city. This idea is advanced by most of the native writers, though some of them agree that Motecuçoma had been discredited and would therefore be open to attack if he appeared in public. The *Anales Tolteca-Chichimeca* (quoted by Orozco y Berra, IV: 425) even say that it was Cuauhtemoc who threw the stone. Durán (chap. LXXVI) also mentioned the wound but says that when Motecuçoma was found it was almost healed, and that he had been stabbed five times in the chest. Ixtlilxóchitl (I:341), who is largely pro-Spanish, repeats the Spanish version of the killing but adds, "his vassals say that the Spaniards killed him by stabbing him in the bowels." The *Codex Ramirez* (p. 144) also says that he was killed by a sword thrust in the bowels. Torquemada (bk. IV, chap. 70), following Sahagún, says that Motecuçoma and Itzquauhtzin, lord of Tlatelolco, were found garroted. There is little evidence to support this: garroting was for formal executions, not assassination.

In addition to the murder of the *Uei Tlatoani*, Cortés is also accused of having killed the lords of several of the neighboring towns. Though both the Spanish and the native sources agree that these lords were imprisoned —Cortés himself admits it—the Spaniards claim that they were killed by their own people during the *noche triste*. Alvarado Tezozomoc says that besides Motecuçoma the Spaniards killed "Itzcuauhtzin, the *Cuautlatoani* of Tlatilolco and Cacamatzin lord of Texcoco" (*Crónica Mexicayotl*, p. 149). Ixtlilxóchitl (II:396) says that Cacama fought so hard he had to be stabbed forty-seven times. Durán (*loc. cit.*) says that "many chieftains and lords who had been imprisoned with him were all stabbed to death when they [the Spaniards] fled their quarters." It seems likely that they were all in fact murdered by Cortés, either in the belief that this would paralyze the Mexica offensive, or in the hope that the people would be too occupied with the funeral rites to prevent his leaving. The murders were undoubtedly done in secret, and knowledge of them withheld from the common soldiery. The bodies do not seem to have been discovered until the day after the noche triste. According to Sahagún, "When four days had passed since all [the chieftains] had been hurled from the [pyramid] temple, [the Spaniards] came out and cast forth [the bodies of] Motecuçomatzin and Itzquauhtazin, who had died, at the water's edge at a place called Teoayoc. For here was a carved stone image of tortoise; like a tortoise was the representation in stone.

"And when they were seen and recognized as being Motecuçomatzin and Itzquauhtzin, they took up Motecuçomatzin in their arms and carried him there to a place called Copulco" (bk. XII, chap. 23, p. 63).

Motecuçoma was buried in Tenochtitlan and Itzquauhtzin in Tlatelolco; what happened to the bodies of the others is not recorded. (See also Orozco y Berra, IV: 437–443, who quotes at length from the authorities mentioned above.)

90. This was possibly not, as Cortés suggests, the temple of Huitzilopochtli but the *Yopico*, dedicated to Xipe Totec, the "Flayed God," which lay closer to the palace of Axayacatl. The Indians on top of this "tower" seem to have been directing the attack. The position was obviously a vital one, and Cortés employed a large number of his men against it, despite his claims to have taken it almost singlehanded.

91. This must have been the Ciuacoatl, or "Serpent Woman." She was the mythical mother of Huitzilopochtli and cared for all women who died in childbirth. Huitzilopochtli's high priest assumed her name, although the office was always held by a man (see also the Fourth Letter, n. 51).

92. Gómara (p. 368) says that the retreat from Tenochtitlan, the famous noche triste, took place on the night of July 10. Bernal Díaz agrees (chap. 128) but may be cribbing from Gómara. If Cortés's record is accurate,

however, they held out for six days after St. John the Baptist's day, which means they left the city on June 30. According to Sahagún (bk. XII, chap. 24, p. 65), a woman going for water was the first to raise the alarm, which was then taken up by a sentry on the *tecpan*, or clan building.

93. Bernal Díaz (chap. 128) says that the church of Santa Maria de los Remedios was built on the same site. Sahagún calls the place Otonteocalco in Spanish, and Otoncalpolco in Nahuatl (Eulalia Guzmán, *op. cit.*, p. 469, n. 468). For Cortés's route see endpaper map. My authority for the place names is bk. XII, chaps. 24–27, pp. 65–77 of Sahagún and pp. 469 ff. of Guzmán.

94. The Spaniards were hindered in their retreat by the gold they were carrying; but it seems that the majority of the men killed were Narváez's, who were lacking in experience. The number of the dead given here by Cortés is obviously false. Six or seven hundred is a fair estimate, but all the authorities disagree. A useful table of their opinions is given by Wagner (p. 300). According to Bernal Díaz (chap. 128), the Tlaxcalteca *tamemes* carrying the gold escaped alive.

Among the dead was a daughter of Motecuçoma who had been baptized and christened Doña Ana. She is supposed to have been pregnant by Cortés when she died. At least two other daughters of Motecuçoma survived and were christened Isabel and Marina. Isabel, the eldest, was married to Alonso de Grado and given, as was her right, Tacuba and its dependencies; Marina was married to Juan Paz, an hidalgo, according to Cortés, and given Ecatepec and its dependencies (*Donación de Tierras a las Hijas de Moctezuma*, in Sanchez Barba, pp. 358–362). Cortés also mentions a third daughter called Maria but says nothing about her being given either a husband or lands. Perhaps she was his child rather than Motecuçoma's, for he left ten thousand *ducados* in his will to a daughter of that name (*Last Will and Testament of Hernando Cortés*, pp. 11, 37).

95. Teocalhueyacan.

96. The lakes are Zumpango, Xaltocan and San Cristóbal. The town is Tepotzotlan.

97. The village of Citlaltepec.

98. Xoloc. In plate 23 of the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* it appears as Aychqualco.

99. Aztaquemecan.

100. Çacamulco.

101. This was the battle of Otumba (see Bernal Díaz, chap. 128). The Indians were Otomis subject to Texcoco.

102. Apan (?).

103. Hueyotlipan. Cortés received a mixed welcome in Tlaxcala. Xicotencatl was openly hostile and kept his men constantly on the alert. Maxixcatzin, however, is supposed to have insisted on maintaining the alliance on condition that Cortés promised the Tlaxcalteca a share in the spoils, the city of Cholula and the provinces of Huexotzinco and Tepeaca (Muñoz Camargo, p. 236). Wagner (p. 311), quoting from another source, gives two other conditions: command of a fortress in Tenochtitlan and perpetual freedom from tribute. Much has been made of these promises and Cortés's failure to keep them, yet it is not certain that they were in fact ever made, although Maxixcatzin was in a position to bargain and it would be reasonable to suppose that he did. Ixtlilxóchitl says that Cortés promised to confirm the power of the Tlaxcalteca *Tlatoque* in return for aid and Bernal Díaz mentions promises of repayment but nowhere specifies what sort. In 1565 an inquiry was conducted, on Tlaxcalteca initiative, into the affair. Living conquistadors were called as witnesses, but only a very few claimed to have heard Cortés actually make any promises. The rest denied all knowledge of them or admitted to having heard rumors but were unable to say just what Cortés was alleged to have promised. On the evidence of this inquiry, however, Tlaxcala was, in 1585, granted exemption from the obligation to pay tribute, a concession which lasted more or less throughout the colonial period, though in practice it was frequently overruled. (A list of the royal decrees granting privileges to Tlaxcala may be found in Gibson, *op. cit.*, appendix VII.) Cervantes de Salazar (bk. V, chaps. VI, VIII) says that the Mexica sent ambassadors to the Tlaxcalteca pleading for a united front against the Spaniards. But the Tlaxcalteca knew only too well that such an alliance would mean the loss of their independence, for, if the Spaniards were defeated, the Mexica would not be slow in taking their revenge on an old and troublesome enemy. The plea, however, divided the Tlacalteca camp. Xicotencatl was knocked down the steps of the council chamber, and the ambassadors were dismissed, "very confused about what had happened and not daring to ask for a reply" (Cervantes de Salazar, chap. VIII).

104. Juan de Alcántara (Bernal Díaz, chap. 129).

105. Cortés was wounded in the head a second time on his journey to Honduras. His skull, at present in the Hospital de Jesús in Mexico City, shows evidence of severe fractures down the left side.

106. Near Zautla. See Bernal Díaz (chap. 134), according to whom, the Spaniards were Juan de Alcántara and two others from Vera Cruz.

107. None of the tribes with whom Cortés came in contact were truly cannibalistic. Certain portions of the sacrificial victims were eaten, but this was a symbolic ritual. The reiterated accusations made by Cortés and other Spaniards seem partly an excuse for taking slaves, partly a preconceived idea of native customs acquired in the Antilles, whose inhabitants were often cannibals.

Bernal Díaz (chap. 135) is bitter about the division of the slaves: Cortés as usual seems to have taken the best cut for himself. The soldiers also complained about Cortés's fifth: "They swore to God that such a thing had never been done before, having two kings in the lands of our King and Lord, and taking two-fifths."

108. According to Bernal Díaz (chap. 136), Andrés de Duero and several other captains now returned to Cuba with some gold and jewelry with which to buy supplies. Solís went to Jamaica for horses, and Francisco de Álvarez Chico and Alonso de Ávila were sent to Santo Domingo on some unspecified business. Diego de Ordaz returned to Castile. The Garay expedition consisted of three ships, one of which sunk. The men from the other two, under Diego de Camargo and Miguel Díaz de Auz, joined Cortés in Tepeaca (Bernal Díaz, chap. 133). Two ships from Velázquez also arrived about this time, carrying provisions for Narváez. The first was under the command of Pedro Barba; the second under Rodrigo Morejón de Lobera: these likewise joined Cortés. Bernal Díaz also says that a ship arrived from Castile, sailing by way of the Canaries to circumvent the embargo on ships going to New Spain. She belonged to Juan de Burgos and was well stocked with arms and powder. In all, these reinforcements amounted to approximately 171 men, fifty horses and a good supply of equipment.

109. Huaquechula (Puebla).

110. They were under the command of Cristóbal de Olid. According to Bernal Díaz (chap. 132), Olid was accompanied by over three hundred soldiers "and all the best horses we had." The majority of the officers in the army seem to have been Narváez's men, and it was they who persuaded Olid not to go to Huaquechula. Díaz also denies that Cortés was present during the battle.

111. Toribio de Motolinía spells it Acapetlahuacan (*Memoriales*, p. 205). It is probably Ocuituco.

112. Izúcar.

113. Oaxaca. The present-day state is much larger than the area referred to by Cortés, which is the Mixtec province of what is today Coaixtlahuaca. According to the *Codex Mendoza* (III, fol. 43 r. v.), there were only eleven tax-collecting stations in the area.

114. Cuitlahuac, ruler of Ixtapalapa. His reign lasted only eighty days. He died of smallpox on November 25, 1520 (see n. 38).

115. Chimalpopoca. He was not Motecuçoma's heir, since the succession was not decided by primogeniture but by election. Motecuçoma must also have had many more sons than two (Sahagún, bk. XII, chap. 24, p. 66).

116. Rodrigo Rangel was in command at Vera Cruz.

117. According to Torquemada (bk. IV, chap. 4), Grijalva was the first to use this name.

118. The Vienna Codex has no signature. Fernán Cortés appears in Lorenzana and most subsequent editions.

119. This note appears at the end of the first printed edition (Seville, 1522). It was not written by Cortés. According to González de Barcia, Cromberger was the author (*Historiadores Primitivos de las Indias Occidentales*, I: 62). If this is so, he must have had access to a letter written by Cortés in August, 1521, which reached Spain in March, 1522. This letter is now lost, but it must have contained a brief notice of the fall of Mexico.

Notes to the Third Letter

1. Jalacingo (Veracruz).

2. Francisco de Orozco.

3. The text of these ordinances (*Ordenanzas Militares dadas por Hernando Cortés in Tlaxcallan*) may be found in Sanchez Barba, pp. 336–341. They are discussed by C. Harvey Gardiner in *The Constant Captain*, pp. 66–71.

The speech made by Cortés on this occasion, or rather his account of it, is intended to persuade the emperor that in attempting to take Tenochtitlan by force, he is acting both in the best interests of the Crown and in accordance with the law. The Mexica, he argues, are not free citizens but rebellious vassals and must be punished as such. The reference here is to the donation of Motecuçoma (see the Second Letter, n. 42). This is almost certainly a creation of Cortés, but it was no doubt accepted by the Crown; and later writers such as Fernández del Pulgar who sought to justify the conquest used it as the basis for their arguments (*Historia Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España*). Without it, Cortés's action could only have been seen as a flagrant act of aggression. Cortés gives a further list of reasons for attacking the city: the Spaniards are fighting for their Faith against a barbarian, that is to say non-Christian, people; they are fighting for their king and to defend themselves. All these are "just" causes and appear in one form or another in the *Siete Partidas* (cf. part. II, tit. 23, leyes I–II. See Silvio Zavala, *La "Utopía" de Tomás Moro en la Nueva España y otros estudios*, pp. 49–50). *Ordenanzas Militares y Civiles*, pp. 13–23.

4. Texmelucan.

5. Coatepec.

6. Coanacochtzin.

7. Coatlinchán and Huexotla (both in the state of Mexico).

8. Tenango.

9. From early January, 1521, until the end of May, Cortés slowly encircled the Mexica capital. Once the highly successful Tepeaca campaign had secured the vital lines of communication with the coast, Cortés suppressed, or forced into alliance, every city to which the Mexica might have turned for support. Texcoco was chosen as the base for these operations probably because of its proximity to Tlaxcala, its size—sufficient to support a large army—and the sparsity of the population on the eastern shores of the lake system. Within five months of establishing himself in Texcoco Cortés had brought the cities around the lakes under Spanish control, and the way was now clear for an offensive against Tenochtitlan itself (C. Harvey Gardiner, *Naval Power in the Conquest of Mexico*, pp. 190 ff. See also Lúcas Alamán, *Disertaciones*, I: 126 ff.).

10. Ahuaxpitzactzin, Cuicuitzcatzin.

11. According to Ixtlilxóchitl (II:414–415) Tecocoltzin, christened Fernando Cortés, and a favorite of the conqueror's, was the first to ascend the throne. Bernal Díaz (chap. 137) says that he was instated the day after their arrival in the city, but is clearly confusing him with Don Fernando Ahuaxpitzactzin. Sahagún (bk. 8, chap. 3, p. 10) lists the last kings of Texcoco as Cacamatzin, Coanacochtzin, Tecocoltzin and Ixtlilxochitl: Ahuaxpitzactzin and Cuicuitzcatzin, puppet rulers of the Spaniards, are omitted for patriotic reasons. The two Spaniards left as guardians for Don Fernando (Ahuaxpitzactzin) were Antonio de Villarroel, who later changed his name to Serrano de Cardona, and Pedro Sánchez Farfán (Bernal Díaz, *loc. cit.*; Orozco y Berra, IV: 517–518).

12. Bernal Díaz (chap. 147) says that a ship belonging to Juan de Burgos arrived about this time. In chap. 136, however, he says that Juan de Burgos arrived while Cortés was still in Tlaxcala, sometime in late December or early January (see n. 96). But in a statement made after his death the date is given as early as July (Wagner, p. 515, n. 36). Herrera (dec. III, bk. I, chap. V) also makes a reference to this ship but gives no more details than Cortés. The only other vessels to land at Vera Cruz arrived in late February, by which time the brigantines had already reached Texcoco.

13. Huaquechula (Puebla).