

# Cortés brev till den spanska kungen.



Mexiko palats och välkända stad i Nya Spanien skulle jag översatt texten till.



Marina, Marquis och något jag inte kan tyda. Vem var Marina?



### Frågor till bilderna

Bilderna på de två första sidorna är gjorda av spanjorer och syftade till att visa upp den nya världen.

Vilka händelser avbildas?

Vilka karaktärsdrag har ursprungsbefolkningen i bilderna?

Hur agerar spanjorerna i bilderna?

### Cortés första brev till den spanska kungen där han beskriver landet.

This country, Most Potent Princes, where we now are in the name of Your Majesties, has fifty leagues of coast on the one side and the other side of this town, the seacoast being low with many sand-hills, some of which are two leagues or more in length. The country beyond these sand-hills is level, with many fertile plains, in which are such beautiful river banks, that in all Spain there can be found no better; these are as grateful to the sight as they are productive in everything sown in them, and very orderly and well kept with walks, and facilities for grazing all kinds of animals. There is every kind of game in this country, and animals, and birds such as are familiar to us--deer, fallow deer, wolves, foxes, quails, doves, and pigeons, and two or three kinds of hares and rabbits,--so that there is no difference between this country and Spain as regards birds and animals; there are lions and tigers . . . [Note, it is hard to determine what the Spaniards were calling lions and tigers since neither is native to Mexico]

[The letter then describes the physical geography of Mexico, specifically commenting on a mountain which the Spaniards believed was covered with snow, which seemed odd to them given the general climate in southern Mexico.]

The people who inhabit this country, from the Island of Cozumel, and the Cape of Yucatán to the place where we now are, are a people of middle size, with bodies and features well proportioned, except that in each province their customs differ, some piercing the ears, and putting large and ugly objects in them, and others piercing the nostrils down to the mouth, and putting in large round stones like mirrors, and others piercing their under lips down as far as their gums, and hanging from them large round stones, or pieces of gold, so weighty that they pull down the nether lip, and make it appear to be very deformed. The clothing which they wear is like long veils, very curiously worked. The men wear breechcloths about their bodies, and large mantles, very thin, and painted in the style of Moorish draperies. The women of the ordinary people wear, from their waists to their feet, clothes also very much painted, some covering their breasts and leaving the rest of the body uncovered. The superior women, however, wear very thin shirts of cotton, worked and made in the style of *rochets*. Their food is maize and grain, as in the other Islands, and *potuyuca*, as they eat it in the Island of Cuba, and they eat it broiled, since they do not make bread of it; they have their fishing, and hunting, and they roast many chickens, like those of the Tierra Firme, which are as large as peacocks. [These exceptionally large chickens were probably turkeys.]

There are some large towns well laid out, the houses being of stone, and mortar when they have it.

### Fortsättning första brevet där Cortés beskriver religionen

Everyday, before they undertake any work, they burn incense in the said mosques [temples] and sometimes they sacrifice their own persons, some hacking the body with knives; and they offer up to their idols all the blood which flows, sprinkling it on all sides of those mosques, at other times throwing it up towards the heavens, and practicing many other kinds of ceremonies, so that they undertake nothing without first offering sacrifice there.

They have another custom, horrible, and abominable, and deserving punishment, and which we have never before seen in any other place, and it is this, that, as often as they have anything to ask of their idols, in order that their petition may be more acceptable, they take many boys or girls, and even grown men and women, and in the presence of those idols they open their breasts, while they are alive, and take out the hearts and entrails, and burn the said entrails and hearts before the idols, offering that smoke in sacrifice to them. Some of us who have seen this say that it is the most terrible and frightful thing to behold that has ever been seen. So frequently, and so often do these Indians do this, according to our information, and partly by what we have seen in the short time we are in this country, that no year passes in which they do not kill and sacrifice fifty souls in each mosque; and this is practiced, and held as customary, from the Isle of Cozumel to the country in which we are now settled. Your Majesties may rest assured that, according to the size of the land, which to us seems very considerable, and the many mosques which they have, there is no year, as far as we have until now discovered and seen, when they do not kill and sacrifice in this manner some three or four thousand souls. Now let Your Royal Highnesses consider if they ought not to prevent so great an evil and crime, and certainly God, Our Lord, will be well pleased, if, through the command of Your Royal Highnesses, these peoples should be initiated and instructed in our Very Holy Catholic Faith . . .

### Cortés förbjuder aztekernas religion och inför Kristendomen.

I [Cortés] forbade them sacrificing human beings to their idols, as they had been accustomed to do; because, besides being abhorrent in the sight of God, your sacred Majesty had prohibited it by law, and commanded to put to death whoever should take the life of another. Thus, from that time they refrained from the practice, and during the whole period of my abode in that city, they were never seen to, kill *or* sacrifice a human being.

The figures of the idols in which these people believe surpass in stature a person of more than the ordinary size; some of them are composed of a mass of seeds and leguminous plants, such as are used for food, ground and mixed together, and kneaded with the blood of human hearts taken from the breasts of living persons, from which a paste is formed in a sufficient quantity to form large statues. When these are completed they make them offerings of the hearts of other victims, which they sacrifice to them, and besmear their faces with the blood. For every thing they have an idol, consecrated by the use of the nations that in ancient times honored the same gods. Thus they have an idol that they petition for victory in war; another for success in their labors; and so for every thing in which they seek or desire prosperity, they have their idols, which they honor and serve.

## Frågor till Cortés brev.

Hur beskriver Cortés det nya landet för sin kung?

Vad skriver han gott om?

Vad skriver han negativt om?

Hur beskriver han religionen?

Verkar det viktigt för honom att kristendomen införs?

Hur motiverar han införandet av kristendomen?

Verkar han vilja lära sig av den nya civilisation han mött?

Källa till breven (som innehåller massvis med fler brev och intresseranta observationer)

<https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/teaching-and-learning-in-the-digital-age/the-history-of-the-americas/the-conquest-of-mexico/letters-from-hernan-cortes>