

3. Examine the artistic renditions of sixteenth-century encounters between Europeans and Indians. What can be learned from these illustrations concerning the assumptions of both European and Native American artists with regard to the "other"? What does the work of European artists such as Theodor de Bry reveal about the values and assumptions of those who portrayed the Spanish conquest? How did these visual documents influence European expectations and ideas about the peoples of the New World?
4. What do the documents reveal about the Indians' reactions to their earliest contacts with Europeans? Why did Native Americans respond as they did? What were the results of their behavior for their own and future generations of Indians?

1. Bartolomé de Las Casas Indicts the *Conquistadores*, 1542

God has created all these numberless people to be quite the simplest, without malice or duplicity, most obedient, most faithful to their natural Lords, and to the Christians, whom they serve; the most humble, most patient, most peaceful, and calm, without strife nor tumults; not wrangling, nor querulous, as free from uproar, hate and desire of revenge, as any in the world.

They are likewise the most delicate people, weak and of feeble constitution, and less than any other can they bear fatigue, and they very easily die of whatsoever infirmity; so much so, that not even the sons of our Princes and of nobles, brought up in royal and gentle life, are more delicate than they; although there are among them such as are of the peasant class. They are also a very poor people, who of worldly goods possess little, nor wish to possess: and they are therefore neither proud, nor ambitious, nor avaricious. . . .

Among these gentle sheep, gifted by their Maker with the above qualities, the Spaniards entered as soon as they knew them, like wolves, tigers, and lions which had been starving for many days, and since forty years they have done nothing else; nor do they otherwise at the present day, than outrage, slay, afflict, torment, and destroy them with strange and new, and many kinds of cruelty, never before seen, nor heard of, nor read of. . . .

Of the Island of Hispaniola

The Christians, with their horses and swords and lances, began to slaughter and practise strange cru-

elty among them. They penetrated into the country and spared neither children nor the aged, nor pregnant women, nor those in child labour, all of whom they ran through the body and lacerated, as though they were assaulting so many lambs herded in their sheepfold.

They made bets as to who would slit a man in two, or cut off his head at one blow: or they opened up his bowels. They tore the babes from their mothers' breast by the feet, and dashed their heads against the rocks. Others they seized by the shoulders and threw into the rivers, laughing and joking, and when they fell into the water they exclaimed: "boil body of so and so!" They spitted the bodies of other babes, together with their mothers and all who were before them, on their swords.

They made a gallows just high enough for the feet to nearly touch the ground, and by thirteens, in honour and reverence of our Redeemer and the twelve Apostles, they put wood underneath and, with fire, they burned the Indians alive.

They wrapped the bodies of others entirely in dry straw, binding them in it and setting fire to it; and so they burned them. They cut off the hands of all they wished to take alive, made them carry them fastened on to them, and said: "Go and carry letters": that is; take the news to those who have fled to the mountains.

They generally killed the lords and nobles in the following way. They made wooden gridirons of stakes, bound them upon them, and made a slow fire beneath: thus the victims gave up the spirit by degrees, emitting cries of despair in their torture. . . .

Of New Spain

New Spain [Mexico] was discovered in the year 1517. And the discoverers gave serious offence to the Indians in that discovery, and committed several homicides. In the year 1518 men calling themselves Christians went there to ravage and to kill; although they say that they go to populate. And from

the said year 1518, till the present day (and we are in 1542) all the iniquity, all the injustice, all the violence and tyranny that the Christians have practised in the Indies have reached the limit and overflowed: because they have entirely lost all fear of God and the King, they have forgotten themselves as well.

2. The Aztec View of the Conquest, ca. Sixteenth Century

Then [Cortés] said to Moctezuma: "Is this not thou? Art thou not he? Art thou Moctezuma?"

Moctezuma replied: "Indeed yes; I am he." . . .

And when Moctezuma's address which he directed to the Marquis [Cortés] was ended, Marina [Malinche, a native woman working for the Spanish] then interpreted it, she translated it to him. And when the Marquis had heard Moctezuma's words, he spoke to Marina; he spoke to them in a barbarous tongue; he said in his barbarous tongue:

"Let Moctezuma put his heart at ease; let him not be frightened. We love him much. Now our hearts are indeed satisfied, for we know him, we hear him. For a long time we have wished to see him, to look upon his face. And this we have seen. Already we have come to his home in Mexico. At his leisure he will hear our words."

Thereupon [the Spaniards] grasped [Moctezuma] by the hand. Already they went leading him by it. They caressed him with their hands to make their love known to him. . . .

And when they had gone to arrive in the palace, when they had gone to enter it, at once they firmly seized Moctezuma. They continually kept him closely under observation; they never let him from their sight. With him was Itzquauhtzin. But the others just came forth [unimpeded].

And when this had come to pass, then each of the guns shot off. As if in confusion there was going off to one side, there was scattering from one's sight, a jumping in all directions. It was as if one had lost one's breath; it was as if for the time there was stupefaction, as if one were affected by mushrooms, as if something unknown were shown one. Fear prevailed. It was as if everyone had swallowed his heart. Even before it had grown dark, there was terror,

there was astonishment, there was apprehension, there was a stunning of the people. . . .

And when [the Spaniards] were well settled, they thereupon inquired of Moctezuma as to all the city's treasure—the devices, the shields. Much did they importune him; with great zeal they sought gold. And Moctezuma thereupon went leading the Spaniards. They went surrounding him, scattered about him; he went among them, he went in their lead; they went each holding him, each grasping him. And when they reached the storehouse, a place called Teocalco, thereupon were brought forth all the brilliant things; the quetzal feather head fan, the devices, the shields, the golden discs, the devils' necklaces, the golden nose crescents, the golden leg bands, the golden arm bands, the golden forehead bands.

Thereupon was detached the gold which was on the shields and which was on all the devices. And as all the gold was detached, at once they ignited, set fire to, applied fire to all the various precious things [which remained]. They all burned. And the gold the Spaniards formed into separate bars. . . .

And four days after they had been hurled from the [pyramid] temple, [the Spaniards] came to cast away [the bodies of] Moctezuma and Itzquauhtzin, who had died, at the water's edge at a place called Teoloc. For at that place there was the image of a turtle carved of stone; the stone had an appearance like that of a turtle.

And when they were seen, when they were known to be Moctezuma and Itzquauhtzin, then they quickly took up Moctezuma in their arms. They carried him there to a place called Copulco. Thereupon they placed him on a pile of wood; thereupon they kindled it, they set fire to it. Thereupon the fire crackled, seeming to flare up, to send up many tongues of

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