

Aztec Empire



**Warm up: 1. List 6 things you see in this picture
2. Who do you think painted this an Aztec or a Spaniard? Why?**



Perspective?



Perspective?



Perspective?



Geography

- Founded capital Tenochtitlan -an island in the middle of Lake Texcoco (modern day Mexico city)
- Moderate climate, interconnecting lakes, forest and wild game




Geography and Adaptation

- Used floating gardens called chinampas to produce food in swampy conditions
- They created canals for irrigation and transportation of goods and people



Rise to Power: Warriors

- Aztecs called themselves Mexica (meh-shee-ka)
 - Skilled warriors
 - under the leader Monteczuma they expanded to 1/3 of Mexico- Mostly in South
 - Population of 25 million at peak
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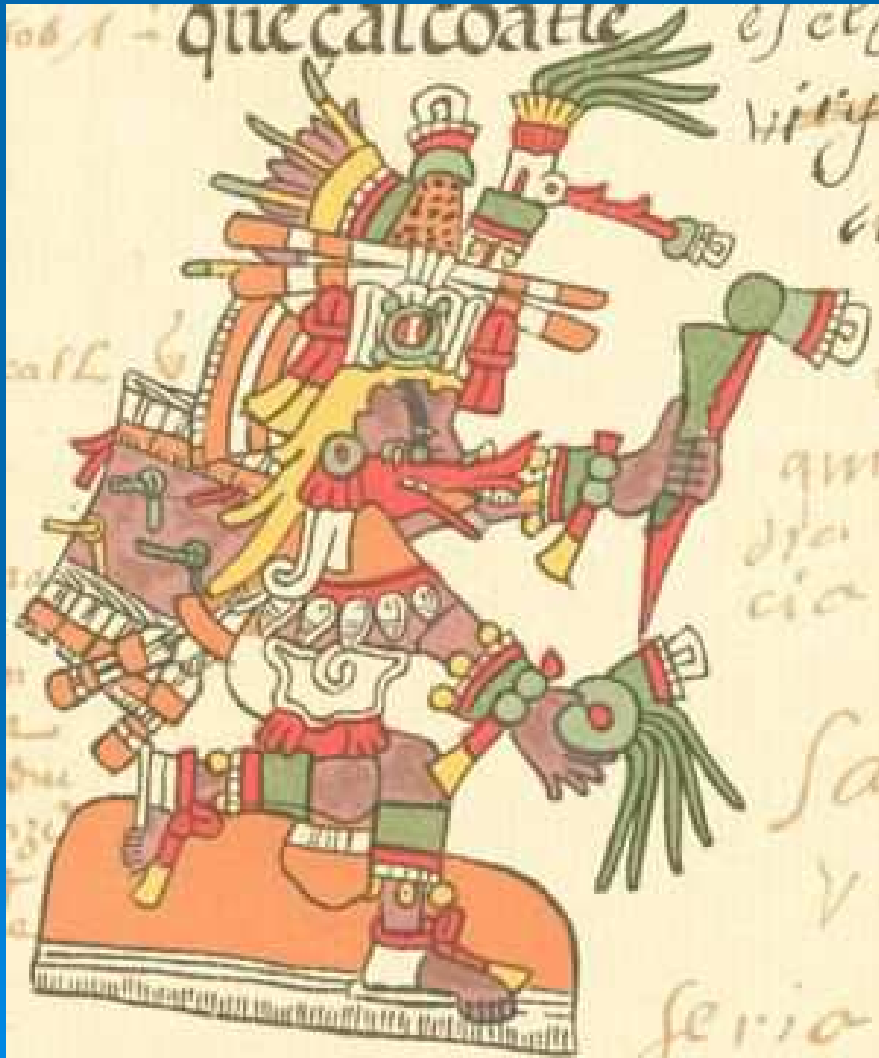
Monteczuma :Warriors



Religion: Polytheism (many gods)

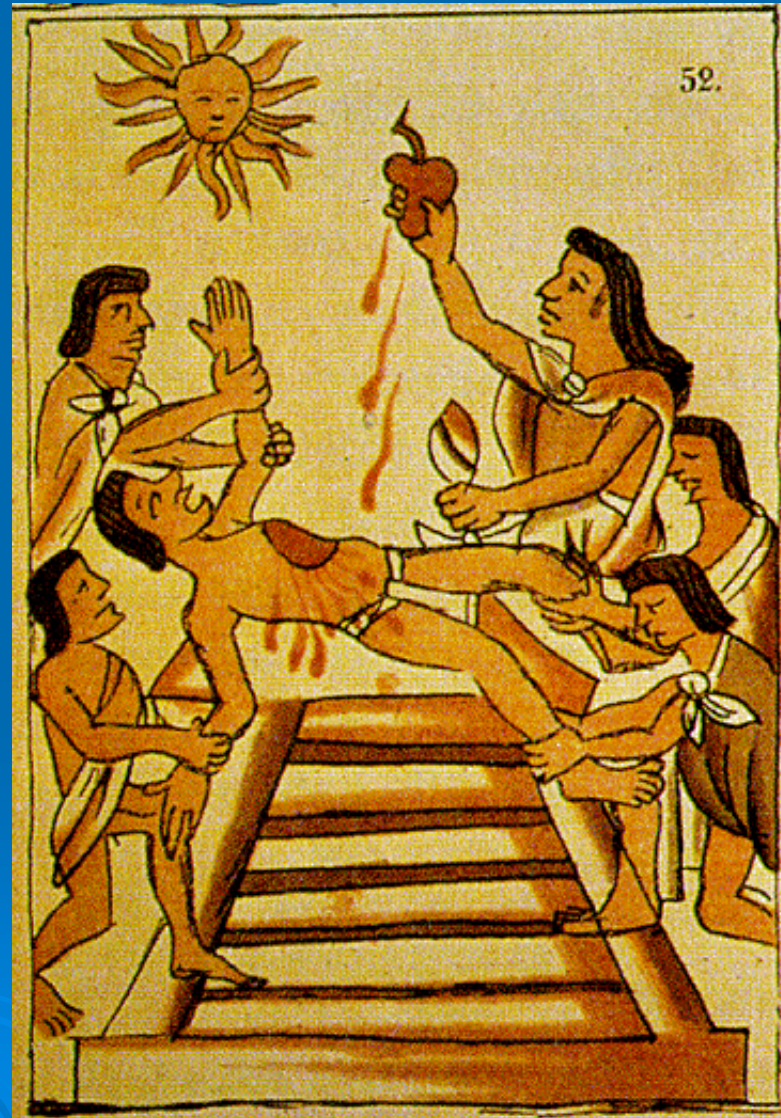
- Worshiped gods of sun, rain, moon etc.
- **KEY POINT:** The Aztecs predicted that Quetzalcoatl (serpent god of creation) would return in early 1500s

Religion: Quetzalcoatl



Religion: Sacrifice

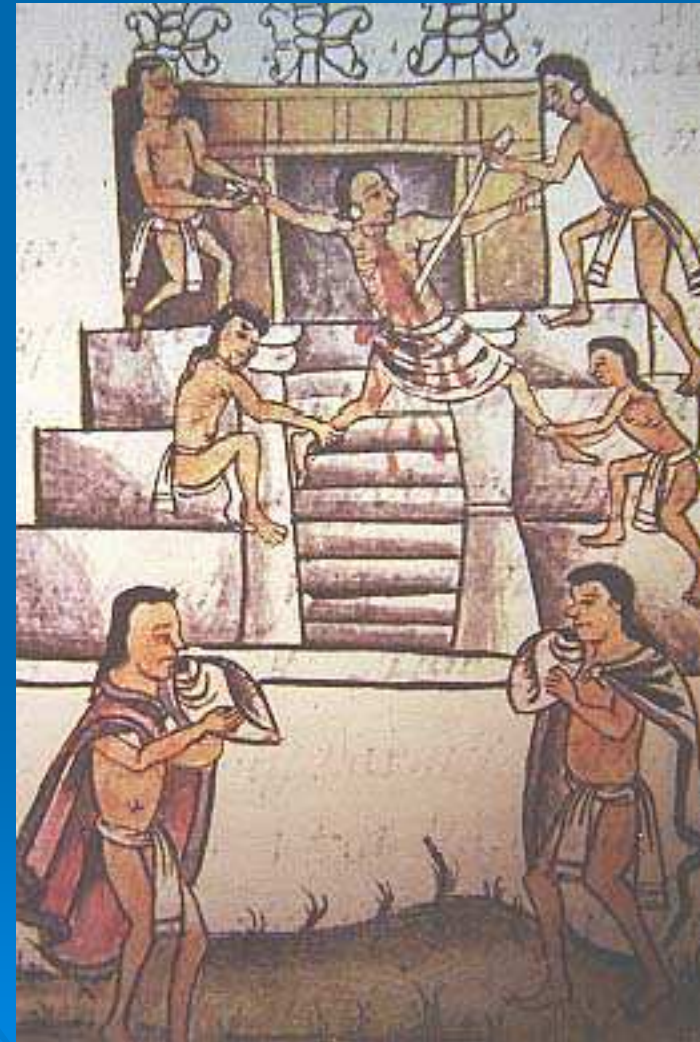
- Attempted to please gods, by human sacrifices
- Military Deterrent: Sacrifices used as intimidation to the people and other tribes
- Typical sacrifices would take place on top of a high temple
- Aztec sacrificed about 10,000 people



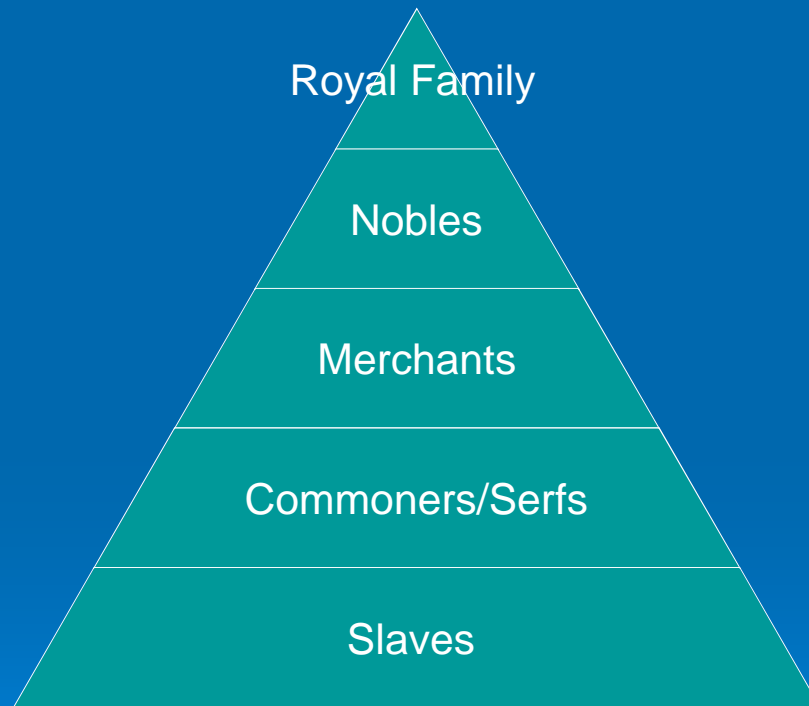
Famine and Sacrifice

- During a famine in 1450 they began to make sacrifices to the gods
- They work. Why?
- Less people to feed...Maybe? Who knows for sure....

Sacrifice



Social Structure



- Royal family ruled all, wives held high positions and respect
- Nobles- priest, military officers, and government leaders
- Merchants- imported the goods
- Commoners/Serfs- worked in the fields
- Slaves- people could be sold into slavery

Interesting Facts

- City contained 80,000 to 250,000 people
- Canals served as roads
- Markets- 60,000 people visited daily
- Huge pyramids, some lined with thousands of skulls



Hernan Cortez and the Spanish

- When he arrives Montezuma thinks that he is Quezalcoatl
- They invite him to the capital Tenochtitlan
- Cortez jails Montezuma

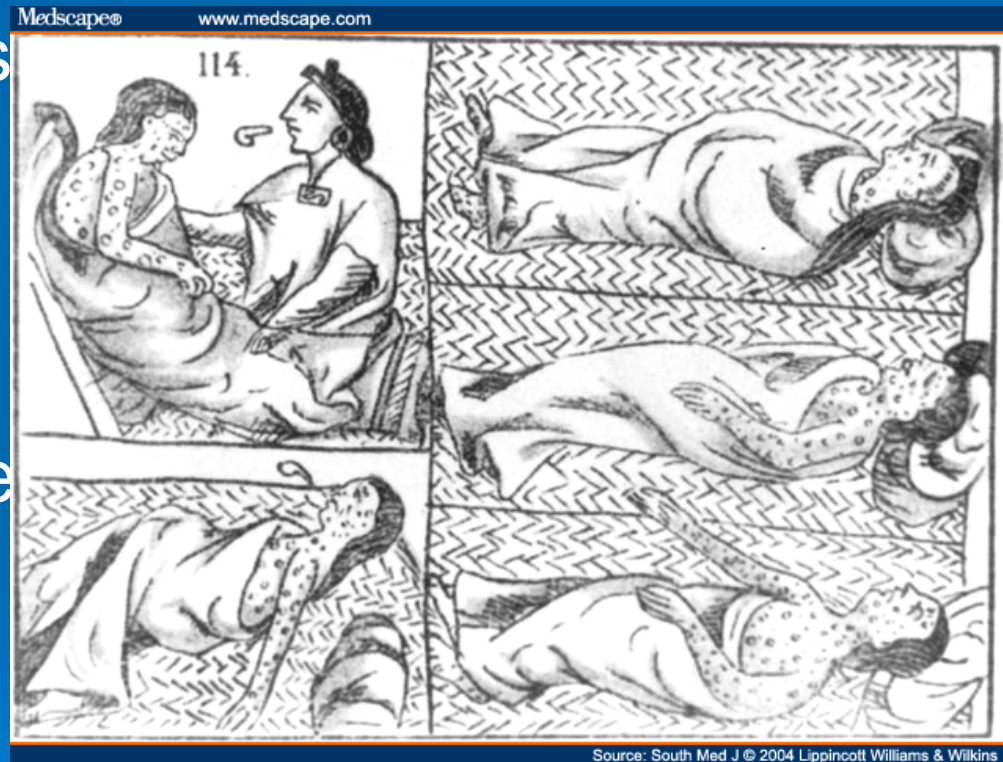


Henan Cortez



Hernan Cortez and the Spanish

- The Aztecs fight the off, but the Spaniards leave behind small pox:
- Cortez returns and defeats them: only 2 million Aztecs survive
- In 1521 they surrender



Small Pox

- fever, chills, headache, nausea, vomiting and severe muscle aches

- A rash follows that spreads and progresses to raised bumps that crust, scab, and fall off after about three weeks, leaving a pitted scar.

- 30-50% fatality rate



Aztec Empire Montage Clip

- <http://172.26.64.6/SAFARI/montage/playlistedit.php?playlisttype=MY&Action=MakeActive&playlistkeyindex=42&location=local>