



## **Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs**

*Buddy Levy*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

# Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs

Buddy Levy

## Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs Buddy Levy

In an astonishing work of scholarship that reads like an adventure thriller, historian Buddy Levy records the last days of the Aztec empire and the two men at the center of an epic clash of cultures.

*“I and my companions suffer from a disease of the heart which can be cured only with gold.” —Hernán Cortés*

It was a moment unique in human history, the face-to-face meeting between two men from civilizations a world apart. Only one would survive the encounter. In 1519, Hernán Cortés arrived on the shores of Mexico with a roughshod crew of adventurers and the intent to expand the Spanish empire. Along the way, this brash and roguish conquistador schemed to convert the native inhabitants to Catholicism and carry off a fortune in gold. That he saw nothing paradoxical in his intentions is one of the most remarkable—and tragic—aspects of this unforgettable story of conquest.

In Tenochtitlán, the famed City of Dreams, Cortés met his Aztec counterpart, Montezuma: king, divinity, ruler of fifteen million people, and commander of the most powerful military machine in the Americas. Yet in less than two years, Cortés defeated the entire Aztec nation in one of the most astonishing military campaigns ever waged. Sometimes outnumbered in battle thousands-to-one, Cortés repeatedly beat seemingly impossible odds. Buddy Levy meticulously researches the mix of cunning, courage, brutality, superstition, and finally disease that enabled Cortés and his men to survive.

**Conquistador** is the story of a lost kingdom—a complex and sophisticated civilization where floating gardens, immense wealth, and reverence for art stood side by side with bloodstained temples and gruesome rites of human sacrifice. It’s the story of Montezuma—proud, spiritual, enigmatic, and doomed to misunderstand the stranger he thought a god. Epic in scope, as entertaining as it is enlightening, *Conquistador* is history at its most riveting.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

## Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs Details

Date : Published June 24th 2008 by Bantam (first published 2008)

ISBN : 9780553805383

Author : Buddy Levy

Format : Hardcover 432 pages

Genre : History, Nonfiction, Biography, War, Historical



[Download Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the ...pdf](#)



[Read Online](#) Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs Buddy Levy

---

**Download and Read Free Online Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs Buddy Levy**

---

## From Reader Review Conquistador: Hernán Cortés, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztecs for online ebook

### Brett Walker says

Stark, startling, and sobering. I found what I knew about Cortez prior to reading this book was almost nothing and massively over-simplified. And, what I know now is somewhat disturbing but supported by this book with a fidelity that will forever classify Cortez in my own mind as a brute and an at-any-costs conqueror, not much different than many of the other explorers of that era but someone I don't plan to congratulate in any future encounters.

---

### John Nellis says

I originally thought the Spanish conquest of Mexico was a cakewalk. I learned how wrong I was reading this book. The conquest was not so simple. Many times events almost happened to end the expedition . There were many battles and close calls. Things just happened to all end up falling into place , as no matter the reverse or hardship, Cortes found a way to triumph in the end. Luck seemed to have been on his side. Read this book, you will learn a lot. I decided not to go into great detail in this review, so as not to spoil the story.

---

### Alfredo says

Disparates geográficos como «el puerto caribeño de Veracruz»; «San Vicente Chimalhuacán» —no Chicoloapan; Xochimilco, una ciudad ubicada al sudoeste de Tenochtitlan —a la que invariablemente se llama «Tenochtitlán»; el canal «Toltec» y la ciudad de «Tlacopán»; Cortés dedicado a edificar la Tepeaca española —Segura de la Frontera— en un monte. Tonterías léxicas del tamaño de «tabascano», «cempaolenses» o «tepeacanos». Imprecisiones que mueven a risa, como españoles que eran «armados caballeros», soldados que soportaban temperaturas «de hasta noventa grados», extraños «higos silvestres» llamados «tunas», curas que «gestionaban» tamplos y capillas o encuentros bélicos llamados «guerras florales». Todo ello se encuentra en un solo libro, *Conquistador*, de Buddy Levy. Un libro tan malo que ni siquiera debería merecer una reseña en este espacio.

Lo dicho en otras ocasiones en torno a lo que sale de la pluma de los escritores que se meten a manosear la historia —bodrios auténticos, nada menos— es perfectamente perceptible en este caso. No sé qué tanto conozca Levy acerca de la historia de España, o de la historia de la conquista, o incluso de la historia de Mesoamérica. Vistos sus errores, podría decirse que su conocimiento es cercano a cero, o se limita a aquello que le brindan las fuentes más elementales que ha podido pescar. Fuentes de las que toma una serie de datos básicos, mismos que integra a su relato y que adereza con una serie de conceptos por demás torpes, anacrónicos o, en el mejor de los casos, equivocados. El autor —que, a juzgar por el apellido, es judío, cosa que le impide comprender de qué va el catolicismo y, peor aún, de qué va el catolicismo de un español que vive en el siglo XVI— jamás consigue desprenderse de su contexto ni, por ende, de sus prejuicios. Ciento es que, en repetidas ocasiones, deja ver la admiración que siente por Cortés y su portentosa empresa, tanto como por los indígenas a los que somete, y que habían desarrollado una civilización de alcances inimaginados para los que se aprestaron a someterlos. No obstante, esa admiración no le condujo a documentarse, no le llevó a ampliar sus horizontes ni a tratar de entender qué era lo que sucedía en aquel

entonces, ni cuáles eran las causas que lo movían. Su historia, entonces, es un relato de españoles que cometen atrocidades con toda naturalidad, pero que al mismo tiempo se espantan ante las atrocidades que llevan a cabo los indígenas. Tal cual. Una historia de atrocidades. No de seres humanos impulsados por una cultura que normaliza lo que se hace, sino de individuos hipócritas que se espantan porque el de enfrente hace cosas menos peores que las que ellos mismos realizan. Ignorancia pura. Ignorancia, además, alimentada por el hecho de que Levy decidió, por razones desconocidas, no leer ninguna de las biografías de Cortés que hay en el mercado, ni la del autopublicista Duverger, ni la del chabacano Miralles, ni mucho menos la exquisita obra de Martínez. Nada de eso. Prefirió tomar un libro de José López Portillo que le aportaba mucho menos que estos y hacerse bolas con él. Los resultados están a la vista.

La ignorancia supina de Levy está presente a lo largo de todo el texto. El autor no entiende por qué los españoles se niegan a empuñar los remos de los bergantines y lo achaca a que ello «es impropio de su rango militar». No se entera de lo que era la hidalgüía, ni de las trabas que la misma imponía al comportamiento de los sujetos. Tampoco entiende que el hecho de que unos indígenas combatieran a otros no se traducía, necesariamente, en la existencia de una «guerra civil», lo que supondría que todos los indígenas pertenecían a una sola entidad política. Menos aún entiende los elementos religiosos que gobiernan la vida de unos y de otros; si acaso, sabe que ciertas cosas tienen un fondo religioso. Pero, más allá de ello, nada. Tampoco comprende —quizá ni siquiera lo pensó— los cambios habidos en el paisaje y en el clima de la región que aborda en su libro a lo largo de los últimos quinientos años. Levy, muy ufano, explica en la introducción de su obra que se subió a una camioneta y que, a bordo de ella, hizo el viaje entre Cholula y Paso de Cortés, lo que encontró sumamente enriquecedor. De igual forma, es posible que, al seguir los pasos de Cortés, haya realizado buena parte de su recorrido en camión, desde el cual tomó nota de los distintos tipos de clima y de paisaje presentes entre la costa y el Altiplano, mismos que se apresuró a poner por escrito en su texto, repito, sin pensar. Para él es lo mismo lo visible hoy que lo visible hace centurias. Así, luego de dejar atrás una parte de la sierra, se adentró en un altiplano árido, lo que posiblemente sea el valle de Puebla-Tlaxcala. Si uno lo mira hoy en día —máxime si efectúa tal observación entre noviembre y mayo—, el valle es algo más que seco. Hoy. Quinientos años después de que se transformó el paisaje, se talaron los bosques, se insertaron zonas de cultivo y extensos potreros. Hoy. Hace quinientos años el calor era menor, había más humedad y, por consiguiente, más vegetación. Todo ello le pasa de noche al asombrado autor, que una y otra vez trata de trasladar el clima a su texto, lo que medianamente consigue al estar en la costa —cosa que no es difícil, al tratarse de calor, humedad y más calor—, pero que le representa un escollo monumental en cuanto se adentra en las tierras altas y las temperaturas varían.

El libro tiene, no se crea que no, un lado humorístico. De puro humorismo involuntario, pero muy simpático a fin de cuentas. De entre los innumerables episodios que podrían considerarse como tales, seleccioné dos que, si se les mira bien, son hasta tiernos. En el primero, según Levy, Cortés atravesó una quebrada que separa al Ajusco de las estribaciones del Popocatépetl. Una quebrada. Menos mal que no se le ocurrió decir «atravesó en un santiamén», o «de un salto», porque la quebrada a la que se refiere el autor, como puede imaginarlo cualquiera que habite estas latitudes, tiene cerca de cincuenta kilómetros de extensión. Menuda quebrada. En tanto, el segundo es solo un error de atención. Decir que los mexicas —a los que el tipo, neciamente, llama «aztecas» a lo largo de todo el libro— dependían de un acueducto que corría por Chapultepec es ser inocente en grado sumo. O bobo. O distraído. Si quería indicar el dato, bastaba con decir «el acueducto que arrancaba en Chapultepec», no más. Pero indicar que el acueducto corría por Chapultepec —y solo por ahí, lo que hacía que no llegara a Tenochtitlan— es un error elemental.

Entonces, si el libro es tan malo, ¿por qué le confiero una calificación de dos estrellas? Porque hace más que muchos otros libros que abordan el mismo tema: narra. Entretiene. Quiere que se le lea. Eso, para mí, vale mucho. Valdría más si la obra fuera mejor pero, en este caso, al haber información buena y útil en medio de tantos absurdos, el texto se salva de la quema. No es, de ninguna manera, un ejemplo a seguir en cuanto al

procesamiento de los datos o incluso en cuanto a la argamasa narrativa empleada. Sí lo es, en cambio, en cuanto al deseo explícito de contar la historia, de hacerla inteligible, de lograr que se entienda, se apropie y, quizás, se le tome el gusto. Que de eso se trata esto de escribir historia, a final de cuentas.

---

### **dead letter office says**

The story is an amazing one... the Spanish conflict with the Aztecs was extraordinary partly because both civilizations were so steeped in cultures and ideologies of extreme violence. It's a compelling read because the history is fascinating--conquest by the Spanish despite inconceivable numerical inferiority to the native people (who were not all united in support of the Aztec, of course), and really weird personal dynamics between Montezuma and Cortes--but it isn't particularly well-written and although the author seems to try to avoid it, it lapses into Euro-centrism over and over (in describing the numbers killed in battle, he sometimes means the number of Spanish lost, etc.).

---

### **Justin Tyme says**

Well researched and balanced. I love how the author quotes primary sources as part of a well-written narrative. This book is a great blend between historical research and story telling. Although the events in this book are not easy to read (human sacrifice, cannibalism, civilian massacre, torture, etc.), they are necessary elements to the narrative, and show that both the conquistadors and the Aztecs were barbaric (the Conquistadors less so).

---

### **Clint says**

Books like this make me really wonder who is worse in the situations where some more advanced European group comes in and stomps the shit out of some barbaric cannibal child-sacrificing group.

This book was pretty good, it was actually written sort of like a novel, with lots of liberties taken by the writer with adjectives and the feelings of the people involved. But I don't think it's really meant to be an academic history book, more a history book for normal people like me, and the writer's literary embellishments don't really detract from the raw facts.

Considering that Montezuma is dead about halfway through the book, I don't think his name should have appeared in the title.

In the epilogue, there is some mention of further adventures of Cortes, all of them failures. I need to check out these books. I can't see how someone can conquer Mexico, and then get beaten back by Honduras. Kind of like America almost single-handedly winning the Pacific war and then getting spanked by the North Vietnamese.

---

## **Tom Elpel says**

I ordered *Conquistador* while preparing to travel to Mexico City, to better grasp local history. *Conquistador: Hernan Cortes, King Montezuma, and the Last Stand of the Aztec* is the riveting and vivid account of Cortes and his brutal conquest of the Aztec empire in 1519 – 1521. Montezuma, king of the Aztecs, ruled over 15 million people when Cortes arrived with a few hundred Spanish soldiers and Cuban porters. The capitol city of Tenochtitlán, which the conquistadors called the “City of Dreams,” was built on Lake Texcoco, much like Venice, yet bigger and more beautiful than any European city of the era. Through shrewd military campaigns, duplicity, and diplomacy, Cortes conquered the Aztecs and Mexico in the name of the Spanish Crown, utterly destroying Tenochtitlán in the process. The subject matter may not be uplifting, but author Buddy Levy’s telling of it is absolutely spellbinding. Moreover, it is astonishing that such a detailed play-by-play account of the events was recorded and preserved for five hundred years. I listened to the story on unabridged CD, as read by Patrick Lawlor, and found *Conquistador* so compelling as to listen to it a second time.

---

## **Urey Patrick says**

If you have any interest at all in Aztec culture and the Cortez saga, this is the book to read. The author is a bit too empathetic with the Aztec culture of daily human sacrifices, totemic dismemberment, ritualistic blood-letting and cannibalism. I don't think it all that bad that Cortez ended the incomprehensibly vast killing and the ruthless preying on numerous "lesser" tribes as fodder to feed the ravenous Aztec appetite for human blood and flesh. On the other hand, his descriptions of Aztec architecture, community organization and agricultural accomplishments are eye-opening, and losses to history that do merit some regret. THAT would be something to see. Same goes for all the Aztec jewelry and exquisite gold & silver crafts that were melted down into ingots by the Spanish. What has survived to present time is but the merest sampling of what was there. On the other hand, Cortez' accomplishments and feats of engineering, military daring and diplomatic deftness are of a magnitude that are equally eye-opening and poorly served by modern conventional accounts of his conquest. He too deserves better.

---

## **Lyn Fuchs says**

Traveling from Veracruz to Mexico City is not a major journey - unless you do it on foot, wearing full metal armor, offroad without good maps, and with thousands of ferocious warriors trying to kill you. Who would attempt this? Only one guy. Buddy Levy's book *Conquistador* allows us to march alongside one of history's most insanely-courageous leaders: Hernan Cortes.

The book compels readers eagerly down this deadly road for God, gold and glory. Despite an avalanche of facts, the complexities of weapons, battles, alliances and negotiations are made clear without slowing the riveting drama.

The narrative documents three controversial propositions. 1) Hernan Cortes was a military genius of Napoleonic or Alexanderic magnitude. He pulled off an incredibly-ballsy, nearly-impossible feat, regardless of how we view it ethically.

2) This wasn't a simple confrontation between Europeans and Natives. What Cortez orchestrated was a new-world civil-war, pitting Aztecs against oppressed neighbors, who hated them enough to fight bravely with Cortes as the lesser of two evils.

3) Despite foul hypocrisy and kindergarten theology, Hernan is to the Americas what Constantine is to Europe: a bloody apostle who spread the Word with the help of swords and prophetic visions. (Constantine saw a cross in the sky by which he'd conquer; Montezuma saw a kingdom from across the sea by which he'd be conquered. These two omens helped propel an Asian called Jesus into a global faith.)

If you doubt the long-term religious influence of the cruel Cortes, consider my recent experience. Visiting a remote Chinantec village in Mexico, I commented on what looked like a Day of the Dead altar. Villagers rebuked me insisting "We are Catholics, this is an All Saints' Day altar, and Day of the Dead is pagan necromancy!" Point taken. To say Hernan Cortes was merely a marauder with no spiritual impact is to say you haven't traveled Latin America much. Admire him or hate him, this guy matters, so the gripping Conquistador matters too.

---

### **Noah Goats says**

If you want to know what an alien invasion would be like, don't read science fiction, read this book instead. Just imagine how horrifying and strange it must have been for the Aztecs to have Cortes and his men show up in huge technologically advanced ships from a strange land they had never heard of. Imagine their reaction at seeing these men who looked so different from themselves with their beards, white skin, and shining armor. Imagine their horror as these Spaniards rode terrifying animals they had never seen before, and killed with cannons and other flaming, smoking weapons. In the end, these aliens destroyed the Aztec's culture and reduced many to slavery.

This book tells the gripping story of how Cortes used violence, diplomacy, lies, courage, native allies, technology and brilliant tactics (along with a big assist from smallpox) to bring down what to the Mexicans had seemed like an unbeatable empire. I wish I could go back in time and see the glorious city of Tenochtitlan before the Spanish reduced it to rubble. It was possibly the largest city in the world at the time and it was constructed in the middle of a large lake. Like Venice, it was a city of canals packed with beautiful buildings and artistic treasures. It also had huge temples built to the Aztec gods who demanded a constant stream of human sacrifices (and cannibalism). It's all gone now.

Buddy Levy's writing style may be a tiny bit clunky, but still, his narrative is never boring. I liked this book quite a bit.

---

### **Kurt says**

I was looking for a way to augment lectures to my middle school social studies students and found this in B&N. Near the close of the school year, I found myself caught up in learning all I could about Cortes, the Conquistadors, and the Aztec civilization. I lucked out with this book as it provides a smoothly written history that reads like a novel. I was appreciative of that -- too many "histories" become tedious data dumps. No fun. This stuff is exciting ... and brutal. I was glad to finish the thing. I felt pretty lousy as a member of the human race, what with all the extreme violence used as the primary and "natural" means to a greedy end.

Mesoamerica in the early 1500s is a place filled with both savagery and wonder. While in London this July, I made it a point to check out some of the beautiful pieces in the Aztec collection of the British Museum. Of course, the greatest treasure trove of artifacts resides in Mexico City -- which might be one of the few things that would ever compel me to make a trip there.

---

### **Sheila says**

When I was in grade school we studied about Hernan Cortes and the mighty Aztecs, but all I could remember was that Hernan Cortes defeated Montezuma and that small pox decimated the Aztecs. Acclaimed historian Buddy Levy clarifies a lot of the myths surrounding the last days of the Aztec empire and the complex relationship between Montezuma and Cortez. The research the author did in order to bring this sweeping adventure in history is impressive. Just for the record, neither party were angels when you take into account all the greed, murder, and cannibalism.

---

### **Anna says**

I really don't know what to think of this book. The author's use of adjectives in praise of Cortes gets tiresome really fast. How many ways can you say he was one tactical, ruthless mother fucker? Not that many, it turns out, since Levy calls him a "brilliant strategist" about a dozen times. Seriously, it ends up reading like the epithets in Greek epics, but instead of "grey-eyed Athena" it's "battle-hardened Spanish soldiers." These repetitions are grating not only for their literary merits, but also because the space they take up in Levy's prose furthers the myth that only a few hundred conquistadors were able to take Tenochtitlan, a city of 300,000 inhabitants, with only passing mentions here are there of the 40,000 Tlaxcalan warriors who fought as allies with the Spanish, as well as allies from Atlixco, Chalco, Texcoco, and many other indigenous states. To his credit, Levy does mention these strikingly large numbers of indigenous troops, but in contrast to his fawning over Cortes' "strategic cunning", it's easy for the force of these numbers (mentioned almost in passing) not to really sink in.

My biggest issue with this book, however, is not with the author, but with the voice actor who did the narration on the audiobook. Patrick Lawlor has apparently won prizes (or at least nominations) for other audiobooks he has recorded, but I can't see why. In some ways, his stilted, awkwardly formal way of speaking was well matched with the text's numerous technical details. Descriptions of the dimensions of various causeways, a full accounting of the number of mares and harquebuses that the Spanish had in working order at various points during the conquest, a recounted geography of the various causeways connecting Tenochtitlan to the mainland, these are details that are hard to bring to life verbally. My main beef with him was his butchering of the pronunciation of various Spanish and indigenous Mexican names. Aguilar is pronounced Ah-ghee-lar, not Ah-gwi-lar. This is a forgivable error to someone who isn't used to pronouncing Spanish names, but seriously, you're narrating a book about a bunch of Spaniards: learn how to say their names.

The weirdest part about his narration, however, was that when the text quoted Cortes, Lawlor uses this bizarre "Spanish" accent when speaking his words. Think: Señor Wencez, but much more sinister. I ended up looking forward to these parts because of the comic relief they offered.

Despite all the complaints I have about this book, I must say that I listened to the whole thing. Not only that,

but I returned it to the library when it was put on hold by someone else, and because I hadn't finished it earlier, I checked it out again. This might say more about how compelling the story of the conquest is, but perhaps some credit should be given to Buddy Levy and the way he tells the story. I found myself turning off my car and thinking, "I wonder what is going to happen in this battle," or "How will Cortes get out of this one?!" The story pulls you along (except where it stalls with the weight of excessive detail) and made me want to go out and read about six more books on this topic from different perspectives.

---

### **Mati says**

This true story of the conquest of the Aztecs blew my mind. It is so gripping, wild, violent, and shattering as to only reflect the scope of empires crashing in who's wake we all still live. Cortes is Both hero and insatiably vicious.

---

### **Fara says**

A fascinating look at how Cortes and his handful of conquistadors managed to take control of one of the largest empires on earth at that time. A fascinating personality study of Cortes the man, and of Montezuma, of what we can know of him.

---

### **Jennifer says**

Wow! Exciting, edge of your seat reading. "Popular" history told narrative style, but supported with extensive research. An "I was there" kind of history, though by the end you're certainly glad you weren't. A wonderful book marred only by an occasional carelessness in the prose – facts are sometimes repeated within a page or two of one another, as though one instance was not removed when the other was inserted. But this happens infrequently and doesn't spoil the pace of the story. As for that story! Well, I thought I knew about Cortés and the Aztecs, but my knowledge and understanding only scratched the surface. You can't admire the Gran Conquistador's cruelty, but you can his determination, leadership, and cleverness. And to be honest, sometimes you can't really say who the bad guys are – the invading Spaniards or the Aztecs who oppressed hundreds of thousands of other Mexican peoples. One thing's for sure: there are stains of blood – from battle or sacrifice – on every page of this outstanding book.

---

### **Chris says**

I read this after watching Michael Wood's *Conquistadors*. Levy does a good job of capturing the time, and the book is engrossing. Levy doesn't romanticize either group, and while he is sympathetic to the Aztecs, he does seem to have some admiration for Cortes. In short, Levy tries to be as fair as he can be. He consulted both Spanish and Native sources. The focus is more on the founding of a modern idea than the evils of imperialism though he does present the evils of imperialism.

It also makes me glad I wasn't alive back then. All those giving away women.

---

### **Ed Mestre says**

Addicted to this tale over many years I just had to read one more version. Not nearly as thorough as Hugh Thomas excellent book "Conquest" (also reviewed by me on Goodreads) I enjoyed it nevertheless. At times I found some silly errors (saying the Toltec city of Tula is present day Mexico City & the Latin name for a bison as the Latin name for a mammoth), but for the most part it was pretty well researched & does give Thomas' acknowledgement for the work he did with previously unknown documents. For those not familiar with this remarkable story this is a much quicker read than Thomas, the classic Prescott story, or the eyewitness account by Bernal Diaz. What boosts this version with new details I didn't know before is the tale of the final assault on the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlan (the real present day Mexico City). I always knew Cortes used ships on the lake that existed then surrounding the capital, but this really drove home that in many ways this was a true naval battle. Lots of "I didn't know that" moments in the final act.

---

### **Shariq Chishti says**

A very well written book about one of the most important chapters of colonial history and world history. Hernan Cortez conquest of Tenochtitlan is unlike any other I have read or heard about. Cortez` s massacre of Cholula and what seemed at first an almost bloodless coup of Tenochtitlan read like historical fiction. But as you flip pages more interesting and bemusing aspects of the conquest come to the fore nothing more than the character of Motecuzoma II. The Aztec emperor Motecuzoma II` s friendship with Hernan Cortez is as bewildering as ironic is his end at his own people` s hands when he was led by the Spanish to placate the rabid population of the city.

Spanish had numerous telling advantages in terms of fire arms & an extremely well trained cavalry but they would have failed if not for the native allies who provided the Spanish with the much needed man-power for fighting, digging canals, intelligence and transferring goods across mountains apart from much needed food & water. The climax of the conquest is the months long siege of Tenochtitlan with ingenious use of brigantine by Hernan Cortez in what is probably the greatest inland naval warfare.

The Aztecs were annihilated by small pox and lack of access of fresh water & food but fought valiantly till the very end under the new emperor Cuauhtémoc.

Perhaps the most ironic aspect of the whole conquest is the fact that Aztecs got hold of Hernan Cortez on two occasions and could have killed him right away but their desire to capture him alive for sacrificing eventually saved his life and indeed the conquest.

---

### **Brian Weaver says**

This book was, perhaps, not so much amazing because of how well it was written (though it was, indeed, a well written and compelling work, especially for a history book), or how much research was done (though there are quite extensive footnotes and end notes, a Nahuatl pronunciation guide, maps, and fairly extensive bibliography), but more so because the story of Cortes' relentless and brutal conquest of the Aztec empire was something about which I knew nothing, yet relished learning about. I've been talking to anyone and

everyone who will listen to me describe all I've learned from this book. Talk about a clash of cultures!!

---