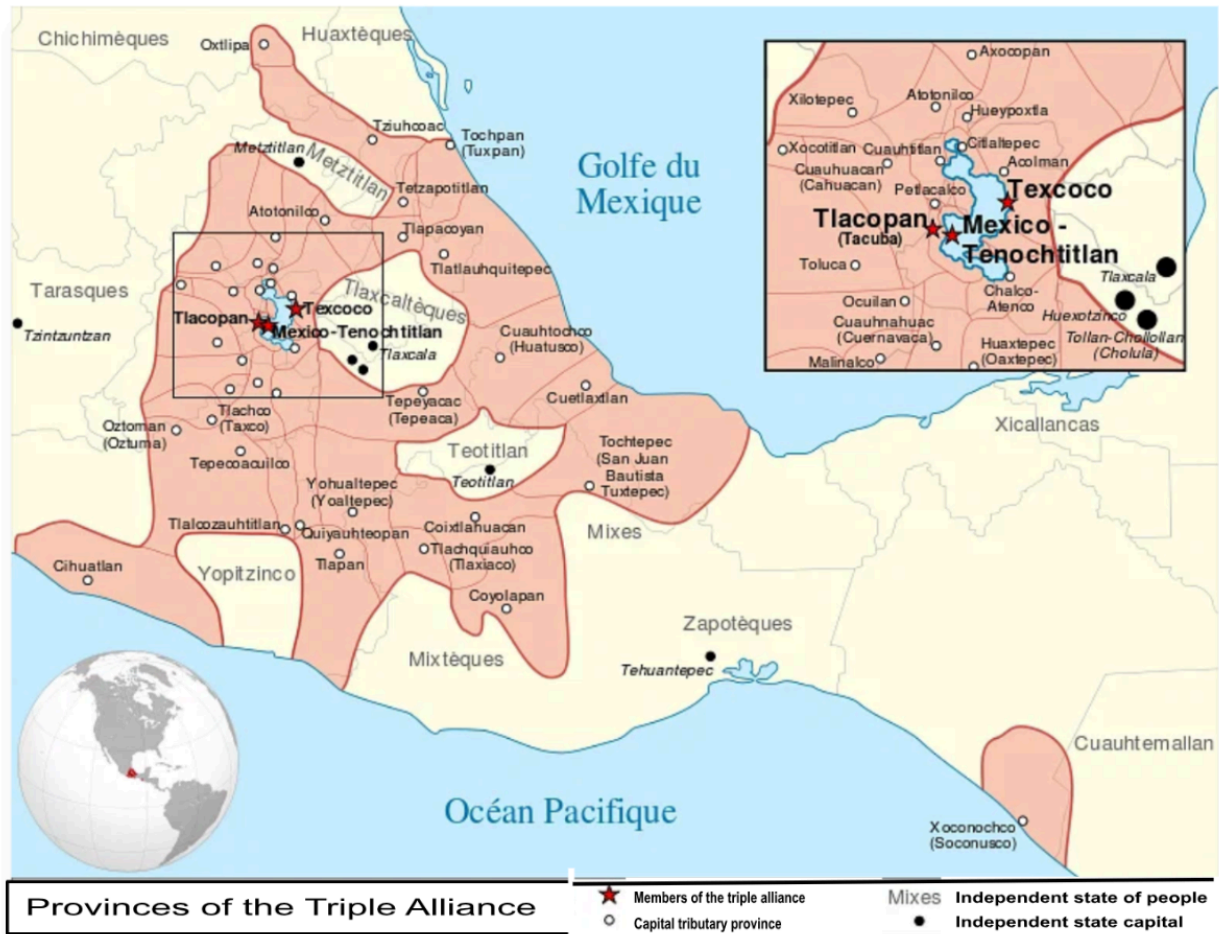


DOCUMENT A

After learning about your Mesoamerican perspective, where do you think they might be located on the map below.



DOCUMENT B

The following is a native account of Cortés's conquest of the Aztecs. The first part, describing the looting of gold from Montezuma, is taken from the Codex Florentino, a compilation of oral histories by those who survived the conquest. The story of the massacre at the Fiesta of Toxcatl, an Aztec celebration to honor the god Huitzilopochtli, comes from the Codex Ramirez and the Codex Aubin. The Codexes are important documents of the Indian people of Mexico at the time of the conquest, mostly assembled by Spanish priests.

SOURCE: From *The Broken Spears* by Miguel Leon-Portilla. (c) 1962, 1990 by Beacon Press.

The Aztecs believed that Cortés was Quetzalcoatl, god and culture hero who had departed to the east, promising that someday he would return from across the seas. It is thus ironic that when Cortés and his men entered Mexico, they were often welcomed not only as guests but also as gods coming home. The Aztec desire to honor the "gods" coincided with the Spanish desire for gold. Thus Montezuma sent out messengers with gifts. But as Cortés's forces moved toward Tenochtitlán (Mexico City), the initial "golden age" disintegrated into suspicion, manipulation, and distrust. Such distrust was often translated into brutality...

When Montezuma had given necklaces to each one, Cortés asked him: "Are you Montezuma? Are you the king? Is it true that you are the king Montezuma?"

And the king said: "Yes, I am Montezuma." Then he stood up to welcome Cortés; he came forward, bowed his head low and addressed him in these words: "Our lord, you are weary. The journey has tired you, but now you have arrived on the earth. You have come to your city, Mexico. You have come here to sit on your throne, to sit under its canopy.

"The kings who have gone before, your representatives, guarded it and preserved it for your coming. The kings Itzcoatl, Motecuhzoma the Elder, Axayacatl, Tizoc and Ahuitzol ruled for you in the City of Mexico. The people were protected by their swords and sheltered by their shields.

"Do the kings know the destiny of those they left behind, their posterity? If only they are watching! If only they can see what I see!

"No, it is not a dream. I am not walking in my sleep. I am not seeing you in my dreams....I have seen you at last! I have met you face to face! I was in agony for five days, for ten days, with my eyes fixed on the Region of the Mystery" And now you have come out of the clouds and mists to sit on your throne again.

"This was foretold by the kings who governed your city, and now it has taken place. You have come back to us; you have come down from the sky. Rest now, and take possession of your royal houses. Welcome to your land, my lords !"

When Montezuma had finished, La Malinche translated his address into Spanish so that the Captain could understand it. Cortés replied in his strange and savage tongue, speaking first to La Malinche: "Tell Montezuma that we are his friends. There is nothing to fear. We have wanted to see him for a long time, and now we have seen his face and heard his words. Tell him that we love him well and that our hearts are contented."

Then he said to Montezuma: "We have come to your house in Mexico as friends. There is nothing to fear."

DOCUMENT C

Massacre in the Main Temple

During this time, the people asked Motecuhzoma how they should celebrate their god's fiesta. He said: "Dress him in all his finery, in all his sacred ornaments."

During this same time, The Sun commanded that Motecuhzoma and Itzcohuatzin, the military chief of Tlatelolco, be made prisoners. The Spaniards hanged a chief from Acolhuacan named Nezahualquenzin. They also murdered the king of Nauhtla, Cohualpopocatzin, by wounding him with arrows and then burning him alive.

For this reason, our warriors were on guard at the Eagle Gate. The sentries from Tenochtitlan stood at one side of the gate, and the sentries from Tlatelolco at the other. But messengers came to tell them to dress the figure of Huitzilopochtli. They left their posts and went to dress him in his sacred finery: his ornaments and his paper clothing.

When this had been done, the celebrants began to sing their songs. That is how they celebrated the first day of the fiesta. On the second day they began to sing again, but without warning they were all put to death. The dancers and singers were completely unarmed. They brought only their embroidered cloaks, their turquoises, their lip plugs, their necklaces, their clusters of heron feathers, their trinkets made of deer hooves. Those who played the drums, the old men, had brought their gourds of snuff and their timbrels.

The Spaniards attacked the musicians first, slashing at their hands and faces until they had killed all of them. The singers-and even the spectators- were also killed. This slaughter in the Sacred Patio went on for three hours. Then the Spaniards burst into the

rooms of the temple to kill the others: those who were carrying water, or bringing fodder for the horses, or grinding meal, or sweeping, or standing watch over this work.

The king Motecuhzoma, who was accompanied by Itzcohuatzin and by those who had brought food for the Spaniards, protested: "Our lords, that is enough! What are you doing? These people are not carrying shields or macanas. Our lords, they are completely unarmed!"

The Sun had treacherously murdered our people on the twentieth day after the captain left for the coast. We allowed the Captain to return to the city in peace. But on the following day we attacked him with all our might, and that was the beginning of the war.

PUBLIC DOMAIN CONTENT

- The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico. **Authored by:** Miguel Leon Portilla. **Located at:** <http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/aztecs1.asp>. **Project:** Internet Modern History Sourcebook. **License:** [*Public Domain: No Known Copyright*](#)

DOCUMENT D

Cortés is featured below in a friendly greeting with Xicotencatl, a Tlaxcala elected official

Source: “Cortés Greets Xicotencatl.” Mid-16th century. Detail from *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*. Archer M. Huntington Art Gallery, University of Texas, Austin.



DOCUMENT E

Sometimes referred to as "floating gardens," chinampas are artificial islands that were created by interweaving reeds with stakes beneath the lake's surface, creating underwater fences. "Chinampero" refers to the mesoamericans that farmed these gardens

