

# Mexico

History through Murals

Aztec Era

1345-152

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# Aztecs called themselves Mexica

Mountains and lake provide natural defense of city

Tenochtitlan Marketplace by Diego Rivera

1345 Aztecs built

Tenochtitlan at Lake Texcoco

Snake on cloth represents Quetzalcoatl-goddess of creation



The city was an important religious center filled with pyramids topped with temples

What raw materials would be used to create mats?

Petates, or mats, were woven out of reed

Slave laborer is identified by simple loin cloth

Importance of family as mother carries child in rebozo

Moctezuma II 1502

# Spanish Conquest & Colonialism 1521-1810





## Conquest by Jose Orozco



Spanish Conquest

Hernan Cortes 1519

Aztecs surrender 1521

Cortes is carrying an iron sword – resting on dismembered bodies of Aztec victim

Aztecs had no metal to match iron's strength

Small pox decimated Aztecs

Winged angel shows partnership of Church and Cortes

Fire in background represents widespread destruction of Spanish soldiers and smallpox.

What is this?

Cortes is a machine... symbolic of European technology





## Absorption of the Indian by Jose Orozco



White European,  
Hernan Cortes, sits with  
an Indian woman,  
Malinche.

Partnership

Symbolic of mixing of  
two groups to create  
**mestizo** people.

Yet, restraint – many  
Mexicans consider  
Mayan Malinche a  
traitor

Mestizo make up  
majority of Mexicans  
today

Dead mestizo  
shows  
unhappiness  
and ill-  
treatment of  
mestizo

Legend: Malinche was  
given to Cortes as a  
translator – later they  
produced a son







## Colonial Domination by Diego Rivera



Cross, Spanish flag and sword represent colonization

Cuauhtemoc, last Aztec emperor, bowing to conquistadors

Conquistadores use branding iron to brand Indian slave

Rivera attempted to summarize 300 years

Bag of gold

Describe the European faces...

Euro faces drawn as animals

Brutal labor of gold mines

Yoked to plow

Huge land grants given to Spanish - encomiendas

Total Indian population fell from 25 million to 1 million by 1700