Chinese sages should reach us. For the last several years, the country has had fertile soil, and the people have had houses in which to live, enough fish and turtles to eat, and enough cloth and silk to make clothes. Parents have looked after their children and the young have respected their elders. Everything has been prosperous and pleasing. There has been no oppression or contention. In the mountains no savage beasts have appeared and in the streams no noxious fishes have been seen. The sea has brought forth treasures and the forests have produced excellent woods. Everything has been in bountiful supply, several times more bountiful than in ordinary times. There have been no destructive winds, and damaging rains have not occurred. Confusion has been eliminated and there is no evil to be found. This is all indeed the result of the civilizing influences of the Sage.' I possess but slight virtuous power. How could I have been capable of this! Is it not the elders and people who brought this about? I am now enfeoffing Ke-yi-li as king of the country and conferring upon him a seal so that he can govern the people. I am also enfeoffing the mountain in the country as 'Mountain Which Protects the Country.' An engraved tablet is to be erected on this mountain to record these facts forever. It will also be engraved as follows: The high peak which rules the land, guards this ocean state, It spits fire and fumes, bringing great prosperity to the country below, It brings rain and sunshine in a timely way, and soothes away troubles, It brings fertile soil and drives off evil vapours, It shelters the people, and eliminates calamities and disharmony, Families are joyful together, and people have plenty throughout the year, The mountain's height is as the ocean's depths! This poem is inscribed to record all for prosperity."

Questions

1. Identify the nature of the relationship between the Chinese empire and the peoples they encountered, as presented here. How does the author describe those relationships? What kinds of terms does he use?
2. Analyze the document's use of the term *equality*. Does the author use the term consistently?
3. What does the author mean by "civilization"?

Bernal Díaz, A Spanish View of Tenochtitlán (1567)

Generally recognized by historians as the most important Spanish chronicler of the conquest, Bernal Díaz wrote *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain* at the end of his life. He completed it around 1567; it was sent to Spain in 1575 but not published until 1632, long after the author's death. Díaz opposed his *True History* to earlier works, written by intellectuals, men who had not experienced the conquest firsthand. Born in Spain, Díaz had been to Mexico twice before the Cortés expedition. He wrote his book to set the record straight about the role of colonists and common soldiers like himself.

Early next day we left Iztapalapa with a large escort of those great Caciques whom I have already mentioned. We proceeded along the Causeway which is here eight paces in width and runs so straight to the City of Mexico that it does not seem to me to turn either much or little, but, broad as it is, it was so crowded with people that there was hardly room for them all, some of them going to and others returning from Mexico, besides those who had come out to see us, so that we were hardly able to pass by the crowds of them that came; and the towers and cues were full of people as well as the canoes from all parts of the lake. It was not to be wondered at, for they had never before seen horses or men such as we are.

Gazing on such wonderful sights, we did not know what to say, or whether what appeared before us was real, for on one side, on the land, there were great cities, and in the lake ever so many more, and the lake itself was crowded with canoes, and in the Causeway were many bridges at intervals, and in front of us stood the great City of Mexico, and we—we did not even number four hundred

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CITATION: Bernal Díaz, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*, ed. A. P. Maudslay (London: Hakluy & Society, 1908) reprinted in Stuart Schwartz, ed., *Victors and Vanquished: Spanish and Nahua Views of the Conquest of Mexico* (Boston: Bedford / St Martins, 2000), pp. 133, 149–150.

soldiers! And we well remembered the words and warnings given us by the people of Huexotzingo and Tlaxcala and Tlamanalco, and the many other warnings that had been given that we should beware of entering Mexico, where they would kill us, as soon as they had us inside.

* * *

Now let us leave the great market place, and not look at it again, and arrive at the great courts and walls where the great Cue stands. Before reaching the great Cue there is a great enclosure of courts, it seems to me larger than the plaza of Salamanca, with two walls of masonry surrounding it and the court itself all paved with very smooth great white flagstones. And where there were not these stones it was cemented and burnished and all very clean, so that one could not find any dust or a straw in the whole place. . .

When we arrived there Moctezuma came out of an oratory where his cursed idols were, at the summit of the great Cue, and two priests came with him, and after paying great reverence to Cortés and to all of us he said: "You must be tired, Señor Malinche, from ascending this our great Cue," and Cortés replied through our interpreters who were with us that he and his companions were never tired by anything. Then Moctezuma took him by the hand and told him to look at his great city and all the other cities that were standing in the water, and the many other towns on the land round the lake, and that if he had not seen the great market place well, that from where they were they could see it better.

So we stood looking about us, for that huge and cursed temple stood so high that from it one could see over everything very well, and we saw the three causeways which led into Mexico, that is the causeway of Iztapalapa by which we had entered four days before, and that of Tacuba, along which later on we fled on the night of our great defeat, when Cuitlahuac the new prince drove us out of the city, as I shall tell later on, and that of Tepeaquilla, and we saw the fresh water that comes from Chapultepec which supplies the city, and we saw the bridges on the three causeways which were built at certain distances apart through which the water of the lake flowed in and out from one side to the other, and we beheld on that

great lake a great multitude of canoes, some coming with supplies of food and others returning loaded with cargoes of merchandise; and we saw that from every house of that great city and of all the other cities that were built in the water it was impossible to pass from house to house, except by drawbridges which were made of wood or in canoes; and we saw in those cities Cues and oratories like towers and fortresses and all gleaming white, and it was a wonderful thing to behold; then the houses with flat roofs, and on the causeways other small towers and oratories which were like fortresses.

After having examined and considered all that we had seen we turned to look at the great market place and the crowds of people that were in it, some buying and others selling, so that the murmur and hum of their voices and words that they used could be heard more than a league off. Some of the soldiers among us who had been in many parts of the world, in Constantinople, and all over Italy, and in Rome, said that so large a market place and so full of people, and so well regulated and arranged, they had never beheld before.

Questions

1. What are some signs of Díaz's respect and wonder at Mexican civilization?
2. What are some signs of disgust and prejudice in this passage?
3. How does Díaz portray Moctezuma?

Galileo Galilei, Letter to Madame Cristina di Lorena, Grand Duchess of Tuscany (1615)

Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) was born to a relatively poor noble family. Sent to the University of Pisa to study medicine, he instead became interested in physics and mathematics. He became a professor of mathematics at Padua in 1592. He made important discoveries about falling objects that called Aristotelian physics into question, about the motion of the pendulum, and in several other areas. He also developed an improved water pump and other practical implements. He is best known, however,