



# Reasons for the Fall of the Aztec Empire

*Stasy Adams*

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## **Reasons for the Fall of the Aztec Empire** Stasy Adams

Seminar paper from the year 2009 in the subject American Studies - Culture and Applied Geography, grade: 1,0, University of Paderborn (Anglistik und Amerikanistik), course: Chicano and Chicana Literature and Culture, language: English, abstract: The capital of Mexico, Mexico City, is located on the remains of an old city. This city, which was once big and gorgeous and was called Tenochtitlan, was razed to the ground in a very short period of time and in a very cruel manner by foreign invaders on August 13th, 1521. Once Tenochtitlan was a capital city of the Aztecs (or how they called themselves Mexica), which they founded in the year 1325. In the course of only few centuries they managed to establish an immense empire, which is known as the Aztec empire today. The Mexica/Aztecs mark the beginning of the Mexican culture. Thus, in this term paper I will be dealing with the Chicano culture at its very beginning.

Who were the Aztecs? What does Aztec mean? Where did they come from? And how did they manage to establish such a big and powerful empire? Why Tenochtitlan has been destroyed? This term paper works with these questions. In order to answer them, a little journey through the history has to be done. Hence, this term paper also offers an overview of the most important events that occurred at that time.

But my primary concern will be to find out how the European invaders managed to overthrow the Aztec empire. Or how could the Aztec empire fall to a small group of Spanish invaders? How is it possible? In other words, I would like to find out the reasons for the fall of the Aztec empire.

A paper about the history, and especially the Ancient history, is a hard venture. Because of a great variety of secondary literature and accordingly of the different opinions and views of the authors of this books relating to this theme one can quickly lose track of things. The analysis is getting even more difficult because we have only few source documents from the Aztecs today, so that one can not know for sure what really happened at that time.

The information about the Aztecs survived in the Aztec codices like, for example, Codex Mendoza, where the conquests of the Aztec kings and tribute areas are registered, it contains also a short ethnographic overview. Other documents, that we have today, are basically chronicles of the Spanish conquerors, for example, "Historia verdadera de la conquista de la Nueva España" written by Bernal Díaz del Castillo; or 5 letters of Cortés to the Spanish king.

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