

Mesoamerica's conquest by europeans essay

[Countries](#), [United States](#)



Quigly argues that civilizations rise and fall naturally. The Aztec empire rose, reached its peak and then collapsed. In *Guns, germs, and steel*, Diamond argues that certain civilizations had an advantage over others and this in part led to their conquest or demise over the millennium. The diamond indicates that Europeans and Conquistador had advanced technology than the Mesoamericans and with an unnatural thirsty for wealth and Christianizing zeal. Europeans prevailed over the Mesoamericans because of their technological strength (Jones, Wood, & Borstelm, 2004). In light of Quigly essay, I support Diamonds thesis. This paper will specifically apply the argument of Diamond to Aztec civilization.

It is without a doubt the technology, Christianity, and unnatural thirst for wealth helped European civilizations to conquer Mesoamerican civilizations (Blattner, 2000). Cortes and his infantry arrived in Mesoamerica and specifically in Aztec civilization at a time when Aztec inhabitants were expecting a white god, and this gave them a chance to fake the entire story of Aztecs (Jones, Wood, & Borstelm, 2004). Cortes was given a godly welcome, and that gave the Spanish some leeway in terms of invading the empire. The Spanish had sophisticated weapons with the best technology that effectively worked against the Aztecs.

The Aztec civilization was not solely conquered by sophisticated arms and the best technology; the Spanish army introduced deadly diseases that weakened the Aztecs and made it easier to conquer them (Edmonds-Poli, 2008). They introduced smallpox, which upon exposure led to deaths of millions of Aztecs. The population stabilized at six million, meaning that more than nineteen million Aztecs succumbed to smallpox.

For many years, Europeans had been known as conquerors in the field of exploration and expansion, but their expansion in Mesoamerica and specifically in Aztec civilization happened at a smaller level (Jones, Wood, & Borstelm, 2004). Both civilizations acted and behaved in line with their technological and cultural factors. The technology of Aztecs was primitive to that wielded by the Europeans. This does not mean Aztec civilization was weak. It was the strongest civilization in Mesoamerica. They used military alliances and conquests to create a strong empire (Jones, Wood, & Borstelm, 2004). The Aztecs amassed their riches by collecting taxes and resources from the conquered empires and kept strong. However, their defeat is attributed to the advanced weapons and technology used by the Europeans.

Cortes, after gaining entry into the territory of Aztecs, he took advantage of the chance offered to him and overthrew the Aztecs (Jones, Wood, & Borstelm, 2004). At that time, Europeans were simply on an expedition mission. The Europeans had “state of the art” ships that enabled them to maneuver and even carry weapons for self-protection. This aspect enabled them to conquer the world without difficulty. These kinds of technologies left natives bowled over, and as they lacked comparable weaponry to challenge the Europeans.

In as much as Europeans had sophisticated weapons and technologies that could easily tear into any civilization, Christianity played a major role in delivering successful conquests. Missionaries were sent out before staging an invasion. Specifically, they forced people to adopt their cultural and religious conceptions (Edmonds-Poli, 2008). The Aztecs were forced to be

God-fearing, welcoming, and non-rebellious to strangers. This aspect explains why Cortes and his infantry were given an arousing welcome even though it had some preconceived godliness in it. The Europeans conquered mainly for economic profit.

Diamond's argument is more convincing in that for civilizations to rise, and fall depended on their technological capability. Other supporting aspects, such as diseases and Christianity also facilitated the process of invasion.

Blattner, D. (2000). *World civilizations and cultures*. Lewistown, MO: Mark Twain Media.

Edmonds-Poli, E. (2008). *Contemporary Mexican Politics*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group.

Jones, J., Wood, P., & Borstelm, T. (2004). *Created equal: Volume I, To 1877 a social and political history of the United States*. Princeton, N. J: Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic.