

Document 2 - More Spanish Advantage

When the Spanish first arrived in the New World, they held several advantages over the natives they encountered. The most important military advantage was European steel, not the guns that have become so famous. While a few primitive firearms were used to awe the Indians with sound and fury, Spanish swords were so much stronger, sharper and more deadly than the stone and soft-metal weapons of the Indians that battles between them were no contest. Guns were scary but swords did the dirty work. Horses were also a major part of the Spanish military advantage over the Aztecs, Mayans and Incas. The largest South American animals were llamas, and although llama spit can be nasty, it didn't instill fear in the Spanish the way charging, armored horses did to the Indians. And speaking of animals, the Spanish brought war dogs with them. These mastiffs and Great Danes were trained to kill, and they were ferocious. All together, sharp, strong steel, horses, and attack dogs added to guns to give the Spanish a military edge that the Indians could not counter.

(Source: "War in Spanish Colonization," Shmoop.com)