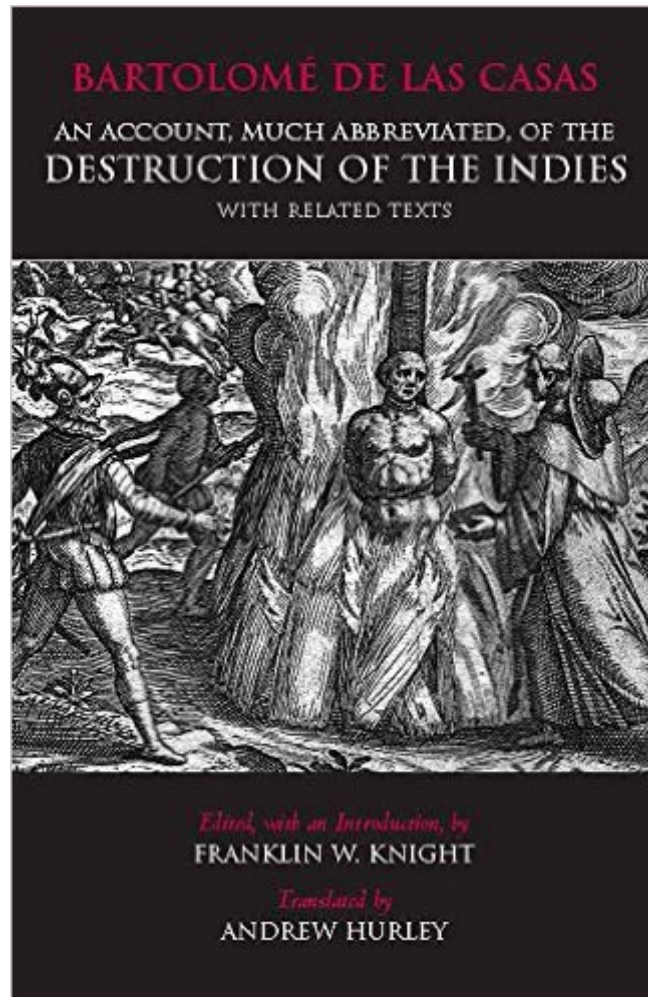


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Fifty years after the arrival of Columbus, at the height of Spain's conquest of the West Indies, Spanish bishop and colonist Bartolom  de Las Casas dedicated his *Brev -sima Relaci n de la Destruici n de las Indias* to Philip II of Spain. An impassioned plea on behalf of the native peoples of the West Indies, the *Brev -sima Relaci n* catalogues in horrific detail atrocities it attributes to the king's colonists in the New World. The result is a withering indictment of the conquerors that has cast a 500-year shadow over the subsequent history of that world and the European colonization of it.

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Customer Reviews

My eyesight is excellent, so I don't wear glasses. However, I was disappointed and annoyed with the tight spacing and small print in this book, which is about the size of a New Times Roman 8 point font. That's slightly larger than what you'll find on a prescription bottle. The book is informative, exposing the cruelties that Spaniards inflicted on the New World's local populations. So, if you want to learn more about this fascinating and sadistic history, you'll probably enjoy this book, despite the small print. For anyone who is not familiar with old Spanish literature, which isn't too different from modern over-winded Spanish prose, you'll encounter long sentences that weave through more than a single subject and object. Example (p.23): "Yet since that wretched and accursed governor carried orders instructing that the aforesaid requerimientos be given, in order to justify them yet more (their being in themselves absurd, unreasonable, and most exceedingly unjust), he commanded, or the thieves and robbers that he sent did so, when they resolved to go a-raiding and

robbing in some village, while the Indians were in their villages or in their houses fearing no harm, and there, that night, they should read out the requerimientos to themselves, saying: `Caciques and Indians of this Terra Firma of such-and-such a village, we do hereby give you notice that there is a God and a pope, and a king of Castile who is the lord of these lands'." The two sentences that follow this quote trail off to nothing and left me scratching my head: "Come then to give him obedience, & c." And: "For if you do not, know ye that we shall wage war upon you, and shall slay you and capture you, &c.

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