

Introduction
Primary Source Exercise
HIST 2111 FA 19

Reading: Bartolomeo de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1542):

<http://web.archive.org/web/19980116133031/http://pluto.clinch.edu/history/wciv2/civ2ref/casas.htm>

After you have read the primary source listed above (as well as the Introduction, and watched the video for this module), answer the following questions, based on what you know about the Spanish Conquest, as well as what you know about Las Casas himself:

1. Why do you think Las Casas expressed sympathy for the Indians? Can you identify an example from the text? What might this reveal about his purpose for writing the text?
2. Why do you think Las Casas criticized the brutality of the Spanish toward the Indians? Can you identify an example from the text? What might this reveal about the audience for whom he wrote this text?
3. Why do you think Las Casas praised the Indians' willingness to convert to Christianity? Can you identify an example from the text?
4. If he wants the Indians to simultaneously be treated peacefully, while also converting to Christianity, what might this reveal about his own bias? Can we trust him to report the facts truthfully? Why or why not?