

De las casas essay



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In Bartolome De Las Casas's " from The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the Indies" a lot of descriptive verbiage is utilized to paint a distinct picture of good vs. evil in an unjust world. Referencing the Spaniards as Christians is done with a great deal of anger, and sarcasm. These Spaniards performed many acts of evil as they brutally tortured, killed, and enslaved the Native American peoples.

According to De Las Casas " they attacked the towns and spared neither the children nor the aged nor pregnant women nor women in childbed, not only stabbing them and dismembering them but cutting them to pieces as dealing with sheep in a slaughter house". (40) This was such a gruesome, cruel, and violent act of murder, without regard to even those we view as pure innocence such as that of a child.

This provokes the reader to feel an intense sorrow and heartache for these innocent Native Americans. De Las Casas portrays the Native American people as innocent, gentle prey to the Spaniards, thus referring to them as " sheep. " They were deemed weak in their efforts to fight back, and they were unable to seek refuge in the mountains where they tried to flee. This piece incorporates multiple biblical representations throughout as well.

The " sheep" biblically represent the followers of Christ, and they are submissive followers with little to no resistance like that of the Native American peoples. However, the so-called Christian Spaniards acted like ravenous, greedy animals rather than human Christ like leaders. De Las Casas, Bartolome " from The Very Brief Relation of the Devastation of the

Indies. " The Norton Anthology of American Literature 8th ed. Ed Nina Baym et al. Vol. A. New York: Norton, 2012. 38-42.