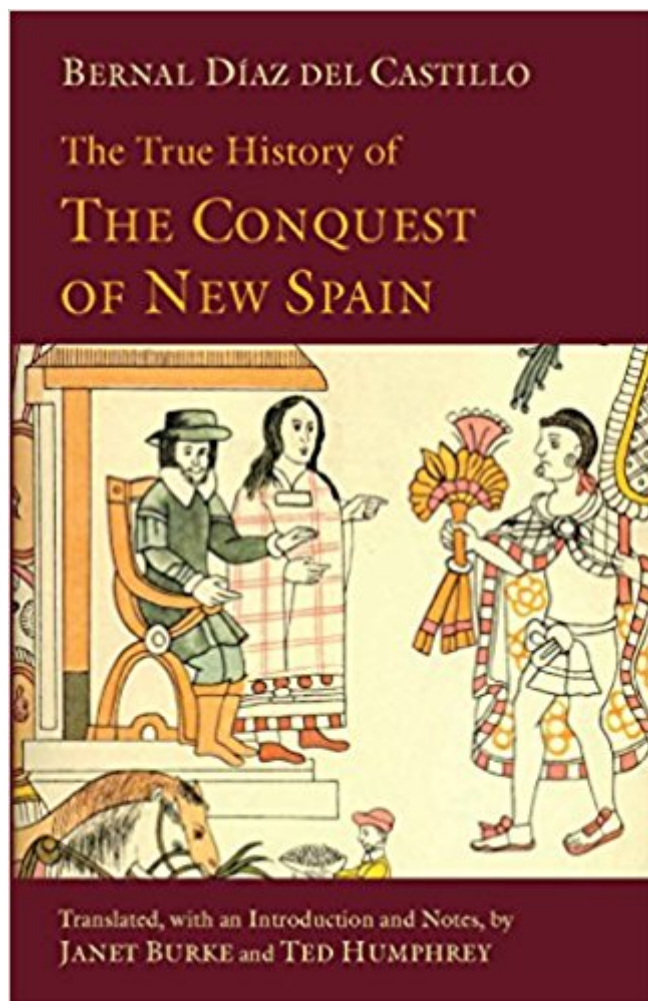


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The True History Of The Conquest Of New Spain (Hackett Classics)



Synopsis

This rugged new translation--the first entirely new English translation in half a century and the only one based on the most recent critical edition of the Guatemalan MS--allows Diaz to recount, in his own battle-weary and often cynical voice, the achievements, stratagems, and frequent cruelty of Hernando Cortes and his men as they set out to overthrow Moctezuma's Aztec kingdom and establish a Spanish empire in the New World. The concise contextual introduction to this volume traces the origins, history, and methods of the Spanish enterprise in the Americas; it also discusses the nature of the conflict between the Spanish and the Aztecs in Mexico, and compares Diaz's version of events to those of other contemporary chroniclers. Editorial glosses summarize omitted portions, and substantial footnotes explain those terms, names, and cultural references in Diaz's text that may be unfamiliar to modern readers. A chronology of the Conquest is included, as are a guide to major figures, a select bibliography, and three maps.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Bernal Diaz's True History of the Conquest of New Spain, the chronicle of an 'ordinary' soldier in Hernando Cortes's army, is the only complete account (other than Cortes's own) that we have of the Spanish conquest of ancient Mexico. Although it is neither so 'true' nor so unassumingly direct as its author would have us believe, it is unmistakably the voice of the often unruly, undisciplined body of untrained freebooters who, in less than three years, succeeded against all apparent odds, in bringing down the once mighty Aztec Empire.™ It makes for consistently fascinating reading,

and Ted Humphrey and Janet Burke have provided the best, and the most engaging, translation ever to have appeared in English. --Anthony Pagden, UCLA Readers interested in the early period of Spanish American history will welcome the publication of this new abridged edition of the classic account by Bernal Diaz del Castillo, True History of the Conquest of New Spain. An observer of and participant in the momentous conquest of central Mexico by the Spaniards and their indigenous allies, Bernal Diaz wrote his chronicle many decades later, at least partially in response to the claims and biases of other writers. This excellent and highly readable translation by Janet Burke and Ted Humphrey remains faithful to the straightforward and unadorned prose that Díaz uses to describe the events as well as his understanding of their significance. The useful introduction, notes and epilogue further enhance the volume's accessibility. This edition is highly recommended for both students and a more general audience. --Ida Altman, University of Florida A reliable modern translation of one of the great historical narratives. While faithful to the original text, [Humphrey and Burke's] translation takes full advantage of the best scholarship of the last fifty years, providing useful context and interpretation for the non-specialist. The result is a highly readable, engaging book that will prove a valuable teaching tool in a variety of classroom settings. --Lyman Johnson, University of North Carolina, Charlotte

Janet Burke is Associate Dean in Barrett, the Honors College, and Lincoln Fellow for Ethics and Latin American Intellectual History in the Lincoln Center for Ethics, at Arizona State University. Ted Humphrey is President's Professor, Barrett Professor, and Lincoln Professor of Ethics and Latin American Intellectual History at Arizona State University.

An incredible story which was almost never written. The author is writing it in response to another book of his time which he continually points out is riddled with falsehoods. Bernal is trying to set the record straight with his account. He freely admits he is not a great writer but is merely trying to tell the story as best he remembers it. The only thing that got confusing was all of the Spanish names and Aztec place names which sort of run together if you try to remember them. Focus more on the main characters and main places when reading it. Though the writer likes Cortes he's not afraid to point out his flaws in many spots. He tries to present the history with all its blemishes as thoroughly as he can remember them. Sometimes he omits specific events or people to not tarnish their image but indicates something happened in some context to change their direction during the conquest.

I would have put 5 stars but it was abridged, which I do not like and did not notice before I ordered.

This is actually one of the best descriptions available of what happens when cultures previously unaware of each other meet and clash. It is probably the best description of the Spanish Conquest of Mexico even though it was written many years after the events it describes.

it is a translation of a translation. Who ever did the last one used their own code for punctuation marks. I very difficult read with grammar errors all the way through it. I don't think all of them came from the last translator. Some of them, I think, are generated by someone in modern times doing just sloppy work. The whole thing should be gone over with a fine tooth comb so the reader can obtain at least some idea of what the original author was trying to get across.

the best story of the conquest of mexico ..i loved reading this book after many years.a true story! very compelling.

This is a fine addition to the translation literature on the conquest. The translators, Janet Burke and Ted Humphrey, provide helpful information about the manuscript they followed, how and why they used other manuscripts, and how they organized their translation in similar and different ways from those manuscripts. They supply personal background information about Diaz as well as sketches of other participants in the story. Burke and Humphrey provide for the reader a clear account of the invasion, glosses to keep the story moving, and a useful timeline for following the events that transpired. Their work establishes for readers new to this event a fine foundation for comprehending what obstacles later invaders faced in the new world and how those invaders rationalized their actions. Readers interested in a broader view of those events should consult Hugh Thomas' work.

Having read Castillo's account before I find it revealing that he fails to address the way that the Spaniard's lack of hygiene and rampant diseases were the actual agent of conquest. These guys wore their clothes till they rotted off and thought bathing was a sin. Still very worth reading.

Did I purchase this book multiple times? I have already reviewed this, so I'm not sure why i have to review it again.

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