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BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS: A BRIEF OUTLINE OF HIS LIFE AND LABOR

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Toil is man's allotment; toil of brain, or toil of hands, or a grief that's more than either, the grief and sin of idleness.[\[1\]](#)

Bartolomé de las Casas was born in Sevilla Spain in 1484 to a farming and merchant family – a background that proved valuable in his understanding and critique of the effects of the conquest.[\[2\]](#) In 1490 he saw for the first time in Seville the Spanish monarchs, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. This distant encounter in his early childhood was followed later in life by many other personal meetings with Spanish royalty. On March 31, 1493, at the age of nine, he witnessed Columbus' parade through Seville following his maiden voyage to the Americas. On Palm Sunday, in the midst of the celebration of Holy Week festivities, seven Taino Indians were passed through the streets along with brilliant red and green parrots and masks intricately made with tiny shells, and beautiful artifacts of beaten gold plates. This was Las Casas' initial experience with the Amerindians.[\[3\]](#) The excitement generated in the populace as a result of this display motivated Bartolomé's father and uncle, along with many others to join Columbus on his second journey to the Americas later that same year.

During the next five years, with his father away, Bartolomé studied Latin and his letters, perhaps at the cathedral school in Seville of the famous latinist and grammarian Antonio de Nebrija.[\[4\]](#) When his father returned in 1498 with newfound wealth, Bartolomé told him he wanted to be a priest, whereupon the elder Las Casas sent his son to the best college in Spain at the time, Salamanca, to study canon law in preparation for the priesthood.[\[5\]](#) In fact according to Helen Rand-Parish, Las Casas received two degrees in canon law, a bachillerato at Salamanca and a licenciatura at Valladolid. Yet he completed his academic career in stages, obtaining his second degree after his initial trip to the Americas.[\[6\]](#) Even so, before his first trip to the Americas in 1502, Bartolomé was most certainly skilled in Latin, a valuable sixteenth century intellectual ability.[\[7\]](#) Francis Augustus MacNutt says the following regarding Las Casas' academic abilities:

The training that he received in the Spanish schools and the University, and which he afterwards perfected by the studies he resumed after his profession in the Dominican Order, rendered formidable as an advocate one whom nature had endowed with a rare gift of eloquence, a passionate temperament, and a robust physical constitution which seems to have been immune to the ills and fatigues that assail less favored mortals. Ginés de Sepúlveda, whose forensic encounter with Las Casas was one of the academic events of the sixteenth century, described his adversary in a letter to a friend as “most subtle, most vigilant, and most fluent, compared with whom Homer's Ulysses was inert and stammering.”[\[8\]](#)

Before finishing his initial studies, at the age of eighteen, he embarked on his first trip to the Americas, traveling to the Island of Hispaniola. It appears that he received minor orders and the tonsure in Seville shortly before leaving for the Indies on February 13, 1502.^[9] He arrived on April 15, 1502, in Santo Domingo, the place where he lived and labored for the next five years before again returning to Spain. While working holdings of lands and Indians, his own and those of his merchant father, he also traveled the island as a provisioner to the Spanish soldiery.^[10] During this early period, while accompanying two different military expeditions of Governor Ovando, he observed the tragic massacre of a large group of Indian leaders on the island. The young Las Casas deplored all the killings and was horrified by what he witnessed of these atrocities.^[11] Moreover, while traveling as a provisioner he also began to see first-hand the conditions to which the Indians were being subjected and the disruption of native life caused by the Spanish enslavement of the indigenous to mine for gold.

Returning to Spain in 1506, he was ordained a deacon in Seville and resumed his studies for the priesthood. He then went to Rome where he was ordained a priest on the third Ember Day in Lent, 1507.^[12] Since Christopher Columbus had died, Las Casas accompanied the Admiral's older brother Bartholomew Columbus to a private audience with Pope Julius II in order to help secure for Christopher's son Diego the inheritance promised by the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella. During his visit with the Pope, Las Casas informed the pontiff about events in the New World and the opportunity to convert natives. Later, back in Spain, he completed his studies for a degree in canon law at Salamanca and then journeyed to Hispaniola with Columbus' son and heir Viceroy and Second Admiral Diego Columbus.^[13] He took up his task as Indian *doctrinero*, the official catechist to the Indians, but remained a holder of Indians and property, a contradiction his conscience could not sustain much longer.

With the arrival of the first Dominicans to Hispaniola in September of 1510, Las Casas' status as a "gentleman-cleric" was challenged. After observing the situation on the island for over a year the call for justice rang-out when Friar Antón Montesino delivered, on December 21, 1511, the fourth Sunday of Advent, his famous speech on behalf of the Indians. Along with his Dominican confreres he denounced as a mortal sin the *encomienda* system of forced labor.^[14] It took Las Casas several more years and additional witnessing of the abuses and atrocities of the conquest to have the first of what scholars call his two great conversions. On Pentecost of 1514, he renounced his ownership of Indians and the inter-island provisions business. He then started to preach his own provocative sermons against the wrongs of the conquest, particularly the *encomienda* system. Las Casas later wrote that the blinders fell from his eyes and he saw that everything the Spaniards had done in the Indies from the beginning – all the brutal exploitation and decimation of innocent Indians, with no heed for their welfare or their conversion – was not only completely wrong, but also mortal sin.^[15]

In 1515 he returned to Spain with Antón Montesino, with the intention of informing King Ferdinand of the situation in the Indies (Isabella had died in 1504). Upon reaching Seville, Montesino introduced Las Casas to the Dominican archbishop and advocate of Columbus, Fray Diego de Deza, who had authority over all diocesan priests in the New

World.^[16] The Archbishop provided letters of introduction to influential persons in the royal household and the king, so that Las Casas and Montesino could meet with the ailing king in Plasencia to convince him to redress the abuses of the conquest.^[17] As a result, the Laws of Burgos were promulgated on December 27, 1512, the first of numerous reform attempts by Las Casas.^[18] After the king's death, Las Casas continued his reform plans with the aging regent, Cardinal Ximénez de Cisneros. He gave Las Casas the title "Protector of the Indians". Yet it seems that Cisneros, like the late king, balanced a variety of competing political and economic interests, which made significant reforms in the Indies difficult. Also, Cisneros' dislike of Columbus and Las Casas' close relationship with the Columbus family cast a shadow on him in the eyes of the Cardinal-Regent of Spain. Even so, Cisneros did lend some support to Las Casas' scheme to save the small remnant of Indians still on the islands. Las Casas wanted to remove them from individual *encomiendas* and place them in self-sustaining villages, known as the *corregimientos* or crown free towns. However Cisneros' tenure as regent was cut short, he died November of 1517. After the deaths of King Ferdinand and Cardinal Cisneros, Las Casas sought the support of the new Flemish-born Spanish king, Charles -- Charles I (Spain, 1516-1556) = Charles V (Holy Roman emperor, 1519-1558) -- , the grandson of the Catholic monarchs.

With letters from the Flemish Franciscans in Hispaniola, Las Casas won speedy approval from Charles for another of his early schemes, colonization by farmers instead of soldiers. He obtained a grant to try his peaceful settlement idea in the early 1520's on the north coast of South America at Cumaná. This colony would have a minimum of force and a maximum of persuasion to allow the Spaniards to live in fruitful peace with the Indians. The project failed because of the greed for slaving in the party assembled. Las Casas saw he had compromised his duty to be protector of the Indians. In the depths of discouragement, he left his work and entered the Dominican Order on the Island of Hispaniola in 1522 at the age of 36.^[19]

Scholars call his entrance into the Dominican Order the second conversion of Las Casas. He spent his initial years studying theology and law, after which he was appointed prior of an out-post on the north coast of Dominican Republic, Puerto de Plata, where he founded a new community.^[20] Prevented from returning to Spain by his Dominican superiors, he resumed his fight for the indigenous by preaching thunderously against the abuses of the slave trade.^[21] Accused of withholding deathbed viaticum from an *encomendero*, he was ordered back to Santo Domingo, and officially silenced by government order for two years.^[22] During this time he also began gathering materials for his *Historia General de las Indias*, one of the most valuable sources for the early discovery and colonization period, and from which he later took the *Apologética Historia*, a landmark in anthropology. About the year 1530 he began writing a Latin treatise, *De Unico Vocationis Modo Omnium Gentium ad Veram Religionem*, which became one of the most significant missionary tracts in the history of the Church. Basically, it was a blueprint for his own later missionary experiments: the spread of the Gospel by peaceful means alone, the need for understanding of doctrine and clear catechesis prior to conversion, the need to respect and utilize native cultures as part of the missionary enterprise.^[23]

After he was made Dominican Vicar of Guatemala, he attended the Mexican Ecclesiastical Conference of 1536 where he worked with Bishop Zumárraga and Bishop Julián Garcés of Tlaxcala to draw up petitions on behalf of the Indians to be forwarded to Pope Paul III. Out of these innovative ideas came the landmark papal bull, *Sublimis Deus*, often called the Magna Carta of Indians rights. This promulgation of 1537 proclaimed that the Indians were truly human and capable of receiving the faith and that they were not to be deprived of their liberty or property, even though they may be outside of the faith. This document proved a powerful weapon in the hands of the pro-Indian forces, although it was never formally published in the Spanish dominions.^[24] That same year, Las Casas traveled from Mexico City to his vicariate of Guatemala to initiate a “peaceful conversion” experiment of his own. He and his friars, accompanied by Indian merchants, penetrated an unconquered region know as *tierra de guerra* by the Spaniards because of this territory’s hostile Indians. Las Casas promptly renamed the area *tierra de vera paz*. This missionary effort proved very successful and is a model of his evangelization ideas in practice.^[25]

In 1540 Las Casas returned to Spain and joined other churchmen and laymen to lobby Charles V for protection for the Amerindians. His nearly forty years of experience in the Americas made him an informative and convincing source for the king to trust. As a result of this lobbying effort, the New Laws of 1542 were enacted, a striking combination of political reality and humanitarian idealism, that abolished slavery and the *encomienda* system. This effort ranked as the supreme achievement of his career.^[26] But even before the New Laws were promulgated, his enemies moved to get him away from court, insisting that it was his duty to accept a bishopric and help enforce the new ordinances.^[27] Las Casas resisted this proposal, especially the wealthiest see of Cuzco, but finally he accepted the impoverished diocese of Chiapa – it contained his own *tierra de guerra* experiment, now called the *tierra de vera paz*. His friends impressed on him that, by accepting the miter, he would automatically be free from the vow of obedience and could use the ecclesiastical arm to enforce the New Laws. Finally persuaded, Las Casas was consecrated bishop in the Church of San Pablo in Seville on March 31, 1544.^[28] Even before starting for his distant diocese, Las Casas undertook his first duty as bishop by securing the liberation of Indians held as slaves in Seville itself. His action aroused much enmity against him, but he was indifferent: the text of the New Laws was explicit, leaving no opening for false implementation.^[29]

Las Casas was back in the New World in 1545, this time as bishop of *Chiapa* and with the largest missionary contingent ever assembled: forty-five Dominican friars, and a lay staff of five.^[30] It took the newly consecrated prelate almost a year to travel the five thousand miles to his faraway diocesan seat of *Ciudad Real*, due to a lack of funds, logistical problems, physical dangers, a boycott from colonists and conflict with Spanish authorities, all of them foretastes of worse to come.^[31] His brief and stormy tenure as a resident bishop was an undertaking of little more than a year, which nearly cost him his life.^[32] No doubt some of this was because of his own inflexibility, but a great deal stemmed from the blind hatred he encountered from the start in his cathedral town.^[33] His life threatened and his efforts to enforce the New Laws thwarted by the

local government officials, he went heavy hearted to the gathering of bishops in Mexico City. There he convinced secular authorities to respect ecclesiastical immunity and along with support from church officials produced a series of strong pro-Indian statements. He even persuaded the Viceroy to convoke a separate meeting of friars who denounced Indian slavery.

Armed with these forceful resolutions, Bishop Las Casas prepared for his final return trip to Spain. He appointed a Vicar General for his diocese with a select group of friars to hear confessions according to the twelve rules that he sent under strictest secrecy in his *Avisos y Reglas Para Confesores*.^[34] Las Casas' *Confesionario* was designed to enforce all the New Laws. The confessor was to deny absolution to anyone who profited from Indian life and land. Moreover, since these rules asserted the illegality of the *encomienda* system and the conquest – a defiance of royal authority, because it was the king who had granted them -- he was questioning royal authority. This amounted to his questioning the divine rights of kings. He would surely have been charged with treason, punishable by death if the rules had leaked out. This is true because it seems that Las Casas wrote his *Confesionario* partially in response to the Emperor's revocation of important parts of the New Laws on November 20, 1545. Charles V gave into the arguments and petitions of the representatives of the colonists at court.

In anticipation of this accusation Las Casas wrote a letter to the Regent, Crown Prince Philip, who was in charge of the Spanish dominions in the Emperor's absence, arguing for ecclesiastical exemption from the coercive power of secular princes.^[35] Even with his preemptive defensive letter to Philip, his manual became known and raised a political as well as an ecclesiastical storm. After attending the meeting of bishops and church leaders in Mexico City, he returned to Spain in 1547. He would never see the New World again and later resigned his bishopric. By this time in his life, it seems that he understood that his true place was at court, and that there he alone could serve as the much-needed "universal procurator" of his beloved Indians.^[36] The beleaguered Bishop probably did not foresee that he would first have to serve as procurator in his own cause.^[37]

Back in Spain in 1547, Las Casas encountered accusations concerning his now public *Confesionario*. His defense against charges of high treason from his detractors, for his confessors manual, reached its climax when he debated the humanist Juan Ginés Sepúlveda. In his counterattack Las Casas challenged Sepúlveda's *Democrates Secundus*, a tract that justified waging war in the process of the conquest in order to "christianize" the peoples of the Americas. Las Casas debated Sepúlveda at the Junta de Valladolid of 1550-1551 where the judges of the exchange were a panel of fourteen distinguished religious and laity, of whom four were fellow Dominicans. Sepúlveda appeared the first day and gave a three-hour summary of the doctrine of his *Democrates Secundus* to the Junta. For the next five days, Las Casas offered his rebuttal, *Argumentum Apologiae*, countering that, even if some of the Indians were guilty of human sacrifice and cannibalism, it could be explained as a rational step in the development of religious thought.^[38] Although no verdict was handed down, the

royal *cédulas* of the Council of the Indies continued to apply the thesis of Las Casas.^[39] Even so, as a result of Las Casas' refutation of his opponent, he was successful not only in stopping the publication of Sepúlveda's work, but also in making a stronger case than ever for his peaceful and just means of evangelization. Following this time of debate, he rewrote and published the previously confiscated *Confesionario* along with other missionary tracks and had them distributed in the Americas.

During this final stage of his life; while still very active at court he continued adding to his impressive list of written works, an essential part of his advocacy on behalf of the Indians. ^[40] He resumed labor on his monumental *Historia de las Indias*, something he worked on until the end of his life; he also published in 1552 what is perhaps the most widely read and known of his works, the *Brevísima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias*.^[41] Enjoying remarkable freedom to criticize the crown and its policies, even though alienated from and the object of hostility of many his countrymen, he was never silenced.^[42] There were some Spaniards in America who had wanted him retired to a monastery, and some had even expressed regret that Las Casas had not been lost by shipwreck on his way to Chiapa. Even so, the crown continued to hear his advice, and he enjoyed a reputation for honesty and as one having influence at Court.^[43]

His dedication, experience and knowledge of the New World, and his contacts were unparalleled. And at the age of eighty he would need them all in the last great battle of his career against the Peruvian Indian holders who wanted to buy Indians in perpetuity from the crown for eight million gold ducats. The debt-ridden Spanish crown of Philip II saw the offer as too good to refuse. Las Casas and other pro-Indian comrades successfully countered that the Indian holders did not have the money and any offer they made would be countered with a better one.^[44] Philip II, believing there were still hidden Inca treasures to be found to pay the counter offer agreed to the scheme. Yet, the whole affair of the offer and counter-offer came to nothing because the royal commission sent to investigate ended-up in such a state of corruption and fraud that the king halted it.^[45]

Inferring Las Casas' thinking about this plan from his last two great written works, *Los Tesoros del Perú* and *Tratado de las Doce Dudas*, one is able to understand the suppositions of his position. He begins this writing by demonstrating that the Inca is the true owner of the "treasures" in the tombs of the past Incas, and he ends with proposing free independent Indian kingdoms under their native rulers, linked into a commonwealth attached to the Spanish Crown.^[46] Once again he is focused on his life's effort, protecting the rights of the indigenous, the common thread of his diverse writings.

Fighting for the indigenous to the very end of his long and fruitful life, he died in Madrid at the Dominican convent of *Nuestra Señora de Atocha*, at the age of eighty-two, in July of 1566. Born at the end of the fifteenth century he lived two-thirds of the sixteenth. The Spain on which he closed his aged eyes was a different country from that on which he had first opened them; the colonial development in America, the

Reformation in Germany, the rise of England – all these and a hundred events of minor but far-reaching importance had changed the face of the world.^[47] Bartolomé de las Casas had outlived his contemporaries; he had enjoyed the confidence and respect of sovereigns: Ferdinand of Aragon, Charles V and Philip II, all of whom received his fearless admonitions. He addressed bishops, cardinals and popes, meeting personally with Julius II early in his life, corresponding with others, most notable Paul III, (who promulgated the famous *Sublimus Deus*). Near the very end of his life, he sent a letter to the new Pope Pius V, begging him to condemn conquest as a means of conversion. Finally, in his last words, he professed that he had kept faith, during fifty years of untiring labor, with the charge that God had laid upon him to plead for the restoration of the Indians to their original lands, liberty and freedom.^[48]

[1] Herman Melville (1819-91), *Mardi: and a Voyage Thither*, ch. 63 (1849). *The Columbia Dictionary of Quotations*, 1998, s.v. "Melville."

[2] Isacio Perez Fernandez, *Fray Bartolomé de Las Casas: Brevisima relación de su vida Diseño de su personalidad. Síntesis de su doctrina.* (Editorial OPE. Caleruega. Burgos-España, 1984), 19.

[3] Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Only Way*. Edited by Helen Rand Parish, Trans. Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J. (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1992), 12.

[4] J.H Elliott, *Imperial Spain: 1469-1716*. (London: Penguin Books, 1990), 128.

[5] Bartolomé de las Casas, *The Only Way*. Edited by Helen Rand Parish, Trans. Francis Patrick Sullivan, S.J. (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1992), 13.

[6] Rolena Adorno, "The Intellectual Life of Bartolomé de las Casas" *The Andrew W. Mellon Lecture*. (Tulane University, Fall 1992), 3.

[7] Juan Friede and Benjamin Keen, Ed. *Bartolomé de las Casas in History: Toward an Understanding of the Man and His Work*. (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1971), 68.

[8] Francis Augustus MacNutt, *Bartholomew De Las Casas: His Life, His Apostolate and His Writings*. (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark Company, 1909), 6.

[9] If Las Casas received minor orders then there is an argument against those who say he was also a conquistador, since clerics were considered excluded from military service. Helen Rand-Parish, interview by author, tape recording, Berkeley, CA., February 12, 2001; Friede and Keen, *Bartolomé de las Casas in History*, 70.

[10] Sullivan, *Indian Freedom*, 2-3.

[11] Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 14-15.

[12] *Ibid.* , 15.

[13] Helen Rand Parish, María Concepta Maciel and Gustavo Gutiérrez, *Bartolomé de las Casas: Liberation of the Oppressed*. (Berkeley, 1984), 4.

[14] An *encomienda* was a grant, held by an *encomendero*, of indigenous laborers made to Spanish conquerors and settlers in Spanish America. It was the earliest basis for coerced labor in Spanish colonies, whereby the indigenous population was entrusted to Spanish settlers, who often exploited and mistreated the Indians. The *encomienda* grant brought two rights, tribute and free labor, and two obligations, military service in times of emergency (there was no standing army until 1762) and support of church and priests for the instruction of the Indians. Lippy, Charles H. and Choquette, Robert and Poole, Stafford. *Christianity Comes to the Americas: 1492 - 1776*. (New York: Paragon House, 1992.), 37.

[15] Las Casas, *The Only Way*, 20.

[16] It should be noted that Diego de Deza, O.P. was the confessor to Queen Isabel and prior of San Esteban, when Columbus was in Salamanca seeking Spanish support for his voyage. Friar Diego was Columbus' advocate before the queen, thus securing support for his

trip to the Americas. "The monks [sic] of the Dominican Order were, in those days, to be found in many posts of influence, not the least of which was that of confessor to the King, Ferdinand..." Francis Augustus MacNutt, Bartholomew De Las Casas , 71.

[17] Ibid. , 69.

[18] Ibid. , 58.

[19] Sullivan, Indian Freedom, 4.

[20] "He gave much time to the study of theology, especially the works of St. Thomas Aquinas. These studies served to equip him with stores of canonical and philosophical learning which enabled him to sustain controversies with some of the most learned men in Europe." Francis Augustus MacNutt, Bartholomew De Las Casas, 177.

[21] Las Casas was prevented from returning to Spain by his Dominican superiors because of his value to the Order. According to Iascasian scholar, Helen Rand Parish, his superiors were afraid he would not return to the Indies if he were allowed to return to Spain too soon. Helen Rand Parish, interview by author, tape recording, Berkeley, CA. February 12, 2001.

[22] Las Casas, The Only Way, 30.

[23] Lippy, Choquette and Poole, Christianity Comes, 84.

[24] Ibid. , 83-84.

[25] Las Casas' ideas were ingenious in practice. The prehispanic Aztecs had often used traveling merchants called pochteca as spies or advance agents of conquest. Las Casas also used traveling tradesmen in the same way. He and other friars composed songs in the native language that summarized Christian doctrine and taught these to Christians traders. In the course of visiting the more important villages, after the day's trading was done, the songs were sung as part of evening's entertainment. When the interest of the non-Christians was aroused, the traders would tell them about the friars who would teach them the rest of the doctrine without demanding anything for themselves. The experiment proved remarkably successful at first. Ultimately, however, it failed because of the hostility of neighboring tribes, opposition by Spanish colonials, and the deaths of some of the missionaries. Its memory remains as one of the most daring of missionary experiments of modern times. Lippy, Choquette and Poole, Christianity Comes, 85.

[26] A brief summary of the original ordinances contain the following: 1) A flat edict forbidding all taking of Indian slaves in the future. 2) Indians could not be used as carriers, except in some places where this was unavoidable, and then they had to be paid and not be overworked nor used against their will. 3) All the encomiendas held by officialdom were revoked outright, and these Indians were ordered placed under the Crown at once. 4) All private encomiendas were to be suppressed by a gradual process – no new encomiendas could be created, and all existing ones would escheat to the Crown on the death of their holder. 5) A series of new regulations for expeditions of discovery, with special regard to the treatment and tribute of the Indians. 6) The surviving Indians in Española, Cuba, and Puerto Rico were to be exempted from all tribute and royal or personal services, so that they could rest and multiply. Henry Raup Wagner with the collaboration of Helen Rand-Parish. The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas. (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1967), 108-120.

[27] Parish, Maciel and Gutiérrez, . Bartolomé de las Casas, 12.

[28] Las Casas, The Only Way, 41.

[29] Francis Augustus MacNutt, Bartholomew De Las Casas, 219.

[30] Of this group nineteen left from the convent of San Esteban de Salamanca on January 12, 1544. Due to the bad road and difficult traveling conditions, the brother of Master Francisco de Vitoria, Tomás de la Torre, told them they could eat meat. But they refused his advice and insisted on their holy poverty, walking all the way in the rain, till they reached Seville about February 15th. Wagner with the collaboration of Parish, The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas, 122.

[31] Ibid. , 128.

[32] "So bad was the situation, that upon seeing that Las Casas was trying to establish a Dominican convent in Ciudad Real, the Spaniards tried to kill him and to starve to death the rest of the friars for not wanting to absolve – obeying their bishop—in confession Spaniards that had repartimientos or encomiendas of Indians, unless they leave completely this unjust situation. Therefore, the friars had to leave the city and they carried out successful missionary activities in various parts of Chiapas." Mauricio Beuchot, Los fundamentos de los derechos humanos en Bartolomé de las Casas. (Barcelona: Editorial Anthropos, 1994), 23.

[33] Wagner with the collaboration of Parish, The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas, 132.

[34] Helen Rand Parish, *Las Casas as a Bishop: A new interpretation based on his holograph petition in the Hans P. Kraus Collection of Hispanic American Manuscripts*. (Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 1980), xxi.

[35] Parish, *Las Casas as a Bishop*, xxi.

[36] Procurators were individuals authorized to manage the affairs of others. They were employees of the state in civil affairs, especially in finance and taxes, in management of estates and properties, and in governing minor provinces. *American Heritage Dictionary*, 3rd ed., 1992.

[37] Wagner with the collaboration of Parish, *The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de las Casas*, 169.

[38] Las Casas argued that the Spaniard's ancestors also practiced human sacrifice during the pre-Christian period, thus they had no right to conquest all peoples with the torch and the sword for the actions of some of the indigenous. They should convert the Amerindians by the example of the Gospel of Christ, not by greed, lust and murder. (Rand-Parish, interview by author, tape recording, Berkeley, CA., February 9, 2001); Lippy, Choquette and Poole, *Christianity Comes*, 85.

[39] Friede and Keen, *Bartolomé de las Casas in History*, 110.

[40] Las Casas generated an impressive collection of writings: over ten major works, ten printed tracts and countless letters and correspondences. *Las Casas, The Only Way*, 269.

[41] Many would claim that the rise of the "Black Legend" was the result of this famous or infamous tract. However others have convincingly asserted it was more the result of Philip's actions in the low countries and his failure to provide written responses to the often exaggerated verbal attacks against the Spanish crown. Adorno, Rolena. "The Intellectual Life of Bartolomé de las Casas", *The Andrew W. Mellon Lecture*. (Tulane University, Fall 1992), 11. Philip II and other leading Spaniards believed that gentlemen fought with swords and not with pens. Spain's reputation suffered dearly for this miscalculation. Philip's removed 3 chapters of Alonzo de Santa Cruz's five volume biography about his father Charles V (Charles I, Spain), because they discussed Spanish atrocities in the Americas, but this too excluded important reference to Charles' reform efforts and the New Laws. Rand-Parish, interview by author, tape recording, Berkeley, CA., February 9, 2001.

[42] Lippy, Choquette and Poole, *Christianity Comes*, 88.

[43] Lewis Hanke, *Bartolomé de Las Casas: Bookman, Scholar & Propagandist*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1952), 49-50.

[44] Parish, Maciel and Gutiérrez, *Bartolomé de las Casas*, 16.

[45] Sullivan, *Indian Freedom*, 8.

[46] Parish, Maciel and Gutiérrez, *Bartolomé de las Casas*, 16.

[47] Francis Augustus MacNutt, *Bartholomew De Las Casas*, 305.

[48] *Las Casas, The Only Way*, 54.