

"All the People of the World are Men" The Good Life of Bartoleme de Las Casas

Stephen Janoson

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/the_histories



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Janoson, Stephen () "All the People of the World are Men" The Good Life of Bartoleme de Las Casas," *The Histories*: Vol. 8 : Iss. 1 , Article 4.

Available at: https://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/the_histories/vol8/iss1/4

This Paper is brought to you for free and open access by the Scholarship at La Salle University Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Histories by an authorized editor of La Salle University Digital Commons. For more information, please contact careyc@lasalle.edu.

II

"All the Peoples of the World Are Men"
The Good Life of Bartolomé de Las Casas

By Stephen Janoson '10



Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484-1566) was a Spanish conquistador, a social activist, a Dominican friar, and a very controversial man. As a boy he befriended and learned from Columbus, as a young man he conquered Spanish America, and as a man led by God he worked for the justice of the people he had conquered. After a sudden conversion he challenged the cruel colonization by the Europeans and significantly changed the way that America was colonized. His written works have served as a foundation for and have helped shape the ideas of Catholic American social justice including human rights. De Las Casas's messages still have meaning today and encompass the modern idea of western values-justice, freedom, and equality. This paper provides clear proof that Bartolomé de las Casas did in fact live his idea of a good life based on the values that he believed in after his conversion. He not only wrote and preached about his values and missions, but he also lived them, and his actions were always consistent with his words. He stood by his beliefs, despite controversy and hardships, and maintained faith in God. He was true to himself and that is very telling that he did live a good life.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Spain, the nation where de Las Casas was born and for which he sailed, was a Catholic country struggling to find its national identity. The people there supported spirituality and religion; they were, in essence, well-intentioned people, but were constantly fighting their own desire for material wealth. This problem still plagues the modern world and it is still difficult for the two to coincide, because for Christian believers worldly possessions and wealth are to have no significance in their lives. This is the world into which de Las Casas was born, a hypocritical nation that supported Christianity and its teachings, but allowed for the cruel and unjust treatment of the citizens that they colonized in the Americas.² In Spain, the monarchy constantly changed its views between colonization and conversion (often the decision was that wealth was more important than saving souls). Western values for that time period would be hard to define because the nation and its people preached justice,

¹ Lewis Hanke, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1965), 111.

² Paul S. Vickery, *Bartolomé de Las Casas: Great Prophet of the Americas* (New York: Paulist Press, 2006), 1-2.

kindness, equality and a moral life based on God. However, in practice the Western values of this time would be greed, power, injustice,³ and allowing passions to control one's life.⁴ There was also a strong focus on selfish rewards and fame, regardless of consequences or who was hurt in the process.

The life of Bartolomé de las Casas began in the Triana section of Seville, Spain, in as early as August of 1474 or as late as November 11, 1484. Although many scholars agree that it was probably 1484 (based on information gathered from de Las Casas writings), early biographies of him disagree. (At the time of de Las Casas birth there was such a high mortality rate among infants that no records of births or early childhood were kept).⁵ At this time, Spain was the preeminent nation in exploration, spreading Catholicism, and was home to some of the greatest Christian thinkers of the time.⁶

It was later said that "de Las Casas lived in an age of remarkable people – yet stood out like a colossus for ideas and initiatives that distinguished him not only in the eyes of his contemporaries, but those of history down to the present day."⁷ Throughout his lifetime, beginning at a very early age, de Las Casas met a large number of these significant people, especially explorers and missionaries (many times these two could be the same person), who would shape his views of the New World before, during, and after his crossings of the oceans. De Las Casas was an active person with many significant connections throughout Spain that allowed him, throughout his life, to shape Spanish and New World history.⁸

De Las Casas was born an Old Christian which meant that all of his grandparents were Christians. He was exposed to a life of exploration at a very early age, his father and uncles made many trips to the New World, some even with Columbus on his later voyages. Perhaps the most important moment in de Las Casas's early life was his first encounter with Columbus in 1493, when Columbus returned from the West Indies bringing with him Native Indians and fine artifacts from the New World. De Las Casas was mesmerized by these new peoples⁹ (as well as the journals that Columbus brought back with him, the only surviving copies of which come from de Las Casas himself),¹⁰ but he had no idea that one day he would become not only their admirer but also their protector and even savior.¹¹

During this time period, religion and exploration were closely linked. Missionaries and priests were oftentimes the explorers founding and settling the New World. Shortly after the discovery of the Americas, Europe, led by Spain, focused on converting the "savage" peoples – a major reason why explorers received financing for their expeditions. However, this idea of conversion soon became, and was later overtaken by, the effort to acquire as much material wealth from the lands that they

³ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 1-3.

⁴ Marcel Brion, *Bartolomé de Las Casas: "Father of the Indians"* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1929, 24.

⁵ Bartolomé de Las Casas, *An Account, Much Abbreviated of the Destruction of the Indies* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2003), xiii-xiv.

⁶ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 5.

⁷ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xi.

⁸ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xii.

⁹ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 1.

¹⁰ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xiii.

¹¹ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 1.

conquered as they could. De Las Casas studied in monasteries at a very early age and developed knowledge of Christianity and Latin which allowed him to become an important member of many sailing expeditions to the West Indies.¹²

In 1502, at the age of eighteen, de Las Casas made his first voyage to the New World. De Las Casas and his father sailed with Nicolas de Ovando to colonize the island of Hispaniola in the Caribbean.¹³ "After that date, the story of [de] Las Casas' life would become very well known, and he would seldom be far from the limelight."¹⁴ He started working as a paid doctrinero, a teacher of religious doctrine, and quickly became a wealthy man. Shortly after, de Las Casas received an encomienda, an official allotment of natives, for his service to Ovando. The way the encomienda tribute system worked was that Spanish nobles, settled in the New World, would receive Indians to do their manual labor. In return for their labor, the natives would receive a modest wage, and the nobles would take responsibility for educating the Indians about the Catholic faith. The Indians were not legally considered slaves since they were not allowed to be sold or traded freely; however, it was common for these natives to be exploited. Those who resisted Spanish rule or refused to serve as part of an encomienda were officially enslaved.¹⁵ While de Las Casas was living in Hispaniola, there was an Indian revolt in the town of Higüey which he helped to brutally suppress. In his post conversion work, *Destruction of the Indies*, he describes the island of Hispaniola as, "the first wherein the Christians entered and began the devastations and perditions of these nations."¹⁶

Like many young conquerors though, he lost sight of his true mission and quickly became filled with greed and acquired much power at an early age. He was your typical conquistador at that time: he set out on a noble pilgrimage to convert and save the "savages" of the New World, but ended up persecuting and destroying those people.¹⁷ "Gold was the immediate reward that blinded the Spaniards to all suggestions of mercy."¹⁸ This greed for wealth and power captured de Las Casas and the other Spanish explorers and led to many dark aspects in the conquest of the Americas which were overlooked then and still seem to be so today.¹⁹

Conquerors said that they were well-received, partly out of respect and partly out of fear, by the people that they encountered and conquered, and obtained all that they needed, yet the Spaniards still took advantage of the people and wasted all that the Indians worked for.²⁰ "First [the Christians] destroyed them and wiped the land clean of inhabitants, [then they] began to take Indians to serve them and use them ill, and they would eat their victuals that issued from the sweat of their brow and their hard work, yet were still not content with what the Indians gave them willingly."²¹ Horrible treatment by the conquerors, unfavorable laws, and poor governing by the Spaniards combined to produce an extremely high mortality rate in the Spanish colonies. The natives received

¹² Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 1-6.

¹³ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xviii.

¹⁴ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xviii.

¹⁵ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xviii-xix.

¹⁶ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, 8.

¹⁷ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 2.

¹⁸ Brion, "Father of the Indians", xii.

¹⁹ Brion, "Father of the Indians", 25.

²⁰ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 3.

²¹ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, 8.

inhumane treatment including forced hard labor, starvation, and butchery, along with facing the spread of European diseases. In a period of about forty years the native population in one area had dropped from 600,000 to about 15,000. Even the scholars and theologians in Spain found some far-fetched judicial basis in the encomienda tribute system to rationalize and morally justify what the conquistadors were doing to these people. At his early age, somewhere in his late teens and early twenties, de Las Casas was in the middle of all this- not the worst of the conquerors, but by no means the best.²²

In 1510, although he was now officially ordained as a priest, de Las Casas was involved in a very wealthy industry of international commerce, including food, cattle, and the slave trade, and "there is no evidence that he paid much attention to his obligations to attend to the spiritual well-being of his Indian charges."²³ Throughout the next few years, de Las Casas traveled throughout the Caribbean and Isthmian mainland and began to witness, rather than participate in, the violent and brutal treatment of the Spanish on the natives. During this time, he began to gradually reevaluate the past twelve years he spent in the New World, and even made occasional protests against severely harsh Spanish treatment of the natives.²⁴

In 1511, a Dominican priest named Antonio de Montesinos came to Santo Domingo and preached two moving, yet disturbing, sermons that would cause a major commotion in the New World. Although de Las Casas was not there to hear the sermons, he did notice the enormous negative uproar that the Spanish had at the men working for the rights of the Indians. In short, Montesinos preached a society of equality between Spanish and Indians and where every man worked for himself. This was unacceptable to the Spanish settlers who acquired their wealth through exploiting the work of others and never thought that they would need to profit off of their own labors. At this time, other Dominican and Franciscan priests began to speak out against the violent rule and enslavement of the natives by the Spanish.²⁵ "No one, however, would pursue his protest as far as Bartolomé de Las Casas."²⁶ After the sermons and during the upheaval that followed, "[de] Las Casas slowly underwent a spiritual epiphany." At this point in his life, he was in a state of mental anguish, "fueled by the extensive agitation among the colonists as well as his increasing spiritual turmoil over being a slave owner."²⁷

On Pentecost Day, June 4, 1514, at about the age of thirty, de Las Casas underwent a life-changing conversion. He took a look at the way he was living and acting and realized they did not coincide with the religious and moral beliefs that he had.²⁸ This moment of realization occurred while he was preparing a sermon and reflecting on bible verses from the book of Ecclesiastes. It was as if his whole life had flashed before his eyes and made his mission clear to him.²⁹ De Las Casas later said of this date that the "darkness left his eye" and from there on he worked on not only changing his actions to fit his beliefs, but also to help and protect the Indians from the

²² Brion, "Father of the Indians", 22-24.

²³ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xix-xx.

²⁴ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xx-xxi.

²⁵ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxii.

²⁶ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxii.

²⁷ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxii.

²⁸ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 3.

²⁹ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxii.

harsh treatment that they were receiving from the Spaniards.³⁰ The date of the conversion is highly symbolic and very significant, especially to Catholics, in two ways: Pentecost is celebrated as the biblical date when the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles, giving them the courage to do God's work, and historically, Jesus was thirty years old when he began his public ministry.

A year after his conversion, de Las Casas decided that he needed to travel to Europe to plead his case for justice before the Spanish monarch. He went before the king and other influential bishops and his ideas were heard, but little was done to change what was occurring across the ocean. Some success came for de Las Casas when his three treatises influenced the appointments of a reform commission that would have the job of examining the situation in the Spanish America.³¹ The Council of the Indies set to examine the Spanish conquest and to determine if it followed the morality of Christian teaching. The council produced a list of wrongs that specifically detailed the atrocities committed by the conquerors. It also stated that the goal of the explorers was to teach the Americans, not to exploit them. This could be seen by de Las Casas as an improvement, but little implementation came as a result of the council's decisions.³²

Throughout his time in Spain, de Las Casas had trouble making any other progress toward his goals because of the complex and political nature of the courts. Through tireless work and dedication to his cause, he was eventually able to win some support from Charles V, the new Spanish king and Emperor. Charles gave de Las Casas land in Venezuela to implement one of de Las Casas's revolutionary projects: to make a community where Indians were equals of the Spanish and owed their allegiance to the crown in Spain, not to any one person in the New World. Another aspect, and maybe the most important of all, was that de Las Casas would create this community without any wars or bloodshed.³³

De Las Casas set sail for his Venezuelan colony in 1520. However by the time he reached his settlement, trouble in Spain and the colonies had destroyed his dream. His peaceful mission quickly became an "utter fiasco" as the Spanish continued to look for slaves and the Indians fought to keep their personal freedom. Two years later (1522) and with all his attempts at maintaining his colony having failed, de Las Casas entered a Dominican monastery in Santo Domingo and took vows as a friar shortly thereafter. He began working in the small city of Puerto Plata on the coast of Hispaniola quickly erecting a major church in the area. During this time, de Las Casas began his work on the *History of the Indies*, an extensive and detailed work documenting the Spanish colonies in the early sixteenth century.³⁴ This is one of the most important early works from the New World and offers deep insight from a first hand perspective.

De Las Casas once again turned his attention to the cause of the Indians in 1531. From the New World, de Las Casas wrote letters to the Council of the Indies back in Spain describing the violent atrocities that the Spanish settlers had wreaked on the native inhabitants. Ignoring this, de Las Casas argued, would have serious consequences for Spain, especially for the monarch since violent colonization was contrary to *official*

³⁰ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 3.

³¹ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxiii.

³² Hanke, *Spanish Struggle*, 111-112.

³³ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxiii.

³⁴ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxiv.

Spanish policy and religious teachings. By the mid 1530s, de Las Casas had made quite a name for himself as “Protector of the Indians” and for his unwavering fight to achieve justice and equality for the Indians; however, he was also developing many political enemies. As a result of this, de Las Casas was ordered by his superiors to return to Santo Domingo, which was the most important city in Spanish America and was also home to many significant people of the time.³⁵

Throughout 1535 and 1536, de Las Casas traveled to many developing colonies throughout Spanish America. Continuing his missionary fight, he preached and wrote many letters to influential people throughout the New World and Spain, but seemed to arouse more anger toward himself than produce any results. A strong development was made in July of 1536, however, when a letter to the Spanish king inspired a royal decree which suspended all conquest activities in Nicaragua for two years. Spanish colonists became furious at the work of de Las Casas and he was often forced by Spanish rulers to leave countries. In a long, yet important, petition entitled “The Only Method of Attracting All People to the True Faith,” de Las Casas wrote to Pope Paul III “advocating nothing short of a radical alteration of the method of conquest and conversion in the New World.” De Las Casas “essentially supported a clear separation between Spaniards and Indians in the New World, with the establishment of theocratic communities of Indians across the Americas.”³⁶

With encouragement from the Spanish monarch and the heads of the Dominican order, Pope Paul issued the papal bull *Sublimis Deus* which essentially stated that the Indians were rational people and, therefore, could not be enslaved by European colonists. “It was recognition of inherent sovereignty of the Indians of the New World. But it also implied that the American Indians were not fully capable of their own political and religious ‘improvements.’”³⁷ This was a clear and much needed victory for de Las Casas because the world, especially the Spanish, now had to recognize the Americans as being capable of communal independence. Although this declaration was beneficial to the Indians, it would prove detrimental to the wealthy Spanish in the New World and would lead to resentment of de Las Casas and his colleagues.³⁸

For the next four years, de Las Casas traveled between Spanish America and Europe while writing his *Brevisima Relacion*, a summary of his *History of the Indies*. He presented a copy of his work to Charles V. In it, de Las Casas described the “unrestrained Spanish cruelty” that virtually wiped out millions of natives since the Spanish had arrived. Largely due to de Las Casas’s unwavering efforts and the *Brevisima Relacion*, Charles issued the New Laws in 1542 to protect the Indians in colonies. Charles hoped that these would end the wars between the Spanish and the Indians and bring peace to his colonies. The New Laws included articles, some written by de Las Casas himself, that prohibited slavery and forced labor while affirming that the natives were loyal to the Spanish crown and not to any individual.³⁹

In 1544, Charles made de Las Casas the first resident bishop of Chiapas, a small, modest town in Mexico. De Las Casas preferred this small diocese to any other

³⁵ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxiv-xxvi.

³⁶ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxvii.

³⁷ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxviii.

³⁸ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxviii-xxix.

³⁹ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxix-xxx.

important city. With his bishopric position he was able to utilize his influence in both the New World and Spain in a continuing effort to win complete rights for his people. Although he fervently protested the violent treatment of the Indians, his other beliefs were quite common to the time. "He was neither a pacifist nor an anti-imperialist nor an antislavery advocate. He believed in wars, provided they were just wars. And he believed in slavery, provided the slaves were legally acquired and treated well."⁴⁰

These ideas may seem contradictory to the beliefs of his mission, but they, in fact, are consistent. His mission was not against the idea of slavery, but against the illegal and violent way that the Spanish had enslaved the Indians. It was one thing to go out and obtain slaves legally and bring them back to a country, but it was not acceptable to arrive in a new place and force the indigenous people there to be slaves. De Las Casas at first even supported the African slave trade believing that these slaves were acquired legally and were better suited for the type of work that needed to be done in Spanish America (another common view in Europe). He would later deeply regret this decision because he witnessed the Africans receiving the same cruelty and harshness from which the Indians had just gained independence. His mission was not met favorably by the Spanish colonists and there were threats on his life which caused him to flee to Spain, never to return to America.⁴¹

The famous debate, over the humanness and social status of the Indians, between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda took place in 1550. De Las Casas was forced, once again, to defend the native inhabitants against the "charges of barbarism and natural servitude" made by Sepúlveda and other influential Spaniards. Sepúlveda, a Spanish noble who never set foot in the Americas, established two important opinions in his argument. The first part of his argument provided a rationale based on the inherent superiority of the Spanish over the Indians which would serve as a guide for present and future conquerors to exert power over those that they conquered. The second aspect characterized the cultures, customs, and differences that divided Spain from the New World. Sepúlveda's work would serve as a precedent for those defending violent colonization based on superiority.⁴²

De Las Casas's response came in the form of a book entitled the *A Brief Apologetic History* in which he defended American life and culture. He denied Sepúlveda's view of natural superiority and inferiority and that the use of might was naturally right. In his argument, de Las Casas also showed that, in ways, the Americans were nobler or more superior to the Spanish, and "were only corrupted by the horrible examples of the European invaders."⁴³ De Las Casas' argument was not more convincing than his opponent's, but, in his closing de Las Casas added a final warning "that failure to heed his words would bring unbearable afflictions on Spain and the monarchy." Although not entirely persuaded, the monarchy decided to halt on following Sepúlveda's advice (which could be viewed as a small victory for de Las Casas).⁴⁴ De Las Casas had claimed victory in 1550 and Sepúlveda the same in 1551. The judges could not completely side with de Las Casas and end all the Spanish had gained in the

⁴⁰ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxx.

⁴¹ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxx-xxx1.

⁴² De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxxii-xxxiii.

⁴³ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxxiii.

⁴⁴ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxxiii.

New World in the last sixty years. Nor could it completely side with Sepúlveda who wanted complete revocation of the New Laws (thus, another victory for de Las Casas). De Las Casas did not technically win the debate, but it did help his cause and reestablish him as “the outstanding defender of the American Indians.”⁴⁵

In the 1550s, Spain’s economy still depended upon the exploitation of the colonies, but over the next decade that would gradually begin to change. De Las Casas died July 17, 1566 at the age of 82, far beyond the average life expectancy of a normal individual in the sixteenth century and which added to his fame. Ironically, de Las Casas probably received more fame for his work against the acquiring of wealth and power than he did when he was a conqueror searching for that fame. By the time of his death, the Spanish monarchy had begun to assert more control over its colonies and, by 1573, de Las Casas’s hard work would finally pay off as new laws and policy changes saw the Indians begin to achieve the justice and equality that he had worked so vigorously to achieve.⁴⁶

Throughout his life, de Las Casas had a long, tireless job as an archivist and was also a very prolific writer. He wrote reports, treatises, and histories to go along with his numerous books. Another important work, which de Las Casas finished near his death, was his *Twelve Doubts* in which there are guiding principles to Indian rights, Spanish right and authority in the Indies, and the appropriate behavior of the Spanish towards the Americans. He stated that by natural and human law the Americans are the rightful possessors of their land and that any authority that the Spanish possess must come from the people they govern. The latter was a philosophy that would be included in the Constitution of the United States of America. De Las Casas also affirmed that Spain’s conquest and enslavement of the Indians was wrong and tyrannical. These and other ideas found in the *Twelve Doubts* serve as a summary of the doctrines that de Las Casas developed, preached, and lived by.⁴⁷

Many contemporaries of his time may have said that de Las Casas did not live a good life because his ideologies were not theirs and he rebelled against the common values and thinking of his time.⁴⁸ In his younger years “he was a product of his time, yet [became] truly revolutionary in his message concerning the treatment of Amerindians.”⁴⁹ He was also described as “that saintly man, who was so often mistaken for a well-meaning fanatic, [but] had in him the vision, [and possessed] the steady and serene outlook of a world statesman.”⁵⁰ De Las Casas not only shaped the way that Europeans viewed the peoples of the Americas and how those people were conquered and converted, but he also left a lasting impression that shaped the American justice system that our country has today.⁵¹ Throughout the history of the colonization of America, de Las

⁴⁵ Henry Raup Wagner and Helen Rand Parish. *The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas*. (Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1967), 182.

⁴⁶ De Las Casas, *Destruction of the Indies*, xxxiii-xxxiv.

⁴⁷ Wagner and Parish, *Life and Writing*, 234.

⁴⁸ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 3-6.

⁴⁹ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 5.

⁵⁰ Brion, “*Father of the Indians*”, viii.

⁵¹ Vickery, *Las Casas: Great Prophet*, 2-5.

Casas's words and ideas would echo in the minds of rulers, as nations such as England and other Christian nations sought never to repeat the brutality of the Spanish.⁵²

De Las Casas truly did live his idea of the "Good Life" by following the western values that he preached. His life was living work for justice, equality, and respect, not just for the Indians, but for all people. Through his words and works, the memory of his life and mission live on today. The effect that he had on Spanish America and the world was only the beginning, currently we must strive to emulate him and bring justice and peace to all peoples.

⁵²E Shaskan Bumaz, "The Cannibal Butcher Shop: Protestant Uses of las Casas' Brevisima Relation in Europe and the American Colonies," *Early American Literature*, Vol. 35 Iss. 2 (2000): 107.

References

- Brion, Marcel. *Bartolomé de Las Casas: "Father of the Indians"*. New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., INC., 1929
- Bumas, E Shaskan. "The Cannibal Butcher Shop: Protestant Uses of las Casas' Brevisima Relation in Europe and the American Colonies." *Early American Literature*, Vol. 35 Iss. 2 (2000): 107.
- De Las Casas, Bartolomé. *An Account, Much Abbreviated, of the Destruction of the Indies*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2003.
- Hanke, Lewis. *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America*. Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1965.
- Vickery, Paul S. *Bartolomé de Las Casas: Great Prophet of the Americas*. New York: Paulist Press, 2006.
- Wagner, Henry Raup and Helen Rand Parish. *The Life and Writings of Bartolomé de Las Casas*. Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press, 1967.