

## COLONIAL AND INDEPENDENCE PERIODS

*Bartolomé de Las Casas: Prophète du Nouveau Monde.* By PHILIPPE-IGNACE ANDRÉ-VINCENT. Preface by ANDRÉ SAINT-LU. Paris: Editions Tallandier, 1980. Illustrations. Notes. Appendixes. Chronology. Bibliography. Pp. 281. Paper.

Beautifully written, brief, and laudatory, André-Vincent's biography is sure to enhance the modern reputation of Bartolomé de Las Casas. This handsome paperback volume enters Fray Bartolomé in the prestigious series of "Figures de proue," alongside Charlemagne and St. Francis, Joan of Arc and the Kaiser. For the professional historian, the book is a handy mirror of the state of Las Casas studies at the start of the current biographical explosion.

In 1957, Pérez de Tudela synthesized the work of the founders of modern *lascasismo*, Hanke and Giménez Fernández, in his "Estudio preliminar" to Las Casas's *Obras escogidas*. In 1971, Friede and Keen assembled later essays on *Las Casas in History*. Now André-Vincent has drawn upon interpretations from the pseudocentennial and the work of recent European investigators for a fresh ideological portrait.

The result is as attractive as André-Vincent's style—"Les dernières années de Las Casas se déroulent parmi les drames d'une Chrétienté en agonie" (p. 162)—as thought-provoking as his previous books on jurisprudence and theology (read pp. 151–157 and 234–238, dissecting Las Casas's views on dominion and natural law), and as flawed as the incomplete biographical material on which the author had to depend.

Thus, he does use Las Casas's new birthdate (p. 21), Marcus's new guesses about the colonist (pp. 22–23), Isacio Pérez's new analysis of Las Casas and the New Laws (pp. 110–118), and Cantù's new find of an unknown petition (p. 137), to supplement earlier studies by Bataillon and others. He wrote before the latest books, however: this reviewer's reappraisal of *Las Casas as a Bishop* (1980), and Pérez's huge *Inventario documentado* of Las Casas's writings (1981). And he was unaware of the massive new discoveries about to be published—the record of Las Casas's ordination and Roman sojourn, his major role in the papal decrees on behalf of the Indians, his influential later career, his several brushes with the Inquisition—that reveal a far larger and more political figure.

Nevertheless, André-Vincent's biography will be welcomed by the French reading public, by specialists interested in its updated, if imperfect, bibliography, and the excellent appendix on the Black slavery con-

trovery, and by the scholarly community as an interim report on Las Casas, "Prophet of the New World."

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HELEN RAND PARISH

*Spanish Scientists in the New World: The Eighteenth-Century Expeditions.* By IRIS H. W. ENGSTRAND. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981. Notes. Maps. Illustrations. Appendixes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 220. Cloth. \$25.00.

Both title and subtitle in this book are misleading, since its contents focus on only two major Spanish expeditions of the eighteenth century: the Royal Scientific Expedition (1787–1806) and Malaspina's around-the-world expedition (1789–94). The first one, directed by Martín de Sessé, surveyed areas of Guatemala, Mexico, and the present-day American Northwest. Malaspina's, after rounding Cape Horn, spent a year mapping the South American West Coast, sailed to Alaska to search for a Northwest passage, and explored the southwest Pacific and eastern Indian Oceans, before being recalled to Spain because of a war with France.

To produce her very well researched work, the author traveled to Spain and Mexico to investigate the original sources. There are twelve chapters, five appendixes (of far greater interest to botanists than to historians), a bibliography with extensive documentary evidence (almost 200 titles), and an index. The chapters themselves cover an introductory history of the Spanish scientific Enlightenment, the formative years of both expeditions, the development of such undertakings and a brief—much too brief—analysis of the results and implications of the expeditions, after they had returned to Spain.

The main body of the book is thus contained between chapters 3 and 11, covering the expeditionary and scientific activity proper. These are meticulous chapters, following the many expedition members in their different errands almost step by step. The key figure is Alejandro Malaspina (1754–1810), Italian by birth, Spanish by adoption. Among eighteenth-century explorers, Malaspina has been ranked on an equal level with Jean La Pérouse and James Cook, but he never saw his reports published and has remained little known. Malaspina is presented in the book as an able leader, explorer, and seaman, as well as an observer who understood well the harm that Spain's conservative policies were causing in its American empire. His devotion to republican principles caused his imprisonment in Spain and his later deportation to Italy, where he died.