Slavery and Salvation
in Colonial Cartagena de Indias

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Contents

List of Illustrations viii
Preface ix

1. Introduction: Polysemic Frontiers 1
2. Pragmatic Order: Jesuits in Europe and the New World 32
3. African Conversion as Jesuit Enterprise 60
4. Africans: The Multitudes and the Monstrous 92
5. Aethiopia Speaks: Sandoval's Ambivalent Page 122

Notes 153
Bibliography 169
Index 179
Illustrations

Maps

1. Civitas Carthagena in Indiae Occidentalis, 1586 25
3. Blaeu’s Aethiopia Superior vel Interior; vulgo Abissinorum sive Presbiteri Ioannis Imperium, 1635 78
3. Sandoval’s Aethiopia 81
4. Blaeu’s Africae nova descriptio, 1617 96

Figures

2. Father José Segundo Lainez, S.J. (1812–1848), “Apostle of Putumayo” 44
2. Frontispiece of Sandoval’s 1627 edition 57

Table

2.1. Provinces and missions where Jesuits were established before the Suppression (1763–73) 40

Preface

For both scholars of colonial studies and readers who have never explored the complexity of the human encounter that occurred with Europe’s entrance into the Americas, this book will provide discovery of a unique historical document. Slavery and Salvation in Colonial Cartagena de Indias analyzes a text about missionaries and slaves that reveals just how difficult it was for Europeans to incorporate new and different peoples into their religious and philosophical understandings. De instauranda Aethiopum salute, Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval’s 1627 treatise, serves as testimony to the epistemological shifts that had to take place in order to make that accommodation of the unknown possible.

The slavery and salvation to which the title of the book refers were concurrent phenomena that characterized colonial Spanish America from its beginnings. Eager to expand an empire and secure their own fortunes, explorers and conquistadors—and later, encomenderos, hacendados, and plantation owners—would accept any source of free labor. The gospel and the rewards of Christianity were the main tools the Spaniards used to justify enslavement of both Amerindians and Africans. While Spaniards grounded their right to just war and dominion in the New World on the need to convert souls to Christianity, most Europeans and criollos in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries generally felt that Africans were better off as slaves in Christian lands than as nonbelievers in their own. And so missionaries were among the first to arrive in the Americas, armed with the Bible and prepared to pave the way for colonization and the creation of a civil and religious society.

Alonso de Sandoval, a Jesuit priest and missionary working with African slaves arriving in Cartagena de Indias in the early seventeenth century,
felt that Jesuits could secure their own salvation by becoming slaves of the slaves. This salvation had spiritual as well as material implications for a religious order that had just begun to establish itself in Spanish America. The more Christ-like Jesuits could be by serving the most lowly, the feet of the corporal Church, the greater would be their own otherworldly rewards. Simultaneously, they also were more likely to secure the Christianization of Africans in the New World as an exclusively Jesuit enterprise.

Slavery for the Africans brought to the Americas, however, was a brutal reality, not merely a spiritual metaphor. Sandoval, unable and unwilling to turn away from the material suffering that surrounds him, thus revises the Christian privilege placed exclusively on the soul. In his criticism of the slave trade, Sandoval underscores the humanity and physical pain endured by Africans, portraying the body as the worldly home of the spirit. This vessel, he argues, must be tended to with as much care as the soul itself.

Scholars of both slavery and Jesuit or religious studies in colonial Spanish America will find this book about a truly unique text well worth reading. Written at a time when Jesuits were both slave owners and ministers to slaves in Africa and the Americas, De instauranda Aethiopum salute (1627) engages classical as well as modern texts regarding the institution of slavery and the burgeoning slave trade of the seventeenth century. Distinguished by his interest in African welfare and his desire to incorporate Africans as full participants in the Catholic Church, Alonso de Sandoval is a missionary analogous to Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas, who fought vigorously in defense of the Amerindians the century before.

Slavery and Salvation in Colonial Cartagena de Indias explores Sandoval’s work as a text that arises out of the social and religious context of the baroque and the Counter-Reformation in the Hispanic world. In his desire to open up the church and make the African more familiar to his Jesuit readership, Sandoval manipulates common notions of blackness and whiteness, dark and light, master and slave. By engaging the heterogeneous environment that surrounds him in Cartagena and by striving to valorize real African humanity and culture, Sandoval contributes new knowledge to the engagement of the Other in Spanish America. At the same time, he creates a space in his pages in which “Aethiopian,” or black, peoples express their own understandings of Christianity and colonization. The resultant polyvocality of the text makes it a singular New World document.

All quotations from Spanish, French, and Portugese have been translated into English, so the text is accessible to monolingual as well as multilingual readers. The original citations have been included so that readers new to Sandoval or texts from the early colonial period may become familiar with the writing style. I have maintained the orthography and punctuation (or more precisely, the lack thereof) from Vila Vilar’s 1987 edition. The translations that follow each citation are my own and are in modern English. For readability, I have broken up the long, run-on sentence style of seventeenth-century Spanish into shorter, more intelligible sentences. It should be noted that Enriqueta Vila Vilar states in her introduction that the original printing of De instauranda Aethiopum salute is full of errors and misspellings. Where errors occur and where Sandoval has written sloppily, I have tried to make passages more intelligible to the reader. At times clarification is included in the notes, as are translations of the Latin phrases used by Sandoval.

In my translation, I have chosen to use black for negro, as opposed to the antiquated Negro. I have also decided to employ the classical spelling of Aethiopians where Sandoval uses etiopes, so as not to confuse the reader with the more contemporary and national connotations of the word Ethiopian. While Sandoval is guilty of leveling very different peoples of the world into a single category of “Aethiopians,” I will also make general usage of the term African throughout this book to refer to the peoples of various African ethnicities that Sandoval encounters in Cartagena de Indias. Where enough information is available, I try to specify the origins or ethnicity of the individuals Sandoval writes about. But especially in the final chapter, I use the word African to refer to an array of peoples colonized or enslaved by Spain and Portugal.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Polysemic Frontiers

In the place where Afro-Caribbean history and literature meet the recently invigorated and politicized field of Spanish American colonial studies, there is an enormous critical and textual gap, particularly in the first two centuries of colonization. When undertaking a search for primary and critical texts that involve Africans and their descendants during the early Spanish American colonial period, one realizes quickly that very little has been published on the topic. A recognition of the important political and discursive role that Africans played in colonial society is spurring new studies, but in many cases, one is forced to make reference to studies that date from the 1960s and 1970s: politically motivated works like Cuban José Luciano Franco’s La diáspora africana en el Nuevo Mundo or Colombian Roberto Arrazola’s Palenque, primer pueblo libre de América. Significantly, these works make use of historical and document sources to reconstruct the scattered colonial past of Africans in Spanish America, but they lack the critical energy that has spurred more recent colonial studies. I speak of the contemporary concern with historicity and historical perspective, the expansion of the category of text, analysis of voice and multidiscursivity, and the search for alternate colonial pasts through consideration of the body and gender, race and ethnicity. The historical texts above have provided necessary insight into the colonial reality of individuals of African descent and have also indicated positive
The existence of Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval’s text, *De instauranda Aethiopum salute*, published originally in Seville in 1627 as *Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catechismo evangelico de todos etiopes*, was brought to my attention by my dissertation director while I completed doctoral studies at Tulane University. With much difficulty, colleagues located for me a personal copy of the 1987 Vila Vilar edition in Madrid, where it was published. The limited availability of even this most recently published edition is suggestive of the marginalized state of the subject matter and inaccessibility of primary texts. Alonso de Sandoval’s treatise provides one type of source material for literary-based historical analysis on the Afro-Caribbean colonial period and allows the critic access to the intellectual culture of a moment in time through exploration of rhetorical structures and the strategic use of language. It is unique in that it is the only published missionary history that deals exclusively with the Christianization of Africans in early Spanish America. Put simply, *De instauranda* stands alone as the earliest Spanish American document that seeks to make historical, philosophical, and cultural sense of the African/European encounter in a New World context. Finally, but by no means least important, the text presents readers of Latin American history and culture with a missionary figure who was as vigorous an advocate of African humanity and dignity in the seventeenth century as the well-known Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484–1566) was for Amerindian moral integrity and inherent rights to autonomy in the sixteenth century. This embracing, albeit paternalistic, stance vis-à-vis the Other creates in Sandoval’s text a periodic window to African perspectives on colonialism and Christianity.

To encounter such a figure as Alonso de Sandoval, who was willing to challenge many commonly held views on racial and ethnic difference and locate a space of humanity and inclusion for Africans in the church, in itself makes reading the Jesuit’s text a worthwhile endeavor for scholars of the colonial period. Indeed, *Slavery and Salvation in Colonial Cartagena de Indias* presents abundant reasons to justify that such a unique and important text for Spanish American colonial studies should be given due consideration in the classroom and in critical investigation. However, this book does not set out merely to celebrate a missionary who adopted a controversial social and religious stance and dedicated years of his life to the defense of African humanity in the New World. Rather, the book treats both “sides,” or realities, of colonialism: the power of the colonialist project as articulated through writing as well as the expression of resistance against colonialism contained within the very discourse that intended to repress it. I insist that the mere fact that Sandoval’s work is at once a Jesuit missionary text as well as a document of colonialism is by no means grounds for its simplistic categorization as a transparent apology of Spanish colonial domination in the Americas. *De instauranda* is much more complex in its motivations and development, as we shall see. I suggest in this book that by examining more closely the means by which colonial subjects are represented in writing, the cracks of an uneven and incomplete system of domination may be explicitly revealed in the Spanish American context.

When critically exploring representation, I refer to the textual portrayal of Africans by members of dominant colonial society such as Sandoval, who belonged to a small group that both created and transferred power through writing. Sandoval’s colonialist missionary project seeks to subsume history and the physical world that surrounds him, including the bodies and material culture of Africans, to his own purposes, specifically claiming the conversion of Africans as a Jesuit enterprise. Beyond its general foundation in colonial studies, however, which seeks to reveal the ways in which Africans are written into history and generally misrepresented in the process, the book also engages the postcolonial concern of how Africans wrote themselves into the pages of colonial history. For, as Terry Eagleton has so succinctly pointed out in a recent essay, narrowly conceived research in colonial studies can lead to investigative dead ends:

The bad news is that otherness is not the most fertile of intellectual furrows. Indeed, once you have observed that the other is typically portrayed as lazy, dirty, stupid, crafty, womanly, passive, rebellious, sexually rapacious, childlike, enigmatic and a number of other mutually contradictory epithets, it is hard to know what to do next apart from reaching for yet another textual illustration of the fact. The theme is as theoretically thin as it is politically pressing. Nothing
is now more stereotyped in literary studies than the critique of stereotypes. While the final chapters of this book address what I propose as one possible model of how to identify and make significant analysis of the moments in which African impositions of meaning on the world appear in colonial texts and documents.

Because their systems of communication were orally based, Africans and their descendants in the Americas participated in limited ways in the official written European discourse of conquest and domination in which they were more often than not misrepresented. In part because of an imposed illiteracy, it is not until the nineteenth century in Latin America that we see texts (as one traditionally understands the term) produced by Afro-Caribbeans. Yet, despite this absence of official text, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, peoples of African descent were expressing overt resistance to domination and slavery. I argue in this book that verbal and physical acts by slaves in rejection of colonial imposition are translated into a discursive counterpositioning within certain circumstances of writing, such as Sandoval's treatise. In historical representation, the two spheres of resistance are often complexly intertwined, since the written representation of an anticolonial utterance or act of rebellion is a tricky matter for a colonial writer to negotiate. It is here that the African participation in the text comes into play, because Alonso de Sandoval and the Africans of his pages in many instances contend for power over representation. The last chapter of the book, therefore, focuses on those moments in which the African becomes a historical or discursive actor or subject in the text—and beyond it, of course—despite the constraints of Sandoval's colonialist page. The intention of Slavery and Salvation is to show how both processes are concurrent and intricately linked within the realm of colonial discourse.

For this type of project, one must reread colonial texts to problematize their presumed univocality, and expand notions of “text” in order to allow for the articulation of these alternative subjectivities and discourses, or alternative literacies, as Walter Mignolo would say. Beyond the written page of Sandoval's work, one must read the materiality it contains, such as bodies, objects, and landscape, and the speech acts it reproduces, all “texts” in themselves. The impetus to open Latin American cultural and literary studies up to a whole gamut of textual possibilities that include maps, material culture and artifacts, and historical documents, among other examples, is part of an effort to create a more complete vision of the colonial period, beyond the often strict limitations of what alphabetic writing can provide. Specifically, it seeks to give voice to a myriad of peoples who were either restricted in their direct participation in colonial writing or who simply didn't practice a form of alphabetic writing. That is, their cultures were predominantly oral and employed some other system of symbolic representation of history and reality. By creating a space for codices and quipus, pottery and textiles, songs and oral tales; by admitting culturally bound conceptions of the landscape as legitimate surfaces open to textual analysis; and by recurring to archival document sources previously ignored, Latin American colonial studies has attempted to provide a more equitable terrain of representation and historical interpretation to groups who were silenced by colonialism.

Within this larger family of colonial studies, research on peoples of African descent in the colonial period in particular requires the construction of a sort of hybrid theoretical framework from the corpus of Latin American colonial theory that now embraces ethnic and gender difference but still tends to ignore Africanness and blackness in the colonial period. Thus I place this book in the theoretical vein of contemporary Latin American scholars who have striven to recover and articulate what were once considered to be the forever lost and irretrievable subaltern voices of the colonial period. But I have merged aspects of their ideas on colonial discourse, mostly of indigenous peoples, with theorization on race in the early modern period, and elements from semiotics and cultural studies on signs expressed on the body and space.

Not coincidentally, the same postcolonial perspective that breaks down traditional categories of genre and text as indicated above does so to a large degree as part of a process of identity formation. Postcolonial theory posits the need for formerly colonized peoples to interrogate the ways in which their own cultural identity has been historically co-opted by colonial authority and reductively defined by strict, traditional categories of text, race, history, and language that are irrelevant and alienating to the postcolonial subject. It is here that terms like hybridity, pidgin, creolité, mestizaje, and diaspora have entered critical lexicon in the struggle to propose alternative concepts that more appropriately address postcolonial reality. Thus a return to precolonial origins, a critical examination of cultural and historical suppressions, and the movement toward authentic
identity formation are some of the strategies that postcolonial theory suggests for reconstitution of the subjectivity subverted by colonialism. At times highly wary of traditional parameters of identity constitution like nationalism, postcolonial theorists debate among themselves whether cultural expression should take a national, regional, or transnational character because they recognize that multiple political, cultural, and economic systems can simultaneously coexist. On one hand, Marxists like Fredric Jameson and Terry Eagleton see nationalism as an essential stage through which ex-colonies must pass in order to reestablish firm political and cultural identities. To fail to do so, says Eagleton, is to play into the hands of dominant culture, which has sought throughout history to strategically fragment marginal groups. Other perspectives, however, like those of Aijaz Ahmad and Anthony Kwame Appiah, see nationalism as yet another conceptual imposition of the Western culture, one that belongs to a linear model of progressive modernization that does not address the reality of many postcolonial regions. Cultural heterogeneity, the coexistence of capitalism and socialism and varying states of premodernization and postmodernism within the same region, along with the inability of nativism to articulate the complexities of contemporary identities, all point to the emptiness of nationalism for many postcolonial societies. Ahmad proposes that postcolonial regions examine their reality according to a more universal, humanist vision (although not the Occidental model of traditional ethics defended by conservative academics and other cultural keepers), one that recognizes the highly heterogeneous states of peoples across the globe. Postcolonial populations of a single geographic area, he argues, belong to diverse economic, political, cultural, and even temporal categories manifested in all of their extremes.

The regional or diasporic models for postcolonial societies suggested by critics like Paul Gilroy and Antonio Benitez-Rojo also attempt to better address a transnational, multicultural identity, such as that which characterizes peoples of African descent in the Caribbean. And yet many postcolonial societies are obliged by global politics to exist as regional or diasporic groups and national entities at the same time. And so, whether or not one holds that the formation of a national literary and cultural identity is essential to modernity, or to what some might call an authentic literary expression, much is at stake for postcolonial peoples as national borders are drawn around them. When participating in national cultures, for example, ethnic groups are often obliged to make cultural negotiations and sacrifices that threaten their continued existence as a community.

Sandoval's *De instauranda* plays an unexpected role in the question of national identity formation for Colombia in particular, and for Latin America in general. National history locates its foundational texts and identifies its relevant heroes consistent with the cultural exigencies of a specific moment in time. It is not surprising, then, that the first contemporary edition of Sandoval's text (the first edition since his expanded version of 1647!) was published in Bogota, Colombia, in 1956, in commemoration of the death of Jesuit missionary Saint Peter (Pedro) Claver (1581-1654) three hundred years before. What is surprising is that the book celebrated not Sandoval, the author of the text, but rather his contemporary and disciple Claver, who came to be known as the "Slave of the slaves" (Esclavo de los esclavos). Claver worked alongside Sandoval in the mission for African slaves in Cartagena de Indias. He was canonized more than two centuries after his death, in 1888, not coincidentally just as the last huge slaveholding regions in Latin America, Brazil, and Cuba were finally accepting the historical demand for abolition of slavery. As with Las Casas, who was portrayed as an almost rabid and irrational figure in history until the nineteenth century redeemed him as the "Defender of the Indians," recognition and praise for both Sandoval's and Claver's missionary work among Africans was spurred by temporal circumstance.

When *De instauranda* saw its first contemporary publication in the middle of the twentieth century, Colombia was experiencing, along with the rest of Latin America, a period of economic growth and modernization, processes that were significantly fostered by North American Cold War economic and political interests. Accompanied by an intense surge in the productivity of Latin American publishing houses, this economic boom fomented an explosion of cultural expression acknowledged equally within and beyond the confines of the region, as North America and Europe began to take notice of Latin American historical and literary importance. Motivated also by the impetus of autonomous cultural pride generated by the 1959 Cuban Revolution, Colombia and many of its neighbors seized the opportunity to vigorously promote their own modern national cultures over the next two decades, focusing on the significant contribu-
The appearance of the second contemporary edition of Sandoval’s text in Madrid in 1987 marks an equally important intellectual moment, occurring precisely when a politically motivated academic interest in the previously suppressed voices of colonial Spanish America was beginning to flourish. That most recent edition also helped recognize the five-hundred-year anniversary of the entrance of Spain into the New World, a commemoration that in part spurred renewed inquiry on the impact of the European conquest on Amerindians and Africans. In an effort to acknowledge the past reality of slavery and its impact on Colombia, President Belisario Betancur and the Colombian Congress, in 1985, recognized Jesuit Fathers Alonso de Sandoval and Peter Claver, and Brother Nicolás González for their efforts in alleviating the misery of African slaves arriving in seventeenth-century Cartagena de Indias, calling them the first human rights workers of Colombia. September 9 was set aside as Saint Peter Claver Day, and a statue of the three “precursores del alivio y defensa de los oprimidos en América” (forerunners for the relief and defense of the oppressed in America) was to be erected in Cartagena (it never was). The significance of Colombia’s heterogeneity as integral to national culture was evidenced again in 1990 by the Colombian government when it officially recognized the heritage of its multicultural society and extended legal, constitutional protection to indigenous and African cultures, languages, and lands within its national borders.

_De instauranda_ is as significant to studies on the African diaspora as it is to national cultures, providing primary source information for one of the largest forced migrations in history. The text is useful, for example, in studies that seek to identify the ethnicity of slaves imported into the Caribbean, and to determine which African groups were making significant linguistic contributions to Spanish and early dialects of the region like _palenquero_ of the maroon community of San Basilio, near Cartagena, Colombia. It also allows insight into some of the details of African slave life. Therefore, while Sandoval’s work languished in oblivion for some three hundred years, the middle of the twentieth century gave this text new currency. _De instauranda_ and other documents like it that remain unedited are beginning to receive due consideration as society finally sanctions the importance of African contributions to the formation of the Americas, and theory provides the means to reconstruct a splintered history.
The Catholic Church and Missionaries in the New World

The Catholic Church entered the New World alongside the Spanish Crown as a central force in the process of conquest and colonization. Both held that their entrance in the Americas was providential, a mission predicted by the Bible and sanctioned by God. Because it held patronage over the church in the Indies and financed its endeavors, the monarchy exercised a great deal of power through the religious institution. Degrees of authority over the Indies therefore radiated simultaneously from both Spain and Rome. In the wake of Christopher Columbus’s first expedition, Pope Alexander VI’s bulls of donation in 1493 affirmed peninsular possession of the Indies. One, Inter caetera divinae, divided the newly encountered territories between Spain and Portugal, while another, Dudum siquidem, granted peninsular dominion over the inhabitants of the Americas with the condition that they be instructed in the Christian faith. The vigorous debate over whether or not Spaniards could legally enslave Indians arose almost immediately and continued for several decades. Queen Isabel quickly and firmly established her position that the Indians were not to be harmed or enslaved, and she ordered that the Indian slaves brought to Spain by Columbus to be sold on the market be expropriated from their owners and returned to the Americas. According to official documentation, no more Indian slaves entered Spain after 1501.

The need to justify the conquest of American lands and inhabitants found temporary resolution in ins predicandi, or the law of preaching, a concept taken from natural law that allowed the Crown domination of the New World for the purpose of spreading the gospel among New World peoples. The subtle paradox of the dual intentions of conquest and Christianization are captured articularly by Schwaller: “Based on the concept of ins predicandi, conquest could not occur before the Gospel had been peaceably preached. If the Gospel was rejected violently, then war was possible. But again, war had as its end the pacification and the Christianization of the people.” In a similar attempt to combine the objectives of colonial profit and religious ends, the encomienda system, begun in 1499 by Columbus on Hispaniola, granted a parcel of land and its inhabitant Indians to Spaniards as payment for service to the Crown. In compensation for labor provided by the indigenous peoples, the Spaniards were to take spiritual and physical care of their charges. The encomienda was just one of the many ways that de facto enslavement of Indians was allowed to continue, despite conclusions among Spanish intellectuals that there were no legal grounds for it.

As the church sanctioned imperial activities in the Indies, and intellectuals in Spain battled first over the humanity and then the nature of the Indians, missionaries made their way into the Americas in search of souls to convert. The first to arrive were the Dominicans and Franciscans who found passage on the voyages of Christopher Columbus. Both orders had been formed in the Middle Ages in response to an overly hierarchical church structure, with the hope of a return to a more simple and primitive religious community, and the Indies provided an ideal ground in the missionary imagination for the materialization of this dream. Prepared to fulfill the papal objectives of spreading the gospel in new lands, these missionaries established themselves among Indian peoples throughout the Spanish possessions in the Caribbean first, and eventually the mainland.

A significant moment for the early missionary impetus was the famous arrival of twelve barefoot Franciscans in New Spain in 1524. This arrival marked the beginning of systematic and large-scale missionary endeavors on tierra firme. Here, among the concentrated and diverse populations of Mesoamerica, Franciscans like friar Toribio de Benavente (1500-1569), or Motolinia, as he was called, built churches and set up schools and missions where thousands of Indians were baptized in a short span of time. The work of Franciscan Bernardino de Sahagún, who came to New Spain in 1529 after receiving his education in Salamanca, is exemplary of the epistemological shift that intimate contact with Amerindians caused in many missionaries. Through the education of native elites and dialogue with native informants, Sahagún’s initial objective was to inquire into and take written record of the religious beliefs and cultural practices of Mesoamericans, with the ultimate goal of undermining those systems and replacing them with Christian paradigms. The texts compiled by Sahagún and his informants provide invaluable written history of a culture in transformation.

Missionaries like Sahagún acquired a deep admiration for Amerindian culture and intellect and found themselves required to make epistemological accommodation of a reality they had not anticipated. Of all the colonial enterprises in the New World, missionary work among indigenous and African peoples, by its very nature, created the circumstances for Europeans to approach non-Europeans on a personal level. For many
eclesiastics, the ideal circumstances for conversion were peaceful, tolerant, and patient. This type of interaction demanded a high level of cultural and linguistic understanding between potential converts and missionaries. Consequently, Franciscans and Jesuits in particular negotiated a middle ground of communication with Amerindians, learning their languages, accommodating their customs, at times adopting them, and thus establishing the foundation upon which successful conversion to Christianity could take place. This willingness to meet the cultural, linguistic, and religious Other on a common ground was characterized by a higher degree of equality or proximity than typified the usual relationship between colonizer and colonized.

Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas is perhaps the most well known missionary to have recognized the humanity of the Amerindians early on and to have rejected Spanish brutality against them, insisting that the notion of just war used to warrant domination was in fact illegal in the New World context. While his Dominican and Jesuit contemporaries were reforming law and theology at the School of Salamanca, where he had previously received his own degree in law, Las Casas was writing fervently in protest against the encomienda system and the continued enslavement and abuse of the indigenous converts. His written works eventually led to the promulgation of the New Laws in 1542. These laws stipulated that all Indians still in bondage were to be immediately set free and were no longer obliged to provide free labor to the Spaniards. Rather, their work was to be compensated by a wage. In short, the New Laws abolished both Indian slavery and the encomienda system, with explicit intention to phase out any lingering remnants over time. Not surprisingly, the laws were met with outrage in the New World, and Las Casas often feared for his life. Nonetheless, the Dominican went on to argue for equal humanity and the natural rights of Amerindians in 1550-51 in the Valladolid debates against Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, who held that the Indians were inferior to Europeans and thus slaves by nature.

Though he has been revered as a defender and protector of the Indians since the Enlightenment, Las Casas is still periodically attacked for having proposed to the Spanish Crown in 1516 the importation of African slaves in order to free the indigenous population from forced servitude. The reality is that the Crown had permitted the introduction of African slaves into the Indies since 1501. While the number of slaves imported did begin to increase after 1520, that phenomenon would most likely have occurred regardless of Las Casas's suggestion, given the dramatically declining native population and the Spaniards' desire for cost-free labor. Nonetheless, a vigorous importation of African slaves did not begin until after the end of the century. Between 1595 and 1640, at least 268,600 slaves were brought to Spanish America, while between 1550 and 1595, the relatively small number of 36,300 were introduced. Las Casas expressed subsequent regrets about his advice to the Crown. He makes several statements quite openly to that effect in his Historia de las Indias (1560). Referring to himself in the third person as he often did in his chronicles, he states:

Este aviso de que se diese licencia para traer esclavos negros a estas tierras dió primero el clérigo Casas, no advirtiendo la injusticia con que los portugueses los toman y hacen esclavos; el cual, después de que cayó en ello, no lo diera por cuanto había en el mundo, porque siempre los tuvo por injusta y tiránicamente hechos esclavos, porque la misma razón es dellos que de los indios.

[This advice that permission be given for black slaves to be brought to these lands was first given by the cleric Casas, without recognizing the injustice with which the Portuguese take them and make them slaves. Which, once he was aware of this, he never would have given (such advice) for anything in the world, because he always thought that they were made slaves unjustly and tyrannically, because the same moral reasoning holds for them as for the Indians.]

Referring once again to the royal decision to import slaves to the New World, made with his recommendation, Las Casas says:

Deste aviso que dió el clérigo, no poco después se halló arrepentido, juzgándose culpado por inadvertente, porque como después vido y averiguó, según parecerá, ser tan injusto el captiverio de los negros como el de los indios, no fue discreto remedio el que aconsejó que se trujesen negros para que se libertasen los indios, aunque él suponía que eran justamente captivos, aunque no estuvo cierto que la ignorancia que en esto tuvo y buena voluntad lo excusase delante el juicio divino.

[Of this advice that the cleric gave, he afterward found himself repentant, judging himself guilty of carelessness. Because after having seen and ascertained that the captivity of the blacks was as unjust as
ecclesiastics, the ideal circumstances for conversion were peaceful, tolerant, and patient. This type of interaction demanded a high level of cultural and linguistic understanding between potential converts and missionaries. Consequently, Franciscans and Jesuits in particular negotiated a middle ground of communication with Amerindians, learning their languages, accommodating their customs, at times adopting them, and thus establishing the foundation upon which successful conversion to Christianity could take place. This willingness to meet the cultural, linguistic, and religious Other on a common ground was characterized by a higher degree of equality or proximity than typified the usual relationship between colonizer and colonized.

Dominican Bartolomé de Las Casas is perhaps the most well known missionary to have recognized the humanity of the Amerindians early on and to have rejected Spanish brutality against them, insisting that the notion of just war used to warrant domination was in fact illegal in the New World context. While his Dominican and Jesuit contemporaries were reforming law and theology at the School of Salamanca, where he previously received his own degree in law, Las Casas was writing fervently in protest against the encomienda system and the continued enslavement and abuse of the indigenous converts. His written works eventually led to the promulgation of the New Laws in 1542. These laws stipulated that all Indians still in bondage were to be immediately set free and were no longer obliged to provide free labor to the Spaniards. Rather, their work was to be compensated by a wage. In short, the New Laws abolished both Indian slavery and the encomienda system, with explicit intention to phase out any lingering remnants over time. Not surprisingly, the laws were met with outrage in the New World, and Las Casas often feared for his life. Nonetheless, the Dominican went on to argue for equal humanity and the natural rights of Amerindians in 1550-51, and the Valladolid debates against Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, who held that the Indians were inferior to Europeans and thus slaves by nature.

Though he has been revered as a defender and protector of the Indians since the Enlightenment, Las Casas is still periodically attacked for having proposed to the Spanish Crown in 1516 the importation of African slaves in order to free the indigenous population from forced servitude. The reality is that the Crown had permitted the introduction of African slaves into the Indies since 1501. While the number of slaves imported did begin to increase after 1520, that phenomenon would most likely have occurred regardless of Las Casas’s suggestion, given the dramatically declining native population and the Spaniards’ desire for cost-free labor. Nonetheless, a vigorous importation of African slaves did not begin until the end of the century. Between 1595 and 1640, at least 268,600 slaves were brought to Spanish America, while between 1550 and 1595, the relatively small number of 36,300 were introduced.

Las Casas expressed subsequent regrets about his advice to the Crown. He makes several statements quite openly to that effect in his Historia de las Indias (1560). Referring to himself in the third person as he often did in his chronicles, he states:

Este aviso de que se diese licencia para traer esclavos negros a estas tierras dio primero el clérigo Casas, no advirtiendo la injusticia con que los portugueses los toman y hacen esclavos; el cual, después de que cayó en ello, no lo diera por cuanto había en el mundo, porque siempre los tuvo por injusta y tiránicamente hechos esclavos, porque la misma razón es dellos que de los indios.

[This advice that permission be given for black slaves to be brought to these lands was first given by the cleric Casas, without recognizing the injustice with which the Portuguese take them and make them slaves. Which, once he was aware of this, he never would have given (such advice) for anything in the world, because he always thought that they were made slaves unjustly and tyrannically, because the same moral reasoning holds for them as for the Indians.]

Referring once again to the royal decision to import slaves to the New World, made with his recommendation, Las Casas says:

Deste aviso que dió el clérigo, no poco después se halló arrepiado, juzgándose culpado por inadvertente, porque como después vido y averiguó, según parecerá, ser tan injusto el captiverio de los negros como el de los indios, no fué discreto remedio el que aconsejó que se trujesen negros para que se libertasen los indios, aunque él suponía que eran justamente captivos, aunque no estuvo cierto que la ignorancia que en esto tuvo y buena voluntad lo excusase delante el juicio divino.

[Of this advice that the cleric gave, he afterward found himself repentant, judging himself guilty of carelessness. Because after having seen and ascertained that the captivity of the blacks was as unjust as
that of the Indians, it seemed that it was not a wise solution to recommend that blacks be brought so that the Indians be freed, even if he thought they were justly captured, even if it were not true that the ignorance and good will he had in this matter would mean forgiveness before divine judgment.\textsuperscript{27}

Las Casas was disturbed by the futility of his advice to better the situation of the Amerindians and by the contribution to the misery of African slaves he felt he had made. He states that while Africans in the ingenios, or sugar plantations, “hallaron su muerte y pestilencia, y así muchos dellos cada día mueren” (found their death and pestilence, and thus many of them die each day), “para los indios ningún fructo dello salió, habiendo sido para su bien y libertad ordenado, porque al fin se quedaron en su captiverio hasta que no hobo más que matar” (for the Indians no good came of it, having been ordered for their well-being and freedom; because in the end they remained in their captivity until there were none left to kill).\textsuperscript{38} Las Casas deals here with the moral contradictions of his own thinking, since on both legal and moral grounds, the institution of African slavery was accepted in Europe at the time, even by the Catholic Church. Las Casas points this out himself when he states that he had originally supported the importation of African slaves with the understanding that they were justly or legally captured. Nonetheless, Las Casas comes to the conclusion that whether or not the enslavement of black Africans was legal, it was wrong to encourage one form of slavery to replace another in the Spanish colonies.

The Jesuits faced a similar ethical contradiction when they purchased black African slaves as labor for the haciendas that financially supported their colleges and Indian missions in the Americas. Jesuit possession of slaves began at the end of the sixteenth century when the order decided to allow colleges in New Spain and Brazil to cultivate sugarcane for profit and follow the common practice of utilizing black slave labor.\textsuperscript{39} The numbers of African slaves on the order’s haciendas across Latin America steadily increased across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as Jesuit economic productivity and wealth grew.\textsuperscript{30} By the time of their expulsion in 1767, the Jesuits were among the largest African slaveholders in the Americas.\textsuperscript{31}

Like other mendicant orders, the Jesuits took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, and according to the desires of Ignatius, were not to own individual property. The organization, however, was permitted to possess and control wealth as a group. Upon their arrival in the New World, Jesuits inserted themselves with ease into the existing economic system. They bought many properties on their own but also received endowments and donations from wealthy Spanish and criollo elites. In their financial matters, Jesuits were largely typical of the times, and their haciendas differed little from those that surrounded them.\textsuperscript{32} What did distinguish the Jesuits is that they became some of the most successful hacienda owners in Spanish America. Colmenares argues that the very hierarchical, systematic, and concerted structure of the Jesuit organization contributed in a natural way to the order’s economic successes as hacendados. For example, haciendas were visited regularly and inspected by appointed members of the order, and unprofitable enterprises were either redirected or sold. Another advantage, Colmenares adds, was that in the cities where their colleges were located, Jesuits had previously established access to urban markets where they could efficiently sell their goods.\textsuperscript{33} And as their estates generated profits, Jesuits wisely reinvested their earnings and their wealth grew further. This accumulation of large wealth was a concern for the Crowns of Spain and Portugal from the start.

Because the numerous Jesuit colleges and missions in Latin America depended financially on the haciendas for both subsistence and surplus production, the majority of the colleges had at least one hacienda. Some had several. Most colleges raised cattle as a meat source, along with crops such as maize and beans, and hay for the stock animals. But money-making enterprises were essential, so consistent with regional location, Jesuits concentrated on the production of sugar and wine and on the cultivation of cacao and other large-scale surplus crops. Among the biggest Jesuit haciendas in Spanish America were those of Mexico, followed by Peru, and then New Granada, Quito, and Chile.\textsuperscript{34} The Mexican hacienda of Santa Lucía, for example, which flourished throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, became enormous, possessing thousands of stock animals including cattle, hogs, sheep, and goats by 1764. Textiles were made from wool at a mill built on the hacienda, and the prime crops included maize and barley.\textsuperscript{35} In Peru, cattle and subsistence crops were also raised, but profit was generated from sugar and wine production.\textsuperscript{36}

Labor on haciendas was not exclusively provided by black slaves, and included Indian and mestizo wage earners as well, but black slaves did represent the most significant portion of the workforce. The larger estates
of Peru and Mexico had steadily growing black slave populations that ranged between two and three hundred people in the eighteenth century. What all scholars of the Jesuit haciendas affirm, however, is that Jesuit ownership of slaves was in many ways less brutal, relatively speaking of course, than that of other slaveholders. In part, this was due to the same systematic Jesuit approach to economics being applied to the treatment of slaves. In fact, in both Peru and Mexico, there was a book of instructions, the Instrucciones, to guide Jesuit administrators of haciendas. Along with other economic guidelines, the Instrucciones stipulated that slaves be fed and clothed well and treated in very specific and humane ways. Jesuits also ensured that roughly the same numbers of men and women were kept on the estates, encouraged legal marriages, and rarely separated families through sale. Of course, there were some productivity benefits to these arrangements, although despite the attempts to marry and settle their slaves, Jesuits did not establish a significant boost in fertility. Records show that Jesuits often purchased adult slaves, predominately male, to supplement their labor force. Thus it is likely that the differences in Jesuit treatment of slaves are as attributable to Christian ideals as to economic objectives.

Consistent with Jesuit activities in the region, the college of Cartagena where Alonso de Sandoval worked also owned haciendas, among them La Ceiba, where sugarcane and cattle were raised. La Ceiba had two satellite tile factories, or tejares, named Alcivia and Preceptor, where 111 slaves were working at the time of the Jesuit expulsion. More significant for the period during which Sandoval was working and writing are the acquisitions records for the order, in which one finds that the Cartagena school owned three houses (two of which had been bought, one donated) and two lots in the Getsemani district that had been willed to the order. The documents further state that in 1637 the Cartagena school owned one hacienda called Matuna and another in Tierrabomba, along with a "tejar y herreria manejada por esclavos" (tile factory and ironsmith shop run by slaves). It may seem incongruent that Sandoval's De instauranda, the only text from early Spanish America that treats the issue of African slavery and defends and promotes slaves as members of the Catholic Church, comes from the ranks of a religious organization that possessed thousands of African slaves at the time. Pushing the contradiction of using African slave labor to support Indian missions even further, here were Jesuit haciendas worked by African slaves supporting the college in Cartagena that was promoting a mission for African slaves! The general acceptance of the institution of slavery at the time made this bizarre circumstance possible. Nonetheless, Alonso de Sandoval was certainly conscious of the urgency of the moment in which he was writing. Perhaps he was even aware that his order was already poised to become a major participant, albeit an indirect one, in the slave trade he disdained. The coexistence of Jesuit ownership of African slaves and missions to Christianize them was a reality in both the Americas and in Africa. While slaves worked for Jesuit masters in Angola, a Jesuit mission in Cape Verde baptized slaves destined for the middle passage.

Despite the uniqueness of his book in a New World context, Sandoval was not entirely alone in his explicit concerns about the African slave trade. Rather, Dominican authors and Jesuits in Spain, Portugal, and the mission in Cape Verde were writing at the end of the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth regarding concerns about the illegality of many of the trade's practices. In 1606, for example, Portuguese Jesuit Baltazar Barreira, who had worked in Angola and in the missions in Guinea, wrote to the Portuguese Crown from Sierra Leone, enumerating the various reasons why there should be concern about the legality of the enslavement of Africans. Barreira states that the eagerness of Portuguese slavers to load up their ships was encouraging injustices committed among the Africans themselves. Africans, in their own desire to partake in slaving profits and purchase goods arriving from Europe, were making unnecessary war upon each other in order to make slaves of prisoners taken in battle. They were also inventing crimes to punish with bondage, and in general creating preposterous circumstances in which to enslave each other. Barreira's proposed solution to the problem is a strange, extreme, and seemingly contradictory one: he believes that either the Crown should make just war against the Africans and thus legally enslave them for the wrongs allegedly committed against Portuguese in their dealings on the coasts; or the trade should be declared illegal and terminated altogether:

Therefore, seeing how many losses these nations have given to the Portuguese and the aggravating things they have done to them, and (seeing) that the Crown of Portugal may claim compensation for all this, it ought to be considered whether your Majesty can give per-
mission to your subjects to buy henceforth, as a form of compensation, all the slaves from these nations that are sold to them, without inquiring into the reasons for their captivity; because I do not see how this trade can be carried on without scruple of conscience, if this (royal permission), or the reasons I pointed out at the beginning, do not make it permissible. And as for the slaves who up to now have been taken from these parts, seeing that the justness or otherwise of their being made slaves is a matter of doubt, and that “when in doubt, leave things as they are,” it seems that nothing should be changed.45

This apparent schizophrenia on the issue of the slave trade and the obsession with legality that these authors writing on slavery exhibited are universal to have stopped short in his complaints against the ill-treatment of Africans. By linking manifestations of the monstrous—which include the blackness of African skin—to the demonic, says Tardieu, the Jesuit locates a premise for increased mobilization of the order in Cartagena de Indias: “Cela reviendrait à dire qu’il n’est pas impossible qu’une partie de l’Afrique soit le domaine du démon, d’où la monstruosité de certaines de ses espèces. D’où aussi l’intérêt majeur, car il faut bien en revenir là, d’évangéliser les Noirs qui proviennent d’Afrique afin de les sauver du pouvoir du démon.” (That would amount to saying that it is not impossible that a part of Africa is the domain of the devil, hence the monstrousness of some of its species. Hence also the great interest, because one must come back to this, in evangelizing the blacks that come from Africa with the purpose of saving them from the power of the devil.)49 I would reiterate that there also existed a general preoccupation that demonic elements might enter the New World along with imported African slaves, further complicating the mission to convert the non-Christian masses of Amerindians and Africans there.

More recently, critics Mario Cesareo (1995) and M. E. Beers (2000)