

# History of the indies by bartolome de las casas term paper

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Eric Foner's 'Voices of Freedom' contains an excerpt from Bartolomé de las Casas's History of the Indies, a book he had started writing in 1527 and was published a year later in 1528. Primarily, History of the Indies, as its title suggests, was a recollection of the history of the Indies from 1492, when Christopher Columbus first arrived in the New Land, until 1520, based upon everything Bartolomé witnessed himself. It can be assumed that Bartolomé's book was directed to the Castilian Crown as well, to deliberately provoke the Europeans, and this is how the concept of the "Black Legend" of Spain was established among the country's enemies.

Bartolomé's book not only looks back at the history of the Indies, but he also explicitly describes the condition in which the Indians were forced to live, where they "were totally deprived of their freedom" (Foner). This is the central theme that has been explored by him in the book, and as a result, he was able to express his discontent against how the Indigenous people were being mistreated, and against slavery.

Bartolomé wrote the book during a period in which Christopher Columbus's vision had long been forgotten as a result of the hunger for gold and mass genocide. Thus, the horrors that Bartolomé documented in his book were a strong expression of what was happening.

In the History of the Indies, Bartolomé also apologizes for his former support of African slavery before he had started writing this book.

Nonetheless, it should not be forgotten that Bartolomé wrote this book during a period in which the Indies was in a state of war and imperial politics had

taken over. Despite all of this, he made a stand for the Native Indians, through his previous books, and this one. As a result, his book ended up influencing Spanish laws, which were the cause of the mistreatment of the Indians.

## **Works Cited**

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