

# Domingo de Salazar's Struggle for Justice and Humanization in the Conquest of the Philippines (1579-1594)

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Christianization of the Philippines was achieved in an incredibly short span of time. Fifty years after Legazpi and Urdaneta's arrival in 1565 the main task of Christianization had already been accomplished. How was this achieved? What were the reasons for this rapid diffusion of Christianity among the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands? Why were the Filipinos so responsive to the Christian message? Who were the men responsible for this outstanding feat? What methods were used in the process of conversion? Was the Christianization of the Philippines the effect of the *Cross* of the missionaries and or the sword of the *conquistadores*? Did Christianity come to the shores of the Philippines as a call to salvation or as a cultural imposition from a Western nation? Was Filipino culture elevated by Christianity?

The main intention of this study will be to make a critical analysis of some aspects of the life and work of Domingo de Salazar, the first bishop of the Philippines. My purpose is to discover the personality of this man who influenced greatly in the process of evangelization of the Filipino people and played a pivotal role in the expansion of Christianity in the Far East during the last quarter of the XVI Century. Some scholars have dealt with some

aspects,<sup>1</sup> of Salazar's work in the Philippines. However, a comprehensive study is still to come.

In my study I will limit myself to some points which I consider more relevant for the modern reader and students of history, especially at the present juncture.

First, I will try to set Salazar in time and space, that is, I will study him in his formative period, covering his student days in the university of Salamanca. These were the heroic years of the conquest and evangelization of the New World. This fact implies the correction of some dates in the life of Domingo de Salazar during his student years in the University of Salamanca and his missionary years in Mexico and Florida. I will offer a bird's eye view on Salazar's life in Spain, Mexico, and Florida. More important I will try to present a brief study on the disputes and problems that the conquest and colonization of America created for jurists and theologians during the XVI century. Two persons stand out as very relevant to our study, as these two persons played a great role in the clarification and solution to the problems originated by the conquest and evangelization of America. They are Francisco de Vitoria (d. 1546) and Bartolomé de Las Casas (d. 1564). These two theologians greatly influenced the cultural and theological world of Spain during the XVI century. Many theologians took inspiration in their juridical and theological principles, among them Salazar, then a young student in the University of Salamanca. I will offer, then, a brief survey of the theologico-juridical ideas of these two men and the impact these ideas had upon subsequent theologians and jurists on both sides of the Atlantic. Salazar's formative years, (1512-1553), were shaped by these two outstanding men, who also happened to be Dominicans, like Salazar. This means, in general terms, that all of them took inspiration from the theological principles of Thomas Aquinas.

Secondly, I will deal with an important aspect of Salazar's work in the Philippines: his fight for justice and humanization. This will be reflected in his passionate struggle against the slavery of Filipinos at the hands of Spaniards and Filipino datus. This fight against slavery has to be understood as an aspect of the total struggle for justice and humanization started in America

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<sup>1</sup>H. DE LA COSTA, "Bishop Salazar and the Colonial Episcopate" in *Asia and the Philippines*. Collected Historical Papers, Manila, 1967, 22-38.

and carried into the Philippines by the Augustinian missionaries and by Salazar.

Thirdly, I will try to present the teachings of the first Synod of Manila (1582-1586) about the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines and the methods to be used in the preaching of the Gospel to pagan nations. These teachings are practical applications, to the concrete historical context of the Philippines, of the teachings of Francisco de Vitoria and Bartolomé de Las Casas.

There are many other points worth studying in the life of the intrepid bishop of the Philippines, Domingo de Salazar. A study of his missionary labors in the Philippines is of great importance. This study would give us, in fact, the measure of the man as bishop and priest in the mission fields. The impetus and progress of the Christianization of the Philippines in the last quarter of XVI century was greatly due to Salazar's missionary efforts. During his stay of ten years in the Philippines (1581-1591) the task of evangelization was greatly accelerated. By the end of the century the Christianization of the Philippines was well advanced. Salazar had played an important role in this process of Christianization. But the study of this aspect will have to wait for the time being.

Another aspect of Salazar's activity is the so-called "empresa de China." Salazar, in agreement with the Spanish colony of the Philippines, presented to the Spanish King in 1586 the romantic plan of the conquest of China. Since his coming to the Philippines in 1581 he had noticed that the Chinese authorities did not allow the missionaries to enter China in order to preach the Gospel. Even the merchants and traders were not allowed to call at Chinese ports for purposes of trade. Could not the door be forcefully opened and thus reveal the hidden mysteries of the Grand Cathay of Marco Polo? Did not St. Thomas, and especially Vitoria, defend as a cause for a just war the opposition to the preaching of the Gospel? Was not the prohibition of trade and commerce against man's *universal sociability*? Was not this opposition to trade and commerce a violation of International Law? According to the information of the Portuguese living close to the Chinese in Macau, the Chinese had imprisoned some missionaries and ill-treated the Christians in China. There was a just cause

for war against them. This point however will not be studied in this article.

In order to complete the personality of Salazar it would be necessary to present a study of the dispute about the tributes between Salazar and governor Dasmariñas in 1591-1594. If the only legitimate title the Spanish King had over the Philippines was the preaching of the Gospel, why did the Spanish officials ask for tributes and taxes from non-Christian Filipinos? Since the non-Christians did not receive any spiritual benefit from the Spaniards, no taxes should have been paid. The title of Spanish dominion over the Philippines was spiritual only and not political. Hence, only Christian Filipinos should have been taxed and this, not as an obligation of justice, but rather, as a help to the Spanish Crown to fulfill her spiritual mission of evangelization. Once again this topic will not be studied in this paper.

Let us now pass to the first point and set Domingo de Salazar in time and space.

## II. SALAZAR'S FORMATIVE YEARS (1512-1553)

### 1. *Salazar as a student in Salamanca (1526-1553)*

Salazar was born in Labastida, Alava, Spain, towards the year 1512. While still very young Salazar went to study at the famous university of Salamanca where he studied on and off for almost twenty years. These were the years of the discovery, conquest, colonization, and evangelization of America by the Spanish *conquistadores* and missionaries. In the span of fifty years the Spaniards conquered an empire as large as that of Rome and it was incorporated into Christianity and European civilization by a handful of brave and, at times, quarrelsome *conquistadores*. The impact these devastating conquests had upon Spanish and European people was enormous.<sup>2</sup> Thus Francisco de Gomara

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<sup>2</sup> MARCEL BATAILLON, "Novo mundo e fim do mundo", *Revista de Historia*, no. 18 (Sao Paulo, 1954), p. 350; Cfr. L. HANKE, *Aristotle and the American Indians. A Study in Race Prejudice in the Modern World*, Chicago 1959, p. 12; PEDRO BORGES, "El sentido transcendental del descubrimiento y conversión de Indias," *Missionalia Hispanica*, XIII, Madrid, 1956, 141-177.

wrote towards the middle of the XVI century: "The greatest thing after the creation of the world, excluded the incarnation and death of its creator, was the discovery of the Indies. Thus they are called the New World."<sup>3</sup>

The problems created by the discovery, conquest, colonization and evangelization of America were very serious. What were the methods to be used for the conquest and pacification of the inhabitants of the New World? In what way could those people be incorporated into the fold of the Christian religion? In fact, there were still more fundamental questions asked by people which needed quick answers. Who were those people found in America? Where did they come from? Were they rational beings like the rest of the known people of the world? Had they the capacity to be christianized and to understand the implications of the Christian faith? What could be the relations between the conquered people of America and the Spanish *conquistadores*?

These were some of the questions posed by the Spaniards and Europeans of the first half of the XVI century. It was the time when Salazar was a student at Salamanca. These burning questions were the daily talk of students and professors. In the aulas of the universities and in the plazas of the Spanish towns the problems, tensions, abuses, and effects of the Spanish conquest and evangelization were heatedly discussed. The questions to be clarified were not merely academic but practical, as they touched the very life and existence of the Amerindians. What could be the possible solutions to these problems? The Spanish Crown, philosophers, theologians, politicians and jurists were faced with the formidable task of creating a system of government and law different from the one vident in the Old World. The European medieval world was suffering an intellectual revolution.<sup>4</sup> There was a need to create. But this was a risky enterprise. In fact, the task of political, religious, cultural and administrative improvisation was a formidable one. But it had to be done. Since Spain was faced with an entirely new situation in the history of

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<sup>3</sup> FRANCISCO LOPEZ DE GOMARA, *Hispania Victrix. Primera y Segunda Parte de La Historia General de las Indias* (Saragossa, 1552), as quoted by L. HANKE, *op. cit.* p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> FRANCISCO ROMERO, *Sobre la filosofía en América*, Buenos Aires, 1952.

mankind she had to ask herself questions which no other nation had asked itself and had to try to find answers to them. Perhaps Spain, of all the European nations, was the best prepared to essay the new methods of conquest and evangelization. In the opinion of the great hispanist Lewis Hanke:

"Two circumstances were responsible for these questions which were asked by no other European colonizing nation with such general and genuine concern. The first was the nature of the Spanish people themselves, a people legalistic, passionate, given to extremes, and fervently Catholic...

The second circumstance was the nature of the dominion exercised by the Spanish Crown in America, by which the Spaniards felt themselves responsible for the conversion of the natives... Without becoming embroiled, as the Spaniards became, in the legal and moral implications of papal pronouncements we may be clear that the Spaniards had, logically, to determine Indian nature and capacity before they could legitimately pursue either conquest or Christianization".<sup>5</sup>

The consciences of the *conquistadores* and the evangelizers were stirred up by these transcendental and heated discussions. In a certain way, the whole nation was shaken by the discoveries and the conquest of so many people and nations. To quote again Hanke:

"Many Spaniards were of the opinion that the discovery and conquest of the New World was the most significant contribution of their country to the history of the universe. Certainly, they do not agree as to the nature of that contribution. And we find Spaniards, during and after the Conquest, bitterly castigating and questioning the policies of Spain in America. The Spaniards have never hidden to the world their penetrating criticism against Spain... It is my belief that the conquest of America, more than an extraordinary military and political enterprise, was one of the greatest feats witnessed by the world to put into practice Christian principles as guidelines for the relations among different

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<sup>5</sup> L. HANKE, *op. cit.*, pp. 8-9. A good study regarding this matter is the one of A. CASTRO, *España en su historia. Cristianos, moros y judíos*, Buenos Aires, 1958; J. M. PARRY, *The Age of Reconnaissance*, Chicago, Mentor Book, 1964, p. 41.

nations. This is existentially manifested in the heated defense of the Indians taken up by many Spaniards. That defense rested on two fundamental truths that a Christian can pose himself, to wit: 1. All men are equal before God; 2. The Christian is responsible for the welfare of his brother, regardless of the difference of culture or the social status in society."<sup>6</sup>

There were two persons who more than anybody else contributed to the clarification of the problems involved and who exercised a lasting influence upon their contemporaries and the generations to come. In fact their influence is still strongly felt today. These two persons stand out as very relevant to our study, as they exercised a powerful influence upon Domingo de Salazar, the subject of our study. These two important figures are Francisco de Vitoria (d. 1546) and the fiery Bartolomé de Las Casas (d. 1564), the great defender of the American Indians and called by some people the "Father of America".

## 2. Francisco de Vitoria and his "*Relecciones de Indis*"

Let us first briefly mention Vitoria. He is considered nowadays as the founder of International Law. The liberating ideas in favor of the Amerindians which we have been talking about were picked up and systematized by Vitoria in his famous *Relecciones de Indis* during his professorship in the university of Salamanca.<sup>7</sup> In order to understand Salazar's intellectual formation, we have to set here Vitoria's theories and teachings though in a very summary way.

<sup>6</sup> L. HANKE, *Bartolomé de Las Casas, Pensador Político, Historiador, Antropólogo*, La Habana, 1949, pp. 1-2.

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. V. BELTRAN DE HEREDIA, *Francisco de Vitoria*, Barcelona, 1939, p. 91. Cfr. E. NYS, *Le droit de la guerre et les precursors de Grotius*, Brussels, 1882; *Les Origines de droit international*, Brussels, 1894; *Le droit de gens et les anciens jurisconsultes espagnols*, Brussels, 1914.

From the end of the last century up to our own times, numerous works have been written in all languages about Vitoria. Cfr. L. A. GETINO, *Relecciones teológicas del maestro fray Francisco de Vitoria*, Edición crítica con facsimil, códices y ediciones príncipes, variantes, versión, castellana, notas e introducción, Madrid, (3 vols.), 1933-1935; *El Maestro Fr. Francisco de Vitoria. Su vida, su doctrina e influencia*, Madrid, 1930; E. HINOJOSA, *El dominico fray Francisco de Vitoria y los orígenes del derecho de gentes*, Madrid, 1889; M. MENENDEZ Y PELAYO, *Algunas consideraciones sobre Francisco de Vitoria y los orígenes del derecho de gentes*, Madrid, 1889 en: *Ensayos de crítica filosófica*, Madrid, 1918, pp. 225-241; C. G. TRELLES, *Fr. de Vitoria el lécole moderne de droit international*, en: *Recueil des Cours de la Academie de Droit International de la Haye*, 1927, pp. 113-137; Fran-

Salazar became a student of Canon Law at the University of Salamanca in 1526. This was the very first year Vitoria started his long and fruitful teaching career in the same university. By 1528 Salazar had finished all his courses on Canon law<sup>8</sup>, but it was only in 1532 when he obtained his baccalaureate degree.<sup>9</sup> He was enrolled in the faculty of civil law from 1534 to 1539, where he completed his courses, obtaining his baccalaureate on June 12, 1539.<sup>10</sup> The years 1537-1539, when Salazar was at the faculty of law, were the most brilliant in the professorship of Vitoria. His *Relectiones* "De Temperantia", "De Indis" and "De Iure Belli" correspond precisely to these same years.<sup>11</sup> Vitoria prepared his *Relectiones* with care and diligence. And he did so in order to clarify the questions regarding the justice of the conquest of America and the way in which the Amerindians ought to be treated by the *conquistadores*. Vitoria had heard of many grave abuses against defenseless people and of spoliation of rich empires like the Aztec of Mexico and the Incas of Peru. Was this done according to justice?<sup>12</sup> Vitoria in his *Relectiones*, systematized the juridical and theological principles that jurists and theologians had been discussing since the second decade of the XVI century. Thus he created a new science: International Law. His system strikes us as new on the whole and quite original. The influence Vitoria had on his contemporaries, on both sides of the Atlantic, especially the missionaries and officials of the Spanish Crown, is accepted by most modern scholars. Charles V expressed

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cisco de Vitoria fundador del Derecho Internacional Moderno, Valladolid, 1928; J. B. SCOTT, *The Spanish origin of international Law*, Washington, 1928; *El Origen español del Derecho Internacional*, Valladolid, 1928, *Vitoria and the International Law*, Washington, 1932; TEOFILO URDANOZ, O.P. *Obras de Francisco de Vitoria. Relectiones teológicas*, (BAC), Madrid, 1960.

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. Archivo de la Universidad de Salamanca (AUS), *Cursos y Bachilleramientos*, April, 1538-April 1539, No. 533, fo. 81.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. AUS, *Cursos y Bachilleramientos*, No. 542, May 1531-March 1532.

<sup>10</sup> AUS, *Cursos y Bachilleramientos*, No. 555, April 1539-January 1940, fo. 37.

<sup>11</sup> The *Relección* "De Temperantia" corresponds to the schoolyear 1536-1537 but, due to Vitoria's grave illness, it was delivered during the schoolyear 1537-1538. The *Relección* "De Indis" corresponds to the schoolyear 1537-1538, being delivered on January of 1539. The *Relección* "De Iure Belli" corresponds to the schoolyear 1538-1539. It was delivered on June 18, 1539. Cfr. V. BELTRAN DE HEREDIA, O.P. *Francisco de Vitoria*, Barcelona, 1939, p. 91.

<sup>12</sup> Cfr. FRANCISCO DE VITORIA, *Relectio De Indis o Libertad de los Indios* ed. L. Pereña and J. M. Prendes, Madrid, 1957, I, 7, 10. To be quoted later as DE INDIS.

his displeasure with the prior of San Esteban in Salamanca regarding the new doctrines taught in San Esteban dealing with the problem of America. Vitoria's *Relectiones* were not a scholastic pastime. They were an answer to the debate regarding Spain's right of conquest and the methods to be used in colonizing and evangelizing the New World. Charles V's letter is a proof of the interest with which Vitoria's *Relectiones* were read and the apprehensions they created in official circles.<sup>13</sup> Vitoria influenced in a positive manner the Spanish legislation for the Indies. Throughout his life many queries were addressed to him by missionaries, theologians, jurists, royal officials, merchants, and all types of people from all over the Spanish dominions.<sup>14</sup> The emperor himself wrote two letters to Vitoria in answer to Zumárraga's appeal for learned missionaries and theologians to embark for Mexico and establish there a new university. Could not Vitoria help in the clarification of the problems debated in America? The emperor had recourse to Vitoria because of the "good reports I have of your person, learning and life"<sup>15</sup> and because "I have come to know you have priests disciples of good morals and exemple".<sup>16</sup> Salazar was never a formal student of Vitoria in the faculty of theology. We know, however, that Vitoria attracted many students from other faculties to his theological lectures.<sup>17</sup> His aula was too small to accommodate all the students who wanted to follow his masterful explanations. Salazar, during his student years, had the privilege to listen to Vitoria's *Relectiones*. Throughout his long missionary career, both in Mexico and the Philippines, Salazar defended the same juridical and theological ideas of Vitoria, though, in the opinion of Alonso de Zorita, a friend of Salazar during his missionary activities in Mexico, Salazar oftentimes dissented from his master's teachings.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Cfr. *Letter of Charles V to the prior of San Esteban of Salamanca*, Madrid, November 10, 1539, in *Ibidem*, p. 153.

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. J. CUERVO, ed., *Historiadores del Convento de San Esteban de Salamanca*, (3 vols.) Salamanca, 1914, I, 246; T. URDANOZ, *op. cit.*, 38.

<sup>15</sup> Cfr. *Letter of the emperor Charles V to Francisco de Vitoria*, Toledo, January 31, 1539, in *Francisco de Vitoria. Relectio de Indis*, ed. L. Pereña, 155.

<sup>16</sup> *Letter of the emperor Charles V to Francisco de Vitoria*, April, 1539, in *ibidem*, p. 155.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. BELTRAN DE HEREDIA, *Francisco de Vitoria*, Barcelona, 1939, 117 ff.

<sup>18</sup> ALONSO DE ZORITA, *Historia de Nueva España*, Madrid, 1909, 13-16.

From 1539, when Salazar obtained his bachelor degree in civil law, up to 1545, when he joined the Dominican Order, he is a mystery for us. We know nothing about his life or studies. In 1545, after a university career of twenty years, probably with some interruptions, he asked to be accepted in the monastery of San Esteban of Salamanca. He was a mature man of well over 30 years. He began his novitiate in November 1545 having as fellow novices and classmates Bartolomé de Medina and Báñez, men who became great theologians in Spanish universities. Vitoria and Domingo de Soto were residents of San Esteban. Vitoria, a sick man, died on August 12, 1546, during Salazar's novitiate. Salazar's profession took place on November 26, 1546 together with Bartolomé de Medina.<sup>19</sup>

Salazar started his philosophical studies in 1546 in the University of Salamanca. The monastery-college of San Esteban, like many other monastery-colleges of Salamanca, was associated with the "estudio" of the university. The students were enrolled in the university but had their classes in their respective monasteries and colleges. In 1550 together with six other outstanding students of theology he was made a scholar of the Cayetano College within the monastery of San Esteban.<sup>20</sup> This meant that together with his regular classes in the faculty of theology of the university, Salazar had special theology classes under the direct supervision of masters of theology from the monastery. Selected students were tutored so as to prepare them to be future masters of theology. A companion of Salazar was Bartolomé de Medina. Salazar's tutors were Soto and Cano. The *Historiadores* of San Esteban wrote about Salazar: "In the schools he had as masters the two celebrated theologians Soto and Cano. Under their guidance and given his excellent talent he would have equalled his classmates. Báñez and Medina had he remained in the schools of Spain".<sup>2</sup> We find Salazar enrolled as a student priest in the faculty of theology during the school-year 1551-1552 together with Domingo Cuevas, Bartolomé de Medina and other students.<sup>22</sup> He enrolled again in 1552-1553.<sup>23</sup> This is the last we come to

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. J. CUERVO, O.P., ed., *Historiadores*, III, 821.

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. *Ibidem*, III, 970.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. *Ibidem*, III, 564.

<sup>22</sup> Cfr. AUS, *Libros de Matriculas*, N. 238, 1551-1552, fol. 11.

<sup>23</sup> AUS, *Libros de Matriculas*, N. 269, 1552-1553, ff. 12-13.

know about Salazar from the enrollment books of the university of Salamanca. In 1553 or beginning of 1554 Salazar embarked himself for America in the company of Gregorio de Beteta, the newly elected bishop of Cartagena de Indias and himself a former student of San Esteban.<sup>24</sup>

The first *Libros de Matrículas* (Enrollment Books) of the university of Salamanca have not come down to us. It would have allowed us to follow Salazar's philosophical and theological studies and to know the year of his ordination to the priesthood. The first *Libro de Matrículas* covers the year 1546-1547. Salazar was a novice in San Esteban. The second book comprises the year 1551-1552. There are four books lacking (1547-1551), precisely the years when Salazar was a student of philosophy and theology. From 1551-1552 we find a complete list of *Libros de Matrículas*.

The fact that Salazar was still a student priest at the university in 1552-1553 solves for us a serious problem of chronology. From 1546, Salazar's profession in the Dominican Order, to 1553, when he sailed for America, we have seven years. This is precisely the time necessary to complete the curriculum of three years of philosophy and four years of theology, essential for any Dominican student.

### 3. *Bartolomé de Las Casas and the conquest of America.*

If Vitoria exercised a strong influence upon Salazar, Las Casas exercised an even stronger one. Salazar declared his indebtedness to Las Casas when he wrote from the Philippines.

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<sup>24</sup> Cfr. ANTONIO DE EGANA, S.J., *Historia de la Iglesia en la América Española desde el Descubrimiento hasta comienzos del siglo XIX*, Madrid, 1966, 29-30; Cfr. *Archivo General de Indias* (A.G.I.), *Contratación*, 557. This *legajo* has this title: *Contratación de Sevilla. Libro de Asientos de pasajeros a Indias, 1553-1571*. It is composed of three books distributed in the following manner;

1. 1553 to 1557, 246 folios
2. 1558 to 1562, 319 folios
3. 1563 to 1571, 497 folios

Salazar's name is not to be found in any of the three books. In fact, the whole *legajo* has no list of religious. Cfr. CRISTOBAL BERMUDEZ PLATA, ed., *Catálogo de Pasajeros a Indias durante los siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII*, (3 vols.), Sevilla, 1940-1946; J. CASTRO SEOANE, "Aviamento y catálogo de misioneros que en el siglo XVI pasaron de España a Indias y Filipinas según los libros de la Contratación", *Misionaria Hispanica*, 13, 1956, 83-140.

"I grew up in the doctrine of the bishop of Chiapa. And I held the same opinion [peaceful conquest and evangelization] during the 23 years that I spent in New Spain".<sup>25</sup> Salazar has been called the "Las Casas of the Philippines".<sup>26</sup> The previous quotation is a clear proof of Salazar's intellectual dependency on Las Casas. The main thesis of Las Casas which he defended passionately all his life, was that the Gospel had to be preached without the help of soldiers. It had to be preached *modo apostolico*, like the Apostles did in ancient times.<sup>27</sup> The ideas of Las Casas' treatise, *Del Unico Modo*, were copied by Salazar in some of his letters from the Philippines during the span of 1581-1591. The main essence of Las Casas thesis is the following: the word of God must be preached without the help of soldiers. The missionary must not be afraid to go out and preach the Gospel as the first apostles did. Arms are useless. The missionary must try to persuade the mind and move the will of the listener. The only valid example is that of Christ and of the first apostles in the Primitive Church. It is against the spirit of the Gospel to conquer in order to evangelize. This was a declaration of war. And what are the benefits derived from war? None. War is something irrational, antinatural and anti-evangelical. Those who advocate this method are closer to the followers of Mohammed than to Christ's own followers.

One of the most bizarre intellectual disputes regarding the methods to be used in the evangelization and conquest took place in the middle of XVI century between the Spanish scholar, Juan de Sepúlveda, and Bartolomé de Las Casas. For the first and last time a colonizing nation, in this case Spain, brought into the open the need to clarify these points through intellectual disputations.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II, Manila, June 18, 1583, Archivo General de Indias (AGI), Patronato 25, ramo 8; Cfr. TORRES-LANZAS — P. PASTELLS, *Catalogo de documentos ineditos relativos a Filipinas existentes en el Archivo General de Indias* (9 vols.) Barcelona, 1928, vol. III, p. CXV.

<sup>26</sup> E. H. BLAIR-J. A. ROBERTSON, *The Philippine Islands, 1493-1898* (55 vols. Cleveland, 1903-1909) vol. V, pp. 9-10.

<sup>27</sup> To prove this he battled his whole life in the court and in the mission fields of America and he wrote extensively about it. Cfr. his *Del Unico modo de atraer a los pueblos a la verdadera religion*, Ed. Agustín Milares Carlo, Mexico, 1942.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. L. HANKE, *Aristotle and the American Indians*, p. I-X-X; 28-95.

Who was in the right? Many Spaniards, among them great and famous missionaries, passionate lovers of the Amerindians, believed in all sincerity that Las Casas method could not be applied to America. In their opinion, the comparison between the Primitive Church and the world of America was false. The American world was by far less civilized and more savage than the Apostle's world. It was, in general terms, a barbarous and wild world. It was a world of warriors. The missionaries risked their lives if they went alone to preach to them. The Roman world, where the Primitive Church was born, offered a security for preachers which was not offered by the American world. Why should the missionaries have to expose their lives without any need? In the state in which most of the people of the New World were found, the missionary needed military protection, so as to be able to exercise with security his preaching and evangelizing role. Otherwise, he might end up being eaten in cannibalistic banquets. A large number of missionaries, perpetual dreamers, and without much knowledge of what a savage past means for a person or a tribe, went directly to the "slaughter house" (*matadero*) when they went alone to preach to cannibals and savages. Hence, many good theologians and missionaries defended vigorously the need for military protection to defend the missionaries. It was merely a protection, an external security against the danger being faced if they dared to go alone to primitive tribes. They did not deny that the best and most perfect method was the apostolic one, used by Christ and the first apostles, but the socio-political and religious circumstances of America did not permit this method to be applied always and everywhere.

The points mentioned above need to be emphasized here for they were part and parcel of the intellectual and moral make-up of Domingo de Salazar. Much before he embarked himself for Mexico in 1553, and before he came to the Philippines in 1581 as first bishop, Salazar was immersed in the disputes then current in Spain and America. Salazar, in some ways faced the same difficulties that the early missionaries faced in America. In trying to give a solution to these problems, Salazar relied on Vitoria and Las Casas and on the accumulated experience of over three quarters of a century of conquest and evangelization in America.

The attitude of the Augustinians and Salazar in the Philippines, as we will see later on, has to be studied and understood against this ideological background we have briefly described.

### III. A MISSIONARY AND CIVILIZER IN AMERICA

#### 1. *Salazar's Opposition to the War Against the Chichimecas*

Having set the problem and the man in time and space, let us follow him to the unknown New World. Towards the year 1553 Salazar embarked for Mexico where he spent twenty three years of uninterrupted missionary work. He labored in the missionary field and in the capital of Mexico. He took a relevant part in the disputes which still continued to beset the Spanish colonizers and missionaries in Mexico during his long stay there. I would like to mention one of his activities while a missionary in Mexico. I refer to his attitude towards the war to be waged against the *Chichimecas*, a conglomeration of savage tribes of northern Mexico, famous in Spanish-Mexican circles for their head hunting habits and bloody depredations against peaceful Mexican settlements and villages. The Spanish authorities, after serious consideration, were of the opinion that war by blood and fire had to be waged against these tribes in order to punish them. The Viceroy, the archbishop, and the rest of the Spanish authorities favored a policy of harshness and heavy punishments. All seemed to agree to a harsh policy except the Dominicans, among whom Salazar was now prominent. Thus we read:

"During the past few days the viceroy called a meeting of learned people from the religious orders and from the lay segment in order to discuss whether it was lawful to wage war against these people [Chichimecas] and condemn them all to perpetual slavery. Having understood their way of life, all agreed that it was just except the Dominicans, who defended the contrary opinion. They held that the Spaniards were the ones responsible and the aggressors, as they went to their lands and took them from the Chichimecas. Thus, the viceroy decided to enslave for thirteen years those who were guilty. The little boys and girls could not in any way be enslaved. Thus is not a good remedy, because nobody wants to go to war under these conditions".<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Letter of D. Pedro de Moya y Contreras, archbishop of Mexico, Mexico, August 31, 1574, AGI, Mexico, 336.,

This text is highly significant. What the Spanish officials in Mexico wanted to do was to punish severely the Chichimecas and condemn them to perpetual slavery, without any distinction between young and old, male or female. The attitude and opposition of the Dominicans to this policy changed radically the picture. There is nothing strange in this opposition. The Dominicans were heirs to a traditional Dominican attitude since the very first years of the conquest, since Montesinos cried out in 1511 against the oppressions and abuses of some Spanish *encomenderos* and officials in the Hispaniola. In Salazar we find the spirit of Las Casas. This war against the Chichimecas may have been the reason why Salazar set down to write a learned treatise on how the Spanish King had to govern and rule the colonies in America. He never finished it, but in the words of one of the officials of Mexico, Alonso de Zorita, it was "worthy of being read and studied. . . . He shows in it his great ability and deep knowledge, together with his delicate and clear judgment, his deep insight and his happy memory. He deals with the problems of the Indians from their very roots, as a man who knows and understands them in a special way. Some of the things his teacher [Vitoria] and the bishop [Las Casas] have said are explained by him. Some others are contradicted with firm and powerful authorities and delicate arguments".<sup>30</sup>

During his stay of 23 years in Mexico, Salazar gained the admiration of many people, especially of the archbishop, Don Pedro de Moya y Contreras. The archbishop came to know him well. Salazar left for Spain in 1576 as a representative of the Dominican order, with the title of "defender of the Indians". Don Pedro de Moya y Contreras left for us this short moral portrait of Salazar:

"He is an important friar in example, life and knowledge. He is one of the most important here, as I know from his many good qualities, for he has always been *calificador* in the Holy Office and judge of books. . . . He has a great knowledge about this land . . . .

"Domingo de Salazar is a good and intelligent Christian. He will be a good procurator, as he has a wide experience of the problems here. He did not want to go to Spain,

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<sup>30</sup> ALONSO DE ZORITA, *Historia de Nueva España*, Madrid, 1909, 13-14.

but as he is so obedient, he has no will but that of his superior... I beg your lordship to grant and audience to him, as he goes alone. Your lordship could even employ him in higher things. I believe he could be a good prelate, something he does not want, as I see him very detached from these things. As your most illustrious lordship knows, those are more worthy who less look for it".<sup>31</sup>

The licentiate Zorita, of whom mention was made in previous pages, writes of Salazar:

"For many years he has been in New Spain and other parts of the Indies, working for the conversion of the natives. This he has done with great zeal, diligence and care. He is an excellent religious, of exemplary virtue and christianity, a very famous preacher of a very solid and learned doctrine"<sup>32</sup>.

## 2. Domingo de Salazar: First Bishop of the Philippines

Salazar returned to Spain from Mexico in 1576<sup>33</sup>. During his stay in Spain he was presented by Philip II as first bishop of the Philippines. This must have happened towards the early part of 1578. As early as 1575 some Spanish officials of the Philippines had asked Philip II to present Fr. Diego de Herrera as first bishop of the Philippines<sup>34</sup>. Fr. Francisco de Ortega, an Augustinian of vast missionary experience in Mexico and the Philippines, was also recommended to Philip II<sup>35</sup>. One of the main reasons why

<sup>31</sup> Letter of D. Pedro de Moya y Contreras, archbishop of Mexico, to the president of the Council of Indies, Mexico, March 24, 1575, AGI, Mexico 333.

<sup>32</sup> ALONSO DE ZORITA, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14; LEWIS HANKE, *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America*, Philadelphia, 1949, p. 159. The title of my article is based on this classical work of Lewis Hanke.

<sup>33</sup> Cfr. A. FRANCO, *Historia de la Provincia de Méjico*, Méjico, 1900, modern ed. p. 96

<sup>34</sup> Cfr. Letter of Juan Pacheco Maldonado to Philip II, Manila, 1575, in *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain*, Manila, 1965, p. 290. Cfr. *Archivo Histórico Agustiano*, XXIV, El Escorial, 1925, p. 220; Cfr. ISACIO RODRIGUEZ, *Historia de la Provincia Agustiniense del Ssmo. Nombre de Jesús, en Filipinas*, Vol. I, *Bibliografía*, Manila, 1965, pp. 164; Cfr. *The Christianization of the Philippines*, Historical Conservation Society-University of San Agustin, Manila, 1965, pp. 134; 346.

<sup>35</sup> Cfr. Letter of Fr. Lorenzo de Villavivencio, OSA to Philip II recommending Fr. Francisco de Ortega as first bishop of the Philippines, without date, (1577?), in *Arch. Hist. Hisp. Agust.*, IV, Madrid, 1915, pp. 132-133; Cfr. ISACIO RODRIGUEZ, *op. cit.*, pp. 228-236.

Philip presented Salazar to the Pope as the first bishop of the Philippines was his strong defense of the rights of the natives of Mexico in the Spanish court in Madrid.

The diocese of Manila was erected on February 6, 1579<sup>36</sup>. Salazar was ordained bishop in Madrid in 1579. By May of 1579 we find him in Sevilla, waiting for the fleet to sail to Mexico<sup>37</sup>. Finally on May of 1580, after having waited in Sevilla for a year<sup>38</sup>, he sailed for Verapaz, Mexico with 18 Dominicans, four clerics<sup>39</sup> and some servants<sup>40</sup>.

In crossing from Sevilla to Mexico all the Dominicans died except one. Salazar's dream of establishing a Dominican province

<sup>36</sup> Regarding the date of the erection of Manila as a diocese there are different and contray opinions. Some authors think that it was erected on Feb. 6, 1978. Others give the date of Feb. 6, 1579.

We think that the confusion is understandable and it finds an easy solution and explanation. Gregory XIII's bull "Illius Fulti Praesidio" erecting Manila as a diocese bears the date of Feb. 1578. However the bull was issued before the Gregorian Reform of the Calendar done by Gregory XIII himself in 1583. Before 1583 the ecclesiastical year, the one followed by the Church, started on March 25, feast of the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Papal bulls were dated *ab Incarnatione Domini* (March 25). In 1583 the beginning of the year was transferred to January 1. In the computation of the modern civil year Feb. 6, "1578" is Feb. 6, 1579. February was, so to speak, the eleventh month of the ecclesiastical year.

That Manila was erected on Feb. 6, 1579 is further confirmed by the fact that the bull "Illius Fulti Praesidio" speaks of the "seventh year of our Pontificate". This cannot be applied to Feb. 6, 1978, but to Feb. 6, 1579, as Gregory XIII was elected pope on *May 13, 1572*. The seventh year of Gregory XIII's pontificate ended on May 13, 1579. February 6, "1578" is February 6, 1579, still the seventh year of Gregory's Pontificate, according to the computation of the modern civil year. Cfr. *Bulletin (400th Year)*, Archdiocese of Manila, 1579-1979, Vol. I, n. 2, October 1978, pp. 5-6.

The original bull, "Illius Fulti Praesidio" is found in *Archivo General de Indias* (AGI), Patronato 25; Spanish translation in *Coleccion de documentos inéditos de América y Oceanía*, vol. XXXIV, 72-79; poor English translation in BLAIR-ROBERTSON, vol. IV, pp. 119-124.

<sup>37</sup> Cfr. JUAN G. DE MENDOZA, *Historia del Gran Reino de la China*, Madrid, 1586, B-R., VI, p. 89.

<sup>38</sup> Cfr. AGI, *Contratación* 5538, lib. II, fol. 15 "22 de mayo de 1580 años. Se despacharon a las Islas Filipinas D. Fr. Domingo de Saalzar, de la orden de predicadores, obispo de las dichas islas y diez y ocho religiosos de la dicha orden.

<sup>39</sup> AGI, *Contratación* 5538, Lib. I, fol. 463vto. "26 de mayo, 1580 años. Nicolás Gerónimo y Santiago de Castro y Gonzalo del Castillo y D. Juan de Pineda, clérigos, se despacharon a las islas Filipinas en compañía de fray Domingo de Salazar, obispo de ellas, por cédula de S. M., en la nao Juan de Ativar."

<sup>40</sup> AGI, *Contratación* 5538, Lib. I, ff. 170 y 170vto.; fol. 267.

in the Far East was thus tragically shattered. No available Dominicans were found in Mexico to go with him to the Philippines. After a short stay in Mexico city he started the difficult inland trip to the seaport of Acapulco. Beyond layed the awesome and unknown expanse of the Pacific. On March 29, 1581 the galleon *San Martin*, 400 tons, under the command of Luis de Sahagossa put out to sea for the long haul across the Pacific. He had with him only one Dominican, Fr. Cristobal de Salvatierra who was to serve him as a faithful secretary. He was accompanied by six Franciscans headed by Antonio de Villanueva, a larger group of eighteen Augustinians under Juan Pimentel, three Jesuits under Antonio Sedeño<sup>41</sup> and seven clerics, one of whom died during the crossing and the other became a Franciscan<sup>42</sup>. There was a crew of ninety six officers and men, over a hundred passengers, five married men with their families, thirty-one unattached males and the sizeable subsidy for the Philippines of 153, 376 silver pesos<sup>43</sup>.

During the long and tedious crossing of the Pacific Salazar became very close to one of the Jesuits Alonso Sanchez, who was to exercise a great influence upon the bishop and the rest of the Spaniards of Manila until 1586, when the Jesuit was sent to Spain as a special envoy and extraordinary ambassador from all segments of the Philippines. After four months of sea travel, towards the end of July, the galleon *San Martin* crossed the *embocadero*, or San Bernardino Strait, and headed for Manila. Unable to make any headway because of contrary winds, since it was the season of the *vendabales*, or southeast winds, the galleon took shelter at Ibalon Bay (now Sorsogon). Salazar waited there for twenty days. As the weather and winds did not change Salazar started his trip to Manila by foot, *modo apostolico*. Salazar entered Manila

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<sup>41</sup> Cfr. *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, March 14, 1582, AGI, Filipinas 74; Cfr. *Letter of the Viceroy of Mexico, Count of Coruña*, Mexico, April 1, 1581, in *Cartas de Indias*, 336; Cfr. AGI, Patronato 25; Cfr. L. PEREZ, "Origen de las Misiones Franciscanas en el Extremo Oriente", in *Archivo Ibero-Americano* (1915), III, 381, note 2.

<sup>42</sup> Cfr. *Letter of D. de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, June 18, 1582, AGI, Filipinas 74.

These are the names of the five clerics: Francisco Morales, Francisco Pareja, Santiago Cavito, Gonzalo de Castillo and Diego Vázquez de Mercado, later on bishop of Yucatán and archbishop of Manila.

<sup>43</sup> Cfr. HORACIO DE LA COSTA, *The Jesuits in the Philippines, 1581-1768*, Harvard, 1961, p. 8; Cfr. COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor Evangelica de Obreros de la Compañía de Jesús en las Islas Filipinas* (3 vols.), Barcelona, 1904, vol. I, 261-263.

on September 17, 1581,<sup>44</sup> sixteen months after leaving Sevilla on May of 1580 and two months of overland journey from Sorsogon to Manila. He was heartily welcome by the people<sup>45</sup>.

#### IV. SALAZAR IN THE PHILIPPINES (1581-1591)

##### 1. *State of the Philippines at the time of Salazar's arrival.*

What was the state of the Philippines at the time of Salazar's arrival in 1581? The Spaniards had arrived sixteen years before and the impact of the conquest and evangelization was already strongly felt. In order to understand Salazar's work in the Philippines and the problems the conquest and evangelization created for the early *conquistadores*, missionaries and Filipinos, we should try to remember the historical significance of two dates, to wit: 1492, discovery of America and 1565, beginning of the conquest of the Philippines. The social, political, economic, religious and cultural changes that took place in the world during these two dates are of universal importance.

At the beginning of the conquest of America, in the clash and first encounter between the civilization of Europe and the one found in America, the natives of the Caribbean suffered serious abuses at the hands of the *conquistadores* and explorers. As the conquest continued, and new nations were incorporated into the Spanish empire, new laws were passed to protect the natives and, at the same time, safeguard the interests of the *conquistadores*.

This policy was based on the assumption that the natives, as people and men, had inalienable rights that had to be safeguarded. On the other hand, the explorers, conquistadores and colonizers had also their own. The Spanish Crown had to balance the two and create a system of laws governing the relations between the two main protagonists of the conquest of America. As early as 1512 we find the famous *Leyes de Burgos*, creating a new policy regarding the Amerindians<sup>46</sup>.

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<sup>44</sup> Cfr. *Letter of D. de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, June 16, 1582, AGI, Filipinas 74.

<sup>45</sup> Cfr. *Letter of D. Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa to Philip II*, Manila, June 15, 1582, in B-R., V, p. 9.

<sup>46</sup> Cfr. ELOY BULLÓN, "El problema de la dominación de España en América antes de Francisco de Vitoria", *Anuario de la Asociación Francisco*

Francisco de Vitoria, from his chair at the University of Salamanca, elaborated a new system of Laws to Regulate the political and social relations between the Spaniards and the Amerindians. His *Relectiones de Indis* and the *Iure Belli*, delivered from 1537 to 1539, exercised a tremendous influence upon the minds and hearts of Europeans. In those theologico-juridical lectures he systematized in a comprehensive treatise his stand on International Law. His ideas had at that time a universal applicability. The ideological medieval world was superseded by the new intellectual world of Vitoria. It was the world of the Renaissance.

In 1542, due to the passionate defense of Las Casas in favor of the Amerindians, the Spanish Crown published the so-called New Laws of the Indies, *Nuevas Leyes de Indias*. A few years later, in 1550, Las Casas and the Renaissance scholar Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda met at Valladolid in a personal intellectual duel to clarify burning problems regarding America and the methods to be used for conquest and evangelization.

Between 1542 and 1565, we have social and political experiments carried out in the vast fields of America, aimed at creating a system of government in accordance with the Gospel of Christ, the demands of justice and the rights and duties of conquered people and conquistadores<sup>47</sup>. There was no need to experiment in the Philippines. The experimental stage of conquest and colonization was almost over when Legazpi came to the Philippines in 1565. Behind him and those who accompanied him, men like Rada, Urdaneta and Aguirre, there were three quarters of a century of Spanish colonial experience. The Mexican scholar Rafael Bernal has this to say: "They had behind them an enormous experience in the art of conquest and Christianization. They knew

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de Vitoria, 4, (1933), 99-122. In this article we find extracts of the treatise of Palacios Rubios' *De Insularis Oceanis*; Cfr. SILVIO ZAVALA, *De las Islas del Mar Océano, por Juan López Palacios Rubios. Del Dominio de los Reyes de España sobre los indios, por fray Matías de Paz*. Traducción notas y bibliografía por A. Millares Carlo, México, 1954. Cfr. V. BELTRAN DE HEREDIA, O.P. "El P. Matías de Paz, O.P. y su tratado "De Dominio Regum Hispaniae Super Indos" *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, 3, Rome (1933), 133-183

<sup>47</sup> Cfr. LEWIS HANKE, *The First Social Experiments in America*, Cambridge (Mass.), 1935; *The Spanish Struggle for Justice in the Conquest of America*, Philadelphia, 1949.

and used all of the experience gained by that genius of conquest and pacification in Mexico, Hernando Cortes. Herrera and Rada had the experience of the great missionaries of Mexico, men like Fray Toribio de Benavente or Fray Pedro de Gante, and bishops Fray Juan de Zumarraga or the unforgettable Vasco de Quiroga.

"The conquest of the Philippines was a part of an episode of Spanish expansion to America and Asia."

"...They were no amateurs in the art. During the previous seventy years the Spaniards had explored the Americas from Cape Mendocino to the Straits of Magellan; they had crossed the Pacific Ocean and circumnavigated the world. They had also established themselves in Mexico, Guatemala, Central America, Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, Chile, Paraguay, and the islands of the Caribbean... Their acquired experience was enormous... The Spaniards had learned the hard way."<sup>48</sup>

## 2. *Peaceful conquest of the Philippines*

Philip II made a serious effort to avoid in the conquest of the Philippines the abuses and sanguinary results of the conquest of Mexico and especially the conquest of the Inca empire of Peru. The school of Vitoria, based on St. Thomas Aquinas, emphasized the rights of the infidels. These rights were based on natural law. Even if these newly discovered people were not Christians they enjoyed inalienable natural rights. Philip II adopted this new method, based on the teachings of Vitoria, for the conquest of the Philippines. It was his chance to prove that peaceful conquest, assimilation, and evangelization were possible. When we read Philip II's *Instructions to Legazpi* we are reading Vitoria's *Relectiones de Indis*. These Instructions show that the Spanish court had adopted the Dominican approach about peaceful evangelization and conquest and the need to avoid bellicose and military methods. Pagan people do not lose their social, political and economic rights by coming into contact with Christian nations. Vitoria's method was adopted by missionaries and conquistadores in the case of the Philippines. In the Adelantado Legazpi and Friars Urdaneta, Rada and Herrera, the Spanish King found the ideal men to accomplish this pioneering enterprise. According to

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<sup>48</sup> *The Colonization and Conquest of the Philippines by Spain*, Introduction, Manila, 1965, pp. XIX-XXI.

the Royal Instruction Legazpi had to tell the natives that he came to teach them the way to salvation, to truth, and to life.<sup>49</sup> It was through Jesus that this salvation could be accomplished.<sup>50</sup> He had to avoid any act of aggression and show restraint even in the face of provocation.

A historical study of the first years of the conquest of the Philippines shows that Legazpi, following strictly Philip II's Instructions, avoided any aggressive act against the natives.<sup>51</sup> Legazpi was actually accused of cowardice by his own soldiers who plotted to kill him and sail to the Moluccas Islands. The reason behind this was precisely Legazpi's refusal to let them start hostilities against the Cebuanos.<sup>52</sup>

The Spanish conquest of the Philippines was perhaps the most humane achieved in the history of the conquest of the XVI and XVII centuries. It was done in an incredible short span of time and with a minimal spilling of blood.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup> "Christians have a right to preach and to announce the Gospel in the regions of the Barbarians — to teach the truth to all those who are ready to listen to him, especially as the truth is that which leads man to salvation and to eternal happiness, Vitoria's *Relectio DE INDIS*, ed. L. Pereña, I, 3, 8, 87.

<sup>50</sup> Cfr. B-R, XXXIV, 252.

<sup>51</sup> For a description of the conduct of Legazpi before reaching Cebu and the final clash see *Legazpi's Voyage of Discovery of the Philippines (1564-1565)*, by Esteban de Figueroa, in *The Conquest of the Philippines by Spain*, Manila (FBG), 1965, pp. 54-63; *Letter of Andrés of Mirándola to Philip II*, Cebu, 1565 in *Ibidem*, pp. 87-88; *Relation of the Voyage to the Philippines*, by Miguel López de Legazpi, Cebu, 1565, in *Ibidem*, pp. 93-99.

<sup>52</sup> Cfr. *Letter of Miguel López de Legazpi to Philip II*, Cebu, July 23, 1567, in *Colonization and Conquest*, p. 123, where we read: "The men of this camp are in extremities and distresses. Because it has not been permitted them to rob or make war upon or in any way harm the natives [underscoring mine] and as they see great delay in the sending of aid, some have not been lacking in treacherous and damnable purposes and desires." Cfr. also *Letter of Guido de Lavezaris and other officials to Philip II*, Cebu, July 16, 1567, in *Ibidem* p. 115.

<sup>53</sup> Historian E. B. Gaylord, in his scholarly *General Introduction to the BLAIR-ROBERTSON Collection* has this to say: "The work of Legazpi during the next seven years entitles him to a place among the greatest of colonial pioneers. In fact he has no rival..."

"In the light, then, of impartial history raised above race prejudice and religious prepossessions, after a comparison with the early years of the Spanish conquest of America or with the first generation or two of the English settlements, the conversion and civilization of the Philippines in the forty years following Legazpi's arrival must be pronounced an achievement without a parallel in history", B-R., vol. I, pp. 32-37.

In the words of historian Phelan: "Legazpi's achievement may not be as spectacular as Cortes' or Pizarro's, but it was a remarkable achievement. To the conqueror of the Philippines must be given the credit in large measure for realizing substantially but not completely Philip II's ideal of a *pacific* occupation."<sup>54</sup>

The acceptance of the Dominican method of conquest and evangelization and the experience of the conquistadores and missionaries in the vast fields of America explain, to a great extent, the rapid and orderly fashion of the conquest of the Philippines.<sup>55</sup>

### 3. *Crisis of the Colony*

Local conditions in the Philippines, however, were not the same as in the rest of the Spanish dominions. Thus the conquest and colonization of the Philippines brought about serious social and economic dislocations. Given the wide difference between the conquistadores and the conquered natives, it was obvious that a crisis had to take place. The arrival of large numbers of non-producing people, like the Spaniards and the Chinese, the latter in much larger numbers, brought the crisis to its peak in the late 1570's. In a subsistence economy, like the one found in the Philippines, the arrival of those two groups meant a dangerous scarcity of basic foodstuffs and the steady rise of prices for prime commodities.

There was perhaps a decline in food production. Given the wars of conquest in Luzon, the conquistadores and Spanish officials were forced to obtain their manpower from the province of Pampanga, (modern provinces of Pampanga, Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Bulacan). This province then, like even today, was the granary of the Philippines. Men were taken to fight with the Spaniards in the wars of pacification, to fell the timber in

<sup>54</sup> J. L. PHELAN, *The Hispanization of the Philippines. Spanish Aims and Filipino Responses, 1565-1700*, Madison, 1959, p. 10.

<sup>55</sup> "The fact that the experimental phase of Spanish colonization was nearly over and viable administrative institutions had already issued from the process when Legazpi founded the city of Manila goes far to explain the comparatively rapid and orderly fashion in which the conquest and settlement of the Philippines were effected." HORACIO DE LA COSTA, S.I., "Bishop Salazar and the Colonial Episcopate" in *Asia and the Philippines. Collected Historical Papers*, Manila, 1967, 23; Cfr. E. J. MacCARTHY, *Spanish Beginnings in the Philippines, 1564-72*, Washington D.C., 1943; F. J. MONTALBAN, S.J., *El patronato español y la conquista de Filipinas*, Burgos, 1930.

the forests, to bring the logs to the Cavite shipyards, to build the galleons of the Manila-Acapulco line, to construct the galleys for the navy and to open up the gold mines of Ilocos. Rice production was thus seriously hindered. Able-bodied men were far from their farm-lands. They had no time to plant and till the land. Employed in burdensome and dangerous occupations, many of them never returned home. Others, to escape this type of labor, fled to the hills.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> "A great number of Indians from Pampanga went to the mines of Ilocos where they remained during the time when they ought to have sowed their grain. Many of them died there, and those who returned were so fatigued that they need rest more than work. As a result, in that year followed a very great scarcity of rice, and for lack of it a great number of Indians in the said Pampanga died from hunger. In Lubao alone the encomienda of Guido de la Vacares, the dead exceeded a thousand..."

"The Spaniards employ the Indians... to row in the galleys and fragatas... At times they go so far away that they are absent four or six months; and many of those who go die there. Others run away and hide in the mountain, to escape from the toils imposed upon them. Others the Spaniards employ in cutting in the forests and conveying it to this city, and other Indians in other labors, so that they do not permit to rest or to attend to their fields. Consequently they sow little and reap less. "*Memorial of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, no date, in B-R., V, 212; *Declaration of the chieftains of Tondo and Capaymisilo*, Manila, June 15, 1582, in B-R., 190; MORGA-RETANA, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, Madrid, 1909, 13-14.

The original *Memorial* of Salazar is found in AGI, Filipinas 74. The *Memorial* was published by W. E. RETANA in *Archivo del Bibliófilo Filipino*, (5 vols.), Madrid, 1895-1905, vol. III, pp. 3-45. It is found in B-R., V, pp. 210-255. Retana gives 1583 as a probable date. The same date is given by B-R. De la Costa in his article "Bishop Salazar and the Colonial Episcopate", in *Asia and the Philippines. Collected Historical Papers*, Manila, 1967, p. 30 accepts that date as probable also. A critical reading of the *Memorial* shows that the year must be 1582. In the *Memorial*, as published by B-R., there are many references to events that happened in 1582. The *Memorial* speaks of them as happening at the same time. Let us examine some of them.

1. Salazar mentions in the *Memorial* a letter written by some chiefs of Tondo and neighboring provinces. This letter, he adds, accompanies the *Memorial*. The letter published by B-R., V, pp. 188-191, bears the date June 20, 1582.

2. The *Memorial* criticizes the government of governor Ronquillo de Peñalosa. It says that Ronquillo was still alive. Ronquillo, however, died on February 14, 1583. The *Memorial* then must have been written in 1582.

3. Mention is made in the *Memorial* (pp. 231; 235) of an expedition just sent to Cagayan. This was directed by Juan Pablo Carrión. In a letter of governor Ronquillo, dated June 16, 1582, and published in B-R., V, pp. 23-33, the governor says that the expedition was sent a few months before. This must have been in 1582.

4. The *Memorial* speaks of an expedition newly organized against some Japanese pirates. This was again the one under Juan Pablo Carrión, 1582, which destroyed the Japanese *Wako* pirates established at the mouth of the Ibanag (Cagayan) river.

The economic crisis was further aggravated by the conduct of the encomenderos and alcaldes mayores. In the Philippines, like in America, the encomienda meant that the natives had to pay the encomenderos a moderate tax in labor and goods in return for protection and basic Christian indoctrination. This was known as *administration of justice* and preparation for the *doctrine*. Some of the encomenderos did not fulfill these two essential duties. They used to collect the tribute on a scarce commodity, selling it later on at huge profits. The same was unfortunately done by the provincial governors. They were the appointees of Ronquillo.<sup>57</sup>

The crisis was felt with a greater intensity during the governorship of Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa (1580-1583). In the opinion of Salazar, Ronquillo was the man responsible for the crisis.<sup>58</sup> His governorship was catastrophic.<sup>59</sup>

In the *asiento* drawn up in 1578 between Ronquillo and the Spanish Crown, the governor accepted the compromise to take 600

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5. Salazar in the Memorial (pp. 241-243) speaks of the decisions of the Council regarding slavery as something very recent. This happened in October of 1581. He accuses governor Ronquillo of procrastination for not having published the decisions of the council until march of next year. This again must be 1582.

6. Reference is made in the Memorial to the accession of Philip II to the Portuguese throne and the initial apprehension of the Portuguese from the Moluccas and Macao (pp. 248-251). Finally they agreed to accept Philip II as king. This happened at the beginning of 1582 when Ronquillo sent Francisco Dueñas to the Moluccas and the Jesuit Alonso Sánchez to Macao. They were successful in their respective embassies. This is clearly stated in the letter of governor Ronquillo to the king, dated Manila, June 16, 1582, published in B-R., V, pp. 27-28.

7. Salazar complains in the Memorial (pp. 250-251) of the harsh treatment the Franciscans who tried to escape to China received at the hands of governor Ronquillo. On March 2, 1582 (B-R., IV, pp. 308-309), the governor passed a strict ordinance against those secret trips to China. Yet the Franciscans, under Fr. Pablo de Jesús, secretly went ahead with their plan and stole out of Manila sometime in March of 1582. The Franciscans were found in Pangasinan and were treated very severely by governor Ronquillo. (Cfr. *Letter of governor Ronquillo to Philip II*, Manila, June 16, 1582, B-R., V, pp. 24-25). This again proves that the Memorial was written in June of 1582, just before the galleon's departure for Acapulco.

<sup>57</sup> The alcaldes mayores "take at their own price the rice of the Indians, and afterward sell it at a very high rate, doing the same with all other articles of provisions and agricultural products," *Letter of Domingo de Salazar-Declaration of the chieftains from Tondo and Capaymisilo*, Manila, June 15, 1582, B-R., V, 191; Cfr. *Affairs in the Philippines by Fray Domingo de Salazar*, B-R., V, 217.

<sup>58</sup> Cfr. *Affairs in the Philippine Islands by Fray Domingo de Salazar*, B-R., V, 211-212.

<sup>59</sup> The terms of the contract or *asiento*, can be found in MORGARETANA, *Sucesos*, pp. 395-396; Cfr. *Introduction*, pp. 18-19.

colonists to the Philippines. This entailed huge expenses. All his fortune and that of his relatives and friends was put at stake. In return for this, the Crown appointed him governor for life, granted him an encomienda in the most important towns of the Philippines and allowed him freedom to name officials to the different administrative posts of the colony. Ronquillo expected to recoup his investment upon his arrival to the Philippines. But by 1580 the conquest of the Philippines was almost complete and the royal ordinances did not allow wars of booty and conquest. The Philippines was not Mexico and Peru, where the conquistadores found easily obtainable deposits of silver and gold. They became rich overnight. The Philippines did not offer chances of quick wealth. Spices were found but not in commercial quantity. The Moluccas Islands were far from the Philippines and they fell under the "empeño", or the sphere of Portuguese influence. There was no chance of becoming rich overnight.

Salazar's hints at another cause of the economic crisis: the terrible weather. By this he surely means the typhoons. For a man who has lived in the Philippines, and knows the catastrophic effects of floods and destruction wrought by typhoons, Salazar's reason is a most valid one.<sup>60</sup> The burdens of the conquest fell more heavily on the natives. They suffered considerably. But we have to say that the times were difficult for all and that there never was a policy of exploitation and abuse.

In the words of De La Costa: "This policy must not be readily condemned as heartless exploitation. Doubtless there were men like Ronquillo who made more money than they should have, but many an ordinary colonist had by this time given up all hope of enriching himself in these God-forsaken islands. He was immediately and urgently concerned with merely keeping alive; with having enough rice to eat."<sup>61</sup> In the subsistence economy of the Philippines there was not enough food for all.<sup>62</sup> It took the Fili-

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<sup>60</sup> "But, not to ascribe all the guilt to men, but to our sins, the cause of this dearth has in part been that these years have not afforded as good weather as others", *Affairs in the Philippines*, B-R., V, 217.

<sup>61</sup> "Bishop Salazar and the Colonial Episcopate" in *Asia and the Philippines. Collected Historical Papers*, p. 26.

<sup>62</sup> "The economic crisis was basically the result of a situation which can be overlooked because it is so obvious. The Philippines had no economic surplus of the readily available sort the Spaniards were looking for. It did not have the silver of Mexico and Peru, the silks of China, or the spices of the Moluccas. The Philippine economy was definitely one of subsistence based on the primitive cultivation of rice." *Ibidem*, pp. 25-26.

pinos some years to produce a surplus economy.<sup>63</sup> Many times the encomenderos and Spanish soldiers were forced to rob the natives in order to survive. The words "forced to rob" may sound too strong, but unfortunately they were true in the Philippines. The encomiendas were small ones. The encomenderos and colonists led poor and wretched lives. If this is true of the encomenderos it was much worse for the common soldier. Food and clothing was lacking. Even bishop Salazar accepted that the abuses were due to misery and poverty.<sup>64</sup> The encomenderos and Spanish officials accepted the fact that they abused the Filipinos, but what else could they do? Poverty forced them to do so. The soldiers had not received any pay since the beginning of the conquest in 1565. They went permanently hungry and most of them were penniless. Hence their confusion of mind and spiritual anxiety.<sup>65</sup>

Our readers might be inclined to think that if this were the case, why did they not abandon the Philippines and return to Mexico and Spain? This was what they earnestly desired. Poor and penniless in this life, and in danger of eternal damnation in the next world, why remain any longer in the Philippines? Most of them wanted to abandon this faraway colony and return home, to the security of Mexico and Spain. A deep sadness filled their

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>64</sup> "All the rest live a very poor and wretched life; for they are not supplied with any provisions, nor do they possess means to procure food and clothing. Notwithstanding all this, they are ordered with great severity to assist the sentinels and aid in other duties of war, just as if they were paid. Hence ensue oppression and ill-treatment of the Indians, for sometimes when an Indian has some food that he has cooked for his own meal, a soldier enters and takes it away from him. Not only that, they also maltreat and beat the Indians, and when I, being near at hand, go to them and reprimand them for it, they say to me: "What is to be done? Must we be left to die?", *Domingo de Salazar. Affairs of the Philippine Islands*, B.R., V, 244; Cfr. W. E. RETANA, *Archivo del bibliófilo Filipino* (5 vols.) Madrid, 1895-1905, vol. III, p. 35; *Letter of Governor Sande, Manila, June 7, 1576*, in *Archivo*, II, 60; 65-66; Cfr. DE LA COSTA, "Bishop Salazar" in *Asia and the Philippines*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>65</sup> "We have seen service in the conquest and pacification of these islands and their settlement, some of us 10 years, others 12, others 15, with only the original grant-in-aid which the officials of your Majesty's treasury of New Spain released to us in Mexico on our way hither. It was soon spent by reason of the necessities we encountered in the pacification of these natives; and so we have been forced to rob them and impose upon them in other ways, burdening our consciences in this in order to subsist. We thus have a heavy load on our souls which we are unable to shake off by reason of our great poverty", *Letter of Diego de Aguilar and others to Philip II*, July 18, 1581, in COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 263, n. 3, as quoted by DE LA COSTA, *ibidem*, 26. Cfr. *Ibidem*, *The Jesuits*, p. 20.

hearts. Even the highest authorities were longing for the security of Mexico and Spain. They felt they lived in an intolerable exile. They remembered the peaceful life in Mexico, their gainful and honest employment there. They missed congenial friends. Most of them were ready to give up the struggle, pack up and escape from that dreadful exile and vale of tears. Furthermore, in the concrete case of the Philippines, they were surrounded by enemies from within and without. Moro pirates, Chinese corsairs like Li-Ma-Hong, Japanese *Wako* in Luzon and the natives pressed the Spaniards to extremists. If they wanted to survive in this struggle for life they had to be, unfortunately, ruthless. If they remained it was because the King had commanded them to conquer, pacify, and establish a colony here. They had to stay to Christianize the natives. Had they left, the process of Christianization would have been brought to a quick end and the first ones to lament this would have been the ecclesiastics, who were throwing excommunications left and right.<sup>66</sup>

The Augustinians, pioneers in the work of Christianization, came out valiantly in defense of the Filipinos and against the abuses of conquistadores, encomenderos, and Spanish officials. If justice had to prevail and the conquest be set along Christian principles, they could not but denounce the abuses. In the opinion of the religious the Spaniards were responsible for the state of affairs of the newly established colony in the Philippines.<sup>67</sup> The encomenderos and Spanish officials denied the claims of the Augustinians. In their opinion the Augustinians, though motivated by zeal for God, King, justice, and love for the Filipinos, exaggerated

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<sup>66</sup> "As I have already written to your Lordship I found this land so ruined and desolate that everything was in confusion; the governor a novice, the city in ashes, the citizens beggarred and dismayed by the loss of their estates in the fire and in the two ships, one of which was lost and the other driven to China and thus rendered no less profitable... I leave it to your Lordship to imagine how much I have suffered from fellow citizens and members of my own household, what my feelings are who erstwhile had such tranquil employment, such congenial company, such good friends, and your Lordship for a patron! The remembrance of all this gnaws at me continually and has my wife in perpetual tears; but with the hope that we may escape, with your Lordship's assistance, from so dreadful an exile for this is all the consolation and refreshment that we have to keep us from giving up the struggle altogether in this vale of tears", *Letter of Governor Sande to D. Pedro de Moya y Contreras, archbishop of Mexico*, Manila, June 20, 1585, in COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 409-410, as quoted by DE LA COSTA, in "Bishop Salazar", pp. 27-28.

<sup>67</sup> *Opinion of Martin de Rada on Tributes from Indians*, Manila, June 21, 1574, B-R III., 253-259.

the abuses and forgot entirely the tremendous benefits the conquest had brought to the Filipinos.<sup>68</sup> They protected the people from enemies, curbed piracy, thus keeping sea and inland travel open, stopped the perpetual wars of extermination common among them before the Spanish arrival and prepared the way for evangelization.<sup>69</sup>

This was the situation which confronted Bishop Salazar when he arrived in Manila in September of 1581. He was no stranger to the struggle for justice in favour of the natives. For 23 years he had fought tenaciously for justice and humanization in the vast missionary fields of Mexico. The Augustinians and the Franciscans, the latter had arrived in the Philippines in 1578, received a man well seasoned in the struggle for justice. He was a learned theologian and a lawyer, invested with episcopal dignity, a privilege that placed him so high in the Spanish colonial system. The religious received a valiant man, indefatigable in the fight for justice, a man who could confront, if need be, the Spanish authorities in the Philippines. Salazar's arrival would indeed mean a greater impetus in the process of Christianization and the struggle for justice.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>68</sup> "Since the arrival of the administration of justice, of the Friars and clergymen to these provinces, they have prospered as never before, as people do not receive the vexations and abuses that the *timaguas* used to receive from the *principales* and the weak from the powerful. It has progressed continuously from good to better. At present there are religious in all the provinces. As the administration of justice reaches even the *visitas*, nobody is abused, rather the great majority is happy and contented and a large number of people have embraced Christianity. The children are all Christians. Such peace was lacking before the advent of the administration of justice and of Christianity. And this because everybody, whether *timagua* or *principal*, with no fear of God and of justice, used to come out on the trails or to the rice fields of the other natives, to kill and rob them. All this had ceased in the provinces due to the large number of missionaries and magistrates. People can go from one place to another, whether by land or by sea, without fear. This is the truth of what happens"; *Declaration of Don Diego Manumba*, in *Archivo Histórico Hispano Agustiniiano*, XV, El Escorial, 1921, pp. 210-211; Cfr. ISACIO RODRIGUEZ, *Historia de la Provincia Agustiniiana del SSmo. Nombre de Jesús. I, Bibliografía*, Manila, 1965, 316; Cfr. DE LA COSTA, *Readings in Philippine History*, Manila, 1965, p. 25.

<sup>69</sup> Cfr. *Reply to Martín de Rada's Opinion*, Manila, June, 1574, B-R., III, 260-271.

<sup>70</sup> As soon as Salazar landed in Sorsogon native datus from Bikol visited him to denounce the injustices committed by some encomenderos. He was told the tragic story of how a tax collector had crucified a Filipino *principal*. Salazar saw the guilty man in Nueva Caceres (Naga) and came to know that he had received a light punishment for such a crime. Cfr. *Memorial of Salazar about the State of the Philippine Islands*, B-R., V, 223-224; Cfr. AGI, Filipinas 74.

From the very first moment of his arrival there was a clash with the governor and the civil authorities. Some of his actions brought him into direct and bitter conflict with the secular powers. Many of the laws promulgated by the Spanish Crown in defense of the Filipinos were due to the fighting spirit of the first bishop of the Philippines. But it was a noble struggle in which it was worthy to take part. Salazar was becoming the main protagonist in this process of evangelization and struggle for justice.

As soon as Salazar arrived he tried to come to grips with the situation. Although he recognized the misery and poverty of encomenderos and soldiers he was not ready to tolerate real abuses. Following the spirit of the Augustinians, Salazar also saw the sufferings of the natives. He felt he had to side with the weaker part, that is, with the natives. He had to do something to change the situation. The doctrine of Vitoria and the spirit of Las Casas weighed heavily on him. He came to realize that unless something was done immediately the evangelization of the Filipinos would be endangered. God's power could perform and did indeed perform miracles and the Filipinos were accepting the faith of their conquerors. But abuses and injustices belied the faith they preached. He had full trust in the resources of the Christian faith. God's admirable power was there for all to see, but men, Christian men at that, were supposed to concur with God's grace rather than belie it with their evil deeds.<sup>71</sup>

There was the danger that instead of peacefully accepting the Spanish rule and the light yoke of Christ they would conspire

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<sup>71</sup> "This is precisely what enhances God's admirable power and brings into greater relief the tremendous resources of our holy faith, that men beaten in war, reduced by the ferocity of their conquerors to a miserable bondage, stripped of their wives, their children and all their worldly goods, should in spite of all this accept the faith and desire to profess the law of that God from whose worshippers they have suffered so many and such great evils, and whose deeds belied the very faith they preached. And what is even more wonderful is that they should be led to accept this religion by missionaries who did not, as Peter did, heal the sick by their mere shadow, nor raise the dead as did the other Apostles, nor have the gift of tongues, but whose only argument was the word of God itself", *Pastoral Letter of Domingo de Salazar*, Manila, Dec. 21, 1581, AGI, Filipinas 74; cfr. COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, p. 187 as translated by HORACIO DE LA COSTA, *The Jesuits*, p. 22.

against the Spaniards and come to hate Christianity.<sup>72</sup> If so, the main purpose of the conquista, the conversion of the natives to Christianity, would never be achieved.

## V. SALAZAR'S STRUGGLE AGAINST SLAVERY

### 1. *Slavery of Filipinos in the hands of the Spaniards.*

One of the most serious problems Salazar was confronted with upon his arrival in the Philippines was that of slavery of Filipinos in the hands of the Spaniards. This was an old problem when Salazar arrived in the Philippines in 1581, as it had started already during the first years of the Spanish occupation of the Philippines.

The Augustinians who travelled with Salazar from Mexico to Manila in 1581 brought with them a Royal Decree in which the Spanish King granted absolute freedom to all Filipino slaves in the hands of the Spanish *conquistadores* of the Philippines.<sup>73</sup>

As soon as the Augustinians arrived in Manila they set things in motion to find a solution to the already long and protected battle for the abolition of slavery. Salazar gave full support to the initiative of the Augustinians.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore he suggested the idea to hold an extraordinary meeting of the most selected members of the religious and secular segments in the Philippines to see how the Royal Decree against slavery could be implemented

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<sup>72</sup> "I could never finish... relating all the hardships that befell these unfortunates in this country. They ought to be feasted and favored, in order that they may become attached to our faith, and understand the mercy that God has shown them in bringing them to the knowledge and manifestation of it..."

"But if it is true, most Christian King, that the intent of Your Majesty in sending Spaniards to these lands is that God may be known, His faith preached, and His Holy law received here; and that Indians, by love, good works, and example, may be led to the knowledge of God and obedience to your Majesty, what law or right permits individuals to transgress in this matter by their greed and self-interest, and do the opposite of that for which your Majesty sent them?... What abhorrence to our holy faith arises in their minds from this conduct, and what an impediment to the conversion of the infidels is thus formed"! *Affairs in the Philippine Islands by D. de Salazar*, BLAIR-ROBERTSON, V, pp. 227-228.

<sup>73</sup> Cfr. GASPARD DE SAN AGUSTIN, *Conquistas de las Islas Filipinas*, Madrid, 1698, p. 413.

<sup>74</sup> "By the ship in which I came the Augustinian fathers brought a new decree from your Majesty, ordering with much vigor, and in strong terms, that the Spaniards shall at once liberate the slaves whom they may hold, under whatever circumstances they may have obtained them. This was presented to the governor, for I talked with him about it..." *Memorial of Domingo de Salazar*, B-R., V, p. 241.

and thus give a hand to Governor Ronquillo in the search for a quick and just solution.<sup>75</sup>

On October 16, 1581, just a month after his arrival, he convoked the most prominent people of the Philippines to a meeting at the Augustinian monastery in Tondo.<sup>76</sup> He explained to them the main purpose of their meeting. He proposed three main points for discussion:

1. In view of the probable opposition of the owners of slaves, would it be justifiable for the governor to suspend the publication and execution of the Royal Decree?<sup>77</sup>
2. Could the governor of the Philippines suspend the execution of the Royal Decree if the owners of slaves appealed to the Spanish King?<sup>78</sup>
3. If those present at the meeting decided to publish and execute the Royal Decree, could the governor general be given authority to allow the owners of slaves some time before they could grant absolute freedom to their slaves? If so, for how long could the governor suspend the actual execution of the Royal Decree?<sup>79</sup>

The answer to the first question was a historical account of the previous legislation in favor of the natives of America and all the territories under the Spanish Crown. Charles V had issued a Royal Decree in 1530 prohibiting in the strictest terms to take captives and slaves even in just wars.<sup>80</sup> This Royal Decree was still binding. In the opinion of those present at the meeting the Spanish owners of slaves were obliged to grant freedom to all their slaves. Anybody opposing this decision was a robber as he was taking away from the natives their most precious gift:

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<sup>75</sup> "As soon as this decree was presented to him the governor asked me to advise him what he should do. Accordingly, I convened the superiors of the orders and the religious therein who had long resided there, with some very learned men who came with me...", *Memorial of D. de Salazar*, B-R., V, p. 242.

<sup>76</sup> Cfr. TORRES LANZAS-P. PASTELLS, *Catálogo de los documentos existentes en el Archivo de Indias relativos a Filipinas* (8 vols.) Barcelona, 1926-1936, II, CXLIV.

<sup>77</sup> *Council Regarding Slaves*, B-R, XXXIV, 327-328.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>79</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>80</sup> Cfr. V. CARRO, *La Teología y los teólogos-juristas españoles ante la Conquista de America*, (2 vols.), Madrid, 1944 I, 87; SILVIO ZAVALA, *Las Instituciones Jurídicas, la Conquista de América*, Madrid, 1935, 248-252.

their freedom. Furthermore, the owners of slaves were bound under penalty of moral sin to restitute to the slaves for the evils infringed upon them during the time of their slavery. There was no need for the New Royal Decree brought by the Augustinians. The old Decree of Charles V was enough.<sup>81</sup>

To the second question they gave a clear and definite answer. The governor general could not suspend the publication and execution of the Royal Decree, even if the owners of slaves appealed to the Spanish King. Any abeyance of the execution of the Decree would mean a continuation of the injustice committed against the slaves.

For the missionaries it was clear that the emancipation of the Filipino slaves in the hands of the Spaniards could not be denied nor even deferred. It was in accordance also with the demands of justice and divine law. The slaves had to be declared free immediately.

However, those present at the meeting were ready to grant the owners of slaves a minimal concession. In order to give them some time to make the necessary arrangements and to avoid social

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<sup>81</sup> Pope Paul III, in his letter *Pastorale Officium*, of May 29, 1537, prohibited under penalty of excommunication any kind of slavery in the Spanish dominions. Cfr. F. J. HERNÁEZ, S.J., *Colección de Bulas, Breves y otros documentos relativos a la Iglesia de América y Filipinas*, (2 vols), Brussels, 1897, vol. I, pp. 101-102.

Pope Paul III again reiterated his strict condemnation of slavery in his apostolic letter *Veritas Ipsa* of June 2, 1537. Cfr. *Ibidem*, vol. I, pp. 102-103. The Pope wrote that the Amerindians "and all other peoples who shall in the future come to the knowledge of Christians are not to be considered incapable of freedom or ownership, and are not to be deprived thereof even though they do not profess the Christian faith; on the contrary they may freely and lawfully exercise, possess, and enjoy said liberty and property and ought not to be reduced to slavery, and if anything to the contrary is done we, in virtue of our apostolic authority... declare and decree it to be null and void", A. DAVILLA PADILLA, *Historia de la fundación y discurso de la provincia de Santiago de México de la orden de Predicadores*, Brussels, 1625, p. 91, as quoted by H. de la COSTA, S.J., *The Jesuits in the Philippines*, p. 638, footnote 15.

Philip II's Ordinance XXIV of 1573 condemned slavery under penalty of death. "Those going to discover by sea or by land cannot and shall not bring any Indian from the discovered lands, even though they will say that they are sold slaves, or because they want to come, or in any other way, under penalty of death...", V. CARRO, *La Teología*, I, p. 106; Cfr. B-R., XXXIV, pp. 328-329.

imbalances, the governor could allow them some time—a month at the most — before granting freedom to their slaves.<sup>82</sup>

As we can see, the missionaries present at the meeting were not afraid of the possible repercussions of the execution of the Royal Decree. Salazar, who had arrived to the Philippines a month earlier, played an important role in the proceedings and decision of this extraordinary meeting. This can be seen in these words:

“The bishop declared that the opinions of those present at the meeting were all in conformity with the law of God, natural, divine, and human right. They were based on truth and justice. This was also his personal opinion. Because of this he approved and confirmed everything agreed upon in the said meeting.”<sup>83</sup>

These resolutions were personally taken by Salazar to the governor general, D. Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa. The bishop told the governor that he expected him to put them into execution immediately, as it was the will of the King, as expressed in the Royal Decree, and also as it was the will of the people who had gathered in that special meeting.

## 2. *Reaction of the Spanish Colony to the Decisions of the Bishop and Religious*

What was the reaction of the Spanish colony to the decisions of the bishop and the religious regarding slavery of Filipino natives in the hands of the Spaniards?

We deem this question important, for the greatness of a law does not stand on its enactment, something merely theoretical, but in its applicability and adaptability to the concrete historical situation. The world has come to know of humane, magnanimous and liberating laws. Most often, however, those laws have remained dead ink. No change was effected in the lives of those for whom the liberating laws were enacted. A wise enactment

<sup>82</sup> Cfr. *Council Regarding Slaves*, B-R., vol. XXXIV, p. 330; Cfr. H. DE LA COSTA, *The Jesuits*, 25.

<sup>83</sup> *Council Regarding Slaves*, B-R., XXXIV, 330-331; *Decisiones del obispo y religiosos sobre la materia de esclavos*, AGI, Filipinas 74; Cfr. TORRES-LANZAS-P. PASTELLS, *Catálogo*, II, CXL. These decisions of the bishop and religious were accepted by the Synod of Manila (1582-1586), Cfr. VALENTIN MARIN, M., *Ensayo de una síntesis de los trabajos realizados por las corporaciones religiosas de Filipinas*, (2 vols.), Manila, 1901, vol. II, p. 221.

of a law, without the possibility of executing it, honors those who work for the law but there is no more to it. Was this the case with the decisions reached by Salazar and his fellow religious?

That Salazar's decisions aroused the Spanish colony cannot be denied. There was a general outcry not only from the part of the owners of slaves but also from the Spanish officials of Manila. In their opinion, immediate emancipation of slaves could be dangerous to the very existence of the colony.<sup>84</sup> These people had the sympathy and support of the supreme authorities. Thus we read:

"This kingdom was thrown into great confusion by a Decree in which your Majesty ordered the liberation of all Indian slaves held by Spaniards. This affair has caused me much anxiety for, if it should be immediately complied with, and put into execution without any term of grace, this Kingdom could be placed in a sad state for many good and very forcible reasons"<sup>85</sup>

Bishop Salazar and the religious agreed that their decisions should be brought to the notice of the people concerned through the means of the pulpit. In case of disobedience they should be denied sacramental absolution, a terrible penalty for a Spaniard of the XVI century. Lacking executive power to carry out the laws, they would use the spiritual means at their disposal.

The whole problem worried Salazar and brought sadness into his heart. He personally felt anxious for the slaves, for the masters of slaves and for everybody. This is expressed in these words:

"It is a great hardship, and a scandal, to have to deny them confession, and many say that they will not release their slaves until your Majesty so orders, even though they remain without confession."<sup>86</sup>

Ronquillo begged bishop Salazar and the friars to lift the censures previous appeal again to the King. Salazar and the religious, in the hope of finally receiving strict order from the King to free the slaves, agreed to the governor's request:

<sup>84</sup> *Letter of the Oidores of Manila to Philip II*, Mla. July 1, 1584, AGI. Fil. 18, 1, 16.

<sup>85</sup> *Letter of Governor Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa to Philip II*, Mla., June 16, 1582, AGI, Filipinas, 6, 2, 56; Cfr. B-R., V, p. 32.

<sup>86</sup> *Memorial of Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, 1582, B-R., V, p. 243.

"Although I have been of the opinion that for the present the masters may be absolved, many of the religious refuse to do so unless the slaves are first given their liberty.<sup>87</sup>

If they did not receive any answer from the King all the slaves had to be granted freedom. Furthermore, within two years all the slaves in the hands of Spaniards had to be given total freedom. With these conditions Salazar agreed to the governor's petition.<sup>88</sup>

If the bishop and religious of the Philippines had not spoken against the abuses of their fellow Spaniards regarding slavery and other abuses, if they had dedicated themselves to the only task of baptizing the inhabitants of the Philippines, if they had closed their eyes to the misdeeds of the *conquistadores* and *encomenderos*, would things have changed in the Philippines? Would there have been any friction between the civil and ecclesiastical authorities? The bishop and religious were not afraid of any possible consequences. And threats they had. On one occasion a Spanish *conquistador* told bishop Salazar that he could hit his miter with his arquebus from a distance of fifty meters.<sup>89</sup> Even governor Ronquillo de Peñalosa reminded Salazar that he was a descendant of Spanish cavaliers who had no scruples to send Bishops to the gibbet.<sup>90</sup> Salazar remained undaunted. The fight for justice and against slavery was to continue.

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<sup>87</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>88</sup> "... I again convened the fathers and priests, and we agreed to admit the owners of slaves to confession, but on condition that they take no objection to what your Majesty may order; or that within two years from the departure of this ship (the term assigned to them by your Majesty) they should free the slaves", *Memorial of Salazar B-R.*, V, p. 242-243.

<sup>89</sup> Cfr. D. ADUARTE, *Historia de la Provincia del Santo Rosario de la Orden de Predicadores en Filipinas, Japón y China*, ed. Manuel Ferrer, (2 vols.), Vol. I, Madrid, 1962, p. 288.

<sup>90</sup> Charles I of Spain, 1516-1556, was challenged by some Spanish cities in what is known in Spanish history as the *War of the Comuneros*. To defend their common rights and freedom against the centralism of his reign, represented by his Flemish counsellors, the *Comuneros* rebelled against Charles. They had the wide support of the towns and bishops of Castille. The *Comuneros* were defeated at Villalar, Valladolid (1521). The main leaders, Juan de Padilla, Juan Bravo and Francisco Maldonado were executed immediately by Ronquillo, alcalde of Segovia. Bishop Acuña of Avila was sent to prison to Arévalo, native place of the Ronquillos and there he was hanged by the grandfather of D. Gonzalo Ronquillo de Peñalosa, the one who now threatened bishop Salazar in Manila. Cfr. TORRES-LANZAS-P. PASTELLS, *Catálogo*, vol. II, p. CV.

Salazar's complaint that under the excuse of appeal to the King things had gone back to its original state does not seem to agree with the social and political reality of the Philippines. Peñalosa's successor, Don Santiago de Vera, is a witness of the great change operated already.

In a letter of 1585, addressed to Philip II, he wrote that in this opinion Salazar wanted to go too far and too fast, thus endangering the political security of the Philippines.<sup>91</sup>

### 3. *Salazar's struggle against slavery in the hands of Filipino Datus*

This letter, written four years after the *Council Regarding Slaves*, seems to prove that a lot had been done. But bishop Salazar did not feel fully satisfied. He was forced to change tactics and present the problem under a different light. He came to realize that the problem of slavery among the Filipino *datus* and *principales* had also to be tackled. He had been pressing his fellow Spaniards, owners of slaves, few as they were, to fulfill the Royal Laws. He had appealed to their Christian sensibility, to their sense of justice. He threatened them with censures. All to no avail. Their stubbornness was based radically on the knowledge that the Filipinos were allowed to possess hundreds of slaves. They, the conquerors and rulers, were not allowed the use of a few slaves acquired in just wars or brought by them from Filipino owners and rulers for an agreed prize, as it was the custom of the times.

Salazar was ready to pose the problem in all its extension and magnitude. From now on, it would be an all-out-war against slavery, whether the owners were Spaniards or Filipinos. His opposition to slavery would know no boundaries.

Salazar availed himself of the same means he had used against the recalcitrant Spaniards: ecclesiastical censures. Christian Filipinos were to be denied absolution and communion if they did not prove in writing that they had granted freedom to their slaves. Filipinos asking to become Christians were to be rejected unless,

<sup>91</sup> "The bishop seems to press them too much for not giving up the slaves. This is not good especially in a new land like the Philippines. And so they live with guilty consciences", *Letter of Santiago de Vera to Philip II*, Mla., June 20, 1585, AGI, 18, 2, 30.

like the Filipino Christians, they produced a written prove of having given emancipation to their slaves.<sup>92</sup>

The bishop was bitterly criticized by the Spanish authorities of Manila and even by the authorities at Madrid for fussing in matters foreign to his episcopal power, that is, his struggle against slavery.<sup>93</sup> He was told not to trouble himself with the problems of civil jurisdiction like slavery. Salazar, however, was of a different opinion. He did not give up his fight for the slaves. He was convinced of the justice of his cause. Furthermore, the task of evangelization could not be accelerated if those who did not want to give up their slaves were left free to enjoy the privileges of slavery, while those who wanted to embrace Christianity would be forced to manumit their slaves. This being so, many of those rulers and datos would remain in their paganism rather than become Christians and be forced to emancipate their slaves. The situation of the Christian datu would be worse than the one of the pagan datu. To remain pagan would mean greater wealth, power and influence.

In Salazar's opinion, slavery among the Filipinos was still growing in 1585. Twenty years after the discovery and conquest of the Philippines, people were easily made slaves, even for insignificant causes. There was a need for a new Royal Decree to stamp out this plague, as it had been stamped out in Peru and Mexico.

A general and extraordinary meeting of all segments of the colony was convoked in 1586 under the presidency of Salazar and the governor. One of the many and serious problems taken up was the one regarding slavery. Those present at the meeting bitterly criticized the recalcitrant group of Spaniards who did not want to give up their slaves. All of them recognized that most

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<sup>92</sup> "The bishop has tried to grant freedom to the slaves in the hands of the natives. (As for this efforts to do the same with those in the hands of the Spaniards we have already given definite orders). As for the slaves in the hands of the Filipino principales the bishop has commanded them to set them free. In case of disobedience to his order the religious are asked not to baptize them if they come for baptism unless they bring clear information that they have already granted freedom to their slaves", *Letter of the Audiencia of Manila to Philip II*, Manila, June 20, 1585, AGI, Filipinas 18, 2, 35.

<sup>93</sup> Cfr. *Marginal note of the Council of Indies to the Letter of the Audiencia*, quoted in previous footnote.

of the Spaniards had given up their slaves, in obedience to the Royal Decrees, but some others still retained them.<sup>94</sup> Conscious that the problem needed an urgent solution, they attacked it in all its extension and magnitude, that is, they asked that slaves in the hands of Filipino datus be also given freedom. It was an overall attack on slavery for, in their opinion, slavery was wide-spread. It had not diminished since the Spanish arrival.

"... All the chief and wealthy Indians, and even many of the common people among them, have and continually make, many slaves among themselves, and sell them to heathen and foreigners, although the slave may be a Christian. It is ascertained that of the twenty or more different methods of enslavement not one is justifiable. Although in regard to those who are recently enslaved and are known, reform is easy, still regarding the many held from former times *the bishop and all his assistants*, [underscoring mine] are in great doubt and perplexity, because, on the one hand, they see that the Indians possess and inherit the slaves from their parents and godparents, while on the other, the ecclesiastics are certain that none, or almost none of the slaves are made so justly. Therefore, hardly any learned and conscientious religious is willing, not only to absolve, but even to baptize or marry the Indian, unless he gives up his slaves; for these generally are, or were, stolen from other countries or taken in unjustifiable petty warfare, or made slaves for very small debts — of which the majority admit no other payment than their enslavement — others by usury and barter according to their custom, and other methods even more unjust than these. It is necessary for his Majesty to ordain some method so that, now and henceforth, at least those who are under our control, may make no more slaves; children born to those who are now slaves, or appear to be slaves, should be born free; that those who wish to redeem themselves may do so at a price adjudged reasonably by arbitrators; and that those held at present may not be sold to pagans or to Indians not subject to his Majesty."<sup>95</sup>

This was an urgent call to the Spanish King to search for a quick and just solution to the problem of slavery, a problem that

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<sup>94</sup> Cfr. *Memorial to the Council*, B.R., VI, 191-192; COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 435, note 1.

<sup>95</sup> *Memorial to the Council*, B.R., VI, 192-193; COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 435, note 2.

had been besetting the Spanish colony for two decades. There was real concern in all the authorities, more so in Domingo de Salazar and the ecclesiastical authorities. The problem was tricky and of no easy solution. To demand total freedom of slaves in the hands of Filipino masters might be an injustice and an oversimplification, since the present masters had inherited their slaves from their forefathers as most of the slaves were made so in unjust and petty wars; or through other illicit means. Hence the bishop and the religious did not want to absolve, baptize, or even bless the marriage of those Filipinos who asked for the sacraments unless they could prove they had granted freedom to their slaves. Salazar and the religious did not feel contented with pious sermons but set in motion a chain of events that led to new legislation regarding possession of slaves in the hands of Filipinos.

In the Memorial of 1586, Salazar and the religious proposed some possible solutions to the problem under discussion.

Regarding the Spanish esclavists who still resisted the bishop's decision and by-passed the Royal Decrees it was imperative to issue new laws to force them once and for all to give up their slaves.<sup>96</sup>

The problem of slavery among the Filipinos demanded tactfulness and prudence. Four points were proposed for those slaves subject to the Spanish authorities in the Philippines:

1. Nobody shall make any more slaves.
2. Children of slaves shall be born free.
3. Slaves ready to buy their freedom could do so at reasonable prices stipulated by distinterested parties.
4. Slaves shall not be sold to infidels or countries not subject to the Spanish King.<sup>97</sup>

The Memorial of 1586 was personally taken to Philip II by the Jesuit Alonso Sánchez, who had been chosen unanimously as extraordinary ambassador of the whole colony in the Philippines. The King and his advisers, after long discussions, came out with clear decisions. A new Royal Decree ought to be sent to the

<sup>96</sup> *Memorial to the Council*, B-R., VI, 191-192; COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 435, note 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Memorial*, B-R., VI, 192-193; COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor* I, 435, note 2.

Philippines. The King instructed the new governor, Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas, to take the new instructions with him and upon his arrival in the Philippines, set free all slaves in the hands of the Spaniards.<sup>98</sup>

Regarding the more complex problem of slavery among the Filipinos, the special committee formed by the King came out with the following recommendations:

1. No person under the Spanish dominions in the Philippines shall make any more slaves in the future.
2. Children of slave parents shall be born free.
3. Slaves over ten years of age shall serve as slaves up to twenty. Those above twenty years of age shall serve for another five years. Afterwards they shall be free.
4. Those ready to buy their liberty shall be free to do so. The bishop and the governor shall fixe the price to be paid for their manumission.<sup>99</sup>

These decisions approved by Philip II were given in 1589 to the newly chosen governor of the Philippines, Gómez Pérez Dasmariñas. They formed part of the General Instructions to be taken to the Philippines and executed as soon as he arrived to his new post.<sup>100</sup> Dasmariñas put them into execution as soon as he arrived in the Philippines in 1590. To support the stand of the King and of the bishop of the Philippines against slavery, Pope Gregory XIV prohibited the Spaniards in 1591, under penalty of excommunication, the holding of slaves. Granting of freedom to slaves became a duty. Holding of slaves meant excommunication.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>98</sup> "I therefore commit it to you, and order that, immediately upon your arrival to the said islands, you shall set at liberty all those Indians held as slaves by the Spaniards" *Instructions to Dasmariñas*, B-R, VII, 171; COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 435, note 1; Cfr. DE LA COSTA, *The Jesuits*, 98.

<sup>99</sup> Cfr. COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 345, note 2; Cfr. DE LA COSTA, *op. cit.*, p. 98.

<sup>100</sup> *Instrucciones de Felipe II a Dasmariñas*, San Lorenzo, August 9, 1589, in COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, II, 741-750; Cfr. *ibidem* in B-R., VII, 170-171.

<sup>101</sup> *Liberty of the Indians in the Philippines by Gregory XIV*, Rome, 18 April, 1591, B-R., VII, 70-72. "... In fine we have learned that our very dear son in Christ Philip, the Catholic King of the Spains, has ordered that in view of the many deceits usually practiced therein, no Spaniard in the aforesaid Philippine Islands shall, even by the right of war, whether just or unjust, or of purchase, or any other pretext whatsoever, take or hold

These Royal Decrees and their application to the Philippine context by the capable Dasmariñas struck a mortal blow against slavery of Filipinos in the hands of Spaniards and Filipino *datus* and *principales*. The proscription of slavery in the Philippines of Filipinos and its application as a general rule was received with shouts of joy by the slaves. I say the application as a general rule for slavery did not disappear immediately and entirely. Chirino, a missionary of the first generation, is a witness that still towards the end of the XVI century in the island of Mindanao some of the *datus*, Christian people already, kept a large number of slaves with the knowledge and consent of the missionaries.<sup>102</sup>

Most of these slaves had been so from time immemorial and it was too difficult to grant them total freedom without disrupting the whole social set up of the islands. On the other hand, many of the slaves had lived all their lives in slavery. It was impossible for them to start a new life. For many of them a life of freedom meant abject poverty and misery. Some of the slaves who accepted manumission ended up in the city to increase the number of iddle men and tramps, others became criminals.

Slavery as in the past, continued because some Filipinos, beset by poverty and misery, and following the immemorial custom of pre-Hispanic times, sold themselves into slavery to other Filipinos,<sup>103</sup> although these cases must have been rather exceptional and rare, as they went opposite the Christian spirit of liberty and equality that prevailed in the Philippines at the end of the XVI century and beginning of the XVII century, that is, the time of

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slaves or serfs, and yet that in contravention of this edict or command of King Philip, some still keep slaves in their service. In order, then, as conformable to reason and equity, that the Indians may go and form their Christian doctrines and their homes and lands freely and safely, without any fear of slavery, in virtue of holy obedience and under pain of excommunication, we order and command all and singular persons dwelling in those islands of no matter what state, degree, condition, rank and dignity on the publication of these presents to set wholly free without any craft and deceit, whatever Indian slaves and serfs they may have; nor for the future shall they in any manner, contrary to the edict or command of the said King Philip, take or keep captives or slaves”.

<sup>102</sup> Cfr. PEDRO CHIRINO, S.J., *Relación de las Islas Filipinas. The Philippines in 1600*, Manila, 1969, pp. 364; 121.

<sup>103</sup> Cfr. DE LA COSTA, *The Jesuits*, 355.

our study. Slavery continued in a subreptitious way and in a small scale throughout the entire Spanish regime.<sup>104</sup>

After the past review of the main events dealing with slavery and the key figures involved in the struggle, we can ask ourselves a few questions: Did Salazar achieve his purpose? Did the religious change the social and political situation in the Philippines? What were the practical results of the opposition to slavery?

Given the intensity of Salazar's struggle against slavery supported by the missionaries and many of the Spanish people of the colony, things were bound to change. And they did change. A man's greatness or the importance of a cause must not be measured only in terms of practical results or figures, but rather in awakening men to injustice and oppression, or even more important, in setting in motion a chain of events that in the long run will mean real change of the situation. And this was achieved by Salazar and the missionaries of the Philippines. The legislation passed by the Spanish Crown in defense of the oppressed and against slavery was mainly due to Salazar's efforts and those of the missionaries. The final liberation of slaves finds its reason in Salazar's personal struggle for them. The struggle against slavery must be seen within the wider context of the struggle for justice and humanization in the conquest of the Philippines. Salazar changed the course of events. His struggle has to be understood as the struggle of a Christian humanist trying to establish a new social and political order in the Philippines. He was bitterly criticized by the Spanish authorities. Thus we read:

"Your Majesty seems to hold me guilty for having encouraged the slaves to leave the Spaniards. I don't know how blame can be placed on me, therefore, since the Indians held as slaves by the Spaniards (who were unwilling to let them go) have been declared free by your Majesty. It was evident that the former could not be absolved, anymore than if they had stolen property; and

<sup>104</sup> Slavery of Filipinos in the hands of the Spaniards disappeared forever. Slavery of Filipinos in the hands of Filipinos took time to die down, inspite of its legal proscription. The Spaniards had the Negro slaves brought by the Portuguese from India. There were few. They were sold here because they could not be sold anywhere else. Cfr. MORGA-RETANA, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*, Madrid, 1909, p. 470; pp. 254-58; Cfr. *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, June 18, 1583, AGI, Fil. 74; Cfr. *Letter of the Audiencia of Manila to Philip II*, Manila, June 26, 1586, B-R., VI, 261.

your Majesty knows that in the jurisdiction of the conscience, there is not the liberty that there is in external matters. Your majesty may pardon a life, or remit the penalty of the law to whom he may consider meet; but the tribunal of conscience is not free to pardon anyone, or to absolve any persons from sin, except when they act as they ought. Confession being thus rigorous, even greater laxity was permitted than should have been.

Your majesty must believe that I am trying to do everything possible here, so as not to exceed my duty and never take such action without first consulting with such persons of learning and conscience as are here".<sup>105</sup>

The proscription of slavery is one of the most outstanding achievements of the first missionaries and Spaniards of the Philippines. It was a gigantic step towards justice and humanization. Chirino in 1605 sums up, in a nutshell, the effects of this struggle: "A large number of slaves have been freed, on the one hand by pious persons who not without difficulty have paid the ransoms, and by the enslaved who clamor for liberty and have provided remedies for their release, and on the other hand by the mercy of God our Lord, who has moved many hearts in baptism and confession".<sup>106</sup>

The end of the XVI century saw a prosperous Spanish colony in the Philippines. The people on the whole welcomed the Spanish system and the economy of the country passed from a state of subsistence to one of self-sufficiency and finally it produced a surplus of rice. The difficult years of the conquest had given way to a recognition of the rights and duties of the conquistadores and the respect of the rights of the Filipinos. The defense of the missionaries of the rights of the natives had been heard by the Spanish Crown and sincere efforts had been made to apply those rights to the concrete historical situation of the Filipino people. The proscription of slavery is an achievement of Salazar and the missionaries. Unfortunately many of the gains of the first two generations were lost due to the determined effort of the Dutch to expel the Spaniards from the Philippines. The Spanish-Dutch War in Asia taxed the Spanish conquerors to the utmost. The colony survived, but the price paid was heavy in terms of man-power,

<sup>105</sup> *Letter of Salazar to Philip II*, June 20, 1590, AGI, Filipinas 74; Cfr. B-R., VII, 243.

<sup>106</sup> CHIRINO, *Relación*, 364; 121.

resources and freedom. The war brought ruin, tears, and sufferings to the Filipinos. But these events fall outside the scope of our study.

## VI. THE SYNOD OF MANILA (1582-1586)

### 1. *Introduction*

The problem of slavery was not the only one Salazar was confronted with. There were many other problems in need of solution. These problems were mainly related to the legality of the conquest and the best means to bring the Filipinos to the Christian faith.

How could the Filipinos be incorporated into the Spanish Crown? What methods were to be used in the conversion of the Filipinos? The Augustinians, as we have noticed before, held the Spaniards responsible for many of the evils inflicted upon the natives during the pacification of the country and its incorporation into the Spanish dominions. Justice had been oftentimes violated. The natives had been abused and robbed. Hence, the Spaniards were bound to restitution. If not, they would not be given sacramental absolution. Could the Spaniards levy tributes on the natives? If so, how much could be levied? Could all of them be taxed in the same amount? Could some of them be excluded from taxation? If so, for how long? If restitution had to be done, to whom? Many of the injustices had been committed during the first years of the conquest and the people were already dead. Who was obliged to restitution? Those directly involved or also those who were instrumental in the injustice? In the event of the death of those who committed the injustice, were the living morally obliged to pay the restitution *in solidum*, in *toto*, or only their corresponding part? Who would decide how much was due for restitution? Behind all these problems there was still a more vital and fundamental one: the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. This last point was essential for the understanding of all the others. If the Spanish King had no legal title to the Philippines it followed that everything done up to them was unjust and immoral. Taxation was no more than robbery. The conquest a mere spoliation. All those dead who took part in the

conquest had perished in hell. Those living were obliged to restitute in *solidum*. Religious and lay people found themselves in total disagreement, to the scandal of Filipino Christians. And what was worse in the religious world of the XVI century, the consciences of many people, both lay and religious were tormented by these burning problems. The religious took with scruples the little rice they were given as maintainance, as they considered it the fruit of the robbery perpetrated by the Spaniards.<sup>107</sup> The conquistadores complained that they were living in misery and poverty. On top of that they lived with a heavy burden on their consciences, as they had been forced to rob the natives in order to survive and they were denied absolution in confession by strict confessors unless they restituted the evils inflicted during the conquest. Was this the reward they deserved for having left the family, the motherland, having conquered the Philippines and helped in the Christianization of the Filipinos?<sup>108</sup>

The problems were eminently practical, touching the lives and consciences of all segments of society. The very existence of the Philippines was at stake. Salazar, then, decided to thrash them out under the light of Christian principles and the demands of justice. Thus he convoked a *junta*, or a synod, to be attended by representatives of the ecclesiastical segment with the concurrence of lay people, men of wide experience in the social, political and religious affairs of the Philippines.<sup>109</sup> What those present at the synod expected to achieve was to put a check or a stop to the injustices and set the conquest along Christian principles. They would thus be able to dedicate themselves energetically and without anxiety of conscience to the difficult task of evangelization. After all, this was the main reason why they had come to the Philippines.

The Synod started in 1582, and lasted with some long interruptions up to 1586. On that year, the secretary of the synod and the man behind the scenes, the Jesuit Alonso Sánchez, left the

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<sup>107</sup> "Many religious are sad due to scruples of conscience, as they understand that what is given them as food cannot be received with clear conscience as everything is unjustly received and unjustly taken", *Letter of Martín de Rada to the Viceroy of Mexico*, Manila, June 10, 1573, in TORRES-PASTELLS, *op. cit.*, II, p. XIII

<sup>108</sup> *Diego de Aguilar and others to Philip II*, Manila, June 18, 1581, COLIN-PASTELLS, *Labor*, I, 263.

<sup>109</sup> Cfr. MARÍN, *Ensayo*, Vol. I, p. 195.

Philippines for Spain and Rome as ambassador extraordinary of the whole colony. With Sánchez out of the Philippines the Synod never met again.<sup>110</sup>

Before entering into the study of some of the main points of the synod it would be necessary to say a few words about Sánchez' influence upon the Spanish colony and Bishop Salazar. The decisions of the synod cannot be understood unless we keep in mind Sánchez' powerful hold over Salazar and the rest of the Spanish colony from 1581 to 1586. Salazar's attitude up to 1583, regarding the conquest in general and the methods of evangelization in particular, were still inspired by the teachings of Vitoria and Bartolomé de Las Casas. In 1583, Sánchez returned from his first trip to China. The synod renewed its sessions immediately and Sánchez pressed on everybody the need for an armed conquest of China due to the fact that, according to him, the Chinese authorities opposed the entrance of missionaries to China and the preaching of the Gospel. Salazar wrote several letters and memorials,<sup>111</sup> begging the Spanish King to attempt the conquest of China. How did Salazar come to change so radically in so short a time? This question will be clarified in the process of our study. But the decisions of the synod have to be read and understood against this background and Sánchez opinion regarding the "empresa de China".

Let us now come to study the synod's doctrine on two main points, to wit: 1. The legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines and 2. Methods of evangelization.

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<sup>110</sup> The arrival of the Dominicans in 1587, most of whom were spiritual disciples of Vitoria and Las Casas, changed totally the intellectual atmosphere in the Philippines. The doctrines of the Synod would have never been approved had the Dominicans taken part in it.

The Acts of the Synod, as they have come down to us, reflect the militaristic spirit of Alonso Sánchez. Probably they were discussed in 1583 after Sánchez' return from his first trip to China. Going through the Acts of the Synod and the contemporaneous correspondence to the King of the protagonists of the Synod, one is inclined to think that the Acts are the result of the general meeting of 1583 and the extraordinary *junta* of all the states in 1586.

<sup>111</sup> *Letter and Memorial of Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, 18 June, 1583, AGI, Patronato 7; *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, 24 June, 1590, AGI, Filipinas 74; *Letter of Salazar to Philip II about the conquest of China*, Manila, 18, 1583, AGI, Patronato 25.

2. *Doctrine of the Acts of the Synod regarding the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines.*

One of the burning points the synod had to deal with was the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. By what title could the Spanish King claim sovereignty over the Philippines? Years before, in the initial stages of the conquest, Martín de Rada, one of the pioneers in the evangelization of the country, had written:

"I have taken the opinion of all the fathers who were to be found here. They unanimously affirm that none among all these islands have come into the power of the Spaniards with just title."<sup>112</sup>

The religious could not escape this question. Their continuity in the Philippines, the levying of tributes to natives, the thorny and grave problem of restitution of the evils committed during the conquest found their moral and legal basis on the legitimacy of the conquest. The political, social and moral implications were tremendous.

In the Philippines, all authority, *de facto*, was exercised in the name of the Spanish King. But was he the sovereign *de iure*? The synod declared that the Spanish King had not come to rule the Philippines by inheritance nor by donation, nor by just war. The first point was clear. The second statement is a confirmation of the teachings of Vitoria and Soto who denied any legal basis to the papal donation of the Indies to the Spanish Kings. And this for a simple reason. The pope did not enjoy universal temporal power over all kingdoms. So he could not donate what did not belong to him. The theologians and jurists of the synod were faithful followers of Vitoria and Soto.<sup>113</sup>

If we were to take the third reason as it sounds, it would mean that the synod declared at the outset that the Spaniards had

<sup>112</sup> *Opinion of Fray Martín de Rada on Tribute from Indians*, San Pablo, Manila, June 21, 1574, in B-R., III, p. 254; Cfr. J. GAYO, *Ideas Jurídico-Teológicas de los religiosos de Filipinas en el siglo XVI sobre la conquista de las Islas*, Manila, 1950, p. 17.

<sup>113</sup> Cfr. FRANCISCO DE VITORIA, *Relectio de Indis o Libertad de los Indios*, ed. L. Pereña and J. M. Pérez Prendes, Madrid, 1967, 432 ff.; Cfr. VENANCIO CARRO, O.P., *Domingo de Soto y el Derecho de Gentes*, Madrid, 1930, pp. 109-110

no just title to the Philippines, as the country had not come into the Spanish Crown by "just war". The theologians had in mind the exclusion of just war by natural right, but not by spiritual right.

The acts faithfully follow the teachings of Vitoria. The Christian has the grave duty to preach the Gospel to all the world.<sup>114</sup> This duty and right was passed on by the pope to the Spanish King, especially in regard to the New World.<sup>115</sup> This same duty was delegated by the Spanish King to his viceroys, governors, and encomenderos.<sup>116</sup> The authority or rights conferred by the Pope to the King was only the one the pope received from Christ, that is, to send missionaries to preach the Good News. The Spanish King could not send conquistadores to take away the lands or assume governmental authority over new commonwealths. This would be sheer spoliation. But in the mentality of the theologians and jurists present at the synod, their duty of preaching the Gospel to all the world implied the right to protect the preachers against those who opposed the preaching. Still more, war could be declared against rulers who opposed the preaching of the Gospel.<sup>117</sup> Thus we read in the Acts of the synod: "This is the right the pope delegated to the Spanish King: to send people to protect the ministers of the Gospel, to protect the newly converted Christians and to establish a temporal government that would enable the achievement of the spiritual end of free conversion and maintainance of the new faith. This does not mean that they can take everything, as they have done, as the Gospel does not dispossess anybody of what rightly belongs to him."<sup>118</sup>

We see here three titles which Vitoria and Spanish theologians of the XVI century considered just to declare war and assume political authority over new Kingdoms. These three titles are:

1. Protection to missionaries<sup>119</sup>
2. Protection to the newly converted people<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Cfr. *DE INDIS*, I, 2, 8, p. 87.

<sup>115</sup> *DE INDIS*, I, 3, 9, p. 88.

<sup>116</sup> Cfr. MARIN, I, 197.

<sup>117</sup> Cfr. *DE INDIS*, I, 3, 8, p. 89.

<sup>118</sup> Cfr. MARIN, I, p. 197.

<sup>119</sup> Cfr. *DE INDIS*, I, 3, 11, p. 89.

<sup>120</sup> Cfr. *DE INDIS*, I, 3, 12, p. 92.

### 3. Right to depose rulers who opposed the preaching of the Gospel<sup>121</sup>

From here it follows that any ruler who opposes the preaching of the Gospel, or induces the new Christians to apostatize can be deposed and the political authority devolves on those who can guarantee these rights. The Acts say: "If the Kings or emperors or rulers of foreign lands entrusted to our kings, impede the preaching of the Gospel, or the conversion of their vassals, or pervert the newly converted, then they can be disposed, so that this end can be ensured."<sup>122</sup>

Was this the case with the Philippines? Had their rulers opposed the preaching of the Gospel? The Augustinians were witness that in the Philippines the rulers did not oppose the Gospel but rather the imposition of tributes.<sup>123</sup> If this were the case, was not the conquest unjust and mere spoliation?<sup>124</sup> The Acts of the synod stated that the rulers of the Philippines had not opposed *directly* the preaching of the Gospel, but *indirectly* they had, as the political and social situation of the Philippines at the time of the conquest was not requisite for the spreading and consolidation of the Gospel. The Spanish King had to create the political set up to insure this spiritual end.

There were three essential conditions to facilitate and insure the faith. First, the existence of a government and a code of laws according to reason, which would not go directly or indirectly against the preaching of the Gospel. Second, a cultural level that would allow the progressive growth of Christianity and all the necessary Christian institutions to maintain it. Third, a people that would respect the right of others, would guarantee the preaching of the Gospel and of which no suspicion could be entertained that it would destroy the Christian religion and expel the missionaries.<sup>125</sup> If all these conditions were to be found in the new territories discovered by the Spaniards, the Spanish King could

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<sup>121</sup> Cfr. *Ibidem*.

<sup>122</sup> Cfr. MARIN, I, p. 198 Cfr. DE INDIS, I, 3, 11, p. 89.

<sup>123</sup> Cfr. *Letter of Martín de Rada*, June 1, 1573, in TORRES-PASTELLS, *op. cit.*, p. XIII; *Opinion of Martín de Rada*, Manila, 21 June, 1974, B-R., III, p. 254-255.

<sup>124</sup> Cfr. MARIN, I, p. 197.

<sup>125</sup> Cfr. MARIN, I, p. 198; Cfr. J. GAYO, *op. cit.*, 63-64; Cfr. DE LA COSTA, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

send missionaries in virtue of his papal commission, but it would be a tyranny to dispossess the rulers, as the Gospel perfects and liberates man. To take away the government and let the Spaniards take over would be a terrible injustice. The temporal government should remain with the native rulers.

Was this the case in the Philippines? The religious of the synod came to examine the concrete Philippine situation, as many people were vexed by the social, political and moral implications of the legality of the conquest. The synod declared that in the Philippines the three conditions that would invalidate the conquest were not to be found. The government of the Philippines, according to the synod, was too imperfect and primitive. The progress of the Christian faith was seriously hindered. Furthermore, there was the danger of a negative reaction that could destroy the advance of Christianity. The laws by which the people were governed were barbarous, tyrannical, and against nature. The people were involved in perpetual warfare. All this would mean a clear danger for the safety of the missionaries, and the newly converted people. It was, then, imperative to impose a new government that would protect the missionaries and the Christians.<sup>126</sup> The conclusion was that the Spanish King possessed *political dominion* over the Philippines *in ordine ad finem spiritualem*, in order to achieve the spiritual end, the conversion of the natives to the Christian religion which would otherwise be unattainable.<sup>127</sup>

A serious objection was raised to this decision. What to say of the government of the Spaniards? The abuses committed during the conquest were manifest to everybody. Was not this a serious impediment to the conversion of the natives to Christianity? If the Spaniards could take away the temporal and political power from the native chieftains because of their barbarous customs and usages, what to say of the serious injustices committed by the Spaniards? Was not rebellion against the Spanish rule justified?

According to the synod, Spanish justice in the Philippines left much to be desired. But the case between the Spanish rule and

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<sup>126</sup> Cfr. MARIN, I, pp. 198-199.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibidem*; Cfr. DE LA COSTA, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

the rule of the chieftains was radically different. The rule of the native *datus* or chieftains was vitiated *a radice*, in principle. Their laws were unnatural and against reason. Due to their sins, people had been spiritually blinded. Their government was not even conducive for the temporal welfare of the commonwealth, much less for the spiritual welfare. In the case of the Spanish rule, their laws were not evil in principle. To a certain extent, they were the best possible laws and system of government. The failure was not in principle but in the practical application of these principles. The solution did not lie in rebellion, but in a perfect observance of the laws of the Spanish Crown. An exemplary punishment should be given to those who, out of selfishness or covetousness, abused the people, thus hindering the progress of the Christian religion. The synod emphasized the duty of the King to send as governors and officials just and responsible people, authentic Christians who would keep all the royal ordinances. Those guilty of misconduct should be severely punished and relieved of their posts. To let the government and political rule devolve back again to native chieftains would not be conducive to the progress of the Christian religion. It would destroy the political and social security of the country. In one word, it would be a step back, a retrogression.

It seems strange that the theologians and jurists present at the synod justified the conquest by the mixed title of opposition to the Gospel and the low level of culture of the natives of the Philippines. Francisco de Vitoria, in his often quoted *Relectiones de Indis*,<sup>128</sup> had written about the possibility of justifying the conquest of America due to the low level of culture of the natives. Yet, he considered this a very dubious title.

If we were to look for some reasons behind the decision of the synod, we would be able to find some. For one thing, many of those present at the synod would never accept the opinion of Rada that all conquests had been unjust. Most of those who had lived in the Philippines from the time of Legapzi's arrival in 1565 were convinced that, in spite of the injustices committed against the natives, the conquest had been achieved and carried out in accordance with the principles of International Law and

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<sup>128</sup> DE INDIS, I, 3, 17, pp. 97-98.

the Laws of Indies.<sup>129</sup> It had been fundamentally a peaceful conquest. On the other hand, the theologians knew of the terrible spiritual anxiety of confessors and encomenderos. Something had to be done to solve the problem. Furthermore and this is probably the most important reason, they were faced with the *fait accompli* of the conquest and the Spanish presence there. The Spaniards had been there for twenty years. The number of Christians was large and those asking for baptism were even more numerous. The peace and order situation had greatly improved. The country offered a security that it had never known before. The blessings of the conquest were there for all to see. The petty wars were over. There was justice in the land.<sup>130</sup> To abandon the country would be unjust and a blind step backwards. Due to these reasons the synod had recourse to that ample title that could justify the conquest, appease the minds of people, pacify the consciences, and release the dormant energies of missionaries and lay people to dedicate themselves zealously to the task of evangelization and colonization. It was as if to say, let us put a stop to these divisions and juridical problems and be what we ought to be: missionaries of Christ.

The Spanish King, then, was the lawful ruler of the Philippines and he governed the Philippines through the agency of his royal officials. However, the fathers of the synod clearly stated that at a local level the King and his royal officials had the grave obligation to appoint in the larger and more settled towns native

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<sup>129</sup> Cfr. *Letter of the citizens of Manila to Philip II*, Manila, 18 June, 1581, COLIN-PASTELLS, I, p. 263, note 3; *Letter of Mateo del Saz to Philip II*, Manila, May 31, 1565, LANZAS-PASTELLS, I, p. CCLXXIV.

<sup>130</sup> "Thus it is of great use and profit that the Spaniards have come to the natives hereabout, on account of the security that they have from one another and because they have free recourse to their trade and interests without being hindered or robbed by anyone. They were not accustomed to this security before the Spaniards came hither, because it is a thing publicly known and notorious that even in their own houses they were captured and robbed. They were not free to go fishing on the sea without being captured. Now not only are they safe in their houses, but they go safely to different places, without any harm being done them. If there are piracies, they are very far from this town and in places where the Spaniards do not go. It is a very ancient custom that the natives had among themselves of capturing, robbing, killing and imprisoning one another. Now there are few injuries committed in comparison to what used to be committed before the Spaniards came here. Everyday there will be fewer because we are even striving to take and punish such pirates" *Reply to Rada's Opinion*, B-R., III pp. 264-265.

magistrates elected by the natives themselves. These local magistrates could take charge of public peace and order and the hearing of ordinary cases. The passage is surprisingly advanced in its views and deserves to be quoted in full:

"On the supposition that the King and his governor exercise a just sovereignty in this land (as we have said) we affirm that the governor is obliged not only to appoint *alcaldes mayores*, but also to authorize in the larger and more settled towns native magistrates, elected by the natives themselves, who shall have charge of public peace and order and the hearing of ordinary cases. In the first place, in order that the *alcaldes mayores*, who try cases of greater moment, may not always be among the natives, since this is not advisable. Secondly, because this is of natural right, and nature itself enjoins it even on brute animals. Thus, we see the cranes, ants and sheeps have governors and chiefs belonging to their respective species and not to others, and what rules the members of the body is itself of the body, namely, the head, and St. Thomas shows that the head must be homogeneous with the body, that is, of the same nature. . . . Thirdly, because the magistrate should be familiar with the laws, customs, uses and abuses of his community, and this the *alcalde mayor* cannot be, because he has to depend on an interpreter, and if the interpreter is native he has no command of Spanish whereas if he is a Spaniard he understands the native but ill. And so even with the best of intentions he is liable to commit serious errors, to the scandal of the natives, who see only what is done and not what is intended. It follows from this that the *alcaldes mayores* are not qualified to attend to the details of administration. Let them leave these matters to the native magistrates who without incurring the expense of hiring interpreters and scribes, but solely by word of mouth, can administer them better than the *alcalde mayor*, with his interpreters and scribes, because of his familiarity with local conditions.

For this reason it is the opinion of the synod that the governor is obliged under penalty of mortal sin and restitution of the damages that may otherwise arise to institute native magistrates wherever possible. And let him not do that as a mere formality, but in such a way that they are truly magistrates; to his end he must prescribe the limits of their jurisdiction. . . . and back them

up with his authority so that they will have the power to chastise those subject to them if they deserve it."<sup>181</sup>

Did Salazar, who presided over the synod, defend the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines? During his long stay in Mexico he had rejected all the conquests done by the Spaniards and had even written a treatise<sup>182</sup> regarding the injustice of the conquest. In the Philippines, confronted as he was with the serious problems we have discussed above, he abandoned his previous ideas.<sup>183</sup>

The arrival of Alonso Sánchez from China in 1583, explaining the tenacious opposition of the Chinese authorities to the entry of missionaries into China, forced the bishop to change his opinion. Salazar's new stand was not in accordance with his previous teachings. He had been a faithful disciple of Vitoria and Las Casas. Furthermore, the new stand was in clear opposition to his attitude in Mexico during his stay of 23 years as a missionary. From 1583 to 1587 Salazar's attitude was clearly in favor of the legitimacy of the Spanish conquest of the Philippines. He even lent his support to the romantic dream of a military conquest of China by Spain in order to open the door for the preachers of the Gospel.<sup>184</sup>

### 3. *The Preaching of the Gospel to pagans.*

How was the Gospel to be preached to pagans? This was one of the most important problems facing the fathers of the synod of Manila. They had to find a solution if they wanted to release the dormant energies of missionaries and *encomenderos*. The consciences were tormented, the spirits divided and the Spaniards, both religious and secular, were at a loss regarding the best means to be used in the preaching of the Gospel to pagans. We have to

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<sup>181</sup> MARIN, *op. cit.*, I, 216-217, as translated by HORACIO DE LAS COSTA, *The Jesuits*, pp. 34-35; Cfr. GAYO, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

<sup>182</sup> This was the title of the treatise *De Modo quo rex Hispaniarum et eius locum tenentes habere teneantur in regimine Indiarum*, in ALONSO DE ZORITA, *Historia de Nueva España*, Madrid, 1908, pp 13-14.

<sup>183</sup> Cfr. *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila 18, 1583, AGI, Patronato 25.

<sup>184</sup> *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, June 18, 1583, AGI, Patronato 25; *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, June 24, 1590, AGI, Filipinas 74

deal at some length on this topic so as to give an exact picture of the problems confronting the missionaries and Salazar during the last decades of the XVI century.

The Christian in general, and the missionary in particular, have the grave task of preaching the Gospel to all people. This task has been received from Christ. The distinctive mark of a Christian must be this inner dynamism which compels him to bring the Good News of salvation to all people.<sup>135</sup>

Christianity is fundamentally dynamic and missionary. The vocation of a Christian compels him to preach and share the Good News of salvation with all men. What about the methods to be used in preaching the Gospel? What should be the attitude of Christians when confronted with persecution especially in semi-civilized or savage societies, or in kingdoms entirely opposed to the entrance of missionaries?

Were they duty bound to face danger even death while preaching the Gospel, or could they abandon this mission received from Christ? Could the missionaries call in soldiers to protect and defend them? Would it be all right to have some soldiers as *guardians* of the missionaries so as to dissuade pagan authorities from harming the missionaries? Would it be better and more apostolic for the missionary to reject even the external protection of soldiers and go along into the new mission fields?

From the very beginning of the conquest of America the Spaniards had discussed passionately regarding the best means to be employed in the preaching of the Gospel. It was still a burning problem at the time of Salazar's arrival in the Philippines. If soldiers were called in to protect the missionaries, would this not be a corruption of the apostolic spirit and an adulteration of the purity of the Christian message? If they defended the need for military protection, was this not an imitation of the methods of Mohammed? Which was the attitude of the primitive Church? Could the apostolic way of preaching the Gospel be applied *ad pedem litterae* to the new times and the new territories discovered and conquered or those still to be discovered? If the fathers of the synod approved the need for soldiers to accompany the missionaries as a deterrent to pagans not to harm the missionaries,

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<sup>135</sup> VITORIA, DE INDIS, I, 3, 8, 87, 89.

would this not be a dangerous precedent in the history of the Christianization of the Philippines? Bartolomé de Las Casas, the fiery defender of the American Indians, always defended the need to preach the Gospel peacefully. The soldiers should never be called in to protect the missionaries or help in preparing the way for the preaching of the Gospel. He wrote a book in which he exposed his ideas.<sup>136</sup> His influence on the missionaries of America, especially the Dominicans, was enormous. Salazar was for more than 23 years a faithful disciple of Las Casas. Yet, among the great missionaries and evangelizers of the New World, passionate lovers of the American Indians, we find many who disagreed with Las Casas. The fathers present at the synod had to give a clear answer to the concrete historical situation in the Philippines. We have to stress the fact that the fathers did not defend the doctrine of military conquest first as Sepúlveda had done before<sup>137</sup> but only the need for soldiers to go with them as protectors, guardians and deterrent if pagan rulers did not give the missionaries the chance to preach to those who were ready to listen to them. The fathers knew that the faith, that mysterious gift of God, is a supernatural gift that cannot be won through arms. The soldiers would simply facilitate the way for the Gospel to be preached.

Soldiers were unknown in primitive times. The early Christian missionaries, pilgrims for Christ and for his Gospel, traversed the length and width of the Roman Empire, announcing the Good News of salvation to those ready to listen to them. They relied on the power of the Gospel, on their total commitment to the Good News and on God's inexhaustible grace.

The acts of the synod of Manila accepted this apostolic method as the best in itself. But the fathers realized that, unfortunately, they were not living within the Roman World. During primitive Christianity God conferred on the missionaries special charisms which were not conferred now in the same manner and with the same intensity. The times the new missionaries were living were

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<sup>136</sup> *Del Unico modo de atraer a los pueblos a la verdadera religión*, ed. Agustín Millares Carlo, Mexico, 1942.

<sup>137</sup> JUAN GINES DE SEPULVEDA, *Democrates segundo o de las justas causas de la guerra contra los indios*, ed. Angel Losada, Madrid, 1951, pp. 84-85.

very different. The socio-cultural and political situation of the New World differed radically from the Roman and Hellenistic World in which Christianity was born. The Roman World, the world of Peter and Paul, given its high cultural and moral level and its excellent political organization offered to the Christian missionaries security and freedom to preach the Gospel. The Roman World tolerated all religions as long as they did not attempt to destroy the socio-political and religious set up of the empire. The high level of culture, the proliferation of new mystery religions, the widespread level of literacy of the people offered an excellent opportunity for Christianity to be heard. Philosophers, pedagogues, preachers and teachers always had an eager audience in the plazas and agoras of the Greco-Roman World. No hindrance was presented to them. The freedom of religion and speech was incredible. People yearned for religion and for mystical experiences. Christianity found the way prepared. The social, political, cultural and religious set up of the Greco-Roman World would serve as a "pedagogue" to Christ. Paul preached at the Areopagus. People listened to him. Most of them laughed at him, but he never was in danger except from fanatic Judaizers who considered him a traitor to the Mosaic Law. The Roman empire at the time of Augustus, the time of the apostles, had truly achieved a universal peace, the PAX ROMANA. The New World on the whole, was ferocious and savage. It did not offer any security to the preachers of the Gospel. The pure preaching of the Gospel, *modo apostolico*, was the most noble and in accordance with the Lord's command, but it could not be applied to the new territories discovered. The missionaries were not given a chance to preach the Gospel. Some pagan authorities had strictly forbidden, under penalty of death, the entry of missionaries, especially in China. Without soldiers to protect the missionaries, the latter would finally end being eaten in cannibalistic banquets or killed by ferocious head-hunters or thrown forever into prison.

It was imperative for soldiers to accompany the missionaries in their task of evangelization. The Gospel had to be given a hearing. The fathers had in mind not only the territories under Spanish control, but also Mindanao and Borneo and more especially China, whose gates remained hermetically closed to the entry

of the missionaries. The opposition of the Chinese authorities to the peaceful entry of missionaries into their empire radicalized many people who, like Salazar<sup>138</sup> belonged to the school of Vitoria and Las Casas. The negative attitude of the Chinese authorities to the entry of missionaries had a tremendous influence upon the Spanish colony in Manila. The Jesuit Alonso Sánchez, in pursuit of his ideal of military conquest of China, defended at the Spanish court in 1590 that the Spaniards had tried peacefully to enter China at least nine times.<sup>139</sup> The doors of China remained always closed. The Gospel could not penetrate the mysterious land of the Grand Cathay of Marco Polo. Why did they keep their doors so resolutely locked against foreigners? Why not force the gates open? The Spaniards convinced themselves of the futility of peaceful means.

Thus, we read in the Acts of the Synod:

"To open the way [militarily] to the Gospel is not evil but just (although many say this method is abominable). The pope commissioned the Spanish King to preach the Gospel according to the passage in the Gospel *Praedicate Evangelium.... et pasce oves meas, et alias oves habeo quae non sunt ex hoc ovili* [Preach the Gospel... tender my sheep and I have other sheep which do not belong to the flock, etc...]. As the preachers commissioned by the pope could not do this without grave and manifest dangers, the King, who received the papal commission, had to find, in accordance with prudence, the best means to protect and defend the preachers and thus encourage the newly converted Christians, least through fear of reprisals they might abandon the faith or might not even receive it. This is just in itself. It is more just

<sup>138</sup> Salazar tells us of his change of attitude. "Your Majesty knows how scrupulously the problems of the Indies have to be dealt with. All the learned scholars of Spain and even those of the Indies condemn all military conquests done against the Indians. They have compelled those who organized or took part in the conquest to retribute the evils, deaths and robberies inflicted upon them. This was my opinion for a long time, for I was reared up in the doctrine of the bishop of Chiapa [LAS CASAS] and I held this opinion in New Spain for 23 years. After my arrival here as bishop, having consulted everything with learned and God-fearing people, God has made known to us what has to be done regarding this matter. This has brought spiritual peace to many consciences which were full of anxiety and sorrow as nobody was ready to confess them and I would have never confessed them before for any reason whatsoever," *Letter of D. de Salazar to Philip II*, Manila, June 12, 1583. AGI, Patronato 25.

<sup>139</sup> ALONZO SANCHEZ, *Apuntamientos breves de algunas cosas de China por parte de las Islas y Castellanes*, COLIN-PASTELLS, I, 36542 ff., note 1.

in the new times, and the new lands, and the new people, as they are radically different from the times and people in which the primitive Church was born."<sup>140</sup>

This is how those people present at the synod thought. The Gospel had to be preached, people had to be brought to the knowledge of the salvific Truth of Christ. This commission was urgent and grave and the Spaniards had received it from the pope. In the mentality of XVI century, the *encomenderos*, the soldiers, the Royal officials and the missionaries were all coadjutors in the task of evangelization. To conquer and evangelize, to evangelize and to conquer were terms which the Spaniards of the XVI century oftentimes interchanged. It was an age of faith. Thus, the fathers of the synod defended the *right* to preach the Gospel with the concourse of soldiers.

Was this the right lost due to the abuses committed oftentimes by the soldiers who accompanied the missionaries? The Acts emphatically say that the right is not lost.<sup>141</sup> The royal official must check the abuses committed by the soldiers and punish severely those responsible for the abuses. These are also coadjutors in the task of evangelization and have to be told of their serious obligation to help the missionaries in spreading the Good News of salvation.

The doctrine of the Acts seemed abominable to many people. Yet, given the socio-cultural state of the Philippines and the difficulties the missionaries faced in spreading the Gospel to the pagans, especially in China, there was little opposition to their acceptance.

What was Salazar's attitude regarding this doctrine? According to him, in a letter written<sup>142</sup> to Philip II in 1590 he never defended the doctrine as it has been exposed by us. He felt deeply insulted by Alonso Sánchez when the latter presented to the Spanish King in Madrid that doctrine as the one of the bishop and of the synod of Manila. But indeed, Salazar in 1590 really forgot what he had defended before. Although he never defended with the same intensity as Sánchez did the need for soldiers to

<sup>140</sup> MARIN, *op. cit.*, I, 209.

<sup>141</sup> MARIN, I, 209.

<sup>142</sup> *Memorial of Bishop Salazar to Philip II*, Mla., June 24, 1590, AGI, Filipinas 74.

accompany the missionaries, yet from 1583 to 1587 Salazar truly supported the decisions of the synod, that is, the missionaries could be accompanied by soldiers in the task of evangelization.<sup>143</sup>

It is true that Salazar in changing the opinion he held for more than 23 years in Mexico and the Philippines, did not defend the need for soldiers to accompany the missionaries as a universal and ever binding thesis, as Sánchez defended it. It was alien to him. He embraced it due to the difficult historical circumstances through which the Philippines was passing. He accepted it because he was told and convinced that China never accepted the entry of preachers of the Gospel.<sup>144</sup>

The spirit of Las Casas becomes dormant in Salazar, though it never dies. For the time being he embraces those ideas, defended by Sánchez and the Synod, but those ideas are strange to his theological and juridical background and to his missionary life in Mexico and the Philippines. They are an iron vest in his life. They are a short parenthesis in his long missionary career in Mexico and the Philippines. As soon as Sánchez left the Philippines in 1586 and the Dominicans arrived in 1587, he realized the deception in which he had lived. Thus, he returned passionately to his previous opinion which he had defended practically throughout his whole life. He opened his eyes. The spirit

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<sup>143</sup> "I would like to break the deception of many regarding this matter. As they are ignorant of the situation they do not know how to apply the right to the concrete situation. Thus, due to this ignorance, they keep the door of China closed to the Gospel. I know how people feel about this, especially in Spain. They consider this way of preaching the Gospel as unjust. And this because, according to them, nobody can be compelled to receive the faith. Others base their objection on the abuses and robberies perpetrated by the army following St. Paul who says *non sunt facienda mala ut veniant bona*. They condemn this doctrine as more proper to Mohammed than to the Gospel. I say the contrary and I have no doubt about this doctrine and nobody would have any doubt if he were to know the basis of this doctrine. "Letter of bishop Salazar to Philip II, Mla. June 18, 1583, AGI, Patronato, 25; COLIN-PASTELLS, I, 312-313.

<sup>144</sup> "If it is true that the rulers [of China] oppose and hinder the preaching of the Gospel, as we have understood up to now, this being the case, your Majesty, to whom God and the church have commissioned the conversion of so many pagans as are to be found in those kingdoms, will see to it what it is to be done. If everything which I tell you in the information is true, then I tell you once more that your Majesty can enter militarily into China to open the door to the Gospel. Still more, if the problems in Spain are not too grave you have the serious duty to carry out that plan... Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II, Mla. April 8, 1584, AGI, Fil. 74.

of Las Casas was enkindled again. From 1587, and especially in the royal court at Madrid in 1593-1594, he defended that the Gospel had to be preached always, at all times and in all places, peacefully, *apostolico modo*, like Christ and the Apostles had done. This change was final and definitive. It was a return to what was connatural to him. His previous acceptance of the need for soldiers to accompany the missionaries was foreign to him and to the school in which he had been educated. He came to realize that the romantic dream of a military conquest of China to open the door to the Gospel was a crazy thing. The fever of conquest remained while Sánchez was in the Philippines. After his departure for Spain in 1586 things changed radically. The method of Vitoria and Las Casas, the Dominican method, is again adopted by Salazar. But this time more passionately than before. Salazar confessed the deception in which he had lived for some years. He had based his information on the reports sent to him by the Portuguese. Finally, he had come to realize that the Portuguese had deceived him, that the door of China was not really closed to the Gospel. He had come to see the futility of an armed conquest. The wheel had completed its full cycle. Let Salazar's own words illustrate this:

"I say that if, at some time, I was of the opinion that war could be waged against China, due to the false reports I had of the impediment and hindrance of the rulers of that Kingdom to the preaching of the Gospel, as they did not let the missionaries enter into it, now that I know the truth I say that the greatest offense against God and the most serious impediment and obstacle to this Gospel would be to enter China with military might or violence. Up to now no cause, reason or right has been found. We have never told them our purpose. They take us as people ready to usurp foreign kingdoms. And having this opinion it is all right for them to take all necessary precautions against us. It will not be good, in order to undo the wrong opinion they have of us, to go with large armies or with military might. The only effect to be followed from this would be to alarm and scandalize the best and greatest Kingdom the world has ever seen. Going into that Kingdom in the manner God wants, and at the time He has ordained, something we do not know, we will have one of the richest conversions the world has known since apostolic times.

The idea that the only way we can enter China is through military means is a device of the devil. I am fully convinced that up to now no people have been discovered so well disposed to receive the Gospel or from whom a greater hope can be entertained of future spiritual fruits if the Gospel is preached as our Lord has commanded. If anybody, even an angel from heaven, had another opinion, let Your Majesty take him as an instrument of the devil. He wants with wrong zeal to persuade others that the Gospel of Christ has to be preached like the Koran of Mohammed, that is, with violence and the might of arms. Let God take this opinion far from Christian princes and from those who feel rightly the law of God and the evangelical truth. I am fully certain that, once your Majesty comes to know the truth, you will not allow anything to be done which is not in accord with God's will."<sup>145</sup>

In a letter of 1590 addressed to Philip II Salazar bitterly criticized the doctrine of Sánchez regarding the need of soldiers to preach the Gospel. Salazar considered that doctrine "as the most pernicious for the natives and the greatest obstacle for the conversion of pagans."<sup>146</sup>

## CONCLUSION

I have tried to present some aspects of the life and work of Domingo de Salazar, first bishop of the Philippines. I studied him as a defender of the Filipinos. He was one of the main protagonists of the struggle for justice and humanization at the end of the XVI century. His struggle was aimed not only at defending the Filipines against the abuses of the Spaniards and datus, but also at establishing a society based on rational and Christian principles. Salazar and the rest of the missionaries tried to elevate the people of the Philippines. They strived to free them from the oppression of the Spaniards and the old abuses and injustices of their own datus and chiefs.

<sup>145</sup> *Letter of bishop Salazar to Philip II*, Mla., June 24, 1590, AGI, Filipinas 74.

<sup>146</sup> *Letter of Domingo de Salazar to Philip II*, Mla., June 24, 1590, AGI, Filipinas 74; COLIN-PASTELLS, I, 389; TORRES-PASTELLS, *Catálogo*, III, XCVI-XVIX

Domingo de Salazar and the early missionaries manifested a deeply felt love for the people. They were conscious that in denouncing oppression and abuses they were defending the cause of Christ. They were true Christians who saw in the natives the image of Christ. In this way they acted like people of the Renaissance, followers of that Christian humanism preached by Erasmus, Thomas More, Las Casas and Vitoria and many enlightened Christian humanists of the XVI century.

The motivating force moving Salazar to fight for justice was religion. He dreamed, like the romantic Las Casas before him, of a society where all would be and live like brothers. The ideas that moved him to action were taken from the best theological sources of XVI century Spain. Salazar did not behave like an outsider, a dispassionate observer who watched from the other side of the fence. He was one of the main protagonists in this struggle for justice and humanization. One could safely say that Salazar, like those who fought alongside with him, was influencing the turn of events and was helping in the creation of a society based on the Gospel of Christ. The legislation passed by the Spanish Crown in defense of the oppressed and against slavery was mainly due to Salazar's efforts and those of the early missionaries.

What would had happened had Salazar and the Friars opted to be silent and busy themselves with a mere "spiritual" evangelization? Had they kept themselves apart from the socio-political set up and remained strangers to the political system that was being created in the new colony, would things have turned out differently? I hope I have answered these questions, at least partially, in my paper.

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