

### SOURCE A: Juan Gines de Sepulveda (1547)

Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1489–1573) was a Spanish humanist, philosopher and theologian.

He presented arguments for the justification [ just reasons]of the Spanish Conquest of the Indies. Sepúlveda was the defender of the Spanish Empire's right of conquest, of colonization [to settle in], and of evangelization [preaching the gospel] in the so-called New World.

The Spanish have a perfect right to rule these barbarians [savages] of the New World and the adjacent islands, who in prudence, skill, virtues, and humanity are as inferior to the Spanish as children to adults, or women to men, for there exists between the two as great a difference as between savage and cruel races and the most merciful, between the most intemperate [lack of self control] and the moderate and temperate and, I might even say, between apes and men.

You surely do not expect me to recall at length the prudence [wisdom in practical affairs] and talents of the Spanish.... And what can I say of the gentleness and humanity of our people, who, even in battle, after having gained the victory, put forth their greatest effort and care to save the greatest possible number of the conquered and to protect them from the cruelty of their allies?

Well, then, if we are dealing with virtue, what temperance [control] or mercy can you expect from men who are committed to all types of intemperance and base frivolity [not sensible], and eat human flesh? Although some of them show a certain ingenuity [cleverness] for various works of artisanship, this is no proof of human cleverness, for we can observe animals, birds, and spiders making certain structures which no human accomplishment can competently imitate.

Therefore, if you wish to reduce them, I do not say to our domination, but to a servitude a little less harsh, it will not be difficult for them to change their masters, and instead of the ones they had, who were barbarous and impious [not showing respect] and inhuman, to accept the Christians, cultivators of human virtues and the true faith. ...