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# The Bishops of Cáceres and Jaro

DOMINGO ABELLA

**A**LTHOUGH it has been known for centuries as the See or Bishopric of *Nueva Cáceres*, the official designation of this ecclesiastical jurisdiction in Vatican records since its foundation in 1595 as a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Manila has always been "Diocesis Cacerensis" or "Diócesis de Cáceres"<sup>1</sup> without the prefix *Nueva*. The Vatican had consistently referred to it by this name in all the bulls, briefs, letters, etc. sent through the centuries to its incumbent prelates. But, strangely enough, I found only one of these, Pedro Godínez (1605-1608)<sup>2</sup>, who signed "Obispo de Cáceres" under his name. All the others had called themselves Bishops of "*Nueva Cáceres*"—until 1954 when I published *Bikol Annals* and therein called attention to the discrepancy. I then suggested that if the time-honored but unofficial name of "*Nueva Cáceres*" was preferred, a move should be undertaken to amend officially the old designation (of "Cáceres") and have *Nueva* added to it, citing as examples the names of the See of Salt Lake and the See of Baker City in the United States, which were officially

<sup>1</sup> See *Bikol Annals*, Manila, 1954, p. 245.

In this connection, it would be interesting to note that the See of Nueva Segobia, erected at the same time as the See under study, has always been known in Vatican records as such (with the prefix *Nueva*) although *Segobia* has always been spelled with "b", not "v" as done by later writers. See footnote 2 of my article on "The Bishops of Nueva Segobia" in this quarterly, V. 10, No. 4, p. 577.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

amended in 1952 to that of *Salt Lake City* (the word "City" being added) and that of *Baker* ("City" being eliminated), respectively. Apparently the incumbent prelate, Msgr. Pedro P. Santos, preferred the original official name; for he began signing his name as "Archbishop of Cáceres", without *Nueva*, which he had been using till then.

Of the four Philippine sees which comprised the Archbishopric of Manila since the latter part of the 16th century, when it was raised to that rank, the See of Cáceres has, of all Philippine sees, the most confused episcopology—if we are to rely solely on published works. On many aspects no two of them coincide. As I pointed out in my previous articles on the episcopal succession of the Sees of Manila, Cebu, and Nueva Segobia, historical accuracy cannot be achieved locally; recourse must be had to the primary sources which are found only in the Vatican Secret Archives. In the case of the See of Cáceres the chaos starts right from the beginning. While some authors place the Franciscan Luís Maldonado at the head of their episcopal lists, others consider the Augustinian Francisco de Ortega as the first bishop of the see. The confusion is worse confounded as one goes down the line and as more works, old and new, are consulted.

#### THE CASE OF SAN PEDRO BAUTISTA

Belonging to the first five years of this see's existence is the claim that the Franciscan Fray Pedro Bautista, a missionary in the Philippines who died a martyr's death in Japan and was later canonized, was among the first three *elected* to be bishops of the See of Cáceres. Naturally the claim could not be disregarded by later historians inasmuch as it was first launched by a contemporary of the saint and stoutly maintained by subsequent Franciscan chroniclers. On the basis of this claim, a *tradition* was established which tended to be perpetuated. Belonging to the diocese of Cáceres myself I also wished to join my co-diocesans in proudly making this claim, which if substantiated would make ours the one and only diocese in this country to count a saint of the Church among its bishops, an honor which is enjoyed by only one other diocese in the whole

Spanish overseas empire, that of Lima, Peru (Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo). But much to my regret and disappointment, all the primary documents unanimously disallowed the claim. At the Vatican, great care is taken to make episcopal succession unequivocal. When a bishop is elected to a see, the name of his predecessor is mentioned, thus leaving no loophole for the insertion of any intruder into an episcopal succession list. In the light of Vatican documents, San Pedro Bautista was *never* promoted to the episcopal dignity. In other words, canonically he was never a bishop and as such his name should not appear in any episcopal list. Nor was he even considered by the royal government of Spain for presentation to Rome for that dignity, as is shown by the primary documents extant in the Archives of Seville which I personally consulted. Here, too, no insertions can be possible, and for the same reason.<sup>3</sup>

#### OTHER ERRORS

Besides that of San Pedro Bautista, other names have been included in the episcopal list of Cáceres without warrant, among them:

José Cabral  
Rodrigo de la Cueva Girón  
Juan de Polanco  
Alonso de Castro  
José Millán de Poblete<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In 1956 the Franciscans published my article, "San Pedro Bautista Obispo de Nueva Cáceres?" in their official organ *Archivo Ibero-Americano* XVI (Madrid), pp. 355-375. They described it as a "conclusive and incontestable study which definitely corrects a historical error committed by Franciscan writers through the centuries." See also J. Schumacher, "Recent Historical Writings on the Philippines Abroad," *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (January 1961), pp. 111-112.

<sup>4</sup> See Gregorio F. Zaide, *Catholicism in the Philippines* (Manila, 1937), p. 182; Mariano Ponce, *Efemérides filipinas* I (Manila, 1914), pp. 238-240; Gaspar de San Agustín, *Conquistas* (Madrid, 1698), p. 449; Agustín María de Castro, *Osario Venerable, 1565-1780*, Merino ed. (Madrid, 1954), p. 28; L. L. R. Morrow, *A Short History of the Filipino People* (Manila, 1936), pp. 188, 270.

Like San Pedro Bautista these ecclesiastics were never promoted to the episcopal dignity and their names definitely have no place in an episcopal list.

As a matter of purely academic interest, I give hereunder the names of those who were chosen by the King of Spain through the centuries to fill vacancies in the See of Cáceres but who for one reason or another failed to obtain consistorial promotion in Rome. Therefore, despite their royal election and presentation they were not bishops in the canonical sense and have no place in an episcopal list.

Pedro de Pila, elected by the King in 1596

Miguel López, 1598

Gregorio Alarcón, 1623

Baltazar de Herrera, 1671

Luis de Campaña, 1720

Julio Balotierra, 1721

Remigio Hernández, 1756

Agustín de San Antonio, 1757

Antonio Manuel Campy y Morata, 1766

Joseph Tomás de Quesada, 1778

Francisco de Guzmán, 1778

Antonio de la Santísima Trinidad, 1810

Manuel de la Anunciación, 1811

José Burillo, 1815

Francisco Albán, 1815

Tomás Ladrón de Guevara, 1841

An interesting case is that of the last named, Tomás Ladrón de Guevara of the Spanish secular clergy. Elected by the throne to fill the vacancy in the See of Cáceres caused by death of Juan Antonio de Lillo, at a time when Pope Gregory XVI refused to recognize the legitimacy of Queen Isabel II's claim to succession to the Spanish throne, Ladrón de Guevara came to the Islands and took possession of his diocese on the strength of his royal election alone. It was he who finished and solemnly inaugurated the imposing cathedral which still stands today. It had been under construction during the previous twenty years. When in 1845 a *modus vivendi* was estab-

lished between Spain and the Vatican, the prelates *elected* by the throne for the Spanish bishoprics during the period of conflict were recalled. They were never given Vatican recognition. One of them was Ladrón de Guevara. Another was Jaime Gil de Orduña who had likewise administered the Bishopric of Cebu on the strength of his royal election to that See.

One error of omission, added to the above errors of commission, makes the confusion worse confounded. A Mercedarian friar named Andrés de Echeandía whose canonical promotion to the See of Cáceres appears clearly in Vatican records has never been given his rightful place in the episcopal list of that see. This was corrected for the first time in my *Bikol Annals*. Apparently the omission of his name by Spanish chroniclers who wrote while they were in the Philippines springs from the circumstance that he never came to govern his diocese. The facts as disclosed by royal and pontifical documents are as follows: he was elected by the King in 1774 to succeed Bishop Antonio de Luna; having accepted the honor, he was presented to the Vatican where he was given consistorial promotion the following year. This Vatican action made him a full-fledged bishop of Cáceres; however, shortly after the certification of his Vatican promotion was received in Spain, the new prelate resigned his office. All this happened during the period from September 1774 to November 1775. To succeed him the King presented the Franciscan Francisco de Maceira who was given the *fiat* of Rome "to succeed Andrés de Encheandía" in 1777. It is therefore clear in the light of royal and pontifical documents that although the See of Cáceres continued to be vacant during all this period, for all practical purposes and in the eyes of the colonial authorities in the Philippines, *canonically* the vacancy had been filled, and Bishop Echeandía is legally and historically the legitimate successor of Antonio de Luna and the predecessor of Francisco de Maceira.

The errors found in secondary sources available to us in the Philippines having been pointed out, I now present the correct chronological list of prelates of the See of Cáceres:

## CORRECTED LIST

- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. LUÍS MALDONADO, Franciscan                           | 14 August 1595    |
| 2. FRANCISCO DE ORTEGA, Augustinian                     | 13 September 1599 |
| 3. BALTAZAR DE COBARRUBIAS,<br>Augustinian <sup>5</sup> | 13 January 1603   |
| 4. PEDRO GODÍNEZ, Franciscan                            | 12 December 1605  |
| 5. PEDRO MATÍA, Franciscan                              | 17 September 1612 |
| 6. DIEGO DE GUEVARA, Augustinian                        | 13 August 1616    |
| 7. LUÍS CAÑIZARES, Minim <sup>6</sup>                   | 1 July 1624       |
| 8. FRANCISCO ZAMUDIO, Augustinian                       | 10 July 1628      |
| 9. NICOLÁS DE ZALDIVAR, Augustinian                     | 2 May 1644        |
| 10. ANTONIO DE SAN GREGORIO,<br>Franciscan              | 17 November 1659  |
| 11. ANDRÉS GONZALEZ, Dominican                          | 10 September 1685 |
| 12. DOMINGO DE VALENCIA, of the<br>secular clergy       | 10 January 1718   |
| 13. FELIPE DE MOLINA, of the<br>secular clergy          | 20 November 1724  |
| 14. YSIDRO DE ARÉVALO, of the<br>secular clergy         | 29 August 1740    |
| 15. MANUEL MATOS, Franciscan                            | 11 February 1754  |
| 16. ANTONIO DE LUNA, Franciscan                         | 19 December 1768  |
| 17. ANDRÉS DE ECHEANDÍA, Mercedarian                    | 11 September 1775 |
| 18. FRANCISCO DE MACEIRA, Franciscan                    | 15 December 1777  |
| 19. JUAN ANTONIO DE ORBIGO,<br>Franciscan <sup>7</sup>  | 14 December 1778  |
| 20. DOMINGO COLLANTES, Dominican                        | 15 December 1788  |
| 21. BERNARDO DE LA CONCEPCIÓN,<br>Franciscan            | 23 September 1816 |
| 22. JUAN ANTONIO DE LILLO,<br>Franciscan <sup>8</sup>   | 23 February 1831  |
| 23. VICENTE BARREIRO, Augustinian <sup>9</sup>          | 19 January 1846   |
| 24. MANUEL GRIJALBO, Augustinian                        | 14 April 1848     |
| 25. FRANCISCO GAÍNZA, Dominican                         | 25 September 1862 |

<sup>5</sup> Transferred to the Bishopríc of Antequera in 1605.

<sup>6</sup> Transferred as Auxiliary to the Bishop of Comayagua in 1628.

<sup>7</sup> Transferred to Manila in 1788.

<sup>8</sup> Formerly Titular of Amata; Auxiliary of Cáceres in 1828.

<sup>9</sup> Transferred to Nueva Segobia in 1848.

|  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| 26. CASIMIRO HERRERO, Augustinian                                  | 1 October 1880   |
| 27. ARSENIO CAMPO, Augustinian <sup>10</sup>                       | 25 November 1887 |
| 28. JORGE BARLÍN, of the<br>secular clergy                         | 14 December 1778 |
| 29. JOHN BERNARD MACGINLEY, of the<br>secular clergy <sup>11</sup> | 2 April 1910     |
| 30. FRANCISCO REYES, of the<br>secular clergy                      | 20 June 1925     |
| 31. PEDRO P. SANTOS, of the<br>secular clergy; first Archbishop    | 21 May 1939      |
| 32. TEOPISTO V. ALBERTO, of the<br>secular clergy <sup>12</sup>    | 29 June 1951     |

This article is the last of a series of four published in this quarterly<sup>13</sup> presenting the corrected episcopal succession lists of the four bishoprics erected in the Philippines before the end of the 16th century. When the See of Manila, the first bishopric (erected in 6 February 1579), was raised to the rank of an archbishopric with the suffragan sees of Cáceres, Nueva Segobia, and Nombre de Jesús (Cebu) in 14 August 1595, the ecclesiastical government of the Philippines which was to remain unchanged for centuries was completed. Only in 1865 was the See of Santa Isabel (Jaro) carved out of the See of Cebu as a separate diocese, also to be a suffragan of the Archdiocese of Manila. Meantime the three dioceses in Luzon remained as they were as originally established. Such was the ecclesiastical organization at the end of the Spanish rule in the Philippines.

<sup>10</sup> Forced to resign in 1903 together with all other Spanish bishops in the Philippines as a result of the Taft-Rampolla agreement shortly after the American occupation of the Islands.

<sup>11</sup> Transferred as first Bishop of Monterey-Fresno in 1924.

<sup>12</sup> First Bishop of Sorsogon in 1952. Promoted as Titular Archbishop of Amastri and Coadjutor Archbishop of Cáceres with right of succession in 7 September 1959.

<sup>13</sup> Domingo Abella, "Episcopal Succession in the Philippines," *Philippine Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (October 1959), pp. 435-447; "The Succession of Bishops of Cebu," *Ibid.*, Vol. 8, No. 3 (July 1960), pp. 535-543; "The Bishops of Nueva Segobia," *Ibid.*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (October 1962), pp. 577-585.

## THE SEE OF SANTA ISABEL DE JARO

To complete our study, I present hereunder the episcopal list of the only addition to the original sixteenth-century sees made during the period of the Spanish rule, the See of Santa Isabel of Jaro:

|   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| Erected by Bull <i>Qui ab initio</i>                                | 6 June 1865       |
| Raised to the rank of Archdiocese                                   | 29 June 1951      |
| 1. MARIANO CUARTERO Y MEDINA,<br>Dominican                          | 27 September 1867 |
| 2. LEANDRO ARRUE AGUDO DE SAN<br>NICOLÁS DE TOLENTINO,<br>Recollect | 27 March 1885     |
| 3. ANDRÉS FERRERO DE SAN JOSÉ,<br>Recollect <sup>14</sup>           | 24 March 1898     |
| 4. FREDERICK ZADOK ROOKER,<br>of the secular clergy                 | 25 June 1903      |
| 5. DENIS J. DOUGHERTY, of the<br>secular clergy <sup>15</sup>       | 21 June 1908      |
| 6. MAURICE P. FOLEY, of the<br>secular clergy <sup>16</sup>         | 6 September 1916  |
| 7. JAMES P. McCLOSKEY, of the<br>secular clergy <sup>17</sup>       | 8 March 1920      |
| 8. JOÉ MARÍA CUENCO, of the<br>secular clergy                       | 27 November 1945  |
| As first Archbishop   | 29 June 1951      |

<sup>14</sup> Forced to resign in 1903. See note 10, above.

<sup>15</sup> Formerly Bishop of Nueva Segobia (1903). Transferred to the See of Buffalo in 1915; promoted to the Archbishopric of Philadelphia in 1918; created Cardinal in 1921.

<sup>16</sup> Formerly first Bishop of Tuguegarao (1910).

<sup>17</sup> Formerly Bishop of Zamboanga (1917).

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