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Blessed Connections: Sociological Aspects of Sainthood in Colonial Mexico and Peru

VICTORIA H. CUMMINS¹

This study compares the respective careers of don Pedro Moya de Contreras (1530?-1592), the third archbishop of Mexico, and Saint Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo (1538-1606), the second archbishop of Lima. These men were King Philip II's two most powerful American archbishops.² They had strikingly similar backgrounds, educations, and experiences prior to assuming their high offices in the Indies. Once in the New World, they not only manifested similar administrative skills, but also demonstrated the sort of exemplary moral character required to lead their flocks and their clergy in an era of reform. Each leader faced similar administrative and religious problems. Each was largely successful in dealing with them, imposing important Tridentine reform measures, fighting challenges to episcopal authority, and providing spiritual inspiration. Each earned the respect of the clergy and the faithful in his archdiocese. Each had a reputation for saintly character in his lifetime. However, only one, Mogrovejo, became a saint venerated to this day. The other, Moya, sank into centuries of obscurity. Why did the historical reputations of these two men take such different paths?

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² Moya de Contreras and Mogrovejo are representative of Philip II's archiepiscopal appointments for the church in his American dominions. In his forty-two year reign as king of Castile (1556-1598), Philip made only fifteen appointments to the four archiepiscopal sees in the Indies (Mexico, Santo Domingo, Lima, and Bogota). All his appointees were Spaniards, two-thirds were from the secular clergy, and seven of the fifteen served as inquisitors prior to episcopal appointments. Mogrovejo (twenty-five years) and Moya (twelve years) served two of the longest tenures. In fact, they were among only six of Philip's appointees actually to reside in their archdioceses during his reign. Enrique Dussel, *Les évêques hispano-américains: défenseurs et évangélisateurs de l'Indien 1504-1620* (Wiesbaden: F. Steiner, 1970), Appendix 1, 229-49.

Prior to becoming archbishop, Pedro Moya de Contreras and Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo had almost identical backgrounds and training. They were representatives of a group of ambitious young lawyers making their way up the bureaucratic ladder through talent and connections.³ Moreover, their noble lineages and legal training represented qualities that Philip II favored in choosing men for high posts in both his civil and ecclesiastical bureaucracies. King Philip also kept in mind the concerns of the Counter Reformation in choosing archbishops. They had to be men of high moral character who could meet the standards of the post-Tridentine church and provide appropriate leadership in forcing the New World clergy to reform itself and lead the laity through example. In spite of their commonalities of personal qualities and accomplishments as prelates, during the century or so following their respective deaths considerations unrelated to their personalities and actions determined sainthood for one, and obscurity for the other.

Pedro Moya de Contreras, third archbishop of Mexico, was born in Pedroche in the archdiocese of Córdoba in the kingdom of Castile about 1530.⁴ He was descended from two old Christian families

³ For a more detailed discussion of Philip II's preferences in appointments, see Victoria H. Cummins, "An Alternative Path to Success? Careers in the Sixteenth Century Church," in *The Church and Society in Latin America: Selected Papers from the Conference at Tulane University...April 29-30, 1982*. Jeffrey A. Cole, ed. (New Orleans: Center for Latin American Studies, Tulane University, 1984), 1-18.

⁴ There are few biographies of Moya de Contreras. The earliest extant is Cristóbal Gutiérrez de Luna, "Vida y heroicas virtudes del Dor. Don Pedro Moya de Contreras arzobispo mexicano, patriarca de las indias y presidente del real consejo de ellas," in *Cinco cartas del Illmo. y Exmo. Señor D. Pedro Moya de Contreras* (Madrid: José Porrúa Turanzas, 1962), 9-46. A manuscript copy of this work, dated 1619, is in the Nettie Lee Benson Collection, University of Texas at Austin. It is not known if this manuscript was ever published by its author. In this 1962 edition there is another life, Francisco Sosa, "El excelentísimo e ilustrísimo señor don Pedro Moya de Contreras 1573-1586," 63-96. Julio Jiménez Rueda's *Don Pedro Moya de Contreras: primer inquisidor de Mexico* (México: Ediciones Xochitl, 1944) is the only other Spanish-language biography. English-language publications on Moya's life and career include Victoria H. Cummins, "An Alternative Path," and "Imperial Policy and Church Income," *The Americas* 43 (1986):87-103. Stafford Poole's biography, *Pedro Moya de Contreras: Catholic Reform and Royal Power in New Spain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), provides an overview of Moya's life and career in Mexico. Unless otherwise noted, biographical information on Moya de Contreras is taken from Cummins, "An Alternative Path," 2-7.

which had been ennobled during the reconquest. Moya was one of three children and his family apparently was not wealthy.⁵ As a boy, his parents sent him to serve as a page to *Licenciado* (licentiate) Juan de Ovando, a rising star in the royal service. This was common practice for noble families like Moya's. Moya demonstrated a talent for letters, and was made Ovando's personal secretary, an office he fulfilled with circumspection and diligence. Recognizing the young man's academic talent, Ovando paid for his undergraduate education in law at the University of Salamanca during the period in which Ovando also pursued advanced degrees there. Moya completed a doctorate in civil and canon law, perhaps at the University of Seville. He appears to have returned to work for Ovando, by then a member of the cathedral chapter in Seville, until he accepted the post of *maestrescuela* (master of the cathedral school) for the cathedral in the Canary Islands. There he served until he was chosen as inquisitor of Murcia in 1566.

Four years later, Moya was selected as one of three inquisitors to be posted to Mexico when the decision was made in 1569 to set up a tribunal of the Inquisition in New Spain. He tried to decline on the grounds of frail health and family obligations (especially the demands of arranging to have his sister enter a convent), but the inquisitor-general insisted that he assume the post, promising this was the road to promotion. Moya made extensive preparations for his trip to the Indies. He took more than a dozen servants, including four slaves, and his library (twelve large boxes of books) with him on his journey to New Spain.⁶ Following an arduous voyage, marred by the death of a colleague from disease and a shipwreck resulting in the loss of all his possessions, he arrived in Mexico in August 1571 and was formally installed as inquisitor in November.

It was at this point that Moya finally took Holy Orders and became a priest. It is not clear to this researcher why he chose to be ordained at this late juncture in his career. Moya's education would have qualified him for the priesthood. He was single and of good

⁵ Testamento y Codicilo de don Pedro Moya de Contreras, Archivo Histórico de Protócolos de Madrid, no. 1609, fols. 100-107.

⁶ Licenses for the inquisitors going to Mexico, August 15, 24, 29, 1570, Archivo General de Indias (hereinafter cited as AGI), Mexico, legajo 1090, tomo I, fols. 149v-150r, 161r-v; Letter, Moya de Contreras to the president of the Inquisition, September 18, 1570, Archivo Histórico Nacional (hereinafter cited as AHN), Inquisición, libro 1047, fols. 10r-v, 43r.

character, but the office of inquisitor did not require ordination; indeed, he had earlier served for four years in Murcia without taking Orders. It is likely that he was encouraged to do so by his old mentor, Juan de Ovando, in order to qualify for desirable ecclesiastical posts.

In 1571 it was obvious that Mexico soon would be needing a new archbishop. Alonso de Montúfar, O.P., who had been archbishop for twenty years, was elderly, ailing, and unable to govern. He relied on another Dominican friar, Bartolomé de Ledesma, to administer the archdiocese after 1569. Thus, even before Moya arrived in New Spain as inquisitor, civil and ecclesiastical officials were calling for the appointment of a bishop coadjutor for Mexico.

Archbishop Montúfar died in March 1572. Shortly thereafter letters arrived from Spain appointing Inquisitor Moya de Contreras as bishop coadjutor, with the right of succession to Montúfar. The decision had been made before news of Montúfar's death had arrived in Spain. Moya's mentor, Juan de Ovando, the new president of the Council of the Indies, apparently secured this plum for his protégé.⁷ Moya took over the governance of the archdiocese on October 30, 1573,⁸ and after the arrival of the papal bulls was consecrated bishop on December 5, 1574. He then assumed his full liturgical duties.⁹ Closing out his inquisitorial activities, Moya presided over the first *auto de fe* held in Mexico during February of 1574, in which twenty-two Protestant heretics were reconciled or relaxed to the secular arm for punishment.¹⁰

The career of Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo, chosen by Philip II in 1578 to be the second archbishop of Lima, was similar in many respects to that of Moya de Contreras. He was slightly younger but of

⁷ Philip II characteristically sought nominations from the president of the Council of the Indies for ecclesiastical posts in America. A. W. Lovett, *Philip II and Mateo Vázquez de Leca: The Government of Spain (1572-1592)* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1977), 148-49. It is also significant that Moya first received news of the appointment from Ovando. See Cummins, "An Alternative Path," 5.

⁸ Minutes of the chapter meeting of the cathedral chapter of Mexico, tomo II, Friday, October 30, 1573, Archivo del Cabildo Metropolitano, México, D.F., México.

⁹ Sosa, "El excelentísimo e ilustrísimo señor don Pedro Moya de Contreras," 68.

¹⁰ Richard E. Greenleaf, *The Mexican Inquisition of the Sixteenth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 164-68; List of Sanbenitos in the Cathedral of Mexico, February 16-17, 1606, Archivo General de la Nación (hereinafter cited as AGN), Inquisición, tomo 77, exp. 35, fols. 43-50.

analogous background. His family lineage, education, and early career path mirrored those of his colleague in Mexico. He was born in Mayorga in the kingdom of León in 1538. His parents were of noble lineage, but not wealthy.¹¹ In his early teens, he was sent to Valladolid to study Latin and the humanities in preparation for a university education. By 1568, he had taken bachelor's and *licenciado's* degrees in law, probably at Salamanca and Santiago de Compostela, respectively. In 1571, under the patronage of his uncle, Dr. don Juan Mogrovejo, a law professor, Toribio received a fellowship at the Colegio Mayor de San Salvador de Oviedo of the University of Salamanca. There he studied for a doctorate in civil and canon law until 1574. Before taking his doctoral examinations, he was offered the post of inquisitor of Granada. This appointment was proffered through the "old boy" network by don Diego de Zuñiga, a *oidor* (judge) and *colegial* (collegiate) of San Salvador.¹²

Mogrovejo took the position and never completed his advanced studies. He served diligently in Granada and conducted a *visita* (inspection tour) of the district.¹³ During this time, he had never seen the need to take Holy Orders. He took the first tonsure (minor orders)

¹¹ Vicente Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo: organizador y apostol de Sur-América*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Consejo superior de investigaciones científicas, Instituto Santo Toribio de Mogrovejo, 1956-1957), 1:3-18, 35-36, discusses Mogrovejo's early life. In addition to Rodríguez Valencia, the most important biographers of Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo are Antonio Rodríguez de León Pinelo, *Vida del ilustrissimo i reverendissimo D. Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo: arcobispo de la ciudad de los Reyes Lima, cabeza de las provincias del Piru...* (Madrid: n.p., 1653); Francisco Antonio de Montalvo, *Breve teatro de las acciones mas notables de la vida del bienaventurado Toribio Arcobispo de Lima...* (Roma: Nicolas Angel Tinasii, 1683) and *El sol del Nuevo Mundo ideado y compuesto en las esclarecidas operaciones del bienaventurado Toribio Arcobispo de Lima...* (Roma: Angel Bernavó, 1683); Nicolas Antonio Guerrero Martínez Rubio, *El phenix de las becas, Santo Toribio Alphonso Mogrovejo, glorioso en la resplandeciente hoguera de sus virtudes* (Salamanca: Viuda de Gregorio Ortiz Gallardo y Eugenio García Honorato y San Miguel, [1728]); Carlos García Irigoyen, *Santo Toribio: obra escrita con motivo del tercer centenario de la muerte del santo arzobispo de Lima...*, 4 vols. (Lima: Imprenta y librería de San Pedro, 1906-1907); Rubén Vargas Ugarte, *Vida de Santo Toribio*, 1971 Reprint (Lima: Ediciones Paulinas, 1989). For the sake of convenience, the writer has used the two most recent biographies, Rodríguez Valencia and Vargas Ugarte, as the sources of biographical facts.

¹² Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio*, 1:63-86, 110-12.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 1:117-27.

while at Salamanca, but this was not unusual for graduate students, who often did so in the hopes of obtaining a chaplaincy or benefice without necessarily committing themselves to the clerical life. His education in canon and civil law, however, would have qualified him for Holy Orders had he desired it.¹⁴

This situation changed abruptly in 1578, however, when Mogrovejo was offered the archdiocese of Lima. The inquisitor's patron, don Diego de Zúñiga, then serving on the Council of the Indies, had proposed his name. After protesting his unworthiness and vacillating over whether to take a post in America, he accepted in August, 1578. After papal confirmation he was ordained a priest in 1579 in Granada, and consecrated bishop in Seville in 1580, just before his departure for America.¹⁵ When he departed for Lima he took with him a considerable retinue: his sister doña Grimanesa, her husband and three children, and more than twenty retainers, including six Black servants. He also brought his library, an impressive collection of books inherited from his uncle the law professor.¹⁶ Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo took possession of the archdiocese in 1581, enthusiastically greeted by a flock left six years without a shepherd.¹⁷

Once in the Americas, Moya and Mogrovejo faced similar administrative problems and leadership challenges. Although in Mexico the initial phase of baptizing the Amerindian population appeared very successful, in 1572 Moya inherited an archdiocese in disarray. At Archbishop Montúfar's death, the archdiocese of Mexico lacked operating funds and its finances were in chaos. There was a dearth of spiritually and educationally prepared clergy. The special privileges of the religious orders, especially their independence from episcopal control, had to be curtailed. There was a need to reestablish church prerogatives vis-à-vis the civil government without antagonizing royal officials or violating patronage prerogatives and incurring royal wrath.

The archdiocese of Lima in 1581 encompassed a vast geographical area, with nine suffragan dioceses stretching from Nicaragua to western Argentina and with a home diocese encompassing about half of modern Peru. The Spanish population in 1581 remained

¹⁴ Vargas Ugarte, *Vida*, 13-17.

¹⁵ Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio*, 1:112, 131-48.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:78, 153-55.

¹⁷ Vargas Ugarte, *Vida*, 22.

limited and far-flung and the overwhelming number of faithful were Quechua-speaking Indians. Due to the relatively small number of priests and the isolating barriers of the Andes mountains, considerable missionary work remained to be done among the Indians in 1581.

Each of these carefully chosen archbishops single-mindedly attacked his new job with supreme confidence, ferocious zeal, and mixed results. The official papers of the archiepiscopacies and other ecclesiastical bodies of Mexico and Lima project an image of strong-willed, capable administrators, willing and able to combat various interest groups within the church and the civil bureaucracy in order to get their own way and achieve their goals. Each prelate made numerous enemies as well as friends along the way.

Archbishop Moya reformed the conduct of the secular clergy, requiring higher educational levels and knowledge of Indian languages for ordination. He also introduced the *oposición* (public competition) as a means of choosing the best candidate for clerical posts.¹⁸ He completed the first visitation of the archdiocese¹⁹ and worked (without great success, however) at increasing financial support for it.²⁰ He tried to curb the independence of the religious orders by implementing the *Ordenanza de Patronazgo*,²¹ and held the third Mexican Provincial Council to promulgate the decrees of Trent. This council produced a new catechism and directory for confessors, as well as drawing up

¹⁸ Pastoral letter of Archbishop Moya de Contreras to the clerics, priests, deacons, and subdeacons of the archbishopric of Mexico, March 10, 1576, Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid (hereinafter cited as BNM), MS no. 19697-4; Letter, Moya de Contreras to the king, October 20, 1574, AGI, Mexico, legajo 69, tomo I; Letters, Moya de Contreras to Juan de Ovando, March 30 and April 22, 1575, AGI, Mexico, legajo 336; Letter, Moya de Contreras to Juan de Ovando, March 24, 1575, BNM, MS no. 202853, pieza 6.

¹⁹ Letter, Dr. Villalobos to Juan de Ovando, May 3, 1572, AGI, Mexico, legajo 69, ramo I; Letter, Moya de Contreras to the king, October 24, 1581, AGI, Mexico, legajo 278, ramo I; Letter, Moya de Contreras to the king, December 16, 1578, AGI, Mexico, legajo 336.

²⁰ Victoria H. Cummins, "Imperial Policy and Church Income," *passim*.

²¹ For a description of the *Ordenanza* and its origins, see Robert Charles Padden, "The Ordenanza de Patronazgo 1574: An Interpretive Essay," *The Americas* 12 (1956):333-54. Moya summarized his views on the necessity for the reform and the problems with implementation in a letter to Juan de Ovando, December 20, 1574, AGI, Mexico, legajo 336.

regulations which governed the archdiocese to the nineteenth century.²² While in Mexico, he also served the civil government as *visitador* (inspector) and interim viceroy.²³ Called back to Spain in 1586 to report on the *visita*, he remained there and served in the civil bureaucracy until his death on January 15, 1592. He was president of the Council of the Indies at the time of his death.²⁴ Moya did not accomplish all this, however, without ruffling some feathers and enduring controversy. He fought with the regular clergy over the issue of episcopal authority in the *doctrinas* (Indian parishes), and with his cathedral chapter over finances and clerical reform. He became involved in endless disputes with civil officials over real jurisdictional conflicts, and imagined issues of precedence.

Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo, like his counterpart in New Spain, energetically pursued his episcopal duties. He undertook four *visitas* of his far-flung archdiocese and held two provincial councils during his tenure.²⁵ The third Council of Lima produced a catechism in the major Indian languages and a book of sermons for missionaries to use. The decrees drawn up by this council, which applied the decrees of Trent in Peru, remained in effect until 1900. He founded the first seminary in the Americas.²⁶ However, Archbishop Mogrovejo was no stranger to controversy. He fought so divisively with his own bishops at the third Council of Lima that he excommunicated most of them and considered suspending the council.²⁷ He quarreled with viceroys and civil officials, resorting sometimes to excommunication to get his way. In the 1580s he engaged in bitter conflict with Viceroy don García Hurtado de Mendoza over the *visitas*, matters of precedence, and questions of jurisdiction. In the 1590s he was officially reprimanded by Viceroy Luís de Velasco on the orders of the Council of the Indies for

²² For a summary of the council's work and decrees, see *Concilio III provincial mexicano, celebrado en México en el año de 1585, confirmado en Roma por el papa Sixto V, y mandado observar por el gobierno español, en diversas reales ordenes, ilustrado con muchas notas del r. p. Basilio Arrillaga...* (México: E. Maillfert, 1859).

²³ Cummins, "An Alternative Path," 7-8.

²⁴ Minutes of the chapter meeting of the cathedral chapter of Mexico, tomo IV, Tuesday, May 9, 1595; Testamento y Codicilo.

²⁵ Vargas Ugarte, *Vida*, 42-46, 55-62.

²⁶ Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio*, 1:191, 235-45.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 1:209-25.

writing directly to the pope asking for income from vacant benefices (which would normally accrue to the crown under the patronage) to support his seminary. He disagreed with his cathedral chapter over finances and the seminary.²⁸

To the modern reader this combative style of leadership might not seem saintly, but his contemporaries would have sensed no anomaly. Strong episcopal leadership was a favored characteristic in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century canonization candidates. Moreover, according to their biographers, other standard saintly traits more familiar to modern sensibilities were also present in abundance.

There is little objective information available to the modern historian regarding the two men's characters as potential saints. However, each man had a biographer, perhaps better described as a hagiographer, who, although writing decades after the subject's death, claimed to have verified the facts with persons, unnamed in either case, who did know him. Both of these biographies were seen by the authors as a first step in the process of canonization for their subjects. It is on these sources that we must rely for an assessment of each man's saintly disposition.

Moya's earliest biographer, Cristóbal Gutiérrez de Luna, stressed his subject's neatness and cleanliness, both in personal appearance and household conditions. Moya ran the archiepiscopal palace like a cloistered monastery, surrounding himself with men of experience, few servants, and little pomp. He treated his pages and servants well, seeing to their medical, physical, and spiritual well-being. He himself was exceedingly abstemious. Few delicacies ordinarily graced his table and he often skipped his afternoon siesta to unobtrusively visit parishes in the city.

As archbishop, despite having earned a doctorate in law, Moya studied the arts and theology with a Jesuit tutor. He learned the Nahuatl language well enough to preach to the Indians and hear their confessions during Lent. His many virtues, as catalogued by Gutiérrez de Luna, included prudence, humility, meekness, charity, continence, and good example. Moya practiced almsgiving to the poor, giving away his clerical income and most of his personal and household possessions. He was so poor from almsgiving at his death that the king had to cede money to pay his debts and his funeral expenses. Moya was particularly

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1:246-48; Vargas Ugarte, *Vida*, 47-54, 63-72, 78-83.

devoted to Saint Michael the Archangel, and spent enormous amounts of time and money promoting the celebration of this saint's cult in Mexico through public religious acts, almsgiving, and other methods.²⁹ His countenance complemented his virtues. He was physically a handsome and well-proportioned man. His natural gravity and composure commanded respect from many of those he encountered.

Gutiérrez de Luna, however, did not mention miracles associated with Moya de Contreras after his death, although he does provide in his biography some evidence of supernatural grace blessing Moya's life. He recounts an incident, witnessed by one of the archbishop's pages, in which the prelate entered a dreamlike or ecstatic state while praying before an image of Saint Michael. He communicated animatedly with angels while his face appeared to have a supernatural light emanating from it. According to his biographer, Moya was especially devoted to the poor, Indians, and Blacks, and they to him because of his charity. In fact, their devotion was so great that Moya was nearly crushed by a mob which gathered in the cathedral to bid him farewell as he was leaving Mexico for Spain in 1586.³⁰

In the 1650s Antonio Rodríguez de León Pinelo wrote a biography of Mogrovejo commissioned by the cathedral chapter of Lima to promote the cause of his beatification.³¹ This biographer reported singular qualities of virtue and penitence present in his subject from youth. As a young boy Mogrovejo made altars to adorn and venerate in his parents' home. He gave away his meals and snacks to the hungry. Even as a boy he practiced fasting, mortifications, and penances to the point of being ordered by his teachers to moderate his habits or risk damage to his health. As a student at Valladolid and Salamanca, and in his career as inquisitor of Granada and archbishop of Lima, he continued to practice mortifications of the flesh to an extreme degree.

Mogrovejo was apparently a man who ate and slept little. He fasted and abstained regularly, preferring bread and water as his

²⁹ A cult, in part, may be defined as "...the recognition of the excellence and superiority of another, together with a manifestation of the reverence and esteem in which that recognition is expressed." *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 4:522.

³⁰ Gutiérrez de Luna, "Vida," 17-40.

³¹ Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio*, 1:39.

evening meal. For sleeping, he chose the hard floor instead of a bed, although he would disturb his bedclothes at night to hide this from his servants. He did not allow banquets, entertainments, or celebrations in the palace, nor did he permit those outside the episcopal palace to distract him from his daily cycle of work and prayer. He passed what free time he had reading spiritual works, his breviary, or the lives of the saints. He gave away his income to the poor. He learned Quechua to be able to preach and confess the Indians, who were devoted to him. He had a special devotion to the Blessed Sacrament, the Virgin Mary, the souls in Purgatory, and various saints. Mogrovejo's salient virtues included humility, meekness, prudence, patience, chastity, and charity.³²

His biographer gave evidence of manifestations of divine favor granted during his lifetime. Mogrovejo was heard numerous times by his servants singing and conversing with angels while praying alone in his room. His servants held the common opinion that on many occasions his face shone with illumination like a star while he prayed, a recognized sign of sanctity. He was reported to have the gift of tongues. It was Archbishop Mogrovejo's fondest desire to die a martyr for the faith, and he exposed himself to many dangers, especially during his episcopal visitations. However, his biographer noted that God intervened to keep him safe, saving him in turn from hungry alligators, drowning, a deadly fall, angry bulls, and a collapsing building. In 1606, at the age of sixty-eight, Mogrovejo did finally succumb to death from natural causes while on his fourth diocesan visit to rural Peru.³³

Rodríguez de León Pinelo reported that following the saintly Mogrovejo's death there were numerous signs of the type commonly understood in the seventeenth century to represent divine favor. There was an eclipse of the moon on the night he died and a cross was seen in the sky by people as far away as Lima, a sure sign of a soul in glory. His body did not decay in the three days before burial, maintaining its sweet odor and flexibility. One year after burial, his body was disinterred and taken to Lima for reburial. Except for some mold on the outer clothing, the body remained unchanged. His beard, in fact, had grown, another sure sign of divine grace to those of the era. A

³² Rodríguez de León Pinelo, *Vida*, chaps. 2, 3, 5, 11-15.

³³ *Ibid.*, chaps. 17-18.

number of miraculous events occurred during the transfer of the body and cures were reported among those who touched the litter taking the body to Lima.³⁴

These types of incidents caused Archbishop Mogrovejo's reputation for sanctity to grow and veneration of him to begin. His successors as archbishop encouraged a cult that grew up, centered on his tomb and relics (his hat, a shoe, a pectoral cross, a pillow) which invoked his intercession for miracles. By the time Rodríguez de León Pinelo wrote Mogrovejo's biography in the 1650s, the cult was well-established, especially at the monastery of the nuns of Santa Clara, which Mogrovejo had patronized. The monastery had received his heart and other relics when he was reburied.³⁵

The pious portraits of these two men painted by their colonial-era hagiographers seem to the historian of today to be idealistic, even formulaic. Indeed, these two biographies can be characterized as catalogues of well-established saintly virtues and actions which call into question the individuality of their respective subjects. As described, the lives of both men closely resemble that of Saint Charles Borromeo (1538-1584), a contemporary already canonized by 1610. In fact, Rodríguez de León Pinelo openly modeled his biography of Mogrovejo on the life of this saint.³⁶ At the very least, it is fair to say that the two archbishops described by Gutiérrez de Luna and Rodríguez de León Pinelo do not entirely resemble the contentious lawyers with proven administrative skills who are otherwise represented in the historical record.

Why then did Toribio Alfonso Mogrovejo become a saint and Pedro Moya de Contreras not?³⁷ Did Moya simply lack appropriately

³⁴ *Ibid.*, chap. 19.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, chap. 20.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 5.

³⁷ The church does not create saints. Rather, the process of canonization represents a recognition of the fact that the soul of a deceased person is already in glory. The procedure for a holy individual to be made a saint became a slow and careful process after papal reforms in 1634. First, there was an investigation into his or her life, personal qualities, achievements, writings, and general reputation for holiness. This was usually conducted by the local bishop in the place where the individual died or lived for a long time. Evidence of miracles performed through the soul's intercession also had to be presented. If there appeared to be good evidence of martyrdom or heroically saintly life and of miracles in the case of a non-martyr, the Holy See in

saintly characteristics? Perhaps not. According to Gutiérrez de Luna he had them all. In their book *Saints and Society*, historians Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell constructed a typology of sainthood for the period based on a computer analysis of more than a thousand saintly lives. These researchers identified five salient traits in the saints they studied. The life history of a typical saint demonstrated evidence of supernatural grace, penitential asceticism, charitable work, worldly power, and evangelical activity.³⁸ As can be seen from the colonial-era biographical sketches of Moya and Mogrovejo, at least in the estimation of these early biographers, both archbishops met these criteria. They were each powerful leaders of Indian churches, and their lives gave evidence of supernatural grace through communicating with saints to whom they were especially devoted. Each lived an ascetic life, Mogrovejo to the extreme of self-punishment. Each, according to legend, gave away his considerable income and household possessions to the needy and died poor. Nevertheless, while Mogrovejo was widely venerated in Peru by the mid-seventeenth century, Moya disappeared from Mexican religious consciousness.

The search for an answer to this can be approached in two ways. One is to assume that Moya was not of saintly character, and thus merited no followers, no miracles, no cult, and no canonization. However, a second avenue of inquiry leads to a consideration of the sociology and politics of sainthood. Bell and Weinstein point out that in the high Middle Ages saints and their cults became a means of identification and pride for places and groups.³⁹ The importance of these geographical or interest groups in "creating" saints has been

Rome could declare the person beatified, which means presumed to be dwelling in heaven. That person would then be referred to as "blessed." Beatification permitted the veneration of the individual in certain places, customarily those associated with his or her life, death, or miracles. Prior to twentieth-century reforms, canonization was only conferred when the congregation of rites in Rome had accepted proof of two additional miracles performed through the individual's intercession. Canonization was solemnly celebrated in St. Peter's in Rome, after which the saint was to be venerated everywhere in the church. See *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 3:55-61; Kenneth L. Woodward, *Making Saints: How the Catholic Church Determines Who Becomes a Saint, Who Doesn't, and Why* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1990), 75-86.

³⁸ Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom 1000-1700* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 141-64.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 170.

stressed by many hagiologists (those who study writing about saints). The view has merit in considering the cases for canonization of Moya and Mogrovejo. It suggests a possible hypothesis that groups in Peru, where evangelization of the Indians lagged, promoted local saints so their cults could serve as rallying points for the Christian community. On the other hand, Mexico, where evangelization appeared to proceed rapidly, did not need saints' cults as rallying points. It may also be that the developing cult of the Virgin of Guadalupe fulfilled this need for Mexico.⁴⁰ Peru did nurture a much higher number of saints and beatified persons than Mexico, where Indian conversions had proceeded more quickly. Mexico's first saint, the Franciscan martyr Felipe de Jesús, was canonized in 1862 along with twenty-five others who perished with him in Japan.⁴¹ By this time, six seventeenth-century residents of the viceroyalty of Peru, including Saint Toribio, had been beatified or canonized.⁴²

Belgian sociologist Pierre Delooz has spent a career developing a methodology for the study of the process and meaning of canonization. In his work, he has pointed to the importance of group recollection in the creation of cults. Theoretically, the beginning of veneration comes when people are "struck by someone's saintly qualities, who would consecrate them after his death."⁴³ But Delooz finds it less clear cut than that:

Only the dead can be saints. And so sainthood is automatically situated in recollection. If someone is the object of an official cult . . . it is because he is a saint, but he is a saint now, because it is believed that he was during his lifetime, in the past, and because one

⁴⁰ Jacques Lafaye, *Quetzalcoatl and Guadalupe: The Formation of Mexican National Consciousness, 1531-1813*, trans. Benjamin Keen (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 242-53.

⁴¹ *Enciclopedia de México*, 14 vols. (México, D.F.: Compañía Editora de Enciclopedia de México, 1987), 5:2681-2.

⁴² Stephen Clissold, *The Saints of South America* (London: Charles Knight & Co., 1972), *passim*.

⁴³ Pierre Delooz, "Towards a Sociological Study of Canonized Sainthood in the Catholic Church," trans. Jane Hodgkin, in *Saints and Their Cults: Studies in Religious Sociology, Folklore and History*, Stephen Wilson, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 189-216.

is assured that he was indeed so. Sainthood therefore depends on a community's recollection of a dead person's past existence. The whole process of beatification and canonization, throughout its historical evolution, has depended on memories that people have retained about the past.

The immediate consequence of this sanctity through recollection is that it also depends on the opinion of others, that is on value judgements made by others. . . . One is never a saint except *for other people* But being a saint . . . means essentially being a saint for those who initiated the cult.⁴⁴

Delooz has characterized beatification and canonization investigations essentially as public opinion polls. Studying this step in the process can only ascertain what people thought about a person's reputation years or even centuries after his or her death. It took widespread fame as well as reputation for saintly qualities to create a public cult. To succeed, the public cult had to be large and well organized in pursuing the canonization proceedings. Delooz has pointed out the importance of this in discussing the case of a candidate who is declared "blessed" but is still awaiting the necessary confirmed miracles for sainthood:

We have here a case where the action of one particular group has been blocked by the inertia of a wider social group. From the sociological point of view, the missing miracle means that 'popular' pressure has not been strong enough. It is as if [he] . . . was not popular enough to awaken the faith required to effect a miracle.⁴⁵

Relics play an important role in invoking a saint's intercession, and, especially those associated with the body of the assumed saint, become a medium for requesting intercession. These divine interces-

⁴⁴ Ibid., 194.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 201.

sions triggered by an appeal to the saint, called miracles, are, to the faithful, proof of divine favor to the venerated person. They are required for beatification and canonization in the case of non-martyrs and canonization for proven martyrs. Miracles have been especially important in Iberian conceptualizations of sainthood.⁴⁶

Mogrovejo left relics in the New World; Moya did not. Archbishop Mogrovejo died in rural Peru and was later entombed in the cathedral in Lima. The events surrounding his funeral in 1606 and the transfer of his body to Lima for reburial the following year became the wellsprings for his cult. His clothing and personal possessions became the source of numerous relics used successfully to secure his intercession. Several items associated with the archbishop circulated in Peru and produced the miracles necessary for his canonization. By way of contrast, Archbishop Moya left Mexico in 1586 and completed his career in royal service in Spain. He never again held an ecclesiastical post with pastoral duties. Instead, supported by his clerical income from the archdiocese and the patriarchate of the Indies, he served as *visitador* of the Council of the Indies and later as its president. He died and was buried in Madrid. Thus, at the end of his life, his person and his body were far removed from his flock in Mexico. The relics so frequently associated with cases of saintly intercessions were not available to those devoted to him.⁴⁷ This may have discouraged the evolution of a cult of veneration for Moya which might have carried him to beatification and sainthood.

Another consideration in securing canonization relates to the determination needed to assemble the paperwork for the cause, guide it through the bureaucracy of the papacy, and raise the money to pay for the long-drawn-out and distant process. Historical studies of the sociology of sainthood unanimously agree that the presence of a spontaneous cult of devotion to a deceased person of saintly characteristics, although required to begin the formal process, is not enough to guarantee success. Many local cults devoted to saintly persons never get any farther than the town or region of origin and some sink into obscurity long before the formal process can be completed, leaving it to be abandoned. These cases are not clearly related to any objective

⁴⁶ Weinstein and Bell, *Saints and Society*, 179-83.

⁴⁷ Richard Kieckhefer and George D. Bond, eds., *Sainthood: Its Manifestations in World Religions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), viii.

differences in merit between successful and failed cases. The presence of an organized and committed group (most typically in the post-Tridentine era a religious order), capable of marshaling the public fame and logistical and financial resources necessary to pursue the process, is key to the successful achievement of formal beatification and canonization.⁴⁸

From the very time of his death, Mogrovejo's cause was helped by powerful friends. The convent of Santa Clara, where the archbishop's heart was preserved in a reliquary, and which was a particular center of devotion to his cult, was founded by him. One of the nuns there at the time of his death was his niece. His sister, doña Grimanesa, who had accompanied him to Peru with her husband and children and benefited from his patronage, outlived him by decades and supported his growing reputation for saintliness.⁴⁹ In the 1720s, fifth- and sixth-generation descendants of doña Grimanesa were still living in Peru.⁵⁰ Mogrovejo had an estate large enough for his family and the cathedral chapter to fight over.⁵¹ Through him, his sister's descendants inherited the family *mayorazgo* (entailed estate) in Mayorga, and the power and prestige for the family that went with it could be put to work promoting this family interest. Archbishop Pedro de Villagomez, the prelate who undertook to begin the formal cause, was related to Mogrovejo.⁵² Don Domingo de Almeida, dean of the cathedral chapter when the process of beatification began and a witness testifying in the process, served as a young priest and as Mogrovejo's chaplain on the voyage from Spain to America.⁵³ Another relation played an active role in the beatification ceremonies in the 1680s.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Woodward, *Making Saints*, 78-86. As an example of this, I can offer the case of San Luis Bertrán (1526-1581), patron saint of New Granada. Bertrán, after spending seven years in the mission field in New Granada, returned to Spain for the last dozen years of his life. However, his cause was successfully advanced by the powerful and influential Dominican religious order, of which he was a member. Clissold, *Saints*, 12-29, 204-205.

⁴⁹ Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio*, 1:164-82.

⁵⁰ José Manuel Bermúdez, *Anales de la catedral de Lima 1534 à 1824* (Lima: Imprenta del Estado, 1903), 260.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 29-44.

⁵² Rodríguez Valencia, *Santo Toribio*, 1:56.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 1:150.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:181.

The relatively new El Colegio Mayor San Salvador de Oviedo de Salamanca gave enthusiastic support to the cause.

Moya appeared to have none of this. Not only did he die in Madrid, but his will indicated that he left no family and few close associates in Mexico.⁵⁵ He died with few possessions and in debt. Philip II had to grant 30,000 ducats from the sale of offices to settle his affairs and fund his modest bequests.⁵⁶ Moya was also unfortunate when it came to gathering support from the archdiocese of Mexico. In fact, the archiepiscopal see stood vacant for the first fifteen years after his departure.⁵⁷

Although the haze of pious hagiography obscures their individual personalities in an ocean of formulaic virtues, the existence of these early biographies makes clear these two archbishops' contemporary reputations for saintliness. Both appear to have possessed the qualities sought in candidates for canonization. In the end, however, differing situations in the Indian church, a need in Peru for validation through the creation of saints, and personal and family connections may have determined canonization as much as individual virtue and accomplishments. Local conditions in Mexico, and Moya's absence in the last five years of his life may have robbed him of his chance for canonization and public recognition of his sainthood.

⁵⁵ Testamento y Codicilo.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Dussel, *Les évêques*, Appendix 1, 236.