**Coexistence and Conflict in the Spanish Southwest: The Pueblo Revolt of 1680**
*Digital History ID 651*

Author:   Pedro Naranjo
Date:1680

**Annotation:** In 1680, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico rose up against the Spanish missionaries and soldiers, destroying every Catholic church in the region. Pedro Naranjo, an Indian prisoner, explains the reasons behind the revolt.

**Document:** Asked whether he knows the reason or motives which the Indians of this kingdom had for rebelling...and why they burned the images, temples, crosses, rosaries, and things of divine worship, committing such atrocities as killing priests, Spaniards, women, and children...he said...they have planned to rebel on various occasions through conspiracies of the Indian sorcerers.... Finally, in the past years, at the summons of an Indian named Pope who is said to have communication with the devil, it happened that in an estufa [Indian temple] of the pueblo of Los Taos there appeared to the said Pope three figures of Indians who never came out of the estufa. They gave the said Pope to understand that they were going underground to the lake of Copala. He saw these figures emit fire from all the extremities of their bodies.... They told him to make a cord of maguey fiber and tie some knots in it which would signify the number of days that they must wait before the rebellion. He said that the cord was passed through all the pueblos of the kingdom so that the ones which agreed to it [the rebellion] might untie one knot in sign of obedience, and by the other knots they would know the days which were lacking.... The said cord was taken from pueblo to pueblo by the swiftest youths under the penalty of death if they revealed the secret. Everything being thus arranged, two days before the time set for its execution, because his lordship had learned of it and had imprisoned two Indian accomplices...it was carried out prematurely that night, because it seemed to them that they were now discovered; and they killed religious, Spaniards, women, and children. This being done, it was proclaimed in all the pueblos that everyone in common should obey the commands of their father whom they did not know, which would be given through...Pope.... As soon as the Spaniards had left the kingdom an order came from the said Indian, Pope, in which he commanded all the Indians to break the lands and enlarge their cultivated fields, saying that now they were as they had been in ancient times, free from the labor they had performed for the religious and the Spaniards, who could not now be alive. He said that this is the legitimate cause and the reason they had for rebelling....

Asked for what reason they so blindly burned the images, temples, crosses, and other things of divine worship, he stated that the said Indian, Pope...ordered in all the pueblos through which he passed that they instantly break up and burn the images of the holy Christ, the Virgin Mary and the other saints, the crosses, and everything pertaining to Christianity, and that they burn the temples, break up the bells, and separate from the wives whom God had given them in marriage and take those whom they desired. In order to take away their baptismal names, the water, and the holy oils, they were to plunge into the rivers and wash themselves with amole, which is a root native to the country, washing even their clothing, with the understanding that there would thus be taken from them the character of the holy sacraments.... They thereby returned to the state of their antiquity...that this was the better life and the one they desired, because the God of the Spaniards was worth nothing and theirs was very strong, the Spaniard's God being rotten wood.... [Pope] saw to it that they at once erected and rebuilt their houses of idolatry which they call estufas, and made very ugly masks in imitation of the devil...; and he said likewise that the devil had given them to understand that living thus in accordance with the law of their ancestors, they would harvest a great deal of maize, many beans, a great abundance of cotton, calabashes, and very large watermelons and cantaloupes; and that they could erect their houses and enjoy abundant health and leisure.

Source: Charles Wilson Hackett, *Revolt of the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico and Otermin's Attempted Reconquest, 1680-1682* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1942), 245-49.