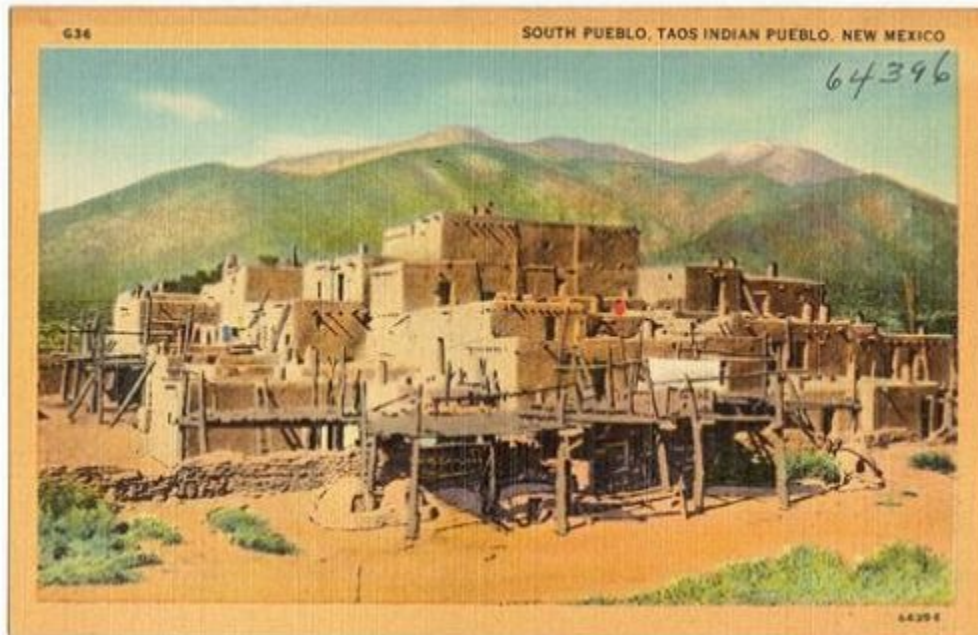


The Pueblo Revolt

by Jesse Kohn



New Mexico was a Spanish settlement founded in 1598. The first capital was San Juan de los Caballeros, and a few more towns were founded in the region in the following decade. However, the Spanish colony of New Mexico was relatively small, and only about 3,000 people lived there a century after its foundation. In 1675, the governor of New Mexico ordered the arrests of 47 Native American medicine men, religious leaders, and healers from the surrounding *pueblos*, or villages, where they lived. Of the four sentenced to death, only three faced the hangman—the fourth took his own life while waiting for his sentence to be served.

Ever since the Spanish colonists arrived in New Mexico in 1598, they had been working to suppress the ancient religion practiced by the Pueblo people. The colonial government had already outlawed festivals like the Kachina dances, where tribal members donned costumes of holy spirits. Precious religious icons such as Kachina dolls, ceremonial masks, and prayer sticks were seized and destroyed. These traditions and traditional objects were essential to the lives of the Pueblo people. Through them, they communed with their gods, honored the spirits that had dwelled beside them for thousands of years, and celebrated the land that had given them life. For the Pueblo people, to be forbidden from practicing their religion was like being separated from their own families and ancestors. The medicine men were the Pueblo people's most direct connection to their religious life. Although the Pueblo had, aside from a

few small-scale revolts, peacefully suffered many of the colonists' attempts to force the Roman Catholic religion upon them, there came a significant breaking point.

Several warriors banded together from the different pueblos surrounding Santa Fe and marched upon the capital to demand the medicine men be set free. Because the governor was afraid of a revolt, he agreed to free the prisoners. But it was too little, too late. The damage had been done, the seeds of revolt already sown.

One of the 47 medicine men imprisoned by the governor was a man named Popé. Popé was from a pueblo north of Santa Fe called *Ohkay Owingeh*, which means "place of the strong people" in the Tewa language. Not only was Popé strong; he was also intelligent and charismatic. Angered by his unjust imprisonment, the unwarranted deaths of the four medicine men, the torturous treatment undergone by all the prisoners, and most of all, the general degradation and destruction inflicted upon his people, Popé resolved to confront the violence of the colonists with violence of his own. After being set free from prison, Popé relocated to the Taos Pueblo and from there began to organize a large-scale revolt.

The Pueblo people were not a single unified group. In fact the name "Pueblo Indians" comes from the Spanish colonists who wanted to distinguish the type of Native Americans that lived together in villages and cultivated the land from the type of nomadic tribe that roamed about the region. Truthfully, the so-called "Pueblo Indians" were composed of many different nations, including the Tewa, Tiwa, Hopi, and Zuni. Each nation had its own language and customs. This disunity had long prevented the different Native American groups from successfully rising against the Spanish colonists. Individually, each tribe was too small to stand a chance in a conflict with the well-armed settlers. Popé recognized that only by working together could the Pueblo people challenge the colonial government.

Popé reached out across nations, spoke across languages, and summoned together a momentous surge of over 2,000 Pueblo warriors. They were united in their common desire to overthrow the colonial government and rid the unwelcome Spanish influence from the land. It took Popé five years to organize his plan. By August of 1680, the flame that Popé had ignited could not be stifled.

On August 10, Popé declared a revolt, and the united Pueblo people unleashed their forces. They struck the small, thinly populated settlements first; each Pueblo tribe targeting the settlements nearest to it. By August 13, every Spanish settlement in New Mexico had been destroyed. The Pueblo tribes convened to invade the capital together. Even in Santa Fe, the Spanish were largely outnumbered. Victory was swift and overwhelming. The Palace of the

Governor was surrounded. Although the governor eventually escaped, both he and his men were pursued all the way to El Paso. About 400 Spanish men, women, and children were killed. The rest were driven from the land.

With the colonists banished from the territory, Popé assumed leadership. His goal was to restore conditions to what the Pueblo people were accustomed to before the Spanish arrived. This meant outlawing the religious and agricultural practices the Spanish had imported. Even though many Pueblo people had embraced parts of the colonial lifestyle, Popé enforced his vision upon everyone. He ordered the burning of crucifixes, the destruction of livestock, and the upheaval of Spanish crops. Twelve years later, the Spaniards returned to recolonize a drought-impooverished and hunger-stricken land.

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. When was the Spanish settlement known as New Mexico founded?

- A. 1675
- B. 1616
- C. 1598
- D. 1680

2. The passage describes the sequence of events that led to a large-scale revolt of the Pueblo people.

"In 1675, the Governor of New Mexico ordered the arrests of 47 Native American medicine men, religious leaders, and healers from the surrounding pueblos ... where they lived."

What happened when a group of warriors marched upon the capital to demand the medicine men be set free?

- A. More towns were founded in New Mexico.
- B. The warriors took part in a Kachina dance.
- C. The Governor decided to leave New Mexico.
- D. The Governor set the prisoners free.

3. Read the following sentences:

"The so-called 'Pueblo Indians' were composed of many different nations, including the Tewa, Tiwa, Hopi, and Zuni. Each nation had its own language and customs. This disunity had long prevented the different Native American groups from successfully rising against the Spanish colonists. Individually, each tribe was too small to stand a chance in a conflict with the well-armed settlers...Popé reached out across nations, spoke across languages, and summoned together a momentous surge of over 2,000 Pueblo warriors."

What can be concluded about Popé based on this information?

- A. Popé was unable to help the Pueblo Indians overcome their differences and unite against the Spanish.
- B. Popé helped the Pueblo Indians overcome their differences and unite against the Spanish.
- C. Popé overestimated his ability to unite the Pueblo Indians against the Spanish despite their cultural differences.
- D. Popé was not involved in the unification of the Pueblo Indians against the Spanish.

4. What was the main purpose of the large-scale Pueblo revolt organized by Popé?

- A. to free the Native American medicine men, religious leaders, and healers arrested by the Governor
- B. to make Popé the leader of the New Mexico territory
- C. to banish the Spanish colonists from the New Mexico territory
- D. to banish the Spanish colonists from the capital of New Mexico

5. What is this passage mainly about?

- A. the arrest of Pueblo people by the Spanish in 1675
- B. the revolt of the Pueblo people against Spanish colonists
- C. the founding and development of New Mexico by the Spanish
- D. the importance of medicine men to Pueblo people's religious life

6. Read the following sentence: "Angered by his unjust imprisonment, the unwarranted deaths of the other medicine men, the tortuous treatment undergone by all the prisoners, and most of all, the general **degradation** and destruction inflicted upon his people, Popé resolved to confront the violence of the colonists with violence of his own."

As used in this passage, what does the word "**degradation**" mean?

- A. confrontation
- B. decrease
- C. appreciation
- D. humiliation

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

_____ the governor of New Mexico freed the Native American prisoners, a large-scale revolt was still organized.

- A. Instead
- B. Although
- C. Especially
- D. Initially

8. What was Popé's goal once he assumed leadership in New Mexico?

9. How did Spanish colonists work to suppress the ancient religion practiced by the Pueblo people?

10. The passage explains that the arrested medicine men were set free after pueblo warriors surrounded Santa Fe and marched upon the capital to demand the medicine men be set free. The passage states, "Because the governor was afraid of a revolt, he agreed to free the prisoners. But it was too little, too late. The damage had been done, the seeds of revolt already sown."

Explain what damage had been done that made revolt inevitable. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

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- B. 1616
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Popé's goal was to restore the conditions that existed in New Mexico before the Spanish arrived.

9. How did Spanish colonists work to suppress the ancient religion practiced by the Pueblo people?

Students should note:

Festivals, like the Kachina dances, were outlawed. Religious icons, including Kachina dolls, ceremonial masks, and prayer sticks, were destroyed. Pueblo people were forbidden from practicing their religion.

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Explain what damage had been done that made revolt inevitable. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

Students should explain that the Pueblo people were fed up with the unjust treatment they received from the Spanish colonists. Critical aspects of the Pueblo lifestyle had been attacked or undermined by the Spanish. For example, the Spanish suppressed the ancient religion practiced by the Pueblo people and arrested and killed medicine men, who were key religious figures. The organizer of the large-scale Pueblo revolt, Popé, was "angered by his unjust imprisonment, the unwarranted deaths of the other medicine men, the tortuous treatment undergone by all the prisoners, and most of all, the general degradation and destruction inflicted upon his people." Thus, he resolved to confront violence with violence.

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1. What is a meaning of the word **colonize**?

- A. to cause annoyance
- B. to settle on (land)
- C. to realize

2. What is another meaning of the word **colonize**?

- A. to say something to someone that expresses praise
- B. to establish a territory governed by a distant country
- C. to move away from a place and to another direction

Please use each answer choice only once. Choose the one word that best completes the sentence.

3. There were thirteen _____ at one time.

- A. colonies
- B. colony
- C. colonialism
- D. colonial
- E. colonials
- F. colonized
- G. colonists

4. A _____ is like a whole city of ants.

- A. colonies
- B. colony
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5. In 1629, long before the American Revolution, Charles I gave land to _____ who went to live there.

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6. From morning to night, _____ times were very different from today.

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7. This system is described as imperialism or _____.

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8. Eirik _____ this inhospitable land and then tried to push on to new discoveries.

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9. Mercantilist policy discouraged making cash payments to _____.

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10. Please write your own sentence using the word **colonize**.

11. What would you like to remember about the meaning of the word **colonize** so that you can use it when you write or speak?

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- C. a building where people go to eat

2. What is another meaning of the word **revolt**?

- A. to explore something unknown
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3. Georgia kept the name even after the American _____, when England no longer ruled the United States.

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4. When the _____ War started in 1776, Americans fought under many different flags.

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