

2. Juan (Tiwa Pueblo) Explains the Pueblo Revolt, 1681

... [H]e had brought into his presence another Indian who said his name is Juan, and in his language Vnsuti, that he is a native of the pueblo of Alameda, a widower, and that he did not know his age. Apparently he is more than a hundred years old because he declares that he remembers distinctly, as if it were yesterday, when the Spaniards entered this kingdom, and that when he was baptized he was able to stand on his own feet. His lordship received the oath from him in due legal form before God, our Lord, and a sign of the cross, under charge of which he promised to tell the truth as he might be questioned and might know it, the seriousness of the oath having been explained to him by the said interpreter. Being asked if he knows why he is arrested, he said that he judges it was because some Spaniards caught him in the pueblo of Alameda on the occasion when, finding himself alone and without any relative and having kin among the Spaniards, he had gone in search of them; and that before he arrived the Spaniards caught him and brought him to this camp. He did not hide himself or do anything whatever; rather, he is rejoiced to find himself among Christians, and although he is a prisoner, he is well content. Asked to state truly what he knows or has heard of the discussions and juntas which the rebellious Indians are holding, he says what he has heard in general is that they are saying they must die from hardships of cold and want; that they have gone to the sierras, leaving the sick in caves among the rocks; and that although it is true that many have desired to go down to their pueblos peacefully, because the señor governor and captain-general has sent to find them, and because the Spaniards who went to Cochití also summoned them, granting them the said peace to which many of them agreed so that they might go to the quiet of their houses, the chief captains who governed them took them away from their pueblos, carrying them to the sierras, and being unwilling to agree to anything; and the rest of the people do what they order out of fear. This is what he knows and has heard, and this is why they say that they want to die. He has heard nothing else about this matter. Asked to state and declare truthfully what reasons or motives the natives of this kingdom had for rebelling, he said that he does not know, nor has he heard any reason given. Asked why they killed religious and Spaniards and burned the church and all the houses, which they did after living so long a time among the Spaniards, protected from the enemy Apaches, being Christians and living quietly in their pueblos and under the law of God, he said that to him, he being so old, they never communicated anything; that the most he knew, which is common knowledge, was that when they committed this destruction it was by order of an Indian from San Juan whom he does not know, who came down through all the pueblos in company with the captains and many other people, ordering them to burn the churches, convents, holy crosses, and every object pertaining to Christianity; and that they separate from the wives the religious had given them in marriage and take those whom they wished; and other things that he does not remember. He said that

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this Indian of San Juan told and gave all the people to understand in the pueblos where he went that they should do as he said because they would thereby be assured of harvesting much maize, cotton, and an abundance of all crops, and better ones than ever, and that they would live in great ease. The people have remained very well content and pleased with all this until now, when they have experienced the contrary, and have seen that they deceived them, for as a matter of fact they have had very small harvests, there has been no rain, and everyone is perishing.