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Governors, Missionaries, Kachinas, and the Holy Office of the Inquisition, 1632–59

> The religious of this province do not know God, nor do they respect the king.
>
> —*Governor Bernardo López de Mendizábal, 1662*[1]

> The governor's reports contain so many falsehoods about the friars and the citizens of this province.
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> —*Thomé Domínguez de Mendoza, 1662*[2]

The creaking *carretas* wended their way northward from waterhole to waterhole along the long Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, reaching New Mexico in spring 1659 after months of travel from Mexico City. One wagon stood out. Quite distinct from the *carretas*, a large *carossa*, a covered wagon with bedding and curtains, carried Governor López de Mendizábal and his wife, doña Teresa de Aguilera de la Rocha. In a separate wagon rode their servants, among them, the mulatta Clarilla and the Black Ana de la Cruz, who would live in the Palace of the Governor in Santa Fe as the governor's servants.[3] His term would be tumultuous and unsettling to the missionaries, settlers, and

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Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, each for different reasons. While the Plains tribes appeared peripheral to events in New Mexico at the time, missionaries continued to venture among them, hoping to convert them to Christianity.

Still, the succeeding governors in the Provincia de Nuevo México between 1632 and 1659 would not be as easygoing as Governor Manuel de Silva Nieto had been. While the New Mexico friars had opposed the administrations of the provincial governors in the first decades of the seventeenth century, governors Francisco de la Mora (1632 to 1635), Francisco Martínez de Baeza (1635 to 1637), and Luis de Rosas (1637 to 1641) would test the patience of friars, settlers, and Pueblo Indians. Captain Luis de Rosas, for example, arrived in New Mexico in 1637 after the long and arduous journey northward on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro. Once in New Mexico, word spread up the Camino Real that the new governor had arrived, and typically each Indian pueblo and Spanish settlement along the Rio Grande received him with the customary courtesies.[4] Once at the Villa de Santa Fé, the settlers came out in procession and greeted him. While the welcome extended to the governor appeared joyous, among the friars and some settlers the rumor flitted about that he was a crony of the viceroy, Marqués de Cadereita, who had given him a free hand to deal with the cantankerous friary of New Mexico. The experienced Rosas, who had been a military commander in Flanders for fifteen years, seemed well prepared to deal with any military and political adversity. He certainly knew what he faced, given the well-known treatment of previous governors by the New Mexican friars.

Almost immediately, Governor Rosas offended the friars when he refused to convene the *residencia*, the official audit, of his predecessor, Martínez de Baeza. The friars hoped that the *residencia* would serve as a means to prosecute the former governor for crimes and abuses charged against him by the friars and their loyal settlers.[5] To everyone's amazement, Rosas let Martínez off without insisting on a strong *residencia*. Governor Rosas has lost no time in serving notice to the clergy that he would not do their bidding.

Charges and countercharges between governor and prelate made their way southward to Mexico City as the civil authorities and the clergy of New Mexico each took a self-righteous stance. The situation finally came to a head with disastrous results. In late 1638 the friars and some settlers met at Sandia Pueblo with the ailing Friar Perea presiding.[6] The members of the meeting at Sandia approved an investigation of Rosas and his followers conducted by

Perea. In their report, they accused Rosas of attempting to destroy ecclesiastical privileges, immunities, and authority. In their testimonies against Rosas, the friars gave example after example of his disdain for the clergy. The anti-Rosas missionaries and settlers received a sharp blow, however, when Friar Perea, commissary of the Holy Office, died during the winter of 1638 and was solemnly buried at Sandia Pueblo. His death temporarily set back the plan to have the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City prosecute Rosas as soon as they could collect enough damaging evidence against him. Meanwhile, Perea's office as agent of the Inquisition remained vacant for over two years. In the meantime the Rosas affair reached its climax. For the moment, the ecclesiastical court presided over by the prelate Friar Juan de Salas appeared to be the only power in New Mexico left to the friars.[7]

The situation and its complicated issues worsened through 1639, when Sebastian de Sandoval slandered the priests, who had him excommunicated. Despite their demands, Rosas refused to force Sandoval to make absolution. The governor, furthermore, supported and encouraged Sandoval's barrage of vocal statements against the priests and their supporting settlers. The friars feared for Sandoval's life; in fact one of them predicted he would be killed. Early in January of 1640 Sandoval's body was found.[8]

Immediately, Rosas accused two friars of committing the murder. Shocked at the accusation, the priests denied the charges, and the anti-Rosas settlers supported them. Because Sandoval, the excommunicant, had died without absolution, Friar Salas refused to permit his burial in holy ground. While Friar Antonio de Aranda, guardian of the church at Santa Fe, was temporarily absent, Rosas ordered Sandoval's body buried in the church. A supporter of Governor Rosas, Friar Juan de Vidania, officiated over the requiem, and soon afterward Friar Salas had him arrested. The intrepid Rosas forcibly rescued him and appointed the friar to the post of "royal chaplain."[9]

In defiance of Rosas, the clergymen solicited and obtained the support of some of the frontiersmen who opposed Rosas's heavy-handed administration in which their property rights had been threatened. The Sandoval-Vidania affair had forced their hand to support the friars. Meeting at Santo Domingo, the ecclesiastical capital of New Mexico, the disaffected frontiersmen joined the friars to defy the governor. They fortified the pueblo and challenged the governor's authority over them.[10] The challenge amounted to no more than a standoff, which lasted a year while both sides hurled accusations at one another.

Changes were in the wind. In the spring of 1641, another governor, Juan Flores de Sierra y Valdéz, relieved Rosas. About the time that the anti-Rosas faction gained political control of the Cabildo de Santa Fe, the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City confirmed Friar Juan de Salas as the commissary of the Inquisition in New Mexico. Salas succeeded the deceased Friar Perea to that office. Shortly after his arrival, Governor Sierra, who was ill when he arrived, died. Immediately the inquisitor, Friar Salas, and the supporting *cabildo* members moved to have Rosas arrested, jailed, and bound over for trial.[11] Rosas's enemies now held control of the civil government. Fearing for his life, the incarcerated Rosas managed to contact Flores's son before he returned to New Spain. Entrusting his last will and testament to him to take to Mexico City, Rosas told him that his enemies intended to kill him.[12]

When it did happen, news of Rosas's death spread throughout Santa Fe and other areas in the province with astounding rapidity. Reports of how Rosas died similarly were widespread. It seems that Nicolás Ortíz, a soldier from Zacatecas who had gone to Mexico in 1637 on business, had returned and learned from certain settlers that Rosas had had an affair with his wife, María Bustillos.[13] Suspecting that she had taken refuge in the house where Rosas was held prisoner, Ortíz persuaded the alcalde and other witnesses to go with him to search Rosas's quarters. The first search proved fruitless, but for some strange reason Ortíz insisted on a second search. This time, they found María in a place that had been previously searched. Enraged, Ortíz seemed uncontrollable. María was taken into custody, and Rosas angrily protested the contrived situation and charges. As a precaution, his guard was doubled. The guard, however, refused to accept responsibility for Rosas's life. Just after midnight on January 25, 1642, a gang of masked swordsmen, one of them Ortíz, overpowered the guards. Apparently Ortíz ran into the room and stabbed Rosas to death with a dozen sword thrusts.[14]

After a quick trial, the anti-Rosas supporters acquitted Ortíz. As soon as he could, Ortíz departed New Mexico, moving fast along the Camino Real southward to Nueva Vizcaya (present Chihuahua). Meanwhile, the pro-Rosas faction dispatched a hard-riding messenger ahead of him to advise the governor of Nueva Vizcaya, Luis de Valdéz, of the case and its outcome. Governor Valdéz posted soldiers along the Royal Road, and when Ortíz came by, they arrested him and took him to Parral. After a second trial Ortíz was found guilty and sentenced to death. He was permitted to appeal the judgment

against him. Before the appeal could take place, Ortíz escaped, and the final disposition of his case became clouded by time.[15]

The assassination of the king's governor proved to be the undoing of the anti-Rosas faction. In time, word of the conflict reached the king's court in Madrid, and a new governor, Alonso Pacheco de Herédia (1642–44), arrived in New Mexico with secret instructions to punish those guilty of the murder of the royal governor. Armed with sufficient authority to judge and execute those responsible, Pacheco arrived in Santa Fe in the fall of 1642.[16]

Working quickly, Governor Pacheco opened an inquiry regarding the assassination and conspiracy against Rosas. After months of investigation, Pacheco ordered the execution of eight soldiers, ringleaders in the murder plot. After they were beheaded, their impaled heads were displayed in the plaza of Santa Fe as an object lesson for all. Hoping to bring an end to the tragic affair, Pacheco declared a general amnesty to minor offenders. Much to the dismay of the clergy, Pacheco ordered the remains of the excommunicant Sandoval, which had been removed by clergymen from the church, reinterred in the church cemetery.[17] So ended the Rosas affair, which had led to a brief rebellion and narrowly missed plummeting New Mexico into a civil war.[18]

As the succession of governors in the 1640s and 1650s had locked horns with the friars, many of the pueblos, observing such consternations and sensing disunity among them, became increasingly restless. Although Indian rebellions had occurred throughout the period, they were small and easily put down. The church-state issues cooled down between 1656 and 1659 primarily because Friar Tomás Manso, the *padre custodio*, had been influential in having his brother, Juan Manso de Contreras, appointed governor of the province.[19] The pueblos, however, had sensed the disarray caused by the competing Spanish colonial civilian and ecclesiastical authorities. Two decades would pass before the Pueblo Indians, biding their time, could muster their forces for a successful revolt. The administration of Bernardo López de Mendizábal would leave an indelible mark on the harried relationships between church and state as it related to the Spanish colonial Indian policy in New Mexico.

In 1658 Viceroy Duque de Albuquerque appointed López de Mendizábal to succeed Juan Manso as governor of New Mexico. López de Mendizábal, a member of a distinguished family, was born near Puebla on the Hacienda de San Cosme y San Damian in "la jurisdicción del Pueblo de Chietla" in

New Spain.[20] His father, Captain Cristóbal López de Mendizábal, a Basque who had immigrated to Mexico from Oñate, Spain, the same place where the family of Juan Pérez de Oñate originated, died in 1635. In 1663 López de Mendizábal's mother, doña Leonor de Pastrana, resided in Mexico City. She came from a wealthy family whose father, a merchant from Toledo, Spain, had settled for a while in Chietla, then in Puebla de Los Angeles, and finally in Mexico City.[21] His maternal great-grandfather, Juan Núñez de Leon, had been the only dark spot in the family history, for he had been found guilty of some religious indiscretion by the Holy Office of the Inquisition and had undergone the penitent's auto-de-fé in the Convento de San Francisco in Mexico City on April 20, 1603.[22]

Loyal citizens of Spain and the empire, the family included one member who had served on the powerful Consejo Real de Las Indias (the Council of the Indies). Others had been nuns and abbesses or had belonged to the Military Order of Santiago or had served as lawyers and judges. Two family members had served as regents of Navarre and Seville, another as chancellor of Valladolid, and one had served on the Junta del Supremo del Inquisición. His uncle, Fray Ambrosio de Mendizábal, had been a doctor of theology, and a cousin, Fray Cristóbal de la Carraga, became a bishop. Governor López came from a politically active family.[23]

Before his appointment to the governorship of New Mexico, López de Mendizábal had served in various political, ecclesiastical, and military assignments in the New World for almost fourteen years.[24] In the tradition of his family, who had served the crown in imperial posts, López de Mendizábal had attended the Jesuit colleges at Puebla and Mexico City as well as the Royal University of Mexico, the most renowned of the colonial universities, founded in 1551. Very well versed in classical Latin, he also studied common law and the arts. After completing his studies, he served in the Armada de Galeones and the presidio at Cartagena de Indias in Venezuela. While living in Cartagena, López de Mendizábal acted as a *visitador* of the diocese where his cousin was bishop. Afterward he served as *alcalde mayor* at San Juan de los Llanos and later at the pueblo of Chicontepeque in the Corregimiento de Guayacoctla in New Spain.

At Cartagena, López de Mendizábal married doña Teresa de Aguilera de la Rocha, born in Alexandria de la Palla in the Italian kingdom of Milan. Her father, Maestre de Campo Melchor de Aguilera from Granada, had

served the crown for fifty years. Teresa de Aguilera was born when her father served as governor of Alexandria. Years later, when her father took a new post as governor of Cartagena de Indias, Teresa met López de Mendizábal. After don Melchor's stint in Cartagena, he retired to Toledo, Spain, where he died.

Teresa de Aguilera's mother, doña María Rocha, born in Ireland, lived in Madrid in her later life. Doña Teresa's maternal grandfather was the Conde de Rocha, who had been ordered from Ireland to Spain by the king. The Rocha family took pride in moving to Spain to escape English tyranny. Doña Teresa came from a family of high social standing.[25] After their marriage, don Bernardo and doña Teresa moved to New Spain where he served as *alcalde mayor*. There he attracted the attention of the viceroy, and in 1658 don Bernardo López de Mendizábal, then forty years old, received his appointment as *governador* and *capitan general* of the Provincia de Nuevo México.[26]

Governor López de Mendizábal had a definite preconception of his role as regent of the remote province of New Mexico. He firmly believed in the superiority of secular authority over ecclesiastical privileges, immunities, and jurisdictions. As a well-educated and politically experienced aristocrat, López de Mendizábal viewed the frontier society of New Mexico and New Spain with a certain contempt. In the end, López de Mendizábal's background would work against him in a land that had historically been filled with disenchantment for previous governors. He failed to realize the relationship between the power of the governors and the old-line families who had been in New Mexico for over two lifetimes.

Toward the end of 1658, López de Mendizábal and his retinue left Mexico City with the yearly mission supply caravan. They were accompanied by a member of the military escort, Miguel Noriega, captain of the cavalry, served López de Mendizábal as his personal secretary. Walking among the teamsters were twenty-four priests and the new *padre custodio*, Friar Juan Ramírez. Waving good-bye to their friends and relatives, the members of the caravan departed the ancient capital.

The journey on the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro was long and arduous. By spring 1659 the caravan had reached Parral on the southern end of Nueva Vizcaya's mining frontier. The rigors of the journey manifested themselves in the desertion of some of the drivers, who had had enough. The deserters were captured and returned to the caravan. López de Mendizábal, however, delivered a tirade against their dereliction of duty and was not about to be

quieted.[27] The wagon train wended its way from water hole to water hole across the desert until it reached the Conversión de los Mansos y Sumas near El Paso on the Rio Grande. The missionaries there had prepared a reception for the new *padre custodio* and had the Camino Real lined with Indians holding branches to form an archway across the road. This angered López de Mendizábal because as the chief political leader of the province, the honor went not to him but to the ecclesiastical chief, Friar Ramírez. The governor ordered his soldiers to break up the demonstration. Pulling the branches from Indian hands and throwing them to the ground, the soldiers roughed up some of the natives, who, perplexed by the Spanish behavior, became afraid and angry.[28] The missionaries and Indians of the *conversión* stepped aside and let the governor and his men pass first. As their new prelate and twenty-four friars were behind the wagon train, the El Paso missionaries and Indians grabbed some extra branches and reformed the arch of welcome for their brothers. López de Mendizábal scoffed at the gesture. The priests, however, would remember the bad example set by the governor before the Indians, who could have used a better Christian model.

Moving northward along the Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, the caravan crossed at El Paso, but not without the archway incident. Proceeding northward along the Jornada del Muerto, they reached Socorro at the extreme end of New Mexico's Río Abajo. On June 30, 1659, they reached the *convento* at Nuestra Señora de Socorro. Friar Benito de la Natividad, the padre guardian of the *convento*, graciously received him. Fray Benito waited until the caravan reached the pueblo, and then with church bells ringing and trumpets blaring, the priest sprinkled holy water on the governor and prelate and received them in the church. Appreciative of the token gesture but unimpressed, Governor López de Mendizábal thought the priests could do a little better in receiving him. Someone thought López de Mendizábal had mumbled a sarcasm. "They should receive [me] like the most Holy Sacrament on the Feast of Corpus Christi," he was thought to have said.[29] Before long, everyone in the province was either aghast at the comment or secretly in admiration of his sense of humor. The priests again took note of his indiscretion.

The priests witnessed more sarcasms by the governor and took note of his attitude toward religion. Reaching Socorro, the caravan stopped to camp. That evening one of the settlers invited López de Mendizábal and doña Teresa to supper. Doña Luisa Dias de Betansos y Castro, an eighty-year-old

widow but a very spry frontierswoman, and her daughter, doña Isabel de Salazar, had made a dinner in honor of the dignitaries. The conversation at the table turned to religious matters, and López de Mendizábal obligingly let doña Luisa know how he felt about the role of the friars. Turning to doña Isabel, López de Mendizábal asked, "Do you go frequently to mass?" "Yes, we go when we can," she responded. "Lord knows we would like to go everyday," she added, "but oftentimes we can't go because we don't have horses or mules." Flippantly, López de Mendizábal remarked that they were "healthier or better off not going to mass."[30] He suggested that they would be happier not having to be around the friars frequently. López de Mendizábal had made a poor impression among these settlers, who were insulted and shocked by his comments. His caustic words put a damper on the conversation and according to report, doña Luisa and doña Isabel were glad when López de Mendizábal and his wife finally departed their home.

After dinner the party went out to the church. López de Mendizábal, still in a caustic mood, remarked to his courteous hosts, "In these remote lands all that is needed is a jacal and some ornaments" instead of a church.[31] The truculent octogenarian, doña Luisa, had been waiting for López de Mendizábal to make one more insulting comment. Calmly but firmly, she answered with asperity, "Where else but in the temple of God should these precious objects be put to use, for they edify all Catholics and Spaniards as well as Indians." With that López de Mendizábal was silenced.

Up the Rio Grande went the caravan. Everywhere they stopped, López de Mendizábal scandalized the citizenry at haciendas, *estancias*, and missions along the way. When they reached Santa Fe, he refused to participate in the traditional reception that the governor and *cabildo* had arranged for the prelate since the days of Governor Pedro de Peralta. Instead, he persisted in enjoying his newly founded reputation as a persecutor of friars. Governor Bernardo López de Mendizábal's fervent belief in the supremacy of civil authority over ecclesiastical jurisdiction became the cornerstone of his policies, or at least his practice, in dealing with the priests. With that, López de Mendizábal quickly established the theme of his administration. The expedition finally reached Santa Fe, and López de Mendizábal prepared for the required tour of the province.

In November 1660, Governor López de Mendizábal unveiled a part of his Indian policy. The missionaries in the Provincia de Nuevo México were

shocked by what happened next. Sitting in the plaza of Isleta Pueblo, Governor Bernardo López de Mendizábal and the Spanish settlers of New Mexico who accompanied him there watched the ritualistic pueblo *catzina* dances with interest. In attendance were Captain Tomé Domínguez de Mendoza, the *sargento mayor* of the Jurisdiction of Isleta and local *estanciero*, and his brother, Juan Domínguez de Mendoza. Near Captain Miguel Noriega, the governor's secretary, stood Juan Griego Navatato, a Tewa who lived among the Spaniards in Santa Fe, and Pedro de Arteaga, López de Mendizábal's indentured servant. The Spaniards watched the dance in the cool morning air of fall 1660.[32]

In cadence, the Indians, dressed as *catzinas*, with hawk's bells jingling and hand gourds rattling, came out dancing and chanting, "Hu! Hu! Hu! Hu!" Through Spanish colonial eyes the Indians in the dance appeared fierce in their dress. They looked "evil," said Tomé Domínguez de Mendoza, "especially the one who wore an ugly guise like a demon with horns on his head, and eyes which hung out an inch and a half from their sockets [it was] a horrible thing, and they chanted in a monotone, Hu! Hu! Hu!" López de Mendizábal turned to his retinue and said, "Look at this! This is nothing more than Hu! Hu! Hu! And the thieving friars say that this is superstitious."[33] All the while, Governor López de Mendizábal knew that the friars considered them diabolical and superstitious and that they had forbidden the Indians to dance them for almost thirty years, since the days of Custodio Estévan de Perea. Now Governor López de Mendizábal gave the Indians permission to dance them. His Indian policy, based on permissiveness, would play havoc with the mission program and would become a source of grievance for the friars in the province.[34] Although Domínguez de Mendoza thought differently, López de Mendizábal was his governor and his *capitan general*; who would dare to contradict him? Still, for Domínguez de Mendoza there was something wrong in watching these dancers which the Pueblo Indians called *catzinas*.

The pueblos, on the other hand, quickly saw an opportunity to practice their cultural values in plain sight of Spanish authorities, missionaries, and settlers. In the context of the times, nevertheless, did implementation of the pronounced policies and orders issued by Governor López de Mendizábal offer legitimate alternatives regarding the treatment of Pueblo Indians not under missionary control as well as their counterpart mission neophytes? Or would the entrenched Franciscan-dominated mission field practices in

New Mexico prevail to dictate sole control over mission and non-mission Indians? In the end, López de Mendizábal and his loyal followers, having made their point, would be prosecuted by the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City for obstructing the mission program as well as for other religious indiscretions.

Indeed, the shocked friars considered the *catzina* dancers diabolical and superstitious and forbade the Indians to dance them. Despite his opposition to the governor, Father Ramírez, the padre guardian of the New Mexico missions, had allegedly told the governor that he saw nothing wrong with the *catzina* dances and had told him to allow them.[35] Later the Franciscans would bring charges against their own padre guardian, Juan Ramírez, for this and other improprieties.

To López de Mendizábal, the broader issues included questions regarding civil versus ecclesiastical control over Indians that needed to be defined. He strongly declared that ecclesiastical jurisdiction conflicted with his authority as governor of the province. He made his policy manifest in a series of declarations about Indian labor and its relationship to the mission process. He refused to support the friars' demands for the punishment of mission Indians for crimes against the church. López de Mendizábal hoped to instruct the friars in the differences between sins against the church and crimes against the state. In his view, the missionaries only had jurisdiction over mission Indians, not the entire pueblo. Thus, he sought to weaken their position by pronouncing the supremacy of his civil authority over that of the church by discrediting the friars and limiting their work and their role in that frontier society.

López de Mendizábal aimed to prevent the missionaries from exercising their power over Indian pueblos, particularly those that had refused to be a part of the mission program. Not only did he draw the distinction between non-mission and mission Indians; he also drew the line between servitude and paid labor by Indians as well as punishment meted out for sins against the church and crimes against the state. Repeatedly López de Mendizábal made it clear that the civil authorities would no longer assist the priests in punishing Indians for sins against the church. The priests would, under his policies, have to mete out their own punishments and pay Indians for work done at their bidding. To that end, he appointed several of his followers to the office of *alcalde mayor de indios* to carry out his policies. The office of *alcalde mayor de indios*, which had been created in the mid-1640s in New

Mexico, had been introduced to manage large Indian areas that had been divided into eight jurisdictions.[36] One of López de Mendizábal's most faithful followers, Nicolas de Aguilar, played an important role in the implementation of his Indian policy.[37] Like all other *alcaldes mayores de indios* assigned to other pueblo districts, Aguilar, as mandated, resided within the Salinas jurisdiction. His duties included informing Indians of their legal status, and he worked tirelessly to familiarize himself with issues between settlers and Indians within his jurisdiction. In particular, he reported all offenses against Indians. As an *alcalde mayor de indios*, he served unsalaried.

The friars observed that the unsalaried *alcaldes mayores de indios* were lower-class people who were constantly seeking ways to better their interests.[38] Perhaps the status of the office intrigued them and inspired unquestioned loyalty to the governor who had appointed them. Aside from his loyalty to don Bernardo, Aguilar, a rugged frontiersman, did not fear the Franciscan missionaries. He would not have long to prove his worth to his governor. The friars not only challenged López de Mendizábal's policies but also questioned the character of his appointees to the office and gathered information about all of the *alcaldes mayores de indios*.

When they focused on Aguilar, for example, they learned that he, born of mestizo parentage sometime in 1623, hailed from Michoacan.[3] At eighteen years old, he settled as a miner in Parral in present Chihuahua. In 1641 he filed charges against claim jumpers who caved in his mine.[39] One dreadful night in 1654, when confronted by a posse led by his uncle, Hernando de Villagomez, who had charged him with kidnapping two women, Aguilar drew his harquebus and killed him. He fled under cover of darkness without a trace.[40] Apparently, Aguilar had been pardoned for the murder of his uncle by the governor of Nueva Vizcaya. Later, Governor López de Mendizábal said that Aguilar had benefited from a *cedula de indulto*, a general amnesty granted throughout the empire by the king on the occasion of a prince being born to the royal family.[41]

Sometime in the 1650s, Aguilar showed up in New Mexico by way of the Great Plains. Former governor Juan de Samaniego y Jaca (1653–56), for whom Aguilar had served, recommended him to Governor López de Mendizábal, who appointed him *alcalde mayor de indios* of the jurisdiction of Las Salinas in 1659.[42] In any case, Aguilar had earned his way into the graces of New Mexican administrators.

Within the first year of his administration, the Laws of the Indies required that each governor make at least one *visita* of the province and submit a report to the viceroy regarding the status of all Indian pueblos and Spanish settlements in the province.[43] The law required the governor to make the *visita* only once during his term of office,[44] but it did not mean that he could not later return to certain pueblos or consider any other complaints from Indians. The law merely limited the obligation to ensure that, for each administration, the entire province would be seen at least once and that each governor would become familiar with places and situations within his jurisdiction. Particularly, during his inspection of the Indian pueblos, the governor, as required, explained his role as judge and defender of their legal rights.[45] To that end, López de Mendizábal, as part of purpose of the *visita*, listened to Indian complaints and, as required, would later submit them to the *juezes ordinarios* (ordinary judges) in the Villa de Santa Fé for investigation and, if necessary, prosecution.

In October 1659, López de Mendizábal and his *alcaldes mayores* began the inspection of the province.[46] Quickly the friars pointed out that the *visita* had been undertaken to investigate them, not the items required by law. After the governor's *visita* at the pueblo of Alamillo near Socorro, the friars felt justified in their concern. At Alamillo, López de Mendizábal announced his intention to implement the Indian policy under his control and take it away from the missionaries. Aware of the antimissionary sentiment at Alamillo, López demonstrated support for Indian causes.

Sitting at a table in the plaza, the bald-headed, bespectacled Governor López de Mendizábal, wearing a black traveler's hat with a tall crown and broad brim, gathered his soldiers, translators, and the Indians around him.[47] Positing a series of leading questions, he asked the natives if they "supported the missions."[48] To the missionaries' dismay, he inquired about concubinage among them and punishments they received for it. López de Mendizábal made it clear that the friars could not punish Indians for certain crimes. Philosophically, he felt that the friars would distinguish between sins against God and crimes against the state.[49] In drawing the line between offenses punishable by friars and those punishable by the civil authority, the governor ordered that Indians could not be placed in stocks or jails without his permission. That, he said, had already been determined by the king of Spain.[50]

Bitterly the friars complained to their superiors. They claimed López de Mendizábal had deliberately encouraged the Indians to make accusations

against their minister, the ninety-year-old Friar Francisco Acevedo.[51] One woman stood up and said the friar had "deflowered" her. With impunity, Governor López de Mendizábal ordered one of his men to Father Acevedo's cell to take a *manta* (blanket) from him as an indemnity to be paid to the woman. As the aggrieved woman took the blanket, the pueblo broke into a "loud cacophony,"[52] as if in mockery of their minister. When the friars pleaded with him to defend himself, the old priest, kneeling in prayer, replied that his defense was his old age, his ill health, and his reputation as a simple and holy man who had worked among Indians for more than twenty-eight years. Besides, given the false accusation made against him, he did not wish to make more of it.[53] Acknowledging the damage done to his reputation, Acevedo did not remain at Alamillo. Four decades later, the Franciscan chronicler Fray Agustin Vetancurt, in his *Menologio*, wrote that Acevedo died at Abó and was buried there.[54]

The missionaries were outraged, for the judgment against the old priest assumed guilt on his part, and the public humiliation besmirched his reputation as a clergyman. The missionaries maintained that only their prelate, as the *juéz ecclesiástico* (ecclesiastic judge), had the right to judge them—not the governor. López de Mendizábal countered by saying that he was obligated to make the case public in order to discharge his duty.[55] Already the governor could sense the contradictions between the legal status of Indians, ecclesiastical immunities, and gubernatorial jurisdiction.

After Alamillo, López de Mendizábal visited other nearby pueblos, some of which were in the Salinas jurisdiction. Everywhere he went, the friars met him with distrust, while the Indians come out with curiosity to see him. Within the jurisdiction López de Mendizábal visited Abó, Quarai, Tajique, and Chililí before moving northward to Galisteo and Santa Fe. At each place he visited, he informed the Indians of his duty to administer Indian policies as prescribed by the Laws of the Indies.

At Socorro, his last stop before going to the Salinas pueblos, one of the ministers gave the governor a list of names of Indians to be punished by the *escolta* for concubinage. As customary, the priests handed the governor a written list of offenders, but again López drew the line. He announced that no Indian would be punished for any sin by order of the priests. As he saw it, such punishments were not within the purview of the civil government.

Eventually the governor and his retinue moved eastward across the mountains to the Salinas jurisdiction. At San Gregorio de Abó, Fray Aguado, the

guardian, came out of the church sprinkling holy water and blessing López de Mendizábal and his retinue. Years later when the friars sought to prove that the López *visita* of 1659 had been undertaken to investigate them, several of them noted their first meeting with Governor López de Mendizábal. They recalled that cold day in early November when all of them, exhausted from the journey from Socorro over the mountainous terrain, had agreed that, overall, the governor had made a lasting negative impression. When Ray Benito de la Natividad came out of the church to meet him "with pealing of bells and with other musical instruments which the churches in that custodia have and with a large cross," the governor harshly rebuked him. López de Mendizábal told him that he should have "gone out two leagues from the convent to receive him."[56] Soon after, when López de Mendizábal arrived at San Gregorio de Abó, Friar Antonio Aguado suffered the same castigation. From there, López de Mendizábal and his retinue continued the *visita* by stopping at Cuarac, Tajique, and Chililí.

Whether López ever went to Tabira or Tenabo is unknown. After he left Salinas, the entourage went to Galisteo, where he encountered more resistance by the friars to his policies. Indeed, the *visita* of 1659 was revealing in two ways. First, the friars were unwilling to accept any tampering with their mission program by the governor, no matter what legalities he might present regarding the appropriateness of his actions. Second, Governor López de Mendizábal had announced the basic premises of his Indian policy as it concerned the Pueblo Indians. López de Mendizábal stressed that he premised his Pueblo Indian policy on the principle that he would attend only to matters of civil disobedience. As a corollary, he would not cooperate with the friars in meting out any punishments of Indians that were based on "sins committed against the church." He felt that the missionaries would have to carry out the punishments themselves without assistance from his administration, inclusive of the *alcaldes mayores*. Moreover, he encouraged the natives to go directly to him and make their complaints. López de Mendizábal went even further. He made it clear that Indians were no longer to do any work for the priests unless the friars paid them according to the Laws of the Indies. Then he stated that, as in other parts of the empire, Indians could participate in native ceremonies as long as they were not idolatrous. Then López de Mendizábal audaciously pronounced that Indians were not obligated to attend the *doctrina* (catechism classes) or assist at the Holy Mass because both

functions adversely influenced them to work for the missionaries without pay and under conditions of forced labor.[57]

As López de Mendizábal ordered, Aguilar immediately executed the governor's policies. At each pueblo he visited, Aguilar, speaking in Spanish and in Tompiro, used a crier to proclaim the new Indian work policy.[58] At other nearby pueblos, Aguilar made similar announcements and went a step further. At Quarai, for example, he told the Indians that they would no longer be permitted to serve the priests without pay, nor would they be allowed to serve as choir members or acolytes.[59]

At Las Humanas one of the priests (probably Friar Santander) said that while construction of the church and convent at the pueblos was underway, López de Mendizábal ordered Nicolas de Aguilar to make sure that, under penalty of death, no Indian worked in that construction. To his confusion, nonetheless, they continued to work on the structures. It seems that the old church of San Isidro was no longer used, and Friar Santander referred to the building of San Buenaventura de las Humanas. The friars argued that the Indians worked because they recognized their obligation as Catholics. Still, López stood accused of criticizing the building of the churches in the pueblos, especially "on the occasion in which the church of Humanas was under construction," he allegedly said. "For what [purpose] were the churches . . . a jacal is enough to say mass in."[60]

In the context of seventeenth-century New Mexico, the question of reforming Indian labor policy at the missions did not have a practical solution. The crisis over Indian labor in the missions and the pueblos was one of jurisdiction, and López attempted to define it. The missionary practice of employing Indians to work for no pay in the fields, care for the herds, and serve the priests as house servants had been a longstanding practice in the missions. The friars considered the premise, that it was done for the good of the mission, to be irrefutable. López de Mendizábal nevertheless demanded that the missionaries pay the Indians one *real* a day according to the Laws of the Indies for their services. Accordingly, he argued that Indians ought not be obligated to work for the priests, nor should they be made to feel morally guilty if they did not, unless a native voluntarily desired to serve the friars, in which case an exception would be made. The friars argued that it had already been defined and that López de Mendizábal's policy debilitated the power of the church in New Mexico.

López de Mendizábal's directives, which had been spun into practice by the *alcaldes mayores de indios*, resulted in a series of altercations at the missions and intensified the struggle between the friars and the governor. To defend their works, the friars turned to documenting every incident involving López de Mendizábal's *alcaldes mayores de indios* so that they could build a case against them and the governor. Aguilar, the most audacious among them, seemed to be their primary target.

One incident that fueled their case occurred at Abó. Father Antonio Aguado reported to his superior that one Sunday Aguilar passed by San Gregorio de Abó on his way to Las Humanas and noticed a large gate to the pueblo had been left open and was in disrepair.[61] As it was a Christian holy day, the Tompiros were in their pueblo enjoying a day of rest. That afternoon, Aguilar ordered some men and women to mix some mud for mortar to repair it. Quickly Fray Aguado challenged Aguilar for having made the natives work on a Christian holy day. The confrontation flared and quickly ended, but Fray Aguado did not forget the occasion and reported the incident to his prelate.[62] As a result, the friars believed that they had found a way to tie the governor's Indian labor policy to a church issue. The Aguado-Aguilar confrontation clearly demonstrated the pitfalls of López de Mendizábal's Indian policy. After all, everyone knew that a Christian holy day was a day of rest.

Before 1659 ended, the friars had met in council at Santo Domingo Pueblo, the ecclesiastical headquarters of the New Mexican mission field. There they drew up a report against López de Mendizábal's policies. They complained to the viceroy that the requirement to pay the Indians for labor in the missions had placed an undue imposition on the already meager earnings of the friars.[63] "The religious of this kingdom, sire," they wrote, "who live by themselves in a convent without the enjoyment of company from his brothers, countrymen and relatives have no other conveniences. [They live] daily at great risk from enemies and even the Christian [Indians], who for one word of reprehension about their views take their lives." The isolation they suffered was exemplified by the fact that they walked "ten, twenty, and thirty leagues one way to the next convent and more for the return trip." Their only "stipend, alms, subvention or collection money at the altar, which they received, came to one hundred and fifty pesos, which the king gives every year to each priest. The money from the royal patronage was often stretched to buy necessities for the church. And, the governor does not want

the Indians to serve unless we pay them one real each day . . . as if we had it," wrote the friars.[64]

They explained that mission lands were used to provide food to the Indians, to needy Spaniards, and to travelers who came by their convents. Furthermore, they complained that the governor's order that Indians not serve the priests without pay included the stipulation that they should not assist the ministers in anything. The friars reiterated that the Indians "do not want to help the church and *doctrina* in anything because of this order; we here do not have anything with which to pay them other than the food which they cultivated for us."[65] In their report, issued to Mexico City officials at the start of 1660, the friars demonstrated their need for Indian labor at the missions. They stressed their poverty as a factor in not affording payment for Indian services. To that end, they resolved to fight against the governor's Indian policy that would eliminate the practice of Indian servitude at the missions.

The friars argued that López de Mendizábal's implementation of his Indian policies had gone too far. To prove their point, the friars documented an event that clearly showed how Aguilar, acting on the governor's mandates, had openly obstructed the mission program and attacked the church. Later, in 1663, when the priests from Salinas brought formal charges against him before the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, they cited multiple accusations, all stemming from similar incidents.[66]

One incident occurred with mission Indians as witnesses. The friars reported that, one day when morning mass at Quarai had finished, Friar Nicolas de Freitas began "to teach these poor Indians," who had remained in the church to hear him. Aguilar, who had attended mass, stayed to hear what the priest had to say.[67] Friar Freitas spoke about "the truths of one God, one Church, and one supreme head who governs it." As their teacher, Freitas reminded them of the Ten Commandments, emphasizing the Fourth Commandment: Honor thy father and thy mother. He said they must honor the friars as they would their own parents. "You are obligated," explained Friar Freitas from the altar, "to obey all your priests and ministers, and give them the necessary assistance in operating the missions."[68] The Indians sat motionless as a deep silence pervaded the nave of the church.

Aguilar, "unable to stomach such Catholic truths,"[69] stood up and interrupted the sermon and in a loud voice ordered the Indians, in their language, to leave the church. Freitas, looking to God for help, said a short prayer and

continued his sermon. Confused, the Indians looked at him sympathetically, trying to hear him, while at the other end of the church, Aguilar raised his voice even louder and harangued them about their civil obligations. They remained in the church and Freitas continued with his lesson. Afterward Father Freitas went up to his room in the *convento* and Aguilar followed him. In front of another clergyman in the priest's quarters, Aguilar told him that he should "acknowledge the evil deed of the friars [instead of] preaching against what the governor had ordered."[70]

There were other incidents involving Aguilar that were recorded by the missionaries. After the altercations in the church and *convento* at Quarai, Aguilar went to the pueblo of Chililí. There he had an Indian whipped for assisting in singing the mass at Las Humanas. Confronting Aguilar, the priests asked him not to execute López's mandates so rigorously. Father Fernando de Velasco had two other requests to make of the *alcalde mayor*. To the first request, that he permit a certain Indian, Francisco, to accompany one of the visiting friars at the pueblo to his convent at Quarai eight leagues away, and to the second request, that he not order the lashing of an Indian musician who had gone to sing at a mass at Las Humanas, Aguilar replied that he must do what his governor had ordered him to do. He refused to listen to the petitions and angrily told the priest that if he interfered with his duties anymore, he would take him "to the Villa de Santa Fe in a pack saddle."[71] Father Velasco backed off for the moment, but he would commit the incident to memory so that he could report it to the vice *custodio* at first opportunity. At Tajique, Aguilar went a step further. After he had ordered the Indians not to assist the friars there, he waited for an opportunity to demonstrate that he meant what he said. One Saturday afternoon soon afterward, Father Freitas had ridden his horse the "four leagues" from Quarai to Tajique to say mass in the absence of Father Parroga.[72] When he arrived at Tajique, Father Freitas asked Diego Chititi, the Indian fiscal of the pueblo, to have some boys feed his horse some grass (*sacate*) and to have the cook prepare the remaining beans in the kitchen. On that occasion Aguilar heard that Chititi had obeyed Freitas's requests. Whereupon, the priest said, Aguilar grabbed the Indian and beat him with his staff. Outraged by Aguilar's actions and having had nothing to eat, Freitas returned to Quarai, and the people of Tajique went without Sunday mass the next day.[73]

By summer 1660, the friars declared Aguilar and other *alcaldes mayores* to be an enemy of the church. About this time three other events occurred that

the friars could use against Aguilar. As if Aguilar's interruption of a catechizing sermon were not bad enough in the eyes of the priests, his stopping Sunday mass at Abó infuriated Father Aguado.[74] As the Tompiros knelt in prayer, Aguilar entered the church of San Gregorio and ordered a number of Indians out to help him cover the doors of some storerooms where salt from the Salinas mines had been stored for Governor López. As the Indians were filing out of the church, Father Aguado protested, "First, let them hear mass." To that Aguilar reportedly responded, "It's orders from my governor and he comes first."[75] After the storeroom doors were covered, the *alcalde mayor* took the Indians to work at some other task elsewhere. His effective surveillance of the Salinas pueblos allowed him to be at each pueblo at "the wrong time," as the priests saw it.[76]

At Tajique, the governor's policies underwent a different test. There Fray Diego de Parraga, having served his ministry at the pueblo for eight years, had collected nearly 600 wooden crosses of variable sizes.[77] The crosses were used for processions that took place every Friday of Lent and on Holy Thursday. During the rest of the year, they were kept in several rooms of the convent. Aguilar said they were fragile, broken, or in bad repair. He claimed that the Indians had even urinated on them.[78]

During the hard winter of 1660–61, when storms ravaged the high elevations of New Mexico and left forty-eight inches of snow in the Manzanos, the crosses became an issue that caused even more hardships for the priests. Given the Apache disdain for mission Indians and anticipating that the distressed missionaries would ask for help from their Christian Indians, Aguilar ordered the people of Chililí, Tajique, Quarai, Abó, and Las Humanas, under penalty of 200 lashes, not to help the friars or "to take the priests one stick of firewood."[79]

That winter, Isabel Baca, a mestiza settler near Tajique, went to Aguilar's house to tell him to have compassion on the priest there. She appealed to him to send him some wood so that he could keep warm and cook his food. The *alcalde mayor* responded that the priest could burn the crosses he had stored, for "whatever purpose the crosses served, it didn't matter if he burned them."[80] When Christian Indians attempted to take the priest firewood, he had them lashed. Seeing this, Father Fernando de Velasco told Aguilar that he would not whip them; "instead they should be given a reward." During that winter, Father Velasco went to the foothills to gather wood. Carrying a large

load of wood on his shoulders, the priest passed near the *casa de la comunidad* of Tajique, where Aguilar happened to be, and heard him and some friends laughing at him.[81] This incident would haunt Aguilar, for the comment about the crosses would be construed as an irreverent remark, and his refusal to help the priests with their firewood would at least serve to support the friars' argument that he persecuted them. Three years later, when the priests brought up charges against him to the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City, there would be fifty-two accusations, all stemming from similar incidents.[82]

In their reports to their superiors, the priests not only construed Aguilar's remarks as irreverent but also interpreted his refusal to help them as persecution. Aguilar defended his actions by noting that Apache raiders had made the area unstable and unsafe. For their protection, he forbade Pueblo Indians within his jurisdiction to leave their villages.[83] He argued that the Apache disdain for mission Indians made it too dangerous for Tiwas and Tompiros to go to the foothills, even to get firewood for the priests.

Opposition to Governor López de Mendizábal's policies, as viewed from the fight between Aguilar and the Salinas friars, took on varied dimensions. The friars understood the impact of the governor's Indian policy on their mission program, for lack of cooperation from Indian officials had became evident.

Cooperation from Indian officials at the pueblo had also become difficult for the friars to get. Despite the existence of the office of *protector de indios*, whereby a Spaniard could be appointed as an attorney for Indian causes, Indian governors and war captains could also be considered to be "judges of Indians."[84] At Tabira, a *visita* of Humanas under Fray Diego de Santander had revealed a case of Indian concubinage (i.e., cohabitation of a man and a women without the sacrament of matrimony), and the war captains of Tabira took the two guilty persons before Aguilar for punishment. The incident at Tabira frightened the friars and demonstrated the debilitating effect of López de Mendizáble's Indian policies on the missions. When the friars exposed a case of concubinage at Tabira, they sought to punish those involved as an object lesson for those who would not abide by the sacrament of matrimony.[47] The friars demanded that the war captains of Tabira take the two guilty persons before Aguilar for punishment. After rebuffing the war captains, Aguilar freed the two prisoners without punishment. Fray Diego de Santander got furiously angry when the war captains explained

what had happened. He could foresee the breakdown of mission discipline, especially in the area of matrimony. Aguilar explained to Friar Santander that no Indian would be punished by the civil authorities for concubinage or any other offense related to the mission program. Concubinage was a church matter. Aguilar stood his ground. At Quarai, Aguilar summoned an Indian official, Capitán Mayor Juan Yguany, and had him seized and whipped for having punished two Indian girls for missing mass.[85]

Such actions had a cumulative effect. After noticing that Indian officials had been punished for having carried out punishments ordered by the friars, Pueblo Indians looked at the issue of punishments at the missions with great interest. Some mission Indians, outraged by the change in policy, sided openly with the priests. Other mission and non-mission Indians took the opportunity to disobey requests by the priests. Although Spanish settlers in the Villa de Santa Fé were split on the effects of the governor's policies, they agreed that the policies had weakened the missionaries' grasp on the pueblos.

The effects of López de Mendizábal's policies, especially those regarding the *catzina* dances, continued to be visibly apparent and problematic to the missionaries charged with the conversion of the pueblos. The settlers, however, also knew an earlier history of the *catzina* dances. Under Governor Luis de Rosas (1637–42), the *catzina* dancers were allowed to perform in the pueblos.[86] At that time, they seemed harmless. Indeed, some of the settlers had even participated in them. Later the Franciscan missionaries condemned them as diabolical and were no longer allowed. Whether it had created a dangerous situation for the colonials remained to be seen. Such incidents aided the friars in the inquisitorial case they were building against the governor and his loyal followers. Their basic tenet was that López de Mendizábal worked to undermine mission discipline and obstructed the mission program of conversion. The settlers also took note, for collectively they feared that the governor's permissive Indian policy would create dangerous conditions for revolt.

Governor López de Mendizábal contended that there was nothing wrong with the *catzina* dances. To demonstrate his point to the friars and the settlers, he invited the dancers from Picurís to dance in the plaza of Santa Fe.[87] Hospitably, he allowed the Indians to dress in one of the rooms of the Palace of the Governors. When they were ready, the dancers came out with their masks, chanting. As spectators, the settlers in attendance, standing motionless, were supposedly frightened by their "demonic" appearance.

When the *catzina* dancers were finished, Governor López de Mendizábal, who had enjoyed the dance from his vantage point on the porch in front of his quarters, stood up and in a loud voice proclaimed, "The knavish priests say that this is evil, this is not evil but good."[88] Later López de Mendizábal commented that the dance was similar to the *palo volador* spectacle he had seen in southern Mexico. At another time, he exclaimed that the chanting had no more effect that the Gregorian chant sung by the friars. He did not regard the *catzina* dances as being any different from the popular Spanish dances of his day or, for that matter, any other kind of dances.[89] Intrigued by them, López de Mendizábal had seen native dances in other parts of the Americas. The friars noted and documented the governor's contrary comments.

Before long, other pueblos requested permission of the governor to perform the *catzina* dances in their pueblos. In 1659 the Isletans asked him for permission to perform *catzina* dances for the first time at their pueblo in decades. López de Mendizábal agreed. Soon settlers reported *catzina* dances at the pueblos of Alameda, Sandia, Cochití, Isleta, Picurís, Santa Cruz de la Cañada, Galisteo, San Cristóbal, San Lazaro, La Cienega, Tesuque, Pojoaque, Santa Clara, San Juan, San Ildefonso, Sevilleta, Tajique, Chililí, and Quarai, among others.

With the support of Christian Indian and Spanish settlers, the missionaries condemned the dances as "diabolical and superstitious." They were determined to prove their contentions. One Spaniard, Estevan Peralta, a settler who spoke "the language of Sandia," said that the dance was "evil and superstitious."[90] The friars hoped to use testimonies to assemble their case against López de Mendizábal. The friars welcomed as fact the testimony of anyone who claimed to understand the Indians and their culture and who could testify that they prayed to the devil. Another Spanish settler, Francisco Pérez Granillo, who lived near the mission at Socorro, testified that he understood Piro and that one of the Indians there told him the "dances are evil."[91] Similarly, Juan Barela, who lived near Sandia, said that in the winter of 1661 at the pueblo of Alameda he found the Indians enjoying a *catzina* dance. Barela asked one of them, "Why don't you go and dance?" The man responded, "I don't wish to dance those dances, for they are not good, and I am afraid of the priests, don't you see a demon there?" Afraid to turn his face and look, Barela must have believed the Indian.[92] At Sandia Pueblo the friars observed that the dances there "are held day and night" and that the church at Sandia

had been desecrated by permitting two calves in the *capilla mayor*, the main chapel.[93] As did other Spanish appointees of Governor López Mendizábal of the various jurisdictions in New Mexico, Alcalde Mayor Nicolas de Aguilar encouraged the dances within the Jurisdiction of Salinas. Later he said that, on seeing the dances, he had failed to see anything evil about them. Testifying before the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City, he offered a description of the *catzina* dance as follows:

> They entered the plaza wearing ugly masks. Each one carries in his hand fruit, the kind which in commonly eaten. The fruit is tied with a string and is placed in a circle in the plaza one after another. The masked dancers then form a circle to guard the said fruit, while other dancers masqueraded as old men, walk among the fruit making ridiculous figures. Then other Indians come as strangers and whoever of them dares to enter to take the fruit, enters and snatches what he wants and flees. The masked dances attempt to hold him and hit him with some palmillas [yucca leaves]. Ultimately, in this way all of the fruit is taken. They neither add to the dance anything else in ceremony nor anything diabolic.[94]

Although Aguilar did not see anything evil about the dances, he failed to understand their meaning and symbolism.[95]

Aguilar would further offend the sensitivities of the friars when they heard about the time when the snow at Chililí was deep and the Indians wished to dance the *catzina*. Aguilar had ordered the *catzina* dance despite the snow.[96] With a twist of dark humor, Aguilar pointed to the church rooftop and said to Friar Velasco, "Father, why did you order the Indians to dance the *catzina* on the roof of the church?" Flustered, Friar Velasco denied it, saying it was "false and that he had neither ordered nor encouraged things which were offensive to God, our Lord."[97]

The ultimate insult to the friars occurred at Quarai, when in October 1660 the Indians showed their brashness to an offended Father Freitas. The drama unfolded like a midsummer's nightmare for the friars. Moments before the *catzina* dancers appeared at Quarai, an old man entered the plaza and announced that the *catzinas* were coming. "Be ready for they are our pagan priests," he proclaimed.[98] The *catzina* dancers, who had taken a woman from Quarai out of the pueblo, returned with her. The people of Quarai received them outside of the pueblo. One of them, pretending to be

a demon, announced in a loud voice that he had been exiled for some time and that the people should be happy, for he now returned to be among them. Then he gave the woman a small fir tree. She took it from the old man and returned to her house. The old man turned and entered a kiva. Meantime, the *catzina* dancers went all over the pueblo, whooping and hollering as they gathered up earthen bowls, calabashes, and other items necessary to carry out their dance.[99]

Other Spaniards present made remarks about the dances. They quickly spread the word about what they had seen. Most witnesses believed that the ancestral *catzinas* had truly been recalled from the spirit world. Not only was it believable; it eerily felt real, as if they were experiencing one of the spirit's periodic visits to the pueblo. Real or imagined, Governor López Mendizábal had revived a tradition that would be difficult to stamp out. Reaction against the governor's Indian policies began to grow within Spanish communities throughout the province.

Francisco Martín Serrano, whose family had been among the original settlers in New Mexico with Juan de Oñate in 1598, knew the correct statement to make before the Commissary of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. In his response, made in careful and measured terms, he straddled the fine line between the Indian point of view and the friars' position. Martín craftily said,

> The Indians receive great consolation with the freedom and license to dance the *Catzinas*. The dances are idolatrous in that generally the natives of this kingdom place their hopes in them for a good harvest in all that they sow; in the dances they ask for water, good fortune to marry, and for their amours, and they ask their false gods for mantas, health and all of their necessities. With this liberty Governor López placed the kingdom in such danger that the Indians do not pay attention to their ministers. . . . If a remedy is not found fast, it is certain that what is left of the kingdom will be lost.[100]

Not only had the friars demanded an end to the governor's permissive policies, especially in regard to the *catzina* dances; they attempted to coerce conformity to their point of view from everyone in the province. When, in 1660, Father Juan Ramírez, the custodian of the New Mexican missions, presented a different view, the friars sought to remove him from the province. Having attended a *catzina* dance event, Friar Ramírez was not troubled in the least about it. Indeed, looking beyond the religiosity of the dances, Ramírez said

he liked the rather festive atmosphere created by the dances and the native foods that were served on those occasions.[63]

Largely out of fear of being condemned by the friars and the Holy Office of the Inquisition, the Spanish settlers conformed to the demands of the church. After sixty-four years of living among the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico, some colonials pretended that they did not understand the cultures around them. Even though some settlers had participated in Indian religious rituals, the majority of them did not wish to admit that they, too, believed in the rich Indian spirit world that the friars had condemned as "demon worship," nor did they defend the sanctity of the Puebloan man-woman relationships that the friars branded as "concubinage."

The friars reacted against every facet of López de Mendizábal's Indian policies. Immediately they condemned them as idolatrous and demonic. Next they confronted López de Mendizábal and his agents as well as the Indians whenever the dances took place. Having openly opposed the dances, which they had forbidden for at least thirty years, the friars filed charges before the Holy Office of the Inquisition against López de Mendizábal and his agents. The friars gloated when López de Menizábal was removed from office, under arrest by the Holy Office of the Inquisition. The friars quickly moved to suppress the *catzinas* once again.

The Pueblo Indian reaction to the suppression of the *catzinas* became a burning grievance, among other causes. The next decade would see an increase in Indian resistance to the missionaries and civil authorities that would culminate in the Revolt of 1680. In the meantime, the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City took a different view: the *catzina* dances were not considered demonic and should not be denied the pueblos.[101] The friars had failed to make their point, but Indian resentment over the issue had grown immeasurably. The governor and the friars claimed they had grounds for protest against one another. Although the accusations made by each side bore a semblance of truth, the friars held the upper hand, for they took their accusations to the Inquisition, not a civil court.

The end came quickly, especially after the friars had reported all offenses by López de Mendizábal, Aguilar, and several others to the Inquisition. Juan Manso, a former governor with an ax to grind against López de Mendizábal, was made high sheriff of the Province of New Mexico. Instructed to arrest López de Mendizábal and his followers, he did so and quickly turned

them over to Inquisition authorities.[102] As for Aguilar, Diego Romero, and Francisco Gómez, those named on the list of complaints by the friars, they were away from their districts, but a plan evolved to apprehend them when they were all together. Returning from a trip to Moqui and passing by way of Zuñi, the group headed toward the Rio Grande. Anticipating their arrival, Manso moved to apprehend them at Isleta. Manso feared that once Aguilar got beyond Isleta and into the Manzano Mountains, it would be difficult to capture him. Actually, Fray Alonso de Posada, commissary of the Inquisition, arrested Aguilar and imprisoned him at Isleta. Soon afterward he was transferred to a cell at Santo Domingo Pueblo, and finally, after a lengthy investigation, he was sent to Mexico City for trial.

Meanwhile López de Mendizábal prepared his defense against the charges against him "before the tribunal." The main tenet of López de Mendizábal's defense was based on his right as governor to implement policies consistent with Spanish law. Whatever Governor López de Mendizábal's motives, the elements of his policy were in line with the Laws of the Indies. He took a stand against all charges against him. His depositions and testimony were marked by directness. The tribunal gave all of his arguments careful consideration. The main issues before them were whether he and his *alcaldes mayores de indios* had been responsible for obstructing the mission program in New Mexico and whether they had committed acts hostile to the clergy and the church. López de Mendizábal knew that they would have to make a very strong case in their defense in order to offset the evidence against them. In his case particularly, given the massive documentation against him, he would have to overcome the tendency of the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, which was extremely jealous of ecclesiastical rights and privileges, to protect the rights of the church and its churchmen.

Three years after the proceedings began, Governor López de Mendizábal's trial came to an abrupt stop when, at 8:30 a.m. on September 16, 1664, an Inquisition jailer found him dead in his cell in the dungeon of the *carcel secreta*.[103] As a matter of record, by 3:30 p.m., two Inquisition officials entered cell "number 22" to identify the body, which was indeed that of former governor López de Mendízabal. As customary in those circumstances, even though he had never confessed to wrongdoing in his administration, he was unceremoniously buried in one of the corrals near the Inquisition jail. Apparently López de Mendizábal had been ill for some time when he died.

Inquisition authorities, however, suspended judgment in his case until 1671. At that time, they reviewed his case and declared it closed. After a brief deliberation, they cleared his name for absolution, and his remains were removed for a Christian burial at the Convento de Santo Domingo in Mexico City.[104]

For his abuses against the church and the friars of New Mexico, the Inquisition judges sentenced Aguilar to walk the auto-de-fé and suffer exile from New Mexico for ten years; they also declared him ineligible to hold administrative office for the rest of his life.[105] Having read his sentence, the Inquisitor's gavel came down swiftly with an echoing sound.

New Mexico in the seventeenth century was both a mission field and an area of settlement. It seemed a given that conflicts would arise between civil authorities and Franciscan missionaries over control of sedentary Indian populations. During the period 1598–1659 missionaries not only established themselves among the pueblos but also ventured out to the Great Plains. Throughout the pueblo lands of New Mexico, the missionaries claimed jurisdiction over entire populations. Governors before and after Bernardo López de Mendizábal consistently pointed out that the Franciscans did not have full control over Indian pueblos; therefore, they could only control those Indians under their charge for conversion purposes. Still, the Franciscans argued that the mission comprised the entire pueblo as a program of conversion in progress. Spanish officials did not agree that the entire population of a given pueblo was with the mission jurisdiction; they argued that only the neophytes who agreed to be converted were subject to missionization. In their attempts to sidestep conflict with the clergymen, civil authorities generally attempted to avoid interfering with the mission process and kept their hands off Indians already committed to conversion to Christianity.

While the colonials debated the question of jurisdiction over the natives, the Indians saw the issue differently. First, they wondered why any jurisdiction had to exist at all, except for the exigencies of colonialism. Secondly, once they realized that the colonial structure was part of their reality, the only thing left to them was to master colonial gamesmanship and play all loose ends against the middle. To a degree, that strategy worked. As part of the colonial legal system, the Indians marked their time, for they knew they could be useful witnesses against royal administrators, friars, and settlers in the legal action that usually followed the end of a governor's term or anytime an investigation, ecclesiastical or civil, took place. Within the structure

of colonial institutions, the native knew well the corrective path to justice. In the end, the natives realized that rebellion was their only recourse. Similarly, the Hispanic settlers of New Mexico feared that the disputes between civil and ecclesiastical authorities would eventually result in rebellion.

Overall, Governor López de Mendizábal's policies, arrest, and trial had called attention to fundamental issues regarding the protection of Pueblo Indians against colonial abuses—that included the treatment of Indians within a mission program. Furthermore, López de Mendizábal had raised questions concerning the inconsistencies in the execution of church and state policies and the maintenance of balance between the two institutions. While he had made his point through his policies, he also outraged the Franciscan missionaries, who, in the context of the times, accused him, before the Holy Office of the Inquisition, of obstructing the mission process. They too had made their point. Still, while the decisions Holy Office in the cases of all the defendants reestablished the right of missionaries to demand unpaid labor from mission Indians, the rights of governors to ensure politician and economic development, especially as it involved trade with natives within the colony, were correspondingly confirmed.[106] Beyond acknowledging the accusations that the *catzina* dances were demonic, questions regarding the "demonic character" of the dances were not specifically addressed in the resolutions issued by the Holy Office. After López de Mendizábal's removal, Pueblo Indian leaders evaluated his permissive policies against the repression that followed. As had been predicted by colonial naysayers against López de Mendizábal's policies, native patience and frustrations violently exploded two decades later in the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

Certainly, the Pueblo Revolt revealed changes regarding native independence in several ways, for during the revolt years, for example, the Pueblos reverted to their old native customs while at the same time preserving Christian practices and values. For them, Spanish influences had made their mark on their distinct cultures that had, in part, evolved into a sort of syncretism. After the reestablishment of Spanish New Mexico twelve years later, in 1692, such issues as those that had occupied Governor López de Mendizábal and other seventeenth-century governors gradually disappeared, but were not forgotten. New Mexico in the eighteenth century was a different place, and its civil and religious leaders were concerned with other issues of the day. Still, the struggle for native independence has historically been played

out on many frontiers. In the 1890s, for example, the revivalist Ghost Dance performed by Plains Indians was condemned and prohibited, and their participants punished by the US government for fear it would spark an era of violent resistance among various tribes. Inclusive of events leading to the US Army massacre of Lakota Sioux at Wounded Knee on December 29, 1890, the widespread messianic Ghost Dance fueled fear of potential native resistance in the Dakotas.[107] Just as in New Mexico's turbulent seventeenth century, so too had history mirrored similar fears of native resistance throughout the Americas.