

[English translation]

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+ Received in the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Mexico City on the twenty-third of November 1617 from Father Friar López Yzquierdo, Commissary of the Inquisition of Zacatecas against Licentiate Pedro de Olarte, Beneficiary Priest who lived in Las Minas de Los Ramos

Who — an altar being decorated with the Nativity, with Our Lady and Saint Joseph and the baby Jesus, and for shepherds some small saints' statues — said: “What great idols those are !”

The Licentiate Pedro de Olarte has for the past year been, and is now, in Mexico City, having lost his Benefice in Los Ramos. A few days ago, the Lord Bishop sent to Your Lordships other denunciations against Olarte, (concerning which I have received a response from Your Lordships) and he has now conducted three further depositions, which he sends. I am certain to return to this issue. I told the witnesses that they should be vigilant, and that they should keep me informed. Olarte appears incorrigible in these testimonies, and the witnesses are all fearful of God, and for this reason are mindful of their consciences and habits.

In Ramos, 6 November 1617 May God guard you all etcetera

*Friar Lópe
Yzquierdo*

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+ In Las Minas de Los Ramos, Thursday morning the twenty-sixth day of the month of October 1617: Being summoned, there appeared before Friar Lópe Ysquierdo, Commissary of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in the City of Zacatecas, one Bernardo de Monçon, married, a resident of these mines, aged thirty-eight (more or less). He was sworn in by God and the Cross, according to form, and promised to tell the truth. Asked if he knows or assumes why he has been summoned, he said that he assumes that it will be in order to know something related to the Holy Faith. And what he knows is that in the year 1615, on entering the main church of these mines one day during the Festival of Christmas, he ran into Luis Moreno de Cierra, Mayordomo, who at that time was a member of the Brotherhoods of the Holy Sacrament and of Our Lady. He looked quite crestfallen, and when this witnesses asked what was wrong Moreno responded that he was going to take down a Nativity scene that he had set up on one of the altars of the

said church, because Father Pedro Loarte Davila, Beneficiary of these mines, had told him that the scene was pure invention, and that it deceived the townspeople with the little idols that he had placed on the said altar. By way of clarification, the said Luis Moreno told this witness that the things that the said Father Loarte had said were little idols were figures of the saints and of the infant Jesus that had been brought to the said altar. And this witness saw the altar, and recognized the figures which served in the Nativity scene. For shepherds, there were images of saints which this witness recognized because he had previously seen them in the main altar, but wearing different clothes. Also present at the event, which one hopes will be kept quiet, were Cristóbal de Morales, Gerónimo de Paez, and others.

Asked how this witness feels about the Christianity and habits of the said Pedro Loarte Davila, he said that he has viewed and still views him as a man not very modest in his life, and who did not give the example to others that his personage and his status required. This witness says this because he had a certain disagreement with the said Pedro Loarte, and when this witness was given the opportunity

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he voiced his complaints, and yet the said Pedro de Loarte de Ávila never apologized to this witness, and never even offered a confession to a priest, but afterwards changed into his holy vestments and said Mass, and as a result this witness holds him for an inferior man, and if some of the words Loarte said sounded bad it was not out of little regard for the things of the Faith, but rather in order to say certain things cleverly, which he knows because when this witness was once trying to organize a Rogation ceremony in this kingdom, so that it would rain, Loarte said that if he wanted it to rain he should just hang Cristóbal de Morales right away, and that nothing else was necessary.

This witness knows that Pedro Loarte is a native of Mexico City, is of medium height, thin and going gray, and limps in one leg. He has always seen him possessed of his wits, and takes him for a man of good understanding and ability. Furthermore, this witness has heard he now lives in Mexico City.

And this is the truth, given under the oath that he took, and being read his testimony he said that it was well recorded, and that he said none of it out of hatred, but rather in order to unburden his conscience. He was charged to keep his testimony secret, which he promised to do, and signed it with his name.

*Friar Lópe Yzquierdo
Bernardino de Monçon
before me
Phelipe Flores
Notary Scribe of the Holy
Office*

In Las Minas de Los Ramos, on the twenty-sixth day of the month of October 1617, there appeared before Friar Lópe Ysquierdo, Commissary of the Holy Office of the Inquisition of the City of Zacatecas, one Bernardo de Monçon, married, resident of these mines, aged

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thirty-eight (more or less). Also present, as honest and religious persons, were Master Don Juan de Salbatierra Curate y Beneficiary of the said mines Father Friar Diego de Ayala, preacher of the Order of Saint Dominic, and the Licentiate Martín Gutiérrez, both Priests who had been sworn to secrecy. Monçon was sworn in according to form, and promised to tell the truth.

Asked if he remembers having given testimony before a judge against another person about things regarding the Faith, he said that he recalls that about an hour ago he gave testimony before the said Lord Commissary against Father Pedro Loarte Davila, Beneficiary who lived in these mines. And he summarized his prior testimony, included here.

He asked that this be read to him, and he was made to understand that the Head Attorney of this Holy Office is presenting him as a witness, for time immemorial, in a case against the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte Davila, and that he should be vigilant, and that he will now be read his testimony, and if in it there should be anything that needs to be altered, added, or amended he should do so, so that it shall tell the truth in everything, and that he shall affirm and ratify it, because that which he says now will count against the said Pedro Loarte Davila. And then he was read, word for word, the above testimony, and being read it, and having said that he had heard and understood, the said Bernard de Monçon affirmed that this was indeed his testimony, and he had said what had been read to him, and that the testimony was well recorded and set down, and that it was not necessary to alter, add, or amend it, because what was written was the truth, and he did and does affirm it, and did and does ratify it, and if it should be necessary he would give his testimony from the beginning against the said Pedro de Loarte Davila, not out of hatred but rather in order to unburden his conscience. He was charged with secrecy, according to form, and he agreed, and signed it with his name.

Transcript note: “Master Don Juan de Salbatierra, Curate and Beneficiary of the said mines” has been crossed out and replaced with “Father Friar Diego de Ayala, Preacher of the Order of Saint Dominic,” written between the lines.

Friar Lópe Ysquierdo
Bernardo de Monçon
Friar Diego de Ayala
Martín Gutiérrez

before me
Phelipe Flores
Notary Scribe of the Holy

Office

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+ In Las Minas de Los Ramos, Wednesday afternoon, the twenty-fifth day of the month of October 1617: Being summoned, there appeared before Friar Lópe Ysquierdo, Commissary of the Holy Office of the City of Zacatecas, one Gerónimo de Paes, resident of these said mines, married, aged sixty-two (more or less). He was sworn in according to form, and promised to tell the truth.

Asked if he knows or assumes why he has been summoned, he said that he assumes that it will be in order to know something related to the Holy Faith. He is asked if he knows or has heard tell that three years ago, more or less, an altar was set up in the main church of these mines in order to celebrate the Festival of the Nativity of the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to which end there were placed a number of figures, including Our Lady the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, the newborn Child, and shepherds. When the Licentiate Pedro Loarte de Ávila had seen this, he made certain commentaries. This witness should say what these were, and who heard them.

He said that it could have been at this time that, celebrating the said holiday, this witness heard from Luis Moreno de Cierra (in whose charge was placed the making of the said altar) that the said Licentiate Pedro Loarte, Beneficiary of these mines, had said “What great idols were those!” that were on the said altar. Asked what this witness feels about the Christianity and habits of the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte Davila, he replied that he does not and has not felt confident about the habits and Christianity of the aforementioned, because while he was in this kingdom and this witness interacted with him, he realized that his personage was not up to the standards required by the needs of his office, to which he had an obligation, nor did he give the example that, as priest, he should.

Asked if he knows if anyone chastised the said Licentiate Loarte for having made the aforementioned comments, he answered that he did not believe that any person chastised him nor crossed him on the matter, in part because of Loarte’s poor health, and in part because of his office and status.

The accused is a man of medium height, thin and not very muscular, going gray, and who limps a little in one leg, and he has heard tell that he is a native of Mexico City. Also, he testifies that he has heard tell from a number of people of these mines that, one Easter Sunday, the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte said

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If Christ wants to rise

*Or if He does not
Give me the money
That you got*

which he had said in reference to the offering which they usually took to him from the procession held during the said Easter festivities.

And asked if this witness heard other harsh words from the said Pedro Loarte, he said that he personally had not heard any, nor indeed did he hear the quotes he has just testified about, but rather he heard about them second-hand. And that this witness has always seen him possessed of his wits, and he has taken and still takes him for a man of good understanding and ability, and at present it is common knowledge that the accused serves in Mexico City. And this is the truth, given under the oath that he took, and being read his testimony he said that it was well recorded, and that he says none of it out of hatred, but rather in order to unburden his conscience.

He was charged to keep his testimony secret, which he promised to do, and signed it with his name.

Transcript note: an addition, "He was sworn in according to form, and promised to tell the truth," has been written between the lines.

*Herónimo Paz
Friar Lópe Ysquierdo
before me
Phelipe Flores
Notary Scribe of the Holy
Office*

In Las Minas de Los Ramos, on the fourth day of the month of November 1617, there appeared before Friar Lópe Ysquierdo, Commissary of the Holy Office of the City of Zacatecas, one Gerónimo de Paes, married, a resident and merchant in this kingdom, aged sixty-two (more or less). Also present, as honest and religious persons, were Father Friar Diego de Ayala, preacher of the Order of Saint Dominic, and the Licentiate Martín Gutiérrez, Curate of these mines, both Priests who had been sworn to secrecy. Paes was sworn in according to form, and promised to tell the truth.

Asked if he remembers having given testimony before a judge against another person about things regarding the Faith, he said that he recalls that on the twenty-fifth day of the month of

October of the current year, he gave testimony before the said Lord Commissary against Beneficiary Pedro Loarte Davila, Beneficiary who lived in these mines. And he summarized his prior testimony, included here.

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He was told that he should understand that the Head Attorney of this Holy Office is presenting him as a witness, for time immemorial, in a case against the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte Davila, and he should be vigilant, and that he will now be read his testimony, and if in it there should be anything that needs to be altered, added, or amended he should do so, so that it shall tell the truth in everything, and that he shall affirm and ratify it, because that which he says now will count against the said Pedro Loarte Davila.

And then he was read, word for word, the above testimony, and being read it, and having said that he had heard and understood, the said Gerónimo de Paes affirmed that this was indeed his testimony, and he had said what had been read to him, and that the testimony was well recorded and set down, and that it was not necessary to alter, add, or amend it, because what was written was the truth, and he did and does affirm it, and did and does ratify it, and if it should be necessary he would give his testimony from the beginning against the said Pedro de Loarte Davila, not out of hatred but rather in order to unburden his conscience. He was charged with secrecy, according to form, and he agreed, and signed it with his name.

Herónimo paez

Friar Lópe Ysquierdo

Friar Diego de Ayala

Martín Gutiérrez

before me

Phelipe Flores

Notary Scribe of the Holy

Office

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+ In Las Minas de Los Ramos, Wednesday afternoon the twenty-fifth day of the month of October 1617: Being summoned, there appeared before Friar Lópes Ysquierdo, Commissary of the Holy Office of the City of Zacatecas, one Cristóbal de Morales, married, a resident of Las Minas, aged fifty-one (more or less). He was sworn in by the name of God Our Lord and the sign of the Cross, according to form, and he promised to tell the truth.

Asked if he knows or assumes why he has been summoned, he said that he assumes that it is to learn from him certain commentaries that Licentiate Pedro Loarte Davila made during the Festival of the Nativity during the past year of 1615. What happened was that one day during the said Festival, an altar in the main church was decorated to represent the Nativity of Christ Our Lord. On it were a number of different figures, including an image of Our Lady the Virgin Mary, an image of Saint Joseph, of the newborn Christ, and some little angels and shepherds and shepherdesses, and because there were no

statues of shepherds on hand, they placed instead some small saints' statues, as if the shepherds were children: images of Jesus, Saint Catherine, Saint Diego, and some others. This witness entered in the said church with some other people, and heard voices by the said altar, and heard Pedro Loarte say some choice words, which this witness did not hear well, and for this reason, and because he saw Luis Morena de Cierra (who was in charge of the said altar, since he had put it up out of devotion) cross himself, this witness went up to him, and asked what it was that the then Father Beneficiary had said, and the said Luis Moreno told him that the words that the Father had uttered were "What great little idols they placed there on the altar!" Also present were Bernardo de Monçon (brother-in-law to this witness), Gerónimo de Paez, Pedro Martín Basago, others who at present he can't recall. And as a result, this witness has been developing a heavy conscience, and so he wrote to the bishop of this kingdom.

Asked if the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte, either at the time he made the said commentary or later, had been chastised by anyone, this witness replied that he doesn't know if anyone ever reprimanded the said Beneficiary,

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both because he is a person of rank, as well as because he is in poor health and incorrigible.

Asked what he feels about the Christianity and habits of the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte, this witness declares that because of the example given above, and for other examples of bad behavior given while he was Beneficiary in this kingdom, he is not confident about his Christianity and habits, about which this witness has spoken before the said bishop.

The said Pedro Loarte is a native of Mexico City, a man of medium height, thin, going gray, and who limps in one leg, and he has always seen him possessed of his wits, and holds him for a man of good understanding and ability.

And furthermore he declares that in the year 1615, there being concern in this kingdom that a Rogation be held to God Our Lord so that it might rain, for there was a great drought, the said Pedro Loarte said that it is not necessary to hold a Rogation or procession, but rather take Morales (this witness) outside and throw stones at him, and then it will rain. This witness testifies the preceding because he heard it from Francisco Gomes de Olmedo, tailor, before whom the said Pedro Loarte made the said comment, and this witness knows that a report was made to the said bishop, to which he refers those present. This witness has heard tell that the said Pedro Loarte currently lives in Mexico City, and furthermore this witness has already testified before the said Lord Commissary certain items against the said Beneficiary. And this is the truth, given under the oath that he took, and being read

his testimony he said that it was well recorded, and that he says none of it out of hatred, but rather in order to unburden his conscience. He was charged to keep his testimony secret, which he promised to do, and signed it with his name.

Transcript note: “small” has been corrected.

Friar Lópe Yzquierdo
Cristóbal de Morales
before me
Phelipe Flores
Notary Scribe of the Holy
Office

In Las Minas de Los Ramos, on the fourth day of the month of November 1617, there appeared before

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Friar Lópe Ysquierdo, Commissary of the Holy Office of the City of Zacatecas, one Cristóbal de Morales, married, a resident and miner of these said mines, aged fifty-one (more or less). Also present, as honest and religious persons, were Father Friar Diego de Ayala, preacher of the Order of Saint Dominic, and the Licentiate Martín Gutiérrez, Curate of these mines, both Priests who had been sworn to secrecy. Paes was sworn in according to form, and promised to tell the truth.

Asked if he remembers having given testimony before a judge against another person about things regarding the Faith, he said that he recalls that on the twenty-fifth day of the past month of October of the current year, he gave testimony before the said Lord Commissary against Beneficiary Pedro Loarte Davila, Priest Beneficiary who lived in these mines. And he summarized his prior testimony, included here. He asked that this be read to him, and he was made to understand that the Head Attorney of this Holy Office is presenting him as a witness, for time immemorial, in a case against the said Pedro Loarte, and he should be vigilant, and that he will now be read his testimony, and if in it there should be anything that needs to be altered, added, or amended he should do so, so that it shall tell the truth in everything, and that he shall affirm and ratify it, because that which he says now will count against the said Pedro Loarte Dauila.

And then he was read, word for word, the above testimony, and being read it, and having said that he had heard and understood, the said Cristóbal de Morales affirmed that this was indeed his testimony, and he had said what had been read to him, and that the testimony was well recorded and set down.

And that what he needed to add was that some six years ago (more or less), when Friar Alonso de Rrebollo of the Order of Saint Francis passed through this realm, being in this

witness' house, he said — in the presence of María de Ochoa his wife and of María Monarda his daughter — that in no way should anyone make their confession before the said Father Pedro Loarte Davila, because they ran a great risk that he would reveal their confessions. When the said Loarte was vicar in Guadiana, some married women confessed to him, and he subsequently revealed to their husbands certain things against the Brothers of Saint Francis in the said town of Guadiana, which caused the said husbands to complain

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before Bishop Don Alonso Delamota, he being of this same Order, and out of fear the said Pedro de Loarte left the said town of Guadiana, for if he had not he would have been greatly disgraced.

And furthermore this witness says that perhaps two years ago (more or less), he heard in this kingdom that when the said Loarte was playing cards with some laymen, he took the cards in his hand and began to play saying “Those who offer me their confessions can't mess with me.”

And in the other parts of this deposition he doesn't have anything to add, remove, or modify, and he did and does affirm it, and did and does ratify it, and if it should be necessary he would give his testimony from the beginning against the said Pedro de Loarte Davila, not out of hatred but rather in order to unburden his conscience. He was charged with secrecy, according to form, and he agreed, and signed it with his name.

Transcript note: “the s” has been crossed out, and “Beneficiary” has been corrected.

And having closed this said testimony he said that shortly afterwards (more or less), in this kingdom, Pedro Martín Basago, resident of these said mines, told this witness that, having told in confidence something of importance to the said Beneficiary Pedro Loarte, something that no one else knew except himself and one other person, the said person repeated to Basago everything that he had said in the said confession to the said Pedro Loarte, saying that the said confessor had revealed this, and the said Pedro Martín Basago will testify about this in more detail. And finally, the depositions which this witness gave before the said bishop, and the ones he has given here before the said Lord Commissary, are all on the same topic, and should not be understood as contradictory statements.

Fray Lópe Yzquierdo
Cristóbal Morales
Friar Diego De Ayala
Martín Gutiérrez
before me
Phelipe Morales
Notary Scribe of the Holy
Office

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[More information on the various exploits of Pedro de Olarte can be found in: Archivo General de la Nación, México Ramo Inquisición, Volumen 316, folios 388 recto a 398 verso and Archivo General de la Nación, México Ramo Inquisición, Volumen 318, folios 344 recto a 345 verso]