Presidios, Misiones, Proyectos en la Frontera
Protection, Acculturation, and Conservation Along the Border

by
William E. Doolittle, Jeffrey M. Banister, Thomas E. Sheridan,
Alex LaPierre, Alex Lim, Francisco Cantú, David Seibert, and Bill Steen

Don Garate AKA Anza          Border wall at Naco                 Fr. Eusebio Kino

Southeastern Arizona

A guide prepared for the U.S.-México Border field trip
Conference of Latin American Geography 2022
Tucson, Arizona
8 January
**Itinerary**

08:00 am  Depart ENR2 Building, University of Arizona

09:00 am  Arrive Tubac  
Alex LaPierre, Tom Sheridan, Bill Doolittle  
Presidios and irrigation  
Coffee break at Tubac Cafe

10:00 am  Depart Tubac

10:15 am  Arrive Tumacácori NHP  
Alex Lim, Tom Sheridan, Bill Doolittle  
Missions and agriculture

11:15 am  Depart Tumacácori

11:45 am  Arrive Nogales  
Paco Cantú  
Border Patrol and immigration

12:15 pm  Lunch  
El Zarape Restaurant, 694 N Grand Ave

01:30 pm  Depart Nogales

02:00 pm  Arrive Patagonia  
David Seibert  
Borderlands Restoration Network

02:30 pm  Depart Patagonia

03:15 pm  Arrive Canelo  
Bill and Athena Steen and family  
The Canelo Project  
Bacanora tasting

04:15 pm  Depart Canelo

05:30 pm  Arrive back at the University of Arizona
Presidios over the years

Presidios or garrisons (not necessarily forts as popular belief holds) were developed in 16th century on the northern frontier of Nueva España to protect Spanish missions, towns, and settlers from hostile native peoples from the North. Because many soldiers were not the most socially reputable citizens, and hence a possible bad influence on the people they were assigned to protect, the Viceroy decreed that presidios be constructed near, but not too close to, missions and towns. Given poor provisioning, presidio soldiers had to grow their own food. Actually, their native wives grew food.

The presidios proved to be largely ineffective and went through two major overhauls. The first was involved an entourage under the leadership of Brigadier Pedro de Rivera Villalón that included chronicler Francisco de Sánchez, and cartographer Francisco Álvarez Barriero. This group set out in 1724 to assess each presidio and the entire presidio system. Rivera was instructed to report on 1. the status of presidios before the inspection, 2. the status in which they were left after the inspection, 3. the status in which they could be found after new regulations were decreed, and 4. maps. The resulting Reglamento para todos los Presidios de la Provincias internas de esta Governacion con el numero de Oficiales, y Soldados, que los ha de guarnecer: sueldos que unos, y otros avran de gozar: Ordenanzas para el mexor Gobierno, y Disciplina Militar de Governadores, Oficiales, y Soldados; Prevenciones para los que en ellas se comprenden: Precios de los Viveres, y Vestuarios, conque a los Soldados se le assiste, y se les avra de continuar...1729, or simply The Reglamento of 1729 established 1. the number of soldiers at each presidio, 2. salaries, 3. duties, 4. conduct of soldiers, and 5. provisions, including costs. It said nothing about the physical facilities.

Under these guidelines, the presidio of San Ignacio de Tubac was established in 1752.
Álvarez de Barriendo map of 1726. Tubac is off the northwest corner of this map.
As early as 1500 AD, the northern Pima Indians (today called the O’odham) had a large settlement called Tchoowaka located near the site of the current town of Tubac. Indian settlements consisted of houses built from poles covered with grass thatch arranged around a central plaza. The Native Americans hunted wild game, gathered fruits and berries, and farmed corn, beans, squash, and cotton, irrigating their fields with water from nearby rivers and streams.

In 1701, the Spanish frontier reached the area of Tubac, with Jesuit missionaries attempting to alter the lifestyle of the local Indians. By the 1730s, Spanish settlers were established at Tubac as supervisors of a mission farm and visita. A visita was a community visited regularly by a priest from a nearby mission.

On November 21, 1751, the northern Pima revolted against the Spanish missionaries due to the Spanish appropriation of Indian lands, the punishment system of the missionaries against the Indians, plus increasing Spanish demands and controls. As a result of the rebellion, a new presidio was established at Tubac in 1752.

Shortly after the Pima revolt, the Apache became a serious threat to the northern Pima and frontier Spaniards, attacking settlements. The primary military mission of the new presidio was to conduct retaliatory strikes following Apache raids.

In 1787, the Pima Indian Company, a group of Native American soldiers working for the Spanish, was transferred from Buena Vista to Tubac to help fight the Apache. Peace existed between the Spanish and Apache until just after the Mexican Republic declared its independence from Spain in 1821. The new nation was unable to afford the food and liquor subsidies given the Apache under Spanish rule. Apache raids intensified during the late 1840s with settlers from Tubac moving north to Tucson and south to Magdalena after a full-scale Apache assault. Apache raids continued into the late 1850s and did not end until 1886.
Close-up view of Urrutia's map showing the presidio buildings and layout, and an enlargement of the legend.
Artist Bill Arendt's rendition of Presidio del Tubac, looking West, in the 1700s.
Urrutia map of Presidio Tubac and surroundings, 1767
Google Earth Image of Tubac. Yellow line is the present-day channel of the Santa Cruz River. The old acequia pirated the stream channel.
Presidios over the years (continued)

The second major restructuring of the presidios and the presidio system occurred as a result of the 1766-1768 expedition of the Marqués de Rubí. Its leader was Cayetano Maria Pignatelli Rubí Corbera y Saint Climent. The chronicler was Nicolás de Lafora, and the cartographer was Joseph Ramón de Urrutia de las Casas. Lafora's account has been translated into English and is easily available at most university libraries. All of Urrutia's maps are curated in the British Library. This expedition resulted in the *Reglamento e instruccion para los presidios que se han de formar en la linea de Frontera de la Nueva Espana, Resuelta por el Rey Nuestra Senor en Cedula de 10 de Septiembre de 1772*, or simply *The Royal Regulations for Presidios, 1772*. Dealing with the physical facilities, it mandated that presidios be:

1. Located on high ground. ✓
2. Located near good farm land. ✓
4. Built of rock or adobe. ✓
5. Walls >3 meters high, and >1 meter thick. ❌
6. Square to rectangular, 60 - 240 meters (200 – 800 feet). ❌
7. One gate. ❌
8. Bastions on two opposing corners. ❌

At this time Tubac failed on five of these eight characteristics and was relegated to a town and Tucson became a presidio and town.

If you have not done so, please try to visit the Presidio San Agustín de Tucson at 196 N. Court Street in Tucson, open Wednesday-Sunday 10-4.

Other presidios that became towns include San Francisco, California, and San Antonio, Texas.
Presidio San Agustín, Tucson. The reconstructed section is letter A (NE corner) of the map.
Tumacácori

The Jesuit priest Father Eusebio Kino baptized a group of O'odham people along the banks of the Santa Cruz River, thereby establishing the mission San Cayetano de Tumacácori in 1691. A mission was more than a church. It was an endeavor to convert native peoples to Christianity and to make them tax-paying citizens of the Spanish government. The earliest structure was undoubtedly a *ramada*.

In 1751 the mission was moved to its present location and renamed San José de Tumacácori. Construction began on a simple church typical of Jesuit structures. As part of global shake-up, King Carlos III expelled the Jesuits from all Spanish colonies in 1767. This included missionaries those at Tumacácori.

Members of the Franciscan order took control of Tumacácori and began building a more elaborate church. It was never completed.

México became independent in 1821 and all Spanish missionaries, soldiers, and officials were expelled. Apache activity increased making life difficult for settlers. By 1848 the mission was abandoned and the church and other buildings began falling into severe disrepair.

The mission grounds became part of the U.S. Arizona territory after the Gadsden Purchase of 1854. Restoration began in 1908 when President Theodore Roosevelt declared it a National Monument. Tumacácori became a National Historic Park in 1990.
Artists birds-eye rendering of Mission Tumacacori. The acequia is indicated by the tree lines between the mission compound in the fore and the orchard and fields beyond.
THE UPPER PIMA
OF
SAN CAYETANO DEL TUMACACORI

An Archaeohistorical Reconstruction
of the
Ootam of Pimeria Alta

BY
CHARLES C. DI PESO

COLLABORATORS
David A. Breternitz and Dick Shutler, Jr.
Hugh C. Cutler and Lawrence Kaplan

NO. 7

THE AMERIND FOUNDATION, INC.
DRAGOON, ARIZONA
1956
LOCATION AND IDENTIFICATION

The Paloparado Ruin,\textsuperscript{10} which is now believed to be the original site of the Jesuit visita of San Cayetano del Tumacacori, is located on the western terrace margin of the Santa Cruz river some 53.22 feet (16.22 meters) above the valley plain (see map, Figure 1). The southern margin of this village is bounded by the steep northern bank of Peck canyon which debouches into the Santa Cruz river at the southeastern corner of the ruin. The entire late village is encompassed by a stone wall which encloses an area of some 18.4 acres (73,464.8 square meters).\textsuperscript{11}

Two canals were located immediately adjacent to the eastern stone wall of the ruin which parallel the western margin of the Santa Cruz river. They had their source at the juncture of this river and Peck canyon, and watered the fields lying north of the ruin on the west bank of the main stream.

The Santa Cruz river makes a sharp bend to the east at the site of the ruin, then turns north, leaving a low-lying valley terrace above the water course which undoubtedly was utilized as farm land by the Pima, even as it is today.

River Banks and Maps

During the course of excavations The Amerind Foundation, Inc. came upon a number of clues which suggested that the Paloparado village had existed prior to and after the coming of the Spanish.\textsuperscript{12}

First, an examination was made of the earliest available maps of the area. These had been drawn by Padre Eusebio Kino, a Jesuit missionary who first entered the Santa Cruz river valley in 1691. His maps were studied in hopes of finding out what rancherias, visitas, or missions were located in the area lying between the Mission of Guevavi south of the Paloparado site, and San Xavier del Bac north of the excavation.

Between 1695 and 1696\textsuperscript{13} the Jesuit cartographer mapped the area and located two rancherias within this specified area. Both designa-

\textsuperscript{10} The Paloparado Ruin, known as ARIZONA:DD:8:1 in The Amerind Foundation, Inc. survey system, is located in the state of Arizona, the county of Santa Cruz on the properties of the Baca Float, Inc. This old Spanish land grant is often designated as Baca Float No. 3. It has not been surveyed and incorporated into the present township system; but if the township system were extended over the area, the ruin site would be located in the SE\textsuperscript{1/4}, Sec. 16, T. 22 s, R 13 e.

The Arizona Highway Department survey, which is much more accurate and which was used to locate the base datum point on the ruin, was used in defining the limits of the site. Starting from a point on the new Nogales-Tucson highway at a point designated as the new Calabazas School bridge there is a permanent survey marker designated as P.C. 763 + 97.84 BK 766 + 69.58 AHD. The true north bearing is N 180°43'-30" S. A traverse line was run from this point, which had an elevation of 3,356.38 feet, to station 754 + 17.75 (1951) to the highway right-of-way marker on the west side of said highway designated as R of W.P.C. 763 + 98.34 BK 766 + 69.58 AHD. Elevation was established as 3,392.38 feet. From here a line was run to the Amerind base datum point located in the approximate center of Compound A at an elevation of 3,409.6 feet or 1,039.25 meters.

\textsuperscript{11} The bulk of the work in the form of stripping was carried on on the upper terrace, while the lower terrace was trenched.

\textsuperscript{12} The presence of cow and horse bones found in association with the Upper Pima houses, wrought iron objects with Upper Pima burials, Spanish glaze sherds, and a bronze spoon in late trash, and certain architectural features in the adobe structure of Compound A constituted evidence which was convincing enough to imply that a search in the Spanish archival literature was necessary.

\textsuperscript{13} BOLTON, 1936, p. 272.
visions were made on the east bank of the river; they were entitled S. Cayetano, north of Guevavi, and San Martin, north of the latter station.

On the Teatro de Los Trabajos Apostolicos map of 169614 Kino placed only one rancheria in the area between Bac and Guevavi; it was designated as San Cayetano and was placed on the east bank of the river.

14 Ibid., p. 290, entitled “Map of Pimeria Alta,” showing the martyrdom of Father Saeta in 1695.
ranch was established upon the legalities of an old Spanish Land Grant. The officers of this corporation\(^1\) were kind enough to allow the Foundation a right-of-way easement across their property as well as an archaeological permit.

During the course of the first season’s work a small cave, located in the Ramanote drainage near the site of San Cayetano, was excavated. This work necessitated an excavation permit which was obtained from the United States Department of Agriculture.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Messrs. T. and J. Pendleton and H. Merryweather.
\(^2\) Obtained through the aid of Forest Ranger G. Sykes and Forest Supervisor W. H. Woods, Jr.
pound was not examined. If the mesa edge is considered its eastern border, the compound measured approximately 56 m. on an east-west axis and 152 m. along a north-south axis.

Plate 63. Lower Terrace Compound Area.
   a. View of lower terrace looking northeast. (Vegetation marks limits of compound area.)
   b. Men digging test trenches in lower terrace part of village.

Compounds N, O, P, Q, R

These areas were all located along the base of the mesa on a lower river terrace east of the upper village and were enclosed within the village wall. The highway right-of-way cut a wide swath through these compounds and subsequent erosion, emphasized by the steep angle of the mesa face, also destroyed a great deal of information. Too, stripping processes were hindered by a legal point concerning excavations to the east of the highway right-of-way on which portions of these compounds were located.

With these handicaps, the area was checked only to ascertain whether the Late Pima culture extended into it and whether the older Hohokam village also utilized the lower river bench. It was discovered that the Upper Pima did use the area and that House 88-N, located along the southeast corner of the lower village, was a burned Type 1a structure.

No Hohokam material was located in Compounds N and O. However, in Compound P certain old village sherds cropped up which suggested that the Hohokam did utilize the area in the fields as did the Upper Pima. The lower village was merely trenched and surface checked for study but left covered.

Plate 64. Canals B and C
   a. Canals B and C located on lower terrace.
   b. Close-up of Canal B.
      1. Surface fill
      2. Sandy water deposit
      3. Canal fill
      4. Sterile bank
   c. Close-up of Canal C.
      1. Surface
      2. Water level deposit
      3. Canal fill
   d. Close-up of Canal C.
CANALS—Fig. 14, Pl. 64.

Two canals probably dating from prehistoric times were located below the eastern wall of the lower village; they paralleled the lower village wall, ran downgrade from south to north, and fed water to the large fields located northeast of the village. Canal A was a small ditch made in modern times which paralleled the older canals but was not part of the older system.

**Canal B**

This paralleled Canal C and was built above it approximately 50 cm. It was built after Canal C, for much of the debris of Canal B was recent fill, whereas the fill of Canal C consisted of soil thrown over it and into it as B was constructed.

Canal B was cut into a native clay bed; it averaged 1.50 m. in width and 45 cm. in depth. It is still visible in spots.

**Canal C**

This was located approximately 50 cm. to 1 m. east of Canal B; it was cut approximately 50 cm. deep into the clay sterile, and measured 3.20 m. in width. In spots it had been been cut out along its eastern margin by the meandering Santa Cruz river. It was filled with sand and with the debris of accumulation formed in Canal B. It was probably abandoned because the Santa Cruz river changed its course and cut deeply into its eastern flood bank, thus cutting out Canal C.
### El Zarape Mexican Food

**Serving Nogales Since 1993**

### Breakfast

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tr>
<td>Huevos con Machaca eggs with beef jerky style</td>
<td>$4.99</td>
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<td>Huevos Rancheros eggs with Mexican sauce</td>
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<td>Huevos con Papa eggs with potato</td>
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<td>Huevos con Jamon ham and eggs</td>
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<td>Huevos Tocino bacon and eggs</td>
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<td>Huevos a la Mexicana scrambled eggs with tomato, onion, green chiles</td>
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<td>Huevos con Chorizo eggs with mexican sauce</td>
<td>$4.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>Huevos con Birria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Camellt with cheese and one ingredient</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chilaquiles</td>
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<td>Chilaquiles con dos huevos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chilaquiles con pollo</td>
<td>$6.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilaquiles con Machaca</td>
<td>$6.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bir tek con Huevos steak and eggs</td>
<td>$6.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EVERYTHING INCLUDES BEANS WITH CORN OR HOMEMADE FLOUR **** TOTTILLAS ****

**BREAKFAST BURRITO** with 1 ingredient                              $4.50

**ANY EXTRA**                                                        $0.49

### Drinks / Bebidas

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<th>Type</th>
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<td>Large</td>
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<td>Small</td>
<td>$1.25</td>
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<td>Coke, Sprite, Diet Coke</td>
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<td>Fanta, Dr. Pepper</td>
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<td>Coffee</td>
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**AGUAS FRESCAS... $1.99**

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<td>Jugo de Naranja</td>
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<td>Jamaica</td>
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<td>Limonada</td>
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<td>Iced Tea</td>
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### Side Orders

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<td>Tortas</td>
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<td>Quesadillas</td>
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<td>Chimichanga</td>
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<td>Sincronizada</td>
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<td>Burro de Frijol</td>
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<td>Orden de Papa Pallada</td>
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<td>Sopa Grande</td>
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<td>Sopa Chica</td>
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<td>Pan Tostado</td>
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### Combinations

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<td>Chile Relleno, 1 Taco Dorado, 1 Enchilada</td>
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<td>Taco Dorado, 1 Flauta y 1 Enchilada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chimichanga, 1 Gordita, 1 Quesadilla</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carne, Camarones a la Plancha y Quesadilla</td>
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### Lunch or Dinner

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<td>2 Tacos de Carne Asada - Soft Taco with Grilled Steak</td>
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<td>Enchilada on Flour Tortilla of Grilled Beef, Machaca or Chicken</td>
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<td>Chimichangas, Chicken or Machaca Deep Fried Topped</td>
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<tr>
<td>with Mayo, Lettuce, Tomato and Cheese</td>
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<td>3 Tacos Dorados, Machaca or Chicken Deep Fried Hard Tacos</td>
<td>$6.25</td>
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<td>Enchilada Beef, Chicken or Cheese</td>
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<td>3 Flautas Rolled and Deep Fried Chicken or Beef</td>
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<td>2 Tostadas, Beef or Chicken</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gorditas, Chicken or Beef</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bir tek Ranchero, Steak with Tomato, Onions and Green Chile</td>
<td>$7.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bir tek con Papas, Steak w/French Fries</td>
<td>$7.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>Machaca, Order Beef Jerky Style</td>
<td>$7.49</td>
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<td>Escado a la Plancha</td>
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<td>Camarones Rancheros, Shrimp with Tomato, Onions and Green Chiles</td>
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<td>Bir tek con Papas, Steak w/French Fries</td>
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<td>2 Chile Rellenos, Green Chiles Stuffed with Cheese</td>
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<td>Carne con Chile</td>
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<tr>
<td>Beef Fajitas</td>
<td>$8.49</td>
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</table>

**EVERYTHING SERVED WITH RICE, BEANS, CORN OR HANDMADE FLOUR **** TOTTILLAS ****

**BIRRIA**                                                                $6.49

**MENUDO BLANCO/ROJO**                                                    $5.79

### Delivery / Comida Corrida

**DE LUNES A VIERNES**                                                   **$5.79**
In the Fall of 2015, I asked undergraduate students enrolled in my Honors English course at the University of Arizona to spend a semester thinking about maps and the stories they tell. Their first assignment was to choose a map and analyze its rhetoric: who is the map’s author, who is the map’s intended audience, what is the mapmaker’s purpose?

One of my students, a soft-spoken 40-year-old undergraduate from England named Rupert, was drawn to a map published by the non-profit humanitarian aid group Humane Borders.
The map he chose depicts the southwestern corner of Arizona and plots the deaths of undocumented migrants who lost their lives crossing the border in this remote tract of the Sonoran desert from 2000 through 2013. According to Humane Borders, the map was
designed for distribution south of the U.S. border at shelters and other waypoints along the migrant trail.

The map is peppered with hundreds of red dots, each representing the GPS coordinates where the recovery of a dead body was reported by the U.S. Border Patrol, the Yuma County Sheriff, or the Medical Examiners of Pima and Maricopa counties. Also included are visual overlays indicating the number of days required to walk corresponding distances on the map, a bar graph representing the average number of deaths per month, and icons signaling the location of water tanks and rescue beacons.

In his rhetorical analysis of the map, Rupert describes it as a “warning poster...designed more to scare, reminding people what has to be faced.” He writes that “by presenting the deaths marked in red so prominently, along with the other data...this poster reads like a 'keep out' sign not dissimilar to the ones found on the boundaries of private property or on military land where unexploded ordnances may exist or where land mines are deliberately present.” Indeed, at the bottom of the map bolded text cautions potential crossers in all caps: DON’T GO! THERE’S NO WATER! IT’S NOT WORTH IT! Rupert also recognized that the map serves as more than a simple tool for dissuasion. “The map’s small red circles,” he writes, “mark points of departure from this life, acknowledging people’s previous existence, like memories remembered by family and friends. Usually with no form of identification, no passport, no driving license, these people are like ghosts to the authorities in this life, and the next.”

Rupert was one of those rare students who would frequently visit me during weekly office hours to discuss writing, share drafts of in-progress essays, and ask for detailed feedback for improving his work even after it had already been turned in and graded. When Rupert came in to discuss his analysis of the Humane Borders map, I acknowledged that he had chosen a map that broached a difficult and weighty subject. I struggled to find language that could acknowledge the dissociative nature of the map and recognize, at the same time, the reality of the plotted deaths, the individual and cumulative weight of each red dot.

Since Rupert was more than ten years my senior, I was careful not to speak to him in any way that might suggest I saw myself as more experienced or knowledgeable. Perhaps for this reason, as we sat in my office discussing the map’s two-dimensional abstraction and reproduction of human death, I declined to tell Rupert that I had spent years mapping this very same terrain by hand, that in traversing its landscape I had walked and driven past countless points of departure with little awareness of the lives that had blinked out there, or that I myself had once looked upon a dead body on the desert floor, that I could likely point to one of the map’s red dots and call to mind the very face of the man whose death it signified.
After graduating from the Border Patrol academy at 23 years old, I was sent to my duty station in southwestern Arizona and assigned to a field training unit alongside my academy classmates and other recently-arrived trainees. Our first weeks at the station were wholly dedicated to area orientation, and my first days with a badge and a gun were spent crammed into the back of lumbering patrol vehicles with my fellow trainees, furiously scribbling notes and sketching maps in a small notebook I carried with me in the cargo pocket of my rough duty pants.

As we drove across uneven dirt roads, I filled pages with sloppy lines and quivering handwriting, glancing out the window and repeating place names as I scrawled them in my notebook: there is Diaz Peak, there is Black Mountain, here is Cameron’s Tank.

Among the most important information pressed upon us in those first weeks on the job were the names of prominent topographical features and man-made landmarks. We were prodded to study from all angles and directions the jagged ridge lines of desert mountain
ranges, memorizing the myriad peaks and passes and holding in our minds the foot trails that crossed over them and snaked around their edges. We were made to memorize highway mile markers and corresponding side roads and were quizzed as to which pullouts were favored by drug smugglers and migrants lying in wait for their load vehicles. We were encouraged to see the landscape as crossers might, to look toward the horizon and discern a path of least resistance or a path of greatest obscurity, to recognize places of concealment and waypoints offering shade or a vantage point for surveying terrain,

to identify prominent features walkers might use to guide off while making their way through otherwise barren and indistinct stretches of desert.

As we traversed our station’s area of operations, the field training officers in charge of orienting us often recounted oral histories of the landscape, stories rooted in enforcement, pursuit, and death—here is where I was almost run over by smugglers, here is where I ran over a drunk Indian asleep on the road, here are the burned-out cars we lit on fire in the good old days, there is the water tower where agents on horseback captured 100 walkers, down there is where a group of migrants in torn clothing stumbled out of a canyon after being attacked by a jaguar, here is where an agent crashed into a cow and lost his life in the darkness of early morning. Other times senior agents would pass along strange and storied place names with little context, pointing toward locations known as the spooky forest, the trail of tears, purgatory, vampire village, Christmas gate, beef stew, dead man’s gap. We learned and mapped these places as the agents before us had, with little understanding of the larger narratives that might have surrounded their naming.

At the end of my shift, I would return to the empty house where I lived alone to draw and re-draw full-page maps of the terrain I had detailed in my pocket notebook. In a cavernous dining room, I sat delineating highways and dirt roads, fence lines and foot trails, peaks and mountain passes, thinking little of the deaths that had occurred there or those that were yet to come, thinking even less about the problematic way I was coming to understand the place, about my ignorance at the haunted and de-peopled nature of the landscape, about my own role in perpetuating the struggles that were playing out there.
Traversing the landscape by day, I focused instead on naming and navigating space, avoiding questions about whether I was actually helping to interdict fatigued and dying crossers, or if avoidance of my presence was the very thing pushing them to their death.

On August 15th, 2010, more than a year after finishing field training and being released for regular patrol, I saw my first dead body in the desert. The body was fresh, lying on a dirt two-track about a hundred yards south of a bend in Indian Route 23 where the road turned to snake through a chain of low desert hills. When I arrived on the scene, two boys—the dead man’s 16-year-old nephew and his 19-year-old friend, both of them from the same native village in the Mexican state of Veracruz—stood hovering above the dead man.

What I remember most from that day is the dead man’s face, his dark hair and long eyelashes, the way ants travelled in neat lines towards the foam drying at the corners of his mouth, the way the blood pooling in his body had formed a purple line at the sides of his abdomen, like a massive horizontal bruise. I remember, too, how the two boys traveling with him milled around his body and looked out dazed and devastated upon the desert as if they had been robbed by a faceless criminal. I remember how they asked me, naively, if they could come to the medical examiner’s office, if they could accompany the body back to Mexico, if they could bring the dead man back to his family in Veracruz.

In his analysis of the Humane Borders map, Rupert referred to the red dots demarcating migrant deaths as “clearly marked ghosts,” small icons that “also indicate the invisible living men and women who were once walking with them at the time of their demise. The people that are still alive and walking.” Reading these words, I was made to think of the boys from Veracruz, and I wondered for the first time how they had borne the news of the man’s demise back to his village. I wondered whether or not they still carried his death in their hearts, if his loss had served to sway them from again attempting the journey or
whether it had compelled them to stay once and for all in their homeland, all hope of opportunity and prosperity having withered from witnessing a manifestation of violence so seemingly casual, one that was somehow both wholly manmade and wholly natural.

In the weeks after I first read Rupert’s essay, I found myself imagining red dots hovering above the desert terrain where I had once worked. I imagined the landscape as a topography of death, a representation that was at once false and yet seemed to be somehow vital and urgently true. I sought to find a way of simultaneously holding memories of the terrain as it had been shown to me alongside images of the place as one with a multitude of deaths fixed upon the landscape. I recalled my hand drawn maps and thought of how incorrectly they presented the landscape, how wrong it was to represent this desert as anything other than a place marred by the profusion of wrongful and purposeless death.

I wondered, too, about one particular red dot, the one that was, for me, less monstrously abstract than all the others. On a quiet afternoon, I finally sat down to find the very dot, calling up a high resolution image of the map on the Humane Borders website and zooming in on the terrain to trace the once familiar highways with my finger until I found the place where the road turned to snake through the low desert hills, brown and dappled on the map with dark shading, a place I had once mapped as little more than a thin line stretching west from the villages of Ventana.
Placing my finger upon the dot, I wondered how the entirety of a man’s life could be represented by a single point on the map, a red spot identical to hundreds of others flanking it on all sides.

In his book *The Power of Maps*, geographer Denis Wood asserts that “maps link the territory with what comes with it.” Thus, in the deadly borderlands of Arizona, perhaps any map that fails to acknowledge the dead—like those that filled my pocket notebook—could be seen as problematic or false. But the problem with a map of the dead is that the dead have no names, that their deaths are represented in the very same manner, that each individual is recognized only for their dying, as a “clearly marked ghost” fixed upon the landscape. In beholding a map of dead migrants, the viewer is encouraged to see those who have died crossing the desert in the same way that policy makers and law enforcement agents might see them, the way they are seen by militiamen and human traffickers—each indistinguishable from the next. Indeed, the role we are assigned in beholding a death does everything to determine how we hold it in our minds. As a uniformed agent standing above the body of a dead man all those years ago, I was somehow never compelled to ask his companions for his name, and even if I had, it would have been forgotten quickly and without ceremony.

More important than mapping the deaths of border crossers is preserving the names of those who have died and finding right ways of holding them in our minds, a way that allows us to rightly comprehend the spaces in which they have lost their lives. Just as important as their names, but harder to discern, are their stories. A worthwhile map of border deaths would cause us to feel something for each loss of life plotted upon it—it would cause us to feel necessarily overwhelmed by the amassing of red dots, by the accumulation of numbers and names, by stories with familiar and comprehensible details.
The importance of names and of holding space for distinct individuals is lost in the warning posters of Humane Borders, but not on the organization itself. Through a partnership with the Pima County Medical Examiner, Humane Borders maintains a constantly updated and searchable death map online where “viewers may see the exact location where each migrant body has been found, along with other information, such as the name and gender of the deceased (if known and if the family has been notified), date of discovery, and cause of death.” Such a tool allows us to interact with the red dots marking the departed, enables us to hold distinct names in our mind, and provides us with small pieces of information about individual lives—the closing details of stories we might someday seek to understand.
Nearly six years after his death, I drove west from Tucson to see if I could find my way across the desert to the place where the man from Veracruz had laid down to die. I drove along State Route 86 and entered the vast Tohono O’Odham Nation, continuing for over an hour until I reached Indian Route 34. I turned north, passing through long stretches of barren desert on my way to the villages of Hikiwan and Vayachin until I finally reached the junction of Indian Route 23, where I turned to drive toward the village of Ventana. As I drove west past the village, I began to recognize the low hills in the distance and I suddenly felt a strange weight, an awareness of the subtle distortions that reverberate in space long after one's death. I drove slowly, nervous that I might not find the exact spot, that I might end up driving for miles wondering if it could have been here or if it might have been there. I began to feel alarmed that I might never stand again in the place where that man’s life had ended, the place where his nephew and his companion had stood bewildered as I asked to them to explain how the man had met his end. But then, just before the bend in the road, I saw a dirt two-track splintering south into the creosote flats. I pulled my vehicle onto the dirt shoulder of the road and stepped outside to feel the hot summer wind. In the distance, clouds of clay-colored dust whipped into a tall funnel and then disappeared again at the horizon. As I walked south along the two-track my memories coalesced upon the terrain and I looked down to find the very patch of dirt where the man had laid on his back all those years ago with blood pooling in his abdomen and ants crawling across his face. I looked out at the landscape and said to myself—here is where Ascención Quechulpa Xicalhua ended his life’s journey, here is where his story rests upon the earth.

For more information about this piece, see this issue’s legend.

Francisco Cantú is an author and translator with an MFA in nonfiction from the University of Arizona. His essays and translations appear frequently in Guernica and his
work can also be found in *Best American Essays 2016*, *Ploughshares*, *Orion*, and *Public Books*, where he serves as a contributing editor. A former Fulbright fellow, Cantú also served as a Border Patrol Agent for the United States Border Patrol from 2008-2012, working in the deserts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. A book about his time in the borderlands is forthcoming from Riverhead Books.
Magdelena, Sonora, México

Where we originally planned to go.

Home of Luís Donaldo Colosio, assassinated presidential candidate 1994

Burial place of Fr. Eusebio Kino

Fr. Eusebio Kino
Brown & Lowe 1980 *Biotic Communities of the Southwest*
**OUR MISSION**

We partner to grow a restorative economy by rebuilding healthy ecosystems, restoring habitat for plants and wildlife, and reconnecting our border communities to the land through shared learning.

**OUR VISION**

We envision connected borderlands where rivers flow, plants, wildlife and cultures thrive, and communities develop an inclusive restorative economy where a sense of place inspires a sense of purpose.

**RESTORATIVE ECONOMY**

A restorative economy creates a synergy between human economic activity and natural systems to build a more prosperous and socially-just local economy. Standing in contrast to an extractive economy, which depletes resources, degrades ecological processes, and decreases biodiversity, a restorative economy works to regenerate resources, enhance processes and increase biodiversity.

Dr. David Seibert

David grew up in Tucson and holds degrees in literature and philosophy; linguistic anthropology; and ecological anthropology, historiography, and social memory. He has practiced ecological restoration and education for over 20 years by integrating aspects of hydrology, horticulture, Japanese garden design, firefighting and management, and attention to diverse cultural values on public and private land. Representative work includes sacred spring and wetland restoration and resource protection with Hopi, Zuni, Navajo and Southern Paiute partners; prescribed fire application and wildfire mitigation with ranchers; and training the next generation of practitioners for work in complex adaptive systems.

After starting a restoration consulting business in 2010 while completing a Ph.D. in ecological anthropology at the University of Arizona, David moved to Patagonia in 2012 to co-found Borderlands Restoration L3C. His 2013 dissertation on the region explores the unique sense of place forged among rural residents, smugglers, and travelers through chance encounters and found objects on the land. Unexpected, shared experiences of grace, hope, and mutual caretaking humanize a region prone to political abstractions, and help mitigate extreme uncertainty as people continuously reimagine how best to inhabit the region together.
The Canelo Project is both a family-based community and an applied educational center that gives people hands-on experience on a lifestyle that aims to be sustainable.

It is an ongoing exploration of living, growing food and building, that creates friendship, beauty and simplicity.

While we aim to create integrated living systems, our ultimate goal is to cultivate our own, and others’ partnership with nature, cultures, and one another.

https://caneloproject.com/