

A landscape photograph showing a river or stream flowing through a natural area. In the foreground, there is a dense field of tall, green and yellowish-brown grasses. The river is in the middle ground, with some reeds and shrubs along its banks. On the right side of the river, there is a large, gnarled tree with green foliage. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with light clouds.

## A'al Vaipia-Quitobaquito A Good Place, for a Long Time

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**Father Eusebio, Jesuit missionary**

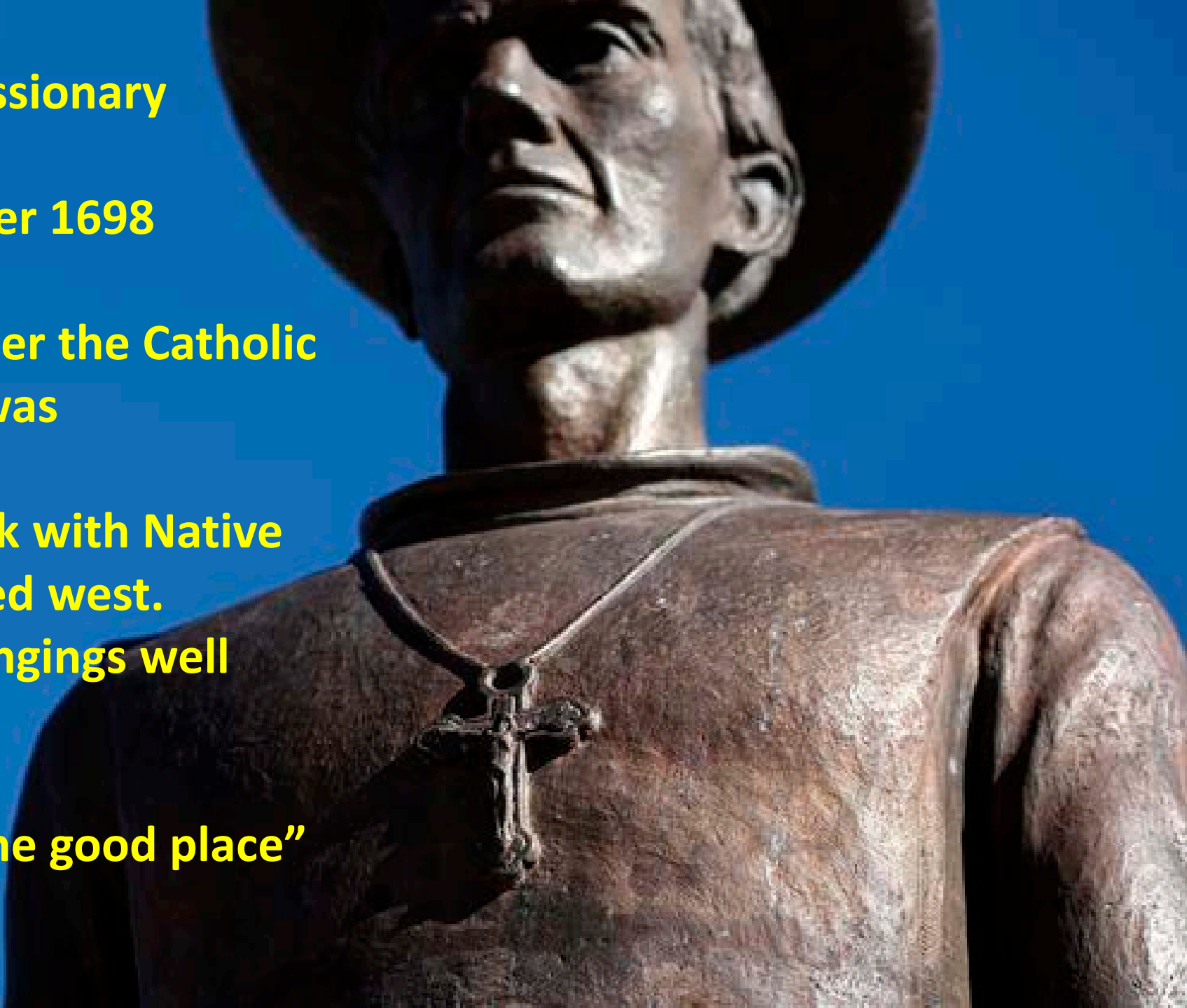
**Visited A'al Vaipia, October 1698**

**Named it San Serguio, after the Catholic saint whose feast day it was**

**Left baggage and livestock with Native villagers while he ventured west.**

**Returned to find his belongings well cared for.**

**Described the oasis as “the good place”**





# Andrew (Adolph?) Dorsey

Newcomer from Georgia

Early 1860s

Imagined profitable oasis  
connected to markets

Built dam, created pond

Dug ditches, irrigated crops

Opened a store

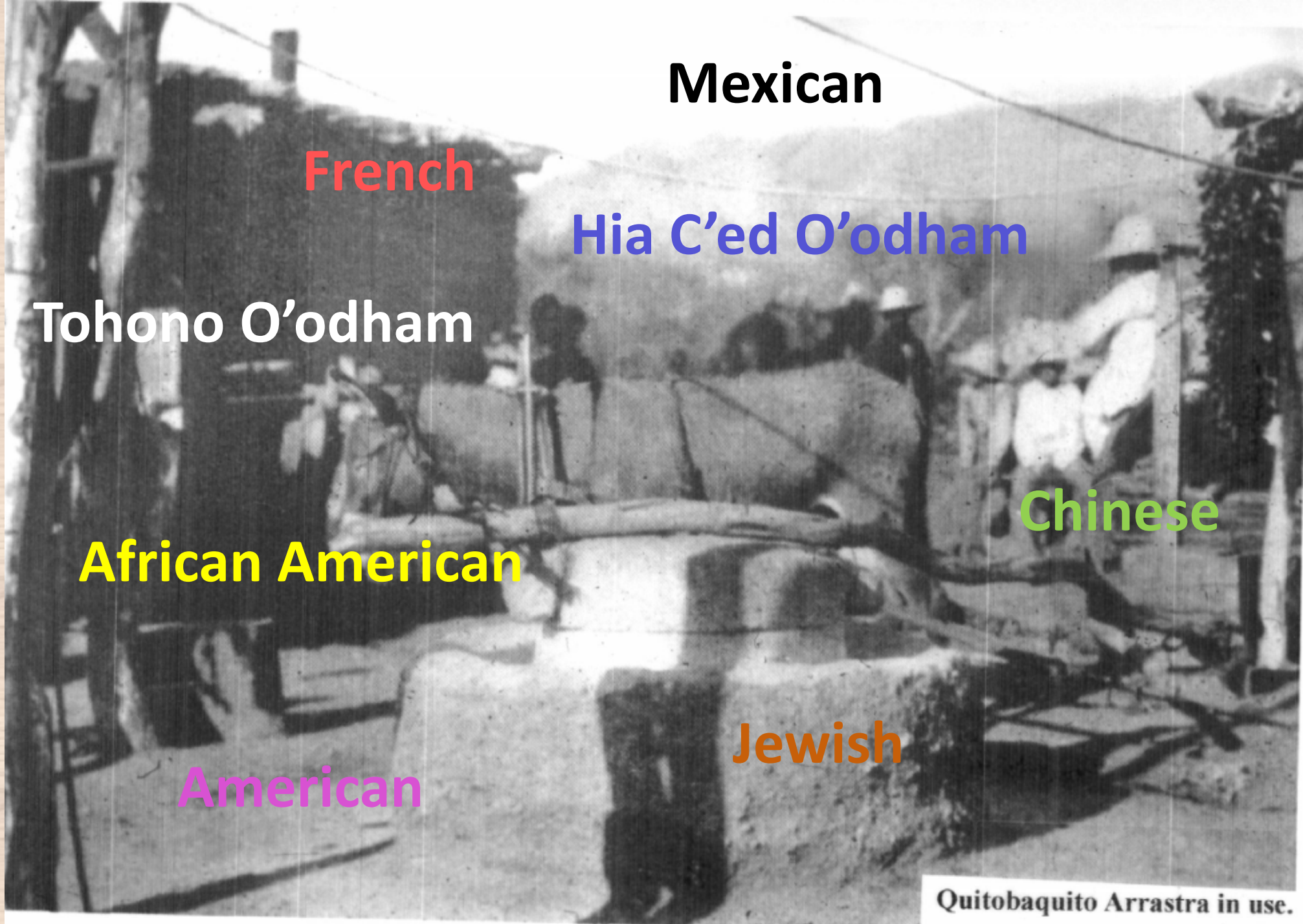
Established a mill







Quitobaquito Arrastra in use.



**Mexican**

**French**

**Hia C'ed O'odham**

**Tohono O'odham**

**African American**

**Chinese**

**Jewish**

**American**

Quitobaquito Arrastra in use.





# THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE

## THE OLD YUMA TRAIL

BY W J MCGEE, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

**T**HE distinctive part of the Old Yuma Trail lies between Sonoita (long 100 miles) and Sierra Gila (long 150 miles). The westernmost part of the trail lies between these two points with the distance of 40 miles. The trail is a narrow strip of land, 40 feet wide, and is the only one of its kind in the world. It is a relic of the old Spanish trail, and is the only one of its kind in the world. It is a relic of the old Spanish trail, and is the only one of its kind in the world.

approach lies through the ancient city of Tucson and by Coyote spring (at the northern end of Sierra Baboquivari) to the main trail anywhere east of Santa Rosa, and thence to Sonoita. From this oasis westward there is but a single way to Tinajas Altas, near the southern end of Sierra Gila; but there the tracks diverge, one distributary leading down the northeastern side of the range to Sierra Gila, another through a neighboring range, and thence directly northwestward to Sonoita, with a third (theoretically at least) leading directly northward. The way is practically impassable by well-equipped expeditions, and is drifting sands stretching to the horizon at the point touched by the Sonora boundary. The Sonora of today stands where the wooden cross erected by the Spaniards over two centuries ago. The old Spanish trail, a relic of the feudal Mexican village of the past, is prevailing in the remoter districts. It is owned and governed (with constant fealty to the distant but beloved Presidente and the much-adored Carmencita, who is to Mexico what Victoria was to Britain) by Don Cipriano Ortega, it com-

“Resources began to suffer; the forage grew scant,...cacti withdrew...big game became wary and betook to other ranges...with the decimation of plants and the trampling of stock the soil grew less retentive of the scant moisture...so that meager ground-water disappeared [and]...the smaller springs went dry.”

W. J. McGee  
ethnologist  
National Geographic  
1901



**Forrest Shreve, botanist,**  
Director, Desert Botanical Laboratory

Illustration from *Desert Magazine*, June 8, 2013

**“The man of practical affairs looks ruefully at the desert as a great waste...His conception of utility... concerns only the physical welfare of man.” But a scientist “can see in the desert many uses of a wholly different type—humanistic, intellectual and esthetic. He can see the desirability of having a little-coveted region in which it is possible for people to...to wander, to think, to paint, to study.” The desert’s value for “inspiration [and] scientific work, is worth many times its marginal value in the world of commodities.”**



## **W. B. McDougall**

**Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument ecologist, 1937**

**“Any change in the environment...would result disastrously to these plants. It is of national importance that the environment be maintained in its present condition...The environment of this unique plant life [should] be studiously protected and kept unmodified.”**











**Quitobaquito, circa mid-20th century,  
Hia C'ed O'odam structures visible**



**Quitobaquito, today, from roughly  
same spot, structures erased**







# A'al Vaipia-Quitobaquito: A Good Place Today and for the Future

What does that look like?

Water

People

Interpretation

Sustainability



How do we get there?

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Accept landscape making

Many stakeholders

Shared authority

Preference to least empowered voices