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La Placita: Vantages of urban change in historic Tucson

MacLaury, Maria Isabel, M.Arch.
The University of Arizona, 1989

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LA PLACITA: VANTAGES OF URBAN CHANGE
IN HISTORIC TUCSON

by
Maria Isabel MacLaury

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A Thesis Submitted to the
COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
MASTER OF ARCHITECTURE
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1989
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APPROVAL BY THESIS DIRECTOR

This thesis has been approved on the date shown below:

Fred S. Matter
Professor of Architecture

30 Nov. 1989
Date
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I profoundly thank the people of Tucson who have shared their experiences and memories, and who in different manners have contributed to a more meaningful understanding of their town.

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ABSTRACT

Cognition and social values prevail in urban evolution. Analysis of these values reconstruct an era that has largely vanished; the context is historic downtown Tucson, and the significance is the Mexican enclave that had La Placita as its social focus. The historical evolution and the urban character of La Placita and its surrounding barrio is documented with emphasis on the social meaning of its change. A newly developed cognitive theory of vantages and coordinates provides a model to depict the viewpoints that defined urban development in Tucson. The analysis of personal viewpoint provides a statement of the manner that social values and cognition shaped architecture and urban change throughout the years of growth in the center of Tucson.
INTRODUCTION

"Culture is ultimately translated into form through what people do as a result of what is in their heads and within the constraints of their situation."
Amos Rapoport.

Multiple cultural values have propelled the architectural evolution of "La Placita." This open space in downtown Tucson originated on the periphery of the old presidio. It acquired most of its splendor when it was a Mexican plaza, strongly defined by its church, its central gazebo, and the way people socialized within it. Later, the growing Catholic community required construction of a larger church cathedral. The old church in the plaza was converted to a hotel and then to a garage, and it was finally torn down. As "La Placita" no longer formed the entryway to a church, it lost much of its activity and meaning.

Technology has gradually fostered transformation of cultural values, which in the twentieth century instigated the spread of a universal culture. This had a tremendous impact on the environment; progress and rapid growth of towns promoted construction of new structures that did not always respond to local needs. Economic factors — a main motive of urban renewal — encouraged development of extensive areas without regard for regional values in architecture and planning. The social consequence of these changes is loss of continuity, identity, and community. This project focuses on such changes as they have occurred around La Placita.
The advent of the automobile prompted an exodus of residents to burgeoning suburbs, and businesses were relocated to shopping malls. The depletion of people and businesses in the center detracted from the downtown image, and La Placita declined with it. Next came urban renewal, the elimination of neglected areas for revitalization. For better or worse, an entire Mexican Barrio was razed and ultimately it was replaced by the Community Center. Of the old barrio, only two houses and part of a restaurant were restored. La Placita also was retained as an open space; but in spite of attempts to preserve its character, it is now an impersonal ghost of the active center that it was.

A diversity of programs target downtown Tucson to enhance its sense of place and to recover the liveability it had in the past. Most programs are related to the consolidation of an "Arts District," and several projects are gradually defining this idea: a new library in the core of the business district is about to be finished; the old Presidio area is a touristic attraction; Congress Street celebrates the opening of its art galleries two Saturdays in a month, and a festive atmosphere extends from there to 4th Avenue during these occasions; annual celebrations are very popular, such as the Mariachi Festival, Foundation of Tucson, Arts District Festival, and "Tucson Meet Yourself." All these activities try to call the attention of the population in Tucson to its downtown; but public attention is only stimulated sporadically by these intermittent occasions. People working in government and business offices are those who mainly patronize the diverse establishments that function in downtown during weekdays. There is need for a more stable offering in addition to what now exists to increase the appeal of the downtown district. Accommodation of residences and their compatible services would inject life into the area and enrich it as a pole of urban attraction.

History exposes the positive and negative agents that have affected urban evolution in Tucson, especially in regard to its strong heritage of Anglo and Mexican cultures. This study examines the values that have been historically relevant for the people of Tucson in defining its present downtown. Understanding of these values is essential in further actions, if they are to address the cognitive requirements of people in the future design of developments.
ON GOING EVENTS

Downtown Saturday Night
The first Saturday night of each month features open galleries, street vendors with food and entertainment on the streets. East Congress 6th Ave. 5-10pm 521-6993
Congress Street Block Parties
On the third Saturday of each month the Congress Street community features art, entertainment for people of all ages. 10pm-4pm

TUCSON MEET YOURSELF

Oct. 13-15
A popular tradition among Tucson’s multi-ethnic population, with a colorful fusion of food, crafts and entertainment from the cultures of the world.

TUCSON ART EXPO

Nov. 11-19
Westlodge celebration of the arts with studio open houses, live music, performance, music, exhibitions, artists’ workshops, and special events for the arts.

NOVEMBER

TUCSON ART EXPO

Nov. 11-19
Westlodge celebration of the arts with studio open houses, live music, performance, music, exhibitions, artists’ workshops, and special events for the arts.

FILM/VIDEO EXPO

Nov. 10-19
Experimental works in the Screening Room Artisitic Center for media.

WESTERN MUSIC FESTIVAL

Nov. 10-19

HOLIDAY IN LIGHTS

Nov. 30-Dec. 2
Downtown holiday market and light show featuring Darling Ballet, live music, and entertainment throughout the historic district as well as numerous daytime and evening holiday activities.

DECEMBER

FOURTH AVENUE

WINTER STREET FAIR

Dec. 9-11
Popular fair for showcasing quality arts and artists from all over the country, food and entertainment.

LAS POSADAS

Dec. 9-10
Celebration of the traditions of Mexico featuring music, dance and other cultural activities.

FOURTH AVENUE

GEM & MINERAL FAIR

Feb. 9-11
Annual fair for jewelers and collectors featuring quality gems and minerals.

PARADE OF LA FIESTA DE LOS VAQUEROS

Feb. 23
Annual parade through the downtown area highlighting thousands of participants from all over the world.

MARCH

PRIMA VERA

FILM FESTIVAL

March 15-25
Annual film festival in the Screening Room Artisitic Center for the Arts.

ST. PATRICK’S DAY PARADE

March 17
Annual St. Patrick’s Day parade through downtown Tucson featuring music, dance and entertainment.

TUCSON SUMMER ARTS FESTIVAL

May, June, July
A summer program of concerts, performances and lectures featuring the best in local and national talent.

SCOTT AVENUE ARTS FESTIVAL

August
Street dance, strolling murals, and entertainment.

FOUNDER’S DAY CELEBRATION

August 21
Annual Founder’s Day celebration with family activities in the Courthouse Plaza.


citywide activities; see page 13 for details.

TUCSON SUMMER ARTS FESTIVAL

May, June, July
A summer program of concerts, performances and lectures featuring the best in local and national talent.

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1. RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA

1.1 Data Collection.

Historical data are drawn from literature, maps, and photographs. Contemporary cognitive data derive from original nondirective interviews of long-term residents and of knowledgeable persons; these develop the social dimension.

Historical data are from archives in the University of Arizona Libraries, including the Arizona State Museum, Special Collections, Architecture, and Main. The City Hall of Tucson and the Arizona Historical Society archives also house valuable data.

The nondirective interviews follow techniques, strategies, and tactics recommended by Bogdan and Tylor (1975); their basic idea is to encourage the interviewee to mentally position himself in a specific timeframe, to elaborate his memories of downtown, and to relate images. Under a general scheme of topics without a structured questionnaire, the goal is to subtly direct the interviewee to develop his own themes in relation to the focus of the study. The repetition of themes in addition to historical data form the basis to structure the cognitive model of urban change.

Eight residents in Tucson have been interviewed. Their information is invaluable for their long term-residency in Tucson. Five of them are native Tucsonans, and the other three are natives of Georgia, California, and Argentina. Interviewees fall into two groups: (1) those who provide a Mexican vantage of direct living experience in the area; (2) other Tucsonans, outsiders to the area, who relate La Placita to the overview of a greater urban image.

1.2 Analysis and Theoretical Orientation.

The urban environment is the most complex conglomerate of communication and conduct experienced by man. Hence, urban problems require interdisciplinary treatment so that fields of social sciences and technology overlap within specialties. This analysis addresses the human perspective of La Placita in its architectural evolution and urban dimension; it will bring a theory of cognitive organization to bear upon architecture in its social and historical context. The model is the Theory of vantages and coordinates whose fundamental tenet is that human viewpoint is constructed by analogy to the coordinates by which all people constitute spatial awareness (R. MacLaury, 1987); the theory is described.
in Part II on chapter 5. Applying this theory to urbanism enhances the methods of understanding now available to architecture and city planning.

Social and cultural issues can be read through architecture and its integration to the urban built form; this requires documentation of the historical changes addressed in Part I. Based on historical data, the theoretical analysis in Part II recaptures the different points of view that defined the urban evolution of Tucson, with focus on its Mexican barrio -- the context of La Placita. The purpose of the work is to establish the cognitions and social values that brought about the changes in spatial organization. Analysis of Tucson's historical development and its present urban characteristics, allow the interpretation of the vantages that the inhabitants of Tucson had through time.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 History.

Broad studies of Tucson provide background information regarding the early presidio, layout of the first plazas, and activities around them; it was the milieu where La Placita evolved (Lockwood 1930; Cosulich 1953; Harte 1980; Sonnichsen 1982). Dynamics of ethnic diversity within Tucson during Spanish colonial rule laid the foundations of present demography and social composition (Dobyns 1976; Sheridan 1986; Officer 1987).

The late nineteenth and early twentieth-century expansion of Tucson brought reorientation, razing, revitalization, and latter-day development of downtown. Urban renewal had both local support and opposition; forces inside and outside Tucson encouraged the renewal (Giebner 1974; Harte 1980; Sonnichsen 1982). All of this directly affected La Placita and its immediate context.

Clark and Fimbres (1978) identify the psychological effects of the relocation that followed urban renewal; interviews with residents of the barrio reflect their inability to absorb the calamity.

Martin (1983) builds on her native understanding of the culture and sentiments of the Mexican-Americans to portray their lives in different areas of Tucson. Some images she captured will be integrated with viewpoints obtained from interviews to reconstruct the human context of La Placita.
2. 2 Environmental and Urban Studies.

Hall (1966) studies the mental parameters of human interaction and considers human geography from a personal dimension. Lynch's (1960) theory of public images within urban landscapes establishes that there is a degree of conformity in the major elements perceived by people in their urbanscape, even though there are differences between individual and group images. Interviews by Fried and Gleicher (1961) lead to findings that spatial territoriality is defined not only by objective space but by the feelings of belonging to spatial settings and by their identification with local people; they state that people and places provide the framework for personal and social integration. Tuan (1976) approaches human attachment to place through the religious concept of "geopiety," a model that considers attitudes, beliefs, values, and symbolic structures in an effort to understand the difficulties that scientific enterprises encounter on the study of ecology and territorial behavior. Rapoport (1986) points out the significance of the study of change in culture and environment to understand their dynamic relation. Doxtater (1984, 87) suggests that ritual performances can establish the social meaning and the organizing elements of a community, and he associates spatial oppositions of nonrational symbolism in the organization of settings. This structuralist analysis of spatial oppositions tries to understand cognitive symbols and values reflected in architecture; it is an approach to find the semiotics of spatial organization. The theory of spatial oppositions is based on a duality of concepts.

The model to be used in the analysis of Tucson's urban evolution is vantage theory. Vantage theory supersedes bipartite duality. Although any vantage is formulated by two concepts: one fixed and one mobile, these two coordinates or points or reference are not of equal value; the fixed coordinate is a ground while the mobile coordinate is a figure. The figure is the focus of attention while the ground is a backdrop against which the focus is contrasted. Figure-and-Ground are human constructions picked out as points of reference to make sense of the surrounds. Points of view gradually change and new points of reference are picked out based on the previous ones. Vantage theory poses figure versus ground rather than binary opposition, and it enables the analysis of change and evolution.

2. 3 Cognitive Theory.

Incisive analytical instruments are newly emerging from the field of cognitive science. The present data analysis utilizes the Theory of Vantages and Coordinates to depict construction of viewpoint in historical evolution. Quotes from the interviewed residents will incorporate personal opinion within contemporary history.
Vantage theory shows promise as a means to extract formal accounts of world view from the results of nondirective interviews. The theory and its field methods are under development by professors of Anthropology, University of Arizona (MacLaury 1987; Hill and MacLaury 1989). The model has proven successful in anthropology, linguistics, communication, discourse analysis, history, health care, decision making, and higher education; and students in these fields have used it as a model of analysis in a seminar1.

The Theory of Vantages and Coordinates was formulated as a means to explain systematically collected observations of color categorization among linguistic Indigenous communities of Mexico and Central America (R. MacLaury, 1986, 87). This research on color was an ideal starting point because color data can be quantifiable; this allows rigorous tests of the cognitive model.

The theory is widely applicable, because models in a primordial process of human thought: categorization. What a person is trying to accomplish when he is categorizing — even though categorization is accomplished unconsciously — is a better understanding of the world, he is trying in effect to establish and affirm a viewpoint (R. MacLaury, 1989).

Vantage theory tries to step inside the skin of the categorizer and develop a theory of what people are trying to do, and not the theory of functional evolutionary results of what they might do. For example if we consider the following statement: young people date each other in order to breed. Dating may ultimately result in reproduction, but dating is a much more complex operation than breeding itself. If a foreign scientist comes to the United States for the study of dating practices and uses breeding as his operating premise; he will not achieve a deep insight into the institution of dating. Likewise, Vantage theory stresses that categorization is an effort to make sense of one's surrounds; it is true, but less relevant, that categorization might order complexity into manageable groups, even though such simplification of reality has indispensable evolutionary values...just as does breeding.

Vantage theory applied to architecture and urbanism, contrasts certain physical theories — as that of Lynch who looks for actual physical landmarks and pathways — to cognitive theory. The latter establishes fixed and mobile coordinates in the mind; coordinates might be landmarks and pathways or they might be social values and ethnic orientations. This incorporates to architecture and urban space theory a more flexible property than one that must plot coordinates in actual physical manifestations without a strong integration with cultural and social considerations.

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1 Titles of these students papers will appear with * in the bibliographic references section
3. ORGANIZATION

The study is divided into Part I and Part II: (I) historical overview of the evolution of Tucson and (II) theoretical analysis of this evolution applying the model of Vantage Theory. These two parts are followed by the conclusion of the findings and by an appendix containing codified interviews of long term residents in Tucson.

Part I is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1 covers the Prehispanic and Hispanic periods preceded by prehistoric considerations of the area. Chapter 2 studies the Gadsden Purchase and the first changes which occurred in the town as part of the United States. Chapter 3 focuses on the advent of the railroad and the urban changes it stimulated. Chapter 4 recounts the principles of urban renewal and its effects on downtown Tucson.

Part II explains the basic concepts of vantage theory and its usual terminology in chapter 5, followed by its application in an attempt to extract the cognitions that guided Tucson's urban development. The cognitive model is viewed at two different levels of focus: Chapter 6 analyzes the urban process of Tucson in broad perspective; and Chapter 7 focuses on La Placita and its immediate context in narrow perspective.
PART I

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

The past offers essential knowledge of the natural and rational processes that involve man and his environment. Understanding of this knowledge is a first step to analyzing the motives of these processes and to encouraging an insightful approach for further actions. Architecture and the urbanscape are the milieux where most of men develop their activities nowadays, hence the significance of interpreting the meaningful forces of the societies and to strengthen those values which identify them as unique. The following chapters are an effort to understand these forces as they prevailed in the evolution of Tucson.
1.1 Brief History of the Tucson basin

Archaeological records for Southern Arizona are at least 10,000 years old. In prehistoric times, the Tucson basin had a cold and wet climate that allowed a woodland flora. To the east of Tucson, in the San Pedro Valley, there was a shallow lake with marshy vegetation. This microclimate attracted large Pleistocene animals such as mammoth, horse, mastodon, camel and giant bison, which were the prey of human predators (Naylor, 1986). Little is known about the daily life of these hunters; their simple society was mobile in order to survive in the harsh environment.

The environment changed gradually as the climate grew warmer and drier. When Pleistocene animals became extinct, the human inhabitants responded positively to environmental changes. Their adaptation to new means of survival is known as Desert Culture; as they gleaned food from wild plants and smaller animals. These hunter/gatherers kept a transhumant existence until about 1st century A.D.

Further south, the mildness of the environment simplified human survival and contributed to the formation of more complex societies. The high mountain valleys of Mesoamerica fostered the domestication of plants and animals. Development of pottery and improvement of crops --specially corn-- lead to sophistication and urban development. These agricultural and technical advances had an impact on the Desert Culture, though their influence did not stimulate equivalent social evolution (Naylor, 1986).
Also about 1 A.D., a distinct group emerged in Southern Arizona. These newcomers are called Hohokam in the Piman language, or "those who vanished." No traces indicate from where they came, but they were definitively different from people of the Desert Culture. The Hohokam population reached 100,000 at its peak. Their use of irrigation became a precedent for future agricultural societies in the arid Southwest. Because of their development in agriculture, the Hohokam people lived throughout the year in individual pithouse dwellings grouped in villages. No matter what shape the pit assumed, it was always excavated one or two feet below ground level; to make it cool in summer and warm in winter. Pithouses were built of brush and sticks framed by poles and plastered with mud, forming an enclosure with only one opening at the doorway. They were scattered around an open area with a common ramada.

From remains of ball courts, it can be inferred that the Hohokam had both a village and a regional organization: the functioning of ball courts is a result of social and recreational development. Though slightly different, these ballcourts are thought to be an influence from Mesoamerican cultures that developed farther South (Naylor, 1986).

During the 14th century, native Americans in the Southwest built adobe-walled compounds of contiguous rooms around a central courtyard. In some cases these compounds were associated with a massive adobe building of several stories, as the ruins of Casa Grande, in San Agustín de Oiaur (Figure 3). The Hohokam culture collapsed around 1450. Many theories address the disaster, but none has been proved. The territory they occupied became the homeland of Papago and Pima Indians; they are generally considered to be Hohokam descendants, although they did not develop societies as complex as the Hohokam.

1.2 Tucson under Spanish rule, 1776-1821

When Europeans reached the Tucson area, it was inhabited by the Northern Pimas. Reverend Father Eusebio Kino, a Jesuit missionary, was among the first Europeans to see how these native Americans lived along the splendid fields of the Santa Cruz river; they were grouped in clusters of houses dispersed barely in sight of each other.

Kino, who probably passed through the site of Tucson in 1694, was the first to include it in a map. He dated the map 1695 and mentioned previous expeditions he made to the area. At Bac, south of Tucson, Kino constructed the first Christian church. Whenever he travelled from Bac to Oiaur (Figure 3) — now Casa Grande — he passed through the area.
of present Tucson, where he spent little time. His slight influence on the native inhabitants of the area was largely limited to baptism (Dobyns, 1976).

The mission of San Xavier del Bac was part of a pacification program established by the Spanish empire. This program was based on the mission system, held first by Jesuit missionaries and later on by Franciscan friars after the former were expelled by order of the Spanish crown. Though mining was the main activity during Spanish colonization, cattle ranching and plantations were important; they required participation of native people for production. Natives, who had different socio-cultural background than the white colonizers, resisted the Spanish takeover of their land and the forced labor to cultivate it. The irregular seasonal movement of Northern Pima Indians was an obstacle for the missionaries, whose main goal was to establish an Indian settlement with an agricultural based economy. The first step toward settlement was the conversion of the Pimas to Christianity.

The first Hispanic edifice built in proximity of present Tucson was established west of the Santa Cruz river at the base of "A" Mountain. It was called "El Rancho de Tucson" or "El Rancho de los Padres" (Tucson's Ranch or the Fathers Ranch). Its location was conveniently close to the farming lands of the Santa Cruz river, inhabited by native Indians who already had undergone contact with San Xavier del Bac Mission.

Later on, this ranch developed into the fortified mission community of San Agustin del Tucson. The community was an industrial school that comprised a church, the friars dwelling, a small kitchen, a large granary, two cemeteries, and several adobe workshops and dwellings. The complex was surrounded by an adobe wall of about 400 feet on a side, with its main gate facing South toward the road between San Xavier del Bac and San Agustin de Oiaur (Lockwood, 1930).

An Indian village, San Cosme del Tucson or Pueblo de Tucson, was located South of the mission. It consisted of a few adobe dwellings and many ramadas. The people of this village were engaged in construction of the mission. Before the mission was completed, some of the locals who were dissatisfied with Spanish domination joined the Apache Indians and attacked the priests and their peaceful Indian converts. These attacks were so constant that the few Spanish soldiers posted on the missions were not able to resist their hostility.

A strong representation of missionaries petitioned the Governor to transfer the northern military defense — at that time the Tubac garrison -- closer to the missions. This was accomplished in 1776 when the Tucson Presidio was established to become the northeast frontier of the Spanish Empire, and it marked the origin of present Tucson.
The Spaniards established a military outpost in such a remote place for various good reasons: to pacify the local Indians while converting them to Christianity and later to tribute payers; to protect the Spanish settlements from raiding tribes; to assure a safe route to California; and to thwart other European powers, such as the Russians who were exploring the Pacific coast (Sonnichsen, 1982).

The Spanish campaign of domination and penetration to the northern lands of Mexico originated in 1540. This campaign to search the silver country, created tensions among the native Indians living in the frontier zone between the barbarian tribes to the north and civilized Indians to the south (Figure 4). Both frontier groups united and rebelled in what was the biggest outbreak in New Spain, the Mixtón War. It lasted from 1541 to 1542, and took place in Mixtón country, on the borders of modern Jalisco and Zacatecas. The Spaniards controlled the attack with their military strength, and since then established the presidio system to mark their occupation in northern territory (Sauer, 1941).

Two centuries after having initiated the presidio system, Tucson became the northern bastion held by the Spanish empire. The selected site for the Spanish Presidio was three quarters of a mile Northeast of the San Agustin mission and overlooking it (Figure 5). It was protected by the deep stream "Arroyo de Tucson" on the north and east and by other streams on the south.

The presidio was designed as a compact village reminiscent of Roman fortifications. It was surrounded by an adobe wall 22 inches thick and 12 feet high, roughly forming a square of 750 feet on a side (Figure 6). Data shows controversy regarding the number of emplacements; either one or two, they had loop holes for gun posts on their second story. The presidio gate was in the west wall, almost where the present Alameda and Main streets intersect. Its heavy mezquite gate had a roof that served as a station post for the sentinel (Lockwood, 1930). Close to the east wall, on the present Alameda St., was the original church of the presidio. It was a plain building, lacking the characteristic adornment of Catholic temples. There were small cemeteries north and south of the church. Opinion differs concerning location of some buildings inside the presidio, especially the Chief Officer's house. Though east of the gateway, it is not known if it was attached to the north wall or if it was approximately at the center of the presidio; but all studies agree that its door faced south and that its construction offered more protection: it was the last line of defense against enemy intrusion.

Life in Tucson during presidial times was concentrated around military activities, because it was mainly populated by soldiers. The number of civilians was small, even
counting the families of some soldiers. The residential quarters were inside the presidio walls, and few people lived outside. Most of the men were engaged in agriculture or stock raising. The only public work was the completion of San Xavier del Bac Church. The fort was a busy place with soldiers coming and going on escort and guard duty at Bac and other communities.

At the onset of the 19th century, Tucson was an agrarian community of self-sufficient rancher-farmers who supported the garrison soldiers. By 1804, they enjoyed a certain level of prosperity due to their crops of corn, wheat, beans, vegetables and cotton, as well as cattle and sheep. This was abundance compared to previous years, in spite of the dependence on Arizpe — the Sonoran capital — for supply of certain goods that the precarious local industry could not provide (Officer, 1987).

The Spanish population grew slowly from 77 persons in 1777 to 500 in 1819. In 1791, a settlement law set aside 4 square leagues around each presidio to encourage the migration of other Spaniards from the south. In 1804 a report submitted to the Real Consulado (Royal Consulate) — a government bureau similar to the Chamber of Commerce — stated that the Tucson Presidio had a total of 1015 persons, 300 were Spaniards and the others were natives and mixed bloods; they occupied an area of less than 2 square miles (Dobyns, 1976).

By 1817, ethnic stratification was demarcated: persons of noble blood at the top and natives and mixed bloods at the bottom; there was no middle class, no professionals, no large landowners, and a few merchants and traders. The native population was slowly giving way to Hispanics and mixed bloods. Retired soldiers were occupying fields that had once belonged to the Papagos, though they were not allowed to possess lands controlled by the mission.

Over the years this community learned to live with scarcity and isolation. They had to deal with flood, drought, and Indian attack without the help of the government in Mexico City, 1500 miles away. The frontier conditions developed the capacity of the pioneers to survive in desolation, although this quality was often considered primitive and backward by early Anglo visitors (Sonnichsen, 1982). In 1821, at the end of the Spanish period, Tucson was a prosperous village where Spaniards and Indians lived side-by-side.
Even though the disturbances began in 1810, the Mexican revolution expelled Spanish occupation in 1821. The country's economy had been disrupted, the main production activities were abandoned, and it was hard to get anything done. This situation was reflected in Tucson, which remained stagnant; for the next three decades the community continued very much the same as before, but with the Mexican flag flying above the presidio walls. The adobe presidio fell into disrepair; and as Mexico's "protectionist wall" came down, Anglo-American traders and trappers began to arrive to the area, carrying diseases that reduced the native population.

Tucson first saw many Anglos during the war between the United States and Mexico: in 1846, the Mormon Battalion stayed in town four days. The mountain men were the first Anglos that entered the presidio. By that time Mexican houses were of adobe, reasonably adapted for the desert climate, cool in summer, and warm in winter. To the Anglos, accustomed to materials common in the East, the adobe houses were a sign of backwardness. Their views of Tucson were mainly negative, with prejudice towards Mexicans. Nevertheless, in short time Anglos settled in Tucson; they married Mexican women and adopted Mexican food and ways of living. The Mexican heritage mixed the Anglo customs and ideas, which began to shape a biracial community.

Interethnic relations were strengthened by a common fight against the Apaches. The Mexican government could not afford to continue supporting the pacified Apaches that lived close to the presidio. As the Apaches did not have their accustomed rations anymore; they resumed their raiding activities, breaking 20 years of peace established by the Spaniards.

In January 1849, Tucson was no longer a presidio; it had been designated a "military colony." This change brought the settlement of young men, who were granted land to cultivate in exchange for their service in defending the community from Apache attacks. The Indians and old settlers were already living and working in the most fertile lands. They were not satisfied with the new status of military colony. It meant the arrival of settlers from elsewhere in Sonora; they were still trying to allocate the Tubac and Calabasas refugees, who had fled to Tucson after suffering a major Apache attack (Dobyns and Officer, 1984).

Around 1850, life in Tucson was almost impossible. Warfare and epidemics caused high death rates. In 1851, nearly a quarter of Tucson's residents died in a cholera
epidemic. In spite of demographic losses, Hispanic women — considered uninhibited by Anglos — were prolific enough to maintain population (Officer, 1987). Ranchers and farmers had abandon their lands because of Apache raids. That left the region reduced to less than 300 people, who all were confined to the inner walls.

The adobe houses were never repaired; when they reached a state of ruin, they were abandoned. This fact calls into question the authenticity of remains from Mexican period; probably few architectural survivals could be identified with the time. In 1849, the Tubac refugees possibly constructed their homes in what was later known as Barrio Libre. This area was torn down in the 1960s to accommodate the freeway and urban renewal projects; depriving Tucson of its oldest structures. Even renovation projects in the presidial area targeted at structures that turned out to be newer than originally thought: the restored Casa Cordoba in the Plaza of the Pioneers was dated from about 1876 by use of the three ring method on its earliest roof beams (Officer, 1987).

In 1873 former Governor Safford interviewed Mariana Diaz, a woman of 100 years old, who lived through the Spanish and Mexican periods. She remembered how pleasant the times used to be. They had few needs that could be easily supplied. They danced, and played, and enjoyed themselves. There was plenty of mescal, but people drank it in excess only on rare occasions. Crime was almost unknown, and if it had not been for the Apaches they would not have known what trouble was. Her husband and many of her relatives died in Indian attacks.
2.1 Gadsden Purchase, 1854

The discovery of gold in California and the development of mining companies in Arizona caused a strong migration towards the Southwest. From the late 1840s through the 1850s, the Southwest attracted newcomers from throughout the United States and northern Mexico. Some settled in Tucson, which reached a population of 350 by 1852.

The southern part of the nation lacked a railroad connection. To build it, the United States bought 30,000 square miles of Mexican territory for 10 million dollars. This was the Gadsden Purchase of 1854, which Congress approved in June (Sheridan, 1986).

From 1854 to 1864, Tucson continued as a fluid society while maintaining its rudimentary economy. Food was provided by nearby fields, adobe was used as building material and Spanish continued as the main language. It was mainly self-sufficient and the most important community in the region.

In 1856, the Mexican troops left Tucson; they removed the presidial records and whatever deeds on the dwellings and small lots that might have been left vacant. The properties were reoccupied by Mexicans and Anglos, and physical possession became the only condition to prove ownership (Officer, 1987).

The year 1858 initiated an era of transcontinental travel with the Butterfield Overland Mail Company, a stagecoach line that came to Tucson in October. Though not the first to come, it stimulated a rapid change of the presidial town. The station for the Butterfield line and the first "hotel" in town were installed in the old Santa Cruz house, since re-named
In the 1850s, the area west of the presidio gate was the heart of Tucson; the Overland Stage Company had its local headquarters there.
the Buckley House. It was located west of the presidio main gate in a quiet residential area of scattered houses. Blacksmith shops and a couple of stores opened quarters close to the station (Figure 7). By 1859, this area had grown to become the center of town (Peterson, 1966).

The Overland Company reached its peak in 1860; it declined the next year because of the hostilities between the Union and the Confederate States. The federal government withdrew its troops from the Southwest, leaving the Overland Mail unprotected against Apache attacks. Moreover, Confederate interference with the mail grew considerably at the eastern end of the line. The Butterfield line was discontinued in 1861.

With the soldiers gone, the presidio lost its military cohesion. This was followed by an initial adoption of a Hispanic pattern of urban settlement. This pattern was strongly centralized in the categorization of squares that congregate the population in different areas by social class (Figure 8). The geographical and social center of the community was a plaza flanked by the visible symbols of the community: representative buildings of church and government, and major businesses. Proximity of residential structures to the square directly reflected the social and economic status of their dwellers. The rich upper class lived closer to the plaza than the poor lower class, who was mainly grouped in surrounding areas called barrios. The pattern repeated itself on a smaller scale within the barrios, hence plazas of minor importance were distributed throughout the community (Redfield, 1941).

In the case of Tucson, some established Mexican businessmen and the powerful Anglo minority moved into the presidial area, defining then what nowadays is Tucson’s central business district. The growth of the Mexican community progressed south in the direction of Sonora. Most Mexicans settled south of the presidio around Plaza de la Mesilla, presently La Placita.

The 1860 census verified 925 persons living in Tucson. Anglos constituted less than 20%, while 71% were Mexican. Yet Anglos possessed 87% of the total real and personal property. Within a decade after the Gadsden Purchase, Anglo capital controlled Tucson (Sheridan, 1986).

Sheridan establishes population totals in 1860: Anglos were 95% male, of which 82% were at their prime as a working force, ages 20 to 30. Unlike the Anglo community, Mexicans had a balanced gender ratio of 53% males and 47% females. While 56% of males were between ages of 15 to 50, 40% of them were at their prime. These percentages show that even though Mexicans greatly exceeded Anglos in number, the working male
PROTOTYPICAL GRID PATTERN OF HISPANIC TOWNS IN AMERICA

(a) Central main square "Plaza de Armas" containing (1) "Cabildo" or government buildings and (2) the Catholic cathedral, surrounded by commercial establishments and upper class houses.

(b) Secondary squares repeating the same concept at the level of neighborhood or "barrio" with a (3) local parish.
force was almost equal. Males between ages 15 to 50 included 149 Anglos and 194 Mexicans, 130 Anglos and 137 Mexicans between 20 and 30.

Moreover the prototypical Anglo was a frontier immigrant and young male seeking fame and fortune; while the Mexican population were from families rooted in the land of Sonoran Tucson.

Tucson was a very poor place before the Gadsden Purchase. By 1860, most of its capital came from outside, brought by the arriving Anglos. Native Tucsonans had scarce resources to compete with the newcomers, and their economic and political power began to fade, finally succumbing in 1880 with the arrival of the Southern Pacific Railroad. During these two decades, Tucson had a unique bi-cultural society. Mexicans and Anglos fought together against the Apaches, and succeeded as merchants, freighters, ranchers and real estate speculators; they married into each others' families and formed partnerships together. This prosperity lay the foundations of Tucson's current interethnic society (Sheridan, 1986).

2.2 Pattern of Growth

The Sonoran desert extends through most of Western Mexico and the North American states of Arizona, New Mexico and Southern California, suffusing this land with similar temperature and aridity. In spite of the uniform climate, urban conglomerations throughout have developed by responding as much to culture as to physical environment. Though the latter has not been the main instigation of urban development, it has determined construction methods and building techniques for protection against the harsh desert climate.

The areas of the American continent that were under Spanish colonization developed adobe construction. Since prehistoric times, adobe buildings with thick walls and narrow apertures, protected against heat and dryness. Adobe structures built under colonial domination shaped the new settings. They followed a grid pattern transplanted from Spain, called *cuadrícula* (squared). The *cuadrícula* pattern originated from a square unit of the grid that measured a *cuadra*, a colonial dimension derived from livestock pastures (approximately 100 sq.m., or 350 sq.ft).

Spanish colonial adobe buildings with continuous facades bordered streets on both sides. The adobe houses hardly opened to the exterior, a cultural value inherited from the
colonizers. This custom valued the importance of maintaining family activities within the house; it shows the centripetal force of the inner patio in colonial houses. The open patio connected different rooms; it functioned as core of the house, not only as a physical connector but as a place of most family activities. It was the social center of the house.

The main open space of colonial settings was the town-plaza where the most public activities were represented. There is a parallel between the plaza and the patio: both are cores of social structure, the plaza at the municipal level and the patio at the domestic.

Tucson had remained isolated from the broader cultural patterns in which Mexico was developing; its contacts with Sonora were so infrequent that only the most basic elements of Spanish-Mexican culture were imported. These elements were transformed by the local customs and adapted to the bleak environment, which defined Tucson's own regional character (City of Tucson, 1971).

The thick adobe walls that enclosed houses both supported the building and provided an effective thermal barrier. In some cases the adobe structures were separated by reduced open spaces creating a system of corridors between them. Buildings were grouped in blocks of irregular shapes and set uniformly along narrow streets. Streets rarely met at right angles, what strengthened the uniqueness of each street intersection. A strong sense of enclosure defined the urban character of town (City of Tucson, 1971).

The foregoing pattern of urban growth, centralized around a major plaza, was developed throughout Sonora. This plaza was surrounded by buildings that represented the religious, political, and economic powers. The concept of centralized plaza manifested an interesting variant in Tucson because of its frontier position and its relative isolation. No longer a presidio, it expanded around two squares: Plaza de las Armas — the former presidio grounds — symbolized the political power, and Plaza de la Mesilla — south of presidio grounds — symbolized the religious power (Figure 9). Moreover, these powers represented the two major communities at the time: Anglos and Mexicans. The most prominent businesses were established between both squares, thereby connecting them. The development was along a North-South axis, with Anglos north and Mexicans south.

At the end of 1860s, two important buildings were constructed in Tucson: the county court house and the first San Agustín Cathedral. In the northern part of town, adja-

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1 Though there were other squares in Tucson at the time, they were not representative of the bicultural pattern of growth as Plaza de las Armas, and Plaza de la Mesilla were. These other squares were: Plaza Militar (presently Pioneers Plaza), and Plazuela (non existent at present).
1883: CHURCH PLAZA - PLAZA DE LAS ARMAS

1. San Agustin Catholic Cathedral
2. Convent School of the Sisters of Saint Joseph
3. Bell Tower: City Recorder, Justice of Peace
4. Pima County Court House and Jail
5. The Whipping Post
6. Governor's Cornerian
7. First Presbyterian Church
cent to the old presidio's main square, was erected the county court house; it formally symbolized the political power. Plaza de la Mesilla -- which might have had its origins at the end of the Mexican period -- was toward the south where (Figure 10) most of the Mexican community lived. They built the first Catholic Cathedral of San Agustín in Plaza de la Mesilla, afterwards known as Church Plaza.

The Anglo culture began to take hold after the Gadsden Purchase, and within a decade its customs and architectural styles had influenced the adobe structures. The existing adobe row houses -- urban in concept -- began to show features of Anglo influence, such as outside porches and gabled roofs. In the early 1870s, detached dwellings set back from a broad street began to shape the new urban configuration of Tucson. Anglos brought the detached house, individualistic in character and suburban in concept. Another break from the Spanish-Mexican urban tradition was the house placed at center of the lot, allowing a deep "American" front yard (Stewart, 1979).

In 1880, the Southern Pacific Railroad established its route through Tucson and initiated an era of rapid growth. The tracks were at the edge of town running southeast to northwest. Shops and warehouses appeared along the tracks. The commercial district expanded toward the south and northeast of the business area. These two commercial cores were connected by Congress St. This linkage made Congress St. the first East-West axis, breaking the original North-South pattern.

The railroad made it possible to bring goods from elsewhere at cheaper prices; which ruined many pioneer owned businesses. The Anglo newcomers brought construction materials foreign to the area, and eventhough this fostered building techniques inadequate for the desert, a great variety of architectural styles flourished in Tucson. By 1880, Tucson's Anglo community had the central business district under economic control. Most of the commercial establishments were located between Court Plaza and Church Plaza.

2.3 Plaza de la Mesilla

According to legend, Plaza de la Mesilla received its name in 1854 when news came from Mesilla that the United States had acquired Tucson and Southern Arizona by the Gadsden Purchase. This square was the terminus of the wagon road joining Tucson to the territorial capital, then at Mesilla. In the early days, Mesilla was a sister town of Tucson, and the only settlement of any size between Tucson and El Paso. Before 1863, when Ari-
zona was part of New Mexico Territory, Mesilla was the county seat of Doña Ana County, which included Tucson (Resolution no. 10289).

The origin of this plaza might have been in the early 1850s; at that time residents from Tubac, Calabasas, and other small villages along the border abandoned their land because of Apache attacks. They found refuge in Tucson, and built their homes outside the presidio walls.

In 1862, a Union force called California Volunteers, occupied the old presidio. Its chief commissary officer in command, Mayor Fergusson, ordered the registration of all properties within three miles of the village center. Under his mandate, the earliest surviving map of Tucson was drawn (Figure 10).

Tucson, as an isolated frontier town, was not directly influenced by the urban model that Spain brought to its colonies: the typical grid around a central plaza. The Fergusson map shows how most of the street corners did not meet at right angles, and how Tucson had altered the concept of a centralized main plaza with many plazas: Plaza Militar, Plaza de Armas, Plazuela and Plaza de la Mesilla.

The foregoing map shows that most of the buildings had a North-South orientation, with their yards in back, a deviation from the Spanish archetypical building centralized around a patio or yard. This orientation limited interior sunlight hours, and promoted a strong East-West direction of streets; these were criss-crossed at awkward angles by minor North-South streets that lacked continuity. The only strong North-South axis was Calle Real (later Main Street); the importance of this street derives from presidial times when it was the route to Sonora.

On the corner of Mesilla and Meyer street was a two story building higher than those nearby: the California Store. Except for one, the properties around the square were smaller than average; no data are available recounting the use of those properties. As mentioned, Plaza de la Mesilla was where freight wagons and stage coaches ended their journeys. At those times, one of the big social events was to watch the stage coaches arrive, and view travelers from the cities of the East and West; some of them established in Tucson (Cosulich, 1953).

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2 Some of them could have been blacksmith shops, corrals, and stables, where freighters boarded their stock.
2.4 Church Plaza

The first Catholic church of considerable size built in Tucson was located on Plaza de la Mesilla, which since was renamed Church Plaza or Church Square. The church was facing westward, east of the square and north of Broadway, which at that time was called Camp Street (Illustration 1 and 2). Father Donato Rogieri, an Italian missionary priest, made possible the construction of San Agustín Church. He laid its foundations between 1860 and 1863; and he began construction of its adobe walls.

The construction of the church was a community project; the Mexican population participated, and Father Donato supervised them. Ana María Coenen, age 4 in 1863, remembers the people's participation:

"The adobes were made on the property of Solano León, where the Manning house is now located. When services were over every morning, Father Donato will tell the congregation not to leave until he had changed his robes. Then he would instruct them to follow him and they would go to the place of Solano León and each woman would return with one brick in her arms. Father Donato would carry one brick also. The entire church was built by the people of the parish."

During those days Tucson was emerging from its frontier condition; many of its residents were transients on their way to somewhere else, or they were adventurers looking for money either honestly or dishonestly. But there was a proportion of residents who wanted to convert Tucson to a gentile community. These were the builders and the responsible people who sustained and supported the construction of San Agustín Cathedral, and made it the heart of Tucson (Chambers and Sonnichsen, 1974).

Adjoining the cathedral on its south side was built the Sister's Convent and Academy for Females — Villa Carondelet School — which began to function in 1870 under the direction of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

San Agustín Cathedral symbolized the Mexican religious faith and was an expression of their cultural identity. Mexican cultural values were affirmed and renewed through their religious beliefs and celebrations. San Agustín became the center of religious life in Tucson and the focus of Mexican social interaction. Religion was a vital force in the life of Tucsonans of Mexican descent; it was related to most aspects of their culture, from mar

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Illustration 1- Looking east on Broadway, Camp Street at the time. In the 1870s, San Augustine, the first Catholic Cathedral of Tucson, before the construction of its towers when it was oriented to the west, facing the plaza. (Photograph: Arizona Historical Society)

Illustration 2- The Cathedral in the 1880s with its towers and its stone entryway built by Jules LeFlein -- nowadays this gate is the sole remain of the church; it stands in front of the Arizona Historical Society. (University of Arizona Special Collections Library)
riage, to fiestas and entertainment, to health care, and to death. Mexicans shaped religion to their own needs, adapting rituals and beliefs to their own traditions (Sheridan, 1986).

Religious celebrations, a fusion of sacred and profane, were the major events in the life of the Tucson Mexican community. The greatest fiesta was that of San Agustín. It began on August 28 and lasted until Mexico's Independence Day, the 16 of September. During the 1870s and 1880s, a solemn mass was celebrated in the church, which was followed by a procession around the Church Plaza. This was a major social event, and the families living around the plaza adorned their houses with lights and banners. The procession was a religious ritual that brought together the whole Mexican community; it was led by the elite members, who took the opportunity to assure their status as leaders (Sheridan, 1986).

It is not known when Tucson began to celebrate the feast, but Samuel P. Heintzelman, a military officer and president of the Sonora Exploring and Mining Company, spent three days in the village in 1858 and recorded in his journal his observations of the festivity. He witnessed the religious procession that carried a wooden figure of San Agustín on a platform. A motley crowd composed the parade, accompanied by music, singing, and gun fire. The profane activities were attended by 200 or 300 people. There was music and dancing under a ramada in front of the stores of Anglo merchants Solomon Warner and Mark Aldrich, west of the presidio's main gate on Calle Real, the center of town at that time (Figure 7).

Later on, the feast took place at Church Plaza; religious ceremonies acquired more pomp, and the celebrations became a full festival. They included dancing, drinking, gambling, bullfights, cockfights, comedy, circus and theater. Merchants, farmers, artisans, and the business community in general looked forward to a quick profit at fiesta time, when they could sell goods not in demand during other times of the year.

The San Agustín fiesta became so crowded that it moved to larger sites, such as Levins Park and Armory Park. It turned out to be the wildest event of the year; and when it was finally suspended in the early 1900s, part of Tucson's Sonoran spirit died (Sheridan, 1986).
Illustration 3- Aerial view looking south, shows La Placita in the late 1800s. The Bell Tower is west of San Augustine Cathedral.

Illustration 4- South facade of the Bell Tower facing Church Plaza.
2.5 The Bell Tower

The Bell Tower was a curious structure built on Church Plaza in 1881. It was not an example of Tucson's territorial architecture, but was a unique facility used for a variety of functions. It was located on the center of Church Plaza, west of the Cathedral. It was the first city hall, polling place, council chambers, recorder's office, and convention center (Illustration 3 and 4). It also was the headquarters of the Tucson Fire Department, composed by forty-five volunteers who occupied the lower floor of the three room frame structure. The city's first and only alarm system was housed in the dome of the building, a bell that weighed 1447 pounds. In 1886, the upper floor of the tower was the second home of the Tucson telephone exchange.

Before the turn of the century the Bell Tower was transferred to the backyard of pioneer attorney Thomas Satterwhite's home on Granada Street. Later, the property was acquired by P.R. Rider, who used the pagoda style structure as a rooming house. It lasted until 1934, when it finally burned to the ground (Mitchell, 1988).
3. 1 The Church: Transformation to Secular Uses.

San Agustín Church was the sole cathedral of Tucson until 1897. When the people called for a larger building the new St. Augustine Cathedral was built on south Stone Avenue, there it still stands. The old church that faced the square lasted only thirty years after its completion. Jules Le Flein's work, the stone gateway with its rose window that crowned the church entrance for fourteen years, is the only remnant of the old cathedral. Each stone of the gateway was numbered and kept by George Chambers until 1973, when they were carefully reassembled at the entrance of the Arizona Historical Society headquarters as a memorial to an era of Tucson.

When the new cathedral was built, the old one fell into disuse. Rumors circulated that it was going to be torn down; and citizens took action to save the church for posterity. At that time, Bishop Bougarde was in charge of the catholic diocese, and he decided to sell San Agustín. It was bought by Dick Brady; he leased it to the newly arrived Colonel Winthrop Scott Low, who transformed the old church into a hotel. By 1898, the church building became San Augustine Hotel, the finest in Tucson (Chambers and Sonnichsen, 1974).

Over the next forty years the church structure had several owners and a variety of uses; it lost its dignity and respectability. The building went through permutations that Harry Drachman describes:
Illustration 5- The first Catholic Cathedral and Church Plaza in its heyday during the 1880s. (A.H.S.)
Illustration 6- San Augustine Cathedral. (A.H.S.)

Illustration 7- By the turn of the century the church building was refurbished to function as San Augustine Hotel; the finest in Tucson at the time. (U.A. Special Collections Library)
"a hotel, cheap hotel, cheaper hotel, whorehouse, taxi stand, garage service station, bootleg headquarters, fight arena, etc."

During World War I, resources were scarce throughout the country. Meat was rationed and grain was used for both bread and liquor. Alcohol consumption had been prohibited in Arizona since 1914. Absolute prohibition invited lawbreaking, and bootlegging became commonplace. A campaign against bootleggers and prostitutes was mounted in 1917. The St. Augustine Hotel — the old church cathedral — had become a house of ill fame and lawless activities, where the police constantly directed their attention.

When the war was over, there was still a scarcity of resources; prices, inflation, and subsequent protests were so high that a federal food administrator for Arizona was commissioned from Washington. Money was provided to install stands and stalls for an open Saturday morning market on Saint Augustine or Church Plaza. It became a very popular market were the farmers sold their goods.

In 1922, the last owner of the church structure converted it to a garage and taxi stand; in 1925 it became a Shell station and was painted yellow. People in town were indignant, but no institution stopped the desecration. In 1934 threat of demolition moved some residents to action, and many proposals were drafted to save the building. The Chamber of Commerce, with the support of the city, proposed to use part of the structure as its headquarters, leaving the rest for an art gallery, curio shops, and a meeting hall for Boy Scouts. But in spite of the common will to restore the building, it was demolished in 1936.

The cathedral — during the years it functioned as such — was vital in defining the square, which was the entryway to the church and, as in most traditional Mexican plazas, the social center. One resident, Donald Bufkin, said (Appendix):

"The new cathedral on Stone was completed in 1896, and the old church, which had been the cathedral, no longer was needed as a cathedral; and later on it went into different uses. But while it was a cathedral obviously the network of masses set in a daily basis, plus Sundays, made of La Placita a kind of front entryway into the church. But after it ceased being a church I'm sure that kind of use changed."

3.2 Images of La Placita during Secular Uses of the Church

The transformation in usage of the cathedral and its subsequent repercussion in La Placita marked the start of dramatic change that characterized downtown Tucson far into its future. This section encapsulates the period that immediately precedes the abrupt departure
Illustration 8- The church building without its towers and functioning as a garage continued in its process of desecration of what it once symbolized. Though not clear in illustration a "Garage" sign is over the church entrance arch. (U.A. Special Collections Library)

Illustration 9- 1936: An aerial view of the San Augustine Garage and La Placita. (U.A. Special Collections Library)
Illustration 10- 1936: Looking at La Placita from the gate of the church building before it was torn down. *(Arizona Historical Society).*

Illustration 11- 1940s: Looking west on La Placita and Mesilla Street. *(U.A. Special Collections Library).*
from tradition. Recounted images of elderly residents who lived in that era revive the meaning and use of an enclave long gone.

Elina Laos Sayre, born in 1889, reminisces about how she experienced La Placita — without the old church — in an excerpt of an interview (Martin, 1983):

"Every Sunday we would leave the house to go to church, there would be a beautiful bouquet of flowers tied to the knob of the door. I was about eighteen and I was singing in the cathedral at the time .... I remember when they renovated the cathedral on Stone. Everybody was sorry about that because we loved that old church. When I was a young girl we would go to the Placita where the first St. Augustine Cathedral was. There was a gazebo in the center of the plaza and a string orchestra played there. The gazebo was so beautiful. It was very omate. It had a roof over it and it had pillars and all around there was interlaced woodwork. And it had steps going up to it. There was grass all around it and great big boulders that we used to sit on. We would sit on the boulders or on the grass and listen to the orchestra. At that time there were no trumpets or cornets. The orchestra was a string orchestra as I have said, with violins, guitars and violas. When the boys came we would get up and parade on the inside circle around the gazebo. And the boys would make another circle and parade on the outside in the opposite direction. And then the first thing you knew, the boys would be intermingling with the girls. We would be all dressed up with long beautiful dresses and we wore hats with feathers or flowers. Everything was handmade in those days. There was no ready-to-wear."

Eleazar Herreras, born in 1897, at age 92 offers us his views of La Placita (Appendix):

"Oh yeah, it was very close to El Charro restaurant. There were two streets this side of Meyer, Convent was another street. La Placita used to be between Meyer and Convent, Pennington and another short street that ran from Meyer and Convent. It was the center of entertainment. It had La Placita, a pavilion that raised above the ground about 3 to 4 feet, that was hexagonal; and had a rail up around 3 feet; and open from the rail to the roof. There's were the band use to play and the orchestra; their city license consisted of so many hours a month playing in the Placita. Oh yeah, Sundays, special holidays, 4th of July, that was their fee. Well, here's the pavilion, and about 12 to 16 feet of planting grass, then 4 to 6 feet the sidewalk. The band would play, the boys would go to one side, the girls would meet them, and afterwards each one got a partner. ... they had this pavilion right on the center of the business, were the orchestra played. Those streets were vacant, no traffic, and you went up there, take a partner go out... and out there go dancing. On the east side was the Occidental Hotel, that comprised Placita to Convent; you might say that was the most important building there (he refers to the church building). And towards the north was the rear end of stores that were facing Congress St., and they back up to La Placita. On the south there was the Pavilion. There was Monica Flynn, The Charro. Monica Flynn was the owner of El Charro restaurant. Next to it was Cano's drugstore, the owner used to live in the 2nd floor. He was married to Monica's sister, Panchita. Yes, there was an open air theater on what would be Meyer's and Broadway. Cine Plaza was a close building, had a roof on it. The theater used to work everyday, it was very reasonable charged, 15 to 25 cents. We use to have chicken dinner, believe it or not, for 25 cents per person. They served a dish of ice cream."
Roy Drachman\(^1\), at age 83, was asked if he ever went to La Placita (Appendix):

Many times.\(\text{[D4a]}\) It was kind of the central area of town.\(\text{[D4b]}\) There were several businesses in La Placita.\(\text{[D4c]}\) I remember its rounded park with a kiosk in the center, and several benches around the park.\(\text{[D4d]}\) In those days the Indians used to come to town with their wagons.\(\text{[D4e]}\) I think it was on Saturdays that they formed an open market in La Placita to sell their produce, rugs, baskets, and a whole variety of things.\(\text{[D4f]}\) Many fiestas like the 4th of July, 16th of August, 5 de Mayo, were celebrated there.\(\text{[D4g]}\)

Another interviewee, Adela Brady at age 92 gives the following image (Appendix):

"La Placita, that was on Church Street and Meyer; we used to have music there every Saturday, every Sunday, everybody use to go around.\(\text{[A5a]}\) Ah! Bailar, no, no bailaban, si no había sitio donde tocaban, cantaban y se paseaban (Oh! dance, no, no there was no place for dancing, they played and sang and they strolled around) \(\text{[A6a]}\) The music ... orchestra.\(\text{[A6b]}\) It was prettier then than now. Era más bonito (it was nicer).\(\text{[A6c]}\) In La Placita, right in the corner, was a place where you could ah ... Lemas had a house and they gave room and board.\(\text{[A7a]}\) Lemas, right in the corner of La Placita.\(\text{[A7a]}\) La Placita, con muchas, muchas, allí habían muchos, muchísimos muchachos conocidos, los Sotos, tres ... (la Placita, with girls, lots of girls, there were lots of known boys, the Sotos, three ... \(\text{[A16a]}\) There, the meeting place. \(\text{[A17a]}\) Sunday, ay los Domingos ... Sundays we use to get together and go around la plaza (the square).\(\text{[A18a]}\) With the girls, six, seven girls we went together, muchas muchachas and (lots of girls), lots of boys there too.\(\text{[A19a]}\) They came from the South.\(\text{[A19b]}\) More girls from this side and more boys from the east side and the south.\(\text{[A19c]}\) Unos eran Mexicanos y otros eran mezízos (some were Mexican and others were half-breed), half and half.\(\text{[A21]}\) I only went once or twice to the old cathedral, I went to the new one (looking at a photograph of la Placita) \(\text{[A35a]}\) ¿Qué es eso? (what is this?)\(\text{[A35b]}\) Ah, la Placita que daba a cuatro calles (ah, la placita facing four streets).\(\text{[A35c]}\) En la plaza allí venían todos, en la plaza tocaba la orquesta (everybody came to the square, the orchestra played there), and the boys use to come from the south and the girls from the... el norte aquí (the north here), los Parkers.\(\text{[A35d]}\) Better days then, good days, muy buenos días.\(\text{[A35e]}\) De este lado habían muchos muchachos, del north side there were a lot of guys from the north side) \(\text{[A46a]}\) El Ben Parker, la Annie Parker, la Sophie Lopez, la Chu Lopez, Uh! un montonazo! (lots of kids) \(\text{[A46b]}\) Del otro lado, del south side estaba la Lolita Montijo. (Lolita Montijo came from the south side) \(\text{[A46c]}\) They use to come and (spend the time in la placita) en la Placita nos estábamos. \(\text{[A46d]}\) We had good time. \(\text{[A46e]}\) La placita, no había mucho por la noche Placita, era en la tarde y agarraba parte de la noche (there wasn't much La Placita during the night, it was in the afternoon and then a bit through the evening) \(\text{[A60a]}\)."

Estella Jácome, close to 70, recalls (Appendix):

"...we came about sixty years ago, I was a little girl and Tucson was a very small town.\(\text{[E1d]}\) I think, at the time there were about twenty or twenty five thousand inhabitants.\(\text{[E1e]}\) The town was very small but very compact; everything was downtown, there wasn't anything else.\(\text{[E1f]}\) And La Placita, that you're speaking of, was... really it wasn't any much to it, there was a small kiosko - I don't know the name in English - in the middle, where I understand they use to have music on Sundays; now, when I came they were no longer doing that.\(\text{[E1g]}\) Well, it was always in walking distance, you see.\(\text{[E15a]}\) Around La Placita there were Mexican restaurants; there was a very good Mexican restaurant, and there were small shops.\(\text{[E16b]}\) It was a nice area to walk around in, as well.\(\text{[E16c]}\)

\(^1\) This interview was reconstructed and paraphrased from memory an hour after its completion, recording was voided by mechanical defect.
Her memories revive the character of La Placita:

"It was mainly shops and things that you would walk to, that you would walk around. One of the old adobe that is still standing in that area is the Adobe Patio, that was close enough to La Placita, so that you walked that area. Everything was at walking distance really." When asked if she saw the church structure in La Placita:

"Yes, it was still in existence when I came to Tucson, but it was no longer a church. I found it very shocking, because they were using it as a garage, at that time. It was a garage with a sign on the outside, and they repaired cars inside it, and as young as I was, I thought that was just...I thought that was a very shocking thing. I still think so! It was no longer a church. Well, the facade was there and I have some pictures of the way the church looked. Of course, the facade is now used in front of the Historical Society, as you probably know. But I understand that the church was a hotel and then a garage and various different things, before they tore it down. It is one of the things that I think should have been kept in Tucson as it was, but nobody was very interested at that time. ...the whole area has changed a great deal from the very beginning! Thinking back, I remember that some of the things to celebrate the 16 of September, took place at La Placita; like the crowning of the queen, and all that took place there. Once in a while there would be a dancing in the street type of thing, which was a lot of fun. Of course, we all went to these things, but that has been so long ago. Off course, the kiosk, the original one is gone, what they have now is a very small gazebo. The kiosk was bigger, big enough so there could be a band in it, a small band, but you could have a band in it. The people just danced around it. I went to one or two things there; it used to be very crowded. It was pretty much a barrio sort of thing. It would be Mexican music, and a lot of Mexican groups; we used to have a few musical groups at that time. There were not all mariachis, I think we have more mariachis now than we did then. ...more a barrio type of thing. In the beginning it was in Spanish, but it gradually changed, there was more and more, but it certainly was."

Roberto Salvatierra grew up in the Mexican barrio adjacent to La Placita, but he remembers it vaguely, though he patronized places located in the square. When asked if he experienced it, he responded (Appendix):

"No never, I think La Placita was before my time, it must have been in the late 1800; I was born in 1909 so... I never, no, La Placita as far as I am concerned was non existing. I was just a little boy, everything was held in Armory Park then. La Placita was just an old building, just sitting there. I remember very little about that, no. See, I use to sell papers just two blocks of La Placita when I was 9 years old.

Lucille Juliani, age 90, settled in Tucson in 1923, when she was 24. She recalls how La Placita looked when the church was already gone (Appendix):

"Tacky, and there was so much dust in Tucson in that period. Now we have miles and miles of pavement surrounding the city. This has cut the dust. But I think also the climate has changed, we use to have terrible dust storms all summer long."
Around the old cathedral it was not paved. It was crummy, very crummy looking area.

When asked if the square was mostly deserted, she responded:

“Well, sparse... You know that if you want to have a business to make money, you can’t afford to have your business on a place were people are not going to shop. The big shopping area was all paved, nice sidewalks and stone buildings, and everything within a radius of maybe ten blocks or so all around the center of town. And this was a little off to one side, a little back, you didn’t see unless you went through it.”

Donald Bufkin appraises the image of the square before it was affected by urban renewal:

“The park area of La Placita was so small that it would be difficult to use effectively, it was more a decoration, more a visual aspect than a provided space for some kind of use.

3. 3 Effects of Transportation

Transportation and communication promoted the dramatic growth of Tucson. First the railroad, then the automobile, and finally the airplane added new impetus to Tucson’s development. Tourism also boosted growth, as it called for good-quality hotels. Downtown Tucson had a variety of hotels for people of moderate means; only the Santa Rita offered quality accommodations. First-class quarters were in demand. The first hotel built out of town, the now demolished El Conquistador, opened in 1928; it was located on the present El Con Mall grounds. The Arizona Inn, another quality hotel which survives, was built in 1931.

World War II promoted strong urbanization of the country, as men and women from small towns and farms — in the South, Southwest, and California — were employed by factories and defense plants. After the war, people migrated to the sunbelt. Increase of tourism and regional promotion of industry were major factors of growth.

Tucson’s population took two views concerning progress and expansion: some wanted it to remain as it was when they arrived, and others who wanted to change its Mexican border character to a progressive place. In 1944, Sarah and Virginia Lovett defended the latter position in columns of the Arizona Daily Star newspaper:

“Contrary to your beliefs, Tucson is not a part of the Old World, but is a city encouraging progress of every kind. After having lived here for 18 and 20 years, we still cannot see the beauty of living conditions on Convent and Meyer streets. We are as ashamed of those districts where the poorer members of our community are forced to crowd into the filth and dirt of those adobe houses in "Mexican Town" as you city slickers should be of your tenement districts. (We’ve seen them!). We cheer for joy every time we see an old building torn down and a new one taking its place. We are not proud of our "Mexican town" — on
the contrary we are looking forward to the time when we can wipe it off the face of our map and give our Spanish-American population a chance to enjoy the finer things of life that they, as American citizens, have the right to look forward to. We believe in progress."

In spite of the Lovett sisters' ideas of "progress," not everyone agreed in tearing down the old for the new; some thought of preserving the flavor of the old part of town. In 1944, the Chamber of Commerce proposed to restore the San Agustín Plaza in order to establish a Mexican historic center. In the 1950s, people against urban growth and in favor of historic preservation were a minority, but in the 1970s their efforts were beginning to obtain clear results.

The oldest neighborhood in Tucson, Barrio Libre, was just South of La Placita; since urban renewal in 1970, the Tucson Community Center has occupied its grounds. The first disruption of the barrio was the cathedral's change of usage and its further demolition. Next, came the exodus of some of its residents to the suburbs and the increase of rental properties in the barrio. Construction of the Greyhound Stagecoach Depot depreciated the site even more, as Roy Drachman remembers (Appendix)²:

"The site of the church was sold to the Greyhound Depot. The bus station was built there, and its rear was facing La Placita. This and the kind of people that began to hang around the bus station annihilated any chance to go ahead with the idea of recovering La Placita to transform it into a tourist attraction."

The population exploded during the 1950s and 1960s. The spread of the automobile stimulated urban growth. The shopping mall concept — a suburban retail nucleus with ample parking — and the exodus of downtown residents to the suburbs provoked decline of the inner city. Business activity and social interaction were the pillar of animation on Congress St. and the downtown in general; when these were gone, downtown vitality faded. This phenomenon is clearly pictured by Annie Laos, a resident of Tucson's Armory Park Historic District:

"But it was the people living in the barrio, that sustained the businesses in the downtown area. They were the ones that went to Walgreens, and they went to Woolworth, and they went to McLellans, you know, and they did all their shopping right there, once they were gone there is nothing! That is the problem we have with downtown at this moment, there's nothing down there! There's the government buildings and the banking buildings, but after 5 o'clock, there's nothing, there's nobody, there's no people. There is nothing, because there isn't anybody living there! That long area there, people could be living there, then your commercial businesses will come back, but until that happens there is never going to be anything in the downtown area, except slums."

² Paraphrased
The means of transportation changed the dimensional perception of urban areas. Nowadays, with the automobile, a person living in metropolitan Tucson has a broader image of its downtown than a person who experienced it during the first decades of the century -- when it was reduced to the intersection of Congress St. and Stone Av. and the adjacent blocks.

The proximity of downtown made it approachable on foot, a positive quality toward fostering social interaction as Estella Jacome recalls:

"...we lived very close to downtown, as most people did.[E11a] Well, it was very, very pleasant because everybody knew everybody.[E12a] For instance, when you went shopping, you walked down, down Congress Street and you met people you knew at every block.[E12b] It was sort of a progress that you made of stopping to speak to this one, and to that one, and to the other one.[E12c] Because all the businesses were within two or three blocks; everything was very close by.[E12d] We didn't drive to go shopping, we walked, we would walk four blocks away.[E12e] Almost all the nucleus of town was right in there.[E12f]"

Eventhough Lucille Juliani lived closer to the university campus, the proximity of downtown and its attraction was important to her, when asked if she used to go to downtown, she replied:

"Of course, but I walked.[J5a] There was a bus, but you could walk; and from there to town it was a very pleasant walk.[J5b] ...our home was almost on the 1400 block of East Sixth Street, that is the block behind the stadium.[J5c] It was walking distance; and of course everybody walked then, hardly anyone had an automobile.[J4b] That was in 1923, there were very few automobiles; and Campbell was the last street east.[J4c] There were no cars, no stop signs and there was nothing to impede your progress.[J6a] Going to downtown from our house we would go down to back of Mansfeld and cut across, come out at the corner of Congress Street and Fourth Avenue subway.[J6b] You didn't just walk the way you do in your automobile, you follow a road and then you turn to get where you wanted to go.[J6c] It was only about a fifteen minute walk.[J6d] Well, all the beautiful stores were downtown.[J8a] When people did go downtown, you always saw people you knew, who went and it was just a lovely way to say hello, how are you, whats happening to you; your neighborhood and everything.[J9g] After the malls came in, a lot of that neighborly spirit just vanished.[J9h]"

Estella Jacome describes activities that were common in downtown (Appendix):

"Pues habfan muchas actividades, aunque yo no tomaba parte en muchas de ellas; pero si habfan muchas actividades en el centro (well, there were many activities, eventhough I did not participate in all of them; but there were lots of activities in downtown).[E55a] Con el hotel, la iglesia y las tiendas en el centro, habia mucho movimiento siempre, mucho movimiento... era completamente diferente (with the hotel, the church and the shops in downtown; there was always a lot going on, lots of activity; it was completely different) [E55b] Luego teniamos otras cosas como el salón de (then we had things like the ...) ice cream parlor "The Palace of Sweets", it was right on the corner of Stone and Congress naturally.[E55c] We all use to go there after the movies and had sundaes.[E55d] That
was quite a thing! There were drugstores, all of them had soda fountains in those days.

Lucille Juliani tells how downtown was integrated to family entertainment:

"I remember one of the greatest pleasures were the ice cream parlors, and another little place where in season, you could take your whole family down there and have a slice of watermelon." We used to go to the Fox Theater for a show, and then we would always go down on West Congress, and have either some watermelon, or ice-cream, or something that the Mexican people had arranged; it was very, very nice.

Roberto Salvatierra recounts another aspect of the social function (Appendix):

"Downtown stores would be on Congress between say 6th Av. down to Church or maybe down to Meyer, were open until 9 o'clock on Saturday. So that was the occasion for the mothers dress up their kids, you know, socialize. So they scrub you down, took your bath, get all dress up and go down meet my mother's friends, my father's. We socialize there; it wasn't much shopping, but mostly socializing. Everybody went to socialize in Congress at Saturday night with the kids; everybody walked there, nobody took the car to downtown, everybody lived nearby."

Transportation had a tremendous impact on the physical form of American cities and in the ways its people socialize. Downtown areas were a perfect milieu for a variety of activities. Now they are more specialized and, as a result, less patronized. Roy Drachman addresses the previous statement when asked if he ever goes to downtown (Appendix):

Oh, hardly ever! All my activities are now in this side of town (he has a real estate business on east Tucson). There are no more businesses there. Nowadays in America very few cities have their downtowns with businesses; the commercial mall concept is so widely spread, and so comfortable for the customers, that the downtowns have turned to be more the government and cultural centers with certain type of business different from retail, which is the one that attracts people.

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3 Paraphrased
CHAPTER 4

URBAN RENEWAL

4.1 A Framework for Urban Renewal

World Wars I and II accelerated the urban process, fostering densification of cities and mass production. Rapid growth of the world's economy made technology available to more people. The automobile had profound effects on the urban environment. Its use changed residence patterns. In America, suburban residences prevailed over urban dwellings. Popularity of suburban quarters brought low rental of central properties, further deterioration, and in some cases abandonment.

Urban process was affected by the influence technology and mass production had in architectural design. Standardization of building materials eliminated construction crafts, causing a tremendous impact in architectural design. Architecture lost its local character; and new construction projects in widely separated cities, nevertheless, bore closer resemblance to each other than to their local surroundings and cultural milieu.

Many town planners and architects recognize the negative effects of mass construction of entire areas without link to preexisting structures. People living in those areas have no visible sign of the continuity of their civilization; they lose a sense of time and become ahistorical. This causes loss of identity and of community, which can underwrite profound social problems.

The major guidelines of urban renewal were adapted to economic factors; this provided modern structures for commerce or residences, increased population density with vertical development on high priced urban real estate, and produced greater income for the
The social consequences of a radical change in the community were not addressed in the guidelines. Urban renewal did not recognize that early values should be kept for readaptation to new use or for restoration.

The controversy of urban renewal brought up a diversity of opinions. In Tucson, two residents express the antagonistic views of urban renewal at the time. Those in opposition were against the loss of an identifiable area of town, they believed that such a variation in image would be in detriment of Tucson's integrity:

"... right about that time started the urban renewal, and the possibility of having the community center put in a very populated area, and everything that we had known in this town ... we always knew it was there, the possibility of having that gone[19q]."

Those in favor thought that was the way to progress:

"In other words if you have physical decay, if you have a rotten tooth, you pull it, right? And that was the idea of urban renewal.[89y]"

4. 2 History of Urban Renewal

Urban blight problems of American cities are as old as the cities themselves. In 1892, these problems were recognized by Congress, but it was only in 1949 that Congress enacted a comprehensive attack on the issue. The role of Federal participation became necessary to fill the gap between urban renewal needs and the required funds available to private enterprise and state and local governments.

After World War II, the United States Sub-Committee on Housing and Redevelopment recommended a program of federal financial assistance for urban redevelopment in American cities. The success of this program depended on recognition that certain necessary losses had to be absorbed by renewal plans. President Eisenhower stated that "Federal assistance is justified for communities which face up to the problem of neighborhood decay and undertake long range programs directed to its prevention." In 1953, Eisenhower appointed the Citizen's Advisory Committee.

In 1954, Congress responded with the Housing Act to broaden and strengthen the slum clearance program. The term "Urban Renewal" was created to define a total approach to city blight. The urban renewal concept was further strengthened by the Housing Act of

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1 In Tucson the goal of urban renewal was the construction of the Community Center as stated by the urban renewal office: "Tucson needs such a facility to capitalize on its greatest source of income - tourism."
1961, when it was understood as teamwork between private enterprise and government. The goal was to attain satisfactory living and working environments for the community, through redevelopment of obsolete areas of the city.

To receive federal urban renewal aid a community had to submit a proposal of the actions that had or would be taken against slums and blight. This proposal was to be submitted by the City to the Federal government. The proposal should establish a reasonable time to develop the following issues: adequate health and safety codes for further construction, comprehensive plan for community development, analysis of blighted areas and their required treatment, renewal programs and administrative organization to meet the financial requirements, responsibility for adequate rehousing of displaced families, and citizen participation.

4.3 Urban Renewal in Tucson

The urban renewal program was accepted nationwide. In Arizona, the legislature enabled its cities the appropriate legal background to seek federal financial assistance for urban redevelopment purposes. Slums and blighted areas were recognized as a growing menace to welfare and public health, and were seen as an economic and social liability. Housing standards were established by law.

Both government and private initiative did studies on behalf of the redevelopment of Barrio Libre. In 1942, Ladislas Segoe, a planning consultant, recognized the seriousness of the problems, as part of his recommendations for a comprehensive plan for Tucson -- because of World War II, the matter was deferred. In 1949, The Citizen's Housing Committee submitted another study reiterating the need for redevelopment of the area. In 1952, the Planning Department studied the feasibility of redevelopment; and in 1954 the City Building Inspector pointed out the blighted condition prevalent in the district, and he reported its unsafe and substandard housing.

Within the 1950s, Tucson became the 54th largest city in the United States, rising from 251th. An area in the heart of Tucson, the Old Pueblo District -- known as Barrio Libre -- had the higher rate of crime, fire and juvenile delinquency than any area of comparable size and population in the city. Municipal services to this district, such as police, sanitation, and fire exceeded $200,000 in 1969. In the past the area had always contributed more than its share of tax money; but that changed, and it no longer contributed enough
for its own support. The community of Tucson had to subsidize the area, thus perpetuating its deterioration.

According to an urban renewal study (City of Tucson, 1961), the people of Tucson chose in referendum between spending $1.25 million to support this area over one decade, or renewing it with the same amount; the program was not to raise the fixed city property tax, and the city's investment would be returned many fold and in numerous ways. Initially, the area proposed for urban renewal comprised 392 acres, bounded by W. Congress St., Stone Av., 22nd St., and Interstate 10 Highway (Figure 11).

The program proposed zonification of the renewal site, which included the following four functions: a nine-acre shopping center that combined and recaptured Old Pueblo and Southwestern territorial architecture; a civic cultural and convention center, including auditorium, arena, small theater, and community building; homes and high-rise apartments occupying 105 acres, including single family residences and garden apartments; and a fifty-one acre industrial park for light industry (Figure 12).

The owners of properties on the site could retain clear title, by participating in the redevelopment plan, with the proviso to that they improve or redevelop in accordance with the plan. Private efforts to redevelop the area were fruitless, mainly because the properties of the district were held in different ownerships. It would have required the assembly of many small lots to create a parcel large enough to permit a feasible development. Moreover, availability of financing depended on renewal for the entire neighborhood. The first plan did not go through. Donald Bufkin, involved at the time in city planning, summarizes the process as follows:

"The original project for urban renewal was all the way from Congress St. to 22nd St., and from El Paso Southwestern Railroad to Stone; more than 400 acres. [B3s] That was voted down in a public referendum. [B3t] Then the whole thing came back around, so that in the 60s the project was down to around 50 acres. [B3u] In the 50s, 57-58, the referendum was city wide and had to do with the city going through an urban renewal of such a magnitude. [B4a] There were some discussions, at the time, about building a convention facility and a Music Hall, in the urban renewal area. [B5d] The arguments were: Should it be in the downtown area? Should it be in the midtown area? Should it be in the foothills? Where should it be? [B5e] The final decision was to revitalize the downtown area by putting the convention center in the downtown area. [B5f] Then in 1965, when it started up again, they scaled down the whole thing down to 50 acres, between Cushing St. and Broadway. [B4b] They bought all the property out and tore down structures, abandoned property lines and right of way lines, and replanned the whole thing. [B4c] They took out the old grid part of that area, like Meyer and Convent. [B5g] They took Broadway and transitioned it up to Congress St. [B5k] The only structures that were saved were Freemont House and Samaniego House, anything else was replanned. [B4d] They retained the old original El Charro. [B5m] Actual Broadway, cuts, wipes out the site were the Old Church was... [B6a]"
A SUGGESTION FOR OLD PUEBLO VILLAGE

Figure 12

By Charles E. Price Jr., Office of Wilbur Wilde, A.I.A.
KEY TO HISTORICAL SITES
1. SAM HUGHES HOUSE
2. HIRAM STEVENS HOUSE
3. EN FISH HOUSE
4. CORDOBA HOUSE
5. CHARLES O BROWN HOUSE
6. SAMANIEGO HOUSE
7. FREMONT HOUSE
8. EL PRESIDIO PARK

OLD BARRIO PATTERN/URBAN RENEWAL PATTERN
Urban renewal included further projects in downtown — such as Pioneers Plaza and Presidio Square — which were not as disruptive as the former. Downtown Tucson lacks internal homogeneity because of continuous changes in function, appearance and accessibility. In spite of this, it has an external thematic unity that makes it different from the rest of Tucson.

At present, the site of La Placita and its vicinity is a node in downtown. It is a strategic point in the city comprised by the junction of Congress St., Broadway Blvd., and Stone Av. Between these streets is the 20th of August Park. The park commemorates Tucson's foundation in 1775, when Father Francisco Garcés and Lt. Don Juan de Carmona accompanied Col. O'Connor. The latter staked out a site at the foot of Sentinel Peak, where he recommended the relocation of the Tubac presidio (Resolution N. 10289). This park is surrounded by a landmark, the Citibank Tower, the tallest building in Tucson. North of the park are government buildings; and South the "La Placita" commercial complex, part of urban renewal.

The Mexican "barrio," that was obliterated by renewal is described by the following responses of Tucson residents:

"To some degree Barrio Libre was, to some sort, like the present area of S. Cushing St.[B9u] It tended to get commercial to the north, closer to downtown area.[B9v] It was the oldest remaining part of Tucson, but on the other hand you did have the aspect of slum landlords, people who were not fixing out the property and renting it out.[B9w]"

South Meyer and Convent were the most important streets of the "barrio" both of them very differentiated in function as stated by the respondents:

"S. Meyer and S. Convent St., were recognized as individual barrios with families.[B7d] Meyer had quite a few stores in the early 1920s, grocery stores, drugstores, movie stores, piano and music stores, they sold records.[R25b] Meyer St. was very commercial. [R25c]"

The residential character of Convent St. was clear:

"It was mostly dwellings, mostly homes.[R26a] The barrio area in S. Convent when it was a very proud barrio with stable families.[B9m]"

Adela Brady evokes the neighborly ambiance of the "barrio" were she spent her youth:

"Convent Street, allí la calle Convento? [B25a] Seguro, allí estaban todos los conocidos en la calle Convento (sure all the known people were there in Convent St). . . . los Rodríguez, two stories house, los Sanchez.[B25b] Meyer Street, en la Calle Meyer había la Mary Joe, Kengla... (on Meyer st. was Mary Joe)[B26a] Sí, si me acuerdo mucho...el güero Manuel (yes i remember very well... Manuel the blonde); Manuel married my sister,
Estella Jácome describes part of the life in the "barrio":

"Well, the area was a very neighborly sort of place, the people were very friendly. Everyone in town just loved to go downtown there. It was very interesting, because the Mexicans, who had lived there for so long, many of them didn't speak a word of English. They all sat out on those little cement stoops in front of the door, which are higher than the sidewalk. All the neighbors would come over, and there would be chairs and everything out there. They sat out there to watch all the passers by. But if they were entertaining friends, their patio in the backyard was the place where they lived, and you'd never got to see that, unless you were invited in."

Lucille Juliani tells what she saw during her visits to the "barrio":

"That was our Sunday excursion. Everyone in town just loved to go downtown there. It was very interesting, because the Mexicans, who had lived there for so long, many of them didn't speak a word of English. They all sat out on those little cement stoops in front of the door, which are higher than the sidewalk. All the neighbors would come over, and there would be chairs and everything out there. They sat out there to watch all the passers by. But if they were entertaining friends, their patio in the backyard was the place where they lived, and you'd never got to see that, unless you were invited in."

Roy Drachman describes the commercial changes after the spread of the automobile:

"When the automobile invaded the streets of America, the shops abandoned the downtowns to group in shopping centers. And the shopping malls also came to Tucson. El Con mall was the first, it offered plenty of free parking to the customers, who didn't have to worry of finding place to park in downtown and then pay for it."

A resident thinks that parking in downtown was easy at that time:

"Oh heavens! Yes. Oh, yes. People parked all around. Parking was not so much of a problem, we parked everywhere; and we walked a lot more than we do now, because everything was so accessible, you see."

While another resident thinks it was the main reason for downtown commercial collapse:

"The great success of the shopping malls was plenty of parking. By that time nearly everybody had an automobile. If you went downtown while you parked on the street if you could find a place. If you parked in the shopping parking places like Jacome's and Steinfeld used to had, they would give you a stamp so you didn't have to pay. But otherwise people going downtown did pay, and you never heard such a squawk, was ten cents that put it out of business. "That selfish simple thing put out of business Steinfeld's beautiful department store and Jacome's perfectly beautiful."

When the Pioneer Hotel had a fire, it just died, because people said: we don't want to go there anyway because its in downtown, and all because of parking."
The residential exodus from downtown had consequences in the "barrio":

"By the 50s, going on the 60s, some of the businesses on N. Meyer St. began to go out of business.[B3] All that commercial structure showed physical decay, as those properties changed.[B3] You had more landlords, people who did not fix the property and rented it out cheaply.[B3k] You had a big number of people that were renting and not owning there.[B3i] Renting formally grouped crowded barrios, was kind of changing into ...kind of physical, economic, and social degeneration of the area.[B3m] Because of that change in nature of that area, I think it lost its family use or its social use; so it was a kind of a casualty of the deterioration of that area.[B6h] They were all homes, low income houses [R50a]."

Henry García grew up and lived in the barrio until it was torn down (Martin, 1983) he describes the struggles of the people of the barrio over the years:

"I could tell you a lot more about those days and the businesses and the people and the families — families who used to live in El Hoyo who have now all gone away and scattered. I can tell you how the people in that area did without for so many years. At first we did without running water, and then a water main was put in. Then we did without electricity, and then finally put in lights. And for so many years the streets were not paved. In the old days that area was also known as Barrio El Sapo because when it rained (the earth in that area was very black and rich — it used to be farmland) big frogs used to come out and they would sing all night long...When it rained it got so muddy that cars couldn't go in without getting stuck — They use to have to leave the cars up on Main St." Anyway, after so many years of doing without water and electricity, after all the houses were paid for and modernized and made more comfortable, after all the little gardens were flourishing — that's when the City decided to take the homes away from the people and evict them. They were old people who had lived there for many years and who had never moved. And it was a very difficult time for everyone."

Another resident has a positive view of the area:

"Those houses... I would say right now would be about 100 years old.[R51a] The houses were OK, people lived in them, they were not abandoned.[R51b] They had to move to some place else[R51c]"

Another response that denotes change in the area:

"Well, yes, they were all in very bad shape, they were poor barrios.[E43a] They were barrios where most of the fresh families had moved away from, and a lot of working people had moved in.[E43b] Money was tight, and lot of the — I would say — middle classes were moving out of them.[E43c] The condition of some of the houses was very bad, yes. [E43d] Off course all of that was adobe, which has to be kept up or it crumbles.[E43e] So with this idea that this was all going to be a great renovation, I think people were very hopeful, but I don't think it has worked out right as they had expected it to. [E43f] Off course a lot of families were displaced.[E43g]"

The residents opinions about locating the community center in the "barrio," shows that there were many interests in maintaining the oldest part of town:

"And even though there were other acceptable sites close to the downtown area, that would not disrupt all the people that lived in the barrio.[L22b] Politics is very, very heavy
when it comes to things like that and they prevailed. The people were actually... the people who lived where the community center and La Placita shops are right now, were actually as if someone had taken one of those big buckets that they move the earth with, and they were just gobbled up like that, and thrown.

"Where else were they going to put it. It could have been built any place. Perhaps they built it there also for the same idea, that area perhaps could be bought cheaper, the homes could be bought cheaper than maybe some other areas in town."

"...they could have done it anywhere else."

"In the 60s the federal government promoted the idea of eradicating areas of the cities that didn't comply with the codes and were considered condemned. The city voted for the idea of building a community center in that area."

Residents have different opinions about the properties appraisal:

"They weren't even payed adequately for their property that they had had for generations. People who had lived down there, people who had property down there, people who had businesses down there; they were actually just...they were displaced. And that particular time the federal government didn't have the laws that they have now. They never were adequately moved, and they were never adequately compensated for being moved. And of course, now there are federal laws that say that if somebody, through condemnation, if you have to move, you have to be placed in safe and decent housing, in that particular time there was no laws like that."

"Oh, that brings bitter memories back, because I had a property there which was going to be my income...and I just had to give up to it, and sell it, after a lot of problems...of course they built the Community Center, and the Music Hall, and all that is very nice; but..."

"People were payed a fair value for their houses. In fact, my former wife's parents had property down there, they say so; they got an appraised value, they were not getting so good rents, so it was a house with no cost, but in the other hand, you know what they would return on what the living house didn't cost might have been the value of my inlaws to hold it. In the other hand the actual repairs, the actual sales value, they got the proper amount on their appraisal."

"There were cases in which the owners wanted to receive much more money than what their property really was, as I said the building conditions were of decay. But those properties had a sentimental value for the people that owned them, and sometimes had lived there for generations. Many cases were solved in court to establish the correct appraisal of the properties."

"The barrio...was largely Anglo owned, and yet rented out to poor Hispanics in conditions that were less than city code would permit. Largely rented out."

When asked if they go downtown nowadays, the residents responded:

"Very seldom. Once a month I go."

"No, and I am six blocks away."


"Oh, hardly ever![D10a] All my activities are now in this side of town (he has a real estate business on east Tucson).[D10b] There are no more businesses there [D10c]."

Some comments regarding their actual attendance to the community center were:

"No, most of my activities culturewise are the ones at the University of Arizona [R58a]."

"No, you know they always told everybody just to appease them, that the TCC was going to be for the whole city of Tucson.[L30a] I would say, only maybe once a year, do the people of the south side and the barrio, and this neighborhood (Armory Park Historic District), get a chance to go to the community center, the prices are too high[L30b] That one time, is during the Mariachi Conference, when they kind of have the puestos out (booths), and then they can actually go and see the community center, and see inside the buildings, and see the fountains, and hear, its free! [L30c]"

In 1969, the community renewal program of the City of Tucson did a field survey. A constant theme of the responses was the fact that much of older Tucson had disappeared. Many citizens strongly indicated a nostalgic attachment to the Tucson of the past — its way of life, its architecture and history, its "small town character." Most residents seemed bitter and resentful for the lack of physical identification with their town's historical unidentity erased by its rapid growth and demolition. Some of the responses that brought up this issue were:

"Sentiment for some of the old landmarks, sometimes make us natives feel that we are loosing a friend."

"Tucson could have been truly unique, had it preserved more of its older architecture."

"Tucson was charming, a small city in a spot of incredible natural beauty. It is now becoming a monotonous large city, which is destroying the beauty of its environment by development of tract houses to the East, mines to the South, and great scars of roads to the North in the Catalina Foothills."

"After one lives in Tucson for 40 years, the whole picture of the City in general is in a man's imagination,"

"We are constantly saddened by the destruction of the old parts of Tucson which we have loved."

"The adobe buildings which are being destroyed, were Tucson ...when these are all gone what is left will be as fake as Scottsdale."

"I liked the old appearance of downtown Tucson... it had a feel that cannot be put into words."

In such conditions of urban change people constantly readjust the mental images of their physical surrounding. How these images are perceived and organized within a long term is difficult to determine. Nowadays, the mobility of residence has increased not only
within the same city, but between cities, and larger polities. This brings us back the first part of this chapter, which emphasizes the importance of continuity with the past. A stable memory of the city facilitates formation of new images capable of enhancing and reaffirming the city's character.

Demolition of the oldest remaining part of Tucson, the Mexican "Barrio" had strong social implications. Residents recount its effects:

"There are people who were affected by urban renewal, who say their lives were ruined; they could not live anywhere else in the community and still feel the continuity and the tradition with the barrio they associate." In a community like Tucson, in most parts, barrios like El Manso, Anita, Sin Nombre and others, there is a pride from people who live in those barrios. In one sense they tend to be poorer properties, and they tend to represent at least spatial segregation, in the other sense they are continuity within the community.

"Some people that we have gotten to know in barrio, that had had businesses in there, they actually died. Some of the older people of the older families, the shock was so traumatic that they actually perished. Because of it, fight as they would, they couldn't make any inroads, they were not listened to. Some of them did get lawyers, and some of them did get to court, and try to get a higher price for their property -- yes, and some of them didn't have the means, you bet. So that was all happening and the shock of that has never left the older people of the city of Tucson."

People living in the areas affected by urban renewal suffered displacement and physical loss of their homes. After renewal, residents in other old areas of town became aware of how growth and progress could endanger their neighborhoods, as one of the interviewees observes:

"This historic areas came after urban renewal, and almost as a response to urban renewal, the emotions of people who lived..."

Annie Laos, a resident of a historic neighborhood in Tucson, recounts her fight against urban renewal:

"So, then comes the idea of a governing body -- about that time -- that they had to have a freeway from the international airport to the community center. They didn't care where they went, they didn't care where it went, it was imperative that the tourists coming from the airport could get to the community center. And it was going to be right through this neighborhood on 15th St., this is 17th St. -- this street here is 17th -- and it was going to take out the whole block between 15th and 14th St. So then is when I got it figured that... it was about time that somebody stood up and said that NO, you can't do this. So I had to get people who lived in that block that they were going to cut, that qualified for legal aid, in other words, their incomes were at certain level, were they could get a lawyer because of their income."

...So I finally found five people like that and we've got a lawyer, and we started petitions, public meetings and so, it was about one year fight. But during that
time, people became — specially in this area — became absolutely aware that YES you could stand up, specially if you were in a body, you know, in a group, and you could fight for your rights. [L22x] We defeated, but we defeated it through a fluke, and that was because of the wishing shrine. [L22y] Because, we found out later — the freeway — even though the idea of it was to come from the International airport and leave off on the community center, in order to get money from the state and from the federal government it had to hook up to interstate-10. [L24g] There had to be a hook up to I-10 so that there would be ingress and egress to this leg of the freeway, and they absolutely needed that in order to get money to pay for that freeway. [L24h]

...From one day to the other, they would bring the bulldozers, and they would knock down things, and you didn’t know, when you got up in the morning, you didn’t know what was going to be gone down there. [L24i] So ... immediately began the papers...to put the wishing shrine in the National Register. [L24k] Because if it was on the National Register, it would be protected by the federal government, and they could not give federal money to move it or to destroy it, or to disturb it in any way; and therefore they could not get money for the freeway. [L24l] Armory Park Historic District came because of the Butterfield Freeway, and with the knowledge that we’ve got the wishing shrine on the National Register, it protected it; it’s like it put a fence around it. [L32c] So I thought to myself: I’m not ever going to let this happen again, so what I want to do with this neighborhood? [L32d] Is put an imaginary fence around it and putting a district together, putting it in the National Register. [L32e] It is a beautiful idea; and it was a very new idea! Uh, we had to convince the city. [L32f] And in order to put the district together... [L32g] Each block, each city block of a proposed area according to city charter or laws, had to have 51% of owner property, agree to it. [L32h] So if you had 32 blocks, and that is how big this place, Armory Park is.... [L32i] You can imagine what kind of work we did to get 51% of every block to agree that it should be a historic district: the advantages, the disadvantages; but the advantages outweighed the disadvantages. [L32j]}

...I could tell it was the only thing that could be done in order to protect ourselves and to protect a little bit of what we had in the past and that was the only way we could do it. [L33e]
Illustration 12- 1966: Looking west over the Greyhound Depot and La Placita, both located between then Broadway and Mesilla Street, long gone. (U.A. Special Collections Library).

Illustration 13- 1968: Looking south at La Placita and the Mexican Barrio. The retained Casa Samaniego, can be seen behind the two story building facing La Placita. (University of Arizona Special Collections Library).
PART II

VANTAGES OF URBAN CHANGE

Analysis of urban change in downtown Tucson will follow vantage theory. Use of this theory is based on the premise that Tucson developed in accord with the prevalent viewpoints of its inhabitants. Different points of view throughout 200 years of local history are rooted in mental models that have continuously shaped urban growth, decay, and renewal. Vantage theory is useful in capturing these models in the mind and in showing how they have guided the architecture and growth of Tucson. In overview, this statement is an attempt to specify precisely how cognition guides urban change.
CHAPTER 5

THEORETICAL THRUST

Vantage theory models viewpoint, how people structure their point of view and why they structure it in a particular way. Viewpoint is fundamental to everything that people do, think, and say. Vantage theory essentially holds that viewpoint is constructed by analogy to the way that people make sense of their position in physical space, in reference to coordinates. In real space, the three perpendiculars (x,y,z) up-down, front-back, right-left, are the fixed coordinates that define a spatial position; time (t) is the mobile coordinate, a function of relative motion.

By analogy to experience in real space, any category is composed in reference to concepts or mental coordinates (R. MacLaury, 1987, 1989). In cognition, when people form a category or when they think about any kind of image or scene, they do so by analogy to their preconceptual experience in real space and time. However, in the mind there is no real motion, and there are not necessarily three perpendiculars; other things may be important about the particular scenes or categories that people think about. These other things constitute points of reference or coordinates that define a cognitive vantage.

Research in color categorization lead to vantage theory; for example, it explains observations related to speakers of indigenous languages who include all of yellow and red in one category. These speakers name with two terms all colors of this broad category: the yellows, light yellows, oranges, corals, reds, dark reds, pinks, and magentas. But when naming all these colors, each word finds its focus — its preferred meaning — near an opposite pure hue, yellow or red.

The simplest explanation for this exotic use of words is that people construct the category from two vantages. They compose an evenly proportioned vantage in reference to one pure hue and their judgement of similarity among the colors; and a biased vantage in
reference to the other unique hue and to distinctiveness. Vantage theory explains this way of naming color as people constructing their own personal viewpoint rather than naming color per se as divorced from themselves (R. MacLaury, 1987).

In color categorization a vantage point is made up of perceptual and cognitive coordinates, the fixed coordinates are the unique hues and the mobile coordinate is the degree of similarity or distinctiveness. The relation between fixed and mobile coordinates is as the relation between ground and figure, or landmark and trajectory, or background and foreground; these are concepts of the same construct that outline the structure of a vantage (R. MacLaury, 1989).

The analogy between a vantage of real space and a mental vantage stands on how both a physical position and a cognitive point of view are defined by two coordinates: one fixed and one mobile. The three perpendiculars in real space collapse in one single reference body that defines a fixed position, while time is the mobile coordinate. Vantage theory regards the fixed coordinate as the base or the background, while the mobile coordinate has an extended definition of something that is in sharp focus against the background.

For instance, if we consider a barrio in downtown Tucson. We are focusing on the barrio, it is the mobile coordinate; downtown Tucson is the fixed coordinate as it is background. If we consider a particular church of the barrio, the barrio becomes the fixed coordinate and the church our new focus or mobile coordinate (Figure 14). Here we zoom-in by one level of focus.

An analogous mental vantage is a personal construct based on a subjective selection of coordinates; it always involves the viewer and his imagined position in reference to the coordinates he selects. In this sense, any thought or any experience is inseparable from the experiencer. In the present analysis of Tucson's urban change, the built form reflects the social and cultural issues that defined it; these are the coordinates of the inhabitants of Tucson to define their vantages. The multiplicity of viewpoints define the world of urban environments. Tucson's present urban characteristics and the analysis of its historical development make it possible to depict the vantages of its inhabitants through time, and the different coordinates from which the urban form has derived.

Historically, people adopted different viewpoints and incorporated new coordinates to shape the urban scene. Vantage theory regards the advent of different viewpoints as an evolutionary process. The evolution is structured as a progressive refinement of focus, a process called zooming-in; this means that a vantage is narrowed by changing a mobile coordinate to a fixed coordinate and by adding a new mobile coordinate. That is, what was
FIGURE 14

VANTAGES: FIXED AND MOBILE COORDINATES

DOWNTOWN TUCSON: FIXED COORDINATE

BARRIO: MOBILE COORDINATE

MOBILE COORDINATE: PLAZA

FIXED COORDINATE: BARRIO

LEVEL OF FOCUS 1

LEVEL OF FOCUS 2

ZOOMING-IN
previously focused as figure and profiled against a ground, itself becomes a ground; it then becomes second nature and is finally taken for granted. New notions are incorporated, and a new figure — usually an entailment of the mobile coordinate that it replaces — is brought to the forefront.

An entailment of a coordinate is anything that follows from it. For example, if we consider the coordinate of Mexican ethnicity, characteristics inherent to it are its entailments such as tradition, religion, church, community, and barrio. When some of these entailments gain strength in people’s viewpoint they become coordinates.

Zooming-in can pass through several stages of changing a mobile to a fixed coordinate and of recruiting a new mobile coordinate. The full process links multiple perspectives. This construct is the counterpart of zooming-out, the opposite process that converts highly focused vantages to broader ones. Zooming-in and zooming-out are reciprocal processes in a single cognitive arrangement of viewpoints (R. MacLaury, 1989).

Vantage theory holds that an individual can consider only one fixed and one mobile coordinate at a given moment (Figure 15). The processes of zooming-in and zooming-out produce a vantage of multiple coordinates; the shifting of coordinates allows the handling of progressive focuses, considering one coordinate after another and altering its fixed and mobile statuses (R. MacLaury, 1989). Zooming-in is a scenario.

In this study, the urban space itself is a scenario. For example, we can focus at the church in the plaza, where the church is the mobile coordinate and the plaza the fixed one. If we consider the plaza — with its church included — as a unique space within the barrio, then this space is the mobile coordinate and the barrio the fixed one. We can go further to consider the barrio, with its plaza and church included, as a neighborhood within downtown Tucson. We could consider downtown Tucson within the broader metropolitan Tucson, metropolitan Tucson to Arizona, Arizona to Southwest, and so forth. In this example we have zoomed-out from a narrow scope to a broader one. We can zoom back in by the opposite process.

Zooming-in or out can be performed very rapidly at a moment or it can constitute a protracted historical development. Moreover, the coordinates established through history can constitute the levels of focus within a complex contemporary vantage.

Zooming-in and zooming-out are natural human processes executed on daily life. When we wake up in the morning we zoom-out from bed into the room, from the room to the house, from house to neighborhood, neighborhood to city; then we zoom into our working area of the city, from there into a particular building, and once there into our of
We are constantly zooming-in and zooming-out in our daily activities, this natural process is transferred by analogy to the abstract construction of a mental viewpoint.

Though the coordinates of the former examples define concrete spatial scenarios, in some cases the scenarios are defined by conceptual coordinates. In urbanism, these concepts are social and cultural values. The values predetermine particular architectural forms, but are not the forms per se. Rather, the coordinates are cognitive whereas the architectural forms follow from them as entailments. For instance, Tucson’s original presidio was a result of a basic defensive need that found in cohesion its appropriate response. Defense and cohesion — social issues — were the coordinates of Tucson’s vantage that shaped a particular architectonic form. The form is entailed by its coordinates; the form follows the concept.

When analyzing vantages in complex environments, where multiple vantages have to be considered, a group adopts an individual viewpoint of an innovator as its shared vantage point. Generally, innovators tend strongly to distinctiveness. It is difficult to establish the reason why people would aspire to the ideas of one innovator rather than of another; but it is probably related with respect and social prestige. Though the motives are not defined, it is clear that an individual makes an innovation and others follow him (Labov, 1972).

The terms dominant and recessive are used when there are two vantages on one category or setting, as on Tucson’s urban scene. Usually a dominant vantage is one from the point of view of similarity. It is the popular vantage, the majority vantage; it is the vantage that people use in a default state. Usually, it is the viewpoint of the dominant culture. Often people who maintain the dominant vantage are only dimly aware or not aware that there can be a recessive vantage, if indeed one exists. The recessive vantage is one from a point of view of distinctiveness. Often, it is an elite, refined, intellectual vantage; it can be a connoisseur’s vantage, far more enlightened than a dominant vantage. However a recessive vantage can also be a minority view; it can be the view of oppressed or marginal people, which nevertheless may make more distinctions and be more aware than those that take the dominant vantage. People can be aware of both vantages but have a preference for one or the other. This is certainly true in color categorization and we find is true in other domains as well (R. MacLaury, 1987). Urban change in downtown Tucson results from interaction of dominant and recessive vantages. Mexican and Anglo vantages were the two fundamental ones in defining the shape of the area of study.
In applying vantage theory to analyze urban change in downtown Tucson, both a dominant vantage and a recessive vantage undergo the processes of zooming-in and zooming-out. The further analysis has a zoomed-out or broad perspective, and a zoomed-in or narrow perspective. The broad perspective encompasses the overall historical process of urban change that affected downtown Tucson. The narrow perspective focuses most closely on La Placita and its Mexican enclave: the Barrio that was torn down by urban renewal.
CHAPTER 6

BROAD PERSPECTIVE: URBAN PROCESS IN TUCSON

Part I sums up Tucson's urban development and the different cultural, social and economic values that shaped its evolutionary process. A zoomed-out view of this process brings up the first coordinates that defined Tucson's first settlement, culture and resources.

Culture is the fixed coordinate, it conforms the set of values and beliefs always present in a person's life. People through their culture define the character and the spirit of the places where they live. Different cultures have defined different settlements around the world. Culture is a constant in urban process.

Resources -- whether natural or manufactured, local or imported -- constitute the mobile coordinate of the historical vantage. People focus on resources as a means to develop their cultural orientation.

Culture and resources are major points of reference throughout urban development; they evolve and change in accord with cognition. Culture as a fixed coordinate is always present in people's viewpoint, who emphasize either in local values or imported ones. Resources, the mobile coordinate, are the organizing basis of people's activities in response to their cultural values.

In the evolutionary process of urban change other coordinates come to the forefront of people's point of view, depending on the prevailing social factors. Emergence of new coordinates enrich the urban scenario complexity. At a particular time people take into consideration only two coordinates, while the previous ones remain in the background; this is captured by zooming-in closer on time -- from the past into the present.
The Pima Indians developed pithouses and ramadas that were scattered throughout the farming lands of primitive Tucson. Through colonization, the Spaniards undertook the first attempt to organize these indigenous settlements, in what was the origin of present Tucson.

6.1 Spanish Period

The Spanish Empire established its colonization under two major coordinates: culture and resources.

*Culture* was the fixed coordinate: it was an assumed background and orientation; the Spanish transmitted civilization to the native population, following the laws formulated by the crown, "Ley de Indias".

*Resources* were the mobile coordinate: throughout the new world the Crown sought wealth. The resources of southern Arizona had to be identified and developed. In Tucson, they were cattle and agriculture. These were developed along the Santa Cruz river after considerable effort and uncertainty (Lockwood, 1943; Dobyns, 1976; Officer, 1981).

The Spanish imposed their ways as a divine right. Culture was an immutable and ethnocentric absolute and an instrument of domination and control of resources.

*Resources* became the fixed coordinate after settlement was established. Its major manifestation was grounded in geography: the *Santa Cruz river* constrained concentration of ranching and agriculture, the economic base. Culture, the earlier fixed coordinate, remained as unitary as before, but it receded farther into background assumption and was no longer a predominant theme.

A new mobile coordinate filled the place of active concern and emphasis that resources formerly occupied. The new mobile coordinate was dualistic, representing the two emphases of Spanish colonization: *religion* and *defense*. Together they characterized the image of the town. Thus, there was the Santa Cruz river as a fixed axis with mobile coordinates polarized on opposite sides, which defined the catholic mission and the military presidio. Tucson could be regarded from either viewpoint, and its first municipal plan emerged from the dualistic scheme.

*Religion*: success of local activities depended on Spanish dominance over Indians to use as a native labor force. Dominance was first effective through religion; it was the belief system that shaped the first mission community settlement, San Agustín del Tucson.
Defense: the Spanish view extended to include military defense; this became a second mobile coordinate, because Apache attacks disrupted achievements of the mission.

The concept of the Spanish colonizing enterprise was motivated by exploitation of available resources, while religion and defense were the justification and the means to concretize their idea.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ABSTRACT</th>
<th>CONCRETE</th>
<th>urban form</th>
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<tr>
<td>fixed coordinate</td>
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<td>means</td>
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Figure N. xx The cognitive model of the Spanish colonizer in Tucson is a process that originates in abstraction and finds concrete realization in categories that define urban form.

6.2 Mexican Period

When Mexico became independent, it reached a crisis that was felt in Tucson. Spanish soldiers abandoned the settlement, and provision of supplies for the Apaches depleted; the Indians dispersed into the desert and subsequently resumed raiding. The mission and its christianization program declined.

Defense became the fixed coordinate. During the late Spanish period defense was a mobile coordinate. It was an active military defense to protect the missions, and eventually it tamed the Apaches. During Mexican times though, defense did not include a strategy of Indian control. Defense was the overriding obsession for the few remaining people, who concentrated inside the presidio walls to defend themselves against attacks.

Cohesion became the new mobile coordinate. Lack of military organization oriented defense inwardly. Ranching and farming activities continued, and the Santa Cruz river still was its main resource; however, the presidio itself became the focus of settlement and the fundamental reason to remain in Tucson; it provided security and housing to the few who worked outside its walls.
With *Defense* and *Cohesion* as coordinates, the viewpoint exerted a centripetal effect on the rearrangement of settlement pattern and community structure.

*Cohesion* became the fixed coordinate shortly after the presidio was densified. Mariana Dias, a woman who lived during both Spanish and Mexican periods, was interviewed at age 100. She reminisces about the importance of friendship and union, and she emphasizes that cohesion inside the presidio engendered a sense of stability in face of the outside uncertainties.

Cultural *Adaptability* then became the mobile coordinate. Mexican control on the frontier was weak, which facilitated access of Anglo-American trappers and traders; some of these adventurers stayed in Tucson. Mariana Dias remembers that people were good and it was easy to establish relationships, because any newcomer that came to the presidio had to take a job within three days in order to stay in the community and become part of it.

*Adaptability* of the population to a different culture encouraged a bi-cultural society. Anglos adopted the ways of Mexicans, who were the majority. While maintaining a strong *Cohesion*, this viewpoint intensified the centripetal unity of the presidio.

*Adaptability* was promoted to fixed status and bi-ethnic relations were strengthened. Both, Mexicans and Anglos merged their cultural backgrounds, lived in harmony, and fought together against the Apaches.

*Expansion* took the place of adaptability as the mobile coordinate. In 1848, close to the end of the Mexican period, people projected their views toward extension beyond the walls. Structures were built South of the presidio to accommodate refugees who fled Indian attacks elsewhere. This was the first step of growth outside the protective walls, and the incipient demise of the presidio itself; its adobe bricks were reused to construct the expanding part of the settlement.

The choice of an open *Expansion* prevailed over the option of enlarging the presidio walls. Enclosure was no longer within people's vantage, which was focused on *Adaptation* to the newcomers and to a new extended form of their town.

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1 Manuscript of this interview with Mariana Dias is catalogued in the Arizona Historical Society.
6. 3 Gadsden Purchase

Expansion: became a background assumption and, thus, the fixed coordinate.

Ethnicity: became the mobile coordinate for both the Mexican and the Anglo vantage. Once fighting against the Apaches was not the main priority, bi-ethnic relations loosened toward differentiation. The coordinate was mobile, because the differentiation was newly formulating. Differentiation between ethnic groups became increasingly accentuated; they even occupied polarized areas of town when it expanded.

In 1854, Tucson became part of the United States. It changed gradually, adopting characteristics imported by incoming settlers. Urban development in Tucson combined two perspectives: its Mexican inhabitants regarded the city from one vantage, and its Anglo inhabitants from another vantage. The vantages were coextensive, each encompassing the same urban setting from an opposite viewpoint. The Mexican vantage was dominant; that is, it was the ordinary and commonplace way of regarding Tucson, because people of Mexican origin were the majority. The Anglo vantage was recessive; that is, it was more rarified and elite; Anglos were in the minority, but they controlled wealth and power disproportionate to their number.

Ethnicity: both the Mexican and the Anglo vantage converted it to a fixed coordinate. The bi-ethnic relations became clearly differentiated, and this was apparent in how the population was distributed in town. The town was polarized in two areas that represented the ethnic differentiation: Anglos north and Mexicans south. Later, the railroad accentuated this difference.

Tradition: the Mexican vantage held it as its mobile coordinate. The Mexicans were rooted in their land, Sonora, and organized within family structures; this strengthened their traditions and their Hispanic heritage.

Fame and Fortune: the Anglo vantage held power and wealth as its mobile coordinate. The Anglos, were basically lonely adventurers seeking economic stability far from their place of origin.

Tradition and Fame and Fortune were points of reference for each Ethnic group. Anglos and Mexicans adopted different viewpoints, each oriented in the direction to their home country generating a North-South reorientation of Tucson.
Illustration 14- Church Plaza and San Augustine Cathedral during the 1880s. (Arizona Historical Society).

Illustration 15- County Court House during the 1880's, on Plaza de las Armas, what was former presidio grounds. (Arizona Historical Society).
\textit{Tradition} and \textit{Fame and Fortune}: zooming in closer, the mobile coordinate becomes fixed, and both the Mexican and the Anglo vantage held \textit{Tradition} and \textit{Fame and Fortune} as their respective fixed coordinates. In its matured state, fame and fortune became wealth.

\textit{Religion} encouraged the Mexican community to construct the San Agustín Cathedral in Plaza de la Mesilla, South of town. Religion — with the cathedral as symbolic reaffirmation of their traditions — was the mobile coordinate of the Mexicans, especially during the 5 or 6 years of its construction.

\textit{Power and Wealth} was what guided the Anglo population to build the Court House, up north in Plaza de las Armas — on former presidio grounds. Power and Wealth — with the Court House as symbolic reassurance of fame and fortune — was the mobile coordinate for the Anglos. Wealth could be interpreted as pertaining to the domain of law concerned with private property.

Under this viewpoint, people regarded a process of common enterprise as the mobile coordinate. The process was building the church and the court house, and it was the attention and focus newly placed in these communal activities. The process would eventually consolidate in the buildings symbolizing their respective ethnicity.

\textit{Religion} and \textit{Power and Wealth} became fixed coordinates for each ethnic vantage, when zooming-in at a closer focus. The \textit{Cathedral} became the pillar of Mexican religious and social activities, as well as their means to reaffirm their traditions. The \textit{Court House} was regarded as the political and economic means of the Anglo population to reassure acquisition of wealth.

\textit{Territoriality} became the mobile coordinate for both vantages, each in their respective neighborhoods: the Mexicans south in the Barrio and the Anglos north in the Presidio area. Each ethnic group held their own neighborhood as an emblem. Both growing neighborhoods thrived in reference to their respective landmark, the \textit{Catholic Cathedral} and the \textit{Court House}.

Diversity in architectural styles brought out the ethnic background of each neighborhood. There were different techniques of building houses, and different ways of relating the houses to the street. These translated the dissimilar ethnic viewpoints of Tucson. They were dichotomized in two areas, each embracing a landmark building that symbolized their particular concerns, their fixed coordinates \textit{Religion} and \textit{Power and Wealth} respectively.
Mexicans and Anglos expressed the coextensivity of vantages by shaping the town with a North-South orientation. As the Mexican vantage was dominant, urban growth followed an Hispanic pattern of growth, but only predominantly; the recessive vantage injected modifications. For example, the Hispanic concept of a centralized plaza was polarized as two plazas. Each of these squares, Plaza de la Mesilla and Plaza de las Armas, contained the symbolic landmarks for each ethnic group: the Catholic Cathedral and the Court House. Between the North Presidio area and the Southern Mexican barrio developed the commercial district, an intensive interface of the two worldviews.

6.4 Advent of the Railroad

In 1880, the Southern Pacific Railroad established its route through Tucson. This was a technological advance that promoted emigration of numerous English speaking newcomers. The railroad boosted the increase of Anglo-American women in Tucson; therefore, mixed-marriages between Anglo men with Mexican women decreased. Marriages between Anglos added a family orientation to the coordinate of Fame and Fortune, lately Wealth.

Territoriality became the fixed coordinate for both the Mexican and the Anglo vantage as their identification with a defined setting and its neighbors became strong.

Anglo Ethnicity, as it grew in dominance began to be viewed as the mobile coordinate.

The vantages of the two main ethnic groups in Tucson kept a dominant-recessive relation; this relation reversed itself through time. Mexican ways of life and tradition were dominant during the decade after the Gadsden Purchase; but the Hispanic population gradually began to lose its numerical edge. Conversely, as the Anglo population grew, its vantage became that of the common majority. The Anglo vantage became dominant and the Mexican vantage recessive. However, after this reversal, the recessive vantage was one of weakness and marginality, not the view of a privileged minority.

The following article published in the Daily Star on 1882, points out the consolidation of the Anglo coordinate of Wealth, and the definite dominant-recessive relation between the Anglo and the Mexican vantage:

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2 The coextensivity of vantages produced a mixed architecture in Tucson. Vantage theory was originally formulated to explain two words for one color category in Mayan languages; the terms are intermixed in response to shades of color within the category, but each had its preferred meaning at maximally contrastive hues (F. MacLaury 1987).
Illustration 16- 1885: Looking east on Congress Street *(Arizona Historical Society)*.

Illustration 17- 1890s: Looking west on Congress Street, near the intersection with Meyer Street. *(Arizona Historical Society)*.
"The improvements now going on in Tucson look somewhat metropolitan. The Court House will be the most finest and most costly structure in the Territory. The Masonic Hall...large mercantile house...the stores...all add character and stability to real property. The character of dwellings now being erected are generally of a modern style of architecture, which shows that new blood is coming into Tucson, or old blood is being stirred up."

**Anglo Ethnicity**: became the fixed coordinate. It was emphasized by the dominant vantage, which was held by the majority — the Anglo population.

**Technology**: the railroad furnished the mobile coordinate that conveyed the spread and consolidation of Anglo values. Via the railroad, the recently settled Anglo population could import materials for new construction in Tucson.

Encouraged by the fixed coordinate, **Ethnicity**, newly built structures projected images familiar to the newcomers' places of origin; they did not comply with the local architectural values, and moreover, did not accommodate to a desert climate. In this fashion, the town grew toward the East, in the area adjacent to the railroad tracks.

**Technology**, the fixed coordinate, brought along entailments that were determinants of urban change; these were *mobility* and *expansion*. They fostered:

1) Establishment of new businesses along the tracks.
2) A new East-West axis of town: Congress St., connecting the newly established businesses with the earlier commercial district that was functioning between the "Presidio" and "Barrio" neighborhoods.
3) In 1891, the opening of the University of Arizona in Tucson stimulated further development toward the East.

The prevalent ethnicity focused on an Anglo pattern of development; this rapid process of change was boosted by the railroad. The new reorientation adopted by Tucson was in direction to the East and to the South, directions where the two ethnic groups oriented their views.

**6.5 The Turn of the Century**

During the turn of the century and the first decades of the 1900s, population in Tucson increased while **Anglo Ethnicity** and **Technology** — the fixed and mobile coordinates respectively — were progressively strengthened in people's viewpoint. Along with
this, *Mobility*, an entailment of Technology increased the momentum of the vantage in reshaping the town:

1) The University of Arizona was a continuous focus of attraction. It generated a series of neighborhoods around it. These areas grew following the Anglo Ethnicity vantage, which conformed with imported architectural models. These models were encapsulated under the general categorization of Victorian architecture.

2) Downtown gradually lost its importance as a social center, because of the exodus of its residents and retail shops to the growing suburbs.

3) Growth toward the East and South consolidated, while the West and North orientation started to move forward. At present, Anglos are mainly in the North-East, and Mexicans in the South-West of Tucson.

The dominant-recessive relation between the Anglo and the Mexican vantages denoted *subordination* of the recessive Mexican vantage, which became progressively *included*. The inclusion meant that the numerical edge of the recessive Mexican vantage was shrinking, as some of the Mexicans adopted points of view of the Anglo dominant vantage. By the turn of the century this inclusion was obvious in the following urban factors:

1) In 1896, reorientation of the new cathedral.

2) Change in use of the old cathedral, which was finally demolished in 1936.

3) Exodus of numerous barrio residents to the suburbs.

4) Deterioration of the Mexican Barrio.

The following Chapter 7 zooms-in to focus closer on the Mexican barrio and goes further to analyze how these points affected the evolution of that enclave.

### 6.6 Urban Renewal

*Technology*: its availability promoted it to a necessary resource, and it soon occupied the place of the fixed coordinate of the modern men. Mass production, a sequel of the two Great Wars, allowed common usage of technology by the 1950s. First the railroad, and later on diverse options such as radio, telephone, automobile, airplane, television, etc. became essential in modern life.
**Mobility**: became the mobile coordinate of the modern viewpoint, first train, then streetcar and finally automobile. As a sign of progress and modernization, technology fostered mobility as an entailment, which became valued in its own right.

Men overemphasized their views toward the future. In confirming this viewpoint, technology was regarded as a ground; it opened the doors to the future. Technology ensued new powerful elements, now common in the urbangscape. These elements such as suburbs, shopping malls, motorized transportation, highways, underpasses, overpasses, telecommunications, etc., promoted one of the entailments of mobility, *expansion*.

As people focused on this vantage, which encompassed *Technology* and *Mobility* as its coordinates; sense of place, time, and distance acquired a different dimension.

**Mobility**: transformed into an essential feature and by the 1960s became a fixed coordinate, while *technology* was soon taken for granted and deferred to the background. Paradoxically, *mobility* – the former mobile coordinate, became fixed and was perceived as a basis or ground for action, as soon as it turned indispensable.

**Expansion**: entailment of mobility, became the mobile coordinate. *Mobility* allowed a greater interchange with external influences, and in a way it implied renouncement of local values to accommodate the *expansion* of a "universal civilization."

Again, *Expansion* is reconsidered as a fixed coordinate of the vantage; it happened before between the two Hispanic eras of Tucson, the Spanish and the Mexican. Though at that time it was basically referred to the physical growth of the town, a definite outbreak from the presidio enclosure. Since then expansion was always present in Tucson's viewpoint, though it was taken for granted. But its late reemergence not only meant an even faster physical growth, but a revision of cultural and social structures.

The *Expansion* was physical and conceptual as well. A consequence of this vantage was a redefinition of the family structure. Traditional ways of working and living — culture in general — were strongly affected. Along with this, the physical environment passed through dramatic changes. In Tucson, as elsewhere, rapid transportation instigated *mobility*, people moved from the center of town to the suburbs, and commercial areas in downtown were abandoned for the suburban shopping malls.

Local and past values were not regarded as essential, and, in the name of progress, urban renewal carried out demolition of the oldest architecture of what remained of Tucson's Mexican era. Over the century, these structures harbored the Mexican side of Tuc-
Illustration 18- The Old Church and the New Cathedral. (Arizona Historical Society).

Illustration 19- Gone the Old Church... the also demolished Santa Rita Hotel can be seen on the background. (Arizona Historical Society).
son; but they were briskly razed and replaced by the Tucson Community Center buildings, Holiday Inn Hotel and "La Placita" Shopping Complex. The dominant-recessive structure, defined by coextensive vantages, foreordained the destruction of the Mexican coordinate; the recessive vantage was disrespected as it had become subordinate.

Universally, mobility contributes to the physical expansion of cities as well as to the overlap of cultural boundaries. This brings a break with the past and implies a process of adaptation to a worldwide way of living, a worldwide view. Living, working, entertainment, and almost any human activity is conducted in a space defined by an architectural framework. The relation between human experience and the space where this experience comes about, is what builds the meaning of "sense of place." This meaning is weakened when the relation between men and its built environment is disrupted.

Under this view, Expansion was followed by considerable factors or entailments. Adaptation emerged as one of these entailments. In some developing countries, which have strong socio-cultural traditions; imported technology and ideas have affected their newly built environment disrupting the structured customs. Not so far, here in Arizona, Papago Indians have a very irregular pattern of adaptation to the standardized Anglo houses that the Housing and Urban Development built in their reservation (Datta, n.d.). Not only cultures rooted in their land have adapted to the invasion of foreign values, but cultures characteristically mobile — such as the American — in their seek of economic and political freedom are also in constant readaptation to places (Lewis, 1979).

The two coordinates of the 1960s vantage, Mobility and Expansion, encouraged diffusion of universal characteristics. This vantage and its entailments caused a dislocation between man and his environment. Industrialization of construction used widespread techniques that crossed cultural boundaries; and, as a result, architecture projects assumed the same image everywhere; the image responds to an international style but not to a local spirit. This not only disturbs the historical continuity of a particular place, but undermines social identity. A resident in Tucson observes (Appendix):

* The trouble with urban renewal is that it is a physical response to a social and economical problem. [B9z] To what is loss of 50 acres of town. [B9aa] There are people who were affected by urban renewal who say their lives were ruined, they could not live anywhere else in the community and still feel the continuity and the tradition, with the barrio they associate. [B11g] In a community like Tucson, in most barrios ...there is a pride from people who live in those barrios. [B12d] ...they are continuity within the community. [B12e]
Henry García (Martin, 1983), a former resident of the barrio expresses his sentiments about it and recalls one aspect of its sense of community:

"...the life in those barrios was a full and rich one. We all lived together — there was a mixture of people — Jews, Syrians, naturally many Mexicans, Chinese, Libaneses — and everyone spoke Spanish....it was a beautiful life....we all lived close together — one house was right next to the other and women visited over the fence. A boy could have a lot of adventures. I saw a lot of things and learned a lot. There were a lot of fiestas. Anytime there was a baptism or a birthday there was a fiesta. The fiestas and dances were held in the yards of the houses. They would water down the patios and put up strings of lights. Then the musicians would arrive and the people of the barrio would come together."

He adds on and gives his opinion about the social effects of expansion:

"....when I think about my memories as a boy, the life of a child today seems sterile in comparison. Sin chiste — without flavor. Everything children of today know, they get from the TV. It seems to me that they know very little of real life. It's sad, because everything is so spread out and disconnected now — there's no sense of community. People stay inside their houses. They don't seem to want to live close to anyone. It's as if people hate one another. Everyone wants to live on an acre — no one wants to have neighbors."

Commerce and tourism were entailments of the expansionist era. Urban renewal focused on them and as a result the Mexican barrio was demolished. At the time, the governing bodies thought that commerce and tourism could be achieved with demolition rather than with renovation. García recalls how things happened and what were the results:

"They had this idea that they would make the Community Center and that they would revitalize the downtown, but it didn't happen. They spent millions and millions of dollars, and look at it now. The businesses can't make it. First of all, they ran out all of the people — no one lives there any more. No one goes to buy there anything anymore. All the shops fail. It's all fake. They would have had more success if they had left things as they were.... In those days the only thing the city thought about was demolish, demolish, demolish. It was a stupidity, an idiocy, a barbarity....I have traveled around — I have been to New Orleans, to Santa Fe, Boston — I have seen what has been done with the old houses in those cities. If the City had had the sense to leave some of the old homes, they could have been renovated and preserved and people would have been interested in them and gone to see them. But the way it is now — the Community Center — no one goes there, not even the flies. Have you noticed? It is practically abandoned all the time. And all those new stores they made in La Placita Village — no one goes there. Why? Because they knocked down all those old houses and stores and then they built new ones. It's all fake and people don't go there because they don't like the artificial. They like genuine things — the real stuff.

Preservation, an entailment of expansion, came forth as a positive reaction to urban renewal, as a resident (Appendix) recounts:

 Complete text of this interview can be read in Images and Conversations, Mexican American Recall a Southwestern Past by Patricia Preciado Martin.
Illustration 20- The Old Charro restaurant, facing La Placita on its south side.
(Dateline Downtown)

Illustration 21- 1970s: Looking east on present La Placita shopping complex, what was retained of the restaurant structure is on the right.
(U.A. Special Collections Library).
"Now you have Armory Park, Barrio Histórico, West University Neighborhood, a whole ring of historic neighborhoods around the town. Which shows that you can recolonize, repopulate, restore. These historic areas came after urban renewal, and almost as a response to urban renewal, the emotions of people who lived...

**Expansion**: is conceived as the fixed coordinate of the present view since the 1970s. In spite of its questionable effects, expansion was viewed as a necessary achievement. Again, evolution propelled the emergence of a zoomed-in view in which the previous mobile coordinate becomes fixed.

**Preservation**: one of the prior entailments of expansion, becomes the mobile coordinate of the current viewpoint. Nowadays, the expansionist view is focused on men, and on the recovery of humanism that was undermined by technology.

The present *Expansionist* view tends to comprehend what is essential and meaningful in nature, region, culture, history, and technology; it seeks to integrate and preserve the significant qualities of urban contexts for a harmonious relation with nature and landscape. *Preservation*, the mobile coordinate, focuses on the uniqueness that the combination of the former factors can offer to an architectural framework. Ultimately, adaptive reuse will enhance the relationship between man and his environment, in an effort to capture the sensibility of places.

This view is more critical about technology and its interface with nature in an integrated organic process. The view is critical about continuity of shared meanings and the quality and spirit of places. Positively, technology has opened doors to awareness, and knowledge of post-industrialism negative factors. Awareness of heritage is awareness of future achievement. Throughout the world, historical districts are recovering their original liveable character. European cities which abound in architectonic patrimony update these cultural legacies and convert them to modern temples of art and culture, with the idea of promoting human interaction at a community level. Tucson, younger in history is rich in cultural heritage — eventhough parts of it have been largely obliterated and others are still in jeopardy — requires a proper understanding of its historical past to revitalize its own cultural identity, with an economic orientation that responds to the needs of the community.

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4 Residents in Barrio Histórico — south of the present Community Center, and all what was left of the Mexican barrio — still fear that the Community Center will keep growing south, eventhough it is recognized as a historic district. The recently torn down "Presidio Hotel", in the corner of Broadway and 4th Ave., presented interesting Hispanic colonnades over Broadway Av. sidewalk. The building was razed under strange circumstances of demolition permit (Arizona Daily Star, Oct.1989)
DIACRHYONIC DEVELOPMENT OF VANTAGES
IN HISTORIC TUCSON

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<tr>
<th>Period</th>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1821 Mexican Period</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>1848</td>
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Figure 16. Overview showing the diachronic development of vantages in historic Tucson. Numbers 1 to 15 key to the figures 17, 18, 19 and 21.
TUCSON VANTAGES: 1776 - 1854

**FIXED COORDINATE**

1. **1776**
   - **SPANISH PERIOD**
   - **Culture**
   - **Resources**

2. **Resources**

**MOBILE COORDINATE**

3. **Religion Defense**

**ENTAILMENTS BUILT FORM**

4. **Cohesion**

5. **Cohesion Adaptability**

6. **Adaptability Expansion**

7. **Entailments**

8. **North-South Growth**

9. **Fixed Coordinate**

10. **Mobile Coordinate**

11. **Entailments**

12. **Built Form**

13. **1776**

14. **Spanish Period**

15. **1821**

16. **Mexican Period**

17. **1848**

18. **Religion**

19. **Defense**

20. **Cohesion**

21. **Adaptability**

22. **Expansion**

23. **Santa Cruz River**

24. **St. Agustin Mission Presidio**

25. **Presidio**

26. **Presidio**

27. **Presidio**

28. **North-South Growth**

Figure 17
TUCSON VANTAGES: 1854 - 1880

1854
GADSDEN PURCHASE

6 Expansion

7 Ethnicity

Mexicans: NORTH
Anglos: SOUTH

1860s

7 Ethnicity

8 Tradition

Fame and Fortune

CHURCH CATHEDRAL
COURT HOUSE

8 Tradition

Fame and Fortune

9 Religion

Power and Wealth

CHURCH PLAZA
PLAZA de las ARMAS

1870s

9 Religion

Power and Wealth

10 Territoriality

BARRIO: Urban Concept
PRESIDIO Suburban AREA: Concept

10 Territoriality

11 Anglo Ethnicity

DETACHED HOUSE
setbacked from street.

11 Anglo Ethnicity

12 Technology

RAILROAD
Congress Street
new east-west axis.

Figure 18
CHAPTER 7

NARROW PERSPECTIVE: EVOLUTION OF LA PLACITA

Different vantages induced urban evolution in Tucson. These vantages are a construct of people's cognitions. Zooming-in brings up the cognitions of historical relevance in defining the urban process of Tucson, while new vantages are included under the scope of older ones, which in turn recede into background assumption; this inclusion is regarded as both cognitive and spatial. In chapter 6 were analyzed a general scope of cognitions that built up Tucson's environment. This chapter zooms-in to focus closer on La Placita and its immediate context, the Mexican Barrio.

The Fergusson map of 1862 documented the square for the first time. Though its exact origin is not known, it was in the late 1840s when Tucson was part of Mexico. At the end of the Mexican period, when Adaptability was the fixed coordinate and Expansion the mobile coordinate, the population outgrew the presidio's capacity and expanded south of its walls. Initially, the expanded area was regarded as peripheral for two reasons: 1) its location outside the presidio, and 2) refugees from elsewhere were the first to live there. Later on, ethnic differences strengthened this peripheral condition.

Sociability was perceived as the fixed coordinate by the people living south of the presidio. In the northern end of the expanded area the coordinate of sociability was physically reflected in Plaza de la Mesilla.

Influx was regarded as the mobile coordinate. Plaza de la Mesilla was the terminus of freight wagons from Mesilla (New Mexico). This fact injected external influx to the area.

Plaza de la Mesilla was viewed as an outpost of external influx within an area that was conceived as peripheral.
Influx becomes the fixed coordinate, when the previous vantage is zoomed-in. People regarded influx as a base for activities. Arrival of freight wagons to Plaza de la Mesilla brought novelty and entertainment. It fostered the coming of diverse people from the east.

Religion became the mobile coordinate of the Mexican population, who reaffirmed their traditions through their involvement in a community enterprise, the construction of the Tucson's Catholic Cathedral. This stimulated their social cohesion and cultivated their traditional rituals.

When Tucson became part of the United States, the arrival of Anglo-American settlers was imminent, and within one decade of the Gadsden purchase they were in control. The Mexican viewpoint was resolved in strengthening their traditions; participation in building the church was a step toward achieving their resolution. This added a religious dimension to the square, which external influx had characterized as an activity center.

Religion was held as the fixed coordinate by the people of the area, who saw the Catholic Cathedral as the landmark of the southern neighborhood.

Territoriality became their mobile coordinate while their neighborhood expanded and grew. Social cohesion reinforced the Mexican identity of the area to define it as a growing barrio.

Mexican ways of living developed in the barrio, with the church as its centripetal focus. With the cathedral on its east side, Plaza de la Mesilla was consolidated as a social center, and since then it was known as Church Plaza. While the church functioned as such, it preserved the unity of the barrio and heartened profane and religious rituals of Mexican tradition. Both church and plaza symbolized the social identity of the barrio within the entire city, and more so after 1880 when the railroad facilitated rapid establishment of the Anglo-American culture. Anglo newcomers settled in the north and east area of Tucson. Again, the southern Mexican barrio was strongly regarded as a peripheral community, but this time because of ethnical differences.

In the 1870s, after the completion of the old cathedral, originated El Tiralido. The little castaway known as the 'Wishing Shrine', in English; is the tomb of a sinner who was murdered and who didn't receive proper catholic burial. The people of the Barrio elevated his tomb to the level of shrine, it became their meeting place with the cosmic world; the mediator of their individual and communal most longing desires.
In his study of religion, Brown (1981) discusses how Christianity adopted the model of the shrine from the Classic World, in which the power that interceded for the living with the invisible world was embodied by gods or other nonhumans. Christianity replaced this embodiment with saints or deceased persons present in the shrine. Husband (1985) shows how public shrines within the western tradition served as expression of social, political, and economic relations. In her study of yard shrines in Tucson, she suggests that they occurred at a moment of crises in a household tradition in their adaptation from one culture to another, and that this occurs not only among Mexican-Americans but other new Americans.

After 1600, many factors lead to devotions outside the catholic church, mainly as a lack of sympathy that the hierarchically oriented members of the church inspired to the people. The strictness of the Catholic precepts might have induced the people of the Mexican Barrio to the creation of their particular wishing shrine. At the time it was originated, the wishing shrine was located at the southwest end of the barrio, while the old cathedral was at the northeast end of the barrio.

Zooming-out to the broad perspective, at this time the coextensivity of the Mexican and Anglo vantages were in a dominant-recessive relation, in which Anglo Ethnicity was gaining numerical edge while fostering a shortcoming in the Mexican vantage. The wishing shrine might symbolize the response of the barrio to this crisis, this internal, personal and individual crisis; while the old cathedral reaffirmed their external, communal and social traditions in confrontation to the new Anglo socio-economic values.

Since then the wishing shrine has been a resource for the people of the barrio to overcome critical situations as the ones happened on the 1970s, described by Annie Laos (Appendix):

"The wishing shrine ...I didn't know at the time we were fighting, that by some quirk of nature the wishing shrine was going to be our saviour.[L22z] ...the origin dates back to 150 years ago... it's a legend to a bad guy... there was a love triangle of a lady, and her husband, and a young sheep-herd that lived right there in that area.[L23a] And the young man became very enamored with the lady, and one day her husband came in town and he killed him, and they threw him — tiradito means castaway — they threw him and they buried him there, in unconsecrated ground.[L23b] ...he became a martyr and the little viejitas (old ladies), from all around the barrio — knowing that he was buried there and not in the cemetery, and he didn't have any...last rights and any blessings or anything like that — would put candles in the grave, so that ...the spirits would grace.[L23c] That's the way it started, and during the war, during World War II ...oh in 1936, they built the wall in back, that wasn't there for a long time.[L23e] But they say that ...the mothers and sweet-hearts of the men who were in the war, will go and light a candle and make a wish; and that the candles were from where the wishing shrine is, all the way to the street.[L23f] Anyway, the way I got into the wishing shrine is that a very good friend of mine called me one
day, she knew I was working desperately to try and get the freeway stopped.  

She said: two men from the Arizona Highway Department are going to meet with some people of the barrio, to show'em where are they going to move the wishing shrine. Any- 
way we met at one of the motels down there along the freeway. And here they came from Phoenix, from the highway department, they had drawings of where they were going to move the wishing shrine, or they were going to put it up on stilts and let the cars underneath of it. Because, we found out later -- the freeway -- eventhough the idea of it was to come from the International airport and leave off on the community center, in order to get money from the state and from the federal government it had to hook up to I-10. 

There had to be a hook up to I-10 so that there would ingress and egress to this leg of the freeway, and they absolutely needed that in order to get money to pay for that freeway. So when I found out, I went to a lady in the university, who at that time was having her doctorates in folklore; we presented the wishing shrine and told her what was going to happen, how perilous it was, and time was of the essence. From one day to the other, they would bring the bulldozers and they would knock down things, and you didn't know when you got up in the morning, you didn't know what was going to be gone down there. So anyway she immediately began the papers for the National Register, to put the wishing shrine in the National Register. Because if it was on the National Register, it would be protected by the federal government, and they could not give federal money to move it or to destroy it, or to disturb it in any way; and therefore they could not get money for the freeway. In three months, she had...we all worked like mad, but in three months she had it on the National Register, under an emergency clause; and because that wishing shrine, placed on the National Register, we defeated the Butterfield Freeway. 

...and then along came an election of the mayor of the city of Tucson, and... the mayor who was the inconvent wanted the freeway and he thought urban renewal was the best thing! His name was Jim Corbett, and he had been mayor for about two or three terms. 

He was in front of an election, and there was another man running against him, by the name of Murphy. 

So I went to Mr. Murphy and told him: we are going to have a candle light vigil at the wishing shrine, if you could come, and as one of your political platforms tell these people of the barrio that you are against the Butterfield Freeway, that you don't want their neighborhood disrupted. I will personally guarantee you, at least 4000 votes. So he agreed! And he came! And he won! And he was mayor for ten terms. 

Territoriality became the fixed coordinate; it physical reflection was the barrio, which symbolized Mexican unity and identity, and it represented continuity with their traditions. 

Expansion was held as the mobile coordinate. People of the barrio regarded it as an amplification of their views in adapting themselves to a different culture, a technological culture. A former resident of the barrio recounts how some of those who could afford the benefits of technology left the barrio:

"They were barrios where most of the fresh families had moved away from, and lots of working people had move in. Money was tight, and a lot of the -- I would say -- middle classes were moving out of them."

Within this vantage, Territoriality and Expansion were antagonic coordinates, but were the viewpoints held by Mexican people. Multiple factors were against the barrio unity. They were a constant disparagement of the Mexican vantage:
Illustration 22- Early 1900s, peaceful Meyer St. On the Mexican Barrio that was torn down. (U.A Special Collections Library)

Illustration 23- Early 1900s, approaching La Placita from east Broadway St. with San Augustine Cathedral on the right. (U.A Special Collections Library)
Illustration 24- Early 1900s, aerial view over the south with La Placita and the barrio on the background. (Arizona Historical Society).

Illustration 25- About 1919: on the foreground Congress St. after the wedge had been eliminated; La Placita, on the middleground when the towers of the church building were already gone; and further back, the Barrio. (UA Special Collections Library)
1) First, a new cathedral was built on south Stone Avenue, which was the barrio's eastern edge at that time. The orientation of the new cathedral was reversed in respect to the old one. So that its rear was toward the barrio and its entrance faced new Anglo neighborhoods developing east. This accentuated even more the barrio's peripheral condition. Mexicans were losing orientation even among themselves; the coordinate of Mexican ethnicity was becoming diluted placing their vantage in internal conflict, that included their views of Tucson and of themselves.

2) The old church building passed through different functions that progressively desecrated its symbolic meaning. It was finally demolished as a Tucson resident remembers:

"I think it was torn down not so much for the land — I don't remember what was built in its place — but it was that the people objected to a historical old church being used for just a garage, and cars, and oil all over everything.[J28a] It seemed like desecration.[J28b] Specially the Catholics, who remembered it when it was a church they went to.[J28c]"

The old cathedral was demolished in 1936, and in 1940 was built the present wall of the wishing shrine. Again the shrine reinforced the Mexican community under a critical situation.

3) On the site of the old church was built the Greyhound Stagecoach Depot, which had its rear facing "La Placita" — the diminutive name of Church Plaza after the church demolition. The Depot was another impediment to prevent the definition of the barrio as a community. In a way, the square recovered its first transient outpost character, and the barrio was redefined in its original peripheral condition. The various attempts of the barrio to establish itself as a stable community were blocked. It was not allowed to root itself in Tucson, despite 100 years of effort it was never accommodated.

4) In Spanish, Placita is in itself a pejorative denomination of plaza, though an effective way of denoting smallness. The coinage was symbolic of the shrinking Mexican presence.

At this point the Mexican vantage lost strength, and it finally dissipated because of its antagonistic coordinates. The Mexican vantage became increasingly subordinate and
weak, and was subordinated to the Anglo vantage — definitely the dominant vantage. The subordination took the form of inclusion as containment, but not as incorporation.

An urban sign of this inclusion is the City of south Tucson, physically included within the City of Tucson. South Tucson has an autonomous municipal government, and its population is mainly of Mexican descent. South Tucson is like an island surrounded by Tucson, it even has its city limits physically demarcated (Figure 21).

Expansion was held as the fixed coordinate of the Mexican view within a short time. Residential areas in the suburbs were flourishing. Some of the barrio residents and owners refocused their interests and left the barrio.

Mobility was regarded as the mobile coordinate: the automobile became an indispensable means of transport.

Expansion was the fixed coordinate of the country at whole; Tucson was no exception, and developed an intensive horizontal growth. Mobility fostered strong migration from the barrio to the expanding suburbs.

Mobility was definitely conceived as the fixed coordinate. As the Mexican vantage became contained by the Anglo vantage, values highly regarded by the Anglo were being newly adopted by the Mexican.

Decay became the mobile coordinate. Centrifugal reorientation of urban settlement motivated deep deterioration in downtown Tucson, and in the barrio itself. Deterioration brought further decay of the area.

Mobility fostered migration from the downtown to burgeoning suburbs, and massive depopulation of residents and businesses. Though many Mexican families stayed in the barrio, those who were economically more stable left and either sold their properties or rented them. The barrio's western part — a neighborhood known as El Hoyo (The Hole), between Main St., Congress and 14th St.— was a strong personalized community of Mexican-Americans that lived there for generations. Their lives were based in the security of the Spanish language and their network of neighbors. From 700 barrio residents removed by urban renewal, two thirds were Mexican-Americans, and most of them lived in El Hoyo.

The barrio environment has often been described as one of decay and dilapidation. In 1956, the City started talking about urban renewal, and warned the residents of the barrio not to improve their properties as they were going to be torn down. Legal permits
for improvements in the area were not issued any more. Some people moved out and many businesses began to decline. In 1967, urban renewal formally took place; the City appraised the properties and razed the barrio. In those ten years tenants did not sign long leases and landlords did not make any repairs. The houses, most of them adobes, showed clear signs of decline as they were not properly maintained. In Tucson, as elsewhere, the past was considered decadent; the Anglo governing bodies viewed the Mexican barrio as an obstacle to progress and its detractors would state that it was a slum area.

Subordination of the Mexican vantage within the Anglo vantage generated a shift of viewpoints. As the advocates of the Mexican vantage diminished, it continued receding, and became more subordinate. Variations of La Placita and its context were direct results of the Mexican viewpoint. Physical deterioration of the barrio showed the recession of the vantage. Hence, it lost strength, and in the 1960s the Anglo vantage took over the downtown.

*Decay* becomes the fixed coordinate; for the prevalent Anglo viewpoint, barrio meant deterioration, it meant affirmation of the past and an obstacle to future economic developments.

*Urban Renewal* was viewed as the mobile coordinate, and in the name of progress and renewal, the barrio was eradicated.

Growth and mass production were the trend of the times. Urban renewal projects acquired a nationwide diffusion as a symbol of progress and development. They were oriented to the demolition of areas within the inner cities that were considered obsolete and decadent because they did not comply with updated housing codes. The social factors of community and territoriality developed by the residents of those areas were neglected (Fried and Gleiche, 1970). Tucson was not an exception, and urban renewal focused on the old Mexican barrio, which was finally eliminated.

Again, zooming-out from the barrio to the broader perspective of Tucson, *Anglo ethnicity*, though always present in people’s thought, had been relegated to the background by other coordinates that came to closer consideration. The dominant Anglo vantage overshadowed the recessive Mexican vantage, which became included. Urban renewal, and the subordinate condition of Mexican ethnicity moved forward the expansionist mobile coordinate of the broader perspective to accentuate the decay of the barrio, and brought back a contrast between the ethnic viewpoints, as observes a Tucson resident (Appendix):
"What was urban renewal to many Hispanics? [B10k] It was an Anglo government, destroying what had been a barrio, that is home to some Tucson Hispanics.[B10l] ...So in one end you have the term barrio, which many Anglos would interpret as meaning the poor area of decaying homes; but within the Hispanic community, barrio is pride of neighborhood.[B11h] ...Well, I think the word barrio to the Anglo, for instance Tucson is composed largely of Anglo immigrants from the upper Midwest, who have rare contact with Hispanic culture.[B12a] You say barrio to them and they think of the inner city, they think of ethnic stratification, of segregation.[B12b] And its cause to dispense that, to destroy that.[B12c]."

Only three structures of the barrio were retained: Casa Samaniego, owned by members of the Mexican elite and symbolized wealth; the Freemont House\(^1\), owned by the Carrillo family — one of the oldest Mexican families in Tucson; and a portion of El Charro,\(^2\) a Mexican restaurant located in La Placita. This barrio establishment was popular among Anglos and Mexicans, and in the years before urban renewal it was a landmark in La Placita. When I asked Eleazar Herreras if he remembered La Placita, he responded: "Oh yeah, it was very close to El Charro.[H6a]" Other interviewed residents also denote the popularity of the establishment:

We use to go to El Charro restaurant at La Placita.[D9j] We especially liked to go in winter, with a cold day, Mexican food is the most appropriate.[D9k]

"El Charro of course was a favorite of everybody on town to go to eat[J23b] ....with family and friends, it was a wonderful restaurant, really wonderful, the food was wonderful, pleasant.[J25a] The walls were decorated with Spanish fans, serapes and things.[J25b] Wasn't as easy to get to Mexico to get to see all that as it is when you have an automobile.[J25c]"

"Well, everybody remembered El Charro restaurant.[B16a] There was Anglos and Hispanics going to El Charro in downtown.[B16b]"

Urban Renewal became the fixed coordinate. Reich (1966) points out that there are indications that the traditional emphasis of urban renewal was on the re-use of cleared land rather than on bettering the living conditions of the residents of the area for renewal.

Preservation became the mobile coordinate. Urban renewal created a sequel of discontent that ramified into other older areas of Tucson. Residents of these areas became aware of the need to protect their remaining heritage from the economic and speculative trends, caused by the increasing attraction of outsiders.

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\(^1\) Jose M. Sosa built this house for his family in 1848. In 1878, Leopoldo Carrillo bought the house and conditioned it for his family. Nowadays it is a branch museum of the Arizona Heritage Center. Its was named after Governor John Fremont, who rented and occupied it for a few months in 1880. The Hispanic community in Tucson thought the name should have reflected its owners and history.

\(^2\) The family who ran "El Charro" is still doing so, though it has a new location in downtown. What remains of the old restaurant has been transformed to "Cafe Gazebo."
Illustration 26- La Placita in the 1870s  
(Arizona Historical Society)

Illustration 27- La Placita in the 1970s.  
(U.A. Special Collections Library)
In spite of the possible design qualities that the present Community Center might have, the loss of the barrio was an irreversible aftermath with immediate negative social effects and further repercussion in the architectonic unity and continuity of downtown. Former residents of the barrio believe that the downtown is dead because it has lost its heart.

Elderly people that had lived in the barrio and that were described as active citizens, lost of sense of identity when they were relocated. Clark and Fimbres (1978) interviewed five families that suffered relocation because of urban renewal. Their study draw the fact that the elderly residents died within a year of relocation after suffering depression and loss of will. Loss of cultural heritage is also emphasized in the interviews. Stating that the human element was overlooked and considered as dispensable as the accumulated belongings of the residents through their lifetime.

The southern area of the barrio that survived to urban renewal is now officially recognized as Barrio Histórico and popularly known as Barrio Libre. Its residential roots and architectural interest called the attention of many who some years ago did not know what the word barrio meant. Banks, real estate businesses and investors began to consider the historic areas as desirable; this attraction has incremented its economic value and they became a sign of status. For this reason the low income old residents of Barrio Histórico are in jeopardy — specially those who rent and do not own the property — as they can not keep up with the economic and social changes.

Kelley Rollings rents property to low income residents of Barrio Histórico and he sees the future of it bent and distorted by outside pressures. A local Tucson paper published his ideas, which clearly describe the shift experienced by the coordinate of preservation:

"Whenever you have a neighborhood which has quality — because it has ambiente — there are a few non-indigenous pioneers who come to live there because they don't like their own culture. They're individualistic. They mix fairly well, because there are only one or two. The neighborhood welcomes them because it's a hospitable neighborhood. Then comes the second generation — the friends and acquaintances of the pioneers. And if the pioneers are Anglos, the second generation is Anglo. They'll probably also like the neighborhood, the feeling, the 'vibes', because of the culture that built it and is living there. They say to the pioneers, 'I'd like to rent there. Tell us when there is a vacancy. It's really cheap.' Those people are a little less accepting of the culture, less outcasts of their own culture. They bring more friends — usually artists, the hip people, university students looking for cheap rent. The third generation is the last, and they're not so hip, not so accepting of the culture. They expect things to go their way, think they're cool because they live in what they think is becoming a status area. Or they may recognize the value of objects like architecture, but don't recognize the human value which gave birth to these structures. Once the third generation is in the process, it becomes almost irreversible."
And what gave the neighborhood its soul, which is its people, is destined to be displaced by pure economics. And that's where Barrio Libre is now."

Again, two antagonic coordinates shape the cognitive perspective of the urban reality. This antagonism strengthens the negative fixation against urban renewal in order to preserve the cultural values represented through historical architecture. A positive consequence of this antagonistic view was the legal protection of a ring of older neighborhoods. The historical evolution of Tucson is better understood through the architecture of these neighborhoods, now denominated as historic districts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Fixed Coordinate</th>
<th>Mobile Coordinate</th>
<th>Entailments - Built Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>5 Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 Expansion</td>
<td>Peripheric Growth south of presidio walls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>6 Gadsden Purchase</td>
<td>7 Expansion</td>
<td>Sociability</td>
<td>Open Public Space within peripheric area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7 Sociability</td>
<td>8 Influx</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Plaza de la Mesilla peripheric outpost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870s</td>
<td>8 Influx</td>
<td>9 Religion</td>
<td>Territoriality</td>
<td>Church Cathedral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 Territoriality</td>
<td>10 Religion</td>
<td>Expansibility</td>
<td>Church Plaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>10 Religion</td>
<td>11 Expansion</td>
<td>Mobility</td>
<td>Old Cathedral change in function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Territoriality</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New Cathedral facing east</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11 Expansion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Demolition of old church building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th Century</td>
<td>Expansion</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 Mobility</td>
<td>Exodus from Barrio to the suburbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950s</td>
<td>12 Mobility</td>
<td>13 Decay</td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Renewal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>13 Decay</td>
<td>14 Expansion</td>
<td>Preservation</td>
<td>Barrio Historico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 21
CONCLUSIONS

Reconstruction of the urban history of Tucson — with focus on downtown and its Mexican barrio — highlights the concerns that propelled the dramatic changes of La Placita. The diverse people that have lived in Tucson underwent cultural and social changes that have defined the particular evolution of the city. These cultural and social changes reflect the cognition of people and their impact on the built form.

Documented history furnishes the material observations of the evolutionary process, and oral history reveals its personal dimension. Both of them contrast the present with the past built form of Tucson, and they prove invaluable to the analysis of this development. This analysis brings up the significance of cognitive processes in configuring the environment, and the crucial role that cultural and social values play in those processes.

Vantage theory models the complex urban growth and architecture in Tucson. It captures the origin of that complexity; the deep seated reasons that Tucson's inhabitants shaped their town as they did.

La Placita and its immediate surroundings has evolved under a variety of pressures, each of them resulting from the viewpoints of people through time. All these motives, founded both on ethnicity and economics, were translated with growing strength into the shape of the area instigating its change of character.

Tucson's situation as a frontier town emphasized the ethnicity of its two prevalent cultures: the Anglo and the Mexican. La Placita mirrors the changes these cultures experienced in their adaptation to each other. Its quality of open space within the urban fabric is its only remaining characteristic. The dramatic changes in its character — since its origins as an outpost of freight wagons from the east, its apogee as entryway of the Catholic cathedral at the heart of town, its decline and final destruction caused by urban renewal to
its present condition of memoir — reflect how the Mexican viewpoint gradually lost
strength while the Anglo population gained a dominant position.

Consideration of the square within a greater scope was necessary to understand all
the forces that affected its variations. Isolating it from its context would have produced an
incomplete study, hence the importance of facing urban issues under a global view that in­
terprets the broader relations between man and his environment. Definition of these rela­
tions is the foundation for focusing on smaller areas within an integrated process.
The process of urban growth is as organic as the human processes that push it forward,
and its complexity derives from the complex cognition of man.

Vantage Theory promises an insightful approach for understanding the issues that
people value. The results of nondirective interviews reach theoretical saturation when a
sample of individuals repeat themes; the repetition defines the cognitive coordinates of the
population represented. Identifying coordinates provides valuable information to designers
in architecture and urban planning.
APPENDIX:
INTERVIEWS WITH LONG TIME RESIDENTS IN TUCSON
ELEAZAR HERRERAS  (age 93)  Interviewed March 1, 1989.

How long do you live in this house?[H1]
   About 60 years.[H1a]

When did you begin to live in downtown?[H2]
   I moved here in 1927, to this house.[H2a]

Did you use to go very often to the downtown area?[H3]
   Well, usually once or twice a day.[H3a]

Were you working there?[H4]
   Yeah.[H4a]

What kind of work and where?[H5]
   Drafting with Mr. Justin, Henry O. Justin.[H5a]

Do you remember La Placita? What do you remember of it?[H6]
   Oh yeah, it was very close to El Charro restaurant.[H6a] There were two streets this side of Meyer, Convent was another street.[H6b]

What do you remember of those places?[H7]
   I used to drive the hours that I wasn't at school, from 8 to 9 and from 1 to 2, and from 3 to 4, 5, 6 depending on the day.[H7a]

So you went many times in a day to that square? What you use to do there, meet friends?[H8]
   Well, I use to draft, and when I was not drafting I was filing, filing plans; and if the floor was dirty, I swept; and if the glass was dirty I cleaned it.[H8a]

You cleaned it!? [H9]
   If the glass was murky I use to clean it.[H9a]

What glass, of a building?[H10]
   Yeah windows.[H10a]

In that square?[H11]
   Yeah.[H11a]

So you mainly were there working? What kind of job were you doing?[H12]
   Plans for houses, for stores, school house once in a while.[H12a]

Did you use to meet friends in La Placita?[H13]
   No.[H13a]

So you only went there to work?[H14]
   Yeah.[H14a]

Were any more people there?[H15]
   Yeah, there was about three more.[H15a] We had a plan, you do the tracing, you do the floor plan, and you do the leveling on the plans; that was my job.[H15b]

Did you ever go to downtown for leisure?[H16]
   Yes, for shopping.[H16a] Once in a while to the movies, get a haircut; just to the ordinary necessities of life.[H16b]

Were you living very close to downtown?[H17]
   Right in the middle of downtown.[H17a] La Placita used to be between Meyer and Convent, Pennington and another short street that ran from Meyer and Convent.[H17b]

Where was your house?[H18]
   I lived in 566 S. Meyer.[H18a]
It was very close. Did they celebrate many types of events, festivals, community events?[H19]
Yes, there were a lot of differentiation between Mexican and American celebration, 16th of September, 5 de Mayo, 4th of July.[H19a]

Were all of them celebrated in La Placita?[H20]
Yeah.[H20a]

Was it an important square in town?[H21]
It was the center of entertainment.[H21a] It had La Placita, a pavilion that raised above the ground about 3 to 4 feet, that was hexagonal; and had a rail up around 3 feet; and open from the rail to the roof.[H21b] There's were the band use to play and the orchestra; their city license consisted of so many hours a month playing in the Placita.[H21c]

Did the orchestra played every week?[H22]
Oh yeah, Sundays, special holidays, 4th of July, that was their fee.[H22a]

What the people did when the orchestra was playing during these celebrations?[H23]
Well, here's the pavilion, and about 12 to 16 feet of planting grass, then 4 to 6 feet the sidewalk.[H23a] The band would play, the boys would go to one side, the girls would meet them, and afterwards each one got a partner.[H23b]

Would they dance on the celebrations?[H24]
Well, once in a while they just... met on celebrations.[H24a] Those streets were vacant, no traffic, and you went up there, take a partner go out... and out there go dancing.[H24b]

When these things happened, was the church there?[H25]
No they had this pavilion right on the center of the business, were the orchestra played.[H25a]

What other buildings where on the square?[H26]
Well, no much.[H26a] On the east side was the Occidental Hotel, that comprised Placita to Convent; you might say that was the most important building there (he refers to the church building).[H26b] And towards the north was the rear end of stores that were facing Congress St., and they back up to La Placita.[H26c] On the south there was the Pavillion.[H26d] There was Monica Flynn, The Charro.[H26e] Monica Flynn was the owner of El Charro restaurant.[H26f] Next to it was Canos drugstore, the owner used to live in the 2nd floor.[H26g] He was married to Monica's sister, Panchita.[H26h]

Was there any theater or movie near the square?[H27]
Yes, there was an open air theater on what would be Meyer's and Broadway.[H27a] Cine Plaza was a close building, had a roof on it.[H27b] The theater used to work everyday, it was very reasonable charged, 15 to 25 cents.[H27c] We use to have chicken dinner, believe it or not, for 25 cents per person.[H27d] They served a dish of ice cream.[H27e]

At what age you began living in downtown?[H28]
I was born in Barrio Libre, which was S. of Meyer St. between 18th and McCormick, Main and Stone; I was born across the street from 566 S. Meyer.[H28a] I was born in 1897.[H28b]

So now you are 92. WOW! Did you live all your life in Tucson?[H29]
Yes except in 1972 and 1970, I went over to Frisco, to the entitle with the title of Fellow Architect, and in 1973, I went to Europe, I went to... Lisbon.[H29a] In Europe they are not widening the streets, they travel slow.[H29b] They have problems, the same as we have.[H29c]

Do you remember this building? (picture of st. Augustine church)[H30]
That's the original St. Augustine.[H30a] They've got its window in the present catheral.[H30b] I went to church there once in a while.[H30c] Oh! Those days, those were the days my dear (looking old photographs of the cathedral and surroundings).[H30d] And Julius Flynn cut that stone and place it.[H30e] W. Congress St., the Fox Theater in the afternoon, hot as hell, nobody had a coat.[H30f]

Do you remember when the church turned to be a hotel and then a garage?[H31]
There's the rose window building.[H31a] It used to be a garage.[H31b] That garage stood there for about 5 years and then it was demolished.[H31c] They took the window, and numbered and placed them up at the Historical Society.[H31d]
Do you know why they changed the open pavilion to an enclosed one?[H32]

Well it is a matter of money, the lettuce... Its cost, cost, cost... Its too bad that always we have to look what is the cost to maintain it, what is the cost to heat it, what is the cost to cool it... ITS... they gave up a beautiful place, the L.H. Manning House in Paseo Redondo...[H33] Manning was a man that finished the Santa Rita Hotel... My dad was the constructor and he gave dad a job...[H34] And my dad: Mr. Manning I don't think that I could do the job... The hell can! If money is bothering you, go to the bank and tell Fred Stuart that L.H. Manning is backing you; and you'll get all the money you want.[H35]

When for urban renewal they tore down Barrio Libre, all S. Meyer and La Placita...[H36]

Well, they didn't tore down all. But they tore down and rebuilt the TCC...[H37] But people were not happy...[H38] Like everything else, when they come down to redoing a town, there are people who suffer... I mean they have to go and build a new house that costs money...[H39] These old buildings over there were built by their grandparents and handed down...[H40]

Where you living in that area of La Placita?[H41]

No, I was living further south, about 6 to 8 blocks to the south...[H42] Oh, those old buildings... Its all the same, it is a matter of time, the development; they call that progress... At what time do you think I got up in the morning? At 12, there comes a time when a man can relax...[H43] Have you been in the new La Placita? What do you think of it?[H44]

As I say everything would be OK if they eliminated all these ups and downs... If it had 3 or 4 steps it would be OK... Its depressing...[H45] What do you feel when you go there?[H46]

Well, having known the barrio, and having lived there among the people, to me its depressing...[H47] Do you think the people were more united before?[H48]

More friendly... Now if you say hello to a guy during the whole afternoon you don't know nothing of him... Nobody knows a damn about you, they don't care who you are... That means a lot to me, going down the streets, say Hi; then you meet somebody you know, chat awhile, move along and, you know...[H49] Going back to how La Placita was before, do you think people from all Tucson used it or only the residents?[H50]

No practically everybody knew everybody... We use to speak, chat; was like homelike... As the Germans say: Haimutku... people of firesplace, home people, people who lived here, their ancestors... A new generation comes in to pick up the ashes. I can not understand, I'm old fashioned...[H51] What do you think was the main reason for tearing down the barrio?[H52]

Well, some of it was all right... No objection to tearing down old buildings that are on their last legs, to build new buildings that will last 50 or 100 years... But to tear down the whole site, all that area called urban renewal, and leave it as it is, to me is criminal... Sure you've got old buildings, but these buildings have been there how long? Maybe 50 years, they pay taxes, remember they pay taxes... I had a piece of property, as you walk by, if you look by there is a fountain, in back of it there is a building, that was my property... They came: Yeah! I came out here from the
City. I came out here to tell you you've got to move. Look you've got to talk with the tenant, I rent the place. You tell them they've got to move. No, you tell him.

Did it happen so fast?
It's really surprising, it happen in 7 days. Good-by I see you on Court! No! No! No! Yes! Yes! Yes! You've got to pay me to move my tenants out; you've gotta pay their move.

How long it took when they told you about tearing down your property, until it really happened?
About 6 months. This mayor happened to be a dentist, is now at the Tucson House. He was of color. When he tried to rent, he told me he had tried three times before, but because of his color he couldn't rent.

Did the people agree with urban renewal?
Yes, the people were informed that they were going to rebuild the town. On such and such a day you should be out.

So did they ask the peoples' opinion?
A hell with the opinion of the people. We are buying all this land, and we, we, we, everything was we.

The major, Mr. Thompson, was colored?
Yes, he was the major in the army and happened to be War World I hero. I would have knock the hell out of the first fellow who told me I couldn't. Here, you are sitting, nice coffee. There, I go sweat, pack a rifle, protect your home; and tell me I can't rent. That's the way the army men look at it: I am protecting your house, and you won't let me rent a place because I'm colored. He was my tenant for eight years.

Were there racial differences in Tucson on those days?
They say no, but I say yes and there are racial differences now.

Did you notice these differences were stronger on some time of your life?
Yes, because in the old days, the old pioneer days, there was no difference between black, white or brown. Manny Drachman, Roy Drachman's father, owned the Elysian Grove. They had skating ring, ballroom. It was a park, with a saloon at the entrance, swimming pool. Further on to one side they had a bear. You see that guy in the bluejeans, shirt all sweaty. He used to work! There were no differences between Manny Drachman, El Herreras, Joe Brown. We celebrated together.

Why do you think they changed the celebrations from La Placita to Elysian Grove?
With progress, things move, things change. Certain things happen here, certain things happen there.

From El Presidio, Armory Park, Casa Cordoba, which one do you think was the core of downtown?
Elysian Grove and Cordova.

What things used to happen near Cordova?
Used to have reunions, parties, having lunch there.

Even during weekends?
Anytime.

Did the Cordova Sq. use to have Mexican character?
Meyer St., Convent St., Main St., from 18th to McCormick, used to have Mexican character.

So that was even more used than La Placita?
Yes, La Placita was neglected and somebody had the guts to put a restaurant.

Were there several restaurants in La Placita? Did the Indians come more because of the stagecoach?
The Indians use to sell cactus, they used to take the spines off and roast it, also tamales, I think... to eat. They sold practically every day. The Indians were coming for years when Tucson...
was an old pueblo. They came with carts to commercialize. They went by the houses and offer their produces: tamales, tortillas, mescal, roasted cacti. That is rarely made now, probably near the San Xavier Mission.

*How long do you live in this house? Do you keep going to downtown?*

I live here 61 years and keep going to downtown to work, I worked every day and went everyday to downtown.

*When did you notice that downtown changed, that it was not the main recreation?*

Well, about 1925.

*What was the reason for this change?*

It was just natural growth, natural progress.

*How was Barrio Libre?*

Was like a little village, lots of adobe houses. Everybody knew everybody. The neighbor had a key to the front door of my house. Those days were days of good people. If somebody got sick my mother use to cook, take soup and meat; everybody called her Lupe.

*Do you think some of the houses of the barrio had possibilities to be restored?*

Yeah, some of them have been restored, La Casa del Governador, that I did, and Casa Samaniego, part of it.

*Do you think the Temple of the Music and the Arts can be restored?*

I worked in the original plans, we never got payed for that job; Ms. Heineman was the proprietor.

Did you ever lived in downtown?[B1]
Not lived there.[B1a] I worked in downtown, I was familiar with downtown area.[B1b] I was involved in city planning, so I have reason to be familiar with the area.[B1c]

Have you ever been to La Placita square?[B2]
I've been there, in La Placita, the square that was there in the 50s.[B2a] Around that where a number of businesses; and of course, up until 1936, to the east of La Placita area, was the original Catholic Church, the door of which is in front of the Historical Society.[B2b] El Charro restaurant, the Vilanova bar...were in Camp Street (present Broadway Boulevard).[B2c]

Did you ever go to the places around La Placita?[B3]
I went to El Charro and Vilanova bar.[B3a] I went to eat in El Charro as a regular, and also had beer on the Vilanova.[B3b] The back of the Greyhound Depot was also in La Placita.[B3c] Ronquillo's Bakery was on La Placita.[B3d] There was a kiosk, I'm not sure if it is the same of now.[B3e] The Fox Theater was in Congress. [B3f] There was vitality and unique social life on Congress St, across the street was El Cine Plaza (The Plaza Theater), and later on Reuben's Golds Furniture, and places like that.[B3g] Those businesses kind of patronized the area.[B3h] By the 50s, going on the 60s, some of the businesses on N. Meyer St. began to go out of business.[B3i] All that commercial structure showed physical decay, as those properties changed.[B3j] You had more landlords, people who did not fix the property and rent it out cheaply.[B3k] You had a big number of people that were renting and not owning there.[B3l] Renting formally grouped crowded barrios, was kind of changing into...kind of physical, economic, and social degeneration of the area.[B3m] And that came into the idea of urban renewal.

[B3n] In other words, what you might be able to eradicate — urban decay — by physically desleveling the buildings, reselling the property and having it redeveloped.[B3o] And that was the idea of urban renewal.[B3p] The number of people that were living in the area were moved to public housing, county chambers, La Reforma and adjacent barrios around it, like Manso, Sin Nombre, El Hoyo, and others.[B3q] Now, the reason I say this, is because that had an impact on La Placita, and how it was used and conceived in the community.[B3r] The original project for urban renewal was all the way from Congress St. to 22nd St., and from El Paso Southwestern Railroad to Stone; more than 400 acres.[B3s] And that was voted down in a public referendum. [B3t] And then the whole thing came back around, so that in the 60s the project was down to around 50 acres.[B3u]

When was this referendum?[B4]
In the 50s, 57-58, the referendum was city wide and had to do with the city going through an urban renewal of such a magnitude.[B4a] Then in 1965, when started up again, they scaled down the whole thing down to 50 acres, between Cushing St. and Broadway.[B4b] They bought all the property out and torn down structures, abandon property lines and right way lines, and replanned the whole thing.[B4c] The only structures that were saved were Freemont House and Samaniego House, anything else was replanned.[B4d]

How came the idea of building the Community Center where it is?[B5]
Decayed buildings and reuse of the land boost the idea for building the Tucson Community Center.[B5a] The problem with 50 acres in that area, is that there wasn't a market for more commercial.[B5b] And urban renewal projects across the country tended to be used for governmental or public purposes more than for private purposes.[B5c] There were some discussions, at the time, about building a convention facility and a Music Hall, in the urban renewal area.[B5d] The arguments were: Should it be in the downtown area? Should it be in the midtown area? Should it be in the foothills? Where should it be?[B5e] The final decision was to revitalize the downtown area by putting the convention center in the downtown area.[B5f] And then that what was the shops, some offices in the area of the convention center and downtown itself.[B5g] So, activity is there when there is a workforce during the day in downtown.[B5h] But in the evenings, the idea was to have kind of a Mediterranean style staggered.[B5i] They took out the old grid part of that area, like Meyer and Convent.[B5j] They took Broadway and transitioned it up to Congress St.[B5k] Therefore old Freemont House use to sit in Main St., which is long gone, now you've got Granada.[B5l] Begins the replanning of the Convention Center, the Music Hall, the Little Theater; destroyed that old grid pattern - kept two houses Samaniego and Freemont - this whole La Placita area, that contained the hotel at one end, not the Holiday Inn, and then these specialized shops, including they retained the old original El Charro.[B5m]
Where was the church in respect to the new plan?[B6]

Actual Broadway, cuts, wipes out the site were the Old Church was, on the east, and later on, that bus station.[B6a] The proximity of La Placita to the Church meant that, well, like traditional Mexican plazas, it was a social center.[B6b] Like girls walked one way around the plaza and the boys in the other way. [B6c] Down in Sonora that is still the practice, just a social custom, and girls and boys get to flirt when they walk around.[B6d] The park was adjacent to the church and was the entryway to it.[B6e] But the area began to deteriorate; and the bars like Vilanova, Legal Tender, and some of those, they also reflected the change in social conditions.[B6f] To the detriment of the area, there was a pretty rough Bar Beigh near Ronquillo's Bakery; that was a problem for the police.[B6g] Because of that change in nature of that area, I think it lost its family use or its social use; so it was a kind of a casualty of the deterioration of that area.[B6h]

What sort of things do you recall use to happen in these bars?[B7]

Well, fights of course, and probably some prostitution.[B7a] Maiden Lane, north of Congress was the red area, it was wiped out when they widen Congress St.[B7b] So the red light district moved down to the barrio, to a street called Gay Alley, and then was known as Sabino Alley.[B7c] But on the other hand, S. Meyer and S. Convent St., were recognized as individual barrios with families.[B7d] What happened is that the northern end of the barrio began to commercialize, and you didn't have residential, but you had your businesses, and your parlors and bars.[B7e] And that's what began to deteriorate it.[B7f] And then finally, some of those literally were abandoned or left vacant, born of that, and that accentuated the process of decay.[B7g] So like everything else, we're talking about physical evolution, physical evolution of the downtown area, and the physical evolution of the area south of downtown area.[B7h] The term Barrio Libre, would be generally used in many southwestern communities, in reference to an area in which anything goes.[B7i] In other ways the law will look the other way, it would be more tolerant.[B7j]

Did families ever used La Placita during the 50s?[B8]

At the time when the church was there it was a vital, almost a focal point of the city, of downtown life.[B8a] That changed as the area changed, but it changed gradually.[B8b] The adobe walled structure, the original presidio fortified military garrison, was further north.[B8c] With the gold rush in California, we had all these gold seekers and the community of Tucson began to grow south, towards Sonora and towards the mission.[B8d] It didn't grow north and east.[B8e] So what that meant is that this area that we are talking about, is one of the earliest portions of Tucson as it went out beyond the walls of the Presidio.[B8f] And then pictures of S. Meyer St. from the turn of the century, it has the look of a Sonoran style.[B8g] For instance, if you want to see what that looked like, all you have to do is to go down to Magdalena Sonora today, you'll see a community that looked very much as how that area was.[B8h]

Do you recall how was the Pioneers Plaza in the 50s, where Cordoba House is?[B9]

Is much later than that, if you look at the Fergusson map, it was the Plaza Militar, which was behind the Mexican barracks.[B9a] The Pioneer's Plaza was another impact of the urban renewal.[B9b] That block, administered by the museum, was included in the urban renewal; but it contained the Fsh and Stevens Houses, which goes back to the 1860s, the Jacobs House, which is a mission revival from the turn of the century.[B9c] There are historic buildings around this block, plus the museum — the modern building art gallery.[B9d] So it gave the whole thing some unity.[B9e] They refurbished the historic houses, and making use of the yards of this interior portion, was called Plaza of the Pioneer's; to honor Tucson pioneers with a plaque.[B9f] So before, this central space wasn't use as public space.[B9g] Those were private yards.[B9h] Remember your Sonoran style, well actually middle eastern, with patios for family use.[B9i] Plaza of the Pioneer's was a modern...[B9j] The park area of La Placita was so small that it would be difficult to use effectively, it was more a decoration, more a visual aspect than a provided space for some kind of use.[B9k] The shops in W. Congress, you could also see that it was changing and not changing for the better.[B9l] The barrio area in S. Convent when it was a very proud barrio with stable families.[B9m] That changed, but they have memories of the barrio in downtown, they were very sensitive of what was happening.[B9n] There are some strong feelings in the Hispanic community about the urban renewal and the loss of homes.[B9o] There were also some rooming houses around that area, the Criterion Rooms. I thought that was a unique name for a rooming house.[B9p] There were freighting, transportation, businesses and also was demand for commercial prostitution.[B9q] But the community changes, as the barrio changed, so the old style of red light district, became archaic.[B9r] The prostitution wasn't serving the community as a whole and it was kind of a tail end of what had been the tradition before.[B9s] Again, part of the decline of the area.[B9t] To some degree Barrio Libre was, to some sort, like the present area of S. Cushing St.[B9u] It tended to get
commercial to the north, closer to downtown area.[B9y] It was the oldest remaining part of Tucson, but on the other hand you did had the aspect of slum landlords, people who were not fixing out the property and renting it out.[B9w] All the idea of urban renewal, is that word, renewal.[B9x] In other words if you have physical decay, if you have a rotten tooth, you pull it, right? And that was the idea of urban renewal.[B9y] The trouble with urban renewal is that it is a physical response to what is a social and economical problem.[B9z] To what is a loss of 50 acres of town.[B9aa] Now you have Armory Park, Barrio Hist6rico, West University Neighborhood, a whole ring of historic neighborhoods around the downtown.[B9ab] Which shows that you can recolonize, repopulate, restore.[B9ac]

When did the historic districts were originated?[B10]
This historic areas came after urban renewal, and almost as a response to urban renewal, the emotions of people who lived...[B10a] There is another aspect to this that's interesting too; that is sociological, maybe is cultural anthropology, is more than history; and that is Hispanic relations in Tucson area.[B10b] In the period of time which it was down in the Hispanic community, now Hispanics represent 25% of the population.[B10c] Have the Hispanics been discriminated against?[B10d] At what point has there been almost a self imposed segregation?[B10e] Tom Sheridan in his work documents Hispanic occupancy has been predominant south and west side, whereas postwar Tucson grew north and east through Anglo immigration.[B10f] And while Tucson has had less racial problems in terms of Hispanic-Anglo conflicts, than as Southern California, than as El Paso or San Antonio, Texas, and other major southwestern cities.[B10g] The tradition here seems to be that Anglos and Hispanics got along in Tucson.[B10h] There are Hispanics that served in elective offices, there are Hispanic businessmen.[B10i] But the urban renewal brings up the schizophrenia in the Hispanic community - this is a personal observation of course.[B10j] What was urban renewal to many Hispanics?[B10k] It was an Anglo local government, destroying what had been a barrio, that is home to some Tucson Hispanics.[B10l] The barrio, in the case of the urban renewal here, was a decay.[B10m] One that was largely Anglo owned, and yet rented out to poor Hispanics in conditions that were less than city code would permit.[B10n]

So it was largely Anglo owned?[B11]
Yeah, yeah, largely rented out.[B11a] There was a percentage of ownership there, and there is a tradition in some of the barrios like Manso, El Hoyo, which is adjacent to Manso.[B11b] Incidentally there is a map in Tom Sheridan's 'Los Tucsonenses', that shows the locations and names of the various barrios and uniquely enough, some of the barrios, like the reference of Barrio Libre is a historical one; but some of the barrios are really more modern in terms of the naming and the evolution.[B11c] The point I am making is that in a Barrio like Manso there is a tradition of families staying there from generation to generation, and pridefully doing so.[B11d] But that aspect does continue a segregation within the community, knowingly or randomly.[B11e] The pride continues the segregation.[B11f] There are people who were affected by urban renewal who say their lives were ruined, they could not live anywhere else in the community and still feel the continuity and the tradition with the barrio they associate.[B11g] So in one end you have the term barrio which many Anglos would interpret as meaning the poor area of decaying homes; but within the Hispanic community barrio is pride of neighborhood.[B11h]

So the Anglos see this word with negative connotations?[B12]
Well, I think the word barrio to the Anglo, for instance Tucson is composed largely of Anglo immigrants from the upper Midwest, who have rare contact with Hispanic culture.[B12a] You say barrio to them and they think of the inner city, they think of ethnic stratification, of segregation.[B12b] And its cause to dispense that, to destroy that.[B12c] In a community like Tucson, in most parts barrios like El Manso, Anita, Sin Nombre and others, there is a pride from people who live in those barrios.[B12d] In one sense they tend to be poorer properties and they tend to represent at least spatial segregation; in the other sense they are continuity within the community.[B12e]

When you just came to Tucson you also had this clear idea about barrios?[B13]
What was it?[B13a] I was an Anglo coming to Tucson.[B13b] Actually I grew up in south California, so Hispanics were no mystery to me.[B13c] I went to school with people who spoke Spanish, in Catalina Island.[B13d] We played soccer against each other.[B13e]

Do you notice difference between the relations of Hispanics and Anglos in California and in Tucson?[B14]
Yes, I think so, the center of Hispanic population is in east Los Angeles, and right now they are having all kinds of problems with gangs, gang spread violence and that associated with narcotics.[B14a] I think we have a big deal less of that here, eventhough the numbers are lesser here.[B14b] I think the Hispanic community here has not been stratified in terms of juvenile gangs and drug distribution.[B14c]
When were the governmental buildings done, before or after urban renewal? [B15]

After, in 1972, they have not built the present La Placita. [B15a] They were built on the period 65-72. [B15b]

Why they kept El Charro, was it in good conditions? [B16]

Well, everybody remembered El Charro restaurant. [B16a] There was Anglos and Hispanics going to El Charro in downtown. [B16b] Incidentally the planning director of Tucson who was involved in urban renewal still is here in Tucson, Don Layloff is the guy that will tell you why they kept Samaniego house, Freemont House and El Charro Restaurant. [B16c]

Do you remember any big festivals or celebrations in La Placita in the 50s? [B17]

The Old Fiesta de San Agustín got to be very rowdy at the turn of the century. [B17a] Originally it was a religious based fiesta but then it got to be like a Mardi Gras were everybody goes wild. [B17b] It was a bad reputation and it began to come down and cut, it was cut down. [B17c] I don't remember... by the 50s and even in the beginning of the century, the wild fiesta San Agustín was not observed. [B17d]

I was told by El Herreras that at the beginning of the century certain festivals were celebrated in La Placita? [B18]

At the beginning of the century, yeah. [B18a] The new cathedral in S. Stone was completed in 1896, and the old church which had been the cathedral no longer was needed as the cathedral; and later on it went into different uses, hotel, restaurant, garage. [B18b] But while it was the cathedral obviously the network masses will be set in a daily basis, plus Sundays, made of La Placita a kind of front entryway into the church. [B18c] But after it ceased being a church I'm sure that kind of use changed. [B18d] I don't discount what Ed Herreras says, in terms of his long residency here and his contacts with so many people broadly in the community, including being part of the Hispanic community himself. [B18e] When you talked to him did you speak in Spanish or English? [B19]

In English, I tried Spanish when I entered, because his wife didn't speak English, so even when his wife came we were speaking in Spanish, between she and I, but he kept using English. [B19]

Well, his working life has largely been with Anglos. [B19a] You know, it's a funny thing, again talking about my observations of the Hispanic community in Tucson. [B19b] In the early 1970s, the Historical Society put a committee together, primarily to research an attempt to put into use Tucson's original name streets: Calle de la Alegria, Calle del Arroyo, Calle Principal. [B19c] All the original names that you refer in the Fergusson map in 1862. [B19d] And on that committee was Carlos Ronstadt, Ed Herreras... it was a mixture of Hispanics and Anglos. [B19e] We were sitting in the committee talking, and the word Chicano came out, and these older conservative Hispanics felt that Chicano was disparaging and they didn't like it, they were uncomfortable as it tend to describe revolutionary radicals, which they did not associate with. [B19f] Now, we've got Chicana for the aggressive Hispanic female and I think the word Chicano has got a rather broad acceptance, in terms of its application to more than the revolutionary Hispanic. [B19g] Is the word Chicano used in Peru? [B19h]

When I arrived here I knew that Chicano was him who his parents were born in Mexico, but he was born in United States. [B20]

Seems to me that the word Chicano has been used as kind of a reference of the Spanish activist, and it really brings up the other side of the coin. [B20a] Among Tucson Hispanics, who have reason to travel in Mexico, the Mexican national discriminates against or considers the American Hispanic to be something less, than lets say, a Mexican national. [B20b] Almost like, OK you went north and left your motherland for economic reasons so you could live a better life, therefore I think less of you... that kind of attitude. [B20c]

How long did you live in downtown Tucson? 
I was born in 1906 and spent my childhood living in downtown. First in an area called Snob Hollow, in the corner of Main and McCormick streets. It was my grandmother's house, made of adobe, with a porch facing west and another screened porch facing south; where my brothers and I used to sleep. So I slept outdoors like I always did, until I got married and went to live near campus, south of Speedway, on Palm St. between Olive St. and Mountain, that actually is a parking lot. Later on, when I was seven, my father rented a house to Mrs. Brady, on Stone St. and 17th St. Our first house, on Main St. had rooms on both sides of a long corridor. My parents use to sleep inside, but the kids, we slept in the porch, even in winter, and used the rooms for dressing up. The bathroom was outside the house and later on, we had one inside. I liked to play with the Mexican kids of the area, specially marbles. I was very good with the marbles and normally bit all the Gringos, as I like to call Anglos. Mexican kids were pretty tough and very good playing marbles, so it was a challenge for me to play with them.

When you moved further south did you keep going to the area where you lived before?
Oh yeah, I had a lot of friends there and liked to go to play the marbles with the Mexican kids, once I won 4000. There were two Chinese grocery stores in the NW and SE corners of McCormick and Meyer, and in the other two corners two bars. The area looked very much like the present Barrio Histórico, south of Cushing St.

Did you ever go to Gay Alley?
Oh yeah, I remember Gay Alley, it run from McCormick north up to Jackson (in maps it is Ochoa St.). It was the prostitutes street. The buildings were adobe, with window and door, window and door; one after the other. The girls were at the windows and men passed by and entered the door where they liked the girl. There were 220 girls, controlled by the madam, whose house was in McCormick facing north; in a position where she could see all the alley. On 1916, prostitution became illegal, and these buildings were abandoned, so Gay Alley decayed.

Did you go to La Placita?
Many times. It was kind of the central area of town. There were several businesses in La Placita. I remember its rounded park with a kiosk in the center, and several benches around the park. In those days the Indians use to come town with their wagons. I think it was on Saturdays that they formed an open market in La Placita to sell their produce, rugs, baskets and a whole variety of things.

Where any other important events celebrated in La Placita?
Yes, many fiestas, like the 4th of July, 16th of August, 5 de Mayo, were celebrated there. Armory Park and its park in front of the library became very popular for these celebrations. They were also celebrated in Elysian Grove, a park run by my father, close to Carrillo School; that was open during the summer. During the winter the business was out there, so my father opened the Opera House, the Broadway Theater, on Stone and Broadway. These were very busy. Movies became popular, and were the only distraction at the time. Once a week there was a variety show, and the people liked to see live show.

When did La Placita begin to decay?
Well, the whole area was deteriorating because the properties were not well kept, and some bad elements moved to the area, generally those who could not afford to live elsewhere. Many blacks also moved in. There was a black club, which had very good shows, with groups that played quite good music. I enjoyed to hear them. But the area in general lost its family character and became the rough part of town. On 1930, a group of friends and I, bought the building west of La Placita and spent $36000 in its restoration. We talked with Geo Chambers, who owned at that time the building of the old cathedral, east of La Placita; and agreed on the idea of restoring the old flavor of the square. At that time the church building was functioning as a garage, after having been used as a hotel and restaurant. I remember it had a school on its south side. Anyway, our idea of restoring La Placita didn't come through. The site of the church was sold to the Greyhound De-

1 This interview was reconstructed and paraphrased from memory an hour after its completion, recording was voided by mechanical defect.
pot. The bus station was built there, and its rear was facing La Placita. This, and the kind of people that began to hang around the bus station, annulled any chance to go ahead with the idea of recovering La Placita to transform it in a touristic attraction. We thought of installing a curios shop, but then we just had to rent the building for offices. We sold the property, and later on, part of it was Ronquillo's Bakery. There were two hotels on the south side of La Placita and El Charno Restaurant; on the north side some businesses were facing La Placita, and some were the rear of businesses that faced Congress St. The center of commerce was Congress St., all the shopping was done there. When the automobile invaded the streets of America, the shops abandoned the downtowns to group in shopping centers. All that time the Downtown Association of Merchants thought that commercial centers were not going to succeed, against what I believed was going to happen. And the shopping malls also came to Tucson. El Con mall was the first, it offered plenty of free parking to the customers, who didn't have to worry of finding place to park in downtown and then pay for it.

Why did the idea of urban renewal chose the area of Barrio Libre?
In the 60s the federal government promoted the idea of eradicating areas of the cities that didn't comply with the codes and were considered condemned. The city vote for the idea of building a community center in that area.

Did the idea of rehabilitating those buildings to use them as residential area was ever considered? All that area had slowly reached a state of deterioration that it would have been more expensive to try to save the buildings. And anyway the value of the land was so high that it wouldn't have been reasonable and affordable. I was chairman of the urban renewal program of Tucson. At that time the Barrio Libre was mainly owned by Mexicans. There were cases in which the owners wanted to receive much more money than what their property really was, as I said the building conditions were of decay. But those properties had a sentimental value for the people that owned them, and sometimes had lived there for generations. Many cases were solved in court to establish the correct appraisal of the properties. The northern part of that site of the urban renewal was sold to a private developer. I was contracted as a consultant by the developer, and when he showed me the plans of what was the project idea; I was totally against it. The idea went through and basically is what we have today at La Placita. At that time my advice was to maintain the height at one or two floors, maximum; with an adobe type or construction, that would remember the character of what La Placita was before. We didn't agree and they did an underground parking and four to five floors height were done. Since they started, those offices and shops are out of business, and La Placita is nothing of what it was, its character is totally different.

When you moved near campus, did you keep going downtown?
My work was there. When I was a sophomore student taking the first course of journalism held on campus; I decided to quit studying, at the age of 19. The doctors predicted only one more month of life to my father, so I stop studying and decided to work, even though I had been working since much younger while being at school. I never finished my studies at the university and my father lived for 8 years more, even though his health was always delicate. My two brothers were also working, one in Steinfields' shop and the other in the Station. I continued working on one of the theaters I had been doing. And the theaters were in downtown. When I was in charge of the Fox Theater in Congress St., we did drawings of cars, we use to form crowds outside the theater; they were a success. I remember that the Arizona Citizen had its offices besides the Fox theater and Geo Chambers worked there. We use to go to El Charro restaurant at La Placita. We specially liked to go in winter, with a cold day, Mexican food is the most appropriate. North Stone Av., up to Toole, was also an area of downtown that had lots of activities, because of the businesses located there. I specially liked to go to Dooley's Varsity Tobacco Shop. He had pool tables there and was the spot where high school and university crowd would meet. Also adults went there. When ladies went there, they didn't stay for long, just for a while to buy and then go. Dooley was a short guy, he organized Mardi Gras Carnival and paid $5 to the one that recognized him; everyone wore a costume and as he was small he could easily be confused with any of the youngsters. Around the 20s, he died at 45; we were good friends.

Nowadays do you ever go downtown?
Oh, hardly ever! All my activities are now in this side of town (he has a real estate business on east Tucson). There are no more businesses there. Nowadays in America very few cities have their downtowns with businesses; the commercial mall concept is so widely spread, and so comfortable for the customers, that the downtowns have turned to be more the government and cultural
centers with certain type of business different from retail, which is the one that attracts people.[D10d]

Are you aware of the activities to create an arts district?[D11]
I do.[D11a] What is that of an arts district?[D11b] Does it mean that the artists are going to be hanging around downtown?[D11c] What is it?[D11d] Where is it going to be?[D11e] Where it begins?[D11f] Where it ends? [D11g] I don't think there is a clear idea of what they are trying to do with the arts district, its being used to cover much more things than only the arts.[D11h] The construction of the city library in downtown could also be a mistake.[D11i] It may probably work on weekdays, but what about the weekends.[D11j] Who is going to go there?[D11k] The old Carnegie Library in Armory Park is attractive not only by itself, but by its proximity to the park.[D11l] The library should have been done in Randolph Park, which is the geographic center of Tucson.[D11m] There is one library near Randolph Park, on 22nd St but is not the main library of Tucson.[D11n]

How were the relations between Mexican and Anglos at the beginning of the century?[D12]
They were good.[D12a] Many Mexicans succeeded in businesses and as professionals.[D12b] There were many Mexican girls married with Anglo men and vice versa.[D12c] In my family one of my nephews married Ms. Castellanos.[D12d] I think relations were quite good between Mexicans and Gringos. [D12e]
ANNIE LAOS (60 years old) Interviewed on March 3, 1989.

I've got to go back to Spain. [L1a] For about thirty years we haven't been gone any place. [L1b] We just worked, and I had five children, all boys and we worked to get them educated; so we never get to go on vacation; we went on weekends like to Nogales or something. [L1c]

Did both of you were born here? [L2]

Oh yes, our children are fifth generation Tucsons, non Arizonans. [L2a] And so the very first time we ever got any place was to Spain! [L2b] I don't know how we ever been there, but we went with another couple that just insisted that we go and it was quite an ordeal for us, you know. [L2c] Prepare for the store, the kids and everything. [L2d] First the kids were already older, all my children were older. [L2e] But we went on one of those tours, KWA tours, only for ten days. [L2f] It was so monumental for us to get out of this town, and get away from the store. [L2g]

You never went south of Nogales? Never have been to Mexico or something? [L3]

No! So here we go to Spain, and we went to Torremolinos for the first four days, and then we spent the rest of the time in Madrid, and it was like paradise. [L3a] It's neat, Ay, somehow or another I have to go back. [L3b] But since then, you know, since our children are already graduated we have been travelling a little bit more and... [L3c] But that first experience of having to get out, and then to go some place so far as Spain. [L3d] It was something! We had such a good time! I had such a good time with the people in Spain. Oh! The people in Spain are something. [L3e] The only thing that I was taken a bit by surprise was the food; because we are Mexican-American descent, and I always figured that if you go to Spain, or Mexico, or something like that, you'll eat exactly what we eat here, you know. [L3f] It's so different, I was looking for the chili all the time. [L3g] Of course the food is delicious! But so much different, not different in taste or... but different, European type food. [L3h] My very first experience on that was of course when you eat that food on the plane. [L3i]

So that was the first trip you did on a plane? [L4]

I had never been on a jet in my whole life! Can you imagine? [L4a] So, when we got to Torremolinos, I went down to the beach, 'cause I love the water. Ah, the Ocean! [L4b]

So that was the first time you went to the ocean? [L5]

Well, no, I have been to the ocean one time ever on the coast. [L5a] But we go down to the ocean in Torremolinos, and the first thing I see are those sardines that they have, that are smoked, delicious! [L5b] I wanted to stay on, I wanted to stay there the rest of my life! [L5c] And the wine was very good. [L5d] Oh, I have to go back! [L5e]

How long you stayed there? [L6]

Just ten days, but I have to get back. [L6a] I have to go to the northern part. [L6b] We had a chance to go on all the tours; we went to Granada, and we went to Alhambra. [L6c] And we went to El Escorial. Ah! Oh! I thought I had died and gone to heaven; it's just gorgeous! [L6d]

Tell me about your life in Tucson? [L7]

My husband was born in Tucson, and all my immediate family. [L7a] I am what they really call a Mexican-American; my father born in Mexico and my mother born in Illinois. [L7b] They were married in 1916, when Mexican men didn't marry Anglo women, and Anglo women didn't marry Mexican men; but it lasted fifty six years, so I guess it was made in heaven. [L7c] But, unfortunately for me I never did... you learn your mother's tongue; my mother never did speak Spanish, only spoke English. [L7d] My father conducted all of his business throughout this town only in Spanish; he had wholesale grocery in this town for forty seven years. [L7e] My husband's family, of course was here longer than on my maternal side. [L7f]

What is your family name? [L8]

Batford, it is a French name. [L8a] My father came to Tucson with his mother; his father had passed away in Mexico. [L8b] His mother brought the children, my father being the oldest. [L8c] The story of how my mother got here I could write a book, but I won't go into that; is like one of those TV sagas. [L8d]

When were you born, if it is not an indiscretion? [L9]

I was born in 1929 on December twenty six and went to a private convent school here in Tucson, called St. Joseph's Academy, it's where St. Joseph's Hospital is right now, just in back. [L9a] And then, fortunately for me World War II came, while I was in the junior high portion of my education, and I got to
go to public high school. I'm the only one in my family, of five girls, that went to a public school.

Are you the first?
No, no. I'm the youngest of five girls. I graduated from Tucson High and then went to the university, and worked with my father's wholesale grocery, and met my husband and got married in 1952. Had five boys, all of who have graduated from the university, and they all went to the public school system over here, and they are all doing very well in their present occupations.

Where was your father's grocery store located?
In the corner of Stone and Toole, where the Stone Avenue subway is.

Where was your school?
I got to go to Tucson High, but the elementary and Junior High that I went to was a private school run by the sisters of St. Joseph's, it was called St. Joseph's Academy.

When you were working with your father, were you living in this house? (Her historical house on Armory Park neighborhood, on the corner of 4th Av. and 17th St)
No, I was born in the house that my mother and father had for fifty six years, on University Bd., all my family was born there; the house is still standing, and my older sister owns it.

When you were working did you use to walk around downtown?
Ah, I grew up at a time and period, and with a family that was very strict, in other words, I had a very sheltered life. The only way you go out was if you went with somebody, you didn't go out by yourself, you didn't go downtown by yourself. And then part of that time when I was more knowledgeable about anything was during World War II. But yes, we did go downtown, and we usually walked, walked down through 4th Av. subway to downtown. All of the shopping was on Congress St., along Pennington and along Stone Av. My father's business was only like two or three blocks to the north of the downtown businesses, so his banking business and his business with the people of the city of Tucson, was done in the downtown area, where the Pioneers' Hotel is; all the big stores were there.

Do you remember La Placita on those times?
Yes, but... I remember the location, but we were never allowed to go around it. You know, my mother and father...my mother and father's family structure was very strict, I guess maybe because they had five girls, we were not being allowed to do a lot of things.

So whenever you went downtown to shop, you went with your mother and father?
I went only with my mother or with my older sisters.

So you could go the girls alone, with your sisters? Did you ever go to La Placita?
No, what we would do is go to the university, 'cause it was very close to our house, was only five blocks from our house. So in the afternoons, like on Sunday afternoons, we would walk from our house to the Old Main. But we would not usually walk from our house to like La Placita, that was in a portion of town that we were not allowed to go to.

Why you were not allowed?
Well, because I think my mother and father felt that there were people of lower class, and that sound ridiculous, but I think that that is what they thought; and they didn't want us associated with a lower class.

And after, when you had chance to go by yourself, I suppose when you got married, did you kept this image of that area?
No, when we got married we moved to the far east side of the city of Tucson. We were living, when my first child was born, we were living in the 5400 block in E. 8th St., which was between Swan and Craycroft, just off of Broadway. At a time when there wasn't anything there, it was just desert; and there was a housing development there, and that's where we lived. When we first got married, before I got pregnant with my first child, we lived with my husband's mother and father, who lived on the south side. And I was still working with my dad at the time, being a working person, 'cause I've been working since I was twelve, I worked with my dad's wholesale warehouse since I was twelve. The idea was that you just...you just go to work and you come home and that's it, go to church.
on Sunday, and come home.[L19f] And your activities were more home oriented, more so than going out; if you ever did go out, you go to a concert, or you go to a ballet, or you go some place like that.[L19g]

But for actual recreation time, we did most of our recreation at home.[L19h] After we've got married and we've moved to the east side, I was mainly occupied with my children, at that period of time.[L19d] Then in 1962 — I had three boys at that time — my husband had an opportunity to buy the drugstore at S. 6th Av. and 17th St., and we decided to do that.[L19] Then we decided that it was ridiculous to travel on this side and live way out on that side.[L19k] So when we found this house for sale, we bought it, and then we lived in this house.[L19] And then is when...and the idea that maybe you're not going to be tied down so many years with your children.[L19m] Then is when I became a little bit more aware of what is downtown.[L19n] I know it sounds ridiculous, but really it is the true.[L19o] I also became aware of the schools that my children were going to, what schools?[L19p] And I became more aware of...right about that time started the urban renewal, and the possibility of having the community center put in a very populated area, and everything that we had known in this town - although I wasn't really responsible for it - but we always knew it was there, the possibility of having that gone.[L19q] Then is when I became very concerned about the possibility that they were planning to put the Freeway through this town, and what have you've been told and around this that you hear.[L19r] The people that were here, the people that lived here, in this particular neighborhood for generations. [L19s] I started working very seriously, along with raising my children, taking care of my husband and working at the store at the same time.[L19] In actively, I would say fight, 'cause it was a fight, fight against the freeway that was going through, it was called the Butterfield Freeway.[L19u] We came, the people on this neighborhood became very, I would say close, because we know we had the freeway as a peril.[L19v]

Had urban renewal already been accepted in the area?[L20]

It already had been accepted; it had been voted down five times by the city, by the city people.[L20a] And they finally...they just pushed it through.[L20b]

So the city accepted it?[L21]

Mmm...yes, the city accepted it, the City was the one that was pushing it.[L21a] The people of Tucson didn't accept it, they voted it down five times, in actual referendum.[L21b]

Even though the people of Tucson voted against it...[L22]

They still kept bringing it back, and they kept telling everybody that it was progress and that the City of Tucson needed a community center.[L22a] And even though there were other acceptable sites close to the downtown area, that would not disrupt all the people that lived in the barrio.[L22b] Politics is very, very heavy when it comes to things like that and they prevailed.[L22c] The people were actually...the people who lived where the community center and La Placita shops are right now, were actually as if someone had taken one of those big buckets that they move the earth with, and they were just gobbled like that and thrown.[L22d] They weren't even paid adequately for their property that they had had for generations.[L22e] People who had lived down there, people who had property down there, people who had businesses down there; they were actually...they were displaced.[L22f] And that particular time the federal government didn't have the laws that they have now.[L22g] They never were adequately moved, and they were never adequately compensated for being moved.[L22h] And of course, now there are federal laws that say that if somebody, through condemnation, if you have to move, you have to be placed in safe and decent housing, in that particular time there was no laws like that.[L22i] Some people that we have gotten to know in barrio, that had had businesses in there, they actually died.[L22j] Some of the older people of the older families, the shock was so traumatic that they actually perished.[L22k] Because of it, fight as they would, they couldn't make any inroads, they were not listened to.[L22l] Some of them did get lawyers, and some of them did get to court, and try to get a higher price for their property - yes, and some of them didn't have the means, you bet.[L22m] So that was all happened and the shock of that has never left the older people of the city of Tucson.[L22n] So, then comes the idea of a governing body - about that time - that they had to have a freeway from the international airport to the community center.[L22o] They didn't care where they went, they didn't care where it went, it was imperative that the tourists coming from the airport could get to the community center.[L22p] And it was going to be right through this neighborhood on 15th St., this is 17th St -- this street here is 17th -- and it was going to take out the whole block between 15th and 14th St.[L22q] So then is when I got it figured that we just had enough, we were up to our necks with politics, and the pushing and the shoving of the governing bodies.[L22r] And it was about time that somebody stood up and said that NO, you can't do this.[L22s] So, that's easier said than done and sometimes people who are very set in their ways, are actually frightened to do, they're frightened to stand up and say you can't do that, you're infringing on my personal rights.[L22t] This is the land, you know, I live in a free country, and I can live wherever I want, and the freeway is not going to go through my house, you know.
I heard many stories about the wishing shrine, about its origin.

Yes the origin dates back to 150 years ago, that's been documented, and what it was is that...it's a legend, and its a legend to a bad guy, and there was...there's many stories but the one that is most common is that there was a love triangle of a lady, and her husband, and a young sheep-herd that lived right there in that area. And the young man became very enamored with the lady, and one day her husband came in town and he killed him, and they threw him - "tiradito" means castaway - they threw him and they buried him there, in unconsecrated ground. And he was like, he became a martyr and the little "viejitas" (old ladies), from all around the barrio - knowing that he was buried there and not in the cemetery, and he didn't have any...you know, the last rights and any blessings or anything like that - would put candles in the grave, so that...you know, the spirits would grace. That's the way it started, and during the war, during World War II, although I never did see it, like I said because I lived over there and I was never allowed to come over here. So they say that during WWII that...oh in 1936, they built the wall in back, that wasn't there for a long time, that was built in 1936. But they say that during WWII, the mothers and sweethearts of the men who were in the war, will go and light a candle and make a wish; and that the candles were from where the wishing shrine is, all the way to the street.

Oh how nice!

I would have loved to see that, I never did get a chance to see that. Anyway, the way I got into the wishing shrine is that a very good friend of mine called me one day, she knew I was working desperately to try and get the freeway stopped. She said: two men from the Arizona Highway Department are going to meet with some people of the barrio, to show'em where are they going to move the wishing shrine. She says, you want to come Annie? Yes I want to come. Anyway we met at one of the motels down there along the freeway. And here they came from Phoenix, from the highway department, they had drawings of where they were going to move the wishing shrine, or they were going to put it up on stilts and let the cars underneath of it. Because, we found out later -- the freeway -- even though the idea of it was to come from the international airport and leave off on the community center, in order to get money from the state and from the federal government it had to hook up to I-10. There had to be a hook up to I-10 so that there would ingress and egress to this leg of the freeway, and they absolutely needed that in order to get money to pay for that freeway. So when I found out, I went to a lady in the university, who at that time was having her doctorates in folklore; we presented the wishing shrine and told her what was going to happen, how perilous it was, and time was of the essence. From one day to the other, they would bring the bulldozers and they would knock down things, and you didn't know when you got up in the morning, you didn't know what was going to be gone down there. So anyway she immediately began the papers for the National Register, to put the wishing shrine in the National Register. Because if it was on the National Register, it would be protected by the federal government, and they could not give federal money to move it or to destroy it, or to disturb it in any way; and therefore they could not get money for the freeway. In three months, she had...we all worked like mad, but in three months she had it on the National Register, under an emergency clause; and because that wishing shrine, placed on the National Register, we defeated the Butterfield Freeway.

But I think they actually changed the original place of the wishing shrine. Lots of people had said that, but it's not true, quite possible it's not in what you see it, it was more of a mound of dirt. Then they said at one time that they had put old tires, hold on rubber tires around it, to protect it; but it was probably in the very far part of the lot or it was in the very beginning of the lot. Lots of these things have changed in between, there was no roads, and there was no pavement or anything, but the actual site, give or take the lot, is the original. Sabino Otero, who was an old-timer in this town, years and years ago, you'll run across this name in the history, he gave the lot, with
that mount of dirt which was el Tiradito, he gave it to the city. [L25e] And then Mr. Herreras who is an architect and I know you will run across, he is the one that built the wall. [L25e] So anyway that was all about in...and then along came... [L25f]

So you were very involved in maintaining the characteristics of what existed? [L26]
Yeah, and then along came an election of the mayor of the city of Tucson, and the mayor who was run, the mayor who was the inconvent wanted the freeway and he thought urban renewal was the best thing! [L26a] His name was Jim Corbett, and he had been mayor for about two or three terms. [L26b] He was in front of an election, and there was another man running against him, by the name of Murphy. [L26c] So I went to Mr. Murphy and told him: we are going to have a candle light vigil at the wishing shrine, if you could come, and as one of your political platforms tell these people of the barrio that you are against the Butterfield Freeway, that you don't want their neighborhood disrupted. [L26d] I will personally guarantee you, at least 4000 votes. [L26e] So he agreed! And he came! And he won! And he was mayor for ten terms. [L26f]

When did he begin? [L27]
This was about 72. [L27a]

Just when the urban renewal? [L28]
They had already taken and torn down all of the businesses in Congress, and where the community center was they have already started, they have built the Placita, they had already realigned all the streets. [L28a] By taking out that neighborhood there, where the community center is, took away businesses, they took all the people, the businesses all went. [L28b] For a long time, the planners and the governing people, the politicians; they couldn't understand that. [L28c] But it was the people living in the barrio, that sustained the businesses in the downtown area. [L28d] They were the ones that went to Walgreens, and they went to Woolworth, and they went to McLellans, you know, and they did all their shopping right there, once they were gone there is nothing! [L28e] That is the problem we have with downtown at this moment, there's nothing down there! [L28f] There's the government buildings and the banking buildings, but after 5 o'clock, there's nothing, there's nobody, there's no people. [L28g] There is nothing, because there isn't anybody living there. [L28h] That long area there, people could be living there, then your commercial businesses will come back, but until that happens there is never going to be anything in the downtown area, except slums. [L28i]

Do you go to downtown? [L29]
No, and I am six blocks away. [L29a]

Not even to the Tucson Community Center? [L30]
No, you know they always told everybody just to appease them, that the TCC was going to be for the whole city of Tucson. [L30a] I would say, only maybe once a year, do the people of the south side and the barrio, and this neighborhood, get a chance to go to the community center, the prices are too high! [L30b] That one time, is during the Mariachi Conference, when they kind of have the "puestos" (booths) out, and then they can actually go and see the community center, and see inside the buildings, and see the fountains, and hear, its free! [L30c]

When is it? [L31]
It's in May. [L31a]

Ah, el Cinco de Mayo? [L32]
No, it's not the Cinco de Mayo, it varies, but its usually in May, during Mariachi Conference, and what happens is that they bring Mariachi groups from all over the world, and they have workshops, and they have a week long conference here in Tucson. [L32a] And it combines with what they call Garibaldi night, and that's the night or that's the day, one can go downtown. [L32b] They can't do it another day; the tickets to any of those functions are too expensive, at least for them to participate. [L32b] Armory Park Historic District came because of the Butterfield Freeway, and with the knowledge that we've got the wishing shrine on the National Register, it protected it; it's like it put a fence around to it. [L32c] So I thought to myself: I'm not ever going to let this happen again, so what I want to do with this neighborhood? [L32d] It put an imaginary fence around it and putting a district together, putting it in the National Register. [L32e] It is a beautiful idea; and it was a very new idea! Uh, we had to convince the city. [L32f] And in order to put the district together, and this is where Professor Giebner helped, we couldn't have done it without him. [L32g] Each block, each city block of a proposed area according to city charter or laws, had to have 51% of owner property, agree to it. [L32h] So if you had 32 blocks, and that is how big
this place, Armory Park is, its 32 blocks.[L32i] You can imagine what kind of work we did to get 51% of every block to agree that it should be a historic district: the advantages, the disadvantages; but the advantages outweighed the disadvantages.[L32j]

**What were the disadvantages?**[L33]**

Well, the disadvantages is, that if you own property for speculation, there is no building that should build in accordance to the district, the architectural design...[L33a] You can build! That is what people do not understand. You can build on a vacant house, but the architecture has to be in keeping with the color, of the material, the roof, and the architectural design.[L33b] Some people who did own some of this large boarding houses along 4th Av., only owned it for speculation.[L33c] The idea was that with the Community Center and La Placita, we were going to have lots of people down here, we'll be going to have great big offices all over, so lots buy a couple of pieces of property and lots sit on it for a while and speculate.[L33d] I put a stop to that. I don't know whether it's good or bad, but I could tell it was the only thing that could be done in order to protect ourselves and to protect a little bit of what we had in the past and that was the only way we could do it.[L33e] So at that particular time Professor Giebner was having his seniors do a project, and they invented this neighborhood, from that inventory I took and filled the papers for the National Register, I did it! [L33f] I sat at the typewriter for three months and did it.[L33g] I could have had a professional to do it, but I didn't know at the time that I could have got a professional to do it.[L33h] I did it because I knew I had to do it.[L33i] I didn't know who to get to take the pictures of all the houses for me, so I hired a boy that I knew that could take pictures really good, he went around and took pictures of all the houses for me.[L33j] And about that time we put together a neighborhood association; I put it, I incorporated, got the members together, got the people interested.[L33k] And took $168 of my money -- which I never did get back -- $168 to incorporate, to make it a non profit corporation, which is what we did as a neighborhood association. [L33l] My idea was - and they do do this in other historic districts throughout the whole United States - through your non profit association, when the houses in the area that is designated historic, come up for sale, the association buys them, and then stabilizes some, it does emergency repairs, and then sells them to families who after a screening process, the association knows are going to live here, have children here, send their kids to the school here, and generally be in this area and not be transient.[L33m] There were some people here that found that I was terrible, they found I was a racist, and they found I was negative, and that I would discriminate against race, color or religion; which I never would, because you set it up so there is no discrimination.[L33n] And I was literally, literally physically booted out of there, I was drummed out physically.[L33o] Ah! And you think to yourself, after you've put so much work in it, that you will make friends; you make enemies.[L33p]

**So the people in this neighborhood are not united?**[L33q]

Not any more, before there wasn't anything that you could pick up the telephone and call anybody whenever something happened, they'll come.[L34a] Oh the school is another thing, you know, we went through a desegregation case in the city of Tucson for Tucson Unified School District and Safford School, which was part of the historic district, cause it was built in 1918.[L34b] It was in the segregation case that went through the federal courts.[L34c] So I had to fight for Safford, so that they wouldn't close it.[L34d] Because we felt when we put Armory Park together that there were places that were really like the hub of our neighborhood, that was Safford School and the library, the Carnegie Library. [L34e] I finally got Safford School, now nobody will ever touch it; but I haven't been successful in the library.[L34f]

**In what sense, do you agree with the Arts Districts plan to make it an Arts Center?**[L35]**

Oh no! That's my worst worry.[L35a] First of all the new library funds were voted down four times.[L35b] Each time kept it behind, which was remanent of urban renewal, history repeating itself, and finally they've got it pass.[L35c] A new library in the downtown of the city of Tucson is the most ridiculous idea; even though they say that every other major city in the whole United States has a main library in the downtown.[L35d] Each one of those cities has regretted that they put the library in the downtown.[L35e] Omaha, Nebraska is one, in fact they even left two libraries, they thought the new main library was going to revitalize the downtown; they had to open the Old Library up again.[L35f] In 1969, I went before the Council with a proposal, I even had dollar figures; because myself and other architect worked very closely.[L35g] And what it would do? What happen if the city of Tucson would built a new library in the corner of 22nd and Columbus?[L35h] There is a branch library there now, this was before they built that branch.[L35i] They had almost eight acres of land that the city owned, already on that corner of 22nd and Columbus; which was on the geographical center of the city of Tucson, accessible from any point along a major thoroughfare, along 22nd.[L35j] And leave this downtown as a historical downtown branch that only had been accessible in the downtown.[L35k]
But actually there is a library in Columbus and 22nd.[L36]

Actually, afterwards they built a small branch and sold the rest of the acreage, they should have never done it.[L36a] They had enough acreage that the city already owned and they had preliminary plans to put a branch library there.[L36b] So I told, don't put a branch library there, and put your repository for your books there -- 'cause that's what they really need, a repository -- and leave this alone.[L36c] Let us get matching grants so that we can bring that building, the Carnegie Library, back to its beautiful begin, architecturally intact, and let us use it as the downtown branch.[L36d] And at that time there was availability of matching grants supporting historic buildings.[L36e]

When was this?[L37]

This was 69-70, the same time we were doing everything, we were kind of doing everything at once; but that didn't work through.[L37a] Since then it has been fight after fight, for that library.[L37b] Now, I met with a girl that is the director of the Arts.[L37c] And I told her that since I had no official capacity, I am just a resident, a long time resident, I said I'm the one that put the building on the National Register.[L37d] I said, but what are you going to do to it?[L37e] It's going to ruin its integrity and it is not right 'cause this is a beautiful building.[L37f] It's been obliterated over the years by lack of knowledge of historic architecture, but that can all be put back, and it can be put back, what means it can be re-stored.[L37g] I had the original set of plans for that library. And it was Andrew P. Carnegie 17th gift, in his whole giving.[L37h] Andrew P. Carnegie was a philanthropist and he gave money to lots of cities all over the United States to start libraries, this was his 17th gift.[L37i] I don't think it should be modelled, it shouldn't be, to me, if we do anything else it will loose its integrity.[L37j] If it looses its integrity, we might not be able to get the building back the way it was.[L37k] It's changed, so, what I've been trying to do is to get a different focus in that building.[L37l] The Arts District is very, very politically ... it's the in thing.[L37m] I do not agree with the Arts District idea, it stinks.[L37n] Those businesses in Congress that they have put, I don't think they are ever ever going to work, 'cause there is no people there.[L37o] The Arts District is a personal problem for me also, because my son Roy, who works in the City Council, is one of its promoters, so whenever we talk about that, it is a fight.[L37p]
I would like you to introduce yourself, where and when you were born; and if you are not a native Tucsonan, when you first came here and what were your first impressions of it?[J1]

Well, I was born in a very tiny town way 'cross Georgia.[J1a] It was such an insignificant place, that my father, who was from Charleston, South Carolina, told me that when people ask me where I was born, to just say I was a little southern girl.[J1b] My sister was born in Savannah, Georgia; but it was all-right for her to say Savannah, because was of course a beautiful big city.[J1c] So coming from Georgia our first trip west, was to Santa Fe in New Mexico.[J1d] My father was a top auditor for a number of railroads.[J1e] He worked at the auditors offices at one time or another, not for one but I guess most every railroad in the United States.[J1f] So wherever they happen to be, he got an assignment to go, there is where we went.[J1g] I spent all of my baby years and my growing up years, on the train.[J1h] We did live in Santa Fe for four years, but that was the longest time we stayed anywhere until that time.[J1i] My father made many trips to other places, but we were nicely settled there.[J1j] So he left us and went off and came back home.[J1k] Then we went from Santa Fe to Prescott, Arizona, and settled there.[J1l] My mother decided that with four girls - one a new baby - it was time we settled somewhere so we could all go to school.[J1m] We had just been in little private schools, wherever we were for six or eight months.[J1n] What I learned up until the time we arrived to Prescott, I really learned from my father.[J1o] When he was home, he was very busy teaching my two older sisters and myself, to read and write.[J1p] So I had a really splendid beginning in that.[J1q] When I got to Prescott in 1907, I entered to second grade, although I had never been to anything but a little kindergarten.[J1r]

What age were you?[J2]

I was nine years old. When we settled in Prescott, my father went off on all these assignments, and came back.[J2a] We stayed there and went to school.[J2b] I didn't see nearly as much of my father as I would love to, but he didn't think that was going to last for ever; so we were just kind of rocking along with that kind of a home system.[J2c] When he was coming home, in Phoenix, he got very sick on the train and they send him to the hospital.[J2d] He had meninogonitis, which was fatal then.[J2e] It was sort of a communicable thing that they didn't know when or where you got it.[J2f] But he did, when I was twelve.[J2g] So my mother was really stranded in Prescott.[J2h] Since people who have travelling jobs of that sort, never own a home; we were just living in a rented house.[J2i] There wasn't any background of money, because my father, instead of working for one railroad was working for many.[J2j] Whatever any little pension he got, wasn't going to be any good to us at all.[J2k] It was very tough sledding.[J2l] We stayed in Prescott because my mother felt that it would not help any of us to try to move somewhere else, because what we needed was an income, and there wasn't to be any.[J2m] My mother really had a tough time bringing us up, but brought up we were![J2n] Then when I was twenty two, I met my husband, who was sent by the Dead Arms Cure to Prescott; where an old army fort had been converted into a tuberculosis hospital for the war gas victims in France.[J2o] He was given six months to live when he came from the war.[J2p] He live to be seventy years old, and I think some of that was because he was sent west.[J2q] He was in the hospital at his home in New Haven, which is a terrible climate for respiratory things, just terrible.[J2r] Further more, the doctors did not know how to treat those gas victims, they didn't know.[J2s] The first thing about it was that they had no idea the gas stayed in the lungs and started eating away and cause tuberculosis.[J2t] Similar to the silicosis miners get.[J2u] You can have diseased lungs for a number of reasons; but the doctors were not aware of the damage the gas did; it was before X-rays.[J2v] So many, many of them died.[J2w] Who would not have died had they understood what it was going to do, they should have been sent home immediately.[J2x] And instead, my husband was in all five battles in War World I, was just back in the battlefield the next day, so no wonder.[J2y] So I met him in Prescott, we fell in love and eventually we were married.[J2z] That was a very good thing for him, to have a little home of his own and something to live for.[J2a] After we've been married a year and a half, he decided that he was well enough to get back to college, he left New York University College to go to war.[J2b] So we came to Tucson, and he got back into the university; that is why we came down here.[J2c] So you asked me what my impression was?[J2d] Well I had hardly been out of Prescott since 1907 and this was 1923.[J2e] Prescott is a beautiful little mountain town.[J2f] It had far many pine trees than it has now, lot of rocks, 3200 feet of snow in the winter, beautiful spring and summer.[J2g] You know.....I thought of Tucson.....we got here the last of August so that he could register on time.[J2h] We had to find a house, a place to live, and I just thought it was the most hideous! Desolate! Horrible place I ever, ever come to!![J2i] I didn't like a thing about it, just absolutely nothing. [J2j] It was just an endurance test for me. I think you do need, generally speaking, to live in Tucson a little while to learn to like it.[J2k] But it is so much a prettier place now, that it was then, it was really quite barren, there were very few trees; people just accepted it, just as desert, I didn't try to do much about it.[J2l]
In what area of Tucson were you living? I
Near the university. We never lived south of Sixth Street, we didn't, just because we never happened to find a house there. But our home was almost on the 1400 block of East Sixth Street, that is the block behind the stadium. The first house we had was in North Tyndall, and you live south of Tyndall.

No I live in North Tyndall, like two blocks north of Broadway. Broadway is the beginning of north.
Oh, all right, we lived...I forgot the number of the house but it was about three blocks north of Park Av. and campus. It was walking distance; and of course everybody walked then, hardly anyone had an automobile. That was in 1923, there were very few automobiles; and Campbell was the last street east.

Did you use to go to downtown?
Of course, but I walked. There was a bus, but you could walk; and from there to town it was a very pleasant walk.

How often did you use to go?
There were no cars, no stop signs and there was nothing to impede your progress. Going to downtown from our house we would go down to back of Mansfield and cut across on, come out at the corner of Congress Street and Fourth Avenue subway. You didn't just walk the way you do in your automobile, you follow a road and then you turn to get where you want to get. It was only about a fifteen minute walk.

Were there any houses?
Oh yes, Campbell was really the end of town, there were a few houses beyond Campbell, but not many. But Campbell was the last north-south street at that time.

Mainly for what did you use to go to downtown?
Well, all the beautiful stores were downtown. There was a perfectly wonderful grocery store downtown, for years and years run by a Greek family, it was at the corner of Broadway and Stone Avenue. They wrecked it just a few years ago, but that poor man had to go out of business when the downtown collapsed, when the shopping malls came in. The great success of the shopping malls was plenty of parking. By that time nearly everybody had an automobile. If you went downtown while you parked on the street you could find a place. If you parked in the shopping parking places like Jacome's and Steinfeld used to had, they would give you a stamp so you didn't have to pay. But otherwise people going downtown did pay, and you never heard such a squawk, was ten cents that put it out of business. That selfish simple thing put out of business Steinfeld's beautiful department store and Jacome's perfectly beautiful store. When the Pioneer Hotel had a fire, it just died, because people said: we don't want to go there anyway because its in downtown, and all because of parking.

Around what year came the shopping malls?
El Con was the first one. There was the most magnificent hotel called the Conquistador Hotel. It was built there at a great, great expense. These developers came in, walked the land and wrecked down that hotel, it just vanished. It had the most beautiful garden, it was a crime! Now they are complaining that they don't have good business because there are too many malls. But the shopping mall certainly changed Tucson. When people did go downtown, you always saw people you knew, who went and it was just a lovely way to say hello, how are you, what's happening to you; your neighborhood and everything. After the malls came in, a lot of that neighborly spirit just vanished.

What streets of downtown you went more often?
Well, my husband's saw office was in the Valley Bank building, which is still there, thanks goodness, at the corner of Stone and Congress. Near his Valley Bank building, next door to it, was a fine electric shop, Woolworths, a real splendid store. Across the street, on the corner was a beautiful drugstore. Anything you wanted was within an area of three or four blocks around there. When we had a car, I use to drive my husband downtown to his work; and often I would stay around for shopping, so I was very familiar with the area. Anyone who came to Tucson, wanting to open a real nice store, would find a location downtown. Everything downtown was very nice.
Did you ever went to the area were La Placita and the Mexican Barrio was?  
That was our Sunday excursion. Everyone in town just loved to go down there. It was very interesting, because the Mexicans, who had lived there for so long, many of them didn't speak a word of English. They all sat out on those little cement stoops in front of the door, which are higher than the sidewalk. All the neighbors would come over, and there would be chairs and everything out there. They sat out there to watch all the passers by. But if they were entertaining friends, their patio in the backyard was the place they were living; and you'd never got to see that, unless you were invited in.

Were you ever invited in?
My husband was. He spoke...learned Spanish at the university. He took it right away because he knew that he would need it. He was a good linguist. He wanted to learn Spanish so he did. When he finished his law course and began to practice law; he had many Mexican clients because he would speak their language. Well, he was a good lawyer. But I mean, that was the main reason they could talk to him and understand what it was all about. I had the feeling and I still do, that anyone's legal affairs are very private matter; and Harry never wanted to have the family incorporated in his business life. So, I never went with him when he went to see people; and he went to see many people. Few of those Mexicans had a car, maybe one person would have a car and they would pool rides to go to work, and that sort of thing. They were a little handicapped about transportation. It was a little chore for one of those early day Mexicans if you'd say come and visit in my office in the Valley Bank building. If it would be sort of a frightening experience for them to get in there, go up in the elevator to see the lawyer. It was sort of a trauma. If he went to their house to see them it was a very flexible thing. So if they asked him he would come to the house, he would always go. If they wanted to come to his office that was fine. Then he had some accident cases. One quite a famous one that he fought for nine years against the Southern Pacific; for a poor Mexican who was hurt in a railroad accident. He won every time, but the railroad kept appealing the case. The last time the judge said to those lawyers don't come back again. In the meanwhile the poor man died; so here was the widow with six children. Harry got a really splendid settlement for her and helped her get her investment in government bonds, setting aside for each child's education, and helped her find a house to buy.

Do you think that if the accident happened to an Anglo worker the company would have appealed so much?
Sure there were many, many, many. So it didn't matter the fact that he was Mexican. No, except that he neither could read or write. He needed someone capable, to protect him. It was because my husband spoke Spanish that that man heard about him and ask him to come to see him. So that was one of his friends he went to see down in the barrio. But he had many friends among the Mexicans.

So you use to go on Sundays?
On Sundays, on West Congress Street, below Stone Avenue, there was a Mexican Movie theater. Maybe you have, it was the one and only.

Was it in Congress?
It was a nice movie, and a lot of the Spanish teachers in the schools took classes down there to see the Mexican movies.

Was this one?
No, that later became a Mexican theater for Spanish speaking pictures. But this other was further down there, it was just as the...ah lot of these malls theaters are you know. They just simply get a very big space and put a stage for the screen; put the chairs, and off they go and call that a theater.

Was it an open air theater?
Oh, no, no. The open air theaters were not in existence then. They came later, they call them drive-in.
Was there any open air theater in la Placita? [J20]

It might have been, but it wasn't for movie pictures. [J20a] One thing is that the light in Tucson would discourage that, because it wouldn't get dark enough to see the screen until nine o'clock at night. [J20b] In Tucson, especially on the summer time, the nicest part of the day is from about five o'clock until about nine or ten o'clock at night, when everyone is tired and wants to go to bed. [J20c] It is only the newcomers who get up late in the morning, ten or eleven o'clock when it's already terribly, terribly hot. [J20d]

Tell me more about these Sunday evenings when you used to go downtown? [J21]

On West Congress Street, down near the theater a lot of very nice Mexican people, had stores and shops. [J21a] The first Jacome store was there; they sold mostly what they call dry goods, materials to make clothing, children shoes and things like that. [J21b] Later they moved on up on Stone Avenue, into their big lovely quarters, but they were down there. [J21c] I remember one of the greatest pleasures were the ice cream parlors, and another little place where in season, you could take your whole family down there and have a slice of watermelon. [J21d] We used to go to the Fox Theater for a show, and then we would always go down on West Congress, and have either some watermelon, or ice cream, or something that the Mexican people had arranged; it was very, very nice. [J21e]

Was this in close shops or open air in the street? [J22]

Ah, closed. There was never room enough to have much sidewalk cafe effect, and flies, you know everything. [J22a] It was more sanitary inside, and so I don't remember much about it being an open air. [J22b] Then, after we got a car, only after we got a car, that we ever go roaming down on Main Street and all through the barrio. [J22c] They had bakeries, wonderful bakeries. [J22d] We got our bread in a Mexican bakery, even until we moved to California in 1945. [J22e] There was a bakery called Zappias. [J22f]

In the barrio? [J23]

Oh yes, it was down near El Charro. [J23a] El Charro of course was a favorite of everybody on town to go to eat. [J23b]

How was El Charro, what type of restaurant, I know it was a Mexican restaurant, but did it had a yard? [J24]

No but the Old Adobe had a yard, where, if the weather was good, you could sit out there and eat; but otherwise you had to eat indoors. [J24a] That is on Broadway, just before, lets see, right around the corner from Stone Avenue. [J24b] On the west side of the street. [J24c] It no longer is a popular place to eat. [J24d] It use to be wonderful there, many shops were down there too. [J24e]

Tell me more about El Charro, did you go often with your family and friends? [J25]

Oh sure, yes. Sure with family and friends, it was a wonderful restaurant, really wonderful, the food was wonderful, pleasant. [J25a] The walls were decorated with Spanish fans, sarapes and things. [J25b] Wasn't as easy to get to Mexico to get to see all that as it is when you have an automobile. [J25c]

Do you remember any other restaurants or shops that were in that square? [J26]

One of the oldest restaurants in Tucson was a Greek restaurant, but it was further down Congress. [J26a]

At that time when you use to go to El Charro, was the building of the church still there? [J27]

No, when I first saw the Saint Augustine Cathedral, it was just a shell. [J27a] It had just disintegrated. [J27b] There was this great big arch which was saved by a man in town who worked for the newspapers. [J27c] They were going to knock it down too. [J27d] He managed to save that and took it out to his house yard for some years, until the historical society had the money to fix up their building and it is there. [J27e] But my first vision of it were just the four walls, even the doors were gone. It was just allowed to disintegrate. [J27f]

The building was tore down in 1936. [J28]

I think it was torn down not so much for the land — I don't remember what was built in its place — but it was that the people objected to a historical old church being used for just a garage and cars and oil all over everything. [J28a] It seemed like desecration. [J28b] Specially the Catholics who remembered it when it was a church they went to. [J28c]

Do you remember if anyone tried to restore it as a church? [J29]

No, it was too far gone; it could have been done. [J29a] But there was a big cathedral downtown, and another beautiful Catholic church down on Sixth Avenue, you know that. [J29b] So it really wasn't
needed quite that badly, and had it been I think they would have restored it. But it probably fell into disuse through lack of patrons.

**So with the church gone, how was the character of this square, how did it look?**

Tacky, and there was so much dust in Tucson in that period. Now we have miles and miles of pavement surrounding the city. This has cut the dust. But I think also the climate has changed, we use to have terrible dust storms all summer long. Around the old cathedral it was not paved. It was crummy, very crummy looking area.

Was it mostly empty of people?

Well, scarce. You know that if you want to have a business to make money, you can't afford to have your business on a place were people are not going to shop. The big shopping area was all paved, nice sidewalks and stone buildings, and everything, within a radius of maybe ten blocks or so all around the center of town. And this was a little off to one side, a little back you didn't see unless you went through it.

So mainly most of the people just pass by the square to go to El Charro restaurant?

Well, you had to go to the restaurant you didn't pass by there, but it was right near. El Charro was well I'm a little bit hazy about that. But anybody else can tell you where it was exactly.

But the entrance was facing the square.

Yes, I think so. Have you ever met those people? Because the same people own El Charro.

Do you remember if there was any big celebration or Festival like the Cinco de Mayo, or this kind of things in downtown?

Oh yes, always. I would say the Mexicans were 90% Catholics. There was always a religious ceremony going up and down the streets. That is the thing that I remember about Santa Fe, New Mexico, young as I was. Nearly seem to be at least once a week, while there was a lovely parade of a saint, the priest, sometimes the bishop. Religious ceremonies and the Cinco de Mayo has always been a big thing in Tucson.

Did you ever go to these celebrations?

We did.

Do you remember something special that happened?

No, for me it was...I loved it all because it was colorful and meaningful. There was always a reason for these things, but I wasn't a Catholic, so I didn't get the full impact of the meaning of all that. The Cinco de Mayo of course while everyone in Tucson knew about the Mexican Revolution.

Apart from the religious parades....

They were small parades, not like they are now, like this great big Rodeo. It always was good, but it has gotten bigger and bigger and more impressive as the years went by. It's a tremendous thing. They had over two hundred thousand people on the street to watch that this year.

When we came to Tucson in 1924 there were thirty thousand people living here, and that included all the Mexicans, who were almost half the population.

Which of these celebrations or festivals you thought was the biggest?

There really were not too many of any sort that I remember much about. I had three children and they were badly spaced. I had a girl in Manfield's Junior High and two others in another school, so I was really busy with my children. There was a lovely trolley that went from the university gate to downtown and you could take it. On Sixth Street there was a bus, so I would take that. I was the kind of a mama who had breakfast before ever daddy went off, and lunch at noon, dinner at night. I went to the grocery store, which was the first Safeway in Tucson, down near the corner of Park Avenue and Sixth Street. I walked down to that market everyday and got everything fresh, if we had a refrigerator, and we didn't have one for quite some time, we had an old icebox. You still wanted everything fresh, so I had to go marketing practically everyday, do all that cooking, no such thing as a dishwasher. I was very, very busy, just with my family. If I wanted to do those things I'd probably could have let some of it go by the board.
So you say you left Tucson in 1945? [J39]
Yes, but we left then for two reasons. [J39a] My husband had accepted a position in Phoenix as the first assistant of the district attorney for the state. [J39b] We intended to move to Phoenix but the war was on. [J39c] We couldn't find a house. [J39d] We had already sold our nice house here. [J39e] After a year and a half he enjoyed the work a great deal, he was quite an authority in municipal law, which was a good place to practice at. [J39f] But the man he was working for, had to run again for reelection. [J39g] He really turned out to be a very unsavory person. [J39h] My husband didn't want to get out and campaign for him, because he didn't want him to be reelected. [J39i] He could run himself as he was the deputy. [J39j] It wouldn't have been nice, people do it now; but he would not have done it because he wouldn't regard it as a moral thing to do. [J39k] So he decided to resign. [J39l] We came back home and then took a little trip to California. [J39m] We hadn't been out of the state for the longest time. [J39n] There he ran into some old law students from University of Arizona who were practicing in California. [J39o] They said: my heavens why do you stay there with all that heat and everything, they're just crying for a lawyer like you here. [J39p] So we decided to move to California. [J39q] I had asthma badly and every time I went to California, the asthma would disappear. [J39r] So I was a little eager to go for that reason and it was a very fine climate, very good for my husband because his lungs were never strong. [J39s]

Did you go to Los Angeles? [J40]
No, we went between Los Angeles and San Diego to a darling little town named Oceanside. [J40a] They really just determined that my husband was going to move there, so we didn't have much of a chance to decide were we would like to be, because they had already decided that we were coming there. [J40b]

So how long did you live there? [J41]
Seventeen years. [J41a] It was very nice. [J41b] My husband just developed law practice within a year, as good as among as the spent thirteen years he developed in Tucson. [J41c] They really needed somebody like him. [J41d] He did a very fine practice, lots of beautiful civic things for the community. [J41e] We had a very nice life there, but after he died it just seemed that the bottom fell out of everything. [J41f] I just came back to Tucson. [J41g]

So after you lost your husband you came back to Tucson? [J42]
I just came back here. [J42a] I had a daughter living here, my first born daughter, Cybil, married to the son of the publisher of the Arizona Daily Star, the Ellencwoods. [J42b] She was living here with her family and wanted me very much to come back here. [J42c] It's sort of a strange thing that happens to you when someone near and dear dies. [J42d] A part of your life is just over, whether you wanted to be or not. [J42e] You have to quickly summon another way of life to make it important to go on living. [J42f] You miss of course the constant being together sharing everything. [J42g] Suddenly here you are all by yourself, what to do? [J42h] So it was very good for me to come back to Tucson, to the state I've been brought up. [J42i] Because Arizona means a great deal to me than California ever would. [J42j] There is something about the state of Arizona that is so substantial. [J42k] There is so much loyalty here in our state, between people; loyal one to the other, loyal to business things, loyal to things that been brought up to feel like something to protect them. [J42l] There in California has been absolutely over run by newcomers. [J42m]

What do you think about urban renewal, and the demolition of the Mexican barrio, south of Congress? [J43]
Oh, that brings bitter memories back, because I had a property there which was going to be my income ... and I just had to give it up to it, and sell it, after a lot of problems... of course they built the Community Center, and the Music Hall, and all that is very nice; but they could have done it anywhere else. [J43a]
ESTELLA JACOME (early 70s) Interviewed on April 3, 1989.

What were your experiences when you first arrived to Tucson?[E1]
Well, let me see, we came to Tucson about sixty years ago.[E1a] We came from South America and lived in California a couple of years before we came here.[E1b] We came because my brother wanted to go to the University here in Tucson; and my mother and father decided that they will come.[E1c] So we came about sixty years ago. I was a little girl and Tucson was a very small town.[E1d] I think, at the time there were about twenty or twenty five thousand inhabitants.[E1e] The town was very small but very compact; everything was downtown, there wasn't anything else.[E1f] And La Placita, that you're speaking of, was... really it wasn't any much to it, there was a small "quiosco" - I don't know the name in English — in the middle, where I understand they use to have music on Sundays; now, when I came they were no longer doing that.[E1g]

What age were you when you came?[E2]
Oh, when I first got here I must have been about eight years old, perhaps.[E2a] All of downtown was Congress Street, a little bit on Stone, very little; nothing really on Sixth...everything was Congress Street.[E2b] We had three theaters, movie houses, when I first got here; and the church of course, the cathedral that is on Stone, which at the time did not look the way it looks now.[E2c] It was a red brick structure, not very attractive; and the inside was painted in very bright colors.[E2d] It was much later, when Bishop Brook came to Tucson, that they changed the inside and the outside.[E2e] He remodeled the outside, so that it looked a little bit on the mission type.[E2f] Since then, it has been remodeled several times, and it has been enlarged a great deal.[E2g] All of the area around La Placita were what they now call the Barrios: Barrio Meyer, Barrio Anita, Barrio Libre.[E2h] My father, who was a doctor use to practice a great deal in those barrios.[E2i] At that time a lot of people in the barrios didn't speak English and there were only two doctors in Tucson who spoke in Spanish, Dr. Gutierrez and my father, Dr. Valles; and they practiced medicine just as family general practitioners.[E2j]

So he had his office in downtown?[E3]
Yes, downtown as well, he had his office in Sixth Avenue.[E3a]

Did you live in that area?[E4]
Yes, we lived in Sixth Avenue, we did live at... do you know where is Saint Peters? Well, no, Saint Peters...well its not a church any more, but it use to be, it was All Saints; we lived across the street from All Saints.[E4a] We lived in various different places; but in the end my father built a home, where off the home was an office, and he practiced in that office.[E4b] So we have seen many, many changes.[E4c] The University, of course, was a very small school at the time and now it has progressed around tremendously.[E4d]

So you did here all your school, your high school?[E5]
Yes, I went to school at St. Joseph's Academy, which was also almost across the street, the building is still there; it later became the Immaculate Heart Academy, you might know it as that.[E5a] That's just off Sixth.[E5b] Later on, they moved out to Villa Carondelet; but when I was at school it was St. Joseph's Academy.[E5c] I went to school partly here and partly in Lima, whenever we went back to South America.[E5d] I went to school there, depending on what time of the year and how long we were going to be there.[E5e] My husband's family pioneered here in Arizona.[E5f] They had a department store on Congress Street, where over it was.[E5g] My husband's father opened a small store when he was a young age man, he called it "La Bonanza".[E5h] Later that became Jacome's Department Store; and they moved further up on Congress.[E5i] Later still, long after he had died, when my husband was in charge; we moved again on the corner of Stone and Pennington.[E5j] They have since torn down the building and that is where they are now building the Public Library.[E5k]

So there is where the department store was? [E6]
Yes it was directly across from the bank building, and from where used to be the hotel, the Pioneer Hotel.[E6a]

When did they raze the department store?[E7]
This department store was closed about nine years ago.[E7a] But up to that time, it was over ninety years old.[E7b] It had been one of the old institutions here; and it was a family owned store.[E7c] My husband was the tenth of thirteen children.[E7d] He was in charge of the store and ran it for many years after his father's death.[E7e] Most of the family were involved in the store in one way or another. This may give you some ideas of what the downtown was like.[E7f]
So nine years ago, it's not so far away. When did all the businesses leave downtown?[E8]
Well, the businesses had started to leave before nine years ago.[E8a] The malls started and that really took all the businesses from downtown.[E8b] They all went to the malls; and the downtown just started to deteriorate.[E8c] Now off course there are no businesses at all.[E8d] All there is in downtown are offices; I guess we were among the last ones to leave.[E8e] The malls all took everything from downtown.[E8f]

What people use to go to Jacome's store when all the businesses left?[E9]
Well, the old customers, who, off course had been with us for many years.[E9a] We did a great deal of business with people from Mexico, people from the South would come and stay at the Pioneer Hotel, and shop downtown.[E9b] But as soon as the malls started opening, all of that went.[E9c] We were essentially a downtown store, so we decided this was the time to close it.[E9d] But all of the downtown has changed tremendously.[E9e]

Up to when did you live in downtown?[E10]
I lived in this house for thirty years (her present residence in El Encanto neighborhood), and before that, I lived in a house on the corner of Campbell and Lee for twenty years.[E10a] So I did not live in downtown after I married.[E10b]

So just before getting married?[E11]
Yes, before that we lived very close to downtown, as most people did.[E11a] You have probably seen the area that they used to call Snob Hollow, that's where all the beautiful homes used to be.[E11b] This area, that we are in here now, was considered way out, on Country Club, Broadway and Fifth.[E11c] This was far, far from downtown.[E11d] Then, over here - where El Con shopping center is - was the hotel El Conquistador from where it gets its name, El Con is just a contraction of El Conquistador.[E11e] That was torn down, oh...I would say twenty or thirty years ago.[E11f] Which I think is a great tragedy because the hotel should have been kept.[E11g] That was very far.[E11h]

So how did you use to experience the downtown before getting married, when you were living there?[E12]
Well, it was very, very pleasant because everybody knew everybody.[E12a] For instance, when you went shopping, you walked down, down Congress Street, and you met people you knew at every block.[E12b] It was sort of a progress that you made of stopping to speak to this one, and to that one, and to the other one.[E12c] Because all the businesses were within two or three blocks; everything was very close by.[E12d] We didn't drive to go shopping, we walked, we would walk four blocks away.[E12e] Almost all the nucleus of town was right in there.[E12f]

So, did you use to go alone or you had to go with your parents?[E13]
Well, you could go alone, it was a very safe ambiance at that time.[E13a] It was all very, very safe, and very pleasant and very friendly.[E13b] I went with my mother a great deal, I was very close to my mother.[E13c] So we went together most of the time.[E13d] But it was perfectly well for a child even to walk down the street, because it was a very friendly atmosphere.[E13e]

So where you were living it considered Armory Park or Barrio Historico?[E14]
Armory Park was very well attended at that time, and across the street from Armory Park, off course, was the block were the Library is, which was also a Park.[E14a] People use to walk and sit around there a great deal, except when it got very hot.[E14b] All of that area was really the heart of downtown.[E14c]

So you really didn't go much to La Placita?[E15]
Well, it was always in walking distance, you see.[E15a] There we had another thing that was very pleasant, when I first came to Tucson, and no longer exists.[E15b] Where they have that restaurant that is called Carlos Murphy, that used to be the Southern Pacific Railroad Station, which was a very beautiful building; and all around it was a beautiful park, where people quite often went.[E15c] It was just beyond La Placita.[E15d] It was lovely, with trees, flower beds, and fountains.[E15e] It was a beautiful park, which the railroad built and kept up.[E15f] That, off course, has just disappeared, but all of that was part of downtown.[E15g]

So actually just in between that station and the Holiday Inn Hotel, there is an empty lot, was it there?[E16]
That's where that would have been.[E16a] Around la Placita there were Mexican restaurants; there was a very good Mexican restaurant, and there were small shops.[E16b] It was a nice area to walk around in, as well.[E16c]
Did you get to see the church, well I mean the building where the first cathedral was, in La Placita?[E17]
Yes, it was still in existence when I came to Tucson, but it was no longer a church.[E17a] I found it very shocking, because they were using it as a garage, at that time.[E17b] It was a garage with a sign on the outside, and they repaired cars inside it, and as young as I was, I thought that was just...I thought that was a very shocking thing.[E17c] I still think so! It was no longer a church.[E17d]

So it couldn't even be recognized as if it was a church?[E18]
Well, the facade was there and I have some pictures of the way the church looked.[E18a] Of course, the facade is now used in front of the Historical Society, as you probably know.[E18b] That was taken down, stone by stone, and numbered by George Chambers.[E18c] He kept all of the stones nicely numbered so that they could be rebuilt again.[E18d] But I understand that the church was a hotel and then a garage and various different things, before they tore it down.[E18e] It is one of the things that I think should have been kept in Tucson as it was, but nobody was very interested at that time.[E18f]

Did you walk around the Barrio and those streets that have disappeared?[E19]
Yes, yes, we all did.[E19a]

What do you remember about that area?[E20]
Well, the area was a very neighborly sort of place, the people were very friendly.[E20a] In the evening they would sit in front of the porches, or out on the streets.[E20b] They would all bring rocking chairs out and sit there and talk to the neighbors.[E20c] The houses were built very much on the same style that they do on Sonora.[E20d] That is, right down on the sidewalk, with the patios and gardens usually inside or in the back.[E20e]

Did you have any friends that lived there?[E21]
Oh, some of my schoolmates lived in that area.[E21a]

So you went inside some of these houses?[E22]
Oh, yes, they were all very pleasant.[E22a]

Do you remember any special festival like Cinco de Mayo or others?[E23]
Oh, yes they had Cinco de Mayo and they certainly had Fiestas Patrias on the 16 of September.[E23a] Here, it was a very well entrenched institution to have Fiestas Patrias.[E23b] They still do it.[E23c] Every year there was a queen.[E23d] It was a thing to have that festival, all families took part of it.[E23e] Up to a certain point El Día de la Raza (Columbus Day) was celebrated, it was mostly celebrated at the University.[E23f]

Where was the Sixteenth of September celebrated?[E24]
Well, there were places where they had halls where they could have these celebrations.[E24a] There was a dance hall that was out of Tucson, where the Tucson House is, across the street from that on Miracle Mile; it was called the Blue Moon, and a lot of the dances were held there.[E24b] Also there was a Casino Ballroom which was way downtown, a lot of dances for the celebration were held there too.[E24c] A lot of it took place in Armory Park.[E24d]

Is that the same Casino Ballroom that is working right now?[E25]
I think it is, but it's been changed so many times and moved a little from here to there.[E25a] But most of the Fiestas Patrias took place in Armory Park.[E25b]

So it was an exterior feast?[E26]
Yes, it was an exterior up to a point, there use to be a shell there, where they could have them outdoors.[E26a]

Was it a temporary shell?[E27]
No, no. Was not temporary, it was a permanent shell, very nice.[E27a]

Do you remember something special that happened to you in this fiestas?[E28]
No, no, nothing.[E28a]

So they were mainly dances were people met?[E29]
Oh, yes, there were lots of dances.[E29a] There was another group called the Alianza Hispanoameric-
cana, which was a fraternal organization; that had insurance as well as part of it. They had a lot of dances and celebrations for all these festivals. So there was really a great deal going on, if you wanted to do all of this. Then off course, there was the Saturday morning musical club at the Temple of Music and Art; that was very very much the thing there. We had artists from all over the world who came, something like the artists series that we have now. They all performed there, and a great number of local things performed there as well. You could hire the hall and put on a play or a performance of some kind. I was in some of them as well; I use to dance and also the nuns always had plays, that sometimes took place there or at the Tucson High School. It had a very good auditorium at that time, one of the biggest in town; I remember seeing Pavlova dance there. Of course, the Temple of Music and Art was very much a part of downtown, because it was really right there. I believe there is talk now, about making it an Art Center again; but it has not been successful, I understand. Its been so much talk about revitalizing all the downtown area. But off course, that building needs a great deal of work to be done to it.

What do you think about this idea of revitalizing downtown?
I think it is a wonderful idea, but I don’t think it is going to happen very soon.

Have you ever been to the opening of the art galleries in Congress Street each first Saturday of the month?
No, I have not attended them. We use to have a mercado downtown, as well, which was very nice and attractive. It was behind our store, on Saturday and Sundays. People use to bring in produce from farms around the town; and also arts and crafts. But that was a fairly recent thing. So it was a lot of fun to go down on a Saturday morning and look all these things. It was on Stone, Pennington and the other street.

Do this mercado happened in the streets?
Yes, right on the street there were two big parking lots there, two empty parking lots. They would just put it right there on the street, with booths and awnings. It was quite festive.

From the squares in downtown, which are the ones you remember from those days?
The only ones I remember are La Placita, Armory Park and the Library Square; they were really the only parks we had, and off course the one that the Southern Pacific had, which was very beautiful at the time. I understand there were some earlier ones, but I was not here then.

What about the Presidio?
Well, the presidio was just where Tucson started actually, and part of the wall is still there.

I think there is a square called El Presidio Park?
It is now, but there really wasn’t very much then.

So what was that?
It was just part of the walled city, Tucson was a walled city, like most were at the time.

How was it when you came?
There wasn’t very much there. We are very good in Tucson about tearing things down, very good! We also had in Tucson what was called the Governor’s Corner, it was where the homes of the Governors used to be, when Tucson was the state capital; and they tore that down as well.

Where was that?
The Governor’s Corner was just off Church and Stone, I think. I have heard of so many of the changes that took place before I came; like the graveyard being across the street where they are building the library now. We had the newspapers building there for a long time.

So it was just where your business store was, across the cemetery. Talking about tearing down things, what you felt when that neighborhood was tore down, to built the Community Center?
Well, I was rather sorry to see it go, but I was very hopeful that that would be more successful than it has been. I don’t think it has been a great success.

What do you think are the disadvantages and the advantages?
Well they don’t seem to be able to keep any businesses going there.
rents are too high or the people just don't want to go there, I don't understand. I thought it would be more successful than it is. Of course we have the Music Hall, and the Little Theater, and that is very nice, but I think, that could have gone anywhere. I don't think it had to go there, that's why I say we are very good in tearing things down.

This happened during the sixties, did you know any people that lived there?

Oh yes! Many people that lived there and had to move. Some of them were very glad to move and most of them were not; but there was a great feeling of being displaced. We were all assured that this was progress and that it was going to be wonderful, but I don't think it has been.

I've been talking with other people and...

No, nobody is happy, but at the time before it happened, seems that those houses were in very bad conditions.

Well, yes, they were all in very bad shape, they were poor barrios. They were barrios where most of the fresh families had moved away from, and a lot of working people had moved in. Money was tight, and lot of the - I would say - middle classes were moving out of them. The condition of some of the houses was very bad. Off course all of that was adobe, which has to be kept up or it crumbles. So with the idea that this was all going to be a great renovation, I think people were very hopeful, but I don't think it has worked out right as they had expected it to. Off course a lot of families were displaced.

Going back to La Placita; the church was torn down in 1936 and the Greyhound building was built around that time, do you think this changed much that area?

Oh yes; the whole area has changed a great deal from the very beginning! Thinking back, I remember that some of the things to celebrate the 16 of September, took place at La Placita; like the crowning of the queen, and all that took place there. Once in a while there would be a dancing in the street type of thing, which was a lot of fun.

So did you go to these fiestas?

Oh yes, off course, we all went to these things, but that has been so long ago. Off course, the "quioskos," the original one is gone, what they have now is a very small gazabo. The "quiosko" was bigger, big enough so there could be a band in it, a small band, but you could have a band in it. The people just danced around it. I went to one or two things there; it used to be very crowded. Do you remember something special that happened to you there?

Not very much.

Did they have mexican music mainly?

Oh yes, because it was pretty much a barrio sort of thing. It would be Mexican music, and a lot of Mexican groups; we used to have a few musical groups at that time. There were not all maria-chis, I think we have more mariachis now than we did then.

So you had also country music? Did many Anglos go to these fiestas?

I would say that some of the city fathers would show up for these things, more than other people. The Major would show up for these things, as well as the local authorities; more than the general public of the Anglos.

So it was mainly Mexican, in Spanish?

Yes, more a barrio type of thing. In the beginning it was in Spanish, but it gradually changed, there was more and more, but it certainly was. I'm sure they told you about the wishing shrine, The Tiradito, that was very much an institution down there. That has been moved, it is not where it originally was. There is a great feeling for the Tiradito; all the people in the barrio use to go and pray and light candles to it. When Barry Goldwaters was running for Congress, my husband and I, took him to the Tiradito so we could light a candle; I have pictures of that. And he won.

Did you go there whenever you wanted something?

Oh, everybody did; yes they all went to the Tiradito, and it use to be nothing you see. It wasn't the way it is now, where they have places for candles. It used to be just a vacant lot with nothing in it, where people went to pray. People use to put tin can around the candles so that they wouldn't blow out. It looked very peculiar with the candles right on the ground.
no monument, there was no shrine at all; it was just the place where this man had been killed, where people went to pray. As I say, the candles would be propped out with little things around them so they wouldn't blow away, because after all, you couldn't have your candles blow out, then you wouldn't get your wish.

When was this moved?

I believe it has been moved a little, three times. They were building all around it, there were not many houses close by. A chinese grocery store was right down the Tiradito; and that's where we went to buy the candles. They did a thriving business selling candles to all the town's people. You would be surprised at how many flickering candles there would be right on the ground in this place. It was very strange!

When did this began?

Oh, I don't know when it began, it was already going when I got to Tucson, and off course I wasn't aware of it because I was just a little girl. But I would hear all this about the Tiradito, you must go there and light him a candle, because if you pray for him he would pray for you. Creo que lo creían un alma en pena y si rezaban para el alma, entonces el alma también rezaba. (I think they believed he was a suffering spirit; and that if they prayed for his soul, he would pray for them.)

Tu comenzaste a ir al Tiradito ya cuando te casaste? (Did YOU BEGIN TO GO TO THE TIRADITO SINCE YOU GOT MARRIED?)

Yo rara vez iba, pero lo que hacíamos es que llevábamos a gente, porque era una curiosidad ir al tiradito (Though I seldom went to the wishing shrine, we used to bring people there since it was a curiosity.)

Cuando fue eso? (When was that?)

Uf! Hace muchos años, por los cuarenta y cinco o cincuenta. (Many, many years ago, between the '45 and the '50.)

De las actividades cerca de Congress... (ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES CLOSE TO CONGRESS...)

Pues habían muchas actividades, aunque yo no tomaba parte en muchas de ellas; pero sí habían muchas actividades en el centro. (Well, there were many activities, despite though I did not participate in all of them; but yes, there were many activities in downtown.)

With the hotel, the church, and the shops, there were many things going on, much activity... it was totally different. (With the hotel, the church, and the shops, there were many things going on, much activity... it was totally different.)

We all use to go there after the movies and had sundaes. That was quite a thing! There were drugstores, all of them had soda fountains in those days. Everybody congregated in the drugstore sooner or later; either to have a soda, a cup of coffee, or pick up the newspaper. It was sort of the social thing, a social hour; was very nice.

Did you ever go to the Charro Restaurant?

Oh, all the time; that was right in La Placita. It was run by Monica Flynn. Everybody knew Monica and everybody went to El Charro. It was one of the best Mexican food in town. I think it still is one of the best; but off course its moved and is run by a relative of hers, I believe it is her niece, Monica died.

What other shops do you remember in La Placita?

I don't remember many shops, there was a drugstore; there was the Charro, which was extremely popular, everybody went to it. The Anglos went to it as much as the Mexicans families, because it was very, very well liked. There was the Greyhound Station. There was Ronquillos Bakery, we all went there to buy pan de huevo (egg bread) which was very good; and French bread, which in reality was Mexican bread. There was a small hotel, it was a little hotel and I don't remember its name right now.

Was there any open air theater in La Placita?

I don't think so, I can't think of an open air theater. It was mainly shops and things that you
would walk to, that you would walk around. One of the old adobe that is still standing in that area is the Adobe Patio, that was close enough to La Placita, so that you walked that area.

So when the automobile came, did El Chato Restaurant and other places were still around?

Oh heavens, yes. Oh, yes. People parked all around. Parking was not so much of a problem, we parked everywhere; and we walked a lot more than we do now, because everything was so accessible, you see.

What do you think about the new La Placita?

Well, La Placita now is just a little nothing, you could put the whole thing in my living room.

Do you ever go to that area?

Well, yes I do go to some of those areas there, to the Museum of Art, to the restaurant in the Old Time Artisans. Everything around there is close enough to La Placita to be considered a neighborhood of it, although it isn't right in La Placita. But you know, there wasn't very much to La Placita when I came and there certainly is nothing to it now. I think it is a great shame that all that area isn't more popular and that we don't have more shops and nice little restaurants.

If before La Placita wasn't a very popular area compared to Armory Park or to the other parks...

Well, I think its only because it was too small.

Why do you think they have tried to maintain a certain memory of it with the gazebo?

I think its just because its the sentimental part, that this was the downtown, that this was where it originated. I think there is more sentiment to it than anything else; but there is very little left to be sentimental about. The whole area should have been maintained, and it wasn't. We also had a very old fashioned hotel in downtown, that was in Pennington and was called the Omdorff. I have some old pictures of it, which you can also find at the Historical Society; in fact they have pictures of whole rooms of the old Omdorff. I always thought it was a great shame it wasn't turn into a museum, they tore it down as well.
ROBERTO SALVATIERRA (age 80) interviewed on April 17, 1989.

I was born in 1909. My father was born in Mexico City and my mother in northern California, Ensenada. My grandfather, from my mother side, was appointed to judge in Nogales. So they moved from California to Nogales and built a home in Tucson. They decided to come here so we were born "Gringos" instead of Mexicans. In those times, Tucson was different than modern times. In those times we would sleep on the yard at night; probably all Tucson did so because people did not have fans for AC, would sleep on the yard, but you can't do that anymore. Also, I remember in those days most of the grocery stores were Chinese, grocery stores in the corners. I believe that things were a lot more strict in those days than they are now. When I was 15, I started to work at night on the papers, I had to take care of the carrier boys. Quit about 7am, go to church and the young kids used to sit in the back in the church. I believe you can not think of Tucson now, you think of Tucson the way it was before, it was much more relaxed. We had the street car, that went by 4th Av. to downtown. Sometimes somebody had a problem in the neighborhood, call the police, and the police came in the street car. Because if you think of the time then, people were not in a hurry the way they are now.

Did you experience La Placita as a focal center of Tucson?

No never, I think La Placita was before my time, it must have been in the late 1800's, I was born in 1909 so...

When you were in your twenties what are the memories you have of the downtown area?

See, I started working for the bank as messenger when I was 17 years old. That time there were only 5 banks on Tucson, they were all locally owned. The bank I worked in those days was owned by three local men, so they had to make the decisions right away, they didn't need to call to Phoenix. It was more friendly atmosphere in those days than it is now. Nowadays I feel like anybody else in Tucson, nobody knows me...its not that I want to be recognized. In those days people were at a slower pace, nobody hurried. In fact in my bank we did not have AC, so we would open the windows. Nowadays people have AC in their cars also.

Did you use to go to your work walking or by car?

When I first started as a messenger I go by bicycle. Later on I got married, I used to have a car and drive back and forth from house to bank. My first car cost me $40. When my wife had the first child, the night before we went to the movies and somebody stole the seats of the car. So next day my wife felt she had to go to the hospital for the baby, she put three cushions on the car.

At what age did you marry?

I married in 1932, I was 23 years old.

Before getting married what was the normal way to meet girls?

Well, in my case I met my wife in a Halloween party. In fact the town was very small then and everybody knew each other. Then in my case, talking about courting, even though I was not making much money, whenever we went to movies, I had to take my sister in law. That went on for years, and in fact we never went alone any place before we got married.

And that was regular on those times?

Of course, and also usually you go court a girl in her house and by 9 o'clock you were left.

In those days was it complicated to meet American girls or Mexican girls, were there difficulties?

Oh yes, in those days any Hispanic would never think about trying to court an Anglo, never! We were not supposed to be in their class. In fact in school you couldn't speak Spanish in the class or in the yard, you speak English. Most of the Spanish lived south of the railroad lines, most of the Anglos lived north side of town. In fact the junior high were I went to, I doubt it, but 25% were Anglos and the rest were all Hispanic. Compared to junior high that was in the north everybody were mostly Anglos. In fact there was even a very prominent lady here in Tucson, who became a school teacher; she lived about one block west of 4th Av., and one block east of 4th was the high school, the junior high. She couldn't go to that junior high school two blocks away, had to go south side because she was Mexican. There was a dividing line. They wouldn't allow her, they wouldn't make any allowances. But you know, if she had been a prominent Anglo, they would...
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have made allowances for her. [R8k]

Her father was just a poor driver truck so...

So even though the majority of the students were Mexican/Hispanic you had to speak English at school?[R8]

Yes, most most elementary, they could have been more flexible. [R8a] In fact talking about languages, I think one of the things you're going to develop from my interview, is the fact that we came home from school, from elementary school, and my father would not let us speak English at home. [R8b] He said: If you don't speak Spanish at home you're gonna forget your language, it's very important for you not to forget Spanish. [R8c]

'Cause I went to the bank, I became part of international banking because I went to Mexico and got all those forms and loans. [R8d] And all the time I've been in charge of international banking during 14 years, because of my language, making deals on Mexico. [R8e]

This hotel also (PLAZA HOTEL), when this hotel first opened, the first manager here belonged to the Rotary Club; he asked me to come here and help him get people from Mexico City. [R8f] He knew I travelled a lot to Mexico, so he asked me to come here to bring people from Mexico. [R8g] So, in the hotel here for 9 years and 2 in the Santa Rita and 5 more; I've been in the hotel business for 16 years and that because of my language. [R8h]

We have a lot of Mexican people, in fact people wonder why the peso has been devalued so severely over the years, and they keep coming. [R8i] Well when I was at the bank, the Mexican peso took 12.5 pesos for one dollar; which meant that Mexican peso was worth 8 cents American money. [R8j]

And gradually has been depreciating more and more; but for years ago the rate was about maybe 5 to 100 for one. [R8k] Mexicans travel a lot; this year in Holy Week, we had the most Mexican in this hotel we ever did in the past. [R8l] They keep coming, why? [R8m] Because of inflation, here they can buy clothing and other articles, first class for less dollars here; and pay for similar items in Mexico, that might be a second grade; pay more dollars over there for second grade class. [R8n] Lots of them come here for medical reasons; people come from Mexico for operations on the University Hospital. [R8o]

They come from Sonora and Sinaloa, but mainly they come for inflation. [R8p]

Talking about Mexican people, in those days when you lived in downtown, was that area mainly populated by Mexicans?[R10]

Yes, yes, from Congress St. south, I would say that the 80% might have been Hispanics and maybe coming to the railroad line, there on the north side 80% were Anglos. [R10a]

Do you remember how was the streetlife, the social interaction of the people in the street or in the plazas, what were the main squares that you remember?[R11]

Well, as far as interaction is concerned, I would say there was interaction businesswise. [R11a] We went to stores which were mainly owned by Anglos, there was interaction there. [R11b] But after the stores, in the social events, the Hispanics were not invited to Anglo social events. [R11c] The Anglos always kept to themselves, they didn't want Mexicans around. [R11d] They made a few exceptions, but as a majority, whenever an Anglo had a social thing, it would be almost entirely Anglos, very few Mexicans were invited. [R11e]

What happened when there was any Mexican event?[R12]

The same thing would happen, we were just by our own, we never considered inviting them. [R12a]

What are the main celebrations or the main events that you remember?[R13]

Independence Day, 6 of September, in Armory Park, then "El Grito a las once de la noche: VIVA MEXICO!" (The scream at eleven: Viva Mejico) That's from Curro Hidalgo, he declared independence in Mexico at 11 o'clock at night. [R13a] Labor Day used to be very well observed, in fact even in baseball in those days they had a team that were all Hispanics, and the Southern Pacific, had their team of Anglos. [R13b]

Did you ever walked around the area that is now occupied by the Tucson Community Center?[R14]

Oh sure, in fact we had a friend of ours, the Jacob's family, they lived on Congress near Main. [R14a] They had an office and the father had a feeding grain shop; in the store the second of them worked. [R14b] In fact, we had a high-school reunion here in April 1, and the two of them came to the reunion. [R14c] That family was mostly girls, so they had parties quite often. [R14d] I went to several parties there. Several people that parents had money, they threw parties. [R14e] But my family didn't have any parties, we didn't have much money for hardly anything. [R14f] They would invite mostly Hispanics, so it was a Hispanic party. [R14g] It was obvious, the mother was Mexican, though perhaps he might have been partly Anglo. [R14h]

My father taught piano and gave recitals, and he was out in downtown in Safford School. [R14i] He had quite a few Anglos in there, that goes to show that not all Hispanics could afford piano lessons, worst buy a piano to study. [R14j] I would say my father had 50% Anglos and 50%
Hispanics, more or less. You could find Anglos that could afford buying a piano.[R14k]

What do you remember about this area that I think was called Barrio Libre?[R15]

Barrio Libre was considered maybe beginning on 17th St. and south. When I was a boy, 22nd St. was about as far the city went.[R15a]

What I like to know is 17th St. north, between Congress and 17th?[R16]

That area I would say maybe 3/4 were Hispanics and 1/4 Anglos.[R16a] In fact later on, there were some Anglos inside there that wanted to be separated from the Mexicans, so they started a new church called All the Saints Church at S. 6th Av., about by 14th St.[R16b] They wanted to have their own, they wanted to have their own Anglo people go to; they wanted to break with Mexicans.[R16c] We were not held in a high regard, culture wise or social wise.[R16d] In fact, in high school I used to be the sports setter of the newspaper that was called the Cactus Chronicle.[R16e] One Sunday I went down to the print shop, we had to turn in a copy, we were two Anglos and I.[R16f] One of the guys started to talk about Mexicans, kind of ridiculing Mexicans, making fun of the Mexicans - I was sitting on my chair. [R16g] I told the advisor: I kind of shocked to hear this boy making all these remarks about Mexicans, I wonder why?[R16h] Did he realize I was Mexican?[R16i] So they held a meeting of the principals and made the boy apologize to me.[R16j] Just that he was immature, so young they don't think, but it bothered me to make those remarks.[R16k]

What you remember of that area, were the Tucson Community Center is now?[R17]

They had El Teatro Carmen, in S. Meyer, were they had a lot of Mexican plays.[R17a] There used to be a very famous saloon on Church and Congress, were the little park is now; used to be a big saloon there called The Cabinet Cafe, just across the big new building, where there is nothing there now.[R17b] Its doors opened either way on Congress or Church.[R17c]

Did you ever go to this bar?[R18]

I didn't go to the bar, because I was too young to the bar. [R18a] It just existed there; I was just a little boy then.[R18b]

Later on, when you were older, did you go to La Placita?[R19]

I never, no, La Placita as far as I'm concerned was non-existing.[R19a] I was just a little boy, everything was held in Armory Park then.[R19b]

So you never went to La Placita?[R20]

Not that I recall.[R20a]

Talking with other people, what they remember is a Mexican restaurant called El Charro, that was just in La Placita.[R21]

Oh yes, yes, it was where the Pancho Villa statue is now, just across the street El Charro Mexican restaurant for many years.[R21a]

Did you ever go there?[R22]

Oh sure, often, very nice restaurant owned by Monica Fernandez.[R22a] One of the best Mexican restaurants in Tucson at that time.[R22b] The nicest one anyway; I recall it as a very nice restaurant.[R22c]

Do you recall any other restaurants near that El Charro?[R23]

I recall it used to be a grocery store that would be right now where La Placita Village is, on the Southwest corner of Church and Broadway would be a Chinese grocery.[R23a] I used to work in S. Meyer; right around the corner from El Charro; it was a clothing store.[R23b] Meyers & Parkins Brothers had a store on Congress St. which is now where the Citibank is now.[R23c] And I used to work in S. Meyer when I was in high school.[R23d] It was owned by Jewish people.[R23e] Two things I remember about that store: number one, Saturday night they use to jokingly say to Meyers who owned the store, who would close the store until they saw the last Papago going home, there was no more business. [R23f] The Papagos walked home from there to San Xavier, whenever they were going.[R23g] They never closed the store until the last Papago went home, it was night and there was no more business.[R23h]

The Papagos used to come everyday to Tucson?[R24]

Oh sure, in fact they use to come... when I was a boy Papago women came to your house to wash the clothes.[R24a] They bring the wood on the yard to a big tina (tub), put the clothes, built a fire, boiling
water to wash the clothes there. [R24b] And they hanged them, had lunch, and after lunch take them off
the line; and they would iron for you, all in one day. [R24c] Those same Papago people were selling
baskets, all kind of Indian baskets they'd bring to Tucson to sell. [R24d] They sell house to house,
knocking the door. [R24e] There was not a place in Tucson were they would congregate to sell, they
came everyday. [R24f]

What other thing do you recall from La Placita, apart from the Chinese shop and the Mexican restaurant,
because I think there was a bakery? [R25]
Yes it was west side of La Placita and also on S. Meyer. [R25a] S. Meyer had quite a few stores in the
eyearly 1920, grocery stores, drugstores, movie stores, piano and music stores, they sold records.
[R25b] Meyer St. was very commercial. [R25c]

What about Convent St.? [R26]
It was mostly dwellings, mostly homes. [R26a]

Do you remember Gay Alley? [R27]
Yes that was south of Broadway, between Jackson and Ochoa, there was an alley there, it thrived for
quite a while. [R27a] I never patronized because I was too young, it was before my time, but it operated
for many years. [R27b]

It stop operating on the 20s, so what happened later? [R28]
The prostitutes they had several houses in Tucson, went to different places, started their own house,
and Gay Alley then became just a sort of a run-down neighborhood area, very cheap rentals there,
where people were living. [R28a]

Did you notice any difference of people between the streets in that area, was there any social
difference? [R29]
Yeah, on the other streets there was a little bit higher social level, I guess they made a little more
money. [R29a] 'Cause in those days there was no such thing as overtime pay. [R29b] I worked in a bank
as a bookkeeper, in those days whenever you posted a check on deposit you posted it twice. [R29c]
First you post your check on the bank permanent record. [R29d] Then the bookkeepers switch around;
one day bookkeeper number one post number three statement. [R29e] The statement we posted was
the one that customers cut off the checks. [R29f] Often time, we go out to dinner for a sandwich, we
worked ten or eleven o'clock at night. [R29g] We didn't have overpay, we were very poorly paid, straight
salary, I was making $150 as a teller in the bank. [R29h] I used to pay $40 for one of the best pair of
shoes in town from Ed & Elmos, now the same pair of shoes cost $160. [R29i]

Until when you lived in downtown? [R30]
We lived there about 1918, during the First World War, my father had decided to go back to Mexico City,
and try to make a living there, where he had some relatives. [R30a] He sold everything even the piano.
We were three boys, we went by train to Mexico City; and in San Antonio there were some boys that had
to be shipped off for the war, they were all crying. [R30b] There were lots of bandits holding up trains;
ahead of the locomotive, were soldiers, and behind there were soldiers, to protect the train, escolta
(escort). [R30c]

How long did you stayed in Mexico? [R31]
We stayed about seven months. [R31a]
He couldn't do anything so he decided to come back to Tucson and started it all over again. [R31b]
We came back. [R31c] My father was a very intelligent man of very high moral. [R31d] In spite of being
poor, he was neatly dressed, neat, very neat. [R31e] His clothes were very nice, his shoes always
polished. [R31f]

When you came back did you live in the same area? [R32]
I was about nine years old on that time., we went to Mexico City on 1918. [R32a] We came back and
first we started living with my grandparents for a while. [R32b] Then we rented a place on S.4th Av., be-
tween 16th and 17th St. [R32c] For many years, in fact, I went to Saford School; from there I went to
Tucson High School, from that building on S.4th Av. [R32d] We were renting, we never bought a house,
we always rented. [R32e] In fact, the streetcar used to go by 4th Av.; Congress used to go down south
to 17th, east of 17th St. about four or five blocks to 4th, then go north towards Congress, to go down
Congress St. to Stone Av., go north of Stone. [R32f] Just beyond the 6th Av. subway would be an inter-
change; the streetcar going north had to stop there, so did the streetcar coming back from University,
going south, one go south and the other north.[R32g] We used to go up to the University of Arizona to the U of A Museum, near Park Av. Five cents to go up, five cents coming down, in the 1920s also.[R32h]

Until when did you live in 4th Av. and 17th?[R33]
Oh, I would say about 1921 or 1925, then we moved to 6th St. and 3rd Av., on the north side of town, beyond 4th Av. subway north, right across where Roskrudge high school is now.[R33a] In those days the high school occupied the south side of Roskrudge Junior High now, and the back of the building would be occupied by junior high students.[R33b]

So when you moved north of town did you still go downtown to work?[R34]
Oh, sure, took a car; I bought a $40 car, but it ran all right, no?[R34a]

On weekends, what was the main distraction in those days for you?[R35]
I used to go dancing at night.[R35a]
In fact, when I was working at night on the newspaper use to go to a dance hall on Oracle Rd. and Drachman, on Wetmore Swimming Pool, up where near the Tucson Mall is now; was a dance hall also. [R35b] So, I was going with a girl, double date with the brother; his sister and I would date.[R35c] We go dancing up to midnight, then since she was with her brother, nothing about to worry about her.[R35d] So they dropped me off to the south were I was working, I go to work at midnight till seven.[R35e] And then my mother use to get mad at me; you're not getting enough sleep.[R35f] And I didn't care because I was young, who cares about sleeping, sleeping wasn't very important for me.[R35g] I use to make $50 a month working till night, when I became a teller I got $150 a month.[R35h]

So mainly the activities were going out of town?[R36]
Well Sabino Canyon, University.[R36a]

What were the activities in the downtown, apart from business?[R37]
Downtown stores would be on Congress between say 6th Av. down to Church or maybe down to Meyer, were open until 9 o'clock on Saturday.[R37a] So that was the occasion for the mothers dress up their kids, you know, socialize.[R37b] So you know, they scrub you down, took your bath, get all dress up and go down meet my mother's friends, my father's.[R37c] We socialize there; it wasn't much shopping, but mostly socializing.[R37d] Everybody went to socialize in Congress Saturday night with the kids; everybody walked there, nobody took the car to downtown, everybody lived nearby.[R37e]

So the main center was Congress?[R38]
Oh yes, Congress and Stone was the middle of the town.[R38a]

Do you remember when the Greyhound Depot Station was built on Church Av., did that affect a big change on that area?[R39]
I don't think so, because the church building which later was a sort of a hotel, when they tore down the building then they built the Greyhound Depot there, near where Pancho Villa is now.[R39a]

Did you get to see the church when it was a garage?[R40]
Oh yes, yes, pretty old building, looked old and so decayed and abandoned; not a very nice building then.[R40a]

Do you know if there were people that tried to maintain or rehabilitate it?[R41]
Possibly the people that run it as a hotel, used to take care of it.[R41a] But I don't remember there was to much about it at all, I remember seeing a hotel, than a garage; see, most of its activity must have been in the late 1800s.[R41b] When I went to high school the population of Tucson must have been of 25000 people, when I went to junior high must have been 1500 or 18000.[R41c]

Do you remember any celebration done in La Placita?[R42]
As far as I remember everything was celebrated in Armory Park.[R42a] Did any people you interviewed remembered about any activities at La Placita?[R42b]

Yeah, people remember the election of the queen at La Placita for Spring, and dances around the kiosk.[R43]
There was a kiosk there; I would think as far as celebrations concerned the number of years, or perhaps La Placita was very small compared to the number of years celebrated in Armory Park.[R43a] Even
when I was going to junior high in the 1920s we had a spring queen; the Anglos in Roskrudge Junior High elected the queen and we had the spring party and whatever it was celebration in Armory Park that was just a block away from Safford. La Placita was just an old building just sitting there.

But what about the open space, the kiosk?
I remember very little about that, no. See I used to sell papers just two blocks of La Placita when I was 9 years down. La Placita itself was very vague to me, very vague.

On the 60s with urban renewal when they tore down all the area between Meyer and Convent?
I was involved in urban renewal when they built those buildings, La Reforma; I was the interpreter for the U.S.A. man who went around bought all those properties. I'll tell you a story about that, we went to see a lady about buying her house, we offered a certain amount of money, but she wanted a lot more, see. U.S.A. man say: Hey lady how can you say that this house is worth that much money? She would reply: I plan to build a porch and I was gonna to add something in the back of the building. What you want to do? You want to charge us more for the things you thought you might have added later? We're just buying the house, not for your dreams you know. She wants to be paid for something that she might build sometime. She was just trying to make a foolish remark. We bought a lot of houses, lots of them you know; well the government bought them.

Was it very difficult to buy the houses?
No, the few that perhaps rebelled; they didn't want to accept the appraisal price. Took them to court and reach some agreement in court. I would say, I doubt that no more than maybe 5% went to court, to argue about the price.

How was the situation in this area, were the houses in bad condition?
No, I would say those houses would have lasted for many years after we bought them, I'm sure. They were not run-down, people lived in them, people lived in the houses they owned and they maintained them the best they could. They were never run-down or abandon properties, they were used as residences, as homes of people.

What was the basic idea to tore down this houses?
They thought that those houses, well I guess, in other part of town the houses will cost more. Didn't cost to much to buy them up. The whole concept was to buy the houses, tear them down and build new homes for La Reforma, brand new homes, government rented houses, cheap rented, houses for low income people.

Where is La Reforma?
La Reforma is about... Oh 20th St. and Harbourne, which is about 6 or 7 blocks west of 6th Av.; you know, where the church of 22nd St. is on the corner, its 2 blocks west, then north, that it would be.

But what about the houses that were where the actual Tucson Community Center is?
They were all homes, low income houses. Part of that property were sort of a Chinese settlement, where people said the Chinese go there to smoke opium. They had their Chinese church there and on the east side of Main about 2 blocks south of Congress was the Chinese meeting place.

What was the condition of those houses that were between Cushing, Congress, Main, and Church?
Those houses... I would say right now would be about 100 years old. The houses were OK, people lived in them, they were not abandoned. They had to move to some place else.

Do you agree with the fact that they tore down all that neighborhood and built the TCC, the Tucson Community Center?
Yes, Tucson had to have a community center, they had to have one, sure. Where else were they going to put it? You can even have a circus inside there now. Yes, I agree that it had to be done, you've got a cultural center, you've got the music hall now, it's a cultural center, yes.
Do you think it had to be built there, couldn’t it have been built somewhere else?[R53]
Oh yes, it could have been built any place.[R53a] Perhaps they built it there also for the same idea, that area perhaps could be bought cheaper, the homes could be bought cheaper than maybe some other areas in town.[R53b] Also at that time Congress was very important part of town, they wanted it close to Congress, that was downtown at that time.[R53c]

But I think that in the 60s when they tore down those houses Congress was not any more the commercial center?[R54]
No it wasn’t, as a matter of fact, most of the important businesses have moved out.[R54a] Jacome’s didn’t want to move, they didn’t want to move, well, Jacome’s could have moved to El Con, didn’t want to do it, well.[R54b] So lot of downtown was no longer downtown, wasn’t patronized so much as it was before.[R54c] Jacome’s would have still existed if they moved to El Con.[R54d]

So you agree with the building of the Tucson Community Center?[R55]
Oh sure, was the best, right thing to do, right thing to do, I’m sure, absolutely.[R55a] People were paid a fair value for their houses.[R55b] In fact, my former wife’s parents had property down there, they say so; they got an appraised value, they were not getting so good rents, so it was a house with no cost, but in the other hand, you know what they would return on what the living house didn’t cost might have been the value of my in-laws to hold it.[R55c] In the other hand the actual repairs, the actual sales value, they got the proper amount on their appraisal.[R55d]

Why do you think they kept the kiosk in La Placita?[R56]
Sentimental reasons, I guess; though no real activity goes on down at La Placita, just sentimental.[R56a]

Do you go to downtown now?[R57]
Very seldom.[R57a] Once a month I go.[R57b] I’ve got an open heart surgery so we walk, my wife and me go to El Con Mall, Park Mall, Foothills Mall for lunch and walk there.[R57c]

Do you go to the theater or opera?[R58]
No, most of my activities culturewise are the ones at the University of Arizona.[R58a]
ADELA BRADY (age 92) Interviewed on April 20, 1989.

Did you ever lived closer to downtown?[A1]
   I lived on Main Street long time ago and then I came to Third Avenue.[A1a]

What do you remember about downtown Tucson?[A2]
   Downtown Tucson was better in every way than now, better! Every way.[A2a]

In what sense?[A3]
   In every way, everybody tried to help each other, now they don't, times are changed.[A3a]

Do you remember about Congress Street?[A4]
   Congress, just came as far as Stone.[A4a] Congress Street was very good, we went to the show.[A4b] Was Wheeler and Perry there.[A4c]

Do you remember La Placita?[A5]
   La Placita, that was on Church Street and Meyer; we used to have music there every Saturday, every Sunday, everybody use to go around.[A5a] In the 16th of September, Lolita Montijo used to sing and she had girls that sang.[A5b] She used to be the leader in singing, she was very good.[A5c] She had girls that sang: Alicia Laes, Hortencia Tole.[A5d]

In La Placita, on the 16th of September, did you use to dance there, bailar?[A6]
   Ah! Bailar, no, no bailaban. si no habfa sitio donde tocaban, cantaban y se paseaban (Oh! Dancing? No, there was no place for dancing where they sang and played, and strolled around).[A6a] The music ...orchestra.[A6b] It was prettier than now. Era más bonito (it was nicer).[A6c]

Do you remember any special building in La Placita?[A7]
   In La Placita, right in the corner, was a place where you could ah ...Lemas had a house and they gave room and board.[A7a] Lemas, right in the corner of La Placita.[A7a]

Do you remember the old cathedral?[A8]
   Yeah ...around the corner ...la Doctrina en la catedral (the doctrine at the cathedral).[A8a]

The cathedral building was after a hotel?[A9]
   What?[A9a]

El edificio que era la catedral después fue un hotel?[A9]
   Cambio manos dos o tres veces, donde era la catedral (the cathedral changed hands two or three times) [A9b].

¿Qué piensa usted de estos cambios? (What do you think of these changes?)[A10]
   Que estaba mejor antes que ahora (it was better before than now).[A10a]

Porqué?(why?)?[A11]
   Todos iban a misa antes de que se haga la catedral, the cathedral ...muy bien ahora nada, puro, (everybody went to church before the new cathedral was done, the cathedral...very good, now nothing only) its different now, times have changed.[A11a]

Did you ever go to the Mexican restaurant El Charro?[A12]
   El Charro, de la (from) Mónica?[A12a] Everybody went there, that was the only one mexican res ...The Monica had the Charro, and she had Mexican food and American food.[A12b] She had la Aurelia Salazar Montijo, she married a Montijo and ...she did the... [A12c]

Do you remember the bakery, Ronquillo's Bakery?[A13]
   Los Ronquillo use to have a bakery shop. I think across from Congress, some place around there.[A13a] They made bread.[A13b] En la calle (on) Stone Avenue too.[A13c]

Me puede contar las cosas que pasaban en esos tiempos en el downtown, que es lo que hacía la gente, las costumbres de la gente en las calles, como se conocía la gente? (Can you tell me about downtown in those old times, what people did on the street, how people met, their customs?) [A14]
La gente era muy honesta, (people was very honest) they told you the truth, they went to church, they paid whatever it was that they had to pay. [A14a] Ahora no. ¡Qué tal raza! (Now, not! What a shame!)

A14b] Everything has changed to the worse.[A14c] Vino un hombre pa' acá, un americano (An american came) Has everything changed Ms. Brady? Yes.[A14d] To the best or to the worse?

W O R S E!! (she spelled it then).[A14e] No, eran muy buena gente antes.(people were very nice before).[A14f]

Until what age did you live in Main? Cuantos anos tenia cuando estaba viviendo en Main?[A15]

Cuando venia por ahi, como doce anos (I was around twelve when I went there).[A15a] La Angelita, las Sotos, use to go there too.[A15b] She didn't want to change her name, Angelita Flores, and she went to Phoenix.[A15c] The other sisters stayed in Tucson, la María Soto.[A15d]

Did you use to go often to la Placita?[A16]

La Placita, con muchachas, muchas, allí habían muchos, muchos muchachos conocidos, los Sotos, tres.... (La Placita, with lots of girls, many; and many boys there also, known boys as the Sotos...)

[A16a]

So you use to meat there?[A17]

There, the meeting place.[A17a]

Everyday? Weekends?[A18]

Sunday, ay los Domingos ...Sundays we use to get together and go around la plaza (THE SQUARE).[A18a]

Did you go with your parents?[A19]

With the girls, six, seven girls we went together, muchas muchachas and (LOTS OF GIRLS), lots of boys there too.[A19a] They came from the South.[A19b] More girls from this side and more boys from the east side and the south.[A19c]

Were the boys and girls mainly Mexican or also Anglo people came?[A20]

Unos eran Mexicanos y otros eran meztilos (some were Mexican and others were half breed), half and half.[A21]

Did you mostly spoke English there?[A22]

It was very nice, very nice, and then de la Calle Cushing estaba la Lolita (Lolita was on Cushing St.), she used to sing.[A22a]

Where did she sing?[A23]

The Cathedral, she was a solist, muy buena pa' cantar. JIA! JIA! (a good singer) [A23a]

During mass?[A24]

Natural. La Lolita Montijo.[A24a] She got married with a ...twice, Charlie Ojeda and then Aros.[A24b]

Do you remember the Streets of Meyer and Convent?[A25]

Convent Street, allí la calle Convento?[A25a] Seguro, allí estaban todos los conocidos en la calle Convento (sure all the known people were there in Convent St.) ... los Rodriguez, two stories house, los Sanchez.[A25b]

And Meyer Street?[A26]

Meyer Street, en la Calle Meyer habia la Mary Joe, Kengla... (on Meyer St. was Mary Joe)[A26a]

Are those shops?[A27]

Muchos Chinos , Chinese, de Méjico los echaron y vinieron y pusieron aquí tiendas (many Chinese that were thrown out from Mexico, came here and opened stores).[A27a]

Did you ever worked?[A28]

No.[A28a]

At what age you got married?[A29]

Twenty six.[A29a]
Antes de casarse en donde vivía? Where did you live before getting married?[A30]
En Main, in front of...los Tecolotes, four hundred block.[A30a]

So did you know Roy Drachman?[A31]
Roy, UH Like my hand.[A31a] El Roy...muy inteligente Roy, he had a show, on Congress, east Congress, el Roy Drachman.[A31b] El Roy tenía sus hermanos.[A31c] El Roy tenía sus hermanos. (Roy was very intelligent, he had his brothers).[A31d]

Do you remember when they tore down, Ud. se acuerda cuando echaron abajo el edificio de la Old Cathedral?[A32]
Well, oh, sure, here the...in front was the theater, some were offices en frente.[A32a] The Depot tenía dos calles, el Depot pa' alla y luego pa' acá la Calle Congreso y la calle que es del Depot, (the depot had two streets, one over there and then over here Congress St. and the depot street).[A32b]

¿Qué diferencia había cuando estaba el depot antes o cuando estaba la vieja catedral? (What was different when the depot was there when the old cathedral was there)?[A33]
Pues no había envidia, todos se ayudaban (there was no envy, everybody helped each other).[A33a]
Everything was very smooth. Now is nothing but I'm taking your head if I have to.[A33b] Muy malos (very mean).[A33c]
You have to watch your step now, watch what you say too.[A33d] Entonces eran muy buenos todos, todos se ayudaban (then everyone was good and helped each other).[A33e]

Do you remember urban renewal, when they did the Tucson Community Center?[A34]
Donde fué?[A34a] No había high school, luego hicieron la... (where was it, there was no high school, then they did the...).[A34b]

Did you ever go to the old cathedral?[A35]
I only went one or twice to the old cathedral, I went to the new one. (looking at a photograph of la Placita).[A35a]
¿Qué es eso? (What is this?)[A35b] Ah, la Placita que daba a cuatro calles (Ah! The Placita facing four streets!) [A35c]
En la plaza allí venían todos, en la plaza tocaba la orquesta (the orchestra played in the square, everybody came there), and the boys use to come from the south and the girls from the..el norte aquí (the north here) los Parkers.[A35d] Better days then, good days, muy buenos dias.[A35e]

Do you remember something special that happened to you in that square?[A36]
Nothing, nothing.[A36a]
Todos muy buenos, los Mansos venían de allá (everyone was good, the Mansos came from there), la Clarita Manso and her brother; they lived in Cushing Street.[A36b]
El Herreras told me that he knew everything, he wrote down.[A36c] Curioso (curious), very smart boy. Es muy vivo, muy inteligente, todo sabe (he is very smart, very intelligent; knows everything).[A36d]

¿Qué hacía cuando iba a Congress? (What you used to do whenever you went to Congress?)[A37]
Nada, nos paseábamos con los muchachos alrededor (nothing, all the young people we used to walk around).[A37a] Vendían nieve, estaban vendiendo nieve (they used to sell ice cream).[A37b] Iba el Ben Parker, Nito Strohn, nosotros, todos de la Main; la Helen Hughes (all the kids of Main St., we use to go there), we use to have very good time.[A37c]

¿Helen Hughes era la hija de Atanasia Santa Cruz? (Was Helen Hughes, Atanasia Santa Cruz' daughter?)
La Helen Hughes y el hermano (Helen Hughes and her brother), in that street going to the hospital, third street I think.[A38a]

¿Se acuerdo cuando tiraron abajo las casas que habían entre Main, Stone, Congress y Cushing? (Do you remember when they torn down the area between Main, Stone, Congress and Cushing?)[A39]
Yo no vi, el muchacho vino y dijo.[A39a] Ohi dijo, están tumbando las casas (I did not see it, the boy came and said that they were tearing down the houses).[A39b] La casa de Manso, Genaro Manso, he lived across the street from the Montijos on Cushing.[A39c]

Did they tore down the houses of many of your friends?[A40]
Ajá, lots of friends.[A40a] Y allí creo que mataron a Esteban, Esteban Ochoa.[A40b] El tenía negocio en la esquina de la Meyer Street (I think Esteban Ochoa was killed there, he had a business on the corner of Meyer St.).[A40c]
What happened? [A41]

He was selling and a man came and bought liquor. [A41a] He sold him; but then he came ...cayándose y no quiso (falling down and did not want). [A41b] Duerma y no dormió (sleep and he did not). [A41c] ¡Pues ahora quiero! (I want right now) [A41d] ¡Pues no! (Sure not!) [A41e] ¡Pues voy a matar! (I'm going home to bring something to kill you) [A41f] Fué pa' su casa, lo mató (He went home and killed him) [A41g] Y lo iban a matar a él, pero Doña Atanasia y Doña Petrita Stevens (They were going to kill him but Mrs. Atanasia and Mrs. Petra). [A41h] Doña Atanasia y Doña Petra eran hermanas, las Santa Cruz; y ellas lo defendieron mucho...lo querían ahorrar (The people wanted to kill him, but Mrs. Atanasia and Mis Petra, the Santa Cruz sisters, strongly defended him). [A41i]

¿No lo mataron? (WASN'T HE KILLED?) [A42]

No, no lo mataron por ellas (No, he lived thanks to them). [A42a]

Were you very young? [A43]

Very young, but I was in everything, muy intrusa, todo, viendo todo (I had a strong curiosity) [A43a] Y luego les decía a mis hermanas y a los demás: voy a escribir, se va a olvidar (Then I used to say to my sisters and to everyone that I would write everything so I would not forget). [A43b]

Did you write a lot of things? ¿Tiene muchas cosas escritas? [A44]

Tengo yo mucho, yeah, I wrote a lot of things and somebody asked for the papers y no me los trajeron, so I wouldn't forget. [A44a] Do you write for the papers? [A44b]

No, no; for the University. [A45]

Oh, for the University, I went to the University y luego me casé (Then I got married) [A45a] No quise perder a Charlie (I did not want to lose Charlie), a good man with money; y lo querían en mi casa mucho a Charlie (At home he was very much liked). [A45b] Mi hermana Montijo, hermana de la Lolita (Lolita's brother) she use to sing in the cathedral. [A45c] La Fina was my sister and she married Lolita Montijo's brother, Manuel Montijo. [A45d] Nunca se andaban peleando, ni nada, se ayudaban (they never argued, they helped each other). [A45e]

Tell me more things about La Placita? [A46]

De este lado habían muchos muchachos, del north side (There were a lot of guys from the north side) [A46a] El Ben Parker, la Annie Parker, la Sophie Lopez, la Chu Lopez, Uhu un montonazo! (Lots of kids.) [A46b] Del otro lado, del south side estaba la Lolita Montijo. (Lolita Montijo came from the south side) [A46c] They use to come and en la Placita nos estabamos (spend the time in La Placita) [A46d] We had good time. [A46e]

Did some of your friends of La Placita got married after? [A47]

Mmm...yo me casé con el Charlie Brady...hacen cien años (I married Charlie Brady ages ago). [A47a]

¿Cuántos hijos tuvó? (HOW MANY KIDS YOU HAD?) [A48]

El Charlie Brady no estaba aquí primero, luego vino a vivir con su hermano. (First Charlie Brady was not here he came to live with his brother). [A48a]

¿Cómo conoció a Charlie Brady? Where did you meet him? [A49]

Here, in downtown. Ahí vivía (Here in town where he lived): [A49a] El Ben Parker, la Annie Parker, la Sophie Lopez, la Chu Lopez, Uhu un montonazo! (Lots of kids.) [A49b] Las casas de la Maggie Brady, ahí lo conocí (I met him at Maggie Brady's houses). [A49c] Luego se murió la Maggie, y se las dejó a su hermano y al Charlie, a mi esposo (Then Maggie died and left her houses to her brother and Charlie). [A49d] Mi esposo se murió y me las dejó a mí (My husband died and left them to me). [A49e] Allí vivían las Pesqueiras, las Jácomes, las Elises (The Pesqueiras, the Jacomes, the Elises, used to live there) [A49f]. La Panchita era Mejicana y el era Americano, y tuvieron a las muchachas, a la Debby, la Hilda, la Julia, la Amelia; ella era la Mejicana, Doña Panchita (Panchita was Mexican and was married to an American, they had the girls, ... Doña Panchita, she was Mexican). [A49g]

¿Creo que Bob Salvatierra vivía allí? (I THINK BOB SALVATIERRA LIVED THERE?) [A50]

He lived in the corner there. [A50a] ¡El Bob! Eran puros hombres (bob! they were only boys) [A50b] El tocaba el piano (he played the piano) [A50c] Es muy bueno, he is a good boy (he is very good) [A50d]. ¿Se casó? ¿Con quién se casó él? (did he marry, with whom?) [A50e] Vivían en la cuarta y la sexta, en una esquina, vivía en la Diecisiete, allí vivía mucha gente conocida. (They lived on 4th and
6th, on the comer; many known people lived on 17th). [A50]

¿Se acuerda cuando tiraron el Barrio...[A51]  
¿El qué? ¿El qué? (What?) [A51a]

El Barrio donde vivían los Montijos. [A52]  
Sí, si me acuerdo mucho...el guero Manuel (Yes, I remember very well, Manuel the blond); Manuel married my sister, es mi cuñado (He is my brother in law); la Lolita, la catedral, cathedral, se murió cantando (Lolita, the cathedral, she died singing). [A52a]  
El Guero Manuel, la Lolita, el Mike, se casó con la Aurelia Sema; conocí a toda esa bola (Manuel the blonde, Lolita, Mike, the one that married Aurelia Sema, I knew all that gang). [A52b]  
La Maggie Treat vivía en la esquina de la Stone (Maggie Treat lived on the corner of Stone) [A52c]. Y luego aquélla ¿Cómo se llama? Antes de la Church; ahí vivía, dabas vuelta a la esquina, i can show you (And then that one, how is it called, before Church, she lived there around the corner). [A52d]

¿Habían muchos bailes en ésa época? [A53]  
¿Qué? ¿Habían muchos qué? (What? There were many what?) [A53a]

Bailes, dances? [A53]  
Ohh! Qué barbaro! todos querían bailar con el Ben Parker, porque era un guero pa’ bailar (Oh! My goodness! Everyone wanted to dance with Ben Parker, he was very good at it). [A53b]. ¡El Ben! El Ben y la Annie, la Sophie, la Chu, la Aurelia en la Calle Main, y la Carolina Suelas andaba con el Pete Wheel. (Ben...hang around with Pete Wheel). [A53c]

¿Los bailes eran en las casas? (Were the dances at homes?) [A54]  
En las casas; Doña Annie Hughes tenía casas en la Calle Cinco, al frente, la Main y la Cinco, al frente (In the houses, Mrs. Annie Hughes had houses on 5th St across on Main and 5th). [A54a]

¿Se acuerda de alguna celebración en Armory Park? (Do you remember any event in Armory Park?) [A55]  
Armory Park estaba para el (was to the) South. [A55a]

Did you go often to Armory Park? [A56]  
Yo iba para allí, todos los muchachos allí se juntaban, la Lolita cantaba (I use to go there, all the kids did, Lolita sang) and she and the Hortencia Toli, Conchita la Lama...very good times, there were very good times then. [A56a]  
Qué buen tiempo pasábamos (we spent good times). [A56b]

¿Qué tipo de música tocaban en la Placita? (What kind of music was played in La Placita?) [A57]  

¿Música Mejicana? (Mexican music?) [A58]  
Y buena, buena (and good one). [A58a]

¿Los Mariachis? [A59]  
No habían Mariachis (there were no Mariachis). [A59a]

¿También iban a la Placita por la noche? (Did you go to La Placita at night time?) [A60]  
La placita, no había mucho por la noche Placita, era en la tarde y agarraba parte de la noche (There was not much La Placita during the night, it was on the afternoon and then a bit through the evening). [A60a]. Ahi estaban los Elks, ahí eran meseros los Elks... (The Elks were waiters there). [A60b]

What is the Elks? [A61]  
Ahi en frente de la Placita vivían las Lemas (the Lemas lived in front of La Placita), on Church, Stone [A61a]. Viendo conozco todo (if I see it, I know). [A61b]

¿En la misma Placita habían sólo tiendas, restaurantes? (Where there only shops and restaurants in La Placita?) [A62]  
Habían tiendas pocas, pero no muchas, restaurantes sí, tiendas de los chinos (there were some shops but not much, many restaurants and chinese stores). [A62a]

¿Y casas? (And houses?) [A63]  
Muy pocas casas, la casa de las Lemas (very few houses, the Lemas’ House). [A63a].
¿Había algún cine o teatro, movie? (Was there any movie, theatre?) [A64]

En la Placita, no (not in La Placita) [A64a]. Si no necesitábamos movie, teniendo compañero para que quieres eso (we did not need movies, having a partner why you want movies?) [A64b]. Ya teniendo (having a) full friend, what the heck? [A64c]. Mi hermana se casó con el (my sister married) Manuel Montijo [A64d]. La Hazel y la Winnie, las conoce? (Do you know Hazel and Winnie?) [A64e]. Muy buena la Hazel pa’ leer, ¡Oh! Qué bárbara (Hazel was a good reader, yes she was!) [A65f]. Viven ahora en Phoenix (now they live in Phoenix). [A65g]. En Church había mucha gente conocida, los Valenzuelas allí vivían, se fueron para California (Many well known people lived on Church; the Valenzuelas lived there, they went to California). [A65h]. Los Oldtimers! La Maggie Hughes se casó con el Frank Treat y tenían la Mabel Treat (The oldtimers! Maggie Hughes married Frank Treat; they had Mabel Treat), went to San Francisco. [A65i]. La Maggie muy buena hija de Doña Atanasia Hughes, Doña Atanasia y Doña Petra eran hermanas (Maggie was a very good daughter of Mrs. Atanasia Hughes, Mrs. Atanasia and Mrs. Petra were sisters). [A65j].
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