

and even the manner in which building materials were gathered and assembled at the construction site. Many of these pages are intended primarily for architectural historians and readers of this journal may wish only to skim the sections devoted, for example, to fenestration or to the building's "basements and cisterns." On the other hand, they should not overlook the epilog, a brilliant reconstruction of the Escorial's supposedly hidden meaning. Rejecting the hypothesis that the building was little more than the incarnation of the Hermetism to which the king and his principal architect, Juan de Herrera, have been said to subscribe, Kubler believes that the Escorial had more to do with a resurrection of classical Augustinian ideas on architecture than with Renaissance ideas on magic and the occult. Equally valuable are the appendixes, one of which estimates that the Escorial cost Philip a total of more than 1.2 million ducats. This represents a lot of money, but one should remember that in the 1570s and 1580s, the decades in which more than two-thirds of the Escorial was constructed, royal receipts from the Indies averaged well over 10 million ducats a year.

Building the Escorial, in short, is a superb example of classical architectural history written at its best, and for this reason alone it deserves a wide audience. Yet it is also true that this particular approach to a building's history has its limitations. While it provides a wealth of details about a building's style, stages of construction, and so forth, it offers relatively little about its interior decoration, the kinds of activities that took place within its rooms, and the relationship between these activities and the building's overall design. In other words, now that Kubler has succeeded in building the Escorial, still required are studies of the kind that would help bring this magnificent building to life.

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Origins of Pre-Columbian Art. By TERENCE GRIEDER. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1982. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 241. Cloth. \$19.95.

The question of the origins of the ancient civilizations of the Americas has long been debated. That settlers of the Americas came across a Bering Strait land bridge is accepted by most modern scholars; but questions remain about what sort of cultural baggage they brought with them, how much of American culture was imported and how much developed in the Americas, and the length and pattern of migrations.

In *Origins of Pre-Columbian Art*, Terence Grieder speaks to these

questions. Using archaeological and ethnological evidence of traits shared by cultures around the Pacific Basin, he posits that the wider the spread and the greater the distance from the source, the more ancient the traits should be. He proposes three basic waves of migration, using a set of traits to define each wave.

As traits of the First Wave, he cites the use of cup and groove markings (vulva and phallus) in stone, the bullroarer (earth spirits), white feather down (semen), and face and body painting (“attracting the beneficent and warding off the malign”), positing great antiquity for these because of their wide distribution.

Whereas the First Wave emphasized the earth and fertility, Second Wave iconography was marked by “emphasis on the regions above the ground . . . The tree or pole, with its phallic and axial connotations, became the focus of Second Wave religious philosophy,” leading to awareness of the celestial realm at the top. The Second Wave was typified by consciousness of the spirit in things above the earth rather than in it. Material traits included paper and wooden masks—tree products.

“The key to Third Wave symbolism is astronomy-astrology,” when the movements of the heavens became perhaps more important than those of the earth, and orderly systems were developed for understanding and recording celestial phenomena. Old graphic signs like the circle were given new meaning as cosmological symbols, and new signs like the swastika were invented.

Those who have worked with these symbols will undoubtedly have quibbles—with designations of categories, meaning shifts, and so forth—and the material perhaps does not always fit perfectly; but this does not detract from the worth of the book. It is an admirable proposal on an important subject.

There is, moreover, another, more philosophical, level in this book: it concerns the attempt to understand basic questions of how things happen, how cultures and cosmology evolve, how man makes and uses symbols, and how we read evidence for these processes.

On both levels, it is a stimulating book.

Institute of Andean Studies, Bethesda ELIZABETH P. BENSON

The Phoenix of the Western World: Quetzalcoatl and the Sky Religion.

By BURR CARTWRIGHT BRUNDAGE. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1981. Map. Figures. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Pp. xvi, 349. Cloth.

Among the several attempts to put together what archaeology and the written sources of indigenous tradition can tell us about the god