

The Missions of Northern Sonora: A 1935 Field Documentation.
By Buford Pickens (ed.). (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993. Pp. xxxii + 198, illus., bibliography, index, ISBN 0-8165-1342-2 cloth, \$13.95 US, 0-8165-1356-2 pbk.)

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Volume 19, numéro 1, 1997

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1087662ar>
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1087662ar>

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Éditeur(s)

Association Canadienne d'Ethnologie et de Folklore

ISSN

1481-5974 (imprimé)
1708-0401 (numérique)

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Citer ce compte rendu

Jarvis, D. G. (1997). Compte rendu de [*The Missions of Northern Sonora: A 1935 Field Documentation.* By Buford Pickens (ed.). (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993. Pp. xxxii + 198, illus., bibliography, index, ISBN 0-8165-1342-2 cloth, \$13.95 US, 0-8165-1356-2 pbk.) / *The Colonial Architecture of Mexico.* By James Early. (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994. Pp. xii + 221, illus., colour plates, bibliography, index, \$50 US, ISBN 0-8263-1474-0 cloth.)]. *Ethnologies*, 19(1), 166–170. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1087662ar>

lavish, inviting the reader to linger and really examine them. Those interested in industrial history, fisheries, and West-coast history will find the photographs in particular to be extremely valuable and full of information. However, the lack of an index, footnotes and bibliography lowers the value of the text considerably, and substantially mars what could otherwise have been a truly outstanding volume.

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The Missions of Northern Sonora is a compilation of three separate survey reports of Spanish mission churches researched by the U.S. National Parks Service in 1935. The missions, established during the 1690s and early 1700s in Northern Sonora, the border area between Mexico and Arizona, were studied as part of a planned restoration and development of the mission building

at Tumacacori, Arizona. The first of the original reports was prepared by professional archaeologist and journalist Arthur Woodward, who had studied at Berkeley under historian Hubert Bolton and anthropologist Alfred L. Kroeber. Woodward's report largely tackles the individual histories of each mission complex studied. The second report was created by two professional architects, Scofield DeLong, who would later serve as the architect for the Tumacacori building, and Leffler B. Miller. DeLong and Miller had the primary task of the expedition: to accurately measure and draw the floor plans, cross-sections and details of as many buildings as possible. The original version of their report consisted of 28 sheets of plans and details, outlines of descriptive architectural data, and field notes. The third report was photographic, prepared by chief National Parks Service photographer George A. Grant, who took over 300 photographs. Robert Rose, a naturalist, and J. H. Tovrea, an engineer, completed the six-person field crew.

Pickens, himself an architect and architectural historian, has created a beautiful work that weaves together the unpublished documents into a smooth and lucid narrative. He has broken down the different reports, and reassembled them as an integrated whole, devoting a chapter apiece to each of the fifteen missions studied, thirteen in Mexico and two in Arizona. Most chapters consist of Woodward's text for each mission, followed by DeLong and Miller's architectural description and drawings. Pickens has also generously illustrated the book with Grant's photographs, artifact and site drawings by Woodward and DeLong, and historical drawings and archival photographs of the various buildings.

The text itself is well written, perhaps owing in part to Woodward's journalistic background. With the eye of a trained archaeologist, Woodward notes the successive layers of building construction and identifies clues to aid future excavations. At the same time, his writing provides detailed descriptions not only of the buildings and sites, but also of the remaining furniture and material artifacts, flora, and the local inhabitants. His report also offers tantalizing glimpses as to what must have been an exciting and at times dangerous expedition. The fieldwork was conducted against a backdrop of political uncertainty, and his descriptions hint of this; regarding their work at the site of Santa Maria Magdalena for example, he writes, "When we were in Magdalena all of the regularly inducted officials had fled the town fearing assassination" (p. 63). Yet at no point does his writing venture into romanticism. It remains thorough in its historical and archaeological research, and meticulous in its attention to cultural detail. The architectural descriptions by DeLong and Miller are short, on average only a page long, but Pickens has

included as part of the first chapter their discussion of the architecture of the sites, which is excellent if brief. It provides an outline of the materials and construction techniques of the missions, as well as a "Handbook Summary" (p. 11-16) of the development of mission architecture, which describes the origins of the various styles incorporated into the structures and their main architectural features.

One of the brilliant surprises in the book is George Grant's photography. Always objective, Grant's documentation of the mission buildings and their place in the surrounding environment provides an amazing sense of completeness to the work as a whole. His photographs capture with clarity not only the key architectural features and elements of each building, but also patterns of site degradation, flood damage and structural weakness. Yet amidst scene after scene of decaying brickwork and collapsed ceilings there are compelling glimpses of life: the temple of San Diego del Pitiquito photographed (p. 100) with a crew member sitting on the front steps surrounded by village children, and children again playing on the grave site of Padre Francisco Eusebio Kino (p. 64), who founded the missions studied. Many of the photographs surpass mere documentation, and approach art. Of the ones chosen by Pickens, these photos are beautifully shot and composed, with domes framed perfectly inside archways, and ruined towers rising like ghosts from the mesquite and cacti.

Pickens' introduction to the book outlines the history of the 1935 NPS survey, and in the appendices he has included detailed biographical notes of the six field crew members, as well as a comprehensive bibliography on the architectural, cultural and religious history of the region. As little work has been done to date on these buildings, Pickens has pieced together an excellent baseline from which future studies might be drawn. The book, following the nature of the original fieldwork, is largely descriptive, and takes up no particular theoretical perspective, although Woodward *et al* have tried to show regional and historical influences in building design.

For those interested in the architecture or religious history of the area, the book provides a vivid and amazingly complete portrait of the mission churches of Northern Sonora as they stood in the 1930s. Woodward's text is readable, and for an architectural survey, actually enjoyable. For the specialist, the book is a valuable research tool, and for the non-specialist, a worthwhile read.

The Colonial Architecture of Mexico is in many ways a very different type of book from *The Missions of Northern Sonora*, although their subject matter is very similar. Early's book is wider in focus, and deals with a variety

of religious and colonial buildings, almost exclusively in Mexico. Only one of the sites studied in Pickens' book is mentioned in Early's, the Church of San Xavier del Bac, in Tucson, Arizona. This lack of overlap is perhaps understandable given the unpublished nature of the NPS reports which comprise Pickens' book.

Early begins his work with an overview of the city of Mexico and surrounding territories at the time of first Spanish contact, and then moves into a discussion of the programs of building that followed. The layout of the book is roughly chronological, with particular attention paid to the Baroque period, and concluding with the Neo-Classical architecture of the twentieth century.

Chapter Five of Early's book, entitled "Popular or Folk Architecture," is one of the more interesting sections. In it, Early discusses the development of *tequitqui*, an indigenous form of carving found on some colonial buildings. *Tequitqui* is described as "the transformation of European motifs by popular indigenous taste" (p. 119). Early states that "traces of the style are widespread, wherever Indian artisans' sensibility transformed the vocabulary of medieval, Renaissance, or Mudejar forms which Europeans commissioned for Mexican buildings" (p. 120). One of his best examples of *tequitqui* is a comparison between the facade on the 1560 church at Alcoman, and the c.1570 church facade at Yuriria. The church at Alcoman is thought to have been built by artisans from Spain, while the church at Yuriria, two hundred miles to the west, to have been built by locally trained builders. Early demonstrates that at Yuriria, the format of the Renaissance plateresque facade of Alcoman has been copied, but utilizes an "ornamental overlay that originated in a sensibility radically different from that of the Spanish designers" (p. 118).

It is this attention to architectural and decorative detail that is the strong point of the book. Early is careful to illustrate the development of indigenous design, as well as to indicate the varied architectural traditions that meet and are combined to create structures of intricate beauty. It is clear that Early, a professor of English at Southern Methodist University, has a detailed and far-reaching knowledge of the subject area. He consistently draws comparisons between building details, picking out recurring motifs, and showing an expert's familiarity with architectural terminology and methods of construction. His historical research is meticulous, as is his discussion of regional, political and theological contexts. However, Early falls into the trap of not letting the buildings speak for themselves. Many of the photographs are poorly referenced in the text, and there is a serious lack of architectural drawings or floor plans. The text presents a long series of narrowly focused architectural snapshots, and the sense of each building as an actual architectural whole is

occasionally lost in the attention to details and motifs. The approach is clearly that of a historian, and not someone accustomed to studying the manner in which material culture can transmit information about the society in which it was produced.

This bias is demonstrated clearly in his discussion of folk-influenced architecture, elements of which he repeatedly dismisses as confusing, strange, and awkward. It is exactly this architectural awkwardness that should be studied, not put aside. Throughout the book, Early's preference for the purer classical form is evident. He describes *tequitqui's* "indigenous exuberance and love of overall ornamentation that would in the future repeatedly break free from the constraints of European taste" (p. 119). But when the same indigenous exuberance resulted in the colourful repainting of interiors, such as in the church at Tonantzintla, Early rejects it as "garish" (p. 123). Ultimately, the book seems to suffer from the constraints of European taste that *tequitqui* was a reaction against. Early's referrals to and lengthy discussions of the Neo-Classical, Baroque, Rococo, Renaissance, Islamic, and Medieval styles and orders of architecture are all valid and scholarly, but in the end Early has authored a relatively unpalatable study of architecture. Many of his chapters end in mid-discussion, with little in the way of conclusions for any chapter. The book itself ends without any real discussion of what has been described, or for what purpose besides scholarly antiquarianism. Some aspects of the book are more frustrating than others, such as a complete lack of maps and its exclusion of a glossary for the non-initiate. But in its favour, *The Colonial Architecture of Mexico* is well researched and a potentially useful reference tool, with good photographs and an excellent set of colour plates.

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Music From the Heart: Compositions of a Folk Fiddler. By Colin Quigley. (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1995. Pp. xiii + 273, notes, bibliographic essay, photographs, charts, musical transcriptions, \$35 US, ISBN 0-8203-1637-7 cloth.)

Music From the Heart: Compositions of a Folk Fiddler is the outgrowth of a rich relationship between Colin Quigley, an American folk