

Hello,

I joined this forum recently and I find the discussion fascinating. I am grateful to have found you.

I wanted to share a few quotes from Le Corbusier that I think relate to previous discussions about the sacred and about "Thin Places". I am particularly interested in it because Corbu talks about such special places as an achievement in art and architecture.

In "Le Corbusier's Hands" Andre Wogenscky quotes the following comments by Corbu:

1) "I do not know the miracle of faith, but I often experience that of ineffable space, which is the highest level of artistic emotion."

2) "I am the inventor of the phrase 'Ineffable Space', which is a reality that I discovered as I went on. When a work reaches a maximum intensity, when it has the best proportions and has been made with best quality of execution, when it has reached perfection, a phenomenon may take place that we may call 'Ineffable Space'. When this happens these places start to radiate."

I would love to hear any feedback.

Amira Joelson Architect AIA LEED AP BD+C; Adj. Associate Professor, Architecture, CUNY-NYCCT;
Principal: jADE

Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

From: David Seamon <triad@KSU.EDU>

Sender: ACS is a new scholarly forum on architecture and spiritualit <AM-CARC-ACS-L@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU>

Date: Mon, 7 Apr 2014 17:09:08 +0000

To: <AM-CARC-ACS-L@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU>

ReplyTo: ACS is a new scholarly forum on architecture and spiritualit <AM-CARC-ACS-L@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU>

Subject: Belden Lane's three contrasting conceptual approaches to sacredness and place

Folks,

I wrote the following email yesterday, and Anat has graciously agreed to repost it, even though it relates to the discontinued Disneyworld emails. What was so interesting about the "Disneyland" discussion for me is the considerable range of understandings that the posts have pointed to. I composed the following email relating to Belden Lane's work because it provides one way of "placing" these different points of view. I wrote:

I keep mentioning Belden Lane here because his work is so thoughtful and comprehensive conceptually. In the new edition of LANDSCAPES OF THE SACRED, he delineates three contrasting conceptual approaches to "sacred place" and argues that all three need be considered in a comprehensive understanding of platial and environmental sacredness. These approaches are:

1. Ontological and illustrated by Eliade's approach, which assumes that "a sacred place is

radically set apart from everything profane; it is a site recognized as manifesting its own inherent, chthonic power and numinosity. It is a place of hierophany, where supernatural forces have invaded the ordinary.

2. In contrast, is what Lane calls "the cultural approach (e.g., David Chidester, Jonathan Smith), which disclaims "the notion that sacred places inherently possess an intentionality and power drawn from within or beyond themselves." Instead, the assumption is that "every human attribution of sacrality is always a social construction of reality. Places themselves are void of any intrinsic meaning..." Lane argues that the weakness of the SC approach is that it "fails to recognize place itself as a participant in the formation of that experience."

3. This contrasting situation leads to the third approach, which Lane labels "phenomenological" and involving "a way of giving voice to yet another participant in the process of perceiving and experiencing sacred places. To the operations of the esoteric power of the divine in setting apart the place from everything around it and the function of conflicting cultural values in the human claiming and defending of the site was now added a concern to listen to the place itself, to recognize its own topography and material character as suggesting affordances or offerings of their own...."

This perspective "urges that we take into account the integrity of the place in interpreting the way in which any particular site is to be perceived as sacred. Left to itself, however, it is inadequate in providing a full understanding of how the transcendent and the cultural come together in identifying the presence of the holy, failing to address theological and sociological dimensions of that reality" (pp. 42-43 in 2001 expanded edition).

I find Lane's threefold categorization important because it helps understand how there could be such a wide range of interpretations here in regard to the original perspective on Disneyland.

David Seamon

Dr. David Seamon
Professor of Environment-Behavior & Place Studies
Department of Architecture
211 Seaton Hall
Kansas State University
Manhattan, KS 66506-2901
785-532-5953
triad@ksu.edu
www.arch.ksu.edu/seamon/

