

Unfortunately the book lacks a thesis about the historical significance of Nolen or Mariemont, beyond the claim that the community was an unusual example of 20th-century suburban design. A strong element of connoisseurship pervades the book, especially in the assessments of Mariemont's architectural and planning elements. With a fluid writing style supported by a considerable number of illustrations, Rogers offers the reader a guided tour of Mariemont's early residential, commercial, and public buildings. Livingood made all the key architectural decisions. Clearly the Mariemont plan stands as one of Nolen's masterpieces, but its architectural integrity and self-conscious aesthetic was a product of Livingood's influence.

Today Mariemont is a tony suburb with steadily climbing property values, a thriving main street, and a local reputation as an upper-middle-class WASP enclave. This history does not challenge these perceptions. Perhaps living in the community itself, and having accepted the assistance of descendants of Nolen, Livingood, and other directors of Mariemont's early development, affected Rogers' viewpoint. Nevertheless, this book will serve as a good reference source for those interested in Mariemont's early years, given its excellent index, Rogers's close attention to detail, and the helpful bibliography included within. While this book is long awaited, it has left the door open for further investigation.

Notes

1. *Cincinnati Enquirer*, 23 April 1922.
2. Letter, Charles Livingood to John Nolen, 28 June 1922, Correspondence file #2903, John Nolen Papers, Carl A. Kroch Library, Cornell University.

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Chappell, Sally A. Kitt. *Cahokia: Mirror of the Cosmos*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002. Pp. xix, 218. Maps, illustrations, notes, bibliography. \$42.42 (hardcover), \$32.91 (paperback).

Cahokia: Mirror of the Cosmos is an attempt to situate the Cahokia mounds and surrounding area in time and place in terms of both human and natural history. Chappell, a professor emerita in the Department of Art at DePaul University and obviously inspired by the mounds, frames her narrative between the Big Bang and the present. By utilizing a broad time scale, Chappell is seeking to portray the humanization of the Cahokian landscape as successive civilizations have given it form and meaning. Moreover, by situating the Cahokia landscape within the cosmos, Chappell ties the original Aboriginal meaning for the site with the modern period. The city of Cahokia was founded and constructed as an expression of the cosmos on earth, with the location of each mound, plaza, wall, and house serving as a reference point to the heavens as well as establishing our place within it, on earth, and to each other. Chappell thus uses the ancient map of the cosmos represented by Cahokia to form her narrative.

Underpinning the exploration is the conceptual model "that meaning is assigned to form by cultural convention" and from the "idea that the physical characteristics of form have certain innate evocative powers, independent of any a priori cultural assignment of meaning" (3-4). As such, the author claims to be a postmodernist, modernist, and traditionalist throughout the book. The materials consulted to weave together the fabric of her story are drawn from a variety of sources—everything from climatological to ethnological studies, from maps to photographs, and from oral to written histories. Throughout *Cahokia* the author's writing often drifts toward romanticism, although this does give the reader a sense of the sublime nature of the Cahokian setting and how in turn the sublimity has inspired generations of humanity. Despite the broad scope, premise, theory, and sources, Chappell does an admirable job in creating a history of Cahokia that focuses on the multiple meanings, understandings, and contextualizations that the site has inspired. Throughout the study she never loses sight of the mound group we know as Cahokia—it is at once the place of history and meaning serving to ground and focus the narrative for the reader.

The monograph begins with an almost poetical blending of text and photography to create the sensation of witnessing the Big Bang, the earth forming and life emerging on the new planet. The preface thus sets the stage for the narrative to follow. After the preface and introduction, Chappell moves onto a climatological description that in turn leads to an understanding of why the first Paleo-Indians, the Mississippians, and Euro-Americans have been drawn to the area. Essentially, land, air, water, and geography have combined to form an extremely fertile plain with the right type of soil, moisture, and temperature for agriculture.

While it is not the author's intention to create an in-depth study of any one period in Cahokia's diverse history, Chappell manages to give the novice reader a sense of each era and how humanity has imbued the mounds with meaning. The Mississippians by erecting monumental pyramids gave the land a sacred meaning, while centuries after the collapse of the mound-builders monks gave the land a Christian value. The 18th-century construction of a trading post at the site gave it commercial value, 19th-century settlers gave the land agricultural value, and industrialists and real estate developers gave the area economic value. After great effort to preserve the mounds, 20th-century American society, through the state of Illinois, gave the mounds recreational value then historical value. UNESCO confirmed the latter designation when Cahokia became a World Heritage site in 1982. As each meaning was instilled upon the land, humanity altered the appearance of the landscape—the Mississippians' pyramids created elevations where none had existed; 19th-century Americans criss-crossed the land first with furrowed farms, then with railways; and 20th-century development brought concrete highways, an airport, drive-in theatre, subdivisions, and eventually a historic site.

By utilizing historical and contemporary photographs, illustrations, and maps, the reader can obtain a sense of the site and