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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)

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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 descendents 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

the alterations of the landscape through time. Multiple maps are especially useful in understanding the mounds' orientations and relationship to each other. Additionally, by comparing the maps from chapter to chapter, and those placed side by side, it is easy to discern the changing landscape. The illustrations, particularly the pictures that show Cahokian life and architecture during the Mississippian phase, aid the reader in visualizing a complex civilization that existed in prehistoric America. Significantly, the author's insistence that Mississippian Cahokia, c.1000 to 1400 CE, was a city based on an urban development plan with monumental architecture elevates the achievements of the North American Stone Age to their rightful place alongside humanity's other great achievements. Finally, the more theoretical asides that would otherwise detract from the narrative are contained within helpful text-boxes.

Cahokia is a valuable study to introduce the history of the region and its multiple meanings for humanity.

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Terpstra, John. *Falling into Place*. Kentville: Gaspereau Press, 2002. Pp. 318. Illustrations, maps. $25.95 (paperback).

"This book is what happens when one person becomes completely enamored of the landscape, and a particular feature of the landscape, in the city where he lives."

So begins John Terpstra's fascinating, introspective, and illuminating travel through time and space. At one level, the subject matter of the book is the history of the Iroquois Bar, deposited by post-glacial Lake Iroquois at the City of Hamilton, Ontario. Beyond this, however, Terpstra's book explores the broader themes of landscape interpretation and sense of place through evocative and moving accounts of his personal experiences with this landscape.

The historical events and geographical processes described in this book, while specific to Hamilton, are familiar ones to readers of *Urban History Review / Revue d'histoire urbaine* (*UHR/Rhu*). There are city builders (Sir Allan MacNab and Thomas Baker McQuesten), planning decisions (the building of the Royal Botanical Gardens), transportation issues (the Desjardins Canal and the Chedoke Expressway), and so on, all of which directly affected the Iroquois sandbar in Hamilton.

What may be less familiar to *UHR/Rhu* readers is Terpstra's intensely personal and contemplative treatment of these people and processes. The book is, in short, geography and history as experienced and expressed in the words of the poet. (Terpstra has published six books of poetry.)

The press release accompanying the book notes that "Terpstra struggles to fathom just how much the physical and social geography of the area has changed since the sandbar was formed, and the meaning of modern society's constant and often ill-considered alteration of the landscape." The highly successful result of this "struggle" is a work that gives us cause to re-examine familiar places and landscapes. The result for readers of this book will most certainly be new insights and a more profound understanding of places we thought we knew.

Terpstra's presentation of the historical and geographical facts is a lyrical tapestry in which the landscape and the author become one. Along the way, he eloquently expresses the thoughts, feelings, and emotions that comprise his personal experience of the Iroquois sandbar:

> This was my personal landscape, for better or worse; and if I was to find a way into the physical and spiritual geography of my earthly dwelling place, the path would have to wend its way through the features of that inner landscape as well. (89–90)

For Terpstra, this personal landscape takes on a very human character:

> Come, let us anthropomorphize the landscape . . . The living memory of how the place once was is given body, and that body is the earthly home of people for whom the very contours of the land evoke meaning. (26–27)

As he relates a wide range of personal experiences with the sandbar, Terpstra takes the reader on a 10,000-year odyssey, describing events and processes in refreshingly vivid and imaginative prose. For example, he describes the creation of the sandbar as follows:

> Pushed and dragged all the way, the sand, gravel, pebble and cobble were deposited here by ice-age glaciers as unceremoniously as immigrant ships discharged their cargoes of humanity. As the ice began to retreat, a tongue of running water carried the stones the last little way to their new home. (16)

Throughout the book links are forged between the physical and cultural environments. In his description of James Durand's home, Bellevue, built on the sandbar in 1806, Terpstra writes,

> He (Durand) chose the spot . . . because the road up the escarpment ran past it. In a time of few settlements, fewer roads and a lot of geography, that fact made life, and business, much easier. Geography rules.

Soon after, Durand's home on the sandbar played a significant role in the establishment of a settlement at the head of Lake Ontario:

> The city of Hamilton was born on that front porch (of Bellvue) . . . The town was conceived on a piece of paper that lay on a desk inside a room within the house that James Durand built. (209)

Readers familiar with Simon Schama's *Landscape and Memory* among other historical and geographical treatments of landscape and sense of place will find Terpstra's book a thought-provoking and informative read. While some will want more history and others might crave more geography, those who seek a deeper understanding of the meaning of place (and why these meanings matter) will find this to be a very important book. Even those intimately familiar with Hamilton will encoun-