

Trinity Saint David University of Wales,
Lampeter
Sophia Centre
MA in Cultural Astronomy and Astrology
Sacred Geography

Introduction

There are different ways to divide this module thematically. One might think of themes such as 'monuments', 'the sacred', or chronological divisions (past, present) or cultural ones (east, west). The arrangements of the readings should provoke its own thoughts about the material.

Workload

The expected workload for this module, as for all our taught modules, is 200 hours. How you manage this is a matter of your time management. Bearing in mind you have a research project, you need to work out your own balance of reading, research and writing. This is even more the case if you decide to do some fieldwork, which could be anything from qualitative research (if you have taken the Research module) to visiting sites.

Research Forum

To help with your thinking on your research project you will need to take an active role on the forum on the Moodle page. You could float your initial thoughts and also comment on ideas from other students. Such general discussion helps everyone develop their thinking.

Module Text Books

These books can be bought from Amazon or second hand from other book sites.

Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. Expanded ed. edn (Baltimore, Md. ; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). NOTE make sure you buy the 2nd edition not the earlier edition from the 1990s. Here in the UK, this as a new book is £16 - £17

Tim Ingold, *Lines: A Brief History* (London: Routledge, 2007). This books is around £22, or you may be able to get it second hand.

Reading and weekly work

The readings are arranged in weekly sections and divided into required and recommended. Ensure that you read the required reading before the seminar as this will keep you up with the ideas being developed in the seminars. The recommended reading list it for you to follow up on if you wish to pursue a particular theme.

As autonomous and self-directed learners, you should also make as much use as you can of the Universities electronic resources, especially JSTOR. For example, type 'Pilgrimage' or 'Sacred Space' into JSTOR, and you will turn up a wealth of material. You should also make wide use of the web, on which you will discover a wealth of source material, ALWAYS REMEMBERING to apply your critical eye.

Research Project

In the first few weeks of the module, try to formulate an idea for a research project. The sooner you come up with a proposal the sooner you can begin to focus your reading and begin your work.

Week One – What is Sacred Geography?

The reading this week is designed to focus on the concept of the sacred and definitions of what is Sacred Geography. What is the 'sacred' and, in terms of space, is it separate to its converse, profane space?

The Key Reading:

Thorley and Gunn, Sacred Beliefs and Beliefs of Sacredness'

Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*.

Expanded ed. edn (Baltimore, Md. ; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Chapter 1.

Recommended Reading

Catherine Allerton, 'Introduction to Spiritual landscapes of Southeast Asia.'

<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/26782/>

Kim Knott, *The Location of Religion : A Spatial Analysis* (London: Equinox Publishing, 2005).

Thomas A. Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling : A Theory of Religion* (Cambridge, Mass. ; London: Harvard University Press, 2006).

Week Two: Landscapes, Sky and Land.

This week introduces the union of sky and land through the lens of phenomenology. The same piece of physical space can also satisfy simultaneously satisfy competing numinous, religious, political or social uses. Bender set out this theory, but other theorists have worked along parallel paths. And

The Key Reading:

Ingold, Tim, *Lines: A Brief History* (London: Routledge, 2007). Introduction

Bender, Barbara, *Stonehenge: Making Space*, Oxford, Berg 1998, chap 4 ('Contested Landscapes: Medieval to Present Day'). PDF

Randall Studstill, 'Eliade, Phenomenology, and the Sacred', *Religious Studies*, 36 (2000), 177-194.

Jonathan Z. Smith, 'Acknowledgments: Morphology and History in Mircea Eliade's "Patterns in Comparative Religion" (1949-1999), Part 2: The Texture of the Work', *History of Religions*, 39 (2000), 332-351.

Bodenhorn, Barbara, 'Gendered Spaces, Public Places: Public and Private Revisited on the North Slope of Alaska,

Recommended Reading

Bender, Barbara, *Landscape: Politics and Perspectives*, (Oxford: Berg 1993), pp. 169-203. PDF

Plumwood, Val, *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason*, London: Routledge, 2002, pp. 218-235 (Chap 10, 'Towards a materialist spirituality of place') E BOOK

Massey, Doreen, *Space, Place and Gender* (Oxford: Blackwell 1994), pp. 1-16 ('General Introduction'). PDF

Merleau-Ponty Phenomenology PDF

Week Three : Space and Place

Durkheim is one of the modern world's most influential theorists of religion, a materialist sociologist, for whom religion could be defined by its external functions (it has a church, a congregation and so on). His work is the key reading for the work. James Twyman's eccentric piece is included because, by identifying a shopping mall as a sacred space, he is explicitly challenging conventional notions of sacred space.

The Key Reading:

Durkheim, Emile, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. Karen E. Fields, New York: Free Press 1995 [1st edn., *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse*, Paris; F. Alcan 1912], pp. xliii-li, 8-13, 70-83, 440-7. PDF

Casey, Edward S., *The Fate of Place, a Philosophical History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998). Page 50-75.

https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=gJpVcrOnum4C&pg=PR7&source=gbv_selected_pages&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false

Eliade, Mircea, *The Sacred and the Profane* (New York: Harcourt Brace 1959), pp. 20-65 ('Sacred Place and Making the World Sacred'). PDF

Recommended Reading

Bowie, Fiona, *The Anthropology of Religion: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell 2006, chap 5 ('Religion, Culture and Environment'). PDF

Hughes, J. Donald, 'Spirit of Place in the Western World' in Swan, James A. *The Power of Place: Sacred Ground in Natural and Human Environments* (Bath: Gateway, 1993), pp. 15-27. PDF

Schama, Simon, *Landscape and Memory* (New York: Fontana 1996), pp. 3-19 ('Introduction'). PDF

Twyman, James F., *Ten Spiritual Lessons I Learned at the Mall*, Forres: Findhorn Press, 2001, 'Introduction', pp. 7-15. PDF

Week Four : Living Landscapes

This week focuses on the theme of living landscapes. Agency of landscape and the agency of material objects. This leads to raising the theme of environmental ethics – the changing nature of this area and the emerging concept of the rights of the landscape.

The Key Reading:

Curry, Patrick, *Ecological Ethics : An Introduction*. 2nd ed. edn (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011).

Whitehead, Amy, *Religious Statues and Personhood : Testing the Role of Materiality*.

Belden Lane , Chapter 2.

Recommended reading

Heidegger, Martin, 'Building, Dwelling, Thinking', in *Poetry, Language, Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975).

Amiria J. M. Henare, Martin Holbraad, and Sari Wastell, *Thinking through Things : Theorising Artefacts Ethnographically* (London: Routledge, 2007). Holbraad: 'The power of powder,' 189-225

Cormac Cullinan, *Wild Law : A Manifesto for Earth Justice*. 2nd ed. / with a foreword by Thomas Berry. edn (Totnes: Green Books, 2011).

Cassirer, Ernst, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Vol. 2., *Mythical Thought*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1971 [1955], pp. 83-105 ('Foundations of a Theory of Mythical Forms. Space, Time and Number. 1. The Articulation of Space in the Mythical Consciousness') PDF

Bradley R., *The Significance of Monuments: On the Shaping of Human Experience in Neolithic and Bronze Age Europe*; London: Routledge, 1998, chap 8, ('Theatre in the Round; Henge monuments, stone circles and their integration with the environment'). pp. 116-131. E BOOK

Hodder, Ian, *Reading the Past: Current approaches to interpretation in archaeology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986), chapter 8 ('Post-precussual archaeology'), p. 147-178. E BOOK

Edmonds, M., *Ancestral geographies of the Neolithic: landscape, monuments and memory*, London: Routledge, 2002, chap 1 ('Setting the Scene'), pp. 1-10. E BOOK

Morris, Ian, *Archaeology as Cultural History*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2000, chap 1 (Archaeology as Cultural History'), pp. 3-33 PDF

Week Five: Pilgrimage

In this week and next we move on to pilgrimage, the art of moving over or through the land from one place to another. Pilgrimage is fascinating because it represents a sustained relationship between the pilgrim and the land over the course of a journey which may be long or difficult, and which corresponds to a spiritual journey.

The Key Reading:

Petsalis-Diomidis, Alexia, 'Narratives of Transformation: Pilgrimage Patterns and Authorial Self-Presentation in Three Pilgrimage Texts', in Coleman, Simon, and J.Elsner, *Pilgrim Voices: Narrative and Authorship in Christian Pilgrimage*, NY & Oxf CLAFile

Coleman, Simon, and J.Elsner, *Pilgrimage Past and Present in the World Religions*, London: Harvard University Press, 1995, pp. 196-220, ('Epilogue: Landscapes Reviewed').

Recommended reading

Sheldrake, Philip, *Living Between Worlds: place and journey in celtic spirituality* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1995), chap 2 ('Landscape and Sacred Sites'), pp. 22-45. CLAFfile

Artress, Lauren, *Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Tool* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1995), chap 1 ('To Walk a Sacred Path', pp. 1-22) E BOOK

Pullan, Wendy, 'Mapping Time and Salvation: Early Christian Pilgrimage to Jerusalem', in Flood, Gavin D., *Mapping Invisible Worlds, (Cosmos: the Yearbook of the Traditional Cosmology Society, Volume 9, 1993)*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1993, pp. 23-40. PDF

Casey, Edward S., *Earth-Mapping: Artists Reshaping Landscape*, Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2005, chap 4 ('Plotting and Charting the Path: Voyaging to the Ends of the Earth with Michelle Stuart'), pp. 57-91. E BOOK

Coleman, Simon, and J.Elsner, *Pilgrimage Past and Present in the World Religions*, London: British Museum Press, 1995, pp. 196-220, ('Epilogue: Landscapes Reviewed'). PDF

Week Six: Dreamscapes and Utopias

Dreamscapes and Utopias – the geography of the other. Utopias, Postmodern – landscape sculptures and Zodiac dreaming. We also encounter postmodernism this week. In a geographical sense postmodernism encourages us to see space in different ways. For example, with maps, a postmodern cartographer might make a map with Australia at the top or India in the centre, to challenge. Postmodern architecture is characterised by its use of vernacular styles from different periods and cultures.

The Key Reading:

Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. Expanded ed. edn (Baltimore, Md. ; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Chapter 6.

Recommended reading

Soja, Edward W., *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, London Verso, 2003 [1989], chap 1 ('History: Geography: Modernity'). PDF

Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978 [1962], pp. vii-xxi, 3-12, 52-63, 67-72, 243-254. PDF

Robinson, Tim, *Setting Foot on the Shores of Connemara and Other Writings* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press 1996), pp 199-208. PDF

Tilley, Christopher, *A Phenomenology of Landscape* (Oxford: Berg 1994), chap 1 ('Space, Place, Landscape and Perception: Phenomenological Perspectives'). PDF

Sudjic, Deyan, *The Edifice Complex: How the Rich and Powerful Shape the World*, London: Allen Lane, 2005, chap 1 ('Why we Build') pp. 1-11 PDF

Week Seven: Sacred Cities and Constructed Spaces

Sacred Cities and Constructed Spaces. The idea of a cosmological city, eg. Bath, UK and the nature of cosmological builds, domes, labyrinths, gardens. The whole concept of building sacred places is explored. .

The Key Reading:

Belden C. Lane, *Landscapes of the Sacred: Geography and Narrative in American Spirituality*. Expanded ed. (Baltimore, Md. ; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001). Chapter 6.

Recommended reading

Singer, Thomas 'Psyche and the city, a soul's guide to the modern Metropolis. Spring Journal Books, N Orleans.

Week Eight: Cyber Space and Virtual Landscapes

This week we look at Cyber Space as a newly emerging space that we all engage with every day. What is Cyber space, is it sacred, how do we function in cyber space?

The Key Reading:

See Week 8 in Moodle

Recommended reading

See Week 8 in Moodle