

The Race for Sacred Space

Introduction

One of the effects that religion has on the space around it is to organize this space into sacred spaces reserved for worship and other religious activities. As religious groups apportion space to religious purposes sometimes these come into conflict with other religious groups or with secular users vying for control of the same space.

One such sacred space is Stonehenge, a neolithic monument whose exact origins are still a subject of investigation. This site is, however, claimed as a sacred space by practitioners of neo-pagan traditions such as neo-druids. The druids have had persistent conflict with authorities over their ability to worship at the site and having to share it with the tourists that come to Stonehenge in large numbers as illustrated in this slideshow.

<http://photopeach.com/album/rjbckj>

As part of your exercise for today, you will be examining another sacred space chose from the following list of sacred places. You will be answering questions that examine how this sacred site shapes the space around it and what forces are encroaching on the sacred site.

Sacred Spaces

- a. The LDS Temple in Salt Lake City
 - b. St. Paul's Cathedral in London
 - c. The Meiji Shrine in Tokyo
 - d. The Blue Mosque in Istanbul (aka the Hagia Sophia)
- 2.

Exercise

1) Go to the **wikipedia** page for your sacred site. Write a brief paragraph describing the construction of your site and whether there was any conflict over the space when it was first built or subsequently over its lifetime.

2) **Investigate** your sacred site by finding it on **Google Maps** (or the map site of your preference). Are there holy places of other faiths nearby and how does that seem to affect the layout of the space

Look at the **businesses** that surround your site. Do they all have themes that are also sacred? Do any of them sell goods or services that the faith group your site belongs to may find objectionable?

3) **Plan a pilgrimage** to visit your sacred place. Look for plane tickets, hotels, etc that are near your sites. Do the vendors providing travel and lodging in this area make any effort specifically to cater to the religious group whose site this is?

4) Create an account on photopeach.com and look at some of the sample slideshows (one of them is the **Stonehenge** one from earlier).

Create a 5-6 picture slideshow with captions(of 3 sentences min. for each) illustrating how your sacred place organizes the space around it and with whom it must contend for space. (As prompted You simply copy the URL and paste it in an email to the monarch.gk12@gmail.com address.)