

Institute for Christian Teaching
Education Department of Seventh-day Adventists

CAMPUS BEAUTIFICATION:
A FACTOR IN INTEGRATION OF FAITH AND LEARNING

by

Larry W. Boughman

Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies
School of Graduate Studies
Department of Education
Silang, Cavite, Philippines

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INTRODUCTION

The principal thesis of this proposal asserts the need in Christian education for an integrational approach of campus beautification as it relates to the spiritual atmosphere and setting of the campus.

Background

The historical development of campus beautification in colleges and other educational institutions can be traced to the very beginning of formal education. Some colleges and universities considered it a very important part of the total plan, others did not. Nevertheless, landscape design has proved itself to be of extreme value to the educational institution (Jellico, 1966).

Of all the arts, none takes so long to come to maturity, and none is so liable to deterioration and destruction as landscape design. However, it is one of the great arts, and this study is directed towards an exploration of this art and how it relates to the spiritual component of educational institutions.

From a historical viewpoint, right after the Garden of Eden, beautiful settings were not made but discovered—here, a clearing in the forest, there a valley enclosed by mountains, or elsewhere an island surrounded by blue and green water. In the oldest available accounts, such spots were natural, they just happened, and no work was needed to keep the places in order. Such settings often had names that indicated its location: grove, park, garden, wilderness, and meadow. When humans could find such places, they felt different because of the atmosphere surrounding them. Many chose to live in such areas because of the beauty they provided (Thacker, 1979).

Given this natural bent of most of humankind, it is not too surprising to note that as people have developed schools and universities through the centuries, they have become more and more aware of the values of surrounding these places of learning with beauty.

Ancient Beauty Spots

The word "academies" refers to the grove of trees planted in honor of Academus in fourth-century-B.C. Greece. Here, Plato and Socrates, sheltered from the relentless Greek sun in the cool of the shade of an olive tree, met with other inquisitive minds to discuss the nature of existence (State University of New York, 1988).

There are many references to outdoor schools in antiquity. For instance, the Old Testament records the groves dedicated to Baal, which were destroyed by the Israelites. History notes that the Romans, upon arrival in Britain, remarked on the groves used by the Druids for study. Outside the walls of Athens are the groves of the Academy (an enclosure scattered with tombs and monuments)--one of the earliest places of study. This natural, untended quality of the grove reappears throughout the centuries and seems to mark the landscape as the natural side of art (Thacker, 1979).

Medieval Developments

Gardens, or landscaping within the context of the academic setting of medieval times, first came about with Oxford and Cambridge colleges, where gardens and special landscaped areas were made within the quadrangle.

During the medieval period, the quadrangle evolved into the English "collegiate" system initiated at Oxford and Cambridge. Here, one notes the development of a community of specialized buildings for living, learning, and worshipping all enclosed in a common courtyard known as courts (State University of New York, 1988).

Batey (1989), commented on the gardens of Oxford and Cambridge, and pointed out that the gardens often were the inspiration needed for developing the intellect. She stated that records revealed accounts promoting the necessity of the gardens to foster excellence of training. Professors and students spent long hours sitting in the gardens contemplating and meditating. The gardens were considered a source of inspiration and as part and parcel of the philosophy of simplicity and excellence for the students as well as the professors. She maintained that the gardens were regarded as essential, in fact, more necessary to the colleges than good professors.

Batey continued by saying the designs of the gardens similar to those of Oxford and Cambridge were not easily developed. Several groups had to be satisfied: Professors were consulted and each had his own idea, the supporters of the theatrical society had their ideas, and then advocates of a natural setting gave their input.

The 18th Century

By the second half of the 18th century, few colleges in England had any concept of campus design. Lancelot Brown (1716-1783) developed many sites with the "capability idea." He said that each site had capabilities, and in his mind, he would develop those capabilities for each particular site. It was as if he were inspired for each site in relation to its capabilities. Brown, through simple, open design, would develop the "spirit of the place." For this reason, he became known as the great landscape artist of his day (Thacker, 1979).

Often, a mound or small hill, either in the middle or more often to one side against the wall, served as a vantage point from which the attractions of the landscape might be seen. Although few of these mounts (mounds) have survived, the mounts in the gardens of Oxford and Cambridge colleges have been partially preserved within the design concept (Thacker, 1979).

Later, at Hohenheim, near Stuttgart, Germany, Herzog Eugen von Wuerttemberg (1737-1793) worked to develop a unique landscape concept for Hohenheim University by constructing the campus over the ruins of an ancient city. Here and there, fragments of the wall, tower, or archway were allowed to protrude from the greenery, given a unique statement and preserving the appearance of a subsequent settlement. It was these European models, in which the university is conceived of as a community, that provided inspiration for the American campus.

American Campus Development

Landscape architecture in America has a relatively short history compared to that of Europe, yet Americans have become increasingly aware of the need to provide and preserve significant landscapes for future generations. Some of the first gardens and landscapes of America were associated with important persons such as George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. Other landscapes of early importance surrounded such places as the capitol buildings and governors' palaces (Turner, 1989).

Colonial Period

In the early days of education, little regard was given to the development of the landscape around the school. The first type of secondary school in the colonies was the Latin Grammar School, established in Boston in 1635. It was, of course, a replica of similar schools in England. Toward the end of the Colonial Period, men like Benjamin Franklin began to see the need for a new type of education to meet the needs of society. By the close of the 19th century, the American public had endorsed a free, tax-supported public-school system that would help provide the type of setting necessary for optimum learning (Callahan & Clark, 1977).

Yale university, founded in 1701, was one of the first to be concerned with campus beautification. By 1782, the school had grown so much that the original buildings were removed to make way for College Row, an alternating pattern of dormitories and meeting halls that established a nearly continuous wall along the street. Under the influence of John Trumbull, the informal aesthetic adviser, College Row became the first example of an American campus deliberately planned to meet both functional and aesthetic criteria. The red brick dormitories and classrooms had small, symmetrical yards along College Street, bordered by a low wood fence. In the back, beyond the privies, Trumbull planted a picturesque English garden. Most campuses during this time were located in what was viewed as the virtuous countryside, detached from the temptations of the city (Stern, 1986).

In 1770, the term "campus landscape" was first used to refer to the surroundings of Princeton University. However, that term contains some redundancy. The Latin word "campus" means a field, often scattered with trees. Thus, campus literally means landscape (State University of New York, 1988).

The Jeffersonian Concept

Thomas Jefferson pioneered a new type of school rooted in a humanist conception of society. By background and vocation a countryman, Jefferson expressed throughout his life a strong aversion to the city and a preference for a rural way of living. "Those who labor in the earth," he wrote, "are chosen people of God, if ever He had a chosen people." Wherever Jefferson was, he tried to make the surroundings more beautiful (Jackson, 1970).

Acting as both educator and architect, Jefferson brought a new kind of school into being. He called it his "Academical Village," and his idea was to get the school out of the bustle, temptations, and conflicts of the city. When Jefferson founded the University of Virginia in 1817, he located it a mile outside the barely settled village of Charlottesville.

Jefferson seemed to have an interest in the setting when he stated:

It is infinitely better to erect a small and separate lodge for each professorship, with only a hall below for his class, two chambers above for himself, joining these lodges with a covered way to give a dry communication between all the schools the whole of these arranged around an open square of grass and trees. (Stern, 1986, p. 121)

The Developments of the 19th Century

In 1853, the first village improvement association was founded in Stockbridge, Massachusetts. "Improvement" meant beautifying the common, the cemetery, and the roads leading into town. The example spread rapidly, and one village after another undertook to adorn its various public areas including the campus of the local college or seminary with greenery (Jackson, 1970).

A New Awareness of Landscaping

By the 19th century, the landscape concept design began to turn away from the natural place, from developing the capabilities of the site, and started to add artificial elements. Humphry Repton (1752-1818) introduced such things as the fountain, the greenhouse, flower beds, a terrace, or a drive to soften the natural designs typical of those used during the 17th century. By the late 19th century, some campus designers started to use design concept from the beginning when planning a new campus, but for the most part, the idea of campus beautification was new and was incorporated at only a few institutions.

A New Wave of College Founding

The second phase of college founding in the United States, starting before and continuing through the Civil War, extended the colonial aesthetics of greens to include tree-lined walkways, buildings, and plantings. These aspects of campus beautification were incorporated into the design of Bowdoin in Maine, Dickinson in Pennsylvania, Davidson in

North Carolina, and Wittenberg in Ohio. An outstanding example, founded in 1837, is Mount Holyoke College in Massachusetts with more than 800 acres that include four open quadrangles overlooking a small lake and, beyond the Prospect Hills, woodlands, trails, paths, and a wildlife sanctuary.

One carry-over from Jefferson's concept can be seen in the locating of the U.S. Naval Academy. Stern (1986) remarked that, in 1845, the U.S. Naval Academy was established at Fort Severn in Annapolis rather than at the Naval Asylum in Philadelphia, reputedly on the decision of Secretary of the Navy, George Bancroft. A university man, Bancroft was convinced that a campus should be designed at a "healthy and secluded" site away from the "temptations and distractions" that necessarily connect with a large and populous city.

Such examples in campus development were still relatively rare. American schools made very little progress in the area of campus beautification. They were simply places where students came to learn from the teacher. Little thought was given to the appearance of the buildings and grounds, which were officially described in 1844 in New York as "naked and deformed" (Knight, 1951).

Concerns of the 20th Century

In the United States there are more than 3,300 campuses of higher education. For the most part these are pleasant places to visit. The landscape architect's work is visible from coast to coast, from Stanford to Amherst College with its hill top location. An extraordinary range in campus type, extent, and use of landscape reflects the climate and acreage available and speaks of cultural values. America's first colleges, Harvard, Yale, and Brown, each more than two centuries old, began with modest yards and greens, as did Dartmouth and Princeton. The landscapes of Harvard, Yale, and Brown evolved, though constrained by

limited land ownership; Princeton and Dartmouth were extended generously into their rural surroundings.

Recognition of preservation of important historical sites began to grow in the 1930s. This new commitment to protect *tout ensemble*--the sum of the buildings and open spaces--rather than just individual structures also moved to preserve the landscape of educational institutions. Now, landscapes are considered important on their own merits, rather than principally in association with a famous person or building (Turner, 1989).

Landscapes to Create a Sense of Place

Distinctive landscapes help create a sense of place: the informality of the original Radcliffe Quadrangle versus the mannerly sculptured garden of the University of California. The enchanting Sarah Duke rose gardens at Duke University (1838) provide tranquil enclaves for quietness and meditation near the busy central campus.

Different types of trees and a variety of ground cover proclaim regional differences. Simson College (1860) was laid out to look like an urban park, a nice gesture amid prairie and farmland. The University of Miami campus (1925) is wrapped around a palm-rimmed artificial lake. All campuses are truly pedestrian precincts, which provide special opportunities to their inhabitants to experience the intertwining of architecture and landscape for aesthetic enjoyment (Dober, 1989).

The rise of the modern university brought about formal designs inspired by romantic interpretations of Gothic, Georgian, and classical architecture. Monumental enclosed quadrangles can be found at Ohio State University (1870), the University of Chicago (1891), and Southern Methodist University (1910). Typically, the concept includes a visually commanding building and open spaces.

The Emergence of an Adventist School System

During the latter part of the 19th century, while the American public-school system was emerging, the Seventh-day Adventist denomination was beginning to develop its own educational system. In 1872, the first official Seventh-day Adventist school was established. It was housed in a little frame building, 20 by 30 feet on Washington Street in Battle Creek, Michigan (Spalding, 1962).

Since that early beginning in 1872, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has developed a world-wide educational system. In this system, there are universities, colleges, academies, and elementary schools. Many of these institutions have developed beautiful campuses, but unfortunately many have not due to lack of funds or lack of vision.

A need for a Vision

A vision is needed to develop a campus which will bring a sense of place for Christian worship and fellowship. This vision may come from a number of individuals. It need not come from someone in administration, but this would streamline the process if this were the case. There are several major factors that need to be considered before a project of this nature is undertaken. The first and most obvious factor is the vision. Someone is needed who is skilled in campus beautification who has the ability to take a campus from its present state to a state of development which will include the elements needed to produce the desired effect. In this case a campus which will inspire students and faculty alike not only to perform better academically but ultimately be drawn closer to God.

There are two basic ways of going about this. The first one is to hire a landscape architect who understands the vision and is willing to develop it into a set of drawings. The next step would be to implement these plans as funds become available. This is usually quite expensive but does speed things up considerably. The other alternative is to find someone

within the church or college with the necessary skills to oversee the development of the project. This would eliminate the need for an architect, but would place the vision in jeopardy because it would be dependent on the successful implementation and completion by one person. The danger here is losing the original vision because it is not part of a landscape master plan or the possibility of the person moving before the job is completed. It should be noted that a landscape master plan is important to the fulfilment of the vision.

The next factor which should be mentioned is the financial element. The beautification of a campus is certainly a positive selling point for most, if not all colleges and universities. Beautification of a campus costs money not only initially, but also to maintain. If funds are not available or if the administration is not willing to make them available for beautification, the next alternative is to find funds from other sources. Usually there is no problem with the idea of campus beautification, it is with the financing. There are several approaches one can take. There could be a fund raising drive from the faculty, students, and local community. There could be grants from various organizations or there could be donations and bequeathments for memorial gardens. If the vision is presented in an appropriate way the funds can be generated.

Integration of Faith and Learning and the Campus

There are several ways in which faith can be woven into the beautification of the campus. Everything in nature is of God. The first book in the Bible says that it was God who created the earth. In fact, he created the whole universe. He brought into being everything that is in the sky and on the earth and in the sea.

Then he commanded, "Let the earth produce all kinds of plants, those that bear grain and those that bear fruit" -- and it was done. So the earth produced all kinds of plants, and God was pleased with what he saw. Genesis 1:11-12.

It is He who made the flowers and who gave to the sparrow its song who says, "Consider the lilies," "Behold the birds." p.95 In the loveliness of the things of nature we may learn more of the wisdom of God than the schoolmen know. On the lily's petals, God has written a message for us, written in language that we can read only as it unlearns the lessons of distrust and selfishness. He has given us the singing birds and the gentle blossoms to brighten and gladden our path in life. He has filled earth and air and sky with glimpses of beauty to tell us of His loving thought for us. He has surrounded us with beauty to make life bright and joyous and beautiful with the love of Christ--like the flowers, to gladden other lives by the ministry of love (White, 1956).

God cares about the way we treat the earth and everything in it. We have the ability and responsibility to protect nature and in doing strengthen our relationship with him. As Christians, we have a God-given mandate to care for the earth. God told Adam and Eve "have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that lives upon the face of the earth." God did not give this dominion so humanity could plunder the earth's resources. Rather, He intended that humans be stewards, to keep and protect the earth.

As Seventh-day Adventist educators this mandate should be taken to its fullest potential. We could make our campuses the most beautiful places on earth if we are willing. We could leave areas of the campus in a natural state for the study of animals and water life. We could plant trees, shrubs, and flowers in an attractive manner which will draw us closer to God.

The entrance to the campuses should be well designed, making a statement to all who come onto the campus that we care about the earth and the image we want to portray. The

lighting, the sidewalks, the streets and grounds could reflect a careful thought out plan bringing symmetry and beauty to the campus.

Creating a Sense of Place

Creating a sense of place is one of the best ways to bring into reality the idea of integration of faith and learning. The campus could be divided into sections which would be developed according to its location and its relationship with other sections. We might think of it as a big house with many rooms and each of the sections a room. In one large room could be the academic area, perhaps around a quadrangle. The grounds within this quadrangle crisscrossed with sidewalks and along these sidewalks ornamental trees, flowers, and shrubs.

In another large room could be located the faculty homes, each one unique and landscaped according to the individual taste of each occupant, but each one reflecting their love of nature and beauty.

In a smaller room could be the entrance to the campus, beautifully landscaped and well maintained, reflecting the statement which would be interpreted by all who come to the campus.

In another room, which may be large or small is an area that is left natural, with the grass tall and the trees untrimmed. In this room could be found animals and birds and insects and if there is a stream, many kinds of water creatures to be observed and studied.

In another room there could be gardens with fountains, benches, trees, shrubs, flowers, paths, and manmade structures to support the climbing flowers and shrubs creating an area of special interest and which could be used for weddings and special occasions.

In another room, a special room, a room dedicated to meeting God, a wall of natural stone around the outside in an informal manner, surrounded by trees and shrubs and flowers. Inside, a water fall and stream with fish and a fountain which creates a pleasing sound, for

there is nothing like the sound of falling water to soothe the soul. Benches placed along the inside walls for sitting and kneeling for private prayer and meditation. Quite, soft, instrumental music softly in the background helping to create the sense of place. Special lighting at night could transform the room into a place of beauty unlike the day, drawing students, faculty, members of the community to sit, listen, forget about the struggles of the day and be drawn closer to God.

THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN OF PRAYER

There's a garden where Jesus is waiting, There's a place that
is wondrously fair; For it glows with the light of His
presence, Tis the beautiful garden of prayer.

There's a garden where Jesus is waiting,
And I go with my burden and care, Just to hear from His lips words of
comfort, In the beautiful garden of prayer.

There's a garden where Jesus is waiting,
And He bids you to come meet Him there, Just to bow and receive a new
blessing, In the beautiful garden of prayer (Scroll, 1920).

The areas of the campus which would be used to meditate and pray would be special. Therefore, it would depend upon the size and site layout as to how many may be needed. By careful planning, the entire campus can be beautified in such a way as to bring a feeling of inspiration to the students and faculty.

Conclusion

Throughout history man has longed to be surrounded by beauty. The idea of surrounding an educational facility with beauty to attract students and to inspire students and faculty is not a new idea, but one that has not been wide spread. The thesis of developing a landscape to create a sense of place has developed fairly recently and the premise of developing certain aspects of a campus to deliberately enhance ones spiritual relationship is

new. Using the campus as a factor in integrating faith with learning is intended to use another dimension in bringing humankind into a closer walk with the creator.

Each campus is different and located in different geographical and climatic regions. These ideas are not complete but are intended to spark an interest in this supposition and hopefully SDA campuses around the world will create such places which reflect our love for Christ because: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him." I Cor. 2:9.

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APPENDIX

I would like to include as an appendix a project at the Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies (AIAS) in the Philippines. I have the privilege of being a professor in the Education Department, and serve as the secretary to the campus development committee. The campus was started in 1989 and the faculty moved to the campus in 1991. The campus is still under development, so it gives me a once in a life-time opportunity to be involved in its development, especially the grounds.

We are placing gates and other objects along each sidewalk to designate it as a sidewalk from a particular country. We already have one from Japan and one from Indonesia. The gates serve as entry points into the academic area, creating a sense of place.

The project that I want to share with you is a meditation and prayer garden located in the center of the campus which makes a nice statement; Christ is the center of our institution.

In June of 1991 my seventeen year old son was killed in a car accident and I wanted to do something in his memory, so I thought about giving the meditation and prayer garden his name. I approached the administration and told them of my plans and they agreed. I worked with the architect, engineer and contractor to develop a special place that would encourage our faculty and students to come and worship.

We thought about the things that create a sense of place for worship and decided that we needed the sound of water and the sound of religious music. We also wanted to have small private places for individual meditation and prayer. We wanted to have flowers and shrubs to add color and beauty. As a result we have a large split level area with water fall, stream, fish, and fountain. We have thirteen individual areas for families, small groups,

couples, or individuals to meditate and pray. We have flowers and shrubs that add to the beauty. All of this is enclosed by a natural rock wall about five feet high with two entrance and exit gates. The grounds surrounding the prayer garden are well landscaped and maintained.

There are a variety of lights at night to give the garden a colorful, peaceful atmosphere for worship. Most students and faculty come very early in the morning or early in the evening to worship and meditate. The Phillip Boughman Meditation and Prayer Garden is truly a blessing to the campus and brings each one who enters its gates closer to God and their Creator.