Western technologies and Chinese stylistic features but also to urge his Chinese colleagues to do likewise. Meanwhile, his adaptive architecture paralleled the goal of the “indigenous church movement” launched by missionaries in 1923–24, which sought to develop a native Christian art and architecture.

Cody shows that Murphy’s success with his hybrid style was due partly to his personality. He was “deft at solving ‘bricks and mortar’ architectural questions” (41) and “demonstrated considerable personal skills . . . expediency, deference, a down-to-earth attitude, an attention to detail, confidence, energy, resourcefulness and variability” (51). Those characteristics enabled him to win client after client, from Connecticut to Asia, from Western missionaries and businesses to the Chinese government. Cody argues that his rival Hussey failed because his “commitment to understanding Chinese architecture, unlike Murphy’s, was not matched by an understanding of how to please the client and manage the building site” (85).

Building in China is part of a small but growing literature on twentieth-century Western architects who practiced in early-twentieth-century China. Based on careful research on Murphy’s commissions and working relationships, Cody convincingly argues that the architect collaborated with his clients to create a twentieth-century Chinese-style architecture and, through his wide connections with Chinese architects and politicians, initiated a proliferation of such buildings as new political emblems. This book makes a major contribution to knowledge of a complex area long overlooked in canonical modern architectural history defined through the development of architecture in the West.

Cody’s extensive archival research and interviews with the many people who knew Murphy, both in the United States and China, is invaluable, especially considering that modern Chinese architecture was not treated as cultural heritage in China until the mid-1980s, and that many of the records documenting those architects and buildings have disappeared in the course of China’s wars and social upheavals. In his reliance on textual materials, however, Cody has neglected some of the possibilities of the visual sources. His excellent analysis of the plans of Murphy’s banks for the International Bank Cooperation, which segregated Chinese clients and bank employees from Westerners, demonstrates the potential of this kind of approach, which he did not extend to the architect’s other works, particularly those in his Chinese mode. Consequently, Cody has not written about the stylistic development of Murphy’s work, although the illustrations demonstrate its importance.

Visual analysis could have helped answer the question Cody poses in his introduction—“what ‘tradition’ meant to Murphy” (3)—one that might lead to a postcolonialist discussion of how an architectural tradition was invented. Cody’s answer is that for Murphy, “Chinese architectural tradition encompassed three elements: the programmatic creation of space exemplified by the Ming-Qing palaces of the Forbidden City (ca. 1421–1894); the architectural form associated either with those palaces or with other Chinese building types such as pagodas; and the structural or ornamental nature of those forms such as bracketing, roof treatments and color schemes” (3). But the depth of Murphy’s understanding of Chinese architecture is striking when compared to that of other Western architects building in China during the period, such as the unknown practitioner who designed the St. Johns University campus in Shanghai in 1894; Fred Rowntree, who was responsible for the major buildings of the West China Union University in Chengdu in 1912; and A. G. Small of Perkins, Fellows & Hamilton, who did the same for Ginling University in Nanjing in 1919. What differentiated Murphy and made him more influential, I believe, is that he self-consciously drew on an official Chinese architectural language while others made reference to local traditions. His approach can be seen as a codification effort that ultimately ruled out other interpretations of a “Chinese style.” Moreover, visual analysis reveals the compositional similarity between, on the one hand, Murphy’s Bashford Memorial Building of Yenching University and, on the other, the Civic Center of Greater Shanghai and the unexecuted project for the Foreign Ministry Office of the national government in Nanjing, designed by the Chinese architects Dong Dayou and Yang Tingbao, respectively. All three share a tripartite composition with a central pavilion topped by a gabled and hipped roof and flanked by two wings capped with hipped roofs. This comparison may provide a clue to the puzzle Cody presents toward the end of his study: “the few Chinese architects and builders still alive who recall Murphy remain convinced that he exerted considerable influence, and yet they too are hard pressed to say precisely how, or upon whom that influence was exerted” (217).

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Gretchen Townsend Buggeln
Temple of Grace: The Material Transformation of Connecticut’s Colonial Revival churches, which were popular in the first two decades of the twentieth century, stood as nostalgic icons of a simpler time. Their classical porticoes or porches, noble brick walls pierced by round-headed windows, and multistaged steeples conjured up thoughts of homogeneous communities gathered on Sunday mornings to share their faith in God and nation. In the words of one writer in 1944, this quintessential New England church type came to articulate a desire for “the original ideals of this country, inseparable from the old moral and spiritual standards of the Christian churches” (234), imagery employed to this day in greet-
ing cards, magazine covers, calendars, and a host of other media to evoke spiritual and national virtue.

But is the ideological role played by churches in the twentieth century consistent with the conscious intent of those who built churches more than a century earlier? Yes, concludes Gretchen Buggeln in her thoughtful study of original Federalist and Greek Revival churches in Connecticut, but not in the ways one might expect. Delving into the meanings and motivations that informed congregations’ decision-making in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, *Temples of Grace* is a welcome, well-researched, and engagingly written deconstruction of these early Protestant churches. Examining the material aspects of the buildings, Buggeln deftly peels back the layers of religious, social, economic, and political meaning she finds embedded in them. The result is at once a compelling analysis of evangelical architecture and religion in the first third of the nineteenth century and an eloquent treatise on the significance of the study of material culture.

The central argument that unites the disparate strata of meaning asserts that the crucial subtext of the churches in their day concerned “Christianity’s relationship to the material world” (237). During a period in which ideas about authority—both political and religious—were rapidly changing, economic growth and the capitalist transformation of the market were burgeoning, populations were growing, and ideas of respectability were infusing family life, New England Protestant congregations refashioned their meetinghouses to play new roles in civic and religious life.

Buggeln begins with an investigation of how congregations financed and built their churches by providing detailed accounts of the raising of two Connecticut churches: the Congregational Church in Salisbury, completed in 1800, and the First Congregational Church in Hartford, erected in 1807. Drawing on original church records, she guides readers through the intricacies of congregational decision-making processes, examining the organization of the church committees charged with overseeing the building project; their approaches to deciding on the size, structure, furnishings, materials, and ornamentation of the proposed edifice; and their strategies for finding a skilled builder and gathering materials. This discussion leads naturally into that of financing, a subject on which Buggeln excels, and one that constitutes her most important contribution to the exploration of church buildings as material culture. In carefully detailing the strategies congregations used to fund their churches—renting or selling the seating within them, offering stock and subscriptions for the construction process—she demonstrates that congregations eagerly transformed their churches into capital. The marketplace thinking that engulfed early-nineteenth-century cities and towns, she argues, was not left outside the narthex, but was readily integrated into religious life as congregations sought to obtain impressive buildings.

As in the market, it was competition that drove this transmutation of meeting-place into capital. With the waning of their denomination as the established religion in Connecticut, Congregationalists found themselves vying for members with Baptists, Episcopalians, Methodists, and Presbyterians. Many religious societies reasoned that an attractive, up-to-date church announcing the prosperity and propriety of the congregation inside would afford them an edge. Thus, their new church would need to broadcast itself to the broader community as a capital investment. Recognizing that the run-down and dilapidated meetinghouses that had served previous generations would no longer do, religious societies voted to build, using the most advanced architectural techniques and styles available.

Buggeln’s subsequent deconstruction of the cultural and religious meanings that early-nineteenth-century evangelicals associated with the classical façades of these churches significantly counters long-held beliefs that classicism was borrowed by churches, as by government and financial institutions, to emphasize the rationalistic character of Enlightenment ideas. Instead, Buggeln argues, congregations described the design of their new churches in aesthetic terms such as elegance, taste, and gentility—elements that not only served as important cultural capital in this competitive context, but did so by eliciting not Enlightenment thought but the sentimental ideals of Romanticism. Placing the material features of the buildings within the context of the experiential, emotion-laden language of early-nineteenth-century evangelical religion, in which salvation is based on a life-changing conversion experience and piety, the author persuasively demonstrates that beauty in the guise of aesthetic fulfillment became a significant factor in the setting and practice of New England religion. Harking back to Jonathan Edwards’s guidance two generations before, congregations came to view beauty as a divine category “assigned a didactic, spiritual function” (143). When God touched an individual’s heart, the reasoning went, that person became more sensitive to beauty, and, thus, the dignity and elegance of church buildings not only attracted worshipers but assisted devotion. Beauty, they believed, was required in architecture, ornament, furnishings (including communion cups and plates), and music as a means to salvation as well as a vehicle for piety. This conception of religious sentiment and the linking of refinement with piety, Buggeln shows, also led to the unorthodox idea that God’s presence within the church was of a different character than it was elsewhere—that the church, as the House of God, was singularly sacred. Churches came to be viewed as special places that provided a “contrast to, even a refuge from, life in the world” (157).

Nevertheless, these structures were also clearly of the world, and, as the author explains, contributed significantly to the establishment of a political economy that related democracy to Christian morality. The white steeples of Federalist churches soaring over city and town became defining features of the nation’s landscape and a visual symbol of cities’
they were frequently mentioned in
development and prosperity. As such,
they were used for public events from
school commencements to Election Day
activities. Quoting Mircea Eliade,
Buggeln points out that "it is by virtue of
the temple that the world is re-sanctified
in every part" (193); these new churches
went far to sanctify growing cities.

Linking all the political, social, eco-

demic, and cultural meanings is
Buggeln's overarching assertion that
congregations used the material world of
buildings and furnishings to negotiate
religious belief within a changing world.
As she demonstrates, such negotiation
involved significant transformations of
religious practices themselves, which are
in turn given eloquent witness by the
material culture of church architecture and artifact.

While Buggeln's cultural history
approach leaves a few categories of
inquiry undereexamined—her discussion of
Congregationalist theology, for instance, successfully links the sentiment-
ial ideas of piety to the New Divinity
revivals but does not discuss whether or
why more orthodox congregations also
adopted the new buildings—her mar-
shaling of the material evidence for the
integration of the sentimental into
churches offers a significant new reading of
early-nineteenth-century Calvinist
religious practice. In the end, just as these
churches reassured nineteenth-century evangelicals that religion and the expand-
ing material world could be aligned—that "God loves a proper and
genteel consumer" (237)—they continued
to reassure twentieth-century con-
sumers that no inherent contradiction
existed between religion and materialism.

Clearly, the import of Temples of
Grace extends well beyond that of a sim-
ple inquiry into regional vernacular
architecture. Well-written and accessi-
bile, Buggeln's interdisciplinary examina-
tion offers valuable information and
approaches to scholars and students of
architecture, religion, and culture. Its
emphasis on material culture leads to
new questions while providing textual
evidence of ideas, thereby offering a
valuable contribution to the ongoing
repositioning of religious buildings
within cultural studies.

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Alison K. Hoagland and Kenneth A.
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Constructing Image, Identity, and
Place
Perspectives in Vernacular
Architecture 9
Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press,
2003, xvi + 292 pp., 158 b/w illus. $30
(paper), ISBN 1-57233-219-0

In 1980, North American vernacular
architecture scholars first gathered to
form the Vernacular Architecture Forum
(VAF). Since then, the scholarly and pro-
fessional group has met yearly to inspect
buildings and share research. Roughly
every other year, the VAF publishes a
select number of revised papers from the
meetings in the Perspectives in Vernacular
Architecture series. The ninth such
undertaking, Constructing Image, Identity,
and Place, edited by Alison K. Hoagland
and Kenneth A. Breisch, aptly represents
the breadth of vernacular architecture
scholarship in the United States today.

More than most other volumes in the
Perspectives series, Constructing Image,
Identity, and Place reflects the regional
emphasis of the meetings it represents:
Annapolis, Maryland, in 1998 and Colum-
bus, Georgia, in 1999. Over half of the
seventeen essays address Chesapeake or
Deep South topics. One of the delightful
outcomes of the emphasis on the Ches-
apeake, long a hearth area for vernacular
architecture scholarship, is that the vol-
ume combines the voices of scholars new
to the field with those of VAF stalwarts
such as Willie Graham, Carl Lounsbury,
and especially Camille Wells, who served
as the first editor of the Perspectives
series. The four essays addressing colonial
Chesapeake architecture significantly
refine our notion of this region and should
be required reading for scholars who have
not updated their knowledge of the
Chesapeake since the landmark article by
Cary Carson et al., "Impermanent Archi-
tecture in the Southern Colonies" (Win-
terthur Portfolio 16, nos. 2/3, 1981), or Dell
Upton's masterful Holy Things and Profane:
Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Vir-
ginia (Cambridge, Mass., 1986). Lest out-
iders to this area of scholarship think
vernacular architecture scholars consider
only the colonial era, however, well over
half the essays in Constructing Image, Iden-
tity, and Place focus on the built environ-
ment of the twentieth century.

Hoagland and Breisch organize the
volume not by period, region, or building
type, but, as the title implies, by the
themes of image, identity, and place. Of
these, Image is the most coherent, pro-
ceeding from Wells's delightful consider-
ation of eighteenth-century generational
and family conflict in tidewater Virginia
to William Littman's insightful study of
factory tours and Jessica Sewell's fascinat-
ing account of California suffragists' use
of downtown shopping districts as arenas
of political persuasion. The themes of the
other two sections are a bit more forced,
although the organizational scheme
makes for some interesting juxtapositions.
The final section, the amorphous Place,
brackets two well-matched essays on
impermanent architecture in the Ches-
apeake with four texts on the built envi-
ronment of the automobile age. The latter
includes another pair of essays by Timo-
thy Davis and Kathleen LeFrank on
parkways, as well as considerations of drive-in
theaters and of an early enclosed shopping
mall. Davis's sophisticated consideration
of the history of the American parkway
merits special attention, especially for its
acknowledgement of the problems of rigid
constructs that separate our definitions of
elite and vernacular building.

Unlike previous editors of Perspec-
tives, Hoagland and Breisch do not
attempt to define vernacular architecture,
instead referring readers to former editors'
introductions and letting the essays speak
to the breadth of the scholarship. While a
considerable range of opinion exists
among vernacular architecture scholars
about the desirability of limited or
expanded definitions, this volume supports