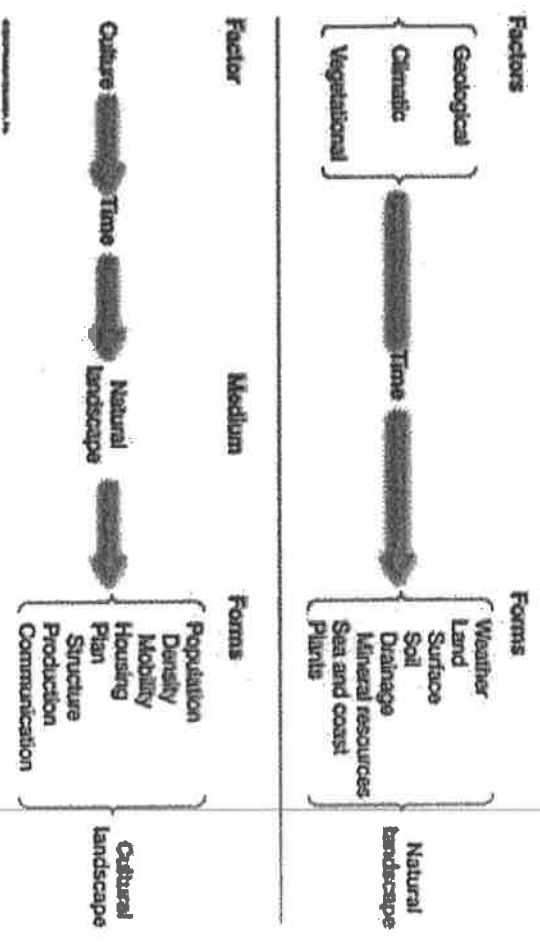


Sauer's "Morphology of Landscape"

- Material expression of culture manifest themselves in the landscape.
- Cultural landscape is a characteristic and tangible outcome of the complex interactions between a human group and its natural environment.
- A cultural landscape is a "humanized" version of a natural environment (i.e., landscape management).





The Sense of Place

What is the sense of place?

It is a combination of characteristics that makes a place special and unique. Sense of place involves the human experience in a landscape, the local knowledge and folklore. Sense of place also grows from identifying oneself in relation to a particular piece of land on the surface of planet Earth.

Another way of looking at sense of place is contrast: places like strip malls have little sense of place because they more or less all look very similar, often have no name and no one who wants to spend any time there or write anything about them. Whereas places that exhibit a strong sense of place have an identity and character recognized immediately by a visitor and valued deeply by residents.

Writers and geographers have been thinking about the subject for some time. Wendell Berry famously said 'If you don't know where you are, you don't know who you are'. Wallace Stegner interprets this as "... talking about the knowledge of place that comes from working in it in all weathers, making a living from it, suffering from its catastrophes, loving its mornings or evenings or hot noons, valuing it for the profound investment of labor and feeling that you, your parents and grandparents, your all-but-unknown ancestors have put into it. He is talking about the knowing that poets specialize in."

That is a sense that requires time, energy, and paying attention to realize. Many people in the 21st century spend so much time online, in their cars, at Starbucks, or in an office that they may have little connection to any unique place. Is the *sense of place* becoming a lost sense? Perhaps, although you can always go to Las Vegas to see shiny replications of the Eiffel Tower or Luxor pyramids.

Some of the tools for recording facets of the sense of place include maps, photographs, virtual reality, neogeography sites like Platial, stories, poems, interpretive displays, paintings, and other evidence of the human experience in a landscape. Examining these entry points can get you started appreciating the sense of place, but it is not anchored until you experience a place personally. So step outside and build up your placeness quotient.

More Quotes

"A sense of place results gradually and unconsciously from inhabiting a landscape over time, becoming familiar with its physical properties, accruing history within its confines."

--Kent Rydon

"The land was ours before we were the land's"

-- Robert Frost

"It is place, permanent position in both the social and topographical sense, that gives us our identity."

--J.B. Jackson
