Interpreting Places and Landscapes

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Behavior, Knowledge & Human Environment

- Knowledge of the immediate environment and the larger world is shaped by many knowledge systems

- Person's knowledge of the environment is derived from his direct and indirect experience with nature

- Conditioned by inherited biological characteristics and group/cultural characteristics

Interdependence of Places

- Most places are interdependent, each filling a specialized roles in complex and ever-changing geographies

- Individual places are tied in to a wider processes of change that are reflected in broader geographical patterns.

Interdependence of Geographic Scales

- Global and local scales

- Global events affect local people in almost all areas of the world (e.g. globalization)

- Local events, on the other hand, could also have global impacts (e.g. Gulf War)

Interdependence as a Two-way Process

- Places are not just distinctive outcomes of geographical processes; they are part of the processes themselves

- There is a continuous two-way process in which people create and modify places while at the same time being influenced by the settings in which they live and work

Landscape Painting

End of Harvest

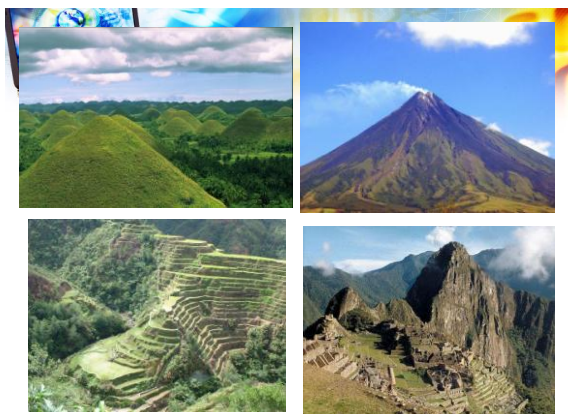## Landscape Garden

Rural Landscape

Urban Landscape

Two Major Kinds of Landscape

- **Natural Landscape** - Landscapes without any evidence or trace of human activities.

- **Cultural Landscape** - a characteristic and tangible outcome of the complex interactions between a human group and a natural environment.
  » Humanized version of Natural Landscape

Landscape as a Human System

- **Landscapes**

- Varied meanings for different people

- Perceived and understood differently by different people.

- Comprehensive product of human actions such that every landscape is a complex repository of society

Landscape as a Human System

- **Landscapes**

- Product of natural and man-made actions in the earth's surface

- Reflection of our culture and our experiences

- **Semiotics** – written code of landscapes
  - Studies how meaning is constructed and understood

Landscape as a Human System

- **Ordinary Landscapes** (vernacular landscapes)
  - Everyday landscapes that people create in the course of their lives
- **Symbolic Landscapes**
  - Representations of particular values or aspirations that the builders and financiers of those landscapes want to impart to a larger public
- **Derelict Landscapes**
  - Landscapes that have experienced misuse, disinvestment or vandalism

Landscape as a Human System

- **Symbolic Landscapes**

- Landscapes of power/affluence
- Landscapes of despair
- Landscapes of typical culture
- Landscapes of fear

Landscape as a Human System
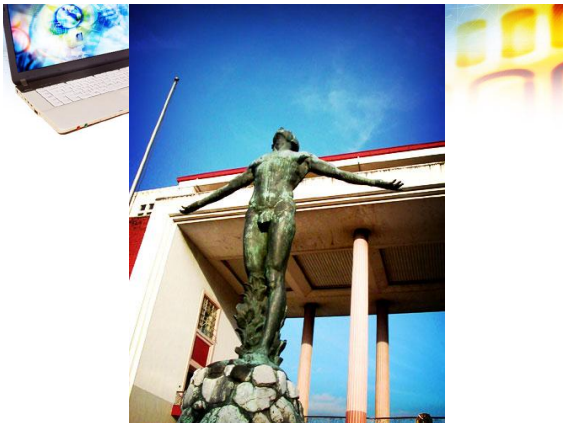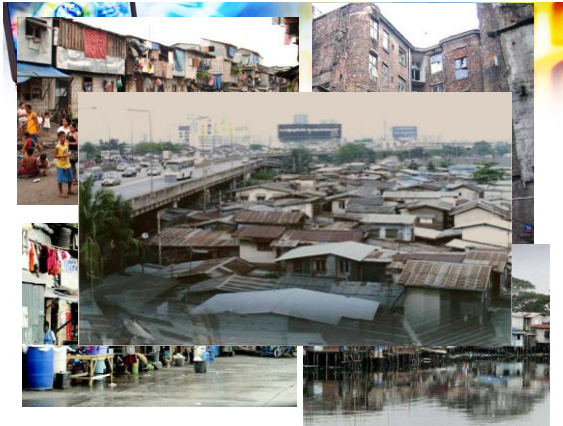
- **Humanistic Approach**

- Places the individual—especially individual values, meaning systems, intentions, and conscious acts– at the center of analysis.

- This caused the emergence of the study of environmental perceptions, which pointed out that different people comprehend the landscape
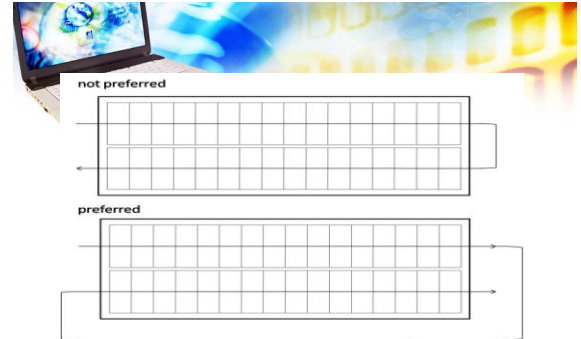
Landscape as a Human System

- **Landscape as text**

- Landscapes can be read and written by groups and individuals

- Writers – produce landscapes and give them meaning
- Readers – consume the messages embedded in landscapes

Landscape as a Human System

- **Coded Spaces – Malls**

not preferred

preferred

Landscape as a
Human System

- **Coded Space – Malls**

- Everything in the mall (lights, sounds, temperature, visual appeal, scents) screams the message of CONSUMPTION

Landscape as a
Human System

- **Coded Space – Malls**

- Cool temperature - entices people who want to get away from the hot and humid climate and puts off people who easily get cold

- Lighting – increases the liminality of the consumption site

- Sounds – used by store managers to entice people to come into their stores
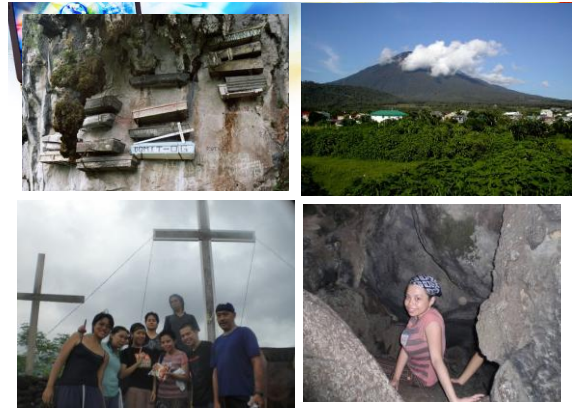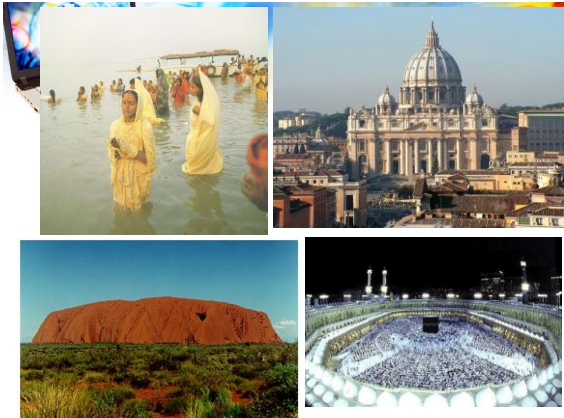

Landscape as a
Human System

- **Coded Space – Malls**

- Background – provides consumers with the impression of luxury and that they can find everything they need in the mall

- Scent – mobile advertisements

- Employees – reinforces the idea that luxury is available for everyone inside the consumption site

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Landscape as a
Human System

- **Sacred Spaces**

- Spaces endowed with divine meaning

- An area recognized by individuals or groups as worthy of special attention as a site of special religious experiences or events

- Are segregated, dedicated, and hallowed sites that are maintained as such generation after generation

Landscape as a Human System

- **Post Modern Spaces**
- View of the world that emphasizes openness to a range of perspectives
- Characterized by
  - living for the moment
  - consumption-oriented
  - eclecticism
  - decoration
  - parody
  - use of historical or vernacular motifs

Landscape as a Human System

- **Post Modern Spaces**

- Reliance on visual and experiential consumption

- The purchase of images

- The experience of spectacular and distinctive places and landscapes

Landscape as a Human System

- **Aesthetics of Landscape**

- Aesthetic – culturally determined standard of beauty and good taste

- Picturesque – landscape so impressive that it inspires awe or wonder

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**

- Territoriality – the persistent attachment of individuals or peoples to a specific place or territory

- Sense of place – feelings evoked among people as a result of the experiences and memories that they associate with a place and the symbolism they attach to it

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**

- Topophilia – the emotions and meanings associated with particular places that have become significant to individuals

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**

Cause:	Effect:
Economic and cultural globalization meant to influence the ways tourists, businesses, media firms and consumers perceive places and regions throughout the world.	Places are increasingly being reinterpreted, re-imagined, designed, packaged, and marketed

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**
- Niagara Falls

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**
- Niagara Falls

- Early 1820s, the Falls was the main attraction and became the most-often painted subject in early North American art

- In the 1930s, it became the major destination for honeymooners

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**
- Niagara Falls

- After Second World War, Niagara's tourist business developed into a million-dollar business, with up to 13 million visitors a year in the 1950s

- By the end of 1960s, the boom was over

Landscape as a Human System

- **Place Making and Place Marketing**
- Niagara Falls

- By the end of 20th century, Niagara reinvented itself

- In 1997, the opening of the Casino Niagara in Niagara Falls attracted over 10 million visitors
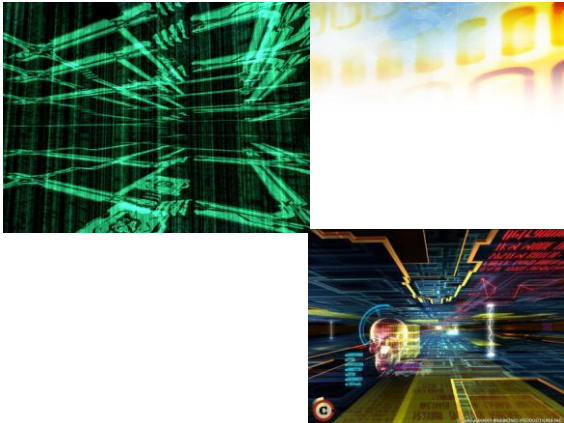
Landscape as a Human System

- **Cyberspace**

- Social setting that exists purely within a space of representation and communication

- No space, nowhere and everywhere at the same time

- Cultural landscape where anything is possible