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## Creating the Landscape Symbol Vocabulary for a Regional Image: The Case of the Kentucky Bluegrass



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### Abstract

A case study of the creation of an image symbol vocabulary for Kentucky is presented. The process of creating a regional image through landscape symbols involves two principal types of actors: patrons and interpreters. Patrons initiate the process by creating or contributing to a prototype landscape in the form of land use, building type, style and design, or manipulation of natural features. The patrons who contributed to Kentucky's preferred landscapes were wealthy gentry from England, Virginia, and Maryland. The interpreters were the architects and landscape designers who selected and filtered elements of the prototype landscape for reproduction and adaptation in new formats, contexts, and locations. Kentucky's regional image symbols are rooted in English gentry landscape tradition with inputs from Virginia and, after the turn of the 19th century, northern and eastern architects. Since about 1975, Post Modern architectural themes have found a rich source of images in the Bluegrass landscape, which are being used to further develop the use of symbols to represent not only the region but the entire state.

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