

APHG Chapter 1: Basic Concepts Notes

Human Geography

Study of logical arrangement of human activities in space-where they are & why there

Five Themes of Geography

Location

The position something occupies on earth's surface identified by:

Place Name

Toponym

Name of a particular location-sometimes provides information about the location

Site

Physical characteristics of a location (e.g. climate, soil, vegetation, etc)

Determines settlements

Ex. New Orleans

Situation

Location relative to other places

Easier to find an unfamiliar place & understanding its importance

Ex. New Orleans

Mathematical location

Based on latitude and longitude/equator and prime meridian
-made much easier by GPS (within 100m)

Relative vs exact (latitude/parallels & longitude/meridians, equator/prime meridian)

Place

Physical characteristics vs human characteristics

Sense of Place

Interaction between people and their environment

What have we done to the environment? vs What has the environment done to us?

Cultural Ecology

Geographic study of human-environment relationships

How humans modify their environment

Von Humboldt & Ritter pushed for finding *natural laws* to human geo

Environmental determinism

Physical environment caused social development

Vs

Possibilism

Humans have the ability to adjust to their environment-even w/limitations of physical environment
(e.g. topography, climate, agriculture)

Modifying the environment

Humans using modern technology to modify the environment by depleting scarce environmental resources, destroying irreplaceable resources and using resources inefficiently

See ex. Netherlands & Florida Everglades

Natural Landscape

environmental attributes that provide setting for human interaction
help shape how ppl live
what resources are available?

Cultural Landscape

Movement

Human migration

Connections between places

Via communication or travel

Distance

Absolute & relative

Cognitive distance

Distance perceived in a given situation

(distance in the eye of the beholder) can seem

longer/shorter, more or less pleasant going from

A-> C than A-> B

gravity model

Distance decay has diminished due to technology

Trade

Ideas

Interdependence/Globalization vs local diversity

“Integration of markets, nation-states and technologies in a

way that is enabling individuals, corporations and nation-

states to reach each other faster and cheaper than ever before”

Thomas Friedman

Globalization of economy & culture

A force or process that involves the entire world and results in

making something worldwide in scope; thus making it easier

for people to interact with others at great distances

Effects:

More uniform, integrated & interdependent, terrorism?

Region

An area (larger than a point and smaller than entire planet) defined by one or more distinctive characteristics

Helpful to distinguish broad national or global patterns

Often identified with the cultural (language), economic (industry) and physical (vegetation) features

Can be defined by physical characteristics OR shared cultural/political/economic ideas

Formal Region (aka uniform region, homogeneous region)

An area within which everyone shares in common one or more distinctive characteristics (either cultural, economic or physical)

Eg: Bible Belt, Montana

Functional Region (aka nodal region)

Area organized around a node or focal point

Characteristic that defines a functional region dominates at a central focus and diminishes in importance outwards

Organized around a focal point

e.g. The Vatican

Vernacular Region (aka perceptual region)

Place people believe exists as part of their cultural identity
Based on informal sense of place rather than scientific models
Exists as a part of cultural identity

e.g. The South

Maps

Reference vs Thematic

Scale model of the real world used to show data

Scale

Relationship of a feature's size on a map to its actual size on earth
often determined by information portrayed

Ratio/fraction

Written

Graphic

Projection

Often lead to distortion

Globe

Robinson Projection

Mercator Projection

Global Positioning System (GPS)

Used for navigation by utilizing satellites to determine current
position and desired locations

Geographic Information System (GIS)

Storing human or environmental information about a location in
layers used to produce maps
allows us to calculate whether relationships between objects on a map
are significant or merely coincidental

Spatial Association

The distribution of one phenomenon related to the distribution of another

Often leads to different conclusions based on scale

Space: distribution of features

Density

Frequency with which something occurs in space

Arithmetic density

Ppl/km^2

High population doesn't always mean high density

Or poverty

Concentration/dispersion

Extent of a feature's spread over space

Clustered vs dispersed

Pattern

Geometric arrangement of objects in space

Geometric patterns vs irregular distribution

Diffusion and Density

Diffusion

Process by which a characteristic spreads across space from
one place to another

Hearth

Where an innovation originates

Relocation diffusion

Spread through physical movement (eg currency)

Expansion diffusion

Spread of a feature from one place to another in a snowballing process due to:

Hierarchical diffusion

Spread of ideas from persons or nodes of authority or power to other persons or places (reverse hierarchical)

Contagious diffusion

Rapid widespread diffusion like a disease

Stimulus diffusion

Spread of an underlying principle