

2 History of Geography

(The study of location, place and interrelationships.)

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Origins of Geography

Roots

- ❖ Geography's origin goes back as far as humans began interacting with their environment and making decisions.

Awareness

- ❑ Early humans developed an awareness of their surroundings:
 - ✓ An awareness of the **component parts** of the physical environment.
 - ✓ An awareness of the **sequence of events**.
 - ✓ An awareness of the **natural cycles**.

Survival

- People have always made decisions about habitat use.
 - Food, water and shelter (protection) were needed to survive.

Natural Curiosity

- Why does it happen?
- How does it happen?
- When does it happen?
- Why does it happen here?
- Where else does it happen?

Origins of Geography

❖ The Ancients divided knowledge into two categories: **TIME** and **PLACE**

- **TIME** >>> *When?* >>> History
- **PLACE** >>> *Where?* >>> Geography

From these all other fields of study evolved as people became "specialists" by narrowing their areas of study.

>>> *The Why?*

CLASSICAL GEOGRAPHY

PLACE

ANCIENTS: Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, Babylonia, Indus Valley, Americas

← GREECE →
Oldest known maps (3800 BC, clay tablets)
Domestication of animals
Development of technology
Navigational skills
Trade

← ROME →
Exploration, Mapping, Inventories

← CHINA →
Travel, Mapping, Inventories, Natural processes

← ARABIA →
Preservation of the works of Greeks and Romans
Exploration, Record keeping, Research

← SCANDINAVIA →
Exploration of Northern Lands (N.Eur., Iceland, Greenland, N.Am.)

← RENAISSANCE EUROPE →
Great Explorations, Scholarship, Earth Sciences

This chart is available on the course home page for viewing and printing.

Earlier ← -500 -2500 -1500 -500 -0 500 800 1300 1700

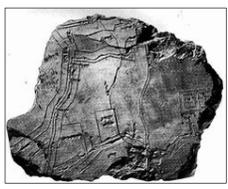
TIME (in 500 yr intervals) BC - AD (in 100 yr intervals)

Clay Tablets, Babylonia

Oldest known maps are clay tablets from Mesopotamia dating back to the 3800s BC (5800 years ago).



Map of the world, c.600s BC
British Museum Collection



Map of city of Nippur, c.1400s BC

Present-day Map of Europe

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The World of Homer 9th century BC (3000 yrs. ago)

The writings of the Greek poet Homer reflected the geographical concepts of his time.

Maps of coastal areas made by Ancient Greeks were fairly accurate.

Sailors tended to avoid the open seas and vessels hugged coastlines.

After National Geographic

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World of Herodotus 5th century BC (2500 yrs. ago)

Herodotus (a Greek living in Italy) gained much of his information about the earth from his extensive travels.

He was one the early group of people who believed the earth was round, not flat.

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Eratosthenes's World Map 3rd century BC

Eratosthenes, the chief librarian of Alexandria, is called the "Father of Geography."

Over 2200 years ago, he estimated the earth's circumference to be 25,000 mi by recording the angle of the sun's shadow in deep wells at noon.

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The World of Strabo 1st century AD

❖ Strabo was born in present-day Turkey into a wealthy family. He was well-educated and had access to the great libraries of Rome and Egypt.

❖ Strabo's "Geography" is a series of 17 books written 2000 years ago that recount the historical geography of Greece and Rome.

- It was used to educate statesmen and military leaders of the Roman Empire.
- He used Eratosthenes's map of the world as a base.

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Ptolemy's World Map 2nd century AD

Last of the ancient classical geographers was Ptolemy, a librarian at Alexandria, who compiled the 8-vol "Guide of Geography" which became the standard reference work for centuries.

Ptolemy's estimate of the size of the earth made it **smaller** than Eratosthenes's earth.

Columbus based his calculations on Ptolemy's measurements.

These numbers were used into the 1500s when explorers traveling the distances began to prove him in error.

Accuracy of known world on ancient maps is amazing, but decreases with distance from Europe.

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Non-Western Contributions

- The *"Tribute of Yu"* is an inventory of the Chinese empire written c.2,500 years ago (5th c. BCE).
 - **Oldest known Chinese maps**, drawn on wood and dates from the 4th c. BCE were discovered in 1986.
- The **libraries of the Arab world** preserved the works of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Scholars continued earth-focused studies during the period in Europe called the "Middle Ages" or the "Dark Age" (5th -10th c. AD).
- **Arab scholars**, esp. **al-Idrisi** (d. 1154), **ibn-Battuta** (d. 1378), and **ibn-Khaldun** (d. 1406) were travelers who wrote detailed descriptions of places they visited (Mediterranean, North Africa, Southwest Asia and India).
- **Asian scholars and merchants** recorded info and mapped areas as they traveled overland across central Asia to Europe and by ship to SE Asia, India and East Africa.
- **No record exists** of exploration outside their region by **empires in Africa and the Americas**.

11th Century Song Dynasty Map

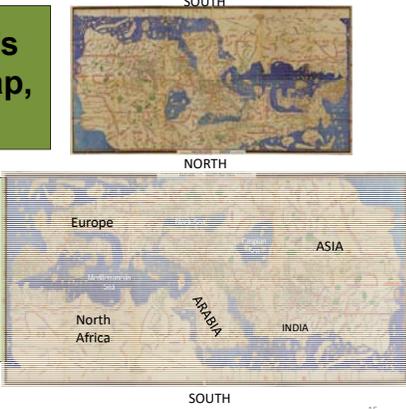
This 12th c. map on stone is a copy of an 11th c. map of China.

The theme is the great rivers of China.

The grid lines etched on the stone represent Chinese area measurement. This allows for size comparison by using a standard scale.

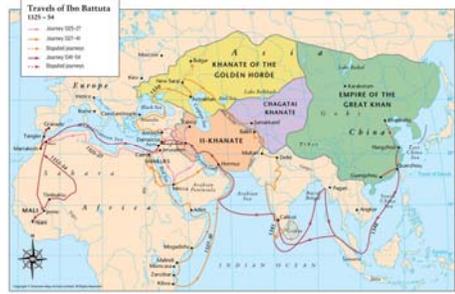


Al-Idrisi's World Map, 12th c.

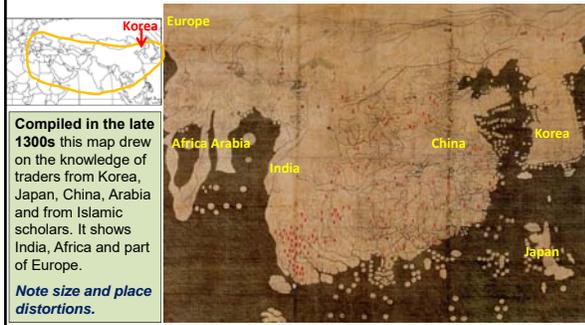


The smaller map is al-Idrisi's original 1154 layout, with south at the top. The larger map has been rotated to put south at the bottom so that the landforms are recognizable.

Travels of Ibn-Battuta, 14th c.



Kangnido Map, Korea: 1402



Compiled in the late 1300s this map drew on the knowledge of traders from Korea, Japan, China, Arabia and from Islamic scholars. It shows India, Africa and part of Europe.

Note size and place distortions.

Martin Waldseemuller's Map of the World - 1507

This is the first map in which the name AMERICA is used to designate the lands of the western hemisphere.



Note shape of North America and South America

Munster Map of the New World: 1552

It is the first map focused on the western hemisphere.

Ornate but very general.

Note location of Japan (called Zipangri) next to Mexico.

Juan Belleró Map of the Americas 1554

This is one of the first maps devoted just to the Western Hemisphere.

Nova Orbis Tabula in Lucem Edita Frederick de Wit, c. 1665

Maps like this were used as wall decoration in the grand rooms of palaces and estates.

Regni Mexicani Sie Nova Hispania Ludoviciana, N. Angla, by Homann

c. 1720 map with detailed information and accurate location.

It is a copper engraving with hand coloring. It was based on the 1703 Delisle map of Mexico and Florida.

Information used to draw it come from the logs of Spanish and French expeditions.

The David Rumsey Collection (<https://www.davidrumsey.com/>) has a very extensive collection of scanned images.

MODERN GEOGRAPHY

This chart is available on the course homepage for viewing and printing.

Milestones and highlights

<p>Rebirth in Europe. Basic Principles and General Laws of Nature recognized.</p> <p>Humboldt: generalist Von Thunen: specialist Kant: philosopher Ritter: academician</p> <p>Late 1700s to mid-1800s</p>	<p>Division of the discipline into branches.</p> <p>Physical Geography Anthropo (human) Geography Schools of thought develop: <i>Environmental Determinism vs Possibilism</i></p> <p>Mid/late 1800s to early 1900s</p>	<p>Creation of subunits within the branches. American geography grows.</p> <p>Regionalization Cultural landscape studies Geopolitics</p> <p>Accepted as a distinct university discipline</p> <p>Mid/late 1800s to early 1900s</p>	<p>Increased specialization. Less description. Fades as it loses its distinctive nature but 1980s "Back to Basics" movement results in a resurgence.</p> <p>Spatial analysis Data manipulation Quantification Hypothesis testing New technologies Extreme specialization Modeling</p> <p>Mid/late 1900s</p>	<p>Humanistic, theoretical, and scientific points of view espoused. Local area studies.</p> <p>Qualitative methodologies: Microstudies Social Theory Radicalism: Structuralism; Gender Studies Environmental studies, esp. climate related</p> <p>Late 1900s-early 2000s</p>
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Heyday of the great geographic societies.

GENERAL TIME LINE

< - 1800-----1900-----2000-----present

MODERN GEOGRAPHY

Full chart is available on the course homepage.

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Milestones and Highlights

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Humanistic, theoretical, and scientific points of view espoused. Local area studies.

Since 2000 many geographers have emphasized **spatial analysis** and **qualitative** (cultural) studies, including **deconstruction** (finding the hidden meaning).

Today geography and geographic applications are everywhere in the form of GPS which locates us and tracks and maps our every move.

Full chart is available on the course homepage.

Spatial analysis Data manipulation
Quantification **Computerization**
Hypothesis **Geographic Education**
testing Geog Info Systems

New technologies
Extreme specialization
Modeling

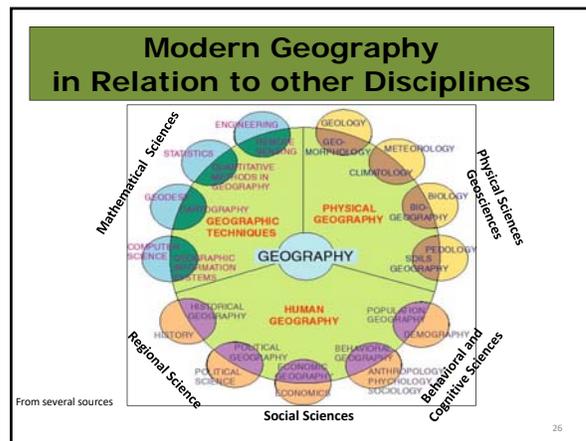
Qualitative methodologies: Microstudies:
Social Theory; Radicalism; Structuralism; Gender Studies:
Environmental studies, esp. climate related

The **1980s** brought about the "**Back to Basics**" movement stressing K-12 geographic education.

Mid/late 1900s Late 1900s-early 2000s

1945-----2000-----present

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NEXT

Studying Geography

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