

GEOG 247

Cultural Geography

Course Introduction II

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CULTURE

Culture is the essence of human geography because it influences all aspects of life on earth.

- ✓ **Learned** actions/behaviors of people.
- ✓ Material items **created** by a society.
- ✓ The collective (shared) **beliefs, symbolization, and organization** (ways of doing things) of a society.
- ✓ Society's **unique** use of space (decision-making).

Four Aspects of Culture

1. **TRAIT:** learned attribute; result of technology, organization and/or ideology.
2. **HEARTH:** source (point of origin)
3. **DIFFUSION:** spread from the hearth
4. **ACCULTURATION:** change by incorporating and adopting the traits of other cultures.



1. Cultural farming traits



2. Hearths and 3. Diffusion



4. Acculturation

Right: Baseball in Japan

Left: Japanese restaurant on Staten Island, NY

GEOGRAPHIC METHODOLOGIES

Geographers study the earth, its peoples and their cultures in a number of different ways.

Time reference:

- Past
- Present
- Future

Viewpoints:

- Physical or Human
- Topical or Regional
- Descriptive or Analytical

Most studies are a combination of the methodologies.

Geographic Methodologies

Geography of the Present

Studies current conditions, interrelationships and happenings.

- It **focuses on today.**
- Provides the visible and tangible components to study.
- It goes back in time to set the scene.
- It evaluates the present for future interactions.

Geographic Methodologies

Geography of the Past

Historical Geography. It looks at and analyzes the conditions that have led to or influenced the actions of people over time.

- It emphasizes **developmental processes.**
- It studies **change.**
- It may help to **explain the present.**

Geographic Methodologies

Geography of the Future

Uses the knowledge gained from the past and present to make **assumptions** about the future = **planning**.

- What conditions will exist in 3 months or 50 or 100 yrs?
- How will things look or conditions be at the end of the period in question?
- What will be the **impact** of humans and on humans?
(Takes into account aspects of **diffusion**, **acculturation** and **assimilation**.)

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Geographic Methodologies

Past, Present and Future Studies

- Use **geographic research methods** to **gather and analyze data**: field work, library research, remotely gathered information, data analysis software programs, and model building/application.
- Use **cartographic methods and GIS** to portray information spatially: mapping

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A Review of Maps and Mapped Information

Mapped data can be presented in several formats.

There are 5 general categories of maps.

Each conveys information differently, thus influencing a person's perception of the same data in a different way.

CATEGORIES:

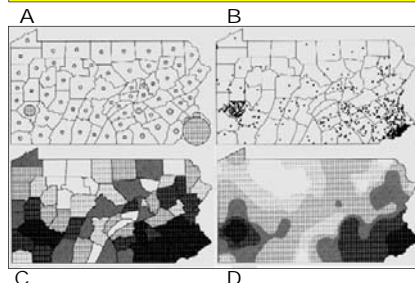
1. Choropleth
2. Isoline
3. Point Symbol
4. Flow Line
5. Cartogram

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Portraying Data

Presentation of **same data** in 4 formats:

- A. Graduated Circle map
- B. Dot map
- C. Choropleth map
- D. Isoline map



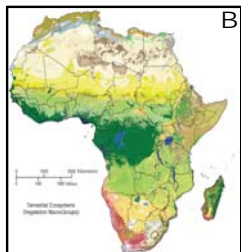
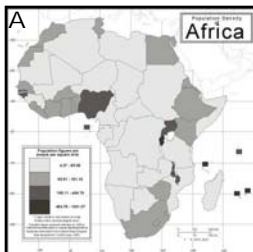
Reported cases of AIDS in Pennsylvania.

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Types of Maps - Choropleth

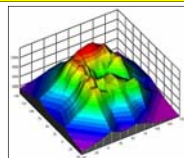
Uses colors and shading to either:

- (A) to convey amounts by area (quantitative)
- (B) to convey an area's characteristics (qualitative)

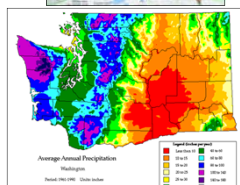
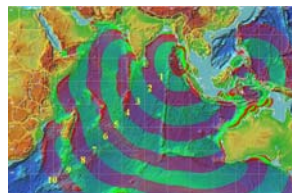


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Types of Maps - Isoline



Uses lines to connect points of equal value.



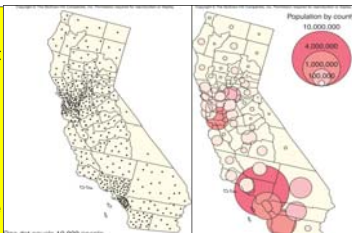
Types of Maps - Point Symbol

A. Dot:

Uses dots to indicate point values at a location. Shows **distribution** and **density** well.

B. Graduated:

Uses circles or other symbols **sized to indicate quantities** (proportional) present at a location.



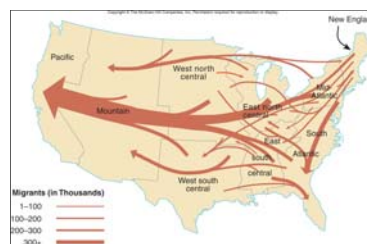
A

B

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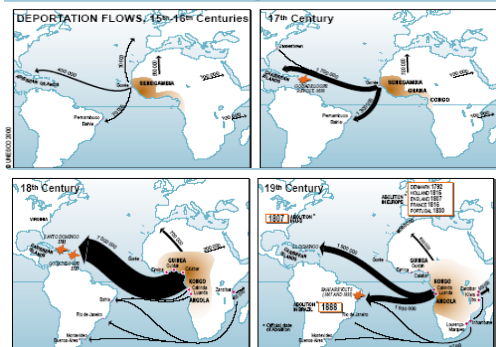
Types of Maps - Flow Line

Uses lines of varying widths (volume) to portray displacement (linear movement) using arrowheads (direction).



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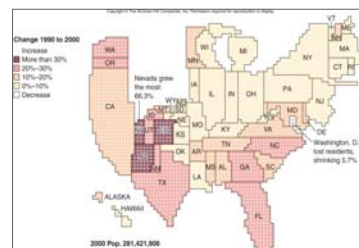
Flow Line Maps Showing Linear and Temporal Movement



Types of Maps - Cartogram

Uses data other than land area to portray the size of an area.

It is based on the **unit value of the topic portrayed, not land area.**



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Summary of the Types of Maps

✓Choropleth

Uses colors and shading to convey amounts/characteristics by area.

✓Isoline

Uses lines to connect points of equal value.

✓Point Symbol – two varieties of this type of map.

- **Dot** Uses dots to indicate point values at a location; shows distribution and density
- **Graduated symbol** Uses circles or other symbols sized to indicate quantities (proportional) present at a location.

✓Flow Line

Uses lines of varying widths to portray linear movement.

✓Cartogram

Uses data other than land area to portray the size of an area and is based on the **unit value of the topic portrayed, not land area.**

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Underlining Themes of Cultural Geography

Every chapter and topic covered will make reference to one or more of these themes.

1. **Region** (area)
2. **Diffusion** (spread)
3. **Ecology** (physical environment)
4. **Interaction** (relationships)
5. **Landscape** (human imprint)

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WHAT IS A REGION?

❖ A **region** is an area of the earth that exhibits **common traits or characteristics**.

❖ A **cultural region** is an area where **specific human traits** are present and dominate the lives of people.



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Regions

All regions have 5 characteristics:

1. **Location** (an area on the earth's surface)
2. **Spatial Extent** (the area that can be measured)
3. **Boundaries** (the area can be enclosed; most regional boundaries are "fuzzy" not distinct)



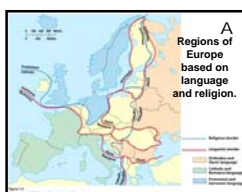
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Regions

All regions have

4. Categorization:

- a) **formal** (or uniform)
- b) **functional** (or nodal)
- c) **vernacular** (or mental)



Regions

All regions have

5. Hierarchical Arrangement

- a) major regions (includes smaller ones)
- b) minor regions (are parts of larger ones)

Regions within regions within regions within regions.

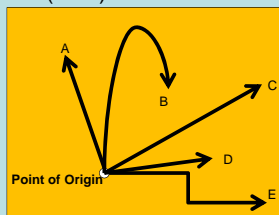
In each subregion the visual appearance (human imprint) varies depending on the characteristics of the people who live there, along with their works and their relationship to aspects of the natural environment.

HIERARCHY
Earth
Western Hemisphere
North America
United States
New York State
New York City
Manhattan
Upper East Side
HC 68 St. Campus
North Building
Geography Dept.
Room 1022HN
Right rear quadrant
Your seat by the door

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What is Diffusion?

❖ **Spread** from the **point of origin** (HEARTH) via a path (ROUTE) to a new location.



5 TYPES of DIFFUSION

- Expansion diffusion
- Relocation diffusion
- Contagious diffusion
- Hierarchical diffusion
- Stimulus diffusion

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Types of Diffusion

- **Expansion diffusion** - the spread within an area that increases both the numbers of users and the areal extent.
- **Relocation diffusion** - the spread that occurs with physical movement away, as migration.
- **Contagious diffusion** - the spread (expansion) by person-to-person contact.

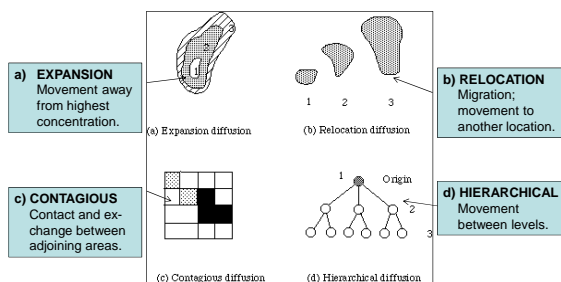
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Types of Diffusion

- **Hierarchical diffusion** – the spread (expansion) “up the ladder” from one **important** place to another **important** place (status), *skipping areas in between*.
- **Stimulus diffusion** – the spread (expansion) that results in the movement of a concept but not the actual trait (which has been modified by the movement away from hearth)

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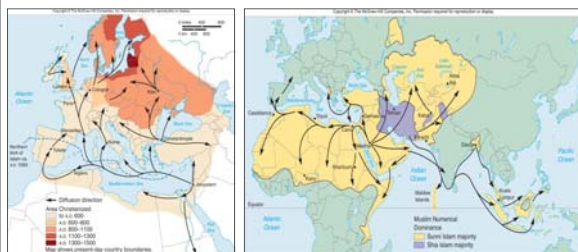
Types of Diffusion



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Example of Diffusion

Spread of religion **via** ports and river valleys **by means of** trade routes.



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Barriers to Diffusion

- **Time-Distance barrier**: where the acceptance of innovation and change decreases with increasing time (years) and distance (interaction) from point of origin (hearth).
- **Absorbing barrier**: one that stops the diffusion and blocks the spread of innovation.
- **Permeable barrier**: one that permits some aspects of innovation and change to pass through; result is a general modification from the point of origin.

What is Cultural Ecology?

- ❖ **The relationship between the natural environment, a cultural group, and their works.**

Historically people have **adapted** their ways to what is available to them.

They have been **influenced** by nature.

Many traditions, methodologies and rites are related to observed natural processes.



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Cultural Ecology Concepts

- ✓ **Cultural adaption**: the way people deal with environmental conditions, including the strategy used to overcome them.
- ✓ **Environmental determinism**: argues that people and cultures are shaped by their surroundings.
- ✓ **Possibilism**: argues that people being thinkers deal with environmental conditions as individuals based on their “personal reading” of a situation. Therefore, reaction to similar situations (conditions) will vary by groups of people.
- ✓ **Environmental perception**: people’s reaction to nature based on observation, awareness and experience.
- ✓ **Natural hazard**: a natural process that adversely affects people and therefore is deemed dangerous; reaction varies with perception.

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