

GEOG 247

Cultural Geography

Course Introduction III

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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 Cultural Interaction?

❖ **The complex relationship between people, their surroundings, their works and their beliefs.**

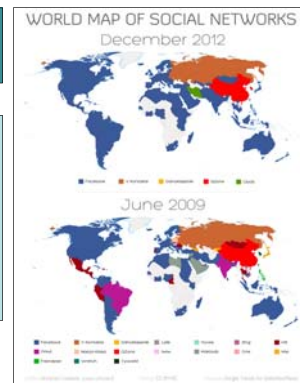
- **Includes** the study of spatial variations of culture, development of characteristic traits, the uniqueness of place, including the naming of places.
- **Shaped** by religious beliefs, political institutions and economic systems.
- **Studied** from the "social science" or "humanistic" point of view. *"Space" vs. "Place".*

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Cultural Interaction

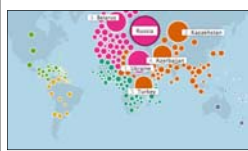
Cybergeography:
Studies the internet as a virtual place (has sites and locations and linkages).

Examines web sites and social media as places for human interaction.



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Cultural Interaction



Mapping friendships:
To whom do we talk?
Who do we "like"?



<https://dabrownstein.wordpress.com/2013/02/13/mapping-friendships>

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What is a Cultural Landscape?

❖ **Human imprint on the physical environment.**

- ❑ Can be seen but also heard and smelled.
- ❑ Can be minimal or overwhelming or destructive.
- ❑ Can be created by the use of technology as farming techniques and architecture.
- ❑ Can be created by the application of law as political boundaries and zoning.
- ❑ Cultural landscapes are not static.

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What is a Cultural Landscape?

❖ Human imprint on the physical environment.

- They change as people react to new events of the physical environment and to other cultural stimuli.
- They change as the actual quality of location (or the perception of its quality) changes over time.

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Cultural Landscape

THE
HUMAN
IMPRINT



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Cultural Landscape: Innovation



Cultural Landscape



Cultural Landscape

❖ Human imprint on the physical environment.

- Usually unique patterns develop overtime.
- Protecting and managing these landscapes and their component parts come under this rubric.
- Role of cultural societies, national parks/historic sites, UNESCO in preserving culture and history.
- Is it worth the cost? Who cares?
- Relationship to travel and tourism industry and to local economies.

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Term Project: 5 Topical Exercises

Each exercise has **several parts**, including **maps** and a **bibliography**, and a **due date**. All parts of each exercise must be addressed for full credit.

Exercise 1: Human Adaptation (*Cultural Ecology*).

Exercise 2: Spread of Cultural Phenomena (*Cultural Diffusion*).

Exercise 3: Complexity of Cultural Areas (*Cultural Interaction*).

Exercise 4: Associated Images (*Cultural Landscape*).

Exercise 5: My Neighborhood (*Cultural Region*).

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Topical Exercises

Exercise 1: Human Adaptation (Cultural Ecology).

Select two areas from the list of unique locations and discuss the adaptations the people (culture groups) living there made to them.

- High elevation plateau or mountain basin
- Hot summer desert area
- Middle latitude plains or steppes
- River delta or area of coastal barrier islands
- Steep-sloped landform area
- Sub-polar tundra region
- Tropical rainforest region

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Guidelines for Exercise 1: Human Adaptation

- Include: location on earth; traditional/historic ethnic geography of the area; cultural identification including language, religion, traditional housing, clothing style and food; aspects of acculturation and assimilation over time; accessibility to the outside world and movement within the area; and economic base.
- Start with an introductory paragraph: set the scene by defining cultural ecology and tell what you are going to do. Explain why you selected the two areas.
- The word traditional is included and underlined for a purpose. An ethnic geography is a discussion of the spatial aspects of ethnicity of a group of people within a region.
- Be sure to point out the similarities and/or differences of the two groups.
- End with a summary and conclusion (no new information here).
- PROOF READ, SPELL CHECK and PROOF READ AGAIN.

Diverse Cultural Landscapes



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Cultural Diversity

- Spatial expression of human differentiation is displayed by such cultural traits as:

language religion field patterns
clothing style architecture cuisine
rituals symbolization

Where did "XYZ" originate?

Who developed (created) "XYZ"?

Where is "XYZ" found now?

How did "XYZ" get there?

How has "XYZ" changed over the years?

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Distribution of Culture

Geographers look at the **spatial distribution** of cultural traits and features as a way to study **cultural diversity**.

We need to be able to

- understand the **creation** of cultural **patterns**.
- visualize the **spread** (diffusion) of cultural features over time and space
- determine if and how they have been **modified** (acculturation) by contact with other cultural features.

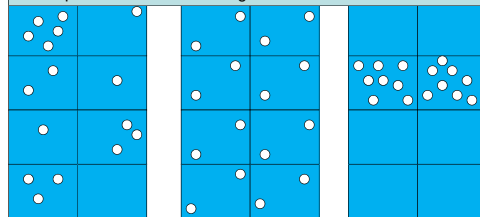
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Spatial Distribution

- Defined as the arrangement of items on the earth's **surface** (as objects/traits/characteristics/customs).

They can be located by latitude and longitude.

Their placement can be distinguished and their attributes described.



RANDOM

UNIFORM

CLUSTERED

Each grid has the same number of circles, yet each has a different look.

Spatial Distribution

Spatial distribution includes:

1. DENSITY
2. CONCENTRATION
3. PATTERN
4. SPATIAL INTERACTION
5. DIFFUSION

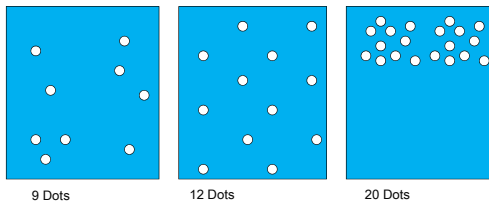
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Spatial Distribution

- 1. DENSITY** – the number of times something exists within a unit *as people per sq. mi. or seats per 400 sq. ft. classroom.*
- 2. CONCENTRATION** – grouping of density *as proximity to each other; clustered or dispersed.*
- 3. PATTERN** – the arrangement of density *as linear, rectangular, circular, centralized, random*

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1. Density: The number of times something exists within a unit



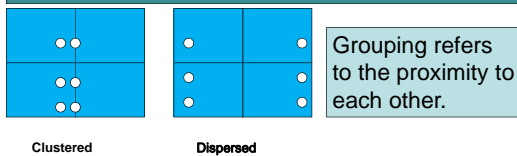
Which box has the greatest density?

Population Density Map of South and East Asia



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2. Concentration: The grouping



Each grid has the same density but in different concentrations.

Patterns of Disease Occurrence

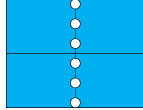


Autoimmune disorders seem to vary inversely with the number of infectious and parasitic agents. **WHY?** Some argue that as **indoor plumbing, sanitation, and living conditions have improved** over the years, decreasing the likelihood of coming in contact with pathogens and parasites, autoimmune disorders are able to become dominant.

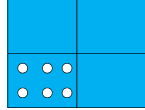
Or do parasites prevent autoimmune diseases?

3. Pattern: The arrangement

Linear



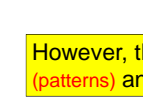
Rectangular



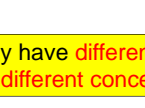
Each grid has the same density.



Circular



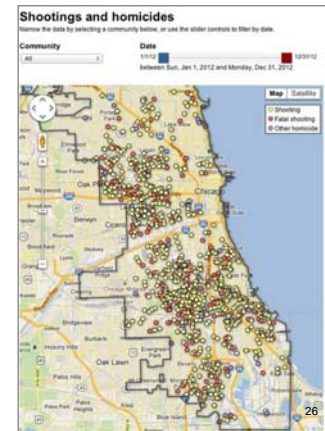
Random



However, they have different arrangements (patterns) and different concentrations.

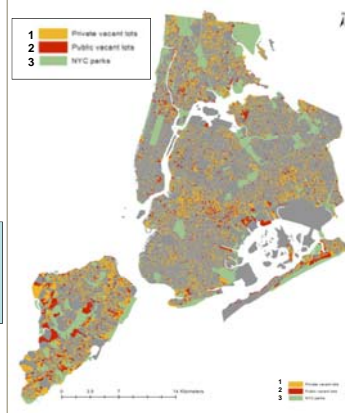
Pattern of Violence

Dot map showing location (pattern) of violence (shootings, fatal shootings and other homicides) in Chicago during 2012.



Pattern of Vacant Land in NYC

Differentiated by
1. private vacant lots
2. public vacant lots
3. city parks.



Map from: Vacant Land in Cities Could Provide Important Social and Ecological Benefits
Timon McPhearson, New York. August 21, 2012

4. Spatial Interaction: The contact

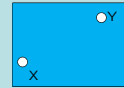
❖ The exchange of something between people and places.

a) Distance – How far?

Linear distance

Time distance

Psychological distance



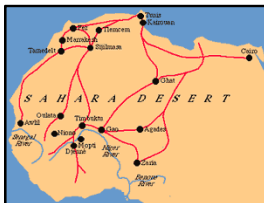
b) Connectivity – linkage; connection of points

c) Accessibility – ease of movement along links

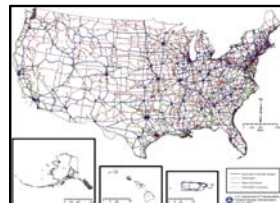
d) Distance Decay – frequency of contact decreases with distance

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Spatial Interaction: Routes of Travel



Caravan routes across the Sahara Desert



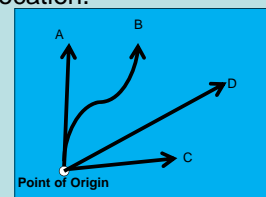
US Interstate highway system

The lower 48 states and the Sahara Desert have about the same area.

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5. Diffusion: The spread

❖ Movement from the point of origin to a new location.



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Diffusion of Cultural Traits via Trade Routes

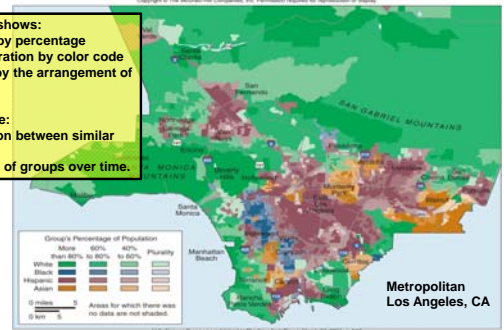


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Spatial Distribution of Ethnic Groups in the Los Angeles Metro Area

This map shows:
✓ Density by percentage
✓ Concentration by color code
✓ Pattern by the arrangement of the colors

Cannot see:
• interaction between similar groups
• diffusion of groups over time.



Cultural Realm

❖ A major world region with a blend of traits that makes it stand out from other regions.



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Pull-Push-Stay Factors

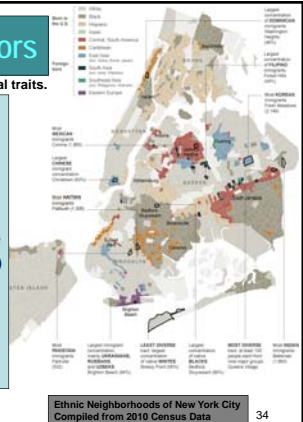
An example of spatial distribution of cultural traits.

Neighborhoods can become mini world culture regions.

People congregate in areas where things are **familiar** to them. This is a **pull** factor.

Some may **move out** because of this (things become unfamiliar). This is a **push** factor.

Others **do not want** to move or **cannot** move. This is a **stay** factor.



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N E X T

**INFLUENCES
ON CULTURE**

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