GEOG 247
Cultural Geography
Course Introduction IV
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Diverse Cultural Landscapes

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?

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.

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.

Spatial distribution includes:
1. DENSITY
2. CONCENTRATION
3. PATTERN
4. SPATIAL INTERACTION
5. DIFFUSION

RANDOM
UNIFORM
CLUSTERED

Each grid has the same number of circles, yet each has a different look.
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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Population Density Map of South and East Asia

2. **Concentration**:

Grouping refers to the proximity to each other.

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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?

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Patterns of Disease Occurrence

3. **Pattern**:

Each grid has the same density.

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.

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**Pattern of Vacant Land in NYC**

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**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

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**5. Diffusion: The spread**

- Movement from the point of origin to new location.

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**Diffusion of Cultural Traits via Trade Routes**
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.

Pull-Push-Stay Factors

Another example of spatial distribution of cultural traits.

Neighborhoods can become mini-versions of 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 don’t want to move or can’t move. This is a stay factor.

Types of Culture

Your textbook (Ch. 2) identifies 7 types of culture:

A. Material culture
   Visible aspects of culture; physical and tangible objects (clothing, art, tools, buildings, musical instruments).

B. Nonmaterial culture
   Oral and written traditions passed down through generations; beliefs, values, tales, songs, lore, superstitions.

C. Folk culture
   Small, cohesive, insular, nearly self-sufficient group; clan structure; often isolated; barter and trade economy.

D. Popular culture
   Dynamic group based in a large, heterogeneous society; features include individualism, innovation, and change; money-based economy; secular institutions.

Types of Culture (cont’d)

E. Indigenous culture
   Native to an area; distinguished by traits and conditions that may be different from the dominant national culture that usually was derived from colonization/occupation.

F. Subculture
   A unique group within the dominate culture; have norms, values, and material practices that differentiate them from the culture to which they belong.

G. Mass culture
   A form of culture that is produced and spread through forms of communication that have a very wide audience.

Sub and Mass Cultures

- No culture is pure. Variations have always existed.
  - Through invasion (war and migration), occupation, exploration, trade and religious zeal, people have spread their culture to others and have been influenced by the cultural traits of those with whom they have been in contact.
  - In the age of globalization and ease of information sharing, the rate of adaptation, blending and acculturation within culture groups has rapidly increased.

“Survival regions” exist: Areas where the essence of the original culture remains.
Survival Regions of the US

Culture of the Use of Alcoholic Beverages

- The use or non-use of alcoholic beverages by people is a cultural phenomena.
- By-product of natural fermentation processes affecting berries, fruits and grains.
- Long history: traces of alcoholic drink found in vessels over 9000 yrs old. Depiction of the use of wine and other spirits found on ancient murals and in ancient writings.
- Used for medicinal and religious purposes, esp. the benefit of an “altered state of consciousness.”
- Prohibitions developed as drunkenness impeded reliability and clear thinking.

Alcoholic Beverage Preference

Alcohol: Per Capita Consumption

Interactive Map

Wine Regions

The essence of wine varies with growing conditions and well as production methods. Wine regions produce distinctive products. Yet these can vary from year to year.

Wines are associated with national and ethnic cuisines and become part of the cultural heritage of an area.
Tolerance toward Alcoholic Beverages in Texas