

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



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Cultural Landscape



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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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Spatial Distribution

Spatial distribution includes:

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

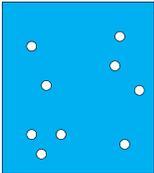
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Spatial Distribution

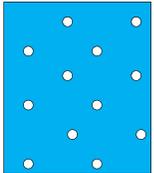
- 1. DENSITY** – the number of times something exists within a unit *as people per sq. mi. or seats per 400 sq. ft. classroom.*
- 2. CONCENTRATION** – grouping of density *as proximity to each other; clustered or dispersed.*
- 3. PATTERN** – the arrangement of density *as linear, rectangular, circular,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

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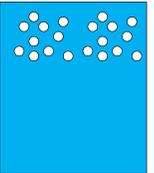
1. Density: The number of times something exists within a unit



9 Dots



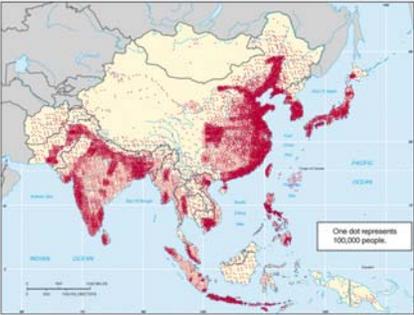
12 Dots



20 Dots

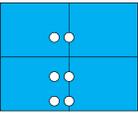
Which box has the greatest density?

Population Density Map of South and East Asia

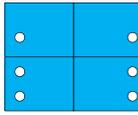


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2. Concentration: The grouping



Clustered



Dispersed

Grouping refers to the proximity to each other.

Each grid has the same density but in different concentrations.

Patterns of Disease Occurrence

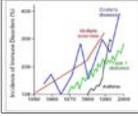
Distribution of Autoimmune Disorders and Helminths

Autoimmune disorders incidence



Helminths infestation incidence





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

Trade Routes in the Indian Ocean, c. 500-1000 CE

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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.

Metropolitan Los Angeles, CA

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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.

Ethnic Neighborhoods of New York City
 Compiled from 2010 Census Data

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NEXT

INFLUENCES ON CULTURE

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