Unit One

Geography: Its Nature and Perspectives

* **Geography** is the study of *where* things are found on Earth’s surface and the *reasons* for the locations.
* **Human Geography** the study of human activities from a spatial contextandasks two simple questions:
	+ Where are people and activities found on Earth?
	+ Why are they found there?
* **Basic Ideas of Geography**
	+ All places have location, direction, and distance with respect to other places
	+ Places may be large or small; the scale is important
	+ Places have both physical structure and cultural content
	+ The characteristics of places develop and change over time
	+ The elements of places interact with other places
	+ The content of a place is rationally organized
	+ Places may be classified into regions with similarities and differences
* **Location** position on the Earth’s surface.
	+ **Absolute Location**
		- The exact position of a place
		- Latitude and longitude - used to describe a point on earth in referenceto degrees, minutes, and seconds
	+ **Relative Location**
		- The position of a place in relation to the position of another place
		- Conveys interconnection and interdependence between different places
	+ **Site**
		- Describes the physical and cultural characteristics of a location
	+ **Situation**
		- Describes where a location is in reference to surrounding features in the larger region
	+ **Scale (Map-scale)**
		- Relationship between the size of a feature as depicted on a map and the size of the feature in actuality
* **Maps and Map Types**
	+ **A map** is a two-dimensional or flat-scale model of Earth’s surface.
		- ***Cartography*** is the science of mapmaking.
		- Maps serve two purposes…
			* As a reference tool to identify an object’s absolute and relative location.
			* As a communications tool to convey the distribution of human activities or physical features.
		- **Thematic Map** represents a single variable over an area (*tells a story*)
		- **Mental Map** an image in one’s mind about an area, location, or environment
		- **General Purpose/Reference Maps** display a variety of variables in an area

***the study of human activities from a spatial context***

*Using examples, explain differences between early maps and contemporary maps to illustrate how we communicate far more complex geographic data than earlier maps.*

* + **Earliest maps** were reference tools—simple navigation devices to show a traveler how to get from Point A to Point B.
		- First world map prepared by **Eratosthenes** (276–194 B.C.)
	+ **Contemporary mapmaking** - Shifted from simply being a tool that provides location reference to a tool used by geographers to communicate complex geographic phenomena.

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| ***Label the maps correctly***: Dot, Choropleth, Isoline, Symbol |
| http://photos1.blogger.com/blogger/908/1589/1600/equal%20intervals%20not%20based%20on%20range.jpg | http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-pgkW5g_u5mo/TZuTuKTwttI/AAAAAAAAABg/fix6vJAuHas/s1600/dot%2Bmap.gif |
| http://www.eastmodelsoft.com/software/images/me_micaps2upperair_height.png | http://www.clker.com/cliparts/c/d/7/c/12065725491921851857johnny_automatic_NPS_map_pictographs_part_1.svg.hi.png |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| ***Three Types of Map-scale are:*** | ***Define projection:*** | ***Define Meridians:*** |
| ***Define International Date Line:*** | ***Define Greenwich Mean Time:*** | ***Define Parallels:*** |
| ***Define GIS:*** | ***Define GPS:*** | ***Define Remote Sensing:*** |

* **Regions** are unique areas with unifying characteristics
	+ **Formal** an area that can be identified by its homogeneous cultural or physical characteristics
	+ **Functional** an area in which there is a center from which social or economic activities spread
	+ **Vernacular** an area not defined by any set of physical data, but by human conception of the area

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Region Type** | **Also known as…** | **Common Associated Traits** | **Example of a big-sized…** | **Example of a small-sized…** |
| **Formal** |  |  | The U.S.A | A zip code region |
| **Functional** |  | Has a clearly defined center of activities.Affected by distance decay! |  |  |
| **Vernacular** | Also known as a **perceptual** region. |  |  |  |

*Which region types are most, and least, influenced by the process of space-time compression and why?*



* **Place** is a specific point on Earth distinguished by a particular characteristic.
* **Space** refers to the physical gap or interval between two objects.
* The arrangement of objects in space is known as its **distribution**.
* Geographers **identify three main properties of distribution** across Earth.
	+ **Density**- frequency with which something occurs in space.
		- It involves the number of a feature and the land area
	+ **Concentration**- extent of a feature’s spread over space
		- Closely spaced together is known as **clustered**.
		- Relatively far apart is known as **dispersed**.
	+ **Pattern**- geometric arrangement of objects in space
* **Spatial Diffusion** method by which cultural elements are spread
	+ **Expansion Diffusion** the element spreads to other areas but remains strong in its hearth region
	+ **Contagious Diffusion** the element spreads uniformly outward from its source region
	+ **Hierarchical Diffusion** process of spreading the element through tiers and often occurs in urban areas
	+ **Relocation Diffusion** element is physically and usually intentionally carried from one region to another as a result of migration
	+ **Stimulus Diffusion** Spread of an underlying principle even though a characteristic itself apparently fails to diffuse. *Example*: Veggie burgers
	+ **Diffusion Barriers** conditions that hinder either the flow of information or the movement of people
	+ **Acculturation** adopting some or all of the characteristics of another dominant culture
	+ **Syncretism** fusing old and new parts of culture together
* **Cultural Change Theories**
	+ **Environmental Determinism** belief that the physical environment is solely responsible for shaping human actions and behaviors.
	+ **Possibilism** belief that people, and not the environment, are the forces responsible for shaping culture.
* **Economic Sectors**
	+ **Primary Sector** agricultural and extractive activities. Relied upon by many developing nations.
	+ **Secondary Sector** processing activities – manufacturing, construction and power production. Many developing nations support secondary activities with lower labor costs than developed countries.
	+ **Tertiary Sector** service activities. Many developed countries’ economies are dominated by tertiary sector jobs.
	+ **Quaternary Sector** informational activities. The **Quinary Sector** is a new theoretical sector within the quaternary sector of high level management jobs.
* **The 4 Traditions of Geography-American Perspectives**
	+ **Spatial Tradition**
		- Emphasis on movement and location
		- Deals with the shape of the land
	+ **Area Studies Tradition**
		- Emphasis on region, place and history
		- Deals with physical and cultural characteristics
	+ **Man-Land Tradition**
		- Emphasis on the relationship between external conditions and human actions
		- Overlaps with the Area Studies Tradition
	+ **Earth Science Tradition**
		- Emphasis on geology
		- Deals with how physical systems affect humans (hydrological cycle, wind patterns, etc)
* **Earth’s Physical Systems**
	+ Geographers classify natural resources as part of four interrelated symptoms.
		- ***Abiotic***system is one composed of nonliving or inorganic matter.
			* **Atmosphere**: thin layer of gas surrounding Earth
			* **Hydrosphere**: all water on and near Earth’s surface
			* **Lithosphere**: Earth’s crust and layer just below the crust
		- ***Biotic***system is one composed of living organisms.
			* **Biosphere**: all living organisms on Earth
			* **Ecumene:** area on earth where humans live