

Unit One

Introduction to cultural and social geography

Dear Colleague, in this chapter you are going to study the meaning and of culture and the definition of cultural and social geography. The different factors those involved in affecting the distribution of cultures are presented. In seeking explanation for spatial cultural diversity, one must consider a wide array of causal factors.

Objectives:

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- ❖ Define cultural geography.
- ❖ Explain the scope of cultural geography.
- ❖ Identify cultural regions of the world.
- ❖ Explain the concept of cultural diffusion.
- ❖ Appreciate cultural ecology.
- ❖ Elaborate the meaning of cultural integration.
- ❖ Express cultural landscape.

1.1. Definition and Scope of Cultural and Social Geography

There is no standard definition given to culture. But, most generally, Culture is a specialized behavioral patterns, understandings and adaptations that summarize the way of life of a group of people. It is the sum of shared attitudes, customs and beliefs that distinguishes one group of people from another. Culture is viewed as the configuration of institutions and modes of life.

Culture is, therefore, the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by human as member of the society. Culture refers to refined music, art, and literature. From wider perspective, culture is learned collective human behavior, which is socially transmitted such as customs, belief, morals, technology, and art, rather than biologically transmitted. Human learns culture through the process of socialization, enumeration, personal experience and through deliberate indoctrination or teaching. Learning of culture is a lifelong process from birth to death.

Cultural elements such as language, religion, ethnicity, race, etc that vary from one culture group to the other. There is a world of cultural differences with respect to religion, technology and medicine, economic and agricultural activity, and modes of architecture and transportation. Cultural communities may differ in their dress, music, food, dance, sport, and other cultural

components. Culture is dynamic/changes, but its transformation is gradual, not sudden. Thus, culture is a continuous process of change.

Culture continues to give a community a sense of dignity, continuity, security and binds society together. Culture is an invaluable inheritance of uncountable experiences, experiments and endeavors. It is nurtured in the infinite lap of time, age after age. Culture has spatial expression, which is one reason why geographers study it.

Cultural and social geography, thus, is the study of spatial variations or cultural diversity among cultural groups and the spatial functioning of society. It focuses on describing; analyzing and explaining the ways language, religion, ethnicity, economy, government and other cultural components vary or remain constant from one place to another. It, therefore, bridges the social and the earth sciences by seeking an integrative view of humankind in its physical environment. Cultural and social geography is also the study of the impact of human culture on the landscape. Cultural geography key concepts or themes, however, are cultural region, cultural landscape, cultural diffusion, cultural ecology, and cultural interaction/integration with emphasis on language, religion, ethnicity, race, technology and social change. It also treats the origin and evolution of human kind and culture, including agriculture, settlement and human dispersal.

Activity 1

1. Why cultural geography has no standard definition?
2. Mention the elements of culture.
3. Define cultural geography.

1.2. Basic Themes in Cultural Geography

The five geographical concepts or themes are cultural region, cultural diffusion, cultural ecology, cultural integration, and cultural landscapes.

1.2.1. Cultural Region

Culture region has three major components. These are culture trait, culture complex and culture system. Cultural traits, complexes and system have spatial extent, which is called *cultural region*.

1. Cultural trait

It is a single attribute of a culture or the smallest distinctive and fundamental element of culture. There are three forms of culture traits. *Artifacts*, also called material/technological object, are those aspects of culture that have a material basis in group behavior. Pots and pans, types of clothing and bodily adornment, housing tools and implements, the layout of cities and farm fields, forms of transportation, and other tangible evidence of human behavior are among the examples. *Socio – facts* are also called sociological or behavioral regularities. Socio – facts pertain to those aspects of culture that place people in society. *Menti – facts* or ideological: for instance, abstract ideas, religious beliefs, ideologies, legends, folklore, magic, attitudes toward natural, and views of the universe. Artistic ideas and styles are part of human menti – facts.

2. Cultural complex

It is a separate combination of traits exhibited by a particular culture such as keeping cattle for different purposes. In other word, it is a group of culture traits that are functionally interrelated.

3. Culture system

It is culture complexes with traits in common that can be grouped together such as ethnicity, language, religion, and other cultural elements. In other word, it is shared, identifying traits uniting two or more culture complexes.

A cultural region is the area within which a particular culture system prevails. It is marked by all the attributes of a culture. *Region* is the term used to mean a grouping of like places or the functional union of places to form a spatial unit which has its own typical characteristics and functions of a given culture with similar physical features and/or anthropogenic attributes. A cultural region is, then, a geographical unit that has common cultural elements such as language, religion, ethnicity, race, technology, etc. It is a portion of the earth's surface occupied by people sharing identifiable and unique cultural characteristics or culture system that summarize their collective attributes or activities. A group of related cultural regions showing related cultural systems and landscapes is called *cultural world* or *cultural realm*.

A cultural region is a geographical unit based on characteristics and functions of culture. There are three types of cultural regions which are recognized by geographers. These are formal, functional and vernacular regions.

Formal cultural region is an area inhabited by people who have one or more cultural traits in common, such as language, religion or way of living. It is an area that is relatively homogeneous with regard to one or more cultural traits that are dominant. Formal cultural regions reveal center or core where the defining traits are all present. Many formal cultural regions display a core-periphery pattern. The hallmark of a formal cultural region is cultural homogeneity.

Functional cultural region is an area tied together by a coordinating system such as law, monetary system, roads, etc. for example, a city, an independent state, a trade area or a farm. Functional cultural regions have nodes, or central points where the functions are coordinated and directed. Functional cultural regions also possess a core periphery configuration in common with formal cultural regions. Many functional cultural regions have clearly defined borders. Functional cultural regions need not be culturally homogeneous. Functional cultural regions generally do not coincide spatially with formal cultural regions.

Vernacular cultural region is also called “popular” or “perceptual” regions. Vernacular cultural regions are those perceived to exist by their inhabitants, as evidenced by the widespread acceptance and use of a special regional name. Vernacular regions generally lack sharp borders. Vernacular region is an area that ordinary people or non-geographers recognize as a region. It can be based on many different things such as physical environment, economic, political, historical aspects, and often created by publicity campaigns. Often they lack the organization and they frequently do not display cultural homogeneity.

1.2.2. Cultural Diffusion

Cultural diffusion is the spatial spread of learned ideas, innovations and attitudes. It is the spread of culture and the factors that account for it such as migration, communications, trade and commerce. Almost all cultures of the world, probably with the exceptions of those few cultural groups who are completely (if there are any) isolated, are products of innovations that spread from locations of origin to another. In general, cultural region describes the location of cultural traits or cultural communities; cultural diffusion helps explain how they got there.

Two general concepts you must take into account in the gradual development of regional world cultures during the early human occupation of the earth. The first is independent invention, and second is the process of diffusion. The concept of total isolations of group carrying independent inventions without outside influence is challenged. These two processes, *invention* and *diffusion* are responsible for human culture in any particular regional or group form.

Cultural diffusion is the process of spreading and adoption of a cultural element, from its place of origin across a wide area. The process of dissemination, the spreading of an idea or an innovation from its source to other cultures, is known as the process of cultural diffusion. The process of borrowing, copying, or taking over from another is the essence of diffusion.

Diffusion occurs through the movement of people, goods or ideas. Consider the following two examples: the diffusion of a disease, such as HIV-AIDS, through a population and the diffusion of computers. Involuntary exposure is involved in the first instance, and voluntary adoption in the second. Anyway, both are manifestations of diffusion processes.

Cultural diffusion involves generally two sub-types, the most commonly being expansion diffusion and relocation diffusion.

Expansion diffusion: ideas or items spread throughout a population from area to area and from groups to groups so that the area of impact and the number of people subject to impact become steadily larger. The different forms of expansion diffusion take place through populations that are stable.

- i. ***Contagious diffusion:*** where some item of culture is spread through a local population by contact from person to person. It is a wavelike diffusion. Ideas spread through a group of people or an area equally without regard to social class, economic position or position of power or hierarchies, in the manner of contagious disease.
- ii. ***Hierarchical diffusion:*** where ideas are transmitted through leapfrog from one node to another temporarily bypassing some within the pre-existing hierarchical structures. It is the spread of an idea through an established structure usually from people or areas of power down to other people or areas. An idea or innovation spreads by trickling down from larger to smaller adaptation units. For example, the acceptance of a new mode of dressing style.
- iii. ***Stimulus diffusion:*** a process where an idea or innovation is not readily adopted by a population but results in local experimentation and eventual changes in the way of doing things.

Relocation diffusion: the spreading of innovations by a migrating population, for instance, Migrant diffusion.

Barrier effects are things or laws that inhibit cultural diffusion and stop spreading. Barrier effects can assume physical, cultural or economic forms. Time and distance decay factor plays the role of accelerating or inhibiting diffusion.

In addition to the gradual weakening or decay of innovation through time and distance, barriers tend to retard its spread. Absorbing barriers completely halt diffusion, allowing no further progress. For example, for decades, during the Apartheid rule, television was prevented from entering the Republic of South Africa because the government there outlawed it. Few absorbing barriers exist in the world more commonly barriers are permeable, allowing part of the innovation wave to diffuse though but acting to weaken and retard the continued spread. When a school board objects to long hair on boys, the principal of high school may set a limit on hair length for male students. This length will likely be longer than the haircuts before the longhair innovation was introduced, but it will be shorter than the length of the new hairstyle. In this way, the principal and school board act as a permeable barrier to a cultural innovation.

Acceptance of innovation at any given point in space passes through three distinct stages. *In the first stage*, acceptance takes place at a steady, yet slow rate, perhaps because the innovation has not yet caught on, the benefits have not been adequately demonstrated, or a product is not readily available. Then during *the second stage*, rapid growth in acceptance occurs, and the trait spreads widely, as with a fashion style or dance fad. Often diffusion on a micro scale exhibits what is called the *neighborhood effect*, which means simply that acceptance is usually most rapid in small clusters around an initial adopter.

The simplicities of the ways of life of man of millennia ago are mostly gone; man today is rather facing instead the complexities of quite a different era. The remaining thousands of preliterate, non-cultivating peoples are relics of the past, surviving on sufferance, almost by accident, in refuge areas not yet preempted by modernization. More important than the extinction of cultures has been the process of acculturation. Through learning, man can acquire the characteristics of several or many cultures in their single lifetime.

Activity 2

1. Distinguish the themes of cultural geography.
2. Mention and define the major components of cultural regions.
3. Identify the types of cultural regions.
4. Clarify the concept of cultural diffusion.

1.2.3. Cultural Ecology

Human being living on the surface of the earth have faced the impact of nature and influenced it. The human ability to alter the environment in the ways significance to varied patterns of daily living is far greater than it ever was. The overall effect of humankind's redistribution of plants and animals is that the wilderness is in retreat. The humankind induced environmental changes have not always been beneficial. Some human actions are already lowering the efficiency of land use for production of economically significant crop plants and decreasing the optimum conditions for all other organisms, including humankind himself.

The study of ecosystems focuses on the interactions between specific organisms and their environments. Cultural ecology is defined as the multiple interactions and relationships between a

culture and its natural environment. It is the study of the cause- and-effect interplay between cultures and the physical environment. The concept of cultural ecology often helps us better understand the cultural landscape. Each human group and their way of life occupy a piece of physical earth they developed in a specific natural habitat. Cultures do not live in an environmental vacuum. It is the study of (1) environmental influences on culture and (2) the impact of people, acting through their culture on the ecosystem. An ecosystem entails a functioning ecological system in which biological and cultural *Homo sapiens* live and interact with the physical environment; a unit through which the flow of matter or energy is traced. One of the basic elements in the human dominance of the earth is the ability of man to interfere with the natural processes of earth sculpture, erosion, deposition, drainage, the hydrologic cycle, and other processes of related significance.

Cultural ecology implies a “*two-way street*,” with people and the environment exerting influence on one another. Cultural ecology based on the premise that culture is the human method of meeting physical environmental challenges-that culture is an adaptive system. The term cultural adaptation is used in this context. Culture serves to facilitate long-term, successful, non-genetic human adaptation to nature and to environmental change. Adaptive strategy involves those aspects of culture that serve to provide the necessities of life-food, clothing, shelter, and defense.

Such adaptive strategies involve culturally transmitted, or learned, behavior that permits a population to survive in its natural environment. Individual adaptive pathways result from interplay between the unique character of cultures and their physical environments. Culture channels the *adaptive strategy* by helping to determine what is meaningful as resources in a particular setting, but the individual person exercises considerable decision-making and innovative power.

Four schools of thought have developed, on the interaction between humans and land, which are known as environmental determinism, possibilism, environmental perception, and humans as modifiers of the earth.

In *Environmental Determinism*, some believe that the physical environment, especially climate and terrain, provided a dominant force in shaping cultures - that humankind was essentially a passive product of its physical surroundings. Humans were clay to be molded by nature. Similar physical environments produced similar cultures. Many centuries ago, Aristotle answered this question affirmatively when he generalized about the peoples of cold, distant Europe as being “full of spirit ... but incapable of ruling others,” and those of Asia “intelligent and inventive ... [but] always in a state of subjection and slavery.” Determinists over emphasize the role of environment in human affairs. Since Aristotle, many held such deterministic view.

Possibilism then is the belief that people, rather than their environment, are the primary architects of culture. Possibilists claim that any physical environment offers a number of possible ways for

a culture to develop. The degree of influence of the natural environment declines with increasing modernization and technological sophistication. Local traits of culture and economy are the products of cultural-based decisions made within the limits of possibilities offered by the environment.

Environmental Perception focuses on human perception of nature. The mental images of individuals and cultural group of the physical environment, shaped by knowledge, ignorance, experience, values, and emotions are defined as environmental perception. Whereas the possibilist sees humankind as having a choice of different possibilities in a given physical setting, the environmental perceptionist declares that the choices of people make will depend more on what they perceive on the environment to be than on the actual character of the land.

Environmental determinists believe that the rugged terrain to be simple, backward, conservative, unimaginative, and freedom loving predestined peoples of the mountains. Dwellers of the desert were likely to believe in one God, but to live under the rule of tyrants. Temperate climate produced inventiveness, industriousness, and democracy. Coastlands pitted with fjords produced great navigators and anglers. Determinists over emphasize the role of environment in human affairs. The physical environment is only one of many forces affecting human cultures and is never the sole determinant of behavior and beliefs.

Reactions to the school of environmental determinism produced counterarguments. A school of possibilism emerged. Possibilists do not ignore the influence of the physical environment, and they realize that the imprint of nature shows in many cultures. However, the Possibilists stress that cultural heritage is at least as important as the physical environment in affecting human behavior. Each culture interacts with the habitat in different ways.

The choices that a society makes depend on the people's requirements and the technology available to them to satisfy these. Local traits of culture and economy are the products of cultural-based decisions made within the limits of possibilities offered by the environment.

That is, cultural changes are added to the normal processes of geological and organic change. With every change of technology, a new evolution is possible of what constitutes a resource. The resource technology interrelationship is not a "static equilibrium" but a continuing dynamic process, based on changing perception of worth, ever since man first used fire for clearing vegetation to improve his hunting ground.

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1.2.4. Cultural Integration

Cultural integration could mean the interactions of different elements of culture in creating a whole system. All facets of culture are systematically and spatially intertwined and integrated. Cultures are complex wholes rather than series of unrelated traits. They form integrated systems in which the parts fit together causally. All aspects of culture are functionally interdependent on one another. The theme of cultural integration addresses this complexity. Cultural integration recognizes that a change in one element of culture requires an accommodating change in others. The distribution of one facet of culture cannot be understood without studying the variations in other facets, in order to see how they are interrelated and integrated casually with one another.

Humankind has moved around the world for many different reasons. Simple curiosity about an unknown territory may inspire exploration, with an intent to return home once the curiosity is satisfied, or exploration may be carried out with the aim of finding a new home territory more satisfactory than the present one. All forms of exploration result in expanded human awareness of conditions on the surface of the earth, providing man with options of sites for residence, sources of raw materials, varied ways of living, and potentials for altering human situations.

A given culture gives character to an area. The architecture, the mode of dress of the people, the means of transportation, and perhaps the goods being carried-all reveal a distinctive cultural environment. The people of any particular culture transform their living space by building structures on it, creating lines of contact and communication, tilling the land, and channeling the water. The cultural landscape includes all identifiably human-induced changes in the natural landscape, involving the surface as well as the biosphere.

Culture Hearths

As long as human communities have existed on the earth, there have been places where people have done well. Where they have succeeded, inventions and efforts have rewarded humankind with an increase in numbers, growing strength, comparative stability, and general progress. Conversely, there have been areas where communities have not done well at all.

Cultural hearths are the *sources of civilizations* from which radiate ideas, innovations and ideologies. The early cultural hearths were centers for innovation and invention, and their non-material and material culture spread to areas around them through a process called cultural diffusion. The early cultural hearths developed in the Middle East, North Africa, South and Southeast Asia, and East Asia in the valleys and basins of the great river systems. The modern

sources of civilization, industrial revolution also began as cultural hearths, but their growth and development had wider, sometimes global impact.

In the early clustering of culture groups, in particular regional landscapes, there were the successes in which technologies, latent resources, and human effort became combined. Success resulted in population growth of two kinds- the natural increase within the region and the immigration by others from localities in which peoples could do well. In these accomplishment of the regions, the technologies, traditions, ambitions, growing populations, and new insights, and the ingenious solutions to problems have accumulated.

The areas where flourished and progress prevailed were the places where the first large clusters of human population developed. The increasing numbers have brought about new ways to exploit locally available resources and generated power over resources located further away. Progress was made in farming techniques and, consequently, in yields. Society grew more complex, and there were people who could afford to spend time not engaged in subsistent farming, but in politics and the arts. The circulation of goods and ideas intensified. Traditions developed, along with ways of life that became the example for other places, far and near.

Out of these hearths went the rules of living, the technologies, the traditions, and the human systems that denoted the civilized society when members of the region expressed beyond their home territory, for whatever reason. The culture hearth was at once the cultural repository and the source of its own perpetuation into the future and outside the homeland.

Thus, it is appropriate to distinguish between culture hearths, thousands of which have evolved across the earth from the Inuit Arctic to Maori New Zealand, the source areas of early as well as the modern civilization. Some culture hearths, therefore, remain comparatively isolated and self-contained, but others have an impact far beyond their bounds. In culture hearths itself, the practice of cultivation led to an explosion of culture, the evolution of an infinitely more elaborate civilization, where one innovation followed another.

As stated earlier, within the broad Old World zone there were several major and minor culture hearths significant to the late growth and spread of Old World culture, and within the New World there were also several of them.

Old World Culture Hearths

Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia here stands for the two rivers, the filled estuary of both Euphrates and Tigris, the surrounding fringes of hill country on the east and north, and the margins of the Arabian Desert on the west and south. Here, there is a great deal of variety within the landforms, local climate,

and the plant cover of the whole region, and even the zone of the river valleys varied markedly from north to south. The estuaries fill of the two rivers has added a significant region to the Southern end of the lowland since Mesopotamia began to be a much sought-after homeland. The physical contrast between North and South reflected in the socio – political history of the two sectors, and a single way of life cannot always be presumed to have been the rule in all localities.

The earliest peoples are fully related to modern ethnic divisions of humanity, nor are some of the immigrants clearly identifiable. The region situated at the intersection of perhaps the most frequented crossroads of them all. Its cultural-trading relationships stretch out along the route ways to include the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea, the hill country of Asia Minor, the hill margins of Iran, and the littorals of the Persian Gulf. This larger zone is the region termed the Fertile Crescent.

By about 3,000 B.C., the Mesopotamia region had become a bright and shining light of culture to an outer world of barbarity. Accessibility of the Mesopotamian region to peoples round about was a two-way proposition. Over the centuries, Mesopotamia received many in-migrating peoples, some of whom came as conquerors, some as settlers seeding a home, some as slaves, and some merely as traders.

After about 800 B.C. the rising power of the Assyrian and Persian kings, conquered Mesopotamia and moved the centers of political power away from the heart of Mesopotamia resulting in the decline of it.

The Nile Valley

The valley is a watered strip of shallow canyon, extending and standing out in sharp contrast to near-barren desert country. Centering on the Nile River valley, the advanced beginnings appear to relate to the lower, or northern, region between about modern Cairo and Aswan. Here there bloomed a culture at an early date, which matured into a regional political state even before that event took place in Mesopotamia.

Writing, art forms, and much of customary culture derive in good part from the north, whereas architecture and politico-religious administration derive from the upper river sector. The Nile River culture hearth never reached the heights achieved in Mesopotamia over the broad front of civilization as a whole. Enjoying relative solitude in the early period, the Nile Valley was invaded repeatedly from about 1700 B.C. on, and numerous peoples came and went through its lower portion and the delta country.

Well before the Christian era, Egypt became a political pawn or a colony of outside power, and the Nile Valley once again became a land of agrarian villagers living out an annual cycle of life framed around the seasonal pattern of the Nile River.

The Indus Valley

Indus Valley exhibited a good deal of regional specialization, which makes it unlike the cultures of the Mesopotamian lowland and the Nile Valley.

North China

The walled settlement, the Chinese language system, pounded earth construction and the patterns of domestic and public architecture, both technology and forms in bronze metallurgy and pottery, and other features characterized Chinese culture hearth.

The New World Amerindian Hearths

Two regions identified in the New World are Mesoamerican and Andean. Mesoamerica includes central-southern Mexico, Yucatan and Guatemala. Agricultural villages, irrigation systems, the first formalization of religious systems, the beginnings of monumental architecture, and other features characterized the region.

The Peruvian Coast-Andean Highland Zone comprises another region in which human development progressed. The growth of settlements, expansion of cropping technologies, domestication of the guinea pig-llama-alpaca, growing formalization of religion, appearance of towns and ceremonial centers, development of fortifications, and regional political organization all came prior to 1500 B.C. Irrigation perhaps predate 1200 B.C., and metallurgy was in evidence by 800 B.C., followed quickly by specialization in manufacturing. Between 1500 and about 200 B.C., there came the maturing of cropping economies, flowering of urban civilization, integration of interregional trade, and the rise of regional political state.

In the Peruvian life, there was no development of systems of writing to provide specific chronology of record, but there did develop a system of statistical notation (employing the *quipu*, a device of variously colored and knotted cords) which served administrative and political ends. There also was almost no development of astronomy-calendar system, and none of the “science” in the Old World sense.

1.2.5. Cultural Landscape

Cultural landscape consists of material aspects of culture that characterize earth’s surface including buildings, shrines, sports and recreational facilities, economic and agricultural structures, crops and agricultural fields, transportation systems, and other physical things. Cultural landscape is the visible, material landscape that cultural groups create in inhabiting the Earth. Cultural landscape is the human imprint cultures leave on the Earth’s surface. All humanized landscapes bear cultural meaning. Landscape can serve as a means to study nonmaterial aspects of culture.

Landscapes are mirror of culture. Cultural landscape reflects the most basic strivings of humankind for shelter, food and clothing. The cultural landscape reflects different attitudes concerning modification of the Earth by people and contains valuable evidence about the origin, speed, and the development of cultures, since it usually preserves relic forms of various types. Every cultural landscape is an accumulation of human artifacts, some old and some new.

Asides from containing relic forms, landscapes also convey revealing messages about the present-day inhabitants and cultures. All humanized landscapes bear cultural meaning. The spatial organization of settlements and the architectural form of buildings and other structures can be interpreted as the expression of values and beliefs of the people responsible for them. That is, the landscape can serve as a means to study nonmaterial aspects of culture. One can read a landscape like a book.

Landscapes have ideological and metaphorical qualities. The three figurative expressions of human worth-three cardinal virtues-are height, durability, and central location. Centrally located and tall structures built of steel, brick, or stone are the worthiest and most important to particular culture in question. In medieval Europe, cathedrals, churches best exemplified the three virtues, because they were built of stone on the central square and towered above other structures.

The concept of cultural landscape can assume practical qualities when an area has been inhabited-and transformed- by a succession of residents, each of whom leaves a lasting cultural imprint. People of different technological and other cultural traditions perceive a place and its resources differently. These contrasting perceptions are reflected in their respective cultural landscapes. Therefore, the cultural landscape today is a collection of these contributions, and the challenge is to reconstruct the contributions made by each community.

Activity 3

1. Write the impacts of culture on the environment.
2. How elements of culture integrated as a system?
3. Explain about the sources of civilizations.
4. Why landscapes are mirror of human culture?

Unit Summary

The distribution of all cultural elements is the result of the constant interplay of diverse causal factors. Cultural geography is the discipline that seeks such explanations for all of humankind. Culture is best defined as learned collective human behavior, as opposed to instinctive, or inborn, behavior.

Culture involves a communication system of acquired beliefs, memories, perceptions, traditions, and attitudes that serve to supplement and channel instinctive behavior.

Cultural Geography is an academic discipline, which studies the spatial variations among cultural groups and the spatial functioning of society. It focuses on describing and analyzing cultural phenomena such as language, religion, economy, government, and other phenomena that vary or remain constant from one place to another and explaining how humans function spatially. Cultural geography is, at heart, a recognition of human cultural diversity.

Cultural integration could mean the interactions of different elements of culture in creating a whole system. A culture gives a character to an area. The people of any particular culture transform their living space by building structures on it, creating lines of contact and communication, tilling the land, and channeling the water. The architecture, the modes of dress of the people, the means of transportation, and probably the goods being carried, all reveal a distinctive cultural environment.

In seeking explanation for spatial cultural diversity, one must consider a wide array of causal factors. Some of these involve the physical environment -terrain, climate, natural vegetation, wildlife, and variations in soil and the pattern of land water. Removed from its physical habitat culture cannot be understood.

In the early clustering of culture groups, in particular regional landscapes, there were the successes in which technologies, latent resources, and human effort became combined. Success resulted in population growth of two kinds- the natural increase within the region and the immigration by others from localities in which peoples could do well. In these success regions, the technologies, traditions, ambitions, growing populations, and new insights, and the ingenious solutions to problems have accumulated.

Unit Assessment

I. Multiple choice

1. Why does spatial pattern of culture exist?
 - A. It is because people liked to live differently.
 - B. This is due to the uniformity of the physical earth.
 - C. Environmental factors could affect it.
 - D. None of the above.
2. Which natural resource contributed to the growth of the old world civilization?
 - A. water
 - B. petroleum
 - C. natural gas
 - D. coal
3. Which one of the following is **TRUE** statement?
 - A. Culture is an instinctive or inborn behavior.
 - B. Culture does not involve language or religion.
 - C. Few casual factors are responsible for cultural diversity.
 - D. Red Indians had never developed civilization.
4. Cultural landscape
 - A. Mirrors culture.
 - B. Is invisible
 - C. Does not say much about the life of a given society.
 - D. All of the above

Unit Two

The Development of Human Culture

Dear Colleague, in this chapter you will be introduced with the basic concepts of human culture. First, you will understand the types of society and evolution of humankind as a cultural phenomenon. Second, you will describe the human dispersals. It will provide a brief catalog of agricultural origins and dispersals. At last, you will be focus on the evolution of settlement patterns.

Objectives:

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- ❖ Identify the types of society.
- ❖ Explain the evolution of humankind
- ❖ Elaborate the human dispersals process.
- ❖ Describe the agricultural origins and dispersals
- ❖ Illustrate the evolution of settlement patterns

2.1. Types of Societies

Maasai villagers, Tehranians, Americans each is a society. But what does this mean? Exactly what is a society? In sociological terms, society refers to a group of people who live in a definable community and share the same culture. On a broader scale, society consists of the people and institutions around us, our shared beliefs, and our cultural ideas. Typically, more advanced societies also share a political authority.

Sociologist Gerhard Lenski (1924) defined societies in terms of their technological sophistication. As a society advances, so does its use of technology. Societies with rudimentary technology depend on the fluctuations of their environment, while industrialized societies have more control over the impact of their surroundings and thus develop different cultural features. This distinction is so important that sociologists generally classify societies along a spectrum of their level of industrialization, from preindustrial to industrial to postindustrial.

1. Pre-industrial Societies

Before the Industrial Revolution and the widespread use of machines, societies were small, rural, and dependent largely on local resources. Economic production was limited to the amount of labor a human being could provide, and there were few specialized occupations. The very first occupation was that of hunter-gatherer.

1.1 Hunter-Gatherer

Hunter-gatherer societies demonstrate the strongest dependence on the environment of the various types of preindustrial societies. As the basic structure of human society until about 10,000-12,000 years ago, these groups were based around kinship or tribes. Hunter-gatherers relied on their surroundings for survival they hunted wild animals and foraged for uncultivated plants for food. When resources became scarce, the group moved to a new area to find sustenance, meaning they were nomadic. These societies were common until several hundred years ago, but today only a few hundred remain in existence, such as indigenous Australian tribes sometimes referred to as aborigines, or the Bambuti, a group of pygmy hunter-gatherers residing in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Hunter-gatherer groups are quickly disappearing as the world's population explodes.

1.2 Pastoral

Changing conditions and adaptations led some societies to rely on the domestication of animals where circumstances permitted. Roughly 7,500 years ago, human societies began to recognize their ability to tame and breed animals and to grow and cultivate their own plants. Pastoral societies rely on the domestication of animals as a resource for survival. Unlike earlier hunter-gatherers who depended entirely on existing resources to stay alive, pastoral groups were able to breed livestock for food, clothing, and transportation, creating a surplus of goods. Herding, or pastoral, societies remained nomadic because they were forced to follow their animals to fresh feeding grounds. Around the time that pastoral societies emerged, specialized occupations began to develop, and societies commenced trading with local groups.

Throughout Northern Africa and the Arabian Peninsula live the Bedouin, modern-day nomads. While many different tribes of Bedouin exist, they all share similarities. Members migrate from one area to another, usually in conjunction with the seasons, settling near oases in the hot summer months. They tend to herds of goats, camels, and sheep, and they harvest dates in the fall.

In recent years, there has been increased conflict between the Bedouin society and more modernized societies. National borders are harder to cross now than in the past, making the traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Bedouin difficult. The clash of traditions among Bedouin and other residents has led to discrimination and abuse. Bedouin communities frequently have high poverty and unemployment rates, and their members have little formal education (Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2005).

The future of the Bedouin is uncertain. Government restrictions on farming and residence are slowly forcing them to integrate into modern society. Although their ancestors have

traversed the deserts for thousands of years, the days of the nomadic Bedouin may be at an end.

1.2.Horticultural

Around the same time that pastoral societies were on the rise, another type of society developed, based on the newly developed capacity for people to grow and cultivate plants. Previously, the depletion of a region's crops or water supply forced pastoral societies to relocate in search of food sources for their livestock. Horticultural societies formed in areas where rainfall and other conditions allowed them to grow stable crops. They were similar to hunter-gatherers in that they largely depended on the environment for survival, but since they didn't have to abandon their location to follow resources, they were able to start permanent settlements. This created more stability and more material goods and became the basis for the first revolution in human survival.

1.3 Agricultural

While pastoral and horticultural societies used small, temporary tools such as digging sticks or hoes, agricultural societies relied on permanent tools for survival. Around 3000 B.C.E., an explosion of new technology known as the Agricultural Revolution made farming possible and portable. Farmers learned to rotate the types of crops grown on their fields and to reuse waste products such as fertilizer, leading to better harvests and bigger surpluses of food. New tools for digging and harvesting were made of metal, making them more effective and longer lasting. Human settlements grew into towns and cities, and particularly bountiful regions became centers of trade and commerce.

This is also the age in which people had the time and comfort to engage in more contemplative and thoughtful activities, such as music, poetry, and philosophy. This period became referred to as the “dawn of civilization” by some because of the development of leisure and humanities. Craftspeople were able to support themselves through the production of creative, decorative, or thought-provoking aesthetic objects and writings.

As resources became more plentiful, social classes became more divisive. Those who had more resources could afford better living and developed into a class of nobility. Difference in social standing between men and women increased. As cities expanded, ownership and preservation of resources became a pressing concern.

1.5 Feudal

The ninth century gave rise to feudal societies. These societies contained a strict hierarchical system of power based around land ownership and protection. The nobility, known as lords, placed vassals in charge of pieces of land. In return for the resources that the land provided, vassals promised to fight for their lords.

These individual pieces of land, known as fiefdoms, were cultivated by the lower class. In return for maintaining the land, peasants were guaranteed a place to live and protection from outside enemies. Power was handed down through family lines, with peasant families serving lords for generations and generations. Ultimately, the social and economic system of feudalism would fail, replaced by capitalism and the technological advances of the industrial era.

2. Industrial Society

In the 18th century, Europe experienced a dramatic rise in technological invention, ushering in an era known as the Industrial Revolution. What made this period remarkable was the number of new inventions that influenced people's daily lives. Within a generation, tasks that had until this point required months of labor became achievable in a matter of days. Before the Industrial Revolution, work was largely person- or animal-based, relying on human workers or horses to power mills and drive pumps. In 1782, James Watt and Matthew Bolton created a steam engine that could do the work of 12 horses by itself.

Steam power began appearing everywhere. Instead of paying artisans to painstakingly spin wool and weave it into cloth, people turned to textile mills that produced fabric quickly at a better price, and often with better quality. Rather than planting and harvesting fields by hand, farmers were able to purchase mechanical seeders and threshing machines that caused agricultural productivity to soar. Products such as paper and glass became available to the average person, and the quality and accessibility of education and health care soared. Gas lights allowed increased visibility in the dark, and towns and cities developed a nightlife.

One of the results of increased productivity and technology was the rise of urban centers. Workers flocked to factories for jobs, and the populations of cities became increasingly diverse. The new generation became less preoccupied with maintaining family land and traditions, and more focused on acquiring wealth and achieving upward mobility for themselves and their family. People wanted their children and their children's children to continue to rise to the top, and as capitalism increased, so did social mobility. It was during the 18th and 19th centuries of the Industrial Revolution that sociology was born. Life was changing quickly and the long-established traditions of the agricultural eras did not apply to life in the larger cities. Masses of people were moving to new environments and often found themselves faced with horrendous conditions of filth, overcrowding, and poverty. Social scientists emerged to study the relationship between the individual members of society and society as a whole. It was during this time that power moved from the hands of the aristocracy and old money to business savvy newcomers who amassed fortunes in their lifetimes. Families such as the Rockefeller's and the Vanderbilt's became the new power players, using their influence in business to control aspects of government as well. Eventually, concerns over the exploitation of workers led to the formation of labor unions and laws that set mandatory conditions for employees. Although the introduction of new technology at the end of the 19th century ended the industrial age, much of our social structure and social ideas like family, childhood, and time standardization have a basis in industrial society.

3. Postindustrial Society

Information societies, sometimes known as postindustrial or digital societies, are a recent development. Unlike industrial societies that are rooted in the production of material goods, information societies are based on the production of information and services.

Digital technology is the steam engine of information societies, and computer moguls such as Steve Jobs and Bill Gates are its John D. Rockefellers and Cornelius Vanderbilt. Since the economy of information societies is driven by knowledge and not material goods, power lies with those in charge of storing and distributing information. Members of a postindustrial society are likely to be employed as sellers of services software programmers or business consultants, for example instead of producers of goods. Social classes are divided by access to education, since without technical skills, people in an information society lack the means for success.

We can summarize that societies are classified according to their development and use of technology. For most of human history, people lived in preindustrial societies characterized by limited technology and low production of goods. After the Industrial Revolution, many societies based their economies around mechanized labor, leading to greater profits and a trend toward greater social mobility. At the turn of the new millennium, a new type of society emerged. This postindustrial, or information, society is built on digital technology and nonmaterial goods.

2.2. The Evolution of Humankind

The nature of the evolutionary process has recently been the subject of considerable controversy.

- i. *Australopithecus*: not accepted by all scientists as a hominid, ramapithecus appears to have moved from the trees to a more open savanna environment. Australopithecus “near man” walking erect and with limb and foot structures. These creatures were clearly the first hominid or humanlike creatures diverge from their ape like ancestors. Australopithecus afarensis the Afar ape-man discovered in 1974, Ethiopia. The creatures evolved in eastern and southern Africa were of short creatures, no taller than a pre-teenage boy of the genus or family known as Australopithecus. Australopithecus was contemporary with early humans, but arrived at an evolutionary dead end, and became extinct perhaps one million years ago. Australopithecus affarensis split into two types. These are
 - a. *Homo Habilis*: occurred about three million years ago. Homo habilis – the line leading to modern humans. Both Australopithecus and Homo habilis were probably restricted to Africa, East and South African savanna areas.

- b. *Homo erectus*: this creature was known as Homo erectus because they walked erect. After the appearance of Homo erectus human biological evolution stabilized for sometimes. Homo erectus first appeared in Africa and subsequently spread over much of and into the warm temperate areas of Europe and Asia.)
- ii. *Homo sapiens*
 - A. *Homo sapiens Neanderthalensis*: immediate precursor of modern humans but a new hominid evolved from Homo erectus. They are often called archaic Homo sapiens. The best known subset of these archaic was named Homo sapiens Neanderthalensis or Neanderthal man.
 - B. *Homo spines sapiens*: the sole hominid survivor of the period was Cro-Magnon man who were nomadic hunters, migrated into Europe from Middle East. They occupied the coastal areas of the Mediterranean and scattered inland to what was then the Tundra. The emergence of modern humans often called Homo spines sapiens. From this time onwards, human evolution is cultural, not biological.

2.3. Agricultural Origins and dispersals

2.3.1. The Agricultural World

Except in the inhospitable parts of the world, the Antarctic, Arctic, the permanently snowy mountain tops, and the empty quarter of Saudi Arabia Desert, people live and are engaged in one or two types of primary economic activities. Shifting cultivation is still practiced in Southeast Asia, South America and Africa. In addition, Asian farmers of the tropical humid and sub – tropical parts of South, and Southeast Asia are engaged in paddy rice farming.

In the deserts, steppes and savannahs of Africa, the Middle East and the interior of Eurasia, nomadic livestock herders consciously move with their herds in search of forages for their animals. In that part of the Earth bordering the Mediterranean Sea and places such as Southwest United States, part of Chile, the Southern tip of South Africa, south and southwestern tip of Australia, Mediterranean type of Agriculture is found.

Plantation agriculture, introduced by Europeans to tropical Africa, Asia and Latin America specializes in the production of luxury products for Canada – USA and European markets. Increased urbanization has affected the spatial pattern of rural land use; perishable products such as dairy and vegetables are raised and cultivated close to cities and grains far out.

The world's huge population seeks its livelihood in various ways, but all depend, either directly or indirectly, on agriculture for food that permits one's survival. The entire urban-industrial society rests, on the base of the food surplus generated by farmers and herders, and that without agriculture there could be no cities or universities, or no factories or offices.

Agriculture, the tilling of crops and rearing of domesticated animals to produce food, drink, and fiber, has been the principal enterprise of humankind through most of history. Agriculture... may be less than 12,000 years old and emerged sequentially in several world regions. Even today, agriculture remains by far the most important economic activity in the world, occupying the greater part of land area and employing 45 percent of the working population. In some parts of Africa and Asia, over 80 percent of the labor force is devoted to agriculture. In North America, less than 2 percent of the population works as agriculturalists. Europe's population is as thoroughly non-agricultural as North Americans are. Most of the rest of the world, however, remains a land of farm villages.

Over thousands of years, agricultural pursuits became highly diverse regionally, and cultivators and herders altered the environment of a massive scale. The cultural landscape over much of the Earth's surface is largely agricultural.

2.3.2. Agricultural Region

The practice of raising plants and animals has spread to most parts of the world. Peoples living in different environments developed new farming methods, creating numerous spatial variations.

Shifting Cultivation

It is a land rotation system. Cultivators chop away the under growth from small patches of land and fell trees. After the dead vegetation dries out, the farmers set it on fire to clear the land. This technique is also known as "slash-and-burn" agriculture. Working with digging sticks or hoes, the farmers then plant variety of crops in the clearings, varying from the maize (corn), beans, bananas, and manioc of American Indians to the yams and non-irrigated rice grown by hill tribes in Southeast Asia. Different crops typically share the same clearing, a practice called inter-tillage. This allows taller, stronger crops to shelter lower, more fragile ones from the tropical downpours and reveals the rich lore and learning acquired by shifting cultivators over many centuries. Relatively little tending of the plants is necessary until harvest time, and no fertilizers are applied to the fields.

Farmers repeat the planting and harvesting cycle in the same clearings for perhaps four or five years, until the soil loses much of its fertility. Then these fields are abandoned, and farmers prepare

new clearings to replace them. The abandoned croplands lie unused, to recuperate for 10 to 20 years before farmers clear, and cultivate it again. Farm animals play a small role in shifting cultivation. Farmers keep few, if any livestock, often relying on hunting and fishing for much of their food supply.

The technology of shifting cultivation may seem crude and poorly developed, but it has proved an efficient adaptive strategy for the people who practice this system. Slash-and burn farming returns more calories of food for the calories spent on cultivation than does modern mechanized agriculture and achieves sustainability for millennia in the absence of population explosion. One should never assume that modern Western agricultural methods are superior to those of traditional non-western farming systems.

Paddy Rice Farming

This is practiced by peasant farmers in the humid tropical and subtropical parts of Asia. From the monsoon coasts of India through the hills of southwestern China, and on to the warmer parts of Japan stretches a broad region of tiny, mud-dikes, flooded rice fields, or paddies, many of which perch on terraced hillsides. The rice paddy is drained and repaired each year.

Rice, the dominant paddy crop, forms the basis of “vegetable civilizations” in which almost all the caloric intake is of plant origin. Many paddy farmers also raise a cash crop for market, such as tea, sugarcane, mulberry bushes or silkworm production, or the fiber crop jute. Asian farmers also raise pigs, cattle and poultry and maintain fish in the irrigation reservoirs, although they remain vegetarians. Farmers in India use draft animals such as water buffalo to a greater extent.

Most paddy rice farms outside the communist area of Asia are tiny. About one hectare landholding is considered adequate to support a farm family. Asian farmers can survive on such a small scale of operation partly because irrigated rice provides a very large output of food per unit of land. Still, the paddy farmers must till their small patches most intensively in order to harvest enough food. This means they must carefully transplant by hand the small rice sprouts from seedbeds to the paddy. They also plant and harvest the same parcel of land two times each year—a practice known as double cropping—while applying large amounts of organic fertilizers to the land. Based on hybrid seed, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides, further heightened productivity; so productive is the system that its yield per hectare exceeds any other green revolution of the last half of the twentieth century.

Peasant Grain, Root, and Livestock Farming

In colder, drier Asiatic farming regions, climatically unsuited to paddy rice farming, as well as in the river valleys of the middle East, parts of Europe, Africa, and the Mountain highlands of Latin America and New Guinea, farmers practice a system of semi subsistence based on bread grains, root crops, and herd livestock. The dominant crops in these regions are wheat, barley sorghum, millet, oats, and maize. Many farmers in these areas also raise cash crops, such as cotton, flax, hemp, coffee, tobacco.

These farmers also raise herds of cattle, pigs, sheep, and, in South America, and llamas. The livestock pull the plow; provide milk, meat, alpacas and wool; serve as beasts of burden; and produce manure for the fields. In some areas such as in the Middle Eastern river valleys, the use of irrigation helps support this peasant system.

Mediterranean Agriculture

In parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa that border the Mediterranean Sea, a truly distinctive type of peasant subsistence agriculture took shape in ancient times, and in a few areas this system survives intact today. Traditional Mediterranean agriculture is based on wheat and barley cultivation in the rainy winter season; raising draught-resistant vine and tree crops like the grape, olive, and fig; and livestock herding, particularly of sheep and goats. In recent times, many farmers began using irrigation in a major way, leading to the expansion of crops such as citrus fruits.

Traditional Mediterranean farmers do not integrate stock raising with crop cultivation. They rarely raise feed, collect animal manure, or keep draft animals. Instead, they pasture their livestock in communal herds on rocky mountain slopes, while they plant the valleys and gentler slopes below with vineyards, orchards, and grain fields. Because Mediterranean farmer do not fertilize their lands, grain fields must remain fallow every other year to regain their fertility.

All three of these basic enterprises- grain raising, vine and tree cultivation, and livestock herding- are combined on each small farm. From this diverse unspecialized trinity, the Mediterranean farmer can reap nearly all of life's necessities, including wool and leather for clothing, and bread, beverages, fruit, milk, cheese, and meat. Since 1850, many Mediterranean agricultural areas changed as commercialization and specialization of farming replace the traditional diversified system. In such areas the present-day agriculture is better described as market gardening.

Nomadic Herding

In the dry or cold lands of the Eastern Hemisphere, particularly in the desserts, steppes and savannahs of Africa, Arabia, and the interior of Eurasia, nomadic livestock herders graze cattle, sheep, goats, and camels. The cold tundra north of the tree line in Eurasia forms another zone of nomadic herders. The main characteristic of nomadic herding is the continued movement of people with their livestock in search of forage for their animals. Some nomads migrate from low lands in winter to mountains in summer, while others shift from desert areas in winter to adjacent

semiarid plains in summer, or from tundra in summer, to nearby forests in winter. Many place a high value on the horse, which has traditionally been kept for use in warfare, or the camel. Nomads in sub-Saharan Africa are the only ones who depend mainly on cattle, whereas those in the tundra of northern Eurasia raise reindeer.

Necessity dictates that the few material possessions the nomads have be portable, including the tents they use for housing. Normally, the nomads obtain nearly all of life's necessities from livestock products, or by bartering with the sedentary farmers of adjacent river valleys and oases. For centuries, nomads presented a periodic military threat to even the greatest farming civilizations.

Today, nomadic herding is in decline almost everywhere. A number of national governments have established policies encouraging nomads to practice sedentary cultivation of the land. A practice begun in the nineteenth century by British and French colonial administrators in North Africa, the settling of nomadic tribes allows greater control by the central governments. Russia adopted such a policy and pursued it with a considerable success. Moreover, many nomads are voluntarily abandoning their traditional life in order to seek jobs in urban areas or in the Middle Eastern oil fields. Further impetus to abandon nomadic life recently came from severe drought in sub-Saharan Africa, which decimated livestock herds. Nomadism survives mainly in remote areas, and this traditional way of life may soon vanish altogether.

Plantation Agriculture

It is a commercial agriculture imposed by both Americans and Europeans in certain tropical and subtropical areas on the native types of subsistence agriculture. A plantation is a huge land holding devoted to the efficient, large-scale, specialized production of one tropical or subtropical crop for market. Most plantations lie in fertile enclaves near the seacoast, in order to be close to the shipping lanes that carry their produce to no tropical lands such as Europe, the United States, and Japan.

Many workers live right on the plantation, where a rigid social and economic segregation of labor and management produces a two-class society of the wealthy and the poor. Because of the capital investment necessary corporations or governments are usually the owners of plantations.

The plantation provided the base for European and American economic expansion into tropical Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It maximized the production of luxury crops for European and Americans: sugarcane, bananas, coffee, coconuts, spices, tea, cacao, and tobacco. Similarly, Western textile factories required cotton, sisal, jute, hemp, and other fiber crops from the plantation areas. Profits from these plantations were usually exported along with the crops themselves to Europe and North America.

Each plantation district in the tropical and subtropical zones tends to specialize in one particular crop. Coffee and tea, for instance, grow in the tropical highlands with coffee dominating the upland plantations of tropical America and tea confined mainly to the hill slopes of India and Sri Lanka. Today, coffee remains the economic livelihood of many less developed countries, whereas sugarcane and bananas are the major lowland plantation crops of tropical America. In most cases, plantation workers at least partially process the crop before sending it to the distant market. Since many plantations are now mechanized—a type referred to as neo-plantation—less labor is required, causing underemployment and displacement of the local people.

Market Gardening

The growth of urban markets in the last few centuries also gave rise to a commercial form of agriculture, market gardening, which is also known as truck farming. Unlike plantations, these farms are located in developed countries and specialize in intensively cultivated non-tropical fruits, vegetables and vines. They raise no livestock. Many districts concentrate on a single product such as wine, table grapes, raisins, orange, apples, lettuce, or potatoes, and the entire farm output is raised for sale rather than consumption on the farm. Many truck farmers participate in co-operative marketing arrangements and depend on migratory seasonal farm laborers to harvest their crops.

Commercial Livestock Fattening

In this system of farming, farmers raise and fatten cattle and hogs for slaughter. One of the main characteristics of commercial livestock fattening is the combination of crop and animal raising on the same farm.

One of the most highly developed fattening areas is the famous Corn Belt of the Midwestern United States, where farmers raise maize and soybeans to feed cattle and hogs. A similar system prevails over much of Western and Central Europe, though the feed crops here are more commonly oats and potatoes. Similar zones of commercial livestock fattening appear in overseas European settlement zones such as southern Brazil and South Africa.

Although commercial livestock fattening is often organized with assembly-line precision and has proved profitable, the specter of famine in recent years has brought its nutritional efficiency into question. In the 1990s world grain production rose significantly faster than world population growth, and cereals provide most of the protein intake of the world's people. But in the same century, wiping out most of these gains, meat eating soared in the Western World, particularly in the United States.

At least one-half of America's harvested agricultural land is planted with feed crops for livestock, and over 70 percent of the grain raised in the United States goes for livestock fattening. Livestock

are not an efficient method of protein production. A cow, for instant, must eat 9.5 kilograms of protein to produce 0.5 kilogram of protein. Plants are far more efficient protein converters.

The protein lost through conversion from plant to meat could make up almost all of the world's present protein deficiencies. The food that presently feeds American would feed 1.5 billion at the consumption level of China. This basic inefficiency has spread to some poorer nations, such as Costa Rica and Brazil, where rainforest is being destroyed and shifting cultivators displaced to make way for cattle pasture to fatten beef for America's fast-food restaurants.

Commercial Grain Farming

It is market-oriented type of agriculture. Farmers specialize in growing wheat or, less frequently rice or corn. Wheat belts stretch through Australia, the Great Plains of interior North America, the steppes of Ukraine, and the pampas of Argentina. Together the United States, Canada, Argentina, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine produce 35 percent of the world's wheat. Farms in these areas are generally very large. They range from family-run wheat farms of 400 hectares or more in the American Great Plains to giant corporations or collective farms. Extensive rice farms, operated under the same commercial system, cover large areas of the Texas-Louisiana coastal plain and lowlands in Arkansas and California.

Widespread use of machinery, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and improved seed varieties enabled commercial grain farmers to operate on this large scale. Indeed, planting and harvesting grain is more completely mechanized than any other form of agriculture. Commercial rice farmers employ such techniques as sowing grain from airplanes. Hired migratory crews using corporation-owned machines normally do harvesting. Perhaps the ultimate development is the *suitcase farm*, a post-World War II innovation in the Wheat Belt of the northern Great Plains of the United States.

The people who own and operate these exceptional farms do not live on the land. Most of them own several suitcase farms, lined up in a south-to-north row through the Plains states. They keep fleets of farm machinery, which they send north with crews of laborers along the string of suitcase farms to plant, fertilize, and harvest the wheat. The progressively late ripening of the grain toward the north allows these farmers to maintain crops on all their farms with the same crew and the same machinery. Except for visits by migratory crews, the suitcase farms are uninhabited.

Such highly mechanized, absentee-owned, large-scale operations or agribusiness, are rapidly replacing the traditional American family owned farm, an important part of the rural heritage.

Commercial Dairying

The specialized production of dairy goods closely resembles commercial livestock fattening. In the large dairy belts of the northern United States, from New England to upper Midwest, western and northern Europe, southeastern Australia, and northern New Zealand, the keeping of dairy cows

depends on the large-scale use of pastures. In colder areas, some acreage must be devoted to winter feed crops, especially hay. Dairy products vary from region to region; depending on part how close the farmers are to their markets. Dairy belts near large urban centers usually produce fluid milk, while those further away specialize in butter, cheese, or processed milk. New Zealanders, remote from world markets, produce much butter, which can more easily be exported than milk.

As with livestock fattening, in recent decades a rapidly increasing number of dairy farmers have adopted the feedlot system and now raise their cattle on feed purchased from other sources. Farmers, instead of breeding and raising livestock on the farm, they buy feed and livestock replacements. In these large-scale automated operations, the number of cows is far greater than on farm-operated dairy farms. Like industry owners, feedlot dairy owners rely on hired laborers to help maintain their herds.

Livestock Ranching

Superficially, ranching might seem similar to nomadic herding, but reality is a fundamentally different livestock-raising system. Although both the nomadic herders and the livestock rancher specialize in animal husbandry to the exclusion of crop raising, and even though both live in arid and semiarid regions, livestock ranchers have fixed places of residence and operate as individuals rather than within a tribal organization. In addition, livestock ranchers raise livestock for market on a large scale, not for their own subsistence, and they are typically of European ancestry rather than being an indigenous people.

Livestock ranchers, faced with the advance of farmers, have usually fallen back into areas climatically too harsh for crop production. There they raise two kinds of animals in large numbers, cattle or sheep. Ranchers in the United States and Canada, tropical and subtropical South America, and the warmer parts of Australia specialize in cattle raising. Mid-latitude ranchers in the Southern Hemisphere specialize in sheep to the extent that Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and Argentina produce 70 percent of the world's export wool. Sheep outnumber people 8 to 1 in Australia, and 16 to 1 in New Zealand.

Urban Agriculture

In recent decades, yet another type of agriculture has arisen, as people have migrated to cities. This might be called urban agriculture. Millions of city dwellers, especially in the Third World countries now produce enough vegetables, fruit, meat, and milk from tiny plots within the cities to provide most of their food needs, often with a surplus to sell. In China, urban agriculture now provides 90 percent or more of all vegetables consumed, while in African metropolises such as Nairobi and Kampala 20 percent of all food comes from city lands. Many inhabitants of war-torn Sarajevo in Bosnia survived the conflict because of urban agriculture. Even developed countries

such as Russia derive much of their food from such operations, and neighborhood gardens can also be found in inner-city areas of North America.

Non-agricultural Areas

For one reason or another, some lands do not support agriculture. These typically lay in areas of extreme climate, in particular deserts and sub-arctic forests, as in much of Canada, Australia, and Siberia, the Sahara. Often such areas are inhabited by hunting and gathering groups of native peoples, such as Inuit and Australian aborigine, who gain a livelihood by hunting game, fishing where possible, and gathering edible and medical wild plants. At one time, before agriculture began, all humans lived as hunters and gatherers, the ancestral occupation of our species. Today, less than 1 percent of humans are so employed preserving the ancient ways. Even fewer depend entirely on such a food-producing system, given the various in roads of the modern world. In most hunting and gathering societies, a division of labor by gender occurs. Males perform most of the hunting and fishing while females carryout the equally important task of gathering harvests from wild plants.

2.3.3. Agricultural Diffusion

The various agricultural regions result from cultural diffusion. Agriculture and its many components are inventions they arose as innovations in certain source areas and diffused to other parts of the world.

The Origin and Diffusion of Plant Domestication

The beginning of agriculture apparently occurred with plant rather than animal domestication. A domesticated plant is one deliberately planted, protected, and cared for by humans. Such plants are also genetically distinct from their wild ancestors because of deliberate improvement through selective breeding by agriculturists, and they tend to be bigger than wild species, bearing larger, more abundant fruit or grain. For example, the original wild Indian maize grew on a cob only 2 centimeters long that is, one -tenth to one-twentieth the size of the cobs of domesticated maize.

Plant domestication and improvement constituted a process, not an event. It began as the gradual culmination of hundreds, or even thousands, of years of close association between humans and the natural vegetation. The first step in domestication is the perception that a certain pant had usefulness for people, leading initially to protection of the wild plant and eventually to deliberate planting. Two steps are normally required to develop and improve plant varieties: selection of seeds or shoots only from superior plants, and genetic isolation from other inferior plants to prevent cross-pollination.

Most experts now believe that process of domestication occurred at many different times locations, involving inventions. Carl O Sauer (1899-1975), an American cultural geographer, believes domestication probably did not develop in response to hunger. He maintain that necessity was not

the mother of agricultural invention, because starving people must spent every waking hour searching for food and have no time to devote to centuries of leisurely experimentation required to domesticate plants. Instead, peoples who had enough food to remain settled in one place and devote considerable time to plant care accomplished it. The first farmers were probably settled folk, rather than migratory hunters and gatherers. He reasons that domestication did not occur in grasslands or large river floodplains. In such areas, primitive cultures would have had difficulty coping with the thick sod and periodic floodwaters. Sauer also believes the hearth areas of domestication must have been in regions where many different kinds of wild plants grew, providing abundant vegetative raw material for experimentation and crossbreeding. Such areas typically appear in hilly districts, where climates change with differing sun exposure and elevation and elevation above sea level.

Many or most geographers now believe that agriculture arose in at least three such regions of biodiversity. Perhaps the oldest among these primary centers is the Fertile Crescent in the Middle East, which gave the world the great bread grains-wheat, barley, rye, and oats-as well as grapes, apples, olives, and many others. When diffusion from the Fertile Crescent brought agriculture to Ethiopia, a secondary center of domestication developed through stimulus diffusion, adding crops such as sorghum, peanuts yams, coffee, and okra.

The second great agricultural innovation developed in Southeast Asia. From it came rice, citrus, taro, bananas, and sugarcane, among other corps. There too, stimulus diffusion apparently yielded a secondary center, in northeastern China, where millet was domesticated.

Later, American Indians in Mesoamerica achieved the third great independent invention of agriculture, from which came crops such as maize (corn), tomatoes, chili peppers, beans, pineapples, sunflower, seeds, vanilla, pumpkins, tobacco, papayas and squash. As the Mesoamerican crop complex spread southward, it too produced a secondary center of stimulus diffusion, in northwestern South America, from which came the wild potato and manioc.

Overall, the American Indians domesticated an array of crops for superior in nutritional value to those of the two Eastern Hemisphere centers combined.

The diffusion of domesticated plants did not end in antiquity. Even today, crop farming continues to spread in areas such as the Amazon Basin, extending the diffusion begun may millennia ago. Introduction of the lemon, orange, grapes, and the date palm by Spanish missionaries in eighteenth-century Californian, where no agriculture existed in the American Indian era, provided a recent example of relocation diffusion. This was part of a larger diffusion-the introduction of European crops that accompanied the mass emigration from Europe to the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa.

An even most important diffusion brought American Indian crops to the Eastern Hemisphere. For example, Chili peppers and maize, carried by the Portuguese to their colonies in South Asia, became basic elements in the diet all across that region.

The Origin and Diffusion of Animal Domestication

A domesticated animal is one dependent on people for food and shelter, differing also from wild species in physical appearance and behavior, a result of controlled breeding and frequent contact with humans. Animal domestication apparently occurred later in prehistoric that did the first planting of crops, with probable exception of the dog. Whose companionship with people is seemingly much more ancient? Typically, people value domesticated animals and take care of them for some utilitarian purpose. Yet the original motive for domestication may not have been economic. People perhaps first domesticated cattle, as well as some kinds of birds, for religious reasons. Certain other domesticated animals such as the pig and dog, probably attached themselves voluntarily to human settlements to feast on garbage. At first, perhaps humans merrily tolerated these animals, later adopting them as pets.

Farmers of ancient crop hearth in southern Asia apparently did not excel as domesticators of animals. The taming of certain kinds of poultry may be attributed to them. But probably little else. Similarly, the American Indian, who made superior contributions to plant domestication, remained rather unsuccessful in taming animals, perhaps in part because suitable wild animals were less numerous. The llama, alpaca, guinea pig, and turkey were among the few American domestication.

Instead, the early farmers of the Middle East in the Fertile Crescent deserve credit for the first great animal domestications most notably herd animals. The wild ancestors of major herd animals, such as cattle, pigs, sheep, and goats, lived primarily in a belt running from Syria and southeastern Turkey eastward across Iraq and Iran to central Asia. Most animal domestication seems to have taken place in the general region or in adjacent areas. There in the Middle East, farmers first combined domesticated plants and animals into an integrated system, the antecedent of peasant grain, root, and livestock farming described earlier. These people began using cattle to pull the plow, a revolutionary invention that greatly increased the acreage under cultivation. In turn, farmers out of necessity began setting aside a portion of the harvest as livestock feed.

As the grain-herd livestock farming system continued to expand, particularly in the Fertile Crescent area, tillers entered marginal lands where crop cultivation proved difficult or impossible. Population pressure forced people into these hard lands, and they abandoned crop farming. They began wandering with their herds so as not to exhaust local forage. In this manner, nomadic herding probably developed on the margins of the Fertile Crescent.

Modern Innovations in Agriculture

Cultural diffusion did not end with the original spread of farming and herding. New ideas arose often during the succeeding millennia and spread through agricultural space as waves of innovation. The twentieth century, in particular, witnessed many such farming innovations and diffusions. The spread of hybrid maize through the United States in the present century provides a good example of expansion diffusion. Such innovations often gain initial acceptance by wealthier, large-scale farmers, providing a good example of hierarchical diffusion.

One of the major innovation diffusions in the twentieth-century American agriculture involved the spread of pump irrigation through many parts of Western Great Plains. The Colorado High Plains farmers, in effect, decided whether they wanted an entirely different system of agriculture from the one they had traditionally practiced. The first irrigation well began operation by 1935, but initial diffusion was retarded in part by a shortage of capital in the Great Depression years. Beginning in 1948, irrigation spread quite rapidly.

In studying this spread, there was observed contagious diffusion from the core area or initial acceptance and time-distant decay. The closer a potential irrigation site lay to an existing irrigated farm, the more likely its owner was to accept the innovation, an example of the *neighborhood effect*. Some barriers to the diffusion of irrigation weakened through time. Banks and other money lending institutions proved initially reluctant to lend money to farmers for investment in irrigation. However, once the technique proved to be economically successful, loans were easier to obtain and interest rates fell.

Not all innovations spread wavelike across the land, in the manner of pump irrigation and hybrid maize. More typical is a much less orderly pattern. In some countries, most notably in India, acceptance of the hybrid seed, chemical fertilizers, and pesticides associated with the green revolution spread widely in a relatively short time span, becoming almost the normal type of farming. By contrast, countries such as Myanmar resisted the revolution, favoring the traditional method. Non-acceptors of the new revolution were named “laggards” and the inevitability of innovations is assumed, but in reality, the green revolution is plagued by problems.

A detailed study was made of the cultural diffusion of the green revolution in India. The new hybrid rice and wheat seeds first appeared in 1966 in India. Although requiring chemical fertilizers and protection by pesticides, the new hybrid allowed India’s 1970-grain production to double in output from its 1950 level. However, poorer farmers—the great majority of agriculturists—could not afford the capital expenditures for fertilizers and pesticides, and the gap between the rich and poor farmers widened. Many of the poor became displaced from the land and flocked to the overcrowded cities of India, greatly aggravating urban problems. To make matters worse, the use of chemicals and poisons on the land heightened environmental damage.

The adoption of hybrid seeds brought yet another problem—the loss of plant diversity or genetic variety. Before hybrid seeds came into widespread use, each farm developed its own instinctive seed types, through the practice of setting aside seeds from the better plants annually at the harvest time for the next season’s sowing. Enormous genetic diversity vanished almost instantly when farmers began purchasing hybrids rather than saving seed from the last harvest. “*Gene banks*” have been set up to preserve what remains of domesticated plant variety, not yet in the areas not affected by the green revolution. In sum, the green revolution proved at best to be a mixed blessing. Perhaps the “laggards” were correct, in the end; a Western innovation in plant genetics may have caused more harm than good in India and elsewhere.

Not all diffusion related to agriculture has been intentional. In fact, accidental diffusion accomplished by humans probably occurs more commonly than the purposeful type. Often the results prove quite undesirable. An example of such undesirable diffusion is that of the tropical American “fire ant”, so named because of its very painful sting. A shipload of plantation-grown banana from tropical America accidentally brought the fire ant to Mobile, Alabama, in 1949, and the continuing relocation diffusion has since brought the fire ant and across most of the American South. These vicious ants now endanger livestock and poultry raising, because swarms of them can attack and kill young animals.

Activity 4

1. What does it mean agricultural world?
2. Mention agricultural regions
3. Where agriculture started?
4. How agricultural diffusion takes place?

2.3.4. Agricultural Ecology

Agricultural types or systems are adaptive strategies. Because farmers and herders work and live on the land, very close relationships exist between agriculture and the physical environment. Thousands of years of agricultural use of the land have led to massive alterations in our natural environment. This interplay between humankind and the land provides the substance of agricultural ecology.

Cultural Adaptation

Weather and climate exert perhaps the greatest influence on the different forms of agriculture. For example, the cultivation of many crops sensitive to frost becomes prohibitively expensive outside tropical and subtropical areas. Plantation farmers in warm climates can produce cash crops desired by peoples in the mid-latitudes, where crops cannot be grown.

In turn, the need for abundant irrigation water to flood the fields confines paddy rice farming to its present limits within Asia. Soils also play an influential role in agricultural decisions. Shifting cultivation reflects in part an adaptation to poor tropical soils, which rapidly lose their fertility when farmed. Groups practicing peasant grain, root, and livestock agriculture often owe their superior farming status to the fertility of local volcanic soils, which are not so quickly exhausted.

Terrain also influences agriculture. As a general rule, farmers tend to practice crop farming in areas of level terrain, leaving the adjacent hills and mountains forested.

Often environmental influence remains subtler. For example, in paddy areas near the margins of the Asian wet-rice region, where unreliability of rainfall causes harvests to vary greatly from one year to the next, farmers developed quite complex cultivation strategies to avert periodic famine, including the use of many varieties of rice.

A similarly subtle environmental influence can also be observed in West Africa, where peasant grain, root, and livestock farmers raise a multiplicity of crops in the more humid lands near the coast. These crops fall away one by one toward the drier interior of the continent where instead numerous draught resistant varieties of only a few basic crops are found.

As a result, it is now generally accepted that “the methods of traditional agriculture and resource management merit serious consideration”

Agriculturalists as Modifiers of the Environment

After the domestication of plant and animals, humankind began to alter the environment in a major way, especially natural vegetation. To the pre-agricultural hunter and gatherer, the forest harbored valuable wild plants and animals. To the agriculturist, however, the woodland became less valuable as a source of food and had to be cleared to make fields. Over millennia, as dependence on agriculture grew and as population increased, humans made ever-larger demands on the forests.

In many parts of China, India, and the Mediterranean lands, forests virtually vanished. In Trans-Alpine Europe, the United States, and some other areas, they were greatly reduced. Aside from the loss of woodland, burning dead vegetation pollutes the air. Shifting cultivators in African’s rainforest produce acid rain levels comparable to those of industrial areas through the slash-and-burn products.

Desertification

Grassland suffered similar modifications. Prairies gave way to the plow or experienced severe damage through overgrazing. Farmers occasionally plow up grasslands too dry for sustainable crop production, and herders frequently allow their herds to overgraze semiarid pastures. The result could be desertification. Half-century ago, Rhoads Murphy-a geographer, studied the process. He assembled convincing evidence that farmers caused substantial parts of North Africa to be added to the margins of the Sahara Desert. He noted the catastrophic decline of countries such as Libya and Tunisia in the 1500 years since the time of Roman rule, when North Africa served as the “granary of the Empire,” yielding huge wheat harvests. Many districts had substantially larger population than at present and agricultural production declined substantially.

The Sahel is a region south of the Sahara. Today at some point in the Sahel, the destruction of vegetation could pass a critical threshold, beyond which the plant life cannot regenerate leading to denudation. This, in turn, would have the effect of reducing rainfall and increasing temperatures. Soon lands that had been covered with pastures and fields could become permanently joined to the dunes of the adjacent Sahara. Africa confronts the greatest such problems, but Asia, Australia, the Americas, and even Europe may also have endangered districts. Desertification could significantly reduce the land area devoted to food production in the decades ahead, with possible dire consequences. Overpopulation leads to overuse of the land, which in turn, may produce desertification, reduction of food supplies, and mass famine.

One might think that irrigation provides a solution to desertification. However, such artificial watering cans have both intentional and unintentional impacts on land. Obviously, the intended effect is to circumvent deficiencies in precipitation by importing water from another area, using dams and canals, or from another era, using deep wells and pumps to exploit groundwater accumulated over decades and centuries.

Unfortunately, the beneficial effect of irrigation is often offset by unintentional environmental destruction. Ditch and canal irrigation can cause the local subsurface water table to rise, water logging the soil, and the mineral content of the water frequently saltiness of the ground. In Pakistan, for example, the water table rose to 3 to 10 meters, and 900 to 2200 kilograms of salt were added per hectare of land, as a result of dam-and-ditch irrigation. Conversely, the water table has been drastically lowered by well and pump irrigation in parts of the American Great Plains, particularly. Texas, causing ancient springs to go dry and promising an early end to intensive agriculture there, irrigation, in other words, had the effect of spreading rather than diminishing desertification.

Another area where desertification resulted from irrigation lies on the borderland between Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in central Asia. The once-huge Aral Sea became so diminished by the diversion of irrigation water from the rivers flowing into it that large areas of dry lakebed now lie exposed. Not only was the local fishing industry destroyed, but also noxious, chemical-laden dust storms blow from the desiccated lakebed onto nearby settlements causing assorted health problems. Irrigation destroyed and ecosystem produced another desert.

Equally as serious as desertification is the increasing chemical contamination of the land through both fertilizers and pesticides, used mainly by commercial farmers in Western cultures. Together with the use of large machines, chemicals allowed drastic reductions in the amount of labor needed in agriculture. However, the ecological consequences could well be devastating, and in some areas, serious contamination problems have appeared. The chemical dependency may be no more sustainable in agricultural systems than in the human body.

Sustainability - *the survival of land-use system for centuries or millennia without destruction of the environmental base-is the central agricultural issue. Western technological adaptive strategies almost certainly are not sustainable.*

Environmental Perception by Agriculturists

People perceive the physical environment through lenses that their culture fashions for them. Each person's agricultural heritage can be influential in shaping these perceptions. This is because human survival depends on how successfully people can adjust their ways of making a living to environmental conditions.

The American Great Plains provides a good example of how an agricultural experience in one environment influenced farmers' environment. Plains farmers came from the humid eastern United States, and they consistently underestimated the problem of draught in their new home. By contrast, German immigrants from the steppes of Russia and the Ukraine, an area very much like the American Great Plains, accurately perceived the new land and experienced fewer problems.

Cultural Integration in Agriculture

Economic and other cultural forces influence the distribution of agricultural activities. Religious taboos, politically based tariff restrictions, rural land-use zoning policies, population density and many other human factors influence the type and distribution of agricultural activities. Among some peoples, the system of crop and livestock raising becomes so firmly enmeshed in the culture that both society and religion are greatly influenced.

As a result, agricultural borders often parallel other cultural boundaries. In northeastern France, for example, where the French-German language border cuts across French national territory, many elements of agriculture roughly follow the linguistic rather than the political boundary. On

the German-speaking side, farms are smaller and more likely to divide into multiple parcels separated from one another. Efficiency and crop output are adversely affected, causing the German-speaking farmers to seek second jobs to augment income. They more likely own dairy cows, as opposed to beef cattle, than do their French neighbors across the language border. Language usually identifies separate cultures, which, in turn, have different dietary preferences.

Intensity of Land Use

Intensive agriculture means that a great deal of human labor or investment capital, or both input into each hectare of land, with the goal of obtaining the greatest output in terms of produce. In much of the world, especially the paddy rice areas of Asia, high intensity is achieved through prodigious application of human labor, with the result that the local rice output per unit of land is the highest in the world. In Western countries, high intensity is instead achieved by the massive application of investment capital in machines, fertilizers, and pesticides, resulting in the highest agricultural productivity per capita found anywhere else.

There is a social-scientific approach that generally supports the theory that increased land-use intensity results when population growth forces the need for additional food and reduces the amount of land each farmer can have. As demographic pressure mounts, farmers systematically discard the more extensive adaptive strategies to focus on those that provide greater yield per unit of land. In this manner, the population increase is accommodated. The resultant farming system may be riskier, since it offers fewer options and possesses greater potential for environmental modification, but it does yield more food, at least in the short run.

The von Thünen Model

Other social-scientific geographers, usually economic determinists, look instead to market forces and transportation costs as keys to level of land-use intensity. They use the core/periphery model developed in the nineteenth century by the German scholar-farmer, Johann Heinrich von Thünen. In his model, von Thünen proposed an “isolated state” that had no trade connections with the outside world; possessed only one market, located centrally in the state; and had uniform soil, climate, and level terrain throughout. He further assumes that all farmers living the same distance from the market had equal access to it and that all farmers sought to maximize their profits and produced solely for market. Von Thünen created this model in order to study the influence of distance from market and transport costs on the type and intensity of agriculture.

Improvement in transportation since the 1820s, when he wrote his work, render certain of this conclusions obsolete; such as the finding that bulky products would be produced near the market. The resultant revised model, in common with the original, reveals a series of concentric zones, each occupied by different type agriculture, located at progressively greater distance from the central market.

For any given crop, the intensity of cultivation declines with increasing distance from the market. Farmers near the market have minimal transport costs and can invest most of their resources in labor, equipment, and supplies to augment production. Indeed, they have to farm intensively in order to make a bigger profit, because their land is more valuable and subject to higher taxes. With increasing distance from the market, farmers invest progressively less in production per unit of land because they have to spend progressively more in transporting produce to market. Moreover, highly perishable products such as milk, fresh fruit, and garden vegetables need to be produced near the market, whereas peripheral farmers have to produce non-perishable products or convert perishable items into a more durable form, such as cheese or dried fruit.

This concentric zone model describes a situation in which highly capital-intensive forms of commercial agriculture, such as market gardening and feedlots, lie nearest to the market. Progressively less intensive types of agriculture represented by dairying, livestock fattening, commercial grain farming, and ranching, occupy the increasingly distant, successive, concentric belts.

How well does this model describe reality? The real world is far more complicated. Models are not meant to depict reality, but instead to simplify conditions for some specific explanatory purpose. Still, on a world scale, one can see that the intensive commercial types of agriculture tend to occur most commonly near the huge urban market of northwestern Europe and the eastern United States. An even closer match can be observed in smaller areas, as in South American nation of Uruguay.

The value of von Thünen model can also be seen in the underdeveloped countries of the world. Geographer Ronald Horvath made a detailed study of the African region centering on the Ethiopian capital city of Addis Ababa. While noting disruptions caused by ethnic and environmental contrasts, Professor Horvath found “remarkable parallels between von Thünen crop theory and the agriculture around Addis Ababa.”

Can the World Be Fed?

Was Thomas Malthus correct? Are starvation and recurrent famine inevitable as the world’s population grows and increasingly becomes concentrated in cities? On the other hand, can the present agricultural system successfully feed the 6 billion or more people?

Today, some 850 million people are malnourished, some starving. Almost every year one reads of famines, usually in one African country or another. Yet-and this would astound Malthus-food production has grown more rapidly than population over the past 30 or 40 years. On per capital basis, more food is available today than in 1950, when only about half as many people lived on Earth as today. The explanation for this paradox surely lies in the theme of cultural integration. The answer is that poverty and politics, not food shortage, cause hunger. Many Third World

countries do not grow enough food to feed their populations, and they cannot afford to purchase enough imported food to make up the difference. As a result, famine can occur even when plenty of food is available. Irish starved by the millions in the 1840s while adjacent Britain possessed enough surplus food to have prevented this catastrophe. Bangladesh suffered a major famine in 1974, a year of record agricultural surplus in the world.

Even when major efforts are made to send food from wealth countries to famine areas, the poor transportation infrastructure of Third World countries often prevents effective distribution. Political instability can disrupt food shipments, and the donated food often falls into the hands of corrupt local officials. Famine then is mainly a cultural phenomenon. Its immediate causes could be environmental, but the failure to relieve hunger has cultural explanation.

2.3.5. Agricultural Landscapes

A great part of the world's land area is cultivated or pastured. This visible human imprint on rural land is called agricultural landscape. The agricultural imprint on the land often varies even over short distance, telling much about local cultures and subcultures. This agricultural landscape also remains in many respects a window on the past.

Survey, Cadastral, and Field Patterns

A cadastral pattern is one describing property ownership lines whereas a field pattern reflects the way a farmer subdivides land for agricultural use. Both can be much influenced by survey patterns, the lines lay out by surveyors prior to the settlement of an area. Major regional contrasts exist in survey, cadastral, and field patterns, as, for example, uni-block versus fragmented land holding, and regular, geometric survey versus irregular or un-surveyed property lines.

Fragmented farms are the rule rather than the exception in the Eastern Hemisphere. Under this system, farmers live in farm villages or hamlets. Their small land holdings lie splintered into many separate fields situated at varying distances and directions from the settlement. The individual plots may be roughly rectangular, as in Asia and southern Europe, or they may lie in narrow strips.

The origins of the fragmented farm system go back to an early period of peasant communalism. One of its initial justifications was a desire for peasant equality. Each farmer in the village needed land of varying soil composition and terrain. Distance of travel from the village was to equalize. From the rice paddies of Japan and India to the pastures and fields of Western Europe, the fragmented holding remains a prominent feature of the cultural landscape.

Unit-block farms, by contrast in which all of the farmer's property is contained in a single, contiguous piece of land occur mainly in overseas area of European settlement, particularly the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa. Most often, they reveal a regular geometric

land survey. The checkerboard of farms and fields in the rectangular survey areas of the United States provide a good example of this cadastral pattern.

The American rectangular survey system first appeared after the Revolutionary War, as an orderly method for parceling out federally owned land for sale for pioneers. It imposed a rigid, square, graph paper pattern on much of the American countryside, geometry triumphant over physical geography. All lines are oriented to the cardinal directions. The basic unit of the system is the section a square of land 1.6 kilometers on each side and thus 259 hectares in area. Land was often bought and sold in half-sections or quarter sections. Larger squares called townships, measuring 10 kilometers on each side, or 93 square kilometers of land, serve as political administrative sub-districts within counties. Roads follow section and township line, adding to the checkerboard aspect of the American agricultural landscape. Canada adopted an almost identical rectangular survey system which is practically evident in the Prairie Provinces. Traces of more ancient rectangular survey systems can be seen in some European and Asian landscapes.

A long-lot farm, in here the landholding consists of a long, narrow unit-block stretching back from a road, river, or canal. Rather than occurring singly, long-lots lie grouped in rows, allowing this cardinal survey pattern to dominate entire districts. Long-lots usually occur widely in the hills and marshes of central and Western Europe, in parts of Brazil and Argentina, along the rivers of French-settled Quebec and southern Louisiana, and in parts of Texas and northern New Mexico. The reason for elongating these uni-block farms lay in the desire to provide each farmer with fertile valley land, water, and access to transportation facilities, either roads or rivers. In French America, long-lots appear in rows along streams, because water transport provided the chief means of movement in colonial times. In the hill lands of central Europe, a road along the valley floor provides, and long-lots reach back from the road to the adjacent ridge crests.

Fencing and Hedging

Fences or hedges, heightening the visibility of these lines in the agricultural landscape often mark property and field borders. Open-field areas, where the dominance of crop raising and the careful tending of livestock make fences unnecessary, still prevail in India, Japan, and much of Western Europe, and some other Old World areas, much of the remainder of the world's agricultural lands are enclosed.

Fences and hedges add a distinctive touch to the cultural landscape. Different cultures have their own methods and ways of enclosing land so that types of fences and hedges can be linked to particular group. As do most visible features of culture, fence types can serve as indicators of cultural diffusion.

The ancient and honored form of livelihood called agriculture varies markedly from place to place, displaying the same tendency for spatial variation that we observed for population. These patterns

are expressed as agricultural regions, ranging from traditional subsistence hand-labor farming systems of tropical rainforests to the highly mechanized cash grain operations of mid-latitude wheat belts.

All of these diverse systems are rooted ultimately in the ancient innovations of plant and animal domestication, ideas that diffused from multiple points of origin to occupy their present distributions. Subsequently, countless other agricultural innovations arose, diffused across agricultural space by expansion and relocation, collided with barriers, and reached their present distributions.

Cultural ecology is implicit in the tiling of the soil and grazing of natural vegetation. Humans cannot engage in agriculture even on the most primitive level without developing an adaptive strategy and deliberately modifying the physical environment. The results include deforestation, soil erosion, and the possible expansion of deserts. Similarly, and because farmers work in such direct contact with the land, they are influenced by the physical environments in which they live and work. The role of climatic advantage and disadvantage and the initiation of level terrain to large-scale mechanized farming, as examples of environmental influence are observable.

Cultural integration teaches one to look for cause- and -effect connections between agriculture and other cultural features. In particular, in the *von Thünen model* the influence of transportation costs and proximity to market on types of farming is observable.

Activity 5

1. What is sustainability?
2. What is the concept of agricultural ecology?
3. Express the agricultural landscapes.

The Industrial World

It is the rapid economic and social changes in agriculture and manufacturing that followed the introduction of the factory system to the textile industry of England in the last quarter of the 18th century.

The Industrial Revolution that began in England in the 1730s and spread to mainland Europe during the 19th century established Western and Central Europe as a premier manufacturing region

and the source area for the diffusion of industrialization across the globe. By 1900, Europe accounted for 90% of the world's industrial output though, of course, its relative position has since eroded, particularly after World War II.

The first steps in the *Industrial Revolution* were not so revolutionary for the larger spinning and weaving machines that were built were driven by the old source of power: water running downslope. However, James Watt and others who were trying to develop a steam-driven engine succeeded (1765-1788), and this new invention was adapted for various uses.

It is this revolution, which is to change the life of primarily Europeans, then North America, Australia, Asia and finally Africa. The world has never been the same since then. The world today is divided into north and south referring to the industrially advanced and developing states respectively.

Industrial Revolution

Since the first appearance of human – beings, two revolutions have taken place. These are agricultural and industrial revolutions. The Industrial Revolution, which began in England, has immensely raised the productive power of humankind. Following this human inventiveness resulted in population explosion, remodeling of the natural environment, changes of settlement patterns, fast urbanizations, population explosion, communications etc.

The industrial revolution, which began in the eighteenth century, released for the second time undreamed-of human productive powers. Suddenly, whole societies could engage in the seemingly limitless multiplication of goods and services. Rapid bursts of human inventiveness followed, as did gigantic population increases, and a massive, often unsettling remodeling of the environment.

Today, the Industrial Revolution, with its churning of whole populations and its restructuring of ancient cultural traditional into popular forms, is still running its course. Few lands remain largely untouched by its machines, factories, transportation devices, and communication techniques. Western nations, where this revolution has been under way the longest, still feel its sometimes painful, sometimes invigorating effects. Every object and every event in human's life is affected, if not actually created, by the Industrial Revolution.

The Industrial Revolution arose among backcountry English cottage craftspeople in the early 1700s and fundamentally restructured secondary industry. Machines in the fashioning of finished products, rendering the word manufacturing (“made by hand”) technology obsolete, replaced first, human hands. No longer would the weaver sit at a handloom and painstakingly produce each piece of cloth. Instead, large mechanical looms were invented to do the job faster and more economically (though not necessarily better).

Second, human power gave way to various forms of inanimate power. The machines were driven by waterpower, the burning of fossil fuels, and later by hydroelectricity and the energy of the atom. Men and women, once the proud producers of fine handmade goods, became tenders of machines.

A lot more is known about Industrial Revolution than about the beginning of agriculture. The industrial revolution is a matter of recorded history. Within a century and a half of its beginnings this economic revolution had greatly altered the first three sectors of industrial activity.

Since the Industrial Revolution, distances measured between places in hours taken to cover have diminished. Communication has so changed that nearly all parts of the Earth is made accessible.

Five types of industrial activities are recognized. These are primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary and quinary. The levels of developments of these industrial types vary with the history of industrial movements in a given state.

Industrialization has raised living standards of the population but it is not without its negative impact on the environment.

Two great economic “revolutions” occurred in the development of culture. The first of these, the domestication of plants and animals, occurred in our dim prehistory. This agricultural revolution resulted in a huge increase in human population, a greatly accelerated modification of the Physical environment, and major cultural readjustments. The second of these upheavals, the industrial revolution, is still taking place, and it involves a series of interrelated inventions leading to the use of machines and inanimate power in the manufacturing process and transportation. One lives today at a pivotal point in the destiny of ones species, and witnesses to this second revolution with its many attendant changes.

Industrial Regions

Five types of industrial activity, each occupying culture regions, can be distinguished. These industries are - primary, secondary, tertiary, quaternary, and quinary.

Primary industries are those involved in extracting both renewable and non-renewable natural resources from the Earth. Fishing, hunting, lumbering, oil wells, and mining provide example of primary industries.

Renewable resources are those that can be used without being permanently depleted, such as forests, water, fishing grounds, and agricultural land. Unfortunately, overexploitations of renewable resources cause depletion in all too many cases, as the demand for the products of

primary industries increases. The 1990s for example witnessed a worldwide crisis in the oceanic fishing industry as a result of over fishing.

Non-renewable resources are depleted when used, as for example, minerals and petroleum.

Secondary Industry

Most of the world's industrial activity has traditionally been found in the developed countries of the mid-latitude Northern Hemisphere, especially in parts of Anglo-America, Europe, Russia, and Japan. This is particularly true of manufacturing.

Many different types of manufacturing exist within these major regions. Industrial regions usually consist of several zones, each dominated by a particular kind of industry. Iron and steel manufacture is concentrated in one of these zones, coal mining in another, and textiles in a third. This regional specialization arose with the industrial revolution in the 1770s, causing manufacturing to take on a heightened geographical character.

Core - Periphery. Reflecting the heightened regionalism that accompanied the industrial revolution was the development of the economic *core/periphery* pattern. The evolving industrial core consisted of the developed countries, with their collective manufacturing regions, while the periphery had non-industrial and weakly industrialized lands. Resources extracted from the increasingly impoverished peripheries flowed to the core. The resultant geographical pattern is one of the fundamental realities of our age-often referred to as uneven development or great regional disparity. Opinions differ concerning whether this industrial manifestation of the core/periphery concept is a correctable or inherent geographical feature of the world economy. Uneven development has proved to be increasingly and unyieldingly present.

Although the manufacturing dominance of the developed countries of the core persists, a major geographical shift is currently underway in secondary industry. In virtually every country, much of the secondary sector is in marked decline especially traditional mass-production industries such as steel making and other similar types of manufacturing that require a minimally skilled, blue-collar workforce. In such districts, factories are closing, blue-collar unemployment rates stand at the highest level since the Great Depression of the 1930s, and a "deskilling" of the work force proceeds.

The manufacturing industries surviving and now booming in the core countries are mainly those requiring a highly skilled or artisans' workforce, such as "high-tech" firms and companies producing quality consumer goods. Because the blue-collar workforce has proved largely unable to acquire the new skills needed in such industries, many old manufacturing districts lapse into deep economic depression. Moreover, the high-tech manufacturer employs far fewer workers than the former heavy industries, and they tend to be geographically concentrated in very small districts,

sometimes called *techno poles*. *Techno pole* is a center of high-tech manufacturing and information-based quaternary industry.

The word deindustrialization describes the decline and fall of once-prosperous factory and mining areas, such as the American Manufacturing Belt, now often called the “rust belt”. Dis-industrialization brings demoralization and erosion of the spirit of place - the vital energy and pride that makes places livable, viable, and renewable. The affected countries reacted to the problem of dis-industrialization in different ways. The western part of Germany, for example, maintained an unusually high proportion of its workforce in manufacturing by reinvesting for high productivity, offering high wages specializing in expensive export-oriented products, and protecting the high level of labor skill through a well-developed apprenticeship system.

Manufacturing industries lost by the core countries relocate in newly industrializing lands of the periphery. South Korea, Taiwan, India, Singapore, Brazil, Mexico, Guangdong province in coastal South China, have experienced a major expansion of manufacturing, a movement that continues and now involves many other peripheral countries.

Global Corporations. The ongoing locational shift in manufacturing regions is largely the work of global corporations, also called multinationals or transnationals. One can no longer think of decisions on market location, labor supply, or other aspects of industrial planning within framework of a single plant controlled by a single owner. Instead, we now deal with a highly complex international corporate structure that plans on a gargantuan scale. Working through great corporation that straddle the Earth, people for the first time utilize world resources with efficiency more completely dictated by the merciless logic of profit. Globalization, as this phenomenon is often called, is many things. It is footloose corporations taking investments where labor is most productive. It is the daily flow across borders of more than \$1.5 trillion and an erosion of national sovereignty. It is “boom” in favored and “bust” in those that lose industry.

Today, the size of corporate conglomeration is breathtaking. The total sales of global corporations are greater than the gross national product of virtually every country. These corporate giants based mainly in the United States, Europe, and Japan, have sweeping control over international communications networks, the latest advances in modern technology, and large amount of investment capital. They effectively control the economic structures of many underdeveloped states of the world.

The decline of primary and secondary industries in the older developed core, or de-industrialization, has ushered in an era widely referred to as the post-industrial phase. The three service sectors- tertiary, quaternary, and quinary-achieve dominance in the post-industrial phase. Both the United States and Canada can now be regarded as having entered the post-industrial era, as have most of Europe and Japan.

Tertiary industry, part of both the industrial and post-industrial phases, includes transportation, communication, and utility services. Highways, railroads, airlines, pipelines, telephones, radios, television, and the Internet all belong to the tertiary sector of industry. All facilitate the distribution of goods, services, and information. Modern industries require well-developed transport systems, and a network of such facilities serves every industrial district. Major regional differences exist in the relative importance of the various modes of transport. In Russia and Ukraine, for example, highways have less than average industrial significance railroads, and to a less extent waterways, carry much of the transport load. Russia still lacks a transcontinental highway. In the United States, on the other hand, highways reign supreme, while the railroad system has declined. Western European nations rely heavily on a greater balance between rail, highway, and waterway transport. Beyond the industrialized regions, transport systems are much less developed.

Quaternary industry

Quaternary industries are those services mainly required by producers, such as trade, insurance, legal services, banking, advertising, wholesaling, retailing, consulting, information generation, and real estate transactions. Such activities represent one of the major and growth sectors in post-industrial economies, and a geographical segregation seems to be developing in which manufacturing is increasingly shunted to the peripheries while corporate headquarters, markets and the producer-related service activities remain in the core. An inherent problem in this spatial arrangement is multiplier leakage: global corporations invest in secondary industry in the peripheries, but profits flow back to the core, where the corporate headquarters are located. As early as 1965, American-based corporations took, on the average, about four-fifths of their net profits out of Latin America in this way.

As a result of multiplier leakage, the industrialization of less developed countries actually increases the power of the world's established industrial nations. In fact, while industrial technology has spread everywhere, today one faces a world in which the basic industrial power of the planet is more centralized than ever. The global corporations are headquartered mainly in quaternary areas where the industrial revolution took root earlier—the mid-latitude countries of the Northern Hemisphere. Similarly, loans for industrial development come from banking institutions in Europe, Japan, and the United States, with the result that interest payments drain away from the poor to the rich countries.

Increasingly important in the quaternary sector is the collection, generation, storage, retrieval, and processing of computerized knowledge and information, including research, publishing, consulting, and forecasting. Post-industrial society is organized around knowledge and innovation, which are used to acquire profits and exert social control. The impact of computers is changing the world dramatically, a process that has accelerated since about 1970, with implications

for the spatial organization of all human activities and each of the five industrial sectors. This leads to new ways of doing things and to new products and services.

Many quaternary industries depend on a highly skilled, intelligent, creative, and imaginative labor force, and as such are elitist. While focused geographically in the old industrial core, the distribution of information-generating activity, if viewed on a more local scale, can be seen to coalesce in techno – poles around major universities and research centers. The presence of Stanford and the University of California at Berkeley, for example, helped make the San Francisco Bay area a major center of such industry, and similar techno – poles have developed near Harvard and MIT in New England and the trio-university Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill “Research Triangle” of North Carolina. These high-tech corridors, or “*silicon Landscapes*,” as some have dubbed them, occupy relatively little area. In other words, the information economy is highly focused geographically, contributing to and heightening uneven development spatially. In Europe, for example, the emerging core of quaternary industry is even more confined geographically than the earlier concentration of manufacturing.

Quinary Industry

Quinary industry mainly involves consumer-related services, such as education, government, recreation/tourism, and health/medicine. Even such mundane activities as housecleaning and lawn service belong in the quinary sector.

One of the most rapidly expanding quinary activities is tourism. Already by 1990, this industry accounted for 5.5 percent of the world’s economy, generated \$2.5 trillion income, and employed 112 million workers-more than any other single industrial activity and amounting to 1 of every 15 workers in the world. Just two years later, the total has risen to \$3 trillion and tourism employed 1 of every 14 workers. Like all other forms of industry, the impotence of tourism varies greatly one region or country to another.

Some countries, particularly those in tropical island locations depend principally upon tourism to support their national economies. One advantage of tourism is that it is disproportionately focused in the industrial peripheries rather than the core, somewhat alleviating the problem of uneven development, though multiplier leakage typically drains most of the profits back to the core.

Evolution of settlement Patterns

Settlement refers to the grouping of peoples and houses into hamlets, villages, towns and cities.

Origin of Settlement

There is abundant evidence that Neanderthals regularly occupied the mouths of caves and rock shelters in Europe and Southwest Asia. There is relationship between the spacing or density of houses and the intensity of crop production. Dispersed settlement does not always show that land is extensively cultivated. In Java, Indonesia, the settlement pattern is nucleated. In the Paleolithic, people did normally live in shelters that were built of perishable materials subject to collapse and rapid decay. In the Neolithic, mud brick houses started appearing that were coated with plaster. Humans have a great capacity for altering their habitats by various methods such as through irrigation, urban planning, construction, transport, manufacturing goods, deforestation and desertification.

Settlement Types and Morphology

Farming people group themselves together in clustered settlements called farm villages. Two basic village forms have often been identified: the nucleated village and the linear village. Nucleated village can be classified as the irregular nucleated village and regular nucleated village. The former is a maze of winding, narrow streets and a jumble of farmsteads. Egs England, Eastern France, Belgium and large parts of Western Germany, in Asia including the North china plain, North and Northwest India. The latter may result from some form of planning. It includes elongated street village, the green village and the grid-iron village and the checkerboard village. The street village consists of farmsteads or houses arranged along both sides of a single, central street, producing elongated settlements. Green village consists of farmsteads grouped around a central open place or green which forms a common property. Round village the houses were arranged in a radical pattern. Grid-iron villages or the checkerboard villages are regular in a layout based on a gridiron pattern of streets meeting at right angles. Hamlet is the most common type of semi-clustered settlement. It consists of a small number of farmsteads grouped loosely.

Unit Three

Geography of Language, Religion and Ethnicity

Dear Colleague, in this chapter you will be presented with the basic concepts of language, religion and ethnicity. First, you will appreciate the origin and major world's languages. Second, you will explain the origin and spread of world's religions. Next, you will focus on ethnicity and race. Much human communication involves not words but gestures and body language. In the world as a whole the existence of 5,000 – 6,000, languages have been documented but many are dying out. Language is a system of symbols that allows members of a society to communicate with one another. These symbols take the form of spoken and written words, which are culturally variable and composed of the various alphabets used around the world.

Religion is a social institution involving beliefs and practices based upon a conception of the sacred. Sacred is that which is defined as extraordinary, inspiring a sense of awe, reverence, and even fear. Because religion deals with ideas that transcend everyday experience, neither common sense nor any scientific discipline can verify or disprove religious doctrine. There are hundreds of religious organizations in the world.

Ethnic is from Greek word *ethnos*, meaning “people” or “nation” Ethnic is from a different race, of national or racial group of people. Ethnicity accrues from different combinations of cultural traditions, and racial background, and even physical environment. Ethnicity is a shared cultural heritage. Members of an ethnic category have common ancestors, a language or a religion that, together, confer a distinctive social identity. Race is biological while ethnicity is cultural.

Politics is the science of governments of states. It is the art and practice of government of human societies. In the common-sense view, politics is about governments, political parties, elections and public policy, or about war, peace and ‘foreign affairs’. All these refer to formal politics, which is the operation of constitutional system of government and its publicly defined institutions and procedures. Political geography is the study of variation of political phenomena from place to place in interconnection with variations in other features of the earth as the home of man.

The term language has been defined in various ways. Language generally defined as a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, gestures, marks, or especially articulate vocal sounds. Actually vocal communication (vocalization) is the crucial part of the definition. Moreover, such communication is symbolic, that is, in each language the meaning of sounds, and combination of sounds, must be learned.

Language is the essence of culture and no culture exists without it; when a people's language is perceived to be threatened, the defensive response often is passionate and protective. Mature and complex cultures attempt to maintain a standard language perpetuated by official state

examinations and sustained by national institutions (in France, for example, the Academie Française); but in this interconnected world of diffusion innovations, standards are difficult to upheld.

More people speak languages belonging to the Indo-European Language Family than any other language family, and Indo-European languages are more widely distributed around the world than any others are. Chinese is the individual language spoken by more people than any other language, but another individual language, English has become the first true world language.

Objectives:

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- ❖ Define the term like language, religion, ethnicity and race.
- ❖ Identify major world languages, religions and race.
- ❖ Distinguish the meaning of ethnicity and race.

3.1. Geography of Language

The term language has been defined in various ways. Language generally defined as a systematic means of communicating ideas or feelings by the use of conventionalized signs, gestures, marks, or especially articulate vocal sounds. Actually vocal communication (vocalization) is the crucial part of the definition. Moreover, such communication is symbolic, that is, in each language the meaning of sounds, and combination of sounds, must be learned.

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What we speak and how we speak is the most powerful marker of who we are, not only as individuals, but as groups. Our language constrains and liberates our thoughts and feelings; and battles over the control of words and phrases are central to how power is exercised in most communities. The pen, or the turn of phrase, is indeed mightier than the sword.

A *language* is a system of communication that persons within a community use to convey ideas and emotions. The study of languages is called *linguistics*. Sometimes, people who speak (or sign) the same language find it very easy to communicate with each other. Chances are, people who communicate easily speak a very similar version of a language, known as a *dialect*. On the other hand, dialects can become so different from each other that they border on becoming a different language because they extend past what is called *mutual intelligibility*. Consider that many speakers of American English find that they cannot understand speakers of Scottish English if their dialect is extreme. Part of the problem is the differences in *accent*, which refers to the *way* people pronounce words. For example, the Scottish “roll” their tongues when they pronounce words with the letter R in them and Americans do not. Americans pronounce “to” like “tu” and the Scottish pronounce it like “tae”. A dialect is more than just accent, because different dialects use different vocabularies and may structure sentences differently than Americans. A Scotsman might use “wee bairn” to describe a small child, where Americans might use “little kid” instead. So different is Scots English that some linguists even consider it a separate language.

There are other forms and uses of language as well. In places where two or more languages are spoken, a *pidgin language* may develop. Pidgin languages are simplified versions of a language or several languages that help people communicate, especially in matters of trade or business. Lots of pidgin languages have formed around the world, especially in border areas and in places where colonial empires were built. Sometimes a pidgin will become more complex and evolve into a language in its own right; a native tongue. Linguists call these newly created tongues *creole languages*. Most creole languages remain unofficial, but some like Haitian Creole, a blend of French and West African languages, become an official language with rules about spelling and syntax, formally taught in schools, etc.

Louisiana has a fascinating mixture of all these elements. Louisiana Creole, the creolized language of many people in south and southwestern Louisiana is spoken by people who call themselves Creoles. It, like the language of Haiti, is a hybrid of French and African languages, plus probably a healthy dose of Haitian Creole as well. Many other people in the region speak a variant called “Cajun French”, which is less a creolized language, and more a very wayward dialect of Canadian French. The popular culture chapter in this text discusses how the linguistic differences among French speakers in South Louisiana is expressed in terms of music and ethnic identity.

Language on the Landscape

Spoken languages, like songs, jokes and other intangible elements of culture is a *mentifact*, and is therefore invisible on the landscape. However, written elements of language are quite common on

the landscape in the form of signs. Because signs generally have words on them, they provide an easy and fascinating opportunity to practice reading the landscape, as a geographer. Be careful though, because frequently the words on the landscape do not “tell” the same story as the landscape in which they are found. Consider for example, a sign that is not uncommon near the entrances to college or high school campuses that reads, “This is a drug free campus”. Do you believe that there are any college campuses free of drugs? There are probably few high schools that could legitimately claim to be drug free, and even fewer colleges. Why do you think then, school administrators would place a sign like that on a campus? Are they naïve? Are they making claims for political gain? Are they just trying to create a drug-free environment and believe that a sign will encourage students to abstain from using drugs? If you see a sign proclaiming something that is clearly false, or laughably untrue, and you realize that the location in which the sign is erected makes it obvious the message on the sign is erroneous, then you are reading the landscape.

Not only are words inscribed on signs occasionally misleading, but often they don’t match the media or materials used in the sign. For example, a sign made of wood might be appropriate and effective for a restaurant specializing in Bar-B-Q ribs or cowboy boots, but would seem inappropriate and misleading for a store that sold laptop computers or high-definition televisions.

World Languages

There are hundreds of languages around the world and many thousands more dialects. Often, the world’s languages are arranged into a sort of family tree, with languages that share similarities occupying a close spot on a branch and more distant relatives sharing a common *proto-language* that forms the trunk of the tree, much like an ancestor who died thousands of years would on a human family tree. The major world language families are Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, Afro-Asiatic and the Niger-Congo.

With nearly a billion speakers, more people communicate using Mandarin Chinese, a Sino-Tibetan language, than with any other in the world. However, there are multiple dialects of Chinese, so you may find that even in the United States people from China who are from Beijing have a hard time understanding other Chinese immigrants who came from Guangdong province in Southern China. The Chinese language has been translated into English using several different systems over the years, so you may find older Americans (or older maps) calling China’s capital city things like Peiping or Peking. The Chinese use a character based *orthography* or writing system that has a complex relationship to the spoken language. Chinese characters (logograms) have been adapted for use in Korea, Japan and Vietnam; even though those languages are not in the Sino-Tibetan language family. Because Chinese characters represent entire words, literate Chinese readers must know over 3,000. An even bigger challenge has been designing software that can write Chinese using a standard computer keyboard (or cell phone key pad) developed for another language system, using around 50 keys. Several ingenious methods have been invented, but each requires significant effort and may have implications for the adoption of certain technologies by Asians using a character based writing system. The second most commonly spoken language is Spanish, a member of the Indo-European language family and one of a number of Romance languages that

evolved from a common ancestor known as Vulgar Latin. While certainly there were swear words in that language, “vulgar” in this instance refers to its use among the *common* people (unlike Classical Latin). Other Romance languages include, Portuguese, Italian, French and Romanian. There may be as many as two dozen additional Romance languages (Catalan, Romansh, Sicilian, etc.) Many of the less well known members of the Romance family are found in mountainous locations, on islands or other isolated locations. Each language in this language family will feature words and linguistic structures that are similar, but they remain generally unintelligible to speakers of other Romance languages. In addition to the Slavic languages of Eastern Europe, the other major linguistic family in Europe is Germanic which dominates Northern Europe. English, German, Dutch as well as the languages of Scandinavia are related. Most people in North America speak English, as do other locations that were once part of the British Empire. In fact, the map of world languages offers important clues into the military history of the world. Languages, as well as other elements of common culture, were carried by armies and navies where ever they roamed. German and English are closely related members of the Germanic language family, but English has become the most international of all languages, with more people speaking it than any other. English isn't a particularly easy language to learn, it includes an enormous number of words adopted from other languages; loads of irregular spellings and verbs, and the it is awash in slang; so why has it become the world's most popular second language? The answers lie mostly in the political and military prowess of England and the United States. British naval power and their ambitious colonization program during the 18 and 19th centuries expanded the use of English around the globe. During the 20th century, the United States' ascension into the realm of military and technological superpower elevated the status of English even further. An example can be found on jet airliners around the world. Most communication between pilots (and traffic controllers) is in English in large part because the airplane was invented by Americans and the British began the first international commercial flights. It's similar to the doctrine of first effective settlement, discussed earlier, but now with a technology. Consider the other technologies, invented by Americans, and used worldwide. Many users, especially early adopters of such technologies, find them easier to use if they know English. Certainly, the massive cultural influence of rock and hip hop, plus the success of Hollywood has spread the appeal of English worldwide. Some locations, particularly those that were difficult for armies or navies to conquer boast unique languages. Locations that are isolated by high mountains, on islands, across vast wastelands or deep in swamps have a tendency to house people who speak uncommon languages. Hungarians and Finns speak a language that is different than most of the rest of Europe. People on the islands of Corsica and Sardinia speak a language similar, but different than their neighbors in Italy. Others, like Armenian and Greek are very far removed from their “cousins” on the Indo-European family tree, and so are called *linguistic isolates*.

Perhaps the best example of this is found in the Eastern Pyrenees Mountains of Spain and France where people speak Basque. This language is so unique, that it appears to be unrelated to any other in the world. There are theories that suggest the language is exceptionally old, perhaps dating back around 40,000 years, before the time that most European's ancestors migrated (with their

protolanguage) into Europe. Some genetic evidence suggests there has been less interbreeding between Basque people and their European neighbors, which may account for how this language survived when presumably other very old European languages went extinct. The rugged mountains where Basques have lived for thousands of years surely played a role in protecting their language and culture from invasion and succession.

Over the centuries, membership in a language or even a language family has proven critical in the fates of both individuals, regions and nations. When the Germanic Archduke of Austria Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo by a Bosnian Serb, it touched off World War I. Though there were numerous additional reasons for the First World War, the first alliances were based on linguistic alliances. The Russians had agreed to help their Slavic cousins in Serbia. The Germans were allied with the Germanic Austro-Hungarian Empire. The earliest rumblings of World War II in Europe were also generated when Adolph Hitler attempted to expand Germany's borders to include parts of neighboring countries where a significant population of German speakers lived. German speaking Austria was effectively became part of Germany in early 1938. Nazi Germany later that year forcibly annexed parts of Czechoslovakia known as "the Sudetenland" because the language created a right to take that land for Germany. Later all of the Czech and Slovak areas were taken. It was when Germany invaded Poland, to take land where the language was once primarily German, World War II began. It should be noted that many wars have been fought between people of similar linguistic heritage, (Germany vs. England, e.g.), but the longstanding alliances between the U.S. and other English speaking nations of the world is no doubt a product of the way our common language has shaped a common core of values that bind us in ways that are especially strong.

3.1.1. Toponyms – Place Name Geography

Toponyms are the words we use to name places. Toponyms are applied to huge places, like "Russia", and to small places like "Windsor Arms Apartments". Toponyms, if they are interpreted carefully, may offer a number of clues into the history of a location and the priorities of the people (or person) who named a place. Many of the place names that are very common to us, those used to refer to states, cities and towns are compound terms. These toponyms often utilize a generic indicator and a specific one. For example, Charleston, Boston and Newton are all city names that have the "- ton" suffix, which is a short-hand way of writing "town". So you could read "Charleston" as "Charles' Town", especially if you're in South Carolina. As you might guess there was some famous "Charles" years ago (King Charles II of England) for whom the town was named. The use of the word "town" or "ton" is an indication that the founders of Charleston were not only English, but also happy with the king; which in turn should also suggest *when* Charleston was founded – well before the unrest that led to the American Revolution. Charleston, West Virginia, founded around the time of the Revolution, was *not* named after any English King, but still uses an English generic suffix. The English weren't the only folks who settled in the United States, so there are numerous other generic terms for "town" scattered across the landscape. In those areas where German speakers settled in large numbers, town names have a tendency to use

“burg”. Pennsylvania has lots of “burgs”, including Pittsburgh. Sometimes, as in the case of Pittsburgh, “burgh” appears to be a corruption of the word “borough”, an Anglo term for an administrative district in a town or rural township. The corruption may have come courtesy of the many Germans who settled in these areas. Because German and English are quite closely related, the evolution of town names was both easy and common. Other common markers of German settlement in the U.S. can be found in the numerous cities named in honor of German cities; including multiple places in the US named Hanover, Berlin or Hamburg. Where the French settled in large numbers in North America, towns with the suffix “-ville”, as in Louisville, are common. Many of these are in Louisiana, where French speakers were once very dominant in the southern reaches of the state. Still, there are many dozens of other cities with French names as well, including Detroit, St. Louis and Des Moines. Other immigrant groups, especially those that settled rural areas have left their mark on the landscape, even though many other cultural elements have disappeared. Russians, Poles, Italians, and other came later so there are fewer toponyms associated with these groups. Far more common are cities that have names supplied by the American Indians. Chicago, Milwaukee and Seattle are perhaps the largest, but perhaps far more common are names for physical features, like rivers, mountains and valleys.

A good example of American cultural hybridization can be found in places like Anaheim, California (home of Disneyland). This town’s name combines a reference to Saint Anne (or St. Hannah – revered particularly in Greek Orthodox and Islam), originally applied to the “Santa Ana” by the Spanish missionary Junipero Serra. Later “Ana” was adopted by German settlers who added “-heim” (home) in order to indicate “home by the Santa Ana”.

Toponymy and Place Marketing

Toponyms are also used to great effect by real estate developers, who seek to convince potential home buyers, or even renters of the quality of their location or their building. One of the most common ways real estate people market their land and buildings is by making an “appeal to snobbery”. It’s a simple ploy that frequently uses a reference to a place or activity associated with rich or powerful people. For example, an apartment complex on Maple Street, might be named “Chateau Des Maples”, to make it sound French, and therefore more exotic. A gated community trying to appeal to upscale homebuyers might be dubbed “The Oaks at Hunter Crossing” in order to evoke large landed estates, where wealthy folks who engage in sports like fox hunting might live. The more comical efforts at leveraging snob appeal appear on the signs of liquor stores, or nightclubs in rundown neighborhoods. Casinos have employed this strategy for years, cashing in on the ability of the landscape to make people feel like “high rollers”. It’s really quite silly once you think about it; but clearly it is effective or it wouldn’t be so very common place.

3.1.2. Language and the Environment

The environment shapes language and in turn, attitudes about nature are shaped by language. There are the obvious things, like the large number of words in Castillian Spanish for rough, hilly terrain versus English. However, it is probably a myth to argue that Eskimos have 50 words for snow.

The point is that languages do adapt to the physical environment so that their speakers have a better chance of surviving.

A new line of research in linguistics finds that other elements in the environment may have an effect on the way language *sounds*. One anthropologist recently found that languages developed in high latitudes with “ejective sounds” using a burst of air are more common among cultures living at high altitudes.

Another fascinating recent study of particular interest to geographers is from the world of cognitive psychology. Researchers have found that the way people think spatially is shaped by their language. For example, Australian Aboriginals who speak Kuuk Thaayorre, don’t have words for left and right, so in order to give people directions or even remark on something mundane, like “there’s a bug on your left leg”, they must reference cardinal directions (north, south, east and west). In order to do that, they must know at all times where they are. You must know which way is north too if you’re going to understand which leg has a bug on it. If you turn in fright, then a new instruction would have to be issued. For people born into languages that rely upon cardinal directions, their brains become hard wired like a GPS. They are acutely aware of where they are at all times, and researchers have found it difficult to disorient even small children by blindfolding them, placing them in windowless rooms, etc. These effects spill over into many other areas as well, including how people experience time and how they see cause and effect. It’s just another example of *what you know* being shaped by *how you know* it. It reminds us to pause a moment before dismiss what others think of as “truth”.

3.2. Language and Language Families

Although in constant change and growth, language in spoken or in written form makes possible the cooperative efforts, the group understandings, and shared behavior patterns that distinguish culture groups. Language is the most important medium by which culture is transmitted. It is what enables parents to teach their children what the world they live in is like and what they must do to become functioning members of society. The language of a society structures the perceptions of its speakers. By the words that it contains and the concepts that it can formulate, language is said to determine the attitudes, the understandings, and the responses of the society to which it belongs.

The now over 6.314 billion (mid-2003) population of the world speak thousands of languages. Knowing that as many as 1,500 languages are spoken in sub-Saharan Africa gives one a clear appreciation of the political and social divisions in that continent.

Language, then, is a hallmark of cultural diversity, a frequently fiercely defended symbol of cultural identity helping to distinguish the world’s diverse social groups.

For the purposes of classification, languages are divided into families, branches and groups. A language family is a collection of individual languages believed to be related in their prehistoric

origin. About half of the world's population speaks a language that originated from the Indo-European family. A *language branch* is a collection of languages that possess a definite common origin but have split into individual languages. A *language group* is a collection of several individual languages that are part of a language branch and that shares a common origin in the recent past and has relatively similar grammar and vocabulary. Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Romanian, and Catalan are language group, classified under the Roman *branch* as part of the Indo-European language *family*.

Language is the very essence of culture and the single most common variable by which cultural groups are identified. A mutually agreed-upon system of symbolic communication, language provides the main means by which learned customs and skills pass from one generation to the next. Language also facilitates cultural diffusion of innovations and even helps shape the way we think or how we perceive our environment.

Most cultural groups have their own distinctive form of speech, either a separate language or a dialect. *Languages* are tongues that cannot be mutually understood. A speaker of one language cannot comprehend the speaker of another. *Dialects*, by comparison, are variant forms of a language that have not lost mutual comprehension. A speaker of Amharic or Oromo can generally understand the various dialects of those languages, regardless of whether the speaker comes from Gonder, Gojjam, or Wollo in the first case or from Harar, Bale, Shewa or Wollege in the second case. But a dialect is still distinctive enough in vocabulary and pronunciation as to label its speaker. Some five thousand languages and dialects are spoken today.

Often when different linguistic groups come into contact, a *pidgin* language is created. It serves for the purposes of commerce and has a small vocabulary derived from the various groups in contact. For example, the Papua New Guinea pidgin includes Spanish, German, and Papuan words in addition to English and is not readily intelligible to a speaker of English or German. In other commercial situations or administrative, one existing language is elevated to the status of *Lingua franca*, or language of communication and commerce, over a wide area where it is not a mother tongue. Amharic in Ethiopia and Swahili in much of East Africa enjoy this status.

Language Families

The very complicated linguistic mosaic in the world becomes easier to comprehend with the recognition that most individual languages belong to families each consisting of related tongues derived from a common ancestral speech. Generally two language families are recognized. These are:

- i) Indo-European
- ii) Afro-Asiatic Families.

i) *The Indo-European Language Family*

The largest and most widespread language family is the Indo-European, which is spoken on all the continents and is dominant in Europe, Russia, North and South America, Australia, and parts of southwestern Asia and India. Sub-groups such as Romance (Italic), Slavic, Germanic, Indic, Celtic, and Iranian are parts of the Indo-European family, and they, in turn, are sub-divided into individual languages. Eight Indo-European tongues are among the top 12 languages in the world ranked by the number of speakers, and nearly half of the world's population speaks one or another of these far-flung kindred languages.

If compared the vocabularies of various Indo-European tongues, one can readily see the kinship of these languages. For example, the English word mother is similar to the Polish *matka*, the Greek meter, the Spanish *madre*, the Armenian *mair*, the Farsi *madar* in Iran, and the Sinhalese *mava* in Sri Lanka. Such similarities in vocabulary reveal that these languages had a common ancestral tongue.

ii) *The Afro-Asiatic Family.*

It consists of two major subdivisions, Semitic and Hamitic. The Semitic languages cover the area from the Arabian Peninsula and the Tigris-Euphrates river valleys in the Fertile Crescent from Iraq (Persia) westward through Syria and North Africa to the Atlantic Ocean. Despite the considerable size of this domain, there are fewer speakers of the Semitic languages that one might expect, because most of the areas that Semites inhabit are sparsely populated deserts. Arabic is by far the most widespread Semitic language and has the greatest number of speakers, about 200 million. Although many different dialects of Arabic are spoken, the written form is standard.

Hebrew, a Semitic language, is closely related to Arabic. For many centuries, Hebrew was a “dead” language, used only in religious ceremonies by millions of Jews scattered around the world. With the creation of the State of Israel in 1947, a common language was needed to unite the immigrant Jews who spoke the languages of many different countries. Hebrew was revived and made the official national language of what otherwise would have been a *polyglot*, or multilanguage, state. However, Hebrew had lain dormant for many centuries and had to be modernized. To make the transition to the twentieth century, words had to be coined for telephone, airplane, rifle, and the like. *Amharic*, a third major Semitic tongue today claims 17 million speakers in Ethiopia.

Smaller numbers of linguistically related people who speak Hamitic languages share North and East Africa with the Semites. These tongues originated in Asia but today are spoken almost exclusively in Africa, by the Berbers of Morocco and Algeria, the Tuaregs of the Sahara, and the Cushitic of East Africa. The Hamitic speech area was formerly much larger than it is now. It once covered the lands of the ancient Egyptians, but it was greatly reduced and fragmented by the expansion of Arabic over a thousand years ago.

iii) Other Major Language Families.

The Niger-Congo language family, also called Niger-Kordofanian, spoken by about 190 million people, dominates most of Africa south of the Sahara Desert. The greater part of the Niger-Congo culture region belongs to the Bantu subgroup, which includes Swahili, the lingua franca of East Africa. Both Niger-Congo and its Bantu constituent are highly fragmented into a great many different languages and dialects.

Flanking the Slavic Indo-Europeans on the north and south in Asia are the speakers of Altaic language family, including Turkic, Mongolic, and several other subgroups. Korean and Japanese are also among the Altaic family. The Altaic homeland lies largely in the inhospitable deserts, tundra, and coniferous forests of northern and central Asia. Also occupying tundra and grassland areas adjacent to the *Slavs* is the Uralic family. Finish and Hungarian are the two most important Uralic tongues, and both enjoy the status of official legal languages in their respective countries.

Dominated numerically and spatially by Chinese, Sino-Tibetan is one of the major language families of the world. The Sino-Tibetan speech area extends throughout most of China and Southeast Asia. Han Chinese is spoken in a variety of dialects by 846 million people and has now been adopted as the official form of speech for the People's Republic of China. Among the other Sino-Tibetan languages are Burmese and Tibetan.

One of the most remarkable language families in terms of distribution is the Malayo-Polynesian, also referred to as Austronesian, or Austro-Tai. Representatives of this group live mainly on tropical islands stretching from Malagasy, of the east coast of Africa, through Indonesia and the Pacific Islands, to Hawaii and Easter Island. This east west or longitudinal span is more than half the distance around the world.

In Southeast Asia, the Vietnamese, Cambodians, and lesser tribal peoples of Malaya, and parts of India, totaling 75 million people, constitute the Austro-Asiatic family.

iv) Minor Language Families

Occupying refuge areas after retreat before rival language groups are remnant language families such as *Khoisan*, found in the Kalahari Desert of southwestern Africa and characterized by distinctive clicking sounds; Dravidian, spoken by numerous dark-skinned peoples of southern India and adjacent northern Sri Lanka; Australian Aborigine; Papuan; Caucasoid; Nilo-Saharan; Paleo-Siberian; Inuktitut; and a variety of Amerindian families. In a few cases, individual minor languages represent the last sole survivors of former families. Basque, spoken in the borderland between Spain and France, is such a survivor, unrelated to any other language in the world.

Linguistic: Diffusion, Regions and Integration

All cultures are amalgams of innumerable innovations spread spatially from their points of origin and integrated into the structure of the receiving societies. Language as one of the cultural traits has diffused over space through time.

In language diffusion, relocation diffusion has been extremely important, when languages spread when groups, in whole or in part, migrated from one area to another. Some individual tongues or entire language families are no longer spoken in the regions where they originated, and in certain other cases the linguistic hearth is peripheral to the present distribution.

Indo-European Diffusion

The earliest speakers of Indo-European almost certainly lived in southern and southeastern Turkey, a region known as Anatolia, about eight or nine thousand years ago. They developed see-plant agriculture and their ancient diffusion to the west and north, bringing them into Europe, represented the expansion of farming people at the expense of hunters and gatherers. As these people dispersed and lost contact with one another, different Indo-European groups gradually developed variant forms of the language, causing the fragmentation of the family.

In later millennia, the diffusion of certain Indo-European languages, in particular Latin, English, and Russian occurred in conjunction with the territorial spread of great political empires. In such cases of imperial conquest, relocation and expansion diffusion were not mutually exclusive.

Malayo-Polynesian Diffusion

From a presumed hearth 3,000 years ago in the interior of Southeast Asia, completely outside the present Malayo-Polynesian culture region, speakers of this language family initially spread southward into the Malay Peninsula. Then, in a process lasting perhaps several thousand years and requiring remarkable navigational skills, they migrated through the islands of Indonesia and sailed in tiny boats across vast, uncharted expanses of water to New Zealand, Easter Island, Hawaii, and Malagasy.

Linguistic Ecology, the Environment and Vocabulary

In some way, the physical environment influences vocabulary and the distribution of language. Humankind's relationship with the environment has played a strong role in the development of linguistic differences. The environment even affects vocabulary. For example, the Spanish language, derived from Castile, a land rimmed by hills and mountains, is especially rich in words describing rough terrain, allowing speakers of this tongue to distinguish even subtle differences in the shape and configuration of mountains. English, by contrast, developed in coastal plains and marshes, and is consequently very poor in words describing mountainous terrain. The Inuktitut tongue has many different words for "seal," depending on whether the seal is old or young, on land or in water. This reflects the seal's importance to the Inuits' livelihood. The Inuktitut language

also has many words for “snow,” each describing a different type, and at least 12 unrelated terms for various winds. In the USA, in the rural South, from Virginia to Texas, there are many terms to describe and distinguish streams: river, creek, branch, fork, prong, run, bayou, and slough. This indicates that the area is a well-watered land with a dense network of streams.

3.3. Geography of Religion

Introduction

At first sight religion and geography have little in common with one another. Most people interested in the study of religion have little interest in the study of geography, and vice versa. So why include this chapter? The main reason is that some of the many interesting questions about how religion develops, spreads and impacts on people's lives are rooted in geographical factors (what happens where), and they can be studied from a geographical perspective. That few geographers have seized this challenge is puzzling, but it should not detract us from exploring some of the important themes.

The central focus of this chapter is on space, place and location - where things happen, and why they happen there. The choice of what material to include and what to leave out, given the space available, is not an easy one. It has been guided mainly by the decision to illustrate the types of studies geographers have engaged in, particularly those which look at spatial patterns and distributions of religion, and at how these change through time. The real value of most geographical studies of religion is describing spatial patterns, partly because these are often interesting in their own right but also because patterns often suggest processes and causes.

The timeless human fascination with otherworldly truth lies at the heart of religion. Religion and language lie at the foundation of culture, vital stands in the fabric of society. Religion, like language, is a symbol of group identity and a cultural rallying point. Hence, two key components of a cultural system for most of the world's people are religion and language.

Even though religious affiliation is on the decline in some parts of the world's core regions, it still acts as powerful sharper of daily life from eating habits and dress codes (veils, turbans), personal habits (beards, scars), to coming-of-age rituals and death ceremonies in both the core and the periphery. Moreover, like language, religious beliefs and practices change as new interpretations are advanced or new spiritual influences are adopted. In modern societies, such outward and overt displays of religious self-identification have declined, but in societies that are more traditional, they continue. In the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the government in 1991 proclaimed that possessing a beard would henceforth be a condition for a judge to be appointed to the country's Islamic courts.

Religious enmity forced the partition of the Indian subcontinent between Hindus and Muslims after the departure of the British in 1947. French Catholics and French Huguenots (Protestants)

freely slaughtered each other in the name of religion in the 16th century. Religion has continued to be a root cause of many local and regional conflicts throughout the world during the latter part of the 20th century. This includes confrontations between Catholic and Protestant Christian groups in Northern Ireland; Muslim sects in Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, and Algeria; Muslims and Jews in Palestine; Christians and Muslims in the Philippines and Lebanon; and Buddhists and Hindus in Sri Lanka. More peacefully, in the name of their beliefs American Amish, Hutterite, Shaker, and other religious communities have isolated themselves from the secular world and pursued their own ways of life.

Unlike language, which is an attribute of all people, religion varies in its cultural role dominating among some societies, unimportant or totally denied in others. All societies have value systems- common beliefs, understandings, expectations, and controls- that unit their members and set them off from other, different culture groups. Religion prominently marks the cultural landscape: churches and mosques, cemeteries and shrines, statues and symbols mark it.

Definitions

it is important, at the outset, to try and define the two main terms we are using - geography and religion. What do we mean by 'geography'? Many different definitions have been offered in the past, but it will suit our purpose here to simply define geography as "the study of space and place, and of movements between places".

Religion is more difficult to define, and whilst many writers have offered working definitions, no single one captures the full meaning of the word. American cultural geographer Yi Fu Tuan (1976) posed the rhetorical question "What is the meaning of religion?". He then sought to answer it by reflecting on what people seek in, from or through religion. In his view, "the religious person is one who seeks coherence and meaning in his world, and a religious culture is one that has a clearly structured world view. The religious impulse is to tie things together. ... All human beings are religious if religion is broadly defined as the impulse for coherence and meaning. The strength of the impulse varies enormously from culture to culture, and from person to person." If it is difficult to agree a simple definition of religion, it is even harder to fit boundaries around its impact on people. As Tyler (1990 p.12) rightly points out, "many of the major religions of the world have become so inextricably linked with particular racial groups, cultures, political systems and lifestyles, that it is difficult to imagine one without the other. It is hard to imagine Thailand without Buddhism, or India without Hinduism, for example. Christianity has become intricately bound up with the lifestyle of Western culture." In essence, religion is so deeply embedded into the matrix of many societies that its boundaries are permeable and its impacts pervasive.

One may not precisely define religion. Religion manifests itself in so many different ways: in the worship of the souls of ancestors living in natural objects such as mountains, animals, or trees; in the belief that a certain living person possesses special abilities granted by a supernatural power; in belief in a deity or deities, as in the great world religions.

There are sets of doctrines and beliefs relating to the god or gods central to the faiths. There are also a number of rituals for expressing these beliefs. Such rituals may mark important events in people's lives: birth and death, attainment of adulthood, marriage. They are also expressed at regular intervals in a routine manner, as is done on Sundays in most of the Western world. A common ritual is prayer, whether at mealtime, at sunrise and sundown, at night upon retiring, or in the morning when arising. Ritual is likely to involve the religion's literature; if such a literature exists (the Bible and the Koran are familiar examples).

Religions, especially the major faiths like Christianity and Islam, have produced vast and complex organizational structures. These bureaucracies have a hierarchy of officers and command a great deal of wealth and authority over people's lives. Religious officers seek to maintain the approval set of standards and the code ethics prescribed by the religion.

Religion is a belief system and a set of practices that recognizes the existence of a power higher than humans do. The focus of religion is 'things that surpass the limits of our knowledge.' Religion is founded on the idea of the sacred, that which is set apart as extraordinary and which demands our submission.

Religion is a matter of faith, belief anchored in conviction rather than scientific evidence. For instance, the New Testament of the Bible defines faith as 'the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen' (Hebrew 11:1) and exhorts Christians to walk by faith, not by sight' (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Human beings certainly knew that they did not understand all the happenings of Nature and that some of these occurrences disturbed them terribly. In this lack of comprehension, fear of the unknown, and quest for assurance lay the human origins of all religious beliefs, practices, and activities and all the formulations of religious systems as such. The attribution of power in this sense to both physical objects and things of another world, in magic, ritual, mysticism, and formal ceremonialism, form a complex continuum designed to deal with the supernatural. Throughout most of human history, human beings living in small societies attributed birth, death and even what happened in between to the operation of supernatural forces.

Two key components of a cultural system for most of the world's people are religion and language. Religion and language lie at the foundation of society. Like language but in a different way confers identity.

In illiterate societies that are not dominated by technology religion is the main bond of relatedness, the guiding rule of daily life. From eating habits to dress codes, religion sets the standards for members of those societies. No people so far known is without a religion.

Like languages, religions are constantly changing. In the process, the great religions of the world have diffused across cultural barriers and language boundaries. Persuasion will not lead people to change the language they speak, but it can induce them to convert to a faith.

The cultural landscape is marked by religion - by churches and mosques, cemeteries and shrines, statues and symbols. Religion is proclaimed in modes of dress (veils, turbans) and personal habits (beards, scars). In industrialized societies, such overt religious displays have declined, but they are still common in societies that are more traditional. In the Western industrialized, urbanized, commercialized world, religion has become a rather subordinate, ephemeral matter in the life of many people. However, in societies in Africa and Asia, religious doctrine may exert tight control over behavior, during the daytime through ritual and practice and even at night in prescribing the orientation of the sleeping body. And even where religion is precisely identified, we can at least observe some of its key characteristics. In the Islamic republic of Pakistan, the government proclaimed in 1991 that henceforth possessing a beard would be a condition for the appointment of judges.

Like language, religion can be a strong unifying force, but it can also divide and foster conflict. Such strife is occurring in Northern Ireland, the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, India and elsewhere.

Themes

Religion leaves an imprint on landscape, through culture and lifestyle. Religious structures - such as places of worship, and other sacred sites - dominate many landscapes. Religious traditions - Hindu ritual bathing in the Ganges, for example - leave their mark on the physical appearance of an area. Religious observance - church attendance, and so on - affect the time management, spatial movements and behavior of believers. Given the many ways in which religion affects people and places, there are many possible themes which could be considered here. After briefly tracing the history of geographical interest in religion, this chapter focuses on two central themes which are both defined in terms of space and place.

The first theme is the distribution of religion. This can be approached at various scales, from the global to the local. At the global scale the important questions are "which religions are strongest in different places?" and "why might this be so?" Answers to such questions are often provided by more detailed studies of smaller scale distributions and dynamics. Here the key questions include "how do religious groups and new religions spread across space?", "how do they change through time?", and "what processes might account for observed patterns of change through space and time?"

The second central theme of the chapter is sacred places and sacred spaces, and how in turn they influence movements of people. A key question is "why are some places regarded as sacred and special, and why is everywhere not regarded as sacred?". In many religions people are actively

encouraged to visit sacred places, and this gives rise to pilgrimage. The movement of large numbers of pilgrims to and within sacred sites is a special religious dynamic which can have very significant impacts on local economies and environments.

This choice of focus on distribution and sacred space allows us to explore some of the interesting work published by geographers of religion. But in adopting this focus we consciously overlook many interesting themes which might have been included had space been available. For example, what is the role of religion in defining culture regions (such as the Mormon Culture Region in Utah, and the Bible belt in the southern states of the USA)? What role has religion played in shaping particular political landscapes (such as the partition of India in 1947, and the geopolitics of Ireland throughout the 20th century)? How have religious factors been imprinted on the physical landscape (such as the distinctive Amish farming landscapes of North America)?

3.3.1. Distributions and Dynamics of Religion

The first of our two central themes is distribution and dynamics of religion at various scales. In this section we focus on distribution. The following section deals with dynamics, and in particular the ways in which ideas (in this case religious ideas) are spread spatially between people.

Distribution

Here we explore the global distribution of major religions, consider what factors might account for the observed patterns, and look in closer detail at the patterns and processes of religious change in North America.

The several sects of Christianity, having been diffused through European colonialism constitute the largest and most widely dispersed religion today. Islam is today the world's fastest growing major religion, possibly a potent of a new (or revived) form of global ideological competition as Christian and Muslim teachings clash. The diffusion of Islam is much more widespread than it is realized. Like the Spanish colonial effort, the rise and growth of Muslim colonization was accompanied by the diffusion of the colonizer's religion. The distribution of Islam in Africa, Southeast Asia, and South Asia that is seen today testifies to the broad reach of Muslim cultural, colonial, and trade activities. Islam has reached into most regions of the world, but the heart of the Muslim culture remains the Middle East, the original cultural hearth. It is also in this area that Islam is most militant.

Christianity and Islam together hold the allegiance of nearly half the world's total population; no other faith comes close, and the third largest religion, Hinduism, is not global but a cultural faith.

Classification

There are various ways of classifying religions, and the most commonly used ones reflect

differences in belief. From a geographical perspective it is more useful to distinguish universal and ethnic religions. *Universal* (or *universalizing*) *religions* - such as Christianity, Islam and the various forms of Buddhism - seek world-wide acceptance by actively looking for and attracting new members (converts). *Ethnic* (or *cultural*) *religions*, are very different in that they do not seek converts. Each is identified with a particular tribal or ethnic group. *Tribal* (or *traditional*) *religions* involve belief in some power or powers beyond humans, to which they can appeal for help. Examples include the souls of the departed, and spirits living on mountains, in stones, trees or animals. More broad based *ethnic religions* include Judaism, Shintoism, Hinduism and the Chinese moral-religious system (embracing Confucianism and Taoism), which mainly dominate one particular national culture.

Regardless of the modernization and secularization of urbanizing societies, religion still dominates the lives and behaviors of billions of people in areas ranging from, dress codes, food prescriptions, outdated rituals, death ceremonies, to family planning.

The daily influence of religion can be seen in our calendar, our holidays, architectural landmarks, many place names, even the slogan “*In God We Trust*” on coins and currency. Even in societies that have sought to divest themselves of religion, such as China, religion has continued to affect living conditions and cultural landscapes. Organized religion has had powerful effects on human societies. It has been a major force in combating social ills, sustaining the poor, promoting the arts, educating the deprived and advancing medical knowledge. However, religion has also blocked scientific study, encouraged the oppression of dissidents, supported colonialism and exploitation, and condemned women to an inferior status in many societies.

Judaism is the older of the other two monolithic religions of Christianity and Islam. It is distributed throughout parts of the Middle East and North Africa, Russia, Ukraine, and Europe, and parts of North and South America. Judaism is one of the world’s great religions, but apart from the state of Israel, it is now scattered and dispersed across much of the world.

Christianity, which originated in the Israel, has the largest number of adherents and geographically the most widely dispersed on Earth.

The faiths of Islam dominate Northern Africa and Southwest Asia, extending into the former Soviet Union and China, including outlying clusters in Indonesia, Bangladesh and southern Mindanao in the Philippines.

In terms of numbers of adherents, Hinduism ranks after Islam as a world religion, but there are significant structural differences between Christianity, Islam and Hinduism. The Hindu religion is without a comparable ecclesiastical organization, lacking the kind of bureaucracy that is familiar to Christians and Muslims. Certainly, there are ‘holy’ men, but they represent thousands of gods. Thus, unlike Christianity, or Islam, Hinduism is polytheistic, fragmented by numerous cults, and

without a prescriptive book, such as the Bible or the Koran. Again, unlike Christianity or Islam, Hinduism remains concentrated in a single geographic realm, the region of its source. The vast majority of the 750 million Hindus live in India, although the faith also extends into Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Nepal.

Buddhism, another religion that had its source in India, is now a minority faith in that country, but remains strong in Southeast Asia, China and Japan. It is a regional religion.

Shintoism, the Japanese ethnic religion closely related to Buddhism, has numerous followers in Japan. It is generally agreed, however, that Japan's modernization is reducing the importance of Shintoism in Japanese culture.

The Chinese religions also have elements of Buddhism mixed with Chinese local belief systems. The traditional Chinese religions never involved concepts of supernatural omnipotence. Confucianism was mainly a philosophy of Earth life, and *Taoism* held that human happiness lies in one's proper relationship with nature.

Shamanism occurs in many parts of the world. It is a community faith in which people follow their *shaman*, a religious leader, teachers, healer, and visionary-but in the ancient Chinese tradition, a man of *this* world, nor of another. Such a shaman appeared to various peoples in many different parts of the world.

Traditional African religions involve beliefs in a god as creator and indivisible provider, in divinities both superhuman and human, in spirits, and in life hereafter.

Global distribution

Although at the start of the third millennium roughly one in three people on earth is classed as Christian, the spatial distribution is uneven. Thus - according to the 1982 *World Christian Encyclopedia* - a high percentage of the population in Europe (84 per cent), the Americas (91 per cent) and Oceania (84 per cent) is Christian, whereas the figure drops to 8 per cent in Asia and 45 per cent in Africa. Conversely, the great majority of Muslims (72 per cent) are in Asia, and most of the rest (26 per cent) are in Africa. Perhaps not surprisingly both Hinduism and Buddhism (both over 99 per cent) are overwhelmingly confined to Asia. Judaism, by far the smallest (numerically) of the five main world religions, has a much more dispersed pattern than the others. The distinction between the universal and ethnic religions has a strong influence on their spatial distributions. Universal religions - as the name implies - are widely distributed. The ultimate goal of the three universal religions is to convert all people on earth. Believers are encouraged to share their beliefs with non-believers, and each universal religion engages in missionary activities and admits new members through individual symbolic acts of commitment. Christianity has an almost global pattern at the start of the third millennium, and Islam is dominant through much of Africa

and Asia. Although Buddhism transcends cultural and political boundaries, it still has a marked concentration in Southeast and East Asia. Ethnic religions are often confined to particular countries. Thus, for example, Hinduism is particularly strong in India, Confucianism and Taoism are largely confined to China, and Shintoism is concentrated in Japan. Unlike the universal religions - where diffusion is a primary objective - the spread of ethnic religions is limited and takes place only slowly because they do not actively seek converts.

Although in the historic past Judaism engaged in missionary activity, in principle (and largely in practice today) membership is reserved for the in-group by inheritance. In other ethnic religions, individuals are not accepted until they are fully assimilated into the community. India and China, for example, gradually absorbed foreign tribes into their dominant culture, which expanded accordingly.

Traditional religions still persist in many less developed parts of the world, including much of Africa, South America, parts of Southeast Asia, New Guinea and northern Australia.

Diversity

Continental data (Table 1) offer clues about large-scale variations in religious diversity. Whilst they do contain members of other major religions, Europe, Oceania and the Americas are so heavily dominated by Christianity that to all intents and purposes they can be classed as Christian. Africa, on the other hand, is not so dominated by one religion; both Christianity and Islam are dominant in roughly equal measure. Asia presents a radically different religious profile, and - at this coarse continental scale at least - it is very pluralistic. Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and Christianity are all very strong there, though smaller scale patterns doubtless exhibit greater homogeneity in particular areas.

DYNAMICS - DIFFUSION AND DISPERSION

In this section we consider the general processes involved in spreading ideas spatially between people, examine how the global pattern appears to have evolved, and by means of some small-scale case studies reflect on detailed processes and resultant patterns.

Processes

Religion is in many ways like any other set of ideas or values that can be spread among and between groups of people, often separated by considerable distances. This involves processes of diffusion, which rest on two key principles. The first is that anything that moves must be carried in some way. This means that we must understand the processes, speeds and dynamics of this movement if we are to have any chance of understanding how and why diffusion occurs. It is not enough to simply be aware of the outcome (usually the spatial patterns) of the diffusion. The second principle is that the rate at which some things move over geographic space will be influenced by other things that get in the way. As a result, we must recognize the existence and operation of both carriers (which promote diffusion) and barriers (which inhibit diffusion).

There are two basic types of diffusion process –

- a. *Expansion diffusion*; in which the number of people who adopt the innovation grows by direct contact, usually *in situ*. For example, an idea is communicated by a person who knows about it to one who does not, and through time the total number of knowers increases.
- b. *Relocation diffusion*; this involves the initial group of carriers themselves moving, so they are diffused through time and space to a new set of locations. Migration is a classic relocation diffusion mechanism, because those who migrate take their beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviour with them to new places. Missionaries who deliberately introduce religion into new areas fall into this category.

Expansion diffusion can be further sub-divided into -

- i. Contagious diffusion; this is diffusion through a population by direct contact. Diseases spread this way. Such diffusion expands and spreads, and the speed of expansion is strongly influenced by the frictional effect of distance. This operates like a series of concentric waves moving over the surface of a pond after a stone has been thrown in - places close to the points of diffusion normally adopt the innovation first, and more distant places adopt after a time lag during which intervening places have adopted. In human terms, ideas are passed to people close to those who already have them. Much religious diffusion is of this contagious type, and takes place by contact conversion as a product of everyday contact between believers and non-believers.
- ii. Hierarchical diffusion; here the idea or innovation is implanted at the top of a society and it appears to leap over intervening people and places. Innovations are adopted or received from the top of the hierarchy down. Hierarchical diffusion of religion has occurred through history when missionaries deliberately sought to convert kings or tribal leaders, in the hope that their people would follow.

The most common type of diffusion process for most innovations, including religious ideas and practices, is contagious expansion diffusion. Traditionally this has taken place mainly the physical relocation of people as carriers of the innovation (in this case a new religion). Modern telecommunications has opened up the prospect of using radio and television to spread religious messages across much bigger areas more quickly. Such processes underlie the evolution of televangelism in the United States.

Few innovations are so important or universally embraced that every single person in an area adopts them, and most innovations are voluntarily adopted by a large majority at best. Religion falls into this category, and universal religions engage in diffusion much more readily and deliberately than ethnic religions. This largely explains the significantly larger areas dominated by the universal religions, and the much larger number of followers they have.

Emergence of the global pattern

The source areas - or, as some writers call them "cradle lands" - of the main religions are well established through detailed historical and archaeological research. Northern India provides the core area of Hinduism in the Punjab, and Buddhism (an offshoot of Hinduism) in the Ganges Plain. From here both religions spread through the Indian subcontinent, but Hinduism (an ethnic religion) extended little further whilst Buddhism (a universal religion) dispersed across much of central and eastern Asia. Judaism and Christianity originated in Palestine, and Islam (partly based on both Judaism and Christianity) began in western Arabia. Both Christianity and Islam – the great universal monotheistic religions - dispersed widely through the old world.

Christianity gained a particular stronghold in Europe and Islam spread through north and east Africa, as well as further east into central and southern Asia. Geographers describe the two areas where the main religions originated as 'religious hearths' or 'religious heartlands'. The two areas share two important properties. First, they closely match the core locations of the major ancient civilizations in Mesopotamia and the Nile and Indus Valleys. This makes cultural evolution of religion a distinct possibility (although spatial correspondence does not in itself establish cause-effect). Secondly, and equally importantly, the religions emerged on the margins not the centers of the great civilizations. This hints at a more complex interplay between religion and culture, involving factors such as innovation and cultural diffusion, religious adaptation, and exchanges of ideas, beliefs and values along migration and trade routes.

Whatever the reasons for the emergence of religions within such a small area, the fact remains that many religions have spread far beyond their original homeland. Paradoxically, many religions are stronger today in countries other than their source areas. Many religions have changed a great deal as they have spread and grown, so that the form they display today is often far removed from their original form.

Through dispersion the main religions have come into contact with and been influenced by different cultures and customs, some have divided into sub-groups (sects), and many have changed forms of worship and organization. Modern Christianity, for example, is different to what it was like in the first century after Christ. Similarly, Hinduism has evolved a great deal over nearly thirty centuries.

The universal religions have an in-built dynamic towards expansion and diffusion, because they deliberately seek new converts. Thus, missionary zeal and endeavor must also be considered in the search for an explanation of contemporary religious patterns. One of the particular strengths of universal religions, as far as survival and growth are concerned, is their adaptability to local cultures. A religion that is adaptable can be modified to better suit new conditions it encounters, both as it spreads through space and it survives through time. The flourishing universal religion is

thus able to assimilate dimensions of ethnic religion, which increases its attractiveness to new converts and promotes its prospects of long-term survival.

3.2.2. Major World Religions

Religions of the Indo-Gangetic Hearth

This important religious source area is based on the lowland plains of the northern edge of the Indian subcontinent that are drained by the Indus and Ganges rivers. Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism were born there. Hinduism had no single founder, and the reasons why it emerged here around 2000 BCE remain unclear. Buddhism and Sikhism evolved from Hinduism as reform movements, the former around 500 BC and the latter in the fifteenth century.

Once a religion is born, the quickest and easiest way in which it can spread is by diffusion. Throughout history India has been an important cultural cross-roads and a center from which cultures, beliefs and values were scattered far and wide.

Hinduism

Hinduism was the earliest major religion to emerge in this area, at least 4,000 years ago. It is known to have originated in the Punjab, in north-west. It later stretched from Afghanistan and Kashmir to Sarayu in the east, followed by a major wave of expansion across the Ganges to occupy the region between the Sutlej and the Jumna. From here it spread eastward down the Ganges and southward into the peninsula, absorbing and adopting other indigenous beliefs and practices as it spread. It was eventually to dominate the whole of the Indian sub-continent. Hindu missionaries later carried the faith overseas, during its major universalizing phase, although most of the convert regions were subsequently lost. During the colonial period many hundreds of thousands of Indians were transported to other countries, including East and South Africa, the Caribbean, northern South America, and Pacific islands (particularly Fiji). This relocation diffusion effectively spread Hinduism far beyond its source area.

Buddhism

Buddhism began in the foothills bordering the Ganges Plain about 500 BC, as an offshoot from Hinduism. Its founder was Prince Gautama (born 644 BC), who found Enlightenment while sitting under a pipal (Bodhi) tree. He later decided to make known to others the way of salvation he had found the (Middle Way between the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification), initially in the Deer Park at Isapatana (now called Sarnath, near Benares). Starting with five converts who became disciples (monks), the Buddha soon gathered around him sixty monks who were sent out to preach and teach. During the Buddha's lifetime his preaching activities were confined to northern India and a few small communities in the west of India. During the next two centuries Buddhism spread into other parts of India, although it was to remain confined to the Indian subcontinent for centuries after that. Missionaries and traders later carried Buddhism to

China (100 BCE to 200 CE), Korea and Japan (300 to 500 CE), Southeast Asia (400 to 600 CE), Tibet (700 CE) and Mongolia (1500 CE). As it spread Buddhism developed many regional forms. Ironically, it was subsequently to die out in the very area it had originated, and was re-absorbed into Hinduism in India in the seventh century (although it has survived among the mountain people of the Himalayas and on the island of Sri Lanka).

Sikhism

Sikhism originated in Punjab at the end of the fifteenth century in a reform movement initiated by a spiritual leader called Nanak. Before long he was being regarded as a holy man (guru), his ideas found widespread support, and he was preaching to large numbers, many of who had travelled especially to hear him. The new religion was widely adopted in the Punjab because it offered a fresh spiritual idea which people found attractive, particularly its criticism of the caste system that was so central a part of Hinduism. It grew fastest when peaceful conditions prevailed, which was not always the case (especially because of disturbance by Muslim invaders), and its consolidation and expansion were greatly aided by initial political patronage. During the first 2 centuries Sikhism remained confined to its source area in the Punjab, mainly because successive gurus were chosen in accordance with family lines.

Between about 1850 and 1971 there was considerable diffusion of Sikhism. Sometimes this occurred by voluntary migration, because the Sikh community was notoriously adventurous. Often the diffusion followed forced migration caused by political unrest. This was so especially with the creation of Pakistan after the partition of India in 1947, which divided the Punjab into an Islamic western half and a dominantly Hindu eastern half. Large numbers of Sikhs embarked on a mass exodus to India from the former West Punjab and other states in Pakistan. Since partition there has been an almost complete shift of the Sikh population from West Pakistan to India. Many of the immigrants settled in Punjab, where nationalism based on both religion and language led to the eventual formation of Punjabi Suba (state) in 1966.

Religions of the Semitic Hearth

Judaism, Christianity and Islam - the three great monotheistic religions - all developed first among the Semitic-speaking people in or on the margins of the deserts of southwestern Asia in what is today the Middle East. Like the religions of the Indo-Gangetic Hearth, these three have family ties. Judaism originated about 4,000 years ago, and Christianity emerged from within Judaism 2,000 years ago. Islam was born in western Arabia about 1300 years ago. Many writers have questioned why it should be that the three great monotheistic religions all developed in the same basic core area but at different times. Environmental factors cannot be ruled out, as the determinists enthusiastically argued before about the 1950s, but it is much too simplistic to seek one single or even one dominant cause or explanation.

Monotheism has spread throughout the world, and between them Christianity and Islam have nearly 2.4 thousand million believers, accounting for half of the world population. Christianity and Islam, two dominant universalising religions, have played key roles in the dispersion of monotheism from their initial Middle East heartland. Judaism, the oldest Semitic religion that does not seek new converts and thus remains an ethnic religion, has played a more minor role, at least numerically.

Judaism

Judaism developed out of the cultures and beliefs of Bronze Age people who wandered through the deserts of the Middle East nearly 4,000 years ago. Like all major religions, Judaism spread and was quickly dispersed over a wide area. By 586 BC, when King Solomon's Holy Temple was destroyed, the Ten Tribes that constituted the northern kingdom of Israel had already been resettled in northern Assyria for four generations. This diffusion and scattering were to become a prominent feature of Judaism through the rest of its history. The Jewish Diaspora (dispersion) began some time before 550 BC, and it was led by Jewish refugees and immigrants who refused to give up their faith when persecuted by pagan neighbours. Judaism spread into Europe by the forced and voluntary migration of Jews, starting with the forced dispersal from Palestine in Roman times that scattered Jews throughout the Mediterranean Basin. Through time most European Jews became concentrated around the present Russian-Polish border in an area that became known as the "Jewish Pale". In 1939 well over half the world's Jews were living in Europe and the Soviet Union (almost 10 million). Poland housed over 3 million, and there were other concentrations in the Soviet Union, Romania and Germany. Modern Zionism (the political movement for the establishment of a national homeland for Jews in Palestine) has roots in medieval Jewish migrations to the Holy Land. But the most important catalyst was a series of shocks that shattered the life of Jews in Europe, the most prominent of which was the rise of Nazism in 1933 and its attempt to annihilate totally the Jews in its conquered territories from 1939 to 1945 (the Holocaust).

Christianity

Christianity began in Jerusalem when disciples of Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed that he was the expected Messiah. The movement spread slowly while Jesus was alive, but after Jesus' death it spread more rapidly. The diffusion was greatly assisted by Christian preachers and missionaries. It spread first to Samaria (in northern ancient Palestine), then to Phoenicia to the north-west, and south to Gaza and Egypt.

Afterwards it was adopted in the Syrian cities of Antioch and Damascus, then subsequently in Cyprus, modern Turkey, modern Greece, Malta and Rome. It spread fast, and numbers quickly grew. Within the first century there were an estimated million Christians, comprising less than one per cent of the total world population. But within 400 years over 40 million people, nearly a quarter

of the total population, had adopted Christianity. Imperial sponsorship of Christianity in the fourth century accounted for its rapid increase in influence and membership. The early spread of Christianity through the Roman Empire was achieved mainly by relocation diffusion aided by the well-developed system of imperial roads. Christian missionaries like Paul travelled from town to town spreading the gospel message.

In later centuries the pattern of Christianity reflected hierarchical expansion diffusion; early congregations were largely confined to towns and cities while the countryside remained largely pagan. Once planted in an area, Christianity spread further via contagious diffusion (contact conversion). Christianity diffused through Europe along a number of different routes, mainly via missionaries initially. Diffusion and adoption were slow during the first 300 years, and most early converts were town dwellers. Progress speeded up after 313 when the Christian Roman Emperor Constantine issued an edict of toleration for Christianity that led eventually to its status as state religion. The Roman Catholic Church emerged in the fifth century, presided over by the bishop of Rome (the Pope). During the fourth and fifth centuries the Roman church spread rapidly in the western Mediterranean. Roman Catholic missionaries introduced Christianity to northern Europe. Between the fifth and seventh centuries Roman Catholicism gained a stronghold throughout Britain. Monks were an important and effective vehicle in the spread of Christianity around Europe, and monasteries were hubs in a network of diffusion points.

While Christianity was winning its battle against paganism in northern Europe, Islam was making inroads into the already Christianized Mediterranean region. In the eighth century North Africa was won by Islam, and has remained Muslim ever since. A sizeable area within the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal) was under Muslim rule for many centuries.

The world-wide dispersion of Christianity coincides with the era of colonial acquisition by European countries. Roman Catholicism was introduced into Middle and South America by the Spanish, after they had invaded the continent in the mid sixteenth century. Much of Africa and small parts of India were converted by Christian missionaries, who were particularly active there during the nineteenth centuries. The Reformation in the sixteenth century served to intensify rather than diminish the enthusiasm of the Christian church for evangelism. Jesuits introduced Christianity into many areas including Ethiopia, Morocco, Egypt, India, China, Japan, the Philippines, Persia, Tibet, Ceylon, Malaya, Siam, Indochina and the East Indies. Many Protestant refugees from the seventeenth century onwards emigrated to North America to escape conflict and oppression in Europe, taking their Calvinist brand of Christianity with them and planting it firmly there. Christianity has remained a universalizing religion, with an abiding commitment to active proselytism (the conversion of non-believers).

Islam

Islam means 'submission to God', and this strict monotheistic religion was founded by Mohammed in Medina in 622 (the year taken as the start of the Islamic calendar). By the time Mohammed died in 632, he ruled the whole of Arabia (in both religious and political terms). Islam spread and expanded mostly by force initially, because conversion of the mainly Christian populations it encountered usually required political control. Within less than a hundred years, Arab Muslims had conquered lands over a vast area - stretching from the Atlantic Ocean in Western Europe to the borders of India, and including Spain, North Africa, Egypt, Syria, Mesopotamia and Persia. Today's distribution of Islam reflects a significant retreat from this early core emirate or territory, although the spread of Islam into India, Central Asia, the Sudan and the margins of East Africa has left an enduring legacy. Islam also has a strong presence in south east Asia. One important factor in the rapid spread of Islam was its emergence at the hub of a series of important trade routes, including caravan trails leading from the Middle East through Central Asia to North China, and across the Sahara to the Sudan. Many Muslim traders were also effective missionaries, acting as multiple diffusion nuclei who travelled widely. Expansion diffusion accounts for the spread of Islam from its Arabian source area, and relocation diffusion accounts for its subsequent dispersal to Malaysia, Indonesia, South Africa and the New World. Unlike Hinduism, Islam attracted converts wherever it took hold. New core areas soon turned into effective source areas for further dispersion, by a combination of contagious and hierarchical diffusion. In recent years Islam has once again started to spread into Europe, caused not by military invasion but by the immigration of dispossessed Muslims from North Africa, the Middle East and southern Asia. Europe now houses an estimated 7.5 million practicing or cultural Muslims, many of them in France, Germany and Britain. Muslims constitute the second largest population group within the former Soviet Union, and their numbers are rising at a rate four times as fast as the Soviet population as a whole. Separatist movements quickly emerged in the dying days of Communist rule, and by 1990 the peoples of the Soviet Union's Muslim republics (Azerbaijan, Kazakstan, Kirgizia, Tajakstan, Turkmenia and Uzbekistan) were seeking to regain control of their own destinies.

3.4. The Geography of Ethnicity

Ethnic: Threads and Diversity

A race is a category composed of people who share biologically transmitted traits that members of a society deem socially significant. People may classify each other into races based on physical characteristics such as skin color, facial features, and hair texture and body shape.

Racial diversity appeared among out human ancestors as a result of living in different geographical regions of the world. In regions of intense heat, for example, people developed darker skin (from the natural pigment melanin) that offers protection from the sun; in regions with moderate climates,

humans have lighter skin. Nevertheless, such differences are superficial; individuals of all races are members of a single biological species.

The majority of the world's societies, even those outwardly seemingly most homogeneous, house distinctive ethnic groups, populations that feel themselves bound together by a common origin and set off from other groups by ties of culture, race, religion, language, or nationality. Ethnic diversity is a near-universal part of human geographic patterns; the current some 200 or so independent countries are home to at least 5,000 ethnic groups.

European colonialism created pluralistic societies in tropical lands through introduction of both ruling elites and, frequently nonindigenous laboring groups. Poly-ethnic Russia, Afghanistan, China, India, and most African countries have native rather than immigrant populations more characterized by racial and cultural diversity than by uniformity. Tri-cultural Belgium has a nearly split personality in matters of political and social. The idea of an ethnically pure nations-state is no longer realistic.

Ethnicity is always based on a firm understanding by members of a group that they are in some fundamental ways different from others who do not share their distinguishing characteristics or cultural heritages.

Ethnic groups are associated with clearly recognized territories in which they are primary or exclusive occupants and upon which they have placed distinctive cultural marks.

Ethnic: Regions, Diffusion, Ecology and Landscape

People the world over display a bewildering array of racial traits. The variety is the product of migration and intermarriage over the course of human history, so that many genetic characteristics once common to a single place are now evident throughout the world. The most striking racial variation appears in the Middle East, Southwest Asia that has long served as a 'crossroads' of human migration. Striking racial uniformity, by contrast, characterizes more isolated peoples such as the island-dwelling Japanese. But no society lacks genetic mixture, and increasing contact among the world's people will ensure that racial blending will accelerate in the future.

Ethnicity is a term derived from the Greek word *ethnos*, meaning a "people" or "nation." In Latin, the adjective became *ethnos* with the same meaning to the Greek *ethnos*. The literal translation is incomplete. Ethnicity is a shared cultural heritage. Members of an ethnic category have common ancestors, language or a religion that, together, confer a distinctive social identity. Ethnicity this accrues from different combinations of cultural traditions, racial background, and physical environments. Ethnic groups are composed of individuals who share some prominent traits or characteristics, some evident physical or social identifications setting the, apart both from the majority population and from other distinctive minorities among whom they may live. Thus,

like culture, ethnicity exists at many spatial dimensions. Ethnic communities in American cities and town often are quite small, sometimes not numbering more than a few thousand people. On the national scale, ethnic groups, as in the case of Ethiopia and Belgium, number in millions.

No single trait denotes ethnicity. Group recognition may be based on language, religion, national origin, unique customs, or an ill-defined concept of “race.” Whatever may establish the identity of a group, the common unifying bonds of ethnicity are a shared ancestry and cultural heritage, the retention of a set of distinctive traditions, and the maintenance of in-group interactions and relationships. The underlying rationale is the same: there is comfort and security in the familiarity of one’s own culture and cultural landscape.

Race and Ethnicity

Are quite different, since *one is biological* (now very muddled) and *the other is cultural*. Nevertheless, the two sometimes go hand in hand. Gujarati Hindus, for example, can have distinctive physical traits and, for those who maintain a traditional way of life, cultural attributes as well. However, ethnic distinctiveness should not be viewed as racial. For example, Jews are sometimes described as a race although they are distinctive only in their religious beliefs as well as their history of persecution.

Ethnicity involves even more variability and mixture that race does, for most people identify with more than one ethnic background, (a person might claim to be, say, an Amhara and Oromo). Moreover, people may intentionally modify their ethnicity over time. Many West Indian immigrants to England gradually shed their cultural background, becoming less ‘West India’ and absorbing new ethnic traits from others. In a reversal of this pattern, others have highlighted their background through ‘Rastafarianism’. Likewise, many people with Native-Irish ancestry have recently taken a renewed interest in their traditional ethnicity, enhancing this dimension of their identity. In short, ethnicity is about varying cultures, which are themselves changeable and fluid.

Ethnocentrism is the term describing a tendency to evaluate other cultures against the standards of one’s own. It implies the feeling that one’s own ethnic group is superior. Ethnocentrism can divide multiethnic societies by establishing rivalries and provoking social and spatial discord and isolation. It can, as well, be a sustaining and identifying emotion, giving familiar values and support to the individual in the face of the complexities of life. The ethnic group maintains familiar cultural institutions and shares traditional food and music. More often than not, it provides the friends, spouses, business opportunities, and political identification of ethnic group members.

Territorial isolation is a strong and sustaining trait of ethnic separatism and assists individual groups to retain their identification. In Europe, Asia, and Africa, ethnicity and territorial identity is inseparable. Ethnic minorities are first and foremost associated with *homelands*. These minorities have specific spatial identity even though they may not have political independence.

Where ethnic groups are intermixed and territorial boundaries imprecise, for e.g. Former Yugoslavia, or where a single state contains disparate, rival populations-the case of many African and Asian countries- conflicts between groups can be serious if peaceful relations or central government control break down. “*Ethnic cleansing*,” a political term with grisly implications, has become a past or present justification and objective for civil conflict in parts of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and in several African and southeast Asian countries.

Race

In nineteenth-century, biologists developed a three-point scheme of racial classifications. They labeled people with relatively light skin and fine hair as *Caucasian*; they called those with darker skin and coarser, curlier hair *Negroid*; and people with yellow or brown skin and distinctive folds on the eyelids were termed *Mongoloid*.

However, such category or classification may be misleading, since no society is composed of biologically pure individuals. In fact, world traveler notices gradual and subtle racial variations from region to region. The people we might call ‘*Caucasian*’ or ‘Indo-Europeans’ or, more commonly, ‘white people’ actually display skin color that ranges from very light (typical in Scandinavia) to very dark (widespread in southern India). One also finds the same variation among so-called ‘*Negroids*’ (‘Africans’ or, more commonly, ‘black people’ and ‘*Mongoloids*’.

Populations of the world are genetically mixed. Over many generations, the biological traits of Negroid Africans, Caucasian Europeans and Mongoloid Native Americans (whose ancestors were Asian) spread widely throughout the world. Many ‘black’ people, therefore, have a significant proportion of Caucasian genes and many ‘white’ people have some Negroid genes. In short, no matter what people may think, race is no black-and-white issue.

Yet, despite this reality of biological mixing, however, people around the world are quick to classify each other racially and rank these categories in systems of social inequality. This process of ranking people on basis of their presumed race is race is racialisation. People may also defend racial hierarchy with assertions that one category is inherently ‘better’ or more intelligent than another, though no sound scientific research supports such beliefs.

The majority of world societies, even those outwardly seemingly most homogeneous, house distinctive *ethnic groups*, populations that feel themselves bound together by a common origin and set off from other groups by ties of culture, race, race, religion, language, or nationality. Ethnic diversity is a near-universal part of human geographic patterns; the current some 200 or so independent countries are home to at least 5,000 ethnic groups. European states house increasing numbers of African and Asian immigrants and guest workers from outside their borders and have effectively become multiethnic societies. Cross-border movements and resettlements in Southeast

Asia and Africa are well-reported current events. European colonialism created pluralistic societies in tropical lands through introduction of both ruling elites and, frequently, nonindigenous laboring groups. Polyethnic Russia, Afghanistan, China, India, and most African countries have native rather than immigrant, populations more characterized by racial and cultural diversity than by uniformity. Tri-cultural Belgium has a nearly split personality in matters of political and social. *The idea of an ethnically pure nation-state is no longer realistic.*

Ethnicity is always based on a firm understanding by members of a group that they are in some fundamental ways different from others who do not share their distinguishing characteristics or cultural heritage. Ethnicity is, at root, a spatial concept. Ethnic groups are associated with clearly recognized territories, either large homeland districts or smaller rural or urban enclaves, in which they are primary or enclave occupants and upon which they have placed distinctive cultural marks.

Ethnicity thus accrues from different combinations of cultural traditions, racial background, and even physical environments. In Northern Ireland, there is no racial distinction between two ethnic groups locked in tragic struggle; the dominant ethnic glue is religion, Catholic for one community, Protestant for the other. In Belgium, that glue is principally linguistic. In Northern Belgium, the Flemings form an ethnic entity of more than 6 million people. Heirs to the rich culture history of Flanders, the Flemings speak a Dutch-derived language. Southern Belgium is the domain of nearly 4 million French-speaking Walloons. The capital, Brussels (Bruxelles), lies north of the ethnic chasm that splits Belgium, a divide so deep that each region has its own parliament. As in so many multiethnic countries, one ethnic group the Walloons fears that domination by a larger or more powerful ethnic group within the national boundaries.

Thus, like culture, ethnicity exists at many spatial dimensions. Ethnic communities in American cities and towns are often quite small, numbering no more than a few thousand people. On the national scale, ethnic groups, as in the case of Ethiopia, ex-Yugoslavia and Belgium, number in millions. The underlying rationale is the same; there is comfort and security in the familiarity of one's own culture and cultural landscape. In the smaller urban communities, group identity and cohesiveness yield advantages for the individual: it constitutes a social network and, in case of personal difficulty, a safety net. Members of a particular community may be especially successful in certain businesses in the larger urban scene, and they will promote their "own" in such businesses. For new arrivals, an ethnic neighborhood will ease the transition because a familiar language is still in use, the common church marks the urban landscape, and stores carry products valued in the local culture. Thus, there is advantage in the self-preservation of an ethnic neighborhood, where local group cohesiveness protects and preserves customs and traditions to mutual advantage.

In today's world, ethnicity began to be identified as primary and secondary. The expression ethnic group is used as a substitute or 'race' to identify groups at the national level; this may be called

primary ethnicity. Hyphenate groups are to be identified in a state this may be called secondary ethnicity, like Afro-Americans. The difference between the two is that 'primary' ethnicity' denotes the shared sentiment and collective action of persons who belong together, or believe that they should belong together, as members of a sovereign political unit. Secondary ethnicity is a similar identification of persons as sub-divisions *within* a sovereign political unit.

Ethnic groups, whether primary or secondary, are currently distinguished from national, religious and racial groups by cultural distinctiveness associated with a belief in distinctive origin, though any particular group may be both ethnic and national, ethnic and religious, ethnic and racial, or distinctive on multiple on multiple dimensions. The various things identified by the adjective ethnic are now frequently grouped together as *ethnicity*, as if this can be an attribute of social life.

Major Racial Families

1. **European** race includes not only Scandinavians, Russians, Germans, and Italians, but also the peoples of Southwest Asia such as the Iranians, Syrians, Saudi Arabians, and North Africa such as Egyptians, Algerians and Moroccans.
2. **Indian**;
3. **Asian** (peoples of China, Japan, inner Asia, Southeast Asia, Indonesia);
4. **African** (peoples of African South of the Sahara);
5. **American** (the indigenous, Indian population of the Americas);
6. **Australian** (the original people of Australia);
7. **Micronesian**;
8. **Melanesian**; and
9. **Polynesian**.

NB: The last three groups are peoples of the Pacific Ocean's Islands.

Ethnicity: Areal Expressions

Since territory and ethnicity are inseparable concepts, ethnicity becomes an important concern in the cultural patterning of space. Throughout much of the world, the close association of territoriality and ethnicity is well recognized, accepted, and often politically disruptive. Indigenous ethnic groups have developed over time in the specific locations and, through ties of kinship, language and culture, religion, and shared history, have established themselves in their own and others' eyes as distinctive peoples with defined homeland areas. The boundaries of most countries of the world encompass a number of racial or ethnic minorities, whose demand for special

territorial recognition have increased rather than diminished with advances in economic development, education, self-awareness.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, for example, not only set free the 14 ethnically based union republics that formerly had been dominated by Russia and Russians, but also opened the way for many smaller ethnic groups to seek recognition and greater local control from the majority populations, including Russians, within whose territory their homelands lay. In Asia, the Indian subcontinent was divided to create separate countries with primarily religious-territorial affiliations, and the country of India itself has adjusted the boundaries of its constituent states to accommodate linguistic-ethnic realities.

The Rising Tide of Nationalism

The 1990s are witness to spreading ethnic self-assertion and demands for national independence and cultural purification of homeland territories. These are the consequences of the decline of strong central governments and imperial controls. It has happened before. The emergence of the nation-states of medieval and Renaissance Europe followed the collapse of the Holy Roman Empire. The fall of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire after World War I saw the creation of new ethnically based countries in Eastern Europe. The brief decline of post-czarist Russia permitted freedom for Finland, and for 20 years for Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The disintegration of British, French, and Dutch colonial control after World War II resulted in new state formation in Africa, South and East Asia, and Oceania.

Few empires have collapsed as rapidly and completely as did that of the Soviet Union and its East European satellites in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In the subsequent loss of strong central authority, the ethnic nationalism that communist governments since 1945 had tried to suppress asserted themselves in independence movements. At one scale, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the republics of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Georgia emerged from the former Soviet Union. At a lesser territorial scale, ethnic animosities and assertions led to bloodshed in the Caucasian republics of former USSR, and in former Yugoslavia, in Moldova and elsewhere, while Czechs and Slovaks agreed to go peacefully their separate ways at the start of 1993.

Democracies, too, at least before legal protections for minorities are firmly in place, risk disintegration or division along ethnic, tribal, or religious lines. African states with their multiple ethnic loyalties have frequently used those divisions to justify restricting political freedoms and continuing one-party rule. However, past and present ethnically inspired civil wars and regional revolts in Somalia, Nigeria, Uganda, Liberia, Angola, Rwanda, Burundi, and elsewhere show the fragility of the political structure on that continent.

Acculturation and Assimilation

The customs and practices of familiar and expected among that already in place had to be learned by newcomers if they were to be accepted. The process of *acculturation* is that of the adoption by the immigrants of the values, attitudes, ways of behavior, and speech of the receiving society. In the process, the ethnic group loses its separate identity as it accepts over time the culture of the larger host community. Although acculturation most usually involves a minority group adopting the patterns of the dominant population, the process can be reciprocal. That is, the dominant group may also adopt at least some patterns and practices typical of the minority group.

Acculturation is a slow process for many immigrant individuals and groups, and the parent tongue may of choice or necessity be retained as an ethnically identifying feature even after fashions of dress, food, and customary behavior have been substantially altered in the new environment.

When through time new arrivals integrate into economic and cultural mainstream and the process is complete, then *assimilation* has occurred. Assimilation is a process by which minorities gradually adopt pattern of the dominant culture.

Activity 6

1. Write language families of the world.
2. Classify the world's religions
3. What is ethnicity?
4. Differentiate race from ethnicity.

Unit Four

Culture and Social Changes

Dear Colleague, in this chapter you are going to study about cultural and social changes. The different factors those involved in affecting the cultural changes are presented. In pursuing explanation for technology and social changes. Arguing the influence of globalization on cultural changes.

Objectives:

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- ❖ Describe the meaning of cultural change
- ❖ Analyze the effects of technology in the process of cultural changes.
- ❖ Identify the factors of cultural changes

Introduction

Change is a very broad concept. Though change is all around us, we do not refer to all of it as social change. Thus, physical growth of a person from year to year or change of seasons does not fall under the concept of social change. Here we look at social change as alterations that occur in the social structure and social relationships. We will discuss the meaning of social change and the important factors of social change in this chapter.

Social change is the transformation of culture and social organization/structure over time. In the modern world we are aware that society is never static, and that social, political, economic and cultural changes occur constantly. There are a whole range of classic theories and research methods available within academic arena for the study of social change.

Meaning of Social Change

Social change refers to an alteration in the social structure of a social group or society which, according to, *International Encyclopedia of Social Science* (IESS. 1972), are the change in the nature, social institutions, social behaviours or social relations of a society.

The alteration may occur in norms, values, cultural products and symbols in a society. This alteration in the structure and function of a social system, institutions and patterns of interaction,

work, leisure activities, roles and other aspects of society can be altered over the time as a result of the process of social change.

Characteristics

Social change is a process of alteration with no reference to the quality of change. And changes in society are related to changes in culture. For instance, growth of modern technology as part of the culture has been closely associated with alterations in the economic structures on important part of the society. Social change can vary in its scope and in speed. We can talk of small scale or large scale changes. As change varies in scope, it influences many aspects of a society and disrupt the whole social system. The process of industrialization affected many aspects of society. Some changes occur rapidly but developing nations are trying to do it more quickly. They do this by borrowing or adapting from those nations which have already achieved it.

Today, anthropologists assume that change is natural, inevitable, and ever present in every part of life for every society. When we are looking at social change, we are focusing not in changes in the experiences of an individual, but on variations in social structures, institutions and social relationships.

There are four main characteristics of social change (Macionis 1996): -

- ✓ **It happens everywhere, but the rate of change varies from place to place.** For example, the United States would experience faster change, than a third world country that has limited access to technology and information.
- ✓ **Social change is sometimes intentional but often unplanned.** For example, when the airplane was invented people knew that this would increase and speed travel. However, it was probably not realised how this invention would affect society in the future. Families are spread through out the country, because it is easier to return for visits. Companies are able to expand worldwide thanks to air travel. The numerous crashes and deaths related to airplanes was not predicted either.
- ✓ **Social change often generates controversy.** For example, the move over the recent years to accept homosexual rights has caused controversy involving the military, religion, and society overall.
- ✓ **Some changes matter more than others do.** For example, the invention of personal computers was more important than Cabbage Patch dolls.

Factors of Social Change

Social change occurs due to various factors. Some of these factors are:

I. Demographic Factors

Changes in population, both in numbers and composition, have a far reaching effect on society. Changes in the size of population may bring about a change in the economic life of the people. In the Indian context, we notice that an increase in population has resulted in an increase in

unemployment, in poverty, in urbanization, in the number of slums and an increase in crime rate, social tension and the burden on infrastructural facilities. These, in turn, have resulted in the absence of adequate facilities, rise in nuclear families and over the time have altered social relationships in a perceptible manner.

II. Technological Factors

Technological progress has often triggered a long lasting change in society. In earlier times, technology was simple and societies were simple too. Traditional society was characterized by manual labour and family was the unit of production. At that time, production was for domestic consumption. There was neither a governing profit motive in economic transactions nor whatever was produced were brought into the market.

Today, modern industrial relationships have given birth to companies, corporations, and share market, multinational companies, banks and the union of industrial workers.

This is to say industrial societies are very complex and distinctly different from the earlier simple societies there is

- i) Importance of capital instead of labour as against the norm in simple societies;
- ii) Rise of factories as units of productions instead of family;
- iii) Use of machines in place of human and animal labour;
- iv) Development of world market instead of local market; and
- v) Improved means of transport and communication and a currency based economy.

III. Cultural Factors:

Social systems are directly or indirectly the creations of cultural values. Any change in values or belief systems on the part of social group affects social institutions. To illustrate this, we can see that the rise of nuclear families has changed the family system in India in a significant manner. The joint family system has slowly disintegrated and this has altered relationships within the family.

Social change occurs through cultural contact between different societies. Diffusion is an important mechanism of social change through which one society adopts the cultural traits of another through prolonged contact as in travel, trade and commerce as also through sudden events like war where new and hitherto secret technologies reveal themselves.

Diffusion of cultural traits also takes place through personal contacts and interaction between members of the two or more cultures. Diffusion also takes place through mass media as it transmits and diffuses information to a large number of people. It has accelerated the process of change by

spreading the elements of individual cultures to people far away and thus resulted in a form of cultural modernization.

IV. Political Factors

Law act as an instrument of socio-economic and political change in society. It protects the interests of the weaker sections of society, particularly of those belonging to the scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and other backward castes in India.

Law also protect the interests of women, children and other disadvantaged section of society. In 1829, a law was passed banning *sati*. A century later, another law fixed the minimum age for marriage. Still later, another law has banned the practice of giving and taking of *dowry*. Article 17 of the Indian constitution has abolished untouchability. Thus, the role of law as an instrument of social change finds full expression where law comes in confrontation with social customs.

The role of elections are also important factors of social change. The right to vote stimulates interest in public affairs and is an important means of imparting education to masses. It inculcates a sense of self-respect and responsibility among the citizens.

V. Economic Factors:

Economic factors influence the quality and direction of social change. We can explain by studying the following theoretical evidences:

A) Marxian View:

Karl Marx is the chief architect of the economic theory of social change. He believes that social change is basically the result of economic factors. The mode of production determines the social, cultural, religious and political aspect of society.

Thus, he traced the development of society from agricultural to feudalism to capitalism and finally, to socialism. A revolution carried out by the workers against the capitalist would end the ills of capitalism and lead to the establishment of a socialist society.

B) Industrial Revolution:

The Industrial Revolution which started in Europe in the late 17th century slowly found its way across the globe bringing about the following changes:

- a) Production moved out of households to factories.
- b) Capital acquired a greater role in the production process.
- c) The occupational structure of the workforce changed from largely agrarian to an increasingly larger industrial workforce.
- d) People from all strata of society took to industrial activity.
- e) Women moved out of homes in large numbers and entered the workforce.
- f) Barriers of religion, belief etc. crumbled as the demand for labour increased.

g) Urbanization took place at an accelerated pace.

h) It triggered changes in other spheres like mass transport and communication too, thus radically altering the existing social structure.

All these changes had a dramatic impact on social relationships and brought about a lasting social change.

- The role of woman changed with their economic independence.
- Similarly, production relationships changed from one amongst kinsmen to a largely impersonal relationship between the “employer” and the “employee” where skills and not royalty became the prime criterion for employment.
- Caste structure weakened in urban centers and workers of different castes and religions became increasingly comfortable working with each other.
- Urbanization, in its wake, brought about other changes. The provision of facilities like hospitals, schools, smaller houses all meant that the dependence on family decreased. This was also triggered by the revolutionary changes in mass transport system, which enabled people to move to far-flung places where employment opportunities existed.
- Finally, the large influx of wage earners and self-employed to urban centers gave rise to a large and powerful middle class in the society influencing political discourse favouring the ideas of democracy, meritocracy and egalitarianism.

C) Green Revolution

As population rise, consequently the demand for food grew, the situation warranted a close look at increasing agricultural productivity and the answer that finally helped India to become self-sufficient in food has been termed the “Green Revolution” which is a name given to the dramatic changes brought about in the field of agriculture since the late 1960s.

This had a great impact on the family relationships as it triggered large scale seasonal migration from states like Orissa, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh to Punjab and Haryana, the cradle of the Green Revolution. Additionally, another significant outcome was a widening of inequality across states in general and among the “landed and the “landless” in particular.

VI. Education as factors of Social Change:

Education plays an important role in social change. While, on one hand, it is responsible for handing down traditions, culture, knowledge and skills from one generation to another, on the other hand, it acts as an agent of social change. New ideas and values are initiated by it and become the goals for the young generation to pursue and achieve.

The impact of education on different aspects of social life can be examined by studying the following:

a) Socialization and the Social Control:

Every society has its history, heritage and culture which it strives to preserve. Through school curricula, children learn about their history, culture and philosophy. They are also made aware of developments in science and technology and taught new skills.

Through socialization, society wants to mold individuals according to its existing structure and hence modern education also lays emphasis on subjects like law, human rights, democracy and tries to inculcate a world view on war, poverty, HIV/AIDS and unemployment.

b) Development of Human Resources:

In simple societies, family was the basic unit of production. The individuals learnt the required skills of the family occupation at home itself. These skills could range from carpentry to craftsmanship, jewelry fabrication, working with metals in agriculture and allied activities.

But as societies grew in diversity and complexity, a wide range of occupations emerged requiring specific skills, such as medicine, public health, engineering, management, law, forensic science, physical, biological, agricultural and social sciences, which are taught in modern educational institution. Education, thus, ensures the allocation of positions in society suitable to the skills of the individuals. It provides an opportunity for individuals to realize their potential and frees them from being tied down to the occupation of their forefathers. Through education, a person can achieve his own status in the society.

c) Political Education:

Education also brings political awareness. Through education, governments try to communicate their national goals to the citizens in order to ensure cohesiveness and unity. Modern education system tries to popularize the ideals of democracy, liberty and equality while familiarizing the students with their unique history and culture.

In general, social change is a continuous and unending process in every society. All societies traditional and modern are constantly evolving. Social change is a process of alteration with no reference to the quality of change. And changes in society are related to changes in culture. Several factors trigger social change as for instance demographic, political, social, cultural, economic and educational factors. Changes are most often gradual and barely perceptible till we attempt an inter-temporal analysis. However, occasionally, there are events which bring about dramatic changes in society.

Additionally, social change is the change in the social structure, social institutions, social behavior (culture) and social relations of a given specific cultural society over time. It is the alteration of patterns of culture, social structure and social behavior over time. It involves the complex interaction of environment, technology, culture, personality, political, economic, and religious.

Technology is the creation of tools or objects that both extend our natural abilities and alter our social environment

All cultures change over time because cultures are DYNAMIC, not STATIC. There are many factors that stimulate change:

- values and beliefs
- technology
- population
- diffusion
- the physical environment
- wars and conquests

There are **three factors** of resistance to cultural change:

- ✓ Ethnocentrism – feeling that one’s own culture or group is superior
- ✓ Cultural lag – the situation in which some aspects of a society change less rapidly than other aspects... they LAG behind
- ✓ Vested interests – an interest to protect what we know and how we’re used to doing things

4.2. Sources of Social Change

There are various causes of social change. These causes include the following:

Culture

Culture is a system that constantly loses and gains components. There are three main sources of cultural change.

The first source is *invention*.

Inventions produce new products, ideas, and social patterns. The invention of rocket propulsion led to space travel, which in the future may lead to inhabitation of other planets.

The second source is *discovery*.

Discovery is finding something that has never been found before, or finding something new in something that already exists.

The third source is *diffusion*.

Diffusion is the spreading of ideas and objects to other societies. This would involve trading, migration, and mass communication. The ‘mass media’ is a vital factor in the speed of social

change. It permits rapid diffusion of ideas, making these manifest in the private and relaxing environs of the home, where audiences are at their most susceptible.

Conflict

Another reason social change happens is due to tension and conflict (between races, religions, classes etc.). Karl Marx thought that class conflict in particular sparked change.

Idealistic factors

Idealistic factors include values, beliefs, and ideologies. From Max Weber's perspective: in essence, values, beliefs, and ideologies have a decisive impact on shaping social change. These factors have certainly broadly shaped directions of social change in the modern world. For example:

- Freedom and self-determination
- Material growth and security
- Nationalism, e.g. French & English Canadians, English & Irish, Germans & French, Palestinians, Kurdish, Basque separatists and Spanish
- Capitalism: not only the type of economic system, but also ideology, connected set of values and ideas emphasising positive benefits of pursuing one's private economic interests, competition and free markets
- Marxism

Max Weber thought that the expression of ideas by charismatic individuals could change the world. Here are some examples of influential people who caused changes in the world (good and bad): Martin Luther King, Jr.; Adolf Hitler; Mao Tseng Tug; Mohandas Gandhi & Nelson Mandela

The need for adaptation

The need for adaptation within social systems, for example: the development of efficient bureaucracies is an adaptive response of firms to a competitive economic environment.

Environmental factors

Change can be through the impact of environmental factors such as drought and famine. The degree of natural disasters between different countries and regions also lead the different social changes between the countries. The shift from collecting, hunting and fishing to agriculture may have happened because, in some areas, the human population grew too large to be sustained by existing resources.

Economic & political advantage

International shifts in economic or political advantage also have great impacts on social change. For example, 'Globalization' & 'the WTO' are key factors in our modern society affecting the global economy, political structures and dynamics, culture, poverty, the environment, gender etc.

Demographic Change

Change occurs from an increase in the population or human migration between the areas. Compared to the Netherlands and Tokyo the United States has an abundance of physical space. The United States was affected by migration the late 1800's to early 1900's. When masses of people came to America, farm communities started to decline and cities expanded. Human migration between rural villages and big cities in China is causing a great impact on society in China as a whole.

Social Movements and Change

Change can also occur from people joining together for a common cause. This is called a social movement. Social movements are classified according to the kind of change they are seeking. Two questions to ask about each type of social movement are: 'Who is changed?' and 'How much change?' More detailed information and discussion will be showed in the later section.

Consumerism

Globalization is defined as a system of values based on the assumption that wellbeing is best achieved by accumulating the maximum wealth as quickly as possible. The myth is that consuming more and more goods and services makes us happy. Increasingly, economic globalization has led to cultural globalization, in that our values are being formed by the underlying consumerist ideology: our desires have been manipulated to benefit the capitalist system, with its emphasis on economic growth. The West has adopted values and lifestyles corresponding to neo-liberalism, i.e. consumerism and individualism, which, in turn, lead towards corresponding outcomes, i.e. a high impact on the environment and social alienation. The more this situation progresses, the more the forces of social change react and mobilize.

The Role of Values and Ethics

Human values are formed by a similar process and act in a similar manner. Although the word is commonly used with reference to ethical and cultural principles, values are of many types. They may be physical (cleanliness, punctuality), organizational (communication, coordination), psychological (courage, generosity), mental (objectivity, sincerity), or spiritual (harmony, love, self-giving). Values are central organizing principles or ideas that govern and determine human behaviour. Unlike the skill or attitude that may be specific to a particular physical activity or social context, values tend to be more universal in their application. They express in everything we do. Values can be described as the essence of the knowledge gained by humanity from past experiences distilled from its local circumstances and specific context to extract the fundamental

wisdom of life derived from these experiences. Values give direction to our thought processes, sentiments, emotional energies, preferences, and actions.

An historical study of certain societies bears out the development of ethics in line with cultural (and individual) development. Gradually, exploitation, injustice and oppression are recognized and rejected - as can be seen with examples such as the abolition of slavery, the banning of racism and the introduction of sexual equality. Animal exploitation and suffering is increasingly recognized and dealt with as such ethical attitudes develop, but this invariably takes longer - as human identification with our ethical foundations (especially in the West) have evolved as a human-biased morality, but the past 20 - 25 years have brought a significant change. Both the animal rights and the Green movements have shifted the focus of attention to include the nonhuman world. This perspective is, in fact, not at all new. The ancient, yet living, traditions of Indians and Aborigines show a reverence and understanding for the natural world, which combines a respect for the sustainability of the environment with a care for the individual animal.

But perhaps this is not at all surprising when seen in the context of the build-up and release of energies for social change? Once *Pioneers* begin to release the energies, they are imitated, the 'multiplier effect' comes into action and the energy is released and made explicit.

Religion

Society develops in response to the contact and interaction between human beings and their material, social and intellectual environment. Ethical views differ greatly from country to country. This is partly because of factors such as culture and religion, as well as the practical circumstances in which people are brought up (e.g. in the case of animal issues whether population are living in close contact with animals, such as farm animals or wildlife, or not).

Religion is all about beliefs - beliefs about creation, purpose, destiny, life, and love. It shapes the lives of believers. What people believe or disbelieve about God and the world affects all aspects of their being, including their day-to-day behaviour. Social movements are all about changing and shaping people's belief systems. It follows, therefore, that religion can be vitally important to the social change movement. Religion can affect attitudes and ethics, either positively or negatively. For example, a society that is strongly Roman Catholic is likely to be very human-centered, and believe that animals have no souls and that humans have 'dominion' over them - whereas a Buddhist or Hindu society is likely to have a strong belief in the 'oneness' of life and the importance of protecting and respecting nature and animals.

Technology and Information

As a society develops to higher levels, non-material resources play an increasingly important role as factors of production. This principle is embodied in the concept of the Information Age, an era in which access to information has become a valuable input and precious resource for improving the quality of decisions and the productivity of activities. Internet technology has an enormous

impact on the globalization of culture and ideas. It has considerably increased the speed of social change. It is also a valuable tool for social change organizations.

Perhaps the three most powerful sources of social change today are ideas, technology and institutions. In fact, these sources of changes are related with and refer to ideology, means of production and production forces, and social structures.

Some of the important sources of social changes are:-

- i. Ideas/ Ideological
- ii. Technology/ Technological
- iii. Institutions/Structural

Changes in economic institutions for instances market and political institutions can cause social change. The size of population has a strong influence on social organization. Changes in the social organization of a society may cause changes in the society's social structure, composition, relations and social order one way or the other. Economic situations may also bring a social change. Times of hardship change almost every aspect of daily life.

4.3. Technology and Social Change

Technological innovations can be either appropriate or inappropriate. Appropriate technology is a technology designed to be suitable to the needs and sources of a particular group of people. It relies on local skills and resources that fit into the local situation economically and culturally, and that do not harm the environment.

Technology has not spared (safe) the social institutions of its effects. Different aspects of culture are integrated with industrial location but equally pronounced are the effects of industry on culture and social change. Indeed, industrialization is the most potent and effective agent of social change in modern times. Entire cultures have been reshaped as a consequence of the industrial revolution.

Modern technology is taking away industry from the household and has radically change the family organization.

4.3. Globalization and Culture

Economically, globalization is the increasing interaction of national economy of sates. Globalization is the systemic integration of autonomous economies into a global system of production and distribution.

Globalization as a political process entails that there is interconnection of sovereign nations through trade and capital flows; harmonization of economic rules that govern relationship among these sovereign nation; creating structures to support and facilitate interdependent and creating a global market place.

Globalization involves rapid social change that is occurring simultaneously in the world economy, politics, communications, physical environment and culture; and each of these transformations interact with each other.

Increasing global connectivity does not imply that the world is becoming economically, culturally or politically 'unified'. The impact of globalization on the culture is immense and diverse.

Optimists look forward to global village linked altogether by internet, and benefiting from over-increasing material wellbeing. On the other hand, pessimists see that globalization destroy the environment and culture, and remove away all that is healthy and meaningful for human existence. Probably it deteriorates the end of geography and the end of sovereignty.

While globalization encourages cultural sharing and interaction between peoples, it may also promote conflict.

Activity 7

1. What are three factors of resistance to cultural change?
2. What are many factors that stimulate change?
3. Mention the sources of social changes.
4. How technology affects social change?
5. In what way globalization influences social change?

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