A Look Ahead

CULTURAL EVOLUTION CONTRASTS WITH CULTURAL DIFFUSION

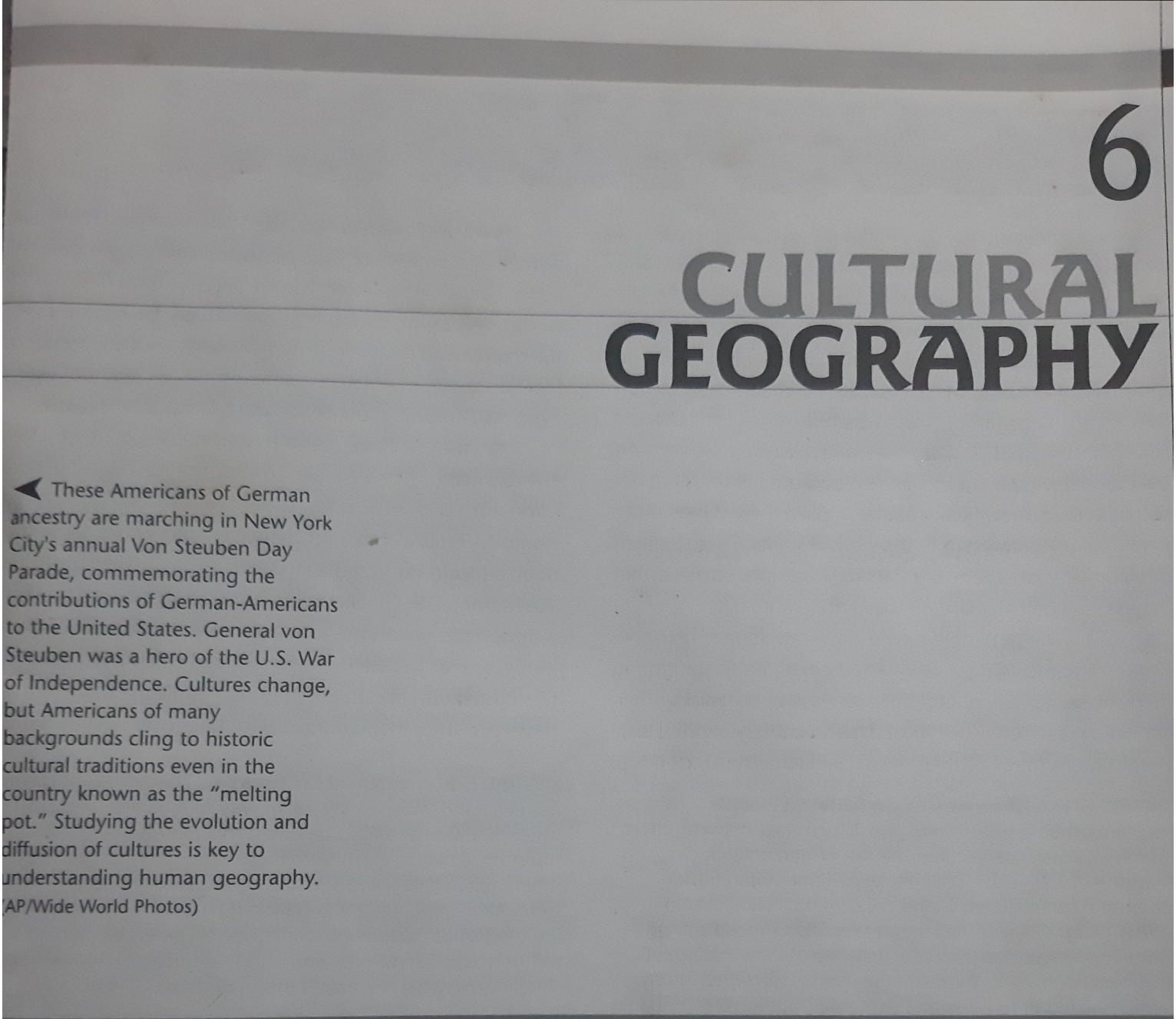
Evolutionism studies the sources of cultural change that are within individual cultures themselves, whereas diffusionism emphasizes how cultures spread out from the places they originate and are adopted by other peoples. Folk cultures preserve traditions, but popular cultures embrace changing norms.

IDENTITY AND BEHAVIORAL GEOGRAPHY

The behavior of any individual is partly unique to tha person, but much of any person's behavior is specific to his or her cultural group. People often group themselves and interact with other groups defined b culture, race, ethnicity, or identity, even though it ma be difficult for an observer to identify these grouping "objectively." Geographers study how

6

CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY



These Americans of German ancestry are marching in New York City's annual Von Steuben Day Parade, commemorating the contributions of German-Americans to the United States. General von Steuben was a hero of the U.S. War of Independence. Cultures change, but Americans of many backgrounds cling to historic cultural traditions even in the country known as the "melting pot." Studying the evolution and diffusion of cultures is key to understanding human geography. (AP/Wide World Photos)

individuals and groups perceive and respond to their environments.

CULTURE REALMS

The entire region throughout which a culture prevails is called a culture realm. Culture realms may be defined on the basis of religion, language, diet, customs, economic development, or still other criteria. Some aspects of culture realms are visible in the landscape.

THE GLOBAL DIFFUSION OF WESTERN CULTURE

Much of today's world cultural geography is the legacy of the diffusion of European culture that accompanied European political and economic global supremacy from about 1500 until about 1950. The attacks on the United States that occurred on September 11, 2001, shocked Americans and other global citizens into reflection on America's role in the world today.

These imaginary Solitary people will have developed in isolation their own distinctive culture, and they will have constructed their own distinctive cultural landscape, as both of these terms were defined in Chapter 1. This chapter explores how cultures originate, develop, and spread.

CULTURAL EVOLUTION CONTRASTS WITH CULTURAL DIFFUSION

The word culture was introduced in Chapter 1 to describe everything about the way a people live: their clothes, diet, articles of use, and customs. Geographers study the origin, diffusion, and extent of all aspects of cultures. An object of material culture is called an *artifact*, which means literally "a thing made by skill." Culture, however, includes patterns of behavior as well as possessions. The way a group does things—its interpersonal arrangements, family structure, educational methods, and so forth—are part of its culture, and so are the facts of a group's mental or imaginative life—its poetry, music, language, and religion.

Human cultures are never static; they are constantly changing, as people learn new techniques and develop new cultural traits. The forces that cause these changes may be divided into two general categories. Some evolve within the society itself, but others are triggered by contact with other societies. The Solitary people, for example, were isolated, so their culture would change only through internal evolution. They might discover new uses for local plants through the years, or they might devise new religious ceremonies. **Evolutionism** is the point of view that the most important sources of cultural change are embedded in cultures, and change is internally determined. **Diffusionism**, by contrast, emphasizes how various aspects of cultures spread out from the places they originate and are adopted by other peoples. The process of spreading is called **cultural diffusion**, and the process of adopting some aspect of another culture is called **acculturation**. Cultural diffusion can be actively imposed, as when an outside power conquers a region and imposes its way of life, or it can be freely chosen, as when one group discovers and adopts some aspect of a different culture that it considers superior to its own.

This chapter will begin with an examination of two classic evolutionist theories. Both emphasize the role that technological and economic evolution play in the development of cultures and in the interaction between societies and the environment. Both theories have been used to suggest that certain developments in the past were inevitable, or even that certain events are inevitable in the future.

The second part of this chapter will then analyze diffusionistic approaches to the study of culture. Through history, the diffusion of goods, ideas, and techniques among peoples has increased, and the original individual characteristics of world cultures have come to be overlain or commingled with new shared characteristics. This mingling has created new and original cultural combinations.

The last section of this chapter analyzes the worldwide diffusion of European culture that accompanied European global conquest and economic dominance. European political dominance has retreated, but it left behind cultural, political, and economic legacies. The United States inherited Europe's leadership, and today many people are reevaluating America's global role.

Theories of Cultural Evolution

Humankind has, for the most part, adapted itself to varying environmental conditions through cultural and technological evolution, not through biological evolution. For example, humans survive Minnesota winters by inventing furnaces and warm clothes, not by evolving furry bodies. Our cultural or technological tools allow us to survive anywhere. Scientific research stations can be maintained even in the frozen wilderness of Antarctica or in the driest desert, although supplies may have to be brought to the local residents. Thus, humans exist in every biome.

The theory of human stages One theory of cultural evolution argues that all cultures evolve through certain stages of development, and it defines these stages by the way in which the culture exploits the environment. This theory was first articulated by a Roman general, Marcus Tarentius Varro (116–27 B.C.), and it remained almost unchallenged until the nineteenth century.

Varro argued that humankind originally derived its food from things that people hunted or harvested naturally. He referred to humans in this stage of evolution as **hunter-gatherers**. Varro stated that humans then domesticated animals and moved into the evolutionary stage of **pastoral nomadism**. Pastoral nomads have no fixed residences, but drive their flocks from one place to another to find grazing lands and water. If their movements are regular and seasonal—as, for example, between mountain and lowland pastures—their movements are called *transhumance*. The evolutionary stage of pastoral nomadism was in turn followed by settled agriculture. Agriculture was at first *subsistence agriculture*, which means that people raised food only for themselves, but subsistence agriculture slowly evolved into *commercial agriculture*, which is raising crops to sell (see Chapter 8). The final stages of social and economic evolution were urbanization and industry.

Imagine that deep in the Brazilian rain forest there is a human community that is completely isolated. The people carry on their lives in total ignorance of the rest of us here on the planet, knowing nothing of international trade, of international political affairs, or even of the government of Brazil, which exercises no effective jurisdiction over them. Certainly they are affected by the complicated affairs of the rest of us. They see our airplanes in the sky, and their local environment is changing because the rest of us are polluting the atmosphere, but they explain these things either as natural phenomena or as the work of spirits. These isolated people—let's call them the "Solitary" people—believe that they are the only humans on the Earth (Figure 6-1).

The Solitary people would have developed their own way of life, including a language to communicate among themselves, a religion, and Solitary ways of organizing their families and society. They must depend entirely on their local environment for all of their needs, including food, clothing, and shelter. Thus, for example, the Solitary people would have learned over time which local plants and animals can be eaten. If the Solitary people receive no imports from the outside world, neither do they produce anything for others. Everything produced locally is consumed locally, and any surplus of food or goods is stored for emergencies or else just wastes away. Activities are probably closely related to the seasons.

As the Solitary people make use of their local environment, they can also transform it. They can clear forests or plant new ones, drain swamps or dig irrigation systems, fertilize the soil or deplete and waste it through poor agricultural practices (Figure 6-2). If they burn local vegetation, they make their own contribution to world atmospheric pollution. They can even redesign local landforms, as many societies have reduced steep mountainsides to stepped terraces for agriculture. People are never entirely passive; rather, they interact with their local environment.

FIGURE 6-1 A discovery of an isolated people. This haunting photograph records the first contact between these formerly isolated people and the rest of humankind. On August 4, 1938, a U.S. scientific expedition entered the supposedly uninhabited Grand Valley of the Balim River in western New Guinea. They found over 50,000 people living in Stone Age circumstances totally unaware of the existence of anyone else on Earth. We cannot say for certain whether any totally isolated groups live on Earth today, but it is less probable each year. (Neg./Transparency no.131456. Courtesy of the Department of Library Services, American Museum of Natural History)

FIGURE 6-2 A cultural landscape. This aerial photograph of the Grand Valley of the Balim was taken a few weeks before the expedition actually contacted the valley's inhabitants. It must have been a surprise to look down into a supposedly uninhabited valley and see these neat clearings and settlements outlined by irrigation ditches. This was clearly a cultural landscape, one modified by considerable human effort. (Neg./Transparency no.131457. Courtesy of the Department of Library Services, American Museum of Natural History)

Varro's theory was generally accepted until the German naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859), whom we met in Chapter 1, pointed out that the native peoples of South America had never experienced a stage of pastoral nomadism. Therefore, Varro's theory could not be true of all societies everywhere. The different ways of life described by Varro might be "categories" of human societies at different times and places, but they are not "stages" in one only possible path of social evolution.

Today there are still human groups living in each category described in this theory of cultural evolution, and we will look at them in greater detail in Chapter 8. Varro's theory that all human societies advance through the same series of stages, however, carries a danger. According to this unilinear theory, societies cannot just be "different" from each other; some must be "ahead" and others "behind." Such presumptions have been used by "advanced" peoples to justify replacing "more primitive" peoples. For example, in the nineteenth century many Americans argued that it was inevitable that the Native North Americans' way of life (pastoral nomadism and subsistence agriculture) would be destroyed and replaced by American farmers. Thus, any activity causing this replacement was morally neutral. Other thinkers, however, argued that human behavior is based on conscious choices. Therefore, the results of human actions can never be scientifically inevitable and morally neutral.

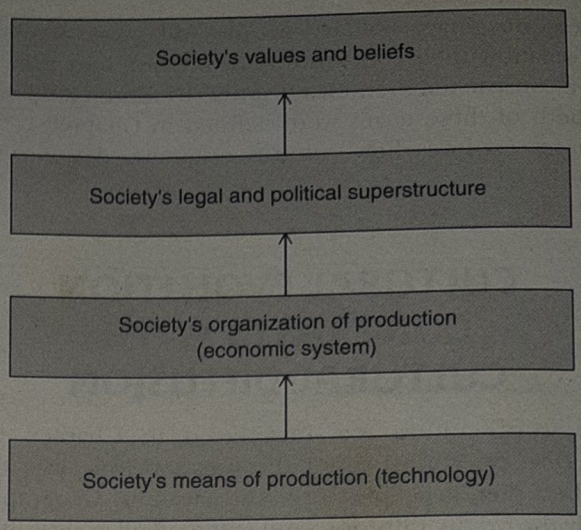


FIGURE 6-3 The theory of historical materialism. Historical materialists believe that any society's productive technology determines its economic system and that its economic system determines its political system. Ultimately, even a society's values and beliefs rest on its technological foundation. Technology is always improving, so all the other aspects of any society are constantly being dragged along and forced to change, too. Technology is the truly revolutionary force in society.

Historical materialism **Historical materialism** is a school of thought that tries to write a plot for human history based on the idea that human technology has increased humankind's control over the environment. Karl Marx (1818–1895) was the founder of historical materialism.

Marx said that humankind has progressively conquered the physical environment in order to improve material welfare. A contemporary ruler may or may not be wiser than one in the past, but a modern tractor can do more work than a horse dragging a wooden plow. Therefore, historical materialists assert, history's plot is the advance of technology. Marx insisted that all social evolution is rooted in technological evolution. This is because technology determines any society's economic system, and the economic system, in turn, determines the society's political and social life (Figure 6-3). Thus, as technology advances, technological change triggers changes in all these other aspects of society. Marx's argument that all aspects of a society are rooted in its technology and economic system has always aroused great controversy.

Marx was an optimist, and he agreed with Condorcet (see Chapter 5) that technology would eventually produce material abundance for all people. Goods would no longer be scarce, so people would no longer dispute their allocation through economic and political structures. Goods would be created and distributed "from each according to his abilities; to each according to his needs."

Some of what Marx wrote has turned out to be misguided guesses, and some of it is simply false, but much of what Marx wrote is generally accepted. Today no one doubts that science progresses almost inexorably, and that scientific progress often upsets society's economic, political, and even philosophical assumptions. The cloning of a lamb and the birth of another with human genes in 1997, for example, challenges our laws and even our ideas of life. Many of the political movements that have used Marx's name, however, disgrace his memory. The communist parties that seized power in Russia in 1917 and were imposed on other peoples in the twentieth century bear no relationship to the humanitarian society that Marx envisioned material abundance would bring.

Historical materialism contrasts with Malthusianism Recently some economists and ecologists have attacked historical materialism from a new direction. Historical materialism notes that in the past, technological progress offered rising standards of living to human populations, and historical materialists assume that this rate of technological

advance will continue. This optimism characterizes some of our leading scientists and industrialists today, who would be classified among the Cornucopians discussed in Chapter 5.

Today many concerned scientists and critics, however, belong to the opposing neo-Malthusian camp. They warn that there is no guarantee that technology will continue to provide rising standards of living for the increasing human population. Confidence that technology will always solve problems of scarcity might lead humankind to disaster. Marx himself never imagined the explosive growth of the human population that has occurred since his death. At that time the human population was only about 1.5 billion, and it was growing at an annual rate of less than 1 percent. The human population today is over 6 billion, and it is rising at an annual rate of just over 1 percent. The neo-Malthusians ask whether increase of the human population is, in fact, outpacing technological development or whether it might do so in the future.

These are some of the most controversial arguments of our time, and you will hear echoes of both the neo-Malthusian and the Cornucopian positions throughout this book. People of different political and economic philosophies offer different answers, and by the time you finish reading this textbook, you will have more information on which to form ideas of your own.

The choices and constraints involved in utilizing the natural environment are often as much cultural, economic, political, and social as they are technological.

Cultures and Environments

Marx wrote that the key to understanding a society is the degree of control that society has over its environment. This degree of control is more important than the nature of the environment itself. Some writers, however, argue that variations in the physical environment itself explain even the variations among human cultures. The simplistic belief that human events can be explained entirely as the result of the effects of the physical environment is called **environmental determinism**. The study of the ways societies adapt to environments, by contrast, is called **cultural ecology**.

Many writers have emphasized climate as a major control on human affairs. The Greek physician Hippocrates (460?–377? B.C.) argued in his book *Airs, Waters, Places* that civilization flourishes only under certain hospitable climatic conditions. Historian Arnold Toynbee (1889–1975) turned Hippocrates' idea that a hospitable climate nourishes civilization upside down with his own *challenge-response theory*. Toynbee argued that people need the challenge of a difficult environment to put forth their best effort and to build a civilization. A rich environment encourages only sluggishness. Today whenever anyone expresses a preference for an environment of seasonal change, as in the northern United States, over the almost tediously fine weather of southern California, that person is suggesting the challenge-response theory.

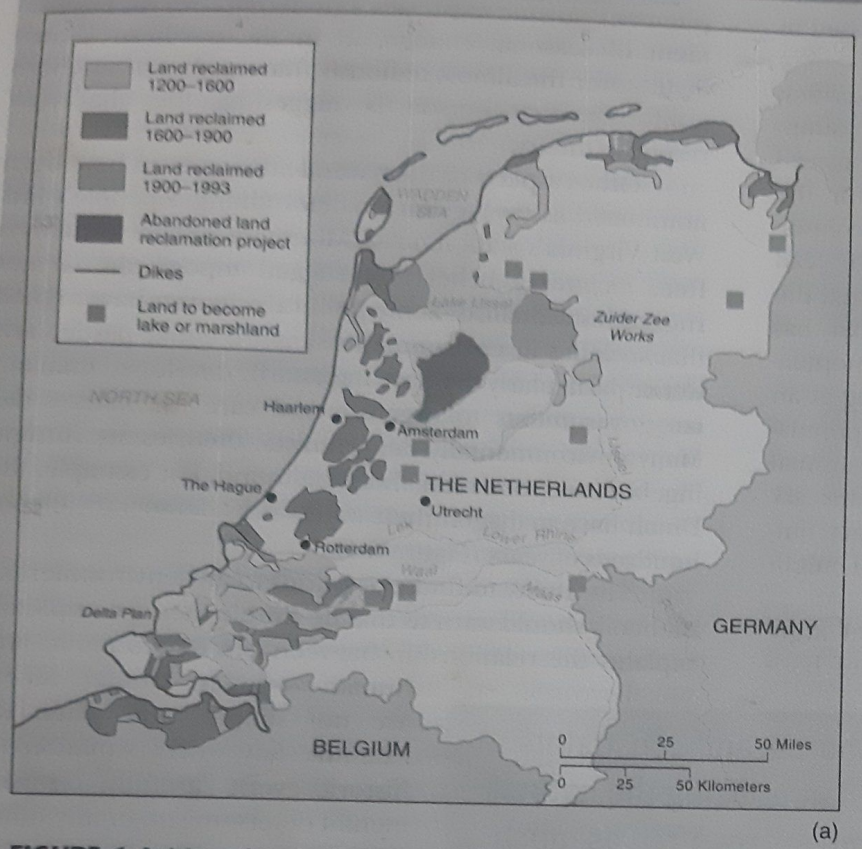
Other aspects of the natural environment have been nominated as the key factor determining a people's life. West Virginia's state motto, "Mountain people are always free," echoes a belief that rugged topography creates rugged individualists. Some political scientists have argued that societies in environments that are either particularly wet or particularly dry have necessarily developed totalitarian governments to organize and care for waterworks. Many environmentally deterministic theories are intriguing, but exceptions can always be found. For example, the Dutch have managed their waterworks democratically for hundreds of years (Figure 6-4).

The ability to find exceptions to any environmentalist theory should warn us that no simple theory completely explains the relationship between the environment and human societies. Human affairs are not simple, and when we examine any world situation or historic event carefully, environmental determinism, or any other single-factor explanation, proves insufficient. Nineteenth-century French geographers proposed the theory of **possibilism** as an antidote to environmental determinism. Possibilism insists that the physical environment itself will neither suggest nor determine what people will attempt, but it may limit what people can profitably achieve. The choices and constraints involved in utilizing the natural environment are often as much cultural, economic, political, and social as they are technological. For example, Canadians have the technological capability to overcome environmental limitations and to grow bananas in greenhouses in Canada, but they choose not to do so. It is cheaper for them to buy bananas grown in Costa Rica.

Environmental determinism today Assumptions about the physical environment's influence in human affairs still affect economic and political debates. For example, today many of Earth's tropical regions are poor, and there are three main hypotheses about why they are poor.

1. One theory emphasizes that the tropical environment handicaps human societies. Tropical heat multiplies the activity of organisms that are inimical to people and to agriculture, and it reduces human work efficiency. Tropical storms frequently are violent, and many tropical soils are poor.

The Netherlands vs. the Sea



(a)

(b)

FIGURE 6-4 More than half of the Netherlands lies below sea level, so most of the country today would be under water if it were not for massive projects to modify the environment. Since the thirteenth century the Dutch have reclaimed more than 4,500 square kilometers (1,800 square miles) of *polders*, which are pieces of land created by draining water. Most polders are reserved for agriculture, although some are used for housing, and one contains Schiphol, Europe's busiest airport. The second distinctive modification of the environment is the construction of massive *dikes* to prevent the North Sea from flooding much of the country. The Dutch have built dikes in two major locations, the Zuider Zee project in the north and the Delta Plan project in the southwest. With these massive projects finished, attitudes toward the environment have changed in the Netherlands. A plan adopted in 1990 calls for returning 26 square kilometers of farms on polders to wetlands or forests. In the infrared satellite photograph showing the northern area of the map (b), the vegetation shows as red, more developed areas as green. (For more details and color description, refer to our web portal www.pearsoned.co.in/edwardfbergman.) ([a]: From W. H. Renwick and J. M. Rubenstein, *An Introduction to Geography*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995; [b] Science Photo Library/Earth Satellite Corporation/Photo Researchers, Inc.)

2. Another school of thought, however, points out that many tropical areas were long held as colonies by countries in the temperate latitudes. This colonial experience left physical, cultural, and economic legacies that, combined with the continuing patterns and terms of world trade (discussed in Chapter 12), best explain tropical regions' current poverty.
3. A third point of view insists that there is something about the cultures of the peoples of the tropical regions that retards their economic growth. Perhaps their cultures do not encourage economic growth or these countries are poorly governed.

Each side in this debate may be partly correct. Which side you take will determine how you allocate responsibility for the current poverty. The first theory faults uncontrollable environmental factors; the second faults the rich, formerly colonial powers; and the third faults the peoples and governments of the tropics themselves. Furthermore, your assumptions will determine what solutions you suggest to the problem of poverty in the tropics. If the environment is to blame, nothing can be done. If the former colonial powers are to blame, perhaps they should pay reparations. If the tropical peoples themselves are to blame, they should change their habits or work harder.

All forms of environmentalist assumptions remain common in popular discussion and debate. Often they seem to be harmless figures of speech, but they are intellectually dangerous. They predispose conclusions and close the mind to alternative explanations. Watch carefully for these simplistic traps.

Cultural Diffusion

The isolation experienced by the imaginary Solitary people is very different from the way most of us live today. Through history, global communication and transportation have increased, and trade and other cultural exchanges have multiplied. Most people no longer exploit their local environments and develop their cultures in isolation. They are interconnected by transportation and communication of goods, people, ideas, and capital. More people eat imported foods and combine them in imported recipes. They wear imported clothes in imported styles, and they fashion their built environments out of imported materials in styles that originated among distant peoples. Your daily life undoubtedly exemplifies this interconnectedness. Many articles that you use and other aspects of your activities draw on materials and ideas from around the world. To describe all this movement, we use the term *circulation*.

Almost everywhere today, cultural diffusion is more important than cultural evolution. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz wrote in 1995, "The very notion of isolation lacks, these days, much application. There are very few places—there may not be any—where the noises of the all-over present are not heard, and most anthropologists work by now in places where such noises all but drown out local harmonies." What Geertz calls "the noises of the all-over present" is cultural diffusion, and those "noises" overwhelm what he calls "local harmonies," which is local cultural evolution. Find a picture of the most isolated people you can, and chances are high that they will be wearing or carrying something that they did not make themselves (Figure 6-5). What happens *at* places depends more and more on what happens *among* places, and mapped patterns of economic or cultural factors can be understood only if we understand the patterns of movement that create them and continuously rearrange them. Today geography doesn't just *exist*; it *happens*.

The American anthropologist Clark Wissler (1870–1947) called the places where cultures are developed *geographical culture centers*. He stated a principle, called the *age-area principle*, that if traits diffuse outward from a single geographical culture center, the traits found farthest away from that center must be the oldest traits. This description of cultural diffusion suggests concentric waves spreading out from a stone dropped into a pool. Geographer Carl O. Sauer (1889–1975) elaborated geographical studies of cultural diffusion. Chapter 1 explained that today we call the place where a distinctive culture originates the hearth area of that culture, and Chapter 1 outlined the paths of cultural diffusion. Geographers can investigate the distributions of any cultural attributes; they are limited only by their imagination and curiosity.

FIGURE 6-5 Manufactured clothes. This little boy wears a traditional robe, as is legally required in Bhutan, the world's most isolated country. Bhutan struggles to preserve its traditional culture, and it allows only a limited number of foreigners to visit each year. The collar of a modern blue shirt, however, peeks out from underneath the robe. (For more details and color description, refer to our web portal.) The shirt, the doll, and other aspects of his attire and possessions are clearly Western imports. It may be that traditional Bhutanese culture has become only a façade. (Courtesy of Brett Cobb)

What happens *at* places depends more and more on what happens *among* places. . . . Today geography doesn't just *exist*; it *happens*.

Diffusion does not explain the distribution of all phenomena. Sometimes the same phenomenon occurs spontaneously and independently at two or more places. In the history of mathematics, for example, the idea of the zero and its use as the basis of a numerical place system

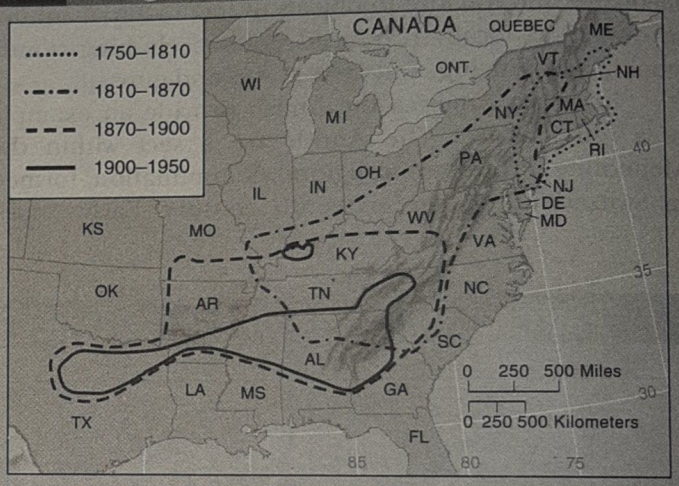
Focus on

THE DIFFUSION OF ANGLO-AMERICAN RELIGIOUS FOLK SONGS

The map of the diffusion of white spiritual songs from eighteenth-century New England exemplifies folk cultural geography. These songs almost seem to have "slid" down the Appalachian Mountains into the Upland South and then into the Lowland South, where many of them are still popular. Some individual migrants carried the songs westward with them, but for the most part the acceptance of these songs diffused from community to community. They have a simple melodic structure, which reveals their folk quality, and their first person narrative reveals their Protestant Christian faith (for example, "Don't you see my Jesus coming? He'll embrace me in His arms"). These songs did not diffuse in other directions, because of cultural barriers. Further to the south, the songs' Protestant religious sentiment hindered their diffusion into largely French Roman Catholic Louisiana and Hispanic Roman Catholic southern Texas. To the north, both religious and political barriers prevented their diffusion. Quebec in Canada is also largely Roman Catholic.

At the same time as these songs were spreading southwestward, they largely disappeared from their culture hearth in the Northeast. This was probably because that region urbanized rapidly and its folk culture was replaced by a popular culture.

The Diffusion of Protestant Religious Folk Songs



Protestant religious folk songs diffused from New England toward the southwest until stopped by cultural barriers. (Reproduced by permission of the American Folklore Society from *Journal of American Folklore* 65:258 [Oct.–Dec. 1952]. Not for further reproduction.)

meticulous sweeping of front yards (a tradition traced from villages of coastal Nigeria to rural Georgia) to the patterns of speech discussed in Chapter 7.

The United States is relatively homogeneous in culture, modern and technologically advanced. Cultural diffusion and change churn across the country rapidly and repeatedly. In such a country the identification and study of folk cultures help us appreciate and cherish the richness of some of our remaining folk traditions. Chapter 5 noted that Canada, by contrast, more carefully nurtures and preserves its diversity as a "cultural mosaic."

Some newly independent countries are today emphasizing or even resurrecting traditional folk cul-tures as a way of enhancing national identity and community. When the nation of Eritrea won independence in 1993, for example, one of the new government's first acts was to open a national university mandated to research and define folk literature, folk music, and other distinct Eritrean traditions.

Popular culture **Popular culture**, by contrast, is the culture of people who embrace innovation and conform to changing norms. Popular culture may originate anywhere, and it tends to diffuse rapidly, especially wherever people have time, money, and inclination to indulge in it.

Popular material culture usually means mass culture—that is, items such as clothing, processed food, books, CDs, and household goods that are mass produced for mass distribution. Whereas folk culture is often produced or done by the people at-large (folk singing and dancing, cooking, costumes, woodcarving, etc.), popular culture, by contrast, is usually produced by corporations and purchased. It is, therefore, often related to social class, as defined by income and education.

Mass manufacturing lowers the cost of items, but in order for it to succeed, consumer taste must be homogeneous. Such "mass taste" necessarily requires some sacrifice of individuality and cultural identity. The United

States has long been the world's largest relatively homogeneous consumer market. This has lowered the cost of items and raised Americans' material standard of living. The substantial unity of the Canadian and U.S. markets has raised Canadian standards of living, too, but some Canadians believe that it has threatened Canadian cultural identity.

The popular culture of the United States exhibits a great degree of national homogeneity, but individual consumer goods win varying degrees of acceptance (called *market penetration*) in different regions of the country. The regions are often the vernacular regions mapped as Figure 1-8. The national marketing managers of corporations might call themselves "applied cultural geographers" who specialize in this type of analysis. The soft drink Dr Pepper, for example, originated in the U.S. South, and it still enjoys its greatest acceptance there. The U.S. South is today less culturally distinct than it was decades ago, but a cultural heritage, much of which lingers from earlier folk traditions, still exists (Figure 6-8).

Geographers investigate the origins and diffusion paths of popular material culture and also of popular social culture. For example, people devise new ways of living, working, and playing, and they innovate in education and in employer-employee relations. Sport is an important part of popular culture, and popular culture regions can be defined by sporting preferences (Figure 6-9). Regions differ in their popular entertainments—a movie that is a success in Seattle, for example, may flop in Houston. Cultural geographers want to know why. The radio stations in different regions across the United States play varying mixes of country, gospel, rock, classical, and other popular kinds of music; DJs base their decisions on market research such as that shown in Figure 6-10 (p. 247). Geographers have investigated these and many more attributes of popular culture.

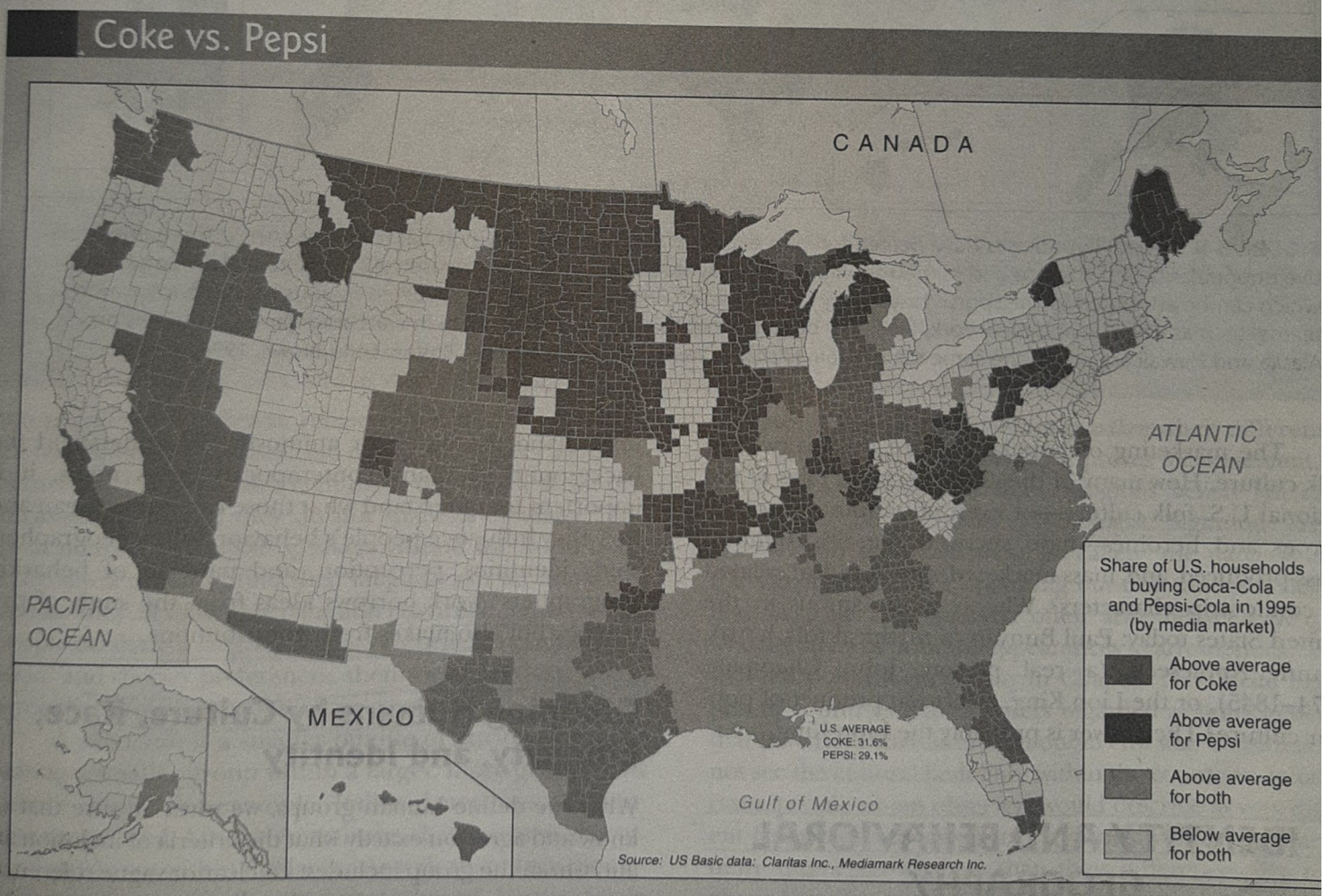


FIGURE 6-8 Both Coca-Cola and Pepsi were born in the U.S. Southeast in the nineteenth century—Coca-Cola in Atlanta, Georgia, and Pepsi-Cola in New Bern, North Carolina—and each is consumed in the region at a rate above the national average. Perhaps the warm climate explains that fact. Nationwide, Coke drinkers tend to be urban and financially better off. Pepsi drinkers are somewhat older, suburban, and rural. Alaska and Hawaii are not to the same scale. (*U.S. News & World Report*, August 5, 1996)

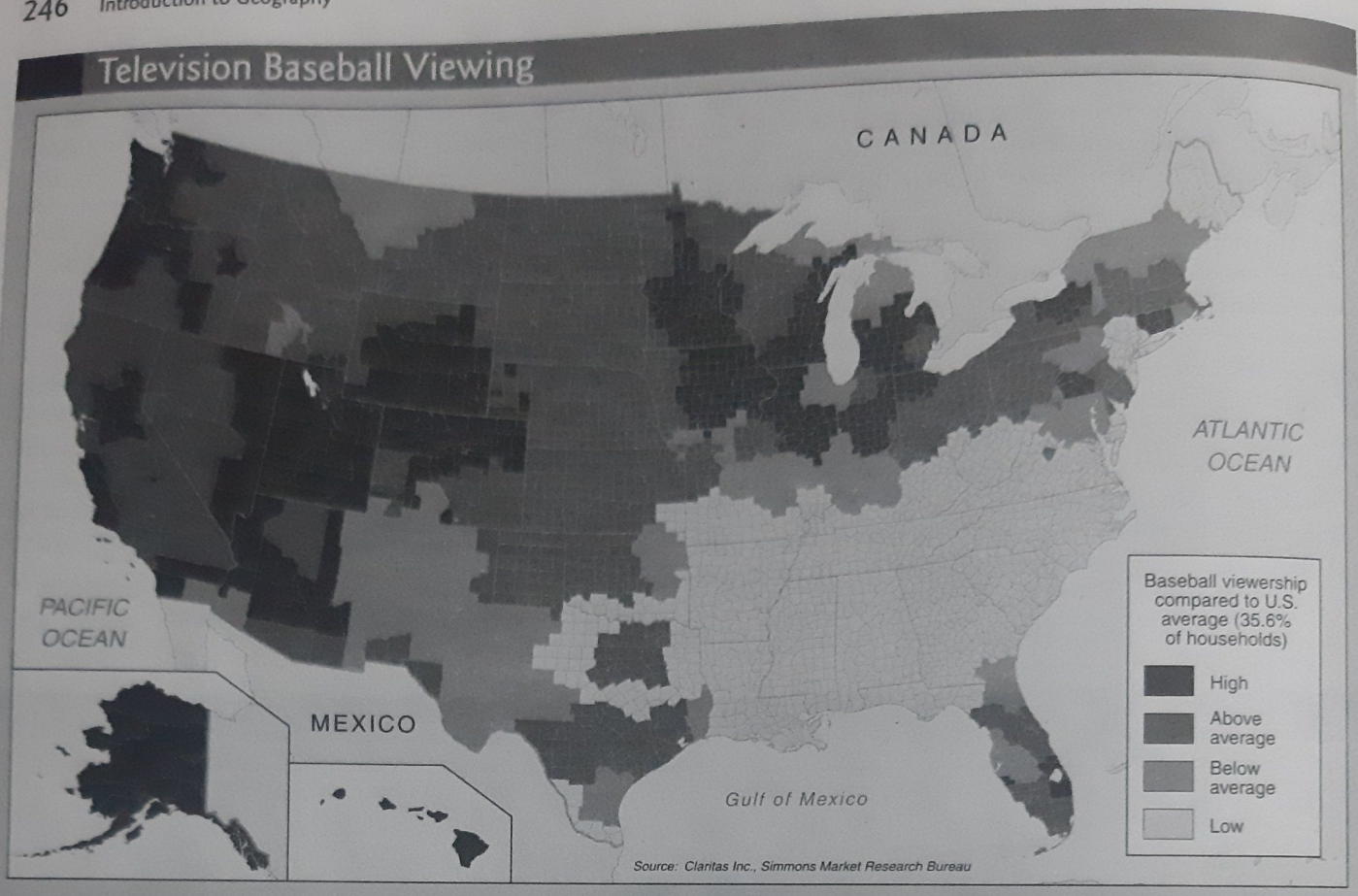


FIGURE 6-9 Several hypotheses have been offered to explain this pattern of television baseball viewership. The game's relative unpopularity in the South and in metropolitan areas may be partly explained by baseball's weak appeal among blacks, which can be attributed to the sport's historically racist policies. Furthermore, in metropolitan regions having two or more teams, such as Chicago and New York, fans may be going out to the ballpark rather than watching games on television. Alaska and Hawaii are not to the same scale. (From Michael J. Weiss, *Latitudes & Attitudes*, Boston: Little, Brown, 1994, p. 55)

The marketing of popular culture can overwhelm folk culture. How many of the characters and tales of traditional U.S. folk culture—or even of genuine historical heroes and heroines—have survived the onslaught of mass-produced and mass-marketed merchandise related to comic-strip characters? Who is most famous in the United States today: Paul Bunyan (a mythical folk hero), Johnny Appleseed (a real person, John Chapman, 1774–1845), or the Lion King, a cartoon product of popular culture? The answer is probably the Lion King.

IDENTITY AND BEHAVIORAL GEOGRAPHY

At any time a great many disputes disturb the world's peace. Widespread international wars, civil wars, urban riots, insurrections, and street fighting persist. The press often refers to the parties to the disputes as being of different culture groups, races, ethnic groups, or other identities, but outsiders to the disputes find it difficult to understand the bases for animosity. To understand the background of many contemporary news items, it is important to understand what those categories mean and how they influence people's behavior. When geographers study identities, perception, and patterns of behavior, geographers' work borrows ideas from the study of psychology but also makes fresh contributions.

Grouping Humans by Culture, Race, Ethnicity, and Identity

When we define human groups, we must be sure that we know and agree on exactly what the criteria of inclusion are and whom the group includes. Unclear or vague references to groups may cause misunderstanding or even insults.

Culture groups The definition of a culture may include a great number of characteristics or just a few. For example, all social scientists agree that language is an important attribute of human behavior. Two people who share a language share something very important. If, however, those

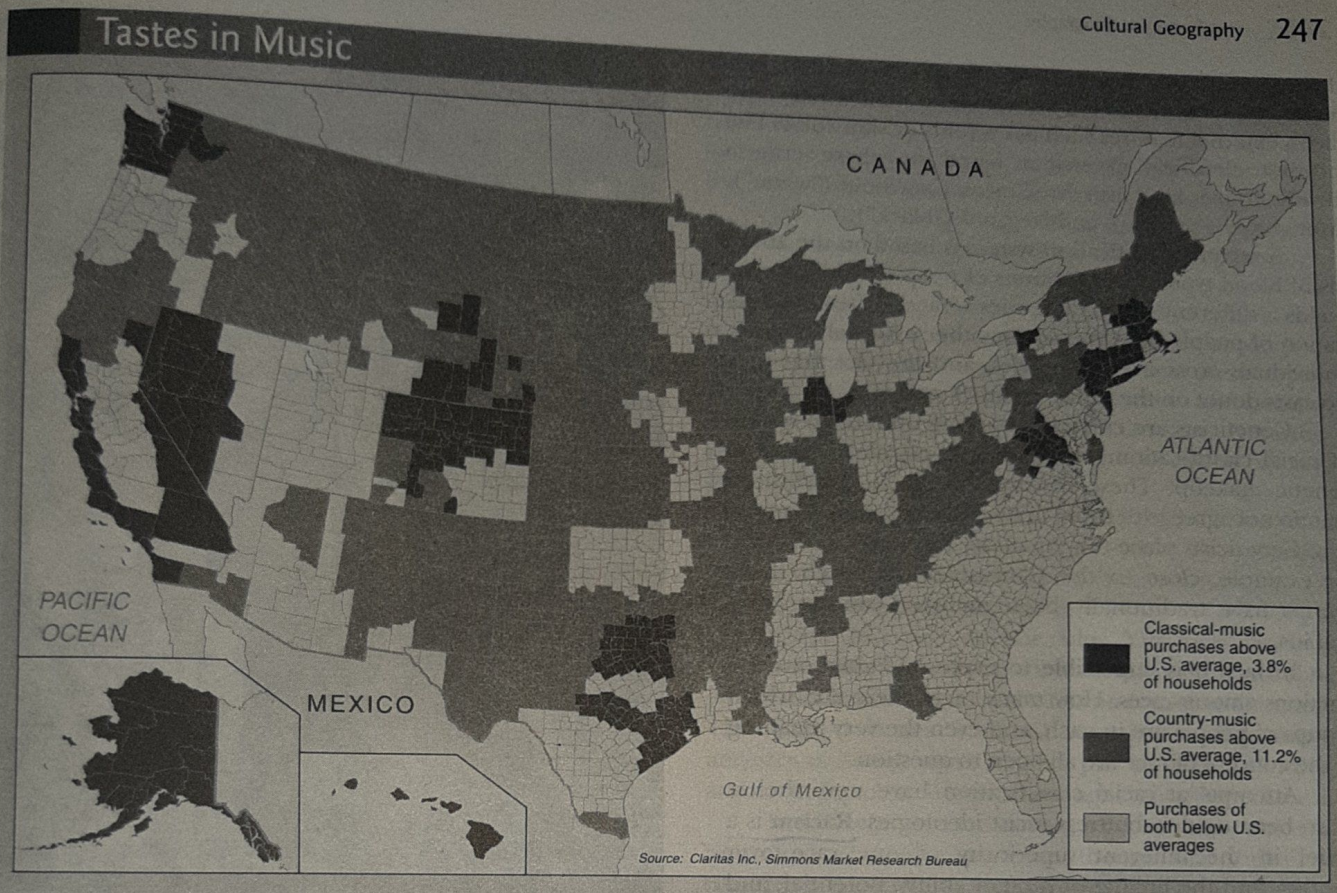


FIGURE 6-10 Purchasers of classical music compact discs are generally urban, upper-income, and highly educated, whereas a much wider social spectrum and geographic distribution of people buy country music. Alaska and Hawaii are not to the same scale. (From Michael J. Weiss, *Latitudes & Attitudes,* Boston: Little, Brown, 1994, p. 55)

two people hold different religious beliefs, feel patriotism for two different countries, and eat different diets, social scientists may insist that although those two people share one attribute of culture, they do not share one culture. The great number of English speakers around the world today share few attributes other than language, so we would not say that they all share one common culture. If, however, two people do share a language, religious beliefs, political affiliation, and dietary preferences, then social scientists would agree that those two people share a culture.

A *subculture* is a smaller bundle of attributes shared among a smaller group within a larger, more generalized culture group. For example, Italian Americans, Chinese Americans, and African Americans share subsets of cultural attributes within the larger American culture. Sometimes even one single attribute—shared loyalty for a sports team, for example—can bind individuals so strongly that that single attribute is termed a subculture.

Ultimately, cultural affiliation may be a matter of the feelings or the preferences of the individuals. Two people may share so many cultural attributes that observers insist that they share a culture, yet they may hate each other. They may even kill each other because, *to them*, their differences are crucial. Each day's newspaper proves this statement. In some cases people who share religious beliefs kill each other over other issues. Psychologist Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) described what he called "the narcissism of the minor differences," pointing out that the most vicious and irreconcilable quarrels often arise between peoples who are to most outward appearances nearly identical. Our study of political geography in Chapter 11 will cite examples of countries that outsiders regarded as homogeneous that have nevertheless broken out in civil war. Outsiders did not see the cultural fault lines within the countries. In other cases, people whom observers would describe as very different from each other feel strong bonds. What they share is more important to them than their differences. We must always investigate peoples' feelings in order to understand their loyalties and their animosities.

Races Human beings are one single species, and humans evolved too recently to have accumulated any significant amount of genetic change or mutations. Nevertheless, anthropologists have traditionally used secondary

biological characteristics to divide all humankind into **races**. The traditional criteria for these subdivisions have been external features such as eyefolds or skin color. The crudest classification system based on these criteria divides humankind into three races: Caucasoid ("white"), Mongoloid ("yellow"), and Negroid ("black").

A second classification system is based on the analysis of blood types. Classifications of people by blood type yields a different set of categories ("races") from classification of people by skin color or other external features. Individuals cross over categories, and the fact that they do casts doubt on the utility of either system.

Geneticists are currently working on a third system of racial classification: differences in people's inherited genetic makeup. These researchers reach conclusions that do not agree with those of any other classification system. Geneticists place the Japanese, Koreans, and Inuits, for example, close to the Caucasoids, although those groups have traditionally been included among Mongoloids.

In fact, it is impossible to make unambiguous distinctions among races. How many races there are, which groups of people are in each, and even the very meaning of the concept of race are all open to question.

Attempts at racial classification have nevertheless often been used to buttress racist ideologies. **Racism** is a belief in the inherent superiority of one race over another and the linking of human ability, potential, and behavior to racial inheritance. Racism is wrong, immoral, and injurious. Racists' search for "racial purity" is nonsense in a world in which people have intermingled as they have throughout human history.

Ethnic groups The concept of an **ethnic group** is frequently confused with the concept of a cultural group. The word *ethnic* comes from the Greek for "people," and the definition of an ethnic group may depend upon almost any attribute of biology, culture, allegiance, or historic background. The word has historically been used in a pejorative sense. Its meanings have included "alien," "pagan," and often "primitive." Some social scientists nevertheless define ethnic groups and study the groups' characteristics or attributes. Ethnomusicology, for example, is the study of ethnic groups' music, and ethnobotany is the study of ethnic groups' knowledge of the uses of plants (Figure 6-11). The migrations discussed in Chapter 5 are sometimes described as migrations of ethnic groups.

Ethnocentrism is the term given to the tendency to judge other cultures by the standards and practices of one's own, and usually to judge them unfavorably. Practices in other cultures that may seem strange to us, however, may in fact be sensible and rational. Conversely, some aspects of our own culture may seem strange or even offensive to others. Most Americans, for example, assume that a man should have one wife and a woman one husband at a time, but almost any number of spouses are allowed in a series. This would shock many people. Americans, in turn, may be shocked to learn that Tibetans assume that a woman is married to all sibling brothers at once. This is called *fraternal polyandry*. Through thousands of years, fraternal polyandry has prevented unsustainable population increases and the fragmentation of landholdings in Tibet's poor mountain valleys. The social ramifications of fraternal polyandry confound most Americans. An American might ask how to identify the father of any given child. To a Tibetan, however, it makes no difference, and a Tibetan might consider the question prurient.

Any geography book will contain examples of ways of life that contrast with your own. None is necessarily "right" or the best for everybody. All people have to overcome the

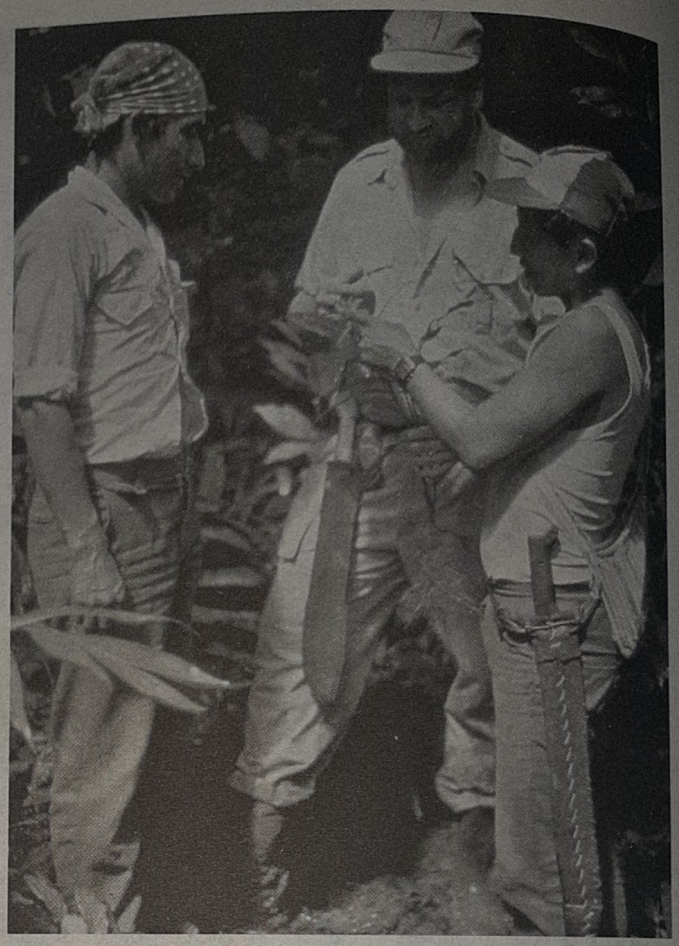


FIGURE 6-11 An ethnobotanist. Dr. Michael Balick of the New York Botanical Garden (center) learns plant uses from these traditional healers of the Kekchi Maya people in Belize. Dr. Balick is researching potential anti-AIDS and anticancer agents for the National Cancer Institute. The healers' clothing reflects how fast these people are being acculturated and their traditional knowledge is being lost. (Photo by S. Matola, courtesy of Michael Balick and The New York Botanical Garden)

territorial behavior among animals have to do with spacing, protecting against overexploitation of that part of the local environment on which the species depends for its living. Applying these studies to human behavior is complicated by the interplay between human biology and culture. People defend their standing space in a crowd (they bump back), urban gangs defend their turf, and nations defend their land; but it remains unclear whether this behavior is biologically determined human territoriality.

CULTURE REALMS

The entire region throughout which a culture prevails is called a **culture realm** or **culture region**. Any aspect of culture may be used to define a culture realm. Religion is an important aspect of culture, so religion is often chosen as a criterion. The use of the phrase "the Christian World," for instance, implies that the prevalence of Christianity across a large region unites the peoples of that region. Furthermore, this region might significantly be contrasted with, for instance, "the Islamic World." Each is a great culture realm, and Chapter 7 examines how the prevalence of each of those religions encourages other similarities across those realms. Other criteria that may be chosen to define culture realms include language, diet, customs, or economic development. These topics will be discussed individually in the following chapters.

Problems in Defining Great Culture Regions

Many geographers and other social scientists have drawn maps dividing the world into great culture regions. Scholars will never agree upon one single pattern of world culture regions, however, because different scholars have different purposes, so they choose different criteria. The use of different criteria yields different regions.

Our delineation of culture regions is important because our pattern predisposes us to stereotype the people within each region as homogeneous, rather than to recognize the differences that may exist within each region. A region, by definition, should display a certain homogeneity, but that homogeneity may exist only in the eyes of an outsider. Insiders may see the differences among themselves as greater than their similarities. For example, Westerners may label Asia as a culture region. A Korean, however, might insist that the many cultural traits that differentiate him from a Burmese are more

Critical Thinking

IS LATIN AMERICA A REGION? HOW DID IT GET ITS NAME?

Some criteria of homogeneity justify labeling Central and South America "Latin America." "Latin" suggests that certain important aspects of the culture spring from the cultural tradition of ancient Rome (*Latium*), and, in fact, most of Latin America was long ruled by either Spain or Portugal, both of which are Latin countries. Most Latin Americans today speak Spanish or Portuguese, both languages descended from ancient Latin, and most of the peoples there belong to the Roman Catholic Church. Italy itself, however, played no historic role in Latin America. Why, then, don't we call the area Luso-Hispanic America? ("Luso" meaning Portuguese, because today's Portugal was the ancient Lusitania) or Ibero-America? The more one thinks about the term Latin America, the more mysterious its origin becomes.

The truth is that the term Latin America originated as political propaganda. During the U.S. Civil War, France's Emperor Napoleon III thought he saw an opportunity to take over Mexico. France had never had any colonial interests there, but Napoleon III invaded on the pretext that France, a Latin nation, was avenging military humiliations suffered by the Spanish and was therefore "defending Latin honor." On July 3, 1862, Napoleon published a letter in the French newspaper *Le Moniteur* introducing the term Latin America to justify what was really French imperialist aggression. Eventually the French were defeated and retreated, but Napoleon's sly propagandistic term has long survived him.

Questions

1. What similarities and differences are there among the countries from Mexico to Argentina? List differences and similarities among the countries in sub-Saharan Africa, in Asia, and in Europe.
2. Which do you think are more important in each case, the similarities or the differences?

World Bank "Demographic Regions"

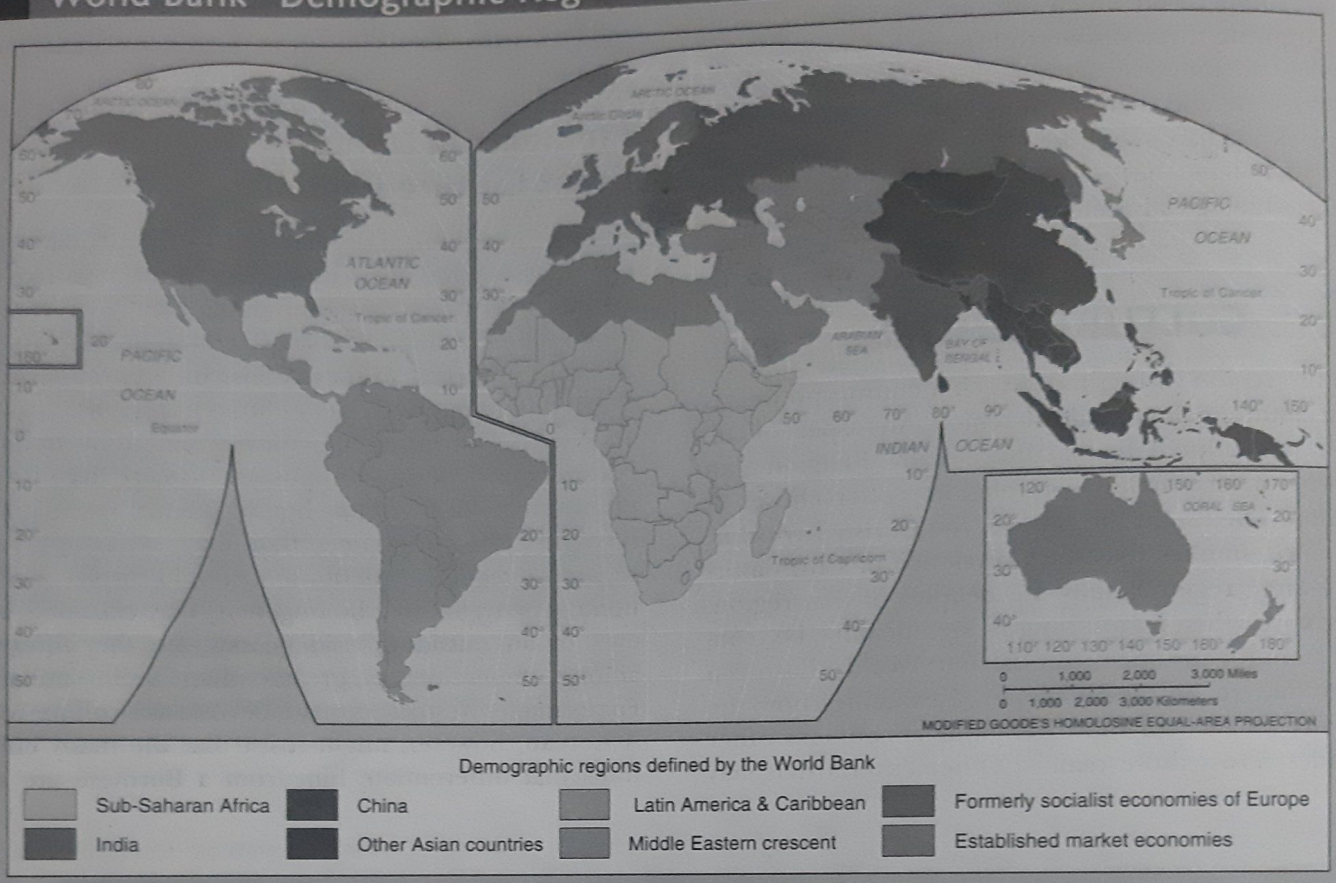


FIGURE 6-13 What internal homogeneity does each of these "demographic regions" exhibit? Virtually none. Therefore, any information provided about each of the regions on this map is not very useful because the cartographer did not define clear criteria for the regionalization scheme. (For more details and color description, refer to our web portal.) (From World Development Bank, *World Development Report 1993*)

important than anything they share. Asia does in fact exhibit greater cultural diversity within it than, for example, Europe does. Asia does not exist as a homogeneous place in the mind of a Burmese, a Japanese, a Vietnamese, or a Cambodian. It exists only in the mind of an outsider. In Chapter 12 we will see how the term the Third World lumps countries that are very different and obscures understanding of any of them.

Two questions must be asked of any pattern of culture regions. (1) Has the cartographer drawn the region correctly according to the criteria that he or she chose? For example, when mapping language regions of South America, did the cartographer remember that Brazilians speak Portuguese, not Spanish? (2) The second question to ask is, Are the criteria chosen meaningful? For example, does the fact that Brazilians speak Portuguese tell us anything important about Brazilians? Does it provoke questions about how that affects Brazil's interaction with Spanish-speaking South Americans? Any regionalization scheme is useful if it is both accurate and meaningful.

If a cartographer does not apply the same criterion consistently on a single map, the map is meaningless and confusing. For example, on Figure 6-13 the World Bank divided the world into eight "demographic regions," but there are no criteria of homogeneity within any individual region, nor are there consistent criteria of heterogenity differentiating one region from another. Some regions are individual countries; other regions are defined by their national economic systems (past or present); still other regions, such as "Middle Eastern crescent," seem to be defined on the basis of religion; and the region "Other Asian Countries" is made up of countries "left over!" Each of these regions contain such great differences within it that any statistic reported to describe that region or to compare it with other regions is of little value.

Visual Clues to Culture Realms

Culture realms can reveal themselves through visual clues. These include the language of posted signs, the clothing

the local people are wearing, and the goods available in local shops. In the built environment, building materials, architecture, and settlement patterns are all visible manifestations of cultures. People usually rely on local materials for building, so in one place stone may be the traditional building material, in another place brick, and in another wood (Figures 6-14 and 6-15). Innovations in the uses of these materials may diffuse across cultures.

Styles of architecture often represent adaptations to climatic conditions, so a particular style may be adopted in different regions with similar climates (Figure 6-16). Cultural preferences are sometimes so powerful, however, that an architectural style may diffuse beyond the limits of where its building materials can be found and even beyond the range where that architecture is comfortable. The style of the Italian Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio (1508–1580), for example, spread to England because of aesthetic preferences, despite the fact that Palladian buildings are uncomfortable in England's damp, cool climate. From England the preference diffused to America, even to areas that lacked both the appropriate climate and the necessary building materials. As Europe and the United States came to dominate other regions, Palladian architecture diffused throughout the world (Figure 6-17).

Public statuary and monuments may reveal local cultural values, but they may also proclaim that a place is dominated by a cultural or political outsider. For example, several Eastern European countries fell under the domination of the U.S.S.R. after World War II (see Chapter 13). Statues of Russian "liberators" were often set up in their public places. Since these countries have regained their freedom, however, the local people have replaced these statues with statues of genuine local heroes. Budapest, Hungary, for example, boasts new statues of ancient Hungarian royalty and Christian saints. Many cities in the U.S. South erected monuments to commemorate the Confederate cause, but as African Americans gained political power there, they insisted the monuments be taken down.

Settlement patterns The designs of settlements reflect cultural differences, so a trained observer can see in the look and layout of whole towns and cities the cultural backgrounds of their builders (Figure 6-18). City planning

Traditional Building Materials

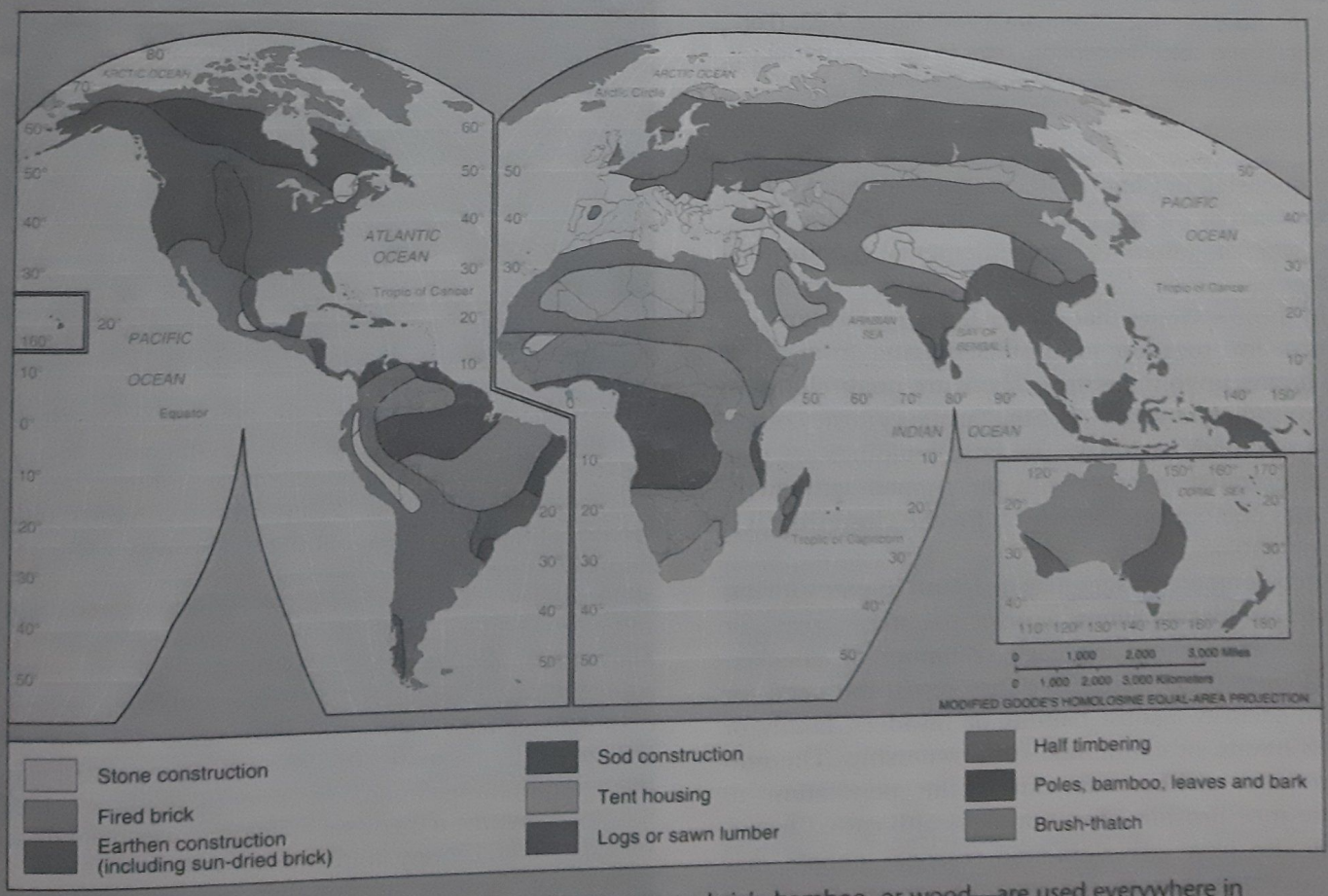


FIGURE 6-14 The materials that are locally available—stone, brick, bamboo, or wood—are used everywhere in traditional architecture, called vernacular architecture. (For more details and color description, refer to our web portal.)

FIGURE 6-15 The mosque at San, in the West African country of Mali. This building demonstrates that when people have mud and very little wood, they can still build extraordinary structures. It is in the distinctive Dyula architectural style, named for a trading people who diffused the style as they moved around West Africa. It is quite different from the Middle Eastern architectural styles that many Americans expect mosques to reflect. Compare it with Figure 7-23. (For more details and color description, refer to our web portal.) (James Stanfield/National Geographic Image Collection)

will be discussed in Chapter 10, but rural societies can be differentiated by the way that some cluster housing settlements, whereas others isolate settlements in individual farmsteads.

In those societies that cluster housing, farmers may choose to live together in clusters ranging from a few dozen homes up to thousands. There are no dwellings in the surrounding farmland, but the farmers journey out to work in the fields each day. The farm buildings are usually concentrated together with the human settlement. There may be no economic reason for the clustering; it is a cultural choice.

Such compact villages may be found in many forms: irregular; wandering along a principal street, river, or canal; clustered about a village common; or checkerboard (Figure 6-19). Clustering may reveal the need for common security against bandits or invaders, family or religious bonds, or communal land ownership. The government may deliberately cluster the population to supervise it or provide education or health care. Clustering may also have environmental reasons—people may cluster at water sources, for example, or on dry places when the surrounding land is swampy. Clustering is more common among farmers than among livestock ranchers, except in Africa, but it generally characterizes settlement across much of Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Isolated farmsteads, by contrast, characterize those areas of Anglo-America, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa that were settled by Europeans, and also some parts of Japan and India. The conditions for isolated farmstead settlement usually include peace and security in the countryside; agricultural colonization of the region by individual pioneer families rather

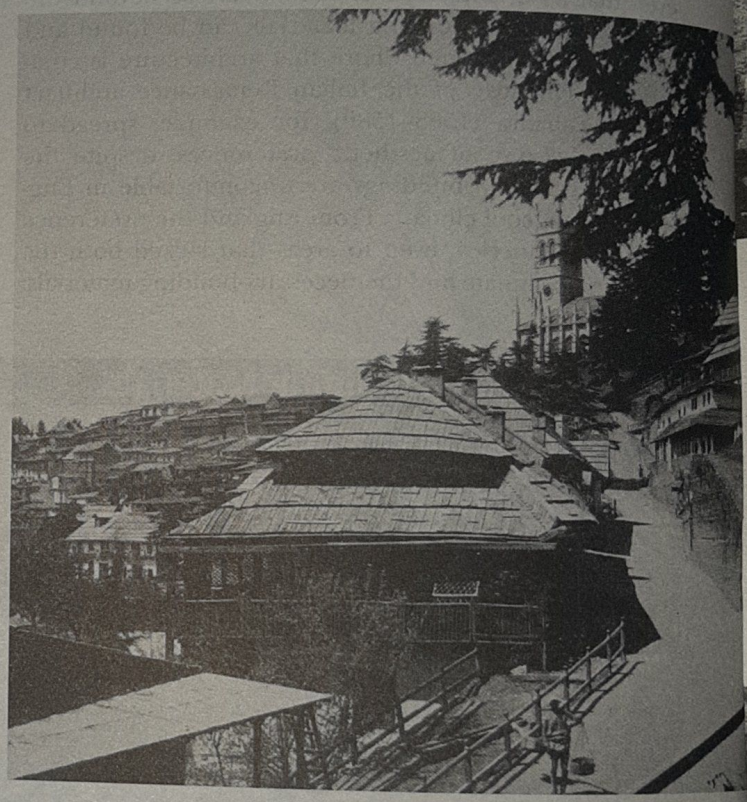


FIGURE 6-16 Simla, India. The building in the left foreground is a bungalow, which is a Hindi word for a low-sweeping single-story house with a roof extending out over a veranda. Such houses were first built in the mountain foothills of northern India, but the style was copied throughout the British Empire and eventually the United States. Today in English the word *bungalow* means almost any sort of small house. Simla was the summer capital of the British Indian Empire between 1864 and 1947. It was cooler up at Simla (2,200 meters/7,100 feet; notice the vegetation) than down at New Delhi in the plains about 275 kilometers (170 miles) to the south. The medieval-style cathedral in the background seems an odd presence in northern India. It is not, however, a medieval building. It was built in the nineteenth century in the medieval style that was popular for Christian churches then (and still is today). Wherever the British went, they took their culture and traditions, including architectural styles. (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

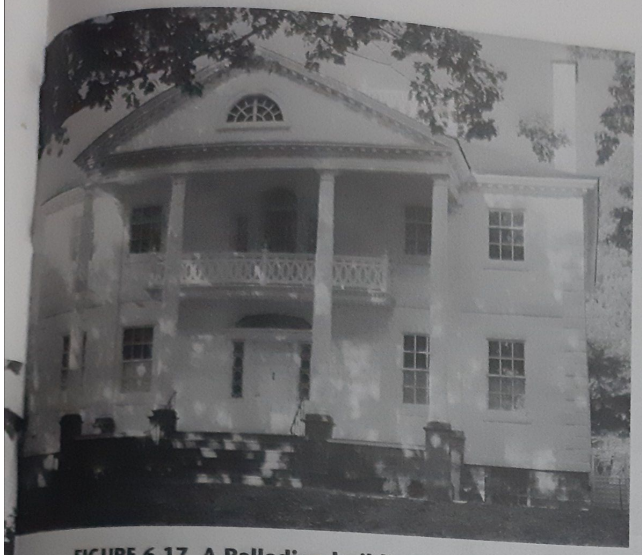


FIGURE 6-17 A Palladian building in the United States. This house, called the Morris-Jumel Mansion, was built in 1765 in Manhattan 10 miles north of Wall Street. The choice of the Palladian architectural style is highly symbolic. Standing virtually on the frontier of Western civilization, this style boldly—almost arrogantly—announced European conquest and the coming of European civilization to the New World. Symbolism and aesthetic taste can prevail even over comfort, for although this style is appropriate for the Italian climate, in New York it would have been impossible to keep warm. Furthermore, in Italy it would have been built of stone. Here it was built entirely of wood masquerading as stone. (Courtesy of Robert F. West/Morris-Jumel Mansion)

than by socially cohesive groups; agricultural private enterprise, as opposed to communalism; unit-block farms in which all of a farmer's land is in a block rather than in scattered parcels; and well-watered but well-drained land.

The history of the United States provides examples of both patterns of settlement. In the southern colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, settlement was characterized by widely dispersed, relatively self-sufficient plantations. New England settlement, by contrast, reflects the social cohesion of the settlers' society. The people of New England were tightly bound in religious communities, so they advanced westward in tiers of adjacent, well-planned towns. The reason for the differences in the settlement patterns was not economic; it was a cultural choice.

Forces that Stabilize the Pattern of Culture Realms

Despite the force of diffusion, a number of factors tend to fix the geography of culture realms. Culture leaves its mark on the landscape. The fixed pattern of activities, land uses, transport routes, and even individual buildings guides, restricts, or predisposes future patterns and activities. The construction of a factory, for example, represents a great investment of money, and once the factory is operating, it relies on a local workforce and develops ties to local suppliers. An industrial complex such as this cannot easily be picked up and moved. **Inertia** is the term for the force that keeps things stable. All of a people's fixed assets in place—railroads, pipelines, highways, airports, housing, and more—are called the **infrastructure**.

Historical geography is the subfield within geography that studies the geography of the past and how geographic distributions have changed. Historical geographers can sometimes read landscapes as if through time the landscape has been overlain with layer after layer of peoples using the land in different ways and organizing it for different purposes. The landscape is like an old manuscript on which a reader can discern earlier erased writings (Figure 6-20). Scholarly re-creations of past land uses were defined as *sequent occupance* studies by the geographer Derwent Whittlesey in 1929. An alternative approach to historical geography focuses on how the transformation, use, and organization of the landscape is continuously changing.

FIGURE 6-18 Settlement patterns. An expert on African cultures would recognize the pattern and spacing of the buildings in this view as typical of the Kisti people of northwest Kenya. (M & E Bernheim/Woodfin Camp & Associates)

FIGURE 6-20 An abandoned city. An abandoned city prompts us to ask, "Who was here before us? What did they do? What happened to them?" This ruin is in Morocco. (Courtesy of Moroccan National Tourist Office)

Several peoples fighting in the Balkans in the 1990s, for example, felt that they were avenging medieval battles.

One major theme in geography is the tension between forces of change and forces for stability. Cultures evolve, cultures diffuse, and peoples can transform themselves and their behavior, but cultures and culture realms also have elements of stability. Any cultural pattern or distribution maps the current balance between those forces.

Trade and Cultural Diffusion

Cultural isolation is usually accompanied by economic self-sufficiency, but trade diminishes peoples' cultural isolation at the same time as it expands their economic possibilities. Trade breaks down cultural isolation and triggers cultural diffusion. Every item in trade is a product of the culture that originates it, so economic exchange is one of the most important forms of cultural diffusion. Choosing goods is an act of self-definition, of social and cultural identity (Figure 6-21). Trade, economics, and culture are intertwined.

The study of how various peoples make their living, how economies develop, and what peoples trade is **economic geography**. Trade releases people from dependence on their local environment. It allows them to draw resources from around the world. Fewer and fewer people anywhere rely on their local environment for all of their needs, so the link between the resources of any local environment and the well-being of the people who live there has been weakened. The Japanese, for example, live in an environment that is poor in natural resources, yet the Japanese have grown rich through trade.

As peoples come into contact with others and begin to trade, they usually first export only whatever they have in surplus and have no use for. They usually view imports as luxuries unnecessary to their way of life. Trade, however, triggers far-reaching cultural and economic changes.

For example, imagine three isolated communities in three different environments (Figure 6-22). Village A is located along a river plain. The people there catch fish, which they fry; they grow rice, which they eat as rice cakes; and they distill rice into sake (rice wine). Village B lies on the slope of nearby hills. The people there have domesticated grapes, which they have learned to distill into wine, and oats, which they make into oat bread. They have also domesticated goats, which clamber about the rugged hillsides. They milk the goats for dairy products, and they roast goat meat. The people in village C, up on a nearby plateau, grow corn for cornbread and to be distilled into whiskey and have domesticated cattle, which

FIGURE 6-21 New consumer goods change cultures. An Avon Lady demonstrates a product to Tembe tribesmen in Brazil's Amazon region. The tribesmen obviously have their own cultural tradition about makeup, but the introduction of new cosmetic products will change these people's culture in ways that cannot be foreseen. (John Maier, Jr./The Image Works)

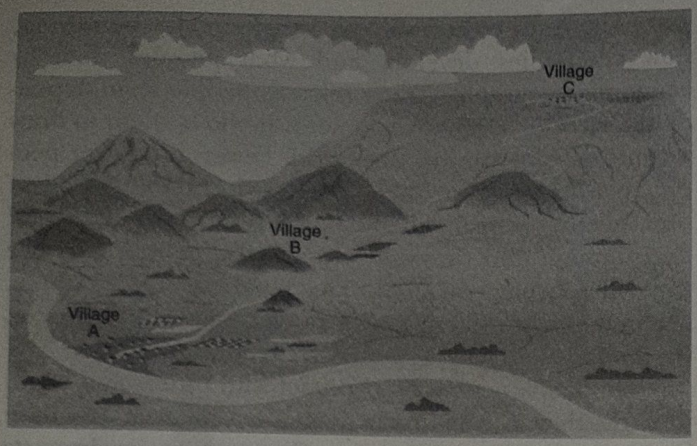


FIGURE 6-22 Isolated cultures yield to interaction. The inhabitants of three isolated villages in three different environments learn to use local resources, and they develop three distinct cultures. When a new road connects those villages, however, the lifestyles of all three villages may be transformed. Their cultural possibilities will multiply, and their economies will evolve.

they eat as broiled steaks. Each village has developed other aspects of a unique culture, too, including its own language, religion, and customs, but let us focus on their diets as representative of their cultures.

The construction of a road and the commencement of trade among the three villages will probably trigger at least four significant changes.

1. Each village will have access to the products of each of the other villages. The people of village A, for example, will taste broiled steaks, and the people of village B will be introduced to fried fish. We might call this the simple *addition of cultural possibilities.*

2. New cultural combinations, or *cultural permutations,* will appear: fried steaks, broiled fish, roast beef, and more. A good example of cultural permutation is the appearance of pita fajitas on menus in southern California. A pita fajita is a piece of pita bread, an item brought to southern California by immigrants from the Near East, stuffed with fajita ingredients, usually beef or chicken, which were introduced to Mexico by the Spaniards long ago and now to southern California by Mexican immigrants. Nobody knows who first devised this permutation. People often find surprising new uses for objects created by other cultures and societies, even when they do not grasp the fundamental values or technologies that created the objects in the first place.

   All aspects of the cultures of all three villages will experience these two results—cultural addition plus cultural permutation. Residents of one village may convert to the religion of another, or perhaps the religions will blend. The languages, styles of architecture, music, games, clothing and other customs of all three villages may add up and also permutate. Those who profit from a new trading system and exchange with other cultures often challenge and overturn local politics and traditions.

3. The residents of all three villages will see how imports can raise their standard of living. In order to pay for the imports they want, they will dedicate more effort to *producing items for trade—that is, for markets.* The change from self-sufficiency to production for markets is one of the greatest transitions in history. The existence of trade and markets gives each village, for the first time, an incentive to produce surpluses of its local goods. Agronomists (economists who specialize in agriculture) say that, in general, "The market produces the surplus." In other words, if farmers have a market where they can sell their surplus for a profit, they are likely to produce a surplus. Furthermore, when people specialize in producing an item, they become more efficient, and the quantities they produce increase. Therefore, the total amount of food—of all goods—produced in all three villages will probably increase.

   Production for the market affects cultures in another subtle way: The people may produce less of those local goods that cannot be exported, but more of those local goods that win broader markets. Traditional local items may be altered in order to increase exports. For example, many Native American tribes once made traditional craft items such as baskets, jewelry, and clothing for themselves only. Then they began to produce these items for tourists, and today they concentrate on producing those items and styles that tourists favor. They even alter traditional designs if requested to do so by customers. Thus, people may slowly surrender their own traditional culture.

   As trade multiplies, more of what people produce anywhere is consumed elsewhere. Conversely, a growing percentage of the things people use are produced elsewhere. Eventually, if the terms of trade are favorable, people dedicate most of their efforts to producing export products, and they rely on imports even for their necessities. They have surrendered their self-sufficiency and become dependent on trade, and they surrender their cultural isolation and experience cultural change.

4. Village B will probably develop a market larger than those in village A or village C. This is because of its situation between the two other villages. Village B is the most convenient place in the pattern or network of exchange, called the *central place,* so it will probably grow to be the largest.

World Trade and Cultural Diffusion Today

Chapter 12 examines world trade in detail, but we must note here that virtually all peoples are today experiencing this evolution from self-sufficiency and cultural isolation to trade and cultural exchange. The share of any country's territory that is devoted to export production may be small, but the shares of the national population and the national income that are involved are rising everywhere. Even within individual countries, growing cities create markets for food from surrounding rural regions. This draws the rural population out of subsistence agriculture into commercial agriculture.

Regions or peoples have not always freely chosen to enter into the system of production and exchange. Some areas were forced into specialized production by colonialism. Peoples in other regions were forced to buy goods, and they had to develop exports in order to pay for these goods. The British actually went to war to force the Chinese to buy opium (1839–1842). Opium is an addicting drug, but all kinds of new goods—electronic equipment, leisure activities, or styles of clothing—may trigger our desire to enjoy them. This process has been called the creation of new **felt needs**—things people begin to think they need. As people begin to depend on the availability of desirable goods, they become more deeply enmeshed in the web of trade and circulation.

Trade leads to specialization of production and to greater production, but it does not benefit all regions equally. Some regions prosper, and others fall behind. Why international trade causes this to happen is a principal subject of research in economic geography. Many different reasons will be suggested throughout this book.

We noted earlier that items of popular culture achieve differing market penetration throughout the United States, suggesting differing regional cultures. One can study market penetration of individual consumer items around the world. In fact, the international marketing divisions of large corporations spend millions of dollars each year in order to explore why some products have worldwide appeal, whereas others are successful only in geographically restricted markets. Salespeople strive to break down cultural differences, but the integrity of each culture realm resists complete homogenization. Therefore, cross-cultural advertising and marketing of consumer goods present fascinating cultural-geographic questions. For example, Domino's Pizza has spread around the world, but the corporation has learned that Germans prefer smaller pies than North Americans do, and Japanese like pies topped with squid and sweet mayonnaise. A few consumer products have already achieved almost global diffusion: Coca-Cola, Sony, and Kodak. Why do people around the world dress differently, eat different foods, and speak different languages, but almost everywhere emulate the Marlboro Man? Is there anyplace where people refuse cola drinks (Figure 6-23)? Yes, Utah. Why there? Many of Utah's devout Mormons avoid the caffeine of the original colas and have not taken to the decaffeinated brands.

FIGURE 6-23 A global product. Some consumer goods practically blanket the Earth. (Courtesy of Julia Nicole Paley)

Consumer goods are only one aspect of culture. In some places people wear American blue jeans, but they wear them to political demonstrations against the United States. They like blue jeans, but that does not mean that they like everything about U.S. culture. In fact, when popular culture from one country overwhelms the folk culture of another, this process may be viewed as offensive cultural aggression. We will examine below how this process feeds some peoples' animosity against the United States.

The Acceleration of Diffusion

In the past, travel and transportation were more difficult and expensive than they are today, whether we measure the cost in time, money, or in any other unit. The friction of distance was so high that only a few things moved far, and those things moved slowly. Over the past 200 years, however, technology has reduced the friction of distance and accelerated the diffusion of cultural elements (Table 6-1). We often hear that the world has "shrunk." As the cost and time of moving almost anything—people, food, energy, raw materials, finished goods, capital, information—have steadily fallen, things are not necessarily so fixed in place as they were in the past. Many activities have been significantly released from the constraints of any given location. If an activity can move or relocate freely, we call it **footloose**.

Focus on

THE DEVELOPMENT OF "THE GLOBAL CHILD"

Previous to the year 2001, the Mattel Corporation manufactured for Asian markets a version of the popular "Barbie" doll with Asian facial features. When, however, Mattel realized that Asian children were happy with a "Caucasian" Barbie, Mattel stopped making an "Asian" model. The corporation estimates that by 2004 a full 80 percent of its goods will be global, and only 20 percent are geared to local audiences. Matthew Bousquette, the President of Mattel Brands, has said, "The general overriding belief was that kids are different around the world, but we discovered that wasn't the case. Kids are more alike than they are different." He meant, presumably, kids from families with enough money to buy manufactured toys and who are, therefore, probably reasonably well-to-do and aware of consumer marketing and advertising. Thus Mattel, Hasbro, the Lego Company, and other multinational giant toy manufacturers that used to sell toys and gear in a variety of local styles are today increasingly designing and marketing one version worldwide.

Several influences mold the "global child," including the following: (1) The rapid worldwide expansion of cable and satellite TV channels, which, along with movies and the Internet exposes millions of children to the same manufactured icons. In 2003 the Disney Corporation, for example, operated 24 Disney-branded cable and satellite channels in 67 countries outside the United States. (2) The international reach of retail giants such as Wal-Mart, Toys 'R' Us, and Carrefour is widening. These retailers enter into agreements with toy companies for global promotions. In October 2002, for example, Mattel introduced a "Rapunzel Barbie" simultaneously in 59 countries. Wal-Mart Worldwide featured the doll in stores and in television ads in 35 languages. A video and DVD was released and played in theaters worldwide the same day. Tie-ins include Barbie laptop computers, Barbie kitchen sets, a travel van, and more. The Barbie website is maintained in 8 languages. Similarly, in 2001 the movie *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* was released in 3,700 theatres in the United States and 10,000 more in 100 countries elsewhere. Toys and other tie-ins launched simultaneously accounted for over $1 billion in sales. Some variations in regional toy markets still exist. Action figures, for example, make up 6 percent of the toy market in the United Kingdom and 5 percent in the United States, but only 1 percent in Germany. Cheerleader-themed goods are meaningless outside the United States.

Originally, information could move only as fast as a person could carry it, but electronics disengaged communication from transportation. When Samuel Morse demonstrated the first intercity telegraph line in 1844, a Baltimore paper wrote, "This is indeed the annihilation of space." The telephone, invented in 1879, furthered the annihilation of space by allowing a person, figuratively, to be in two places at the same time.

The annihilation of space has continued with electronic mail, facsimile machines, computer modems, and other electronic devices collectively known as the **electronic highway**. More people with personal electronic devices are plugged in everywhere all the time (Figure 6-24). Schoolchildren with personal computers can tap into networks of information that were unavailable to the world's leading scholars 25 years ago.

The activities of communicating with other people through an electronic network or even of playing a game alone with a computer create a new mental world—a new "place" where that activity is occurring, called *virtual reality*. That extension of reality through global electronic means of communication is **cyberspace**, a word coined by William Gibson in his 1985 science fiction thriller *Neuromancer*. The term may be applied widely. Many office workers, for example, collaborate through electronic networks without sitting down together in one office. One worker may be at home tending children, a second in a car on the road, and a third in an airport waiting room. The electronic highway connects them in a virtual office in cyberspace, so office work is increasingly footloose.

The compression of space compresses time. The latest music heard on radio stations in Los Angeles and New York will be heard in Nairobi, Kenya, and Montevideo, Uruguay, before the week is over.

New means of communication grant access to news and cultural elements from all parts of the world, but we continue to be selective in what we pay attention to (Figure 6-25). Our own backgrounds; our education, perceptions, and prejudices; and the media to which we are exposed affect our understanding of other peoples and