

PLACES  
AND  
REGIONS  
IN  
GLOBAL  
CONTEXT



HUMAN  
GEOGRAPHY

PAUL L. KNOX  
SALLIE A. MARSTON





# Places and Regions in Global Context

## Human Geography

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# Preface

*A highly embroiled quarter, a network of streets that I had avoided for years, was disentangled at a single stroke when one day a person dear to me moved there. It was as if a searchlight set up at this person's window dissected the area with pencils of light*

Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings*.  
London: New Left Books, p. 85.

Most people have an understanding of what their own lives are like and some knowledge of their own areas. Yet, even as the countries and regions of the world become more interconnected, most of us still know very little about the lives of people in other societies or about the ways in which the lives of those people connect to our own.

The quotation above reminds us that in order to understand places, they must first be made meaningful to us. This book provides an introduction to human geography that will make places and regions meaningful. To study human geography, to put it simply, is to study the dynamic and complex relationships between peoples and the worlds they inhabit. Our book gives students the basic geographical tools and concepts needed to understand the complexity of places and regions and to appreciate the interconnections between their own lives and those of people in different parts of the world.

## Objective and Approach

The objective of the book is to introduce the study of human geography by providing not only a body of knowledge about the creation of places and regions but also an understanding of the interdependence of places and regions in a globalizing world. The approach is aimed at establishing an intellectual foundation that will enable a life-long and life-sustaining geographical imagination.

The book takes a fresh approach to human geography, reflecting the major changes that have recently been impressed on global, regional, and local landscapes. These changes include the globalization of industry, the breakup of the Soviet empire, the upwelling of ethnic regionalisms on the heels of decolonization and new state formation, the physical restructuring of cities, the transformation of traditional agricultural practices throughout much of the world, and the emerging trend toward transnational political and economic organizations. The approach used in *Places and Regions in Global Context* provides access not only to the new ideas, concepts, and theories that address these changes but also to the fundamentals of human geography: the principles, concepts, theoretical frameworks, and basic knowledge that are necessary to more specialized studies.

The most distinctive feature of this approach is that it employs the concept of geographical scale and emphasizes the interdependence of both places and processes at different scales. In overall terms, this approach is designed to provide an understanding of global/local relationships and their outcomes. It follows that one of the chief organizing principles is how globalization frames the social and cultural construction of particular places and regions at various scales.

This approach has several advantages.

- It captures aspects of human geography that are among the most compelling in the contemporary world—the geographical bases of cultural diversity and their impacts on everyday life, for example.
- It encompasses the salient aspects of new emphases in academic human geography—the new geopolitics and its role in the social construction of spaces and places, for example.

- It makes for an easier marriage between topical and regional material by emphasizing how processes link them—technological innovation and the varying ways technology is adopted and modified by people in particular places, for example.
- It facilitates meaningful comparisons between places in different parts of the world—how the core-generated industrialization of agriculture shapes gender relations in households both in the core and the periphery, for example.

In short, the textbook is designed to focus on geographical processes and to provide an understanding of the interdependence among places and regions without losing sight of their individuality and uniqueness.

Several important themes are woven into each chapter, making them integral to the overall approach:

- the relationship between global processes and their local manifestations,
- the interdependence of people and places, especially the interactive relationships between core regions and peripheral regions,
- the continuing transformation of the political economy of the world system, and of nations, regions, cities, and localities,
- the social and cultural differences that are embedded in human geographies (especially the differences that relate to race, ethnicity, gender, age, and class).

## Chapter Organization

The organization of the book is innovative in several ways. First, the chapters are organized in such a way that the conceptual framework—why geography matters in a globalizing world—is laid out in Chapters 1 and 2 and then deployed in thematic chapters (Chapters 3 through 11). The concluding chapter, Chapter 12, provides a coherent summary of the main points of the text by showing how future geographies may unfold, given what is known about present geographical processes and trends. Second, the conceptual framework of the book requires the inclusion of two introductory chapters rather than the usual one. The first describes the basics of a geographic perspective; the second explains the value of the globalization approach.

Third, the distinctive chapter ordering within the book follows the logic of moving from less complex to more complex systems of human social and economic organization, always highlighting the interaction between people and the world around them. The first thematic chapter (Chapter 3) focuses on human population. Its placement reflects the central importance of people in understanding geography. Chapter 4 deals with the relationship between people and the environment as it is mediated by technology. This chapter capitalizes on the growing interest in environmental problems and establishes a central theme: that all human geographical issues are about how people negotiate their environment—whether the natural or the built environment. No other introductory human geography textbook includes such a chapter.

The chapter on nature, society and technology is followed by Chapter 5 on cultural geography. The intention in positioning the cultural chapter here is to signal that culture is the primary medium through which people operate and understand their place in the world. In Chapter 6, the impact of cultural processes on the landscape is explored, together with the ways in which landscape shapes cultural processes.



In Chapter 7 the book begins the move toward more complex concepts and systems of human organization by concentrating on economic development. The focus of Chapter 8 is agriculture. The placement of agriculture after economic development reflects the overall emphasis on globalization. This chapter shows how processes of globalization and economic development have led to the industrialization of agriculture at the expense of more traditional agricultural systems and practices.

The final three thematic chapters cover political geography (Chapter 9), urbanization (Chapter 10), and city structure (Chapter 11). The division of urban geography into two chapters, rather than a more conventional single chapter, is an important indication of how globalization increasingly leads to urbanization of the world's people and places. The final chapter, on future geographies (Chapter 12), gives a sense of how a geographic perspective might be applied to the problems and opportunities to be faced in the twenty-first century.

## Features

To signal the freshness of the approach, the pedagogy of the book employs a unique cartography program, two different boxed features, “Visualizing Geography” and “Geography Matters,” as well as more familiar pedagogical devices such as chapter overviews and end-of-chapter exercises.



**Cartography:** The signature projection is Buckminster Fuller’s Dymaxion™ projection, which centers the globe on the Arctic Circle and arrays the continents around it. This projection helps illustrate the global theme of the book because no one continent commands a central position over and above any other. (Source: The word Dymaxion and the Fuller Projection Dymaxion™ Map design are trademarks of the Buckminster Fuller Institute, Santa Barbara, California, ©1938, 1967 & 1992. All rights reserved.)



**Geography Matters:** Geography Matters boxes examine one of the key concepts of the chapter, providing an extended example of its meaning and implications through both visual illustration and text. The Geography Matters features demonstrate to students that the focus of human geography is upon real world problems.



**Visualizing Geography:** Visualizing Geography boxes treat key concepts of the chapter by using a photographic essay. This feature helps students recognize that visual landscape contains readily accessible evidence about the impact of globalization on people and places.

**Pedagogical Structure Within Chapters:** Each chapter opens with a brief vignette that introduces the theme of the chapter and illustrates why a geographical approach is important. Throughout each chapter, key terms are printed in boldface as they are introduced, with capsule definitions of the term in the margin of the same page. These key terms are listed alphabetically, together with their location in the text, at the end of the chapter. Figures with extensive captions are provided to integrate illustration with text.

Each chapter ends with a Conclusion, a list of the Main Points covered by the chapter, and the list of Key Terms.

Finally, to facilitate the exploration of the resources available on the World Wide Web, Internet exercises are provided. These exercises require students to put into practice several of the key concepts of a chapter. Also included are more traditional types of exercises for those students and instructors who do not have access to electronic resources.

## Supplements

The book includes a complete supplements program for both students and teachers.

### For the Student

**Study Guide (0-13-888710-1):** The study guide includes additional learning objectives, a complete chapter outline, critical thinking exercises, problems and short essay work, and a self-test with an answer key in the back of the book.



**Internet Support:** The *Places and Regions in Global Context* web site gives students an opportunity to further explore topics presented in the book using the Internet. Additionally, it provides support for the Internet-based activities at the end of each chapter, links to other interesting web sites, and on-line review exercises.



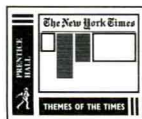
**Earth on the Internet: A Field Guide for Geoscience Students (0-13-779828-8)** by Andrew T. Stull and Duane Griffin is a student's guide to the Internet and World Wide Web specific to geography. It is available free as a shrink-wrap with the text.

### For the Instructor

**Instructor's Resource Manual (0-13-236506-5):** The Instructor's Resource Manual, intended as a resource for both new and experienced teachers, includes a variety of lecture outlines, additional source materials, teaching tips, advice on how to integrate visual supplements, and various other ideas for the classroom.

**Test Bank (0-13-236530-8):** An extensive array of test questions accompanies the book. These questions are available in hard copy and also on Windows (0-13-236548-0) and Macintosh (0-13-236563-4) disks.

**Overhead Transparencies (0-13-236522-7):** The transparencies feature 125 illustrations from the text, all enlarged for excellent classroom visibility. The illustrations are also available as a slide set (0-13-236514-6).



**Prentice Hall-New York Times Themes of the Times Supplements for Geography:** Prentice Hall-New York Times Themes of the Times Supplements for Geography reprints significant articles from the *New York Times*. The Geography *New York Times* article is available to students free of charge. Please contact your local Prentice Hall representative for details.

## Conclusion

The idea for this book evolved from conversations between the authors and colleagues about how to teach human geography in colleges and universities. Our intent was to find a way not only to capture the exciting changes that are rewriting the world's landscapes and reorganizing the spatial relationships between people, but also demonstrate convincingly why the study of geography matters. Our aim was to show why a geographical imagination is important, how it can lead to an understanding the world and its constituent places and regions, and how it has practical relevance in many spheres of life.

The book was written at the culmination of a significant period of reform in geographic education. One important outcome of this reform was the inclusion of geography as a core subject in *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Public Law 103-227). Another was the publication of a set of national geography standards for K-12 education (*Geography for Life*, published by National Geographic Research and Education for the American Geographical Society, the Association of American Geographers, the National Council for Geographic Education, and the National Geographic Society, 1994). This book builds on these reforms, offering a fresh and compelling approach to college-level geography.

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# About the Authors

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Paul Knox received his Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Sheffield, England. In 1985, after teaching in the United Kingdom for several years, he moved to the United States to take up a position as professor of urban affairs and planning at Virginia Tech. His teaching centers on urban and regional development, with an emphasis on comparative study. In 1989 he received a university award for teaching excellence. He has written several books on aspects of economic geography, social geography, and urbanization. He is co-editor of an international journal, *Environment & Planning*, serves on the editorial board of several other scientific journals, and is co-editor of a series of books on World Cities. In 1996 he was appointed to the position of University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech, where he currently serves as interim Dean of the College of Architecture and Urban Studies.



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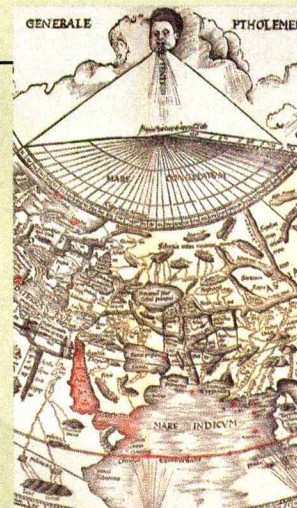
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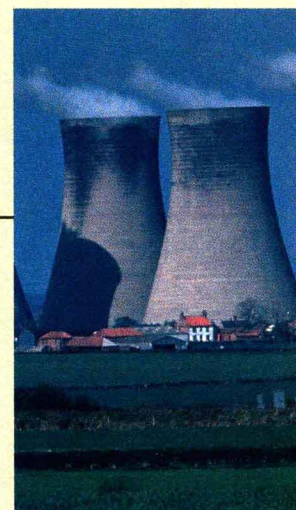
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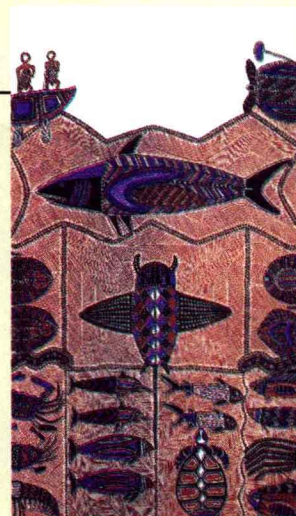
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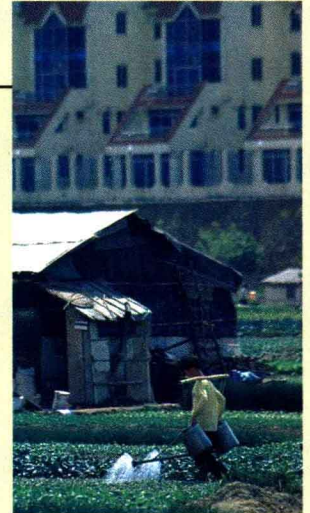
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