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# Cultural Regions



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**Geography (U.G.), SEM- II, Paper – C3T: Human Geography (Cultural Region)**



## **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

Learning objectives include:

- 1) Gaining an appreciation of the world's diversity;
- 2) Gaining an appreciation of the factors that make world regions distinctive;
- 3) Understanding basic geographic concepts and how they help explain global diversity; and
- 4) Understanding the geographic foundations of development, underdevelopment, and globalization.

# REGION

- A region is an area with common features that set it apart from other areas and also a part of a Earth surface.
- Can be large ( Hemispheres) or Small (School gymnasium as an exercise area)
- Can be divided into physical, Climate, Cultural, and Political regions.

## Objective view:

- **According Unstead**, “The region is a real entity, that can be positively identified as natural region.”
- **According to Glasson**, “The region is a continuous and localized area.”
- **According to Vidal de la Blache**, “Man and nature have become molded to one another over the years.”

## Subjective View:

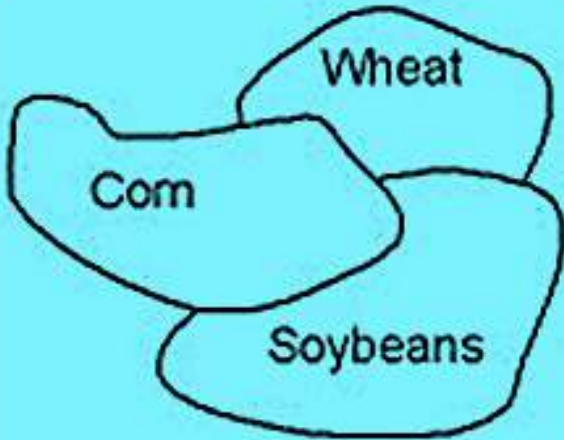
- **According to Hartshorne**, “A region must have passed into history”
- **According to R.E. Dickinson**, “Region is a natural social unit.”

# TYPES OF REGIONS

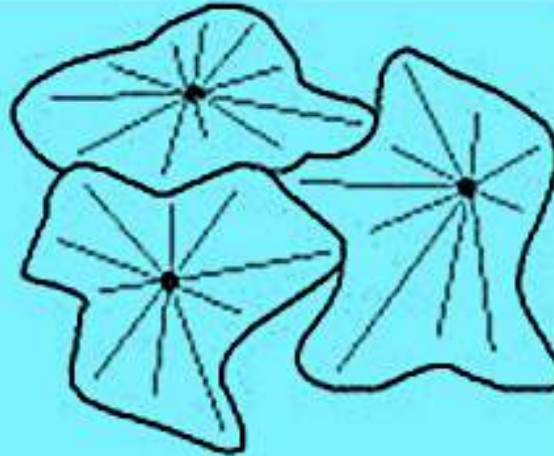
- **Functional Regions:** A functional region is an area defined by one function that may cross political boundaries. This might be a drainage basin of a great river, connecting several states. Such as an area of connected rivers that serves as a drainage basin. **Function which crosses political boundaries, organized around a focal point.**

*According to R.M. Loda*, in his book “Dictionary of Geography” told that, “Functional region is an area in which an activity has a focal point or node”

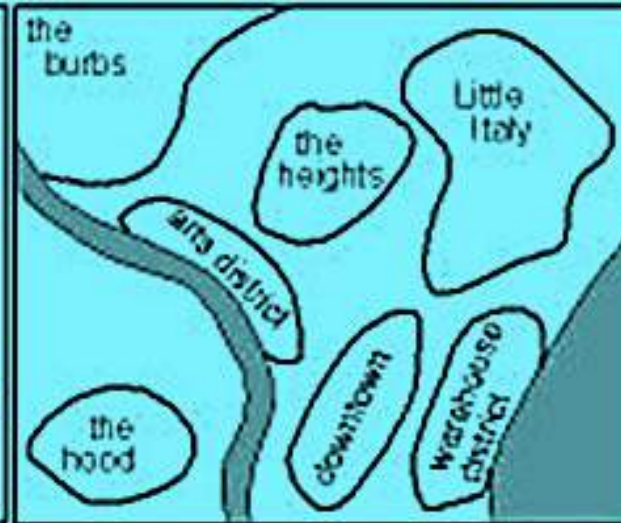
- **Example:** Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex
- **Formal Region:** A formal region is one with clear boundaries. It is defined by at least one common human or physical characteristic. This may be common government, such as a political unit. It have a common human or physical characteristic and clear boundaries. **clear boundaries w/i common characteristic (physical/human)**
  - **Example:** Common government or political unit, Cities, towns, states and countries.
- **Perceptual Region:** A perceptual region is based on people's attitudes, feeling and emotions about a place. Unlike formal or functional regions, a perceptual region may not be based on real facts or conditions
  - **Example:** Big Apple, Dixie, Deep South, Midwest etc.
- **Planned Region:** *According to Boudeville*, “ Planning regions as areas displaying some coherence or unity of economic divisions.”
  - **Example:** Economic Planning Region, City Planning Region etc.



**Formal regions based on dominant crop types.**



**Functional regions tied to a central node. These could be banks serving their branches, dairy farms providing milk to suppliers, etc.**



**Perceptual regions of a city.**





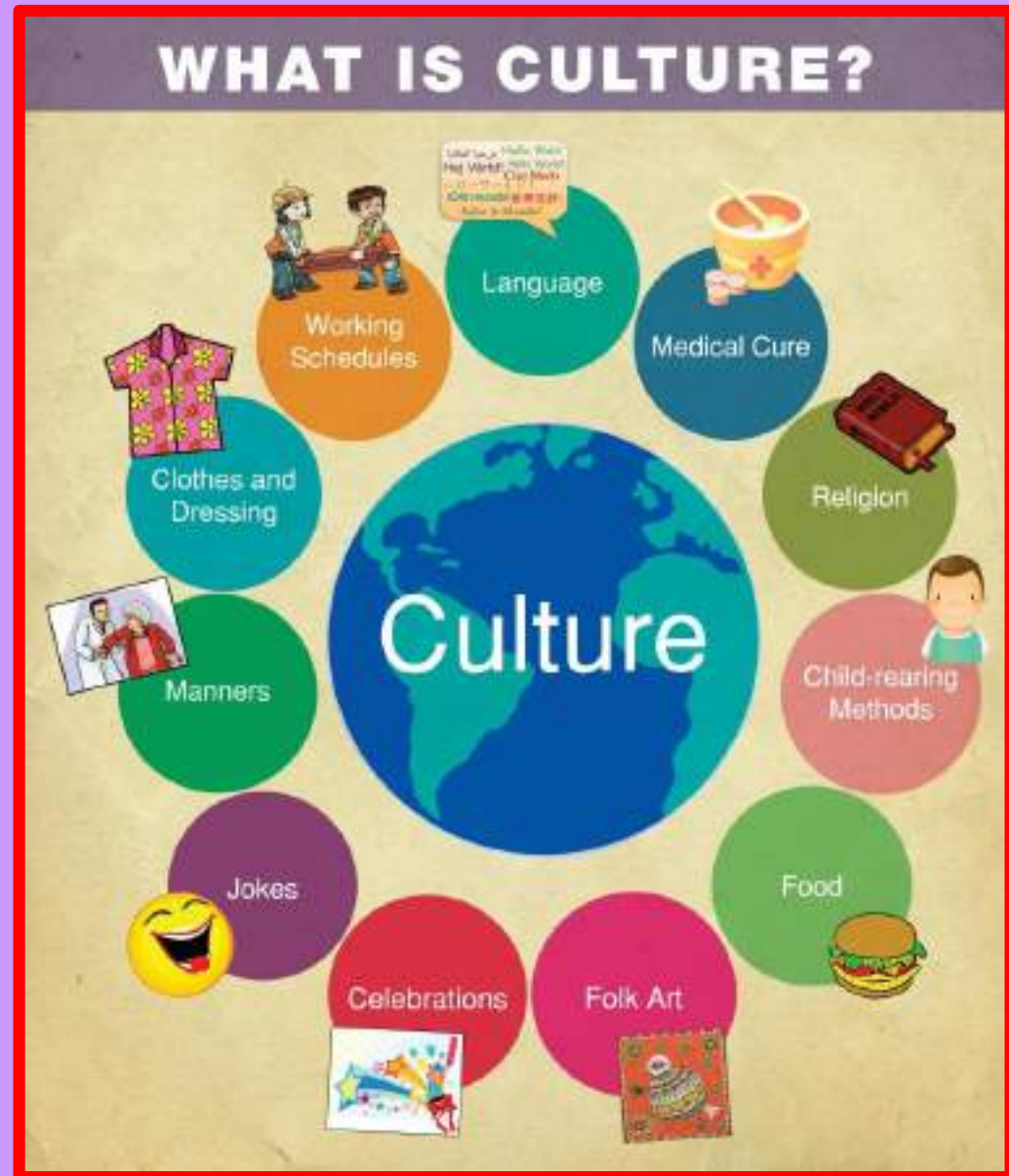
Subject - Object	Formal Region	Functional Region
Nature	Often concrete and physical in nature	Specific to one area
Boundary	Has specific boundaries that set them apart from other regions in the world	Areas organized around a node or focal point. (like a university, airport, or a radio station)
Inward or Outward	Often can be seen inside one another	This kind of region diminishes in importance outward
Homogeneity	Homogeneous areas or habitats inhabited by social groups, societies, or nations	Often a metropolitan area that consists of a major city and lots of smaller towns or cities that surround it
System	Organized and represented by small systems or part systems	The region is tied to the central point by transportation or communication systems or economic or functional associations
Facts or Knowledge	Based on facts and knowledge of an area; like population and temperature	Many people live in one town and work in another because they are part of the same functional region
Functions	Has clear cut, political boundaries	Functions and works together as part of an economic and social system
Formation	Characterized by a common human property like language, religion, nationality, political identity or culture, common physical property, climate, land form and vegetation	The purpose of functional locations is to study the structure and functions of community within some spaces
Measures or accessibility	Defined by measures of: Population, ethnic background, crop production, per capita income, population density and distribution, industrial production, mapping physical characteristics, temperature, rainfall and growing season	The accessibility and isolation are measured in terms of cost distance, time distance or mileage through a transport network – these distances are measured from special nodes or axes
Interaction	Defined by common political identity, political units – where all people are subject to same laws and government Examples: States, Countries, Cities, Counties and Provinces	Defined by a set of activities, connections or interactions
Example	Examples for formal regions: Chinatown (San Francisco, CA) Chinatown – (big cities in USA) – Chinese people, restaurants, stores	Examples include newspaper circulation area, Commuter traffic patterns, Subway systems in NYC, Boston, etc., Highway systems, Los Angeles Metropolitan Area

# CULTURAL REGION

## Definition:

- Cultural Region refers to a Geography with one relatively homogeneous human activity or complex of activities (Culture). It is defined by common language, region, political, or economic features. Beliefs, behaviors, and artifacts share the common features of cultural place.
- **According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary**, cultural region is "a contiguous (adjoining) geographic area comprising a number of societies that possess the same or similar traits (characters) or that share a dominant cultural orientation."
- **According to Husain (1994)**, "It is an area occupied by people who have something in common culturally, a spatial unit that functions politically, socially or economically as a distinct entity."
- **Oxford Dictionary of Geography**, "It is a region characterized by a common trait."

A cultural region can be as small as a street or a neighborhood, or as large as a state or a nation. To find the Cultural Region, you need to look at the human characteristics of a place. One example of cultural region is in India.







## ***Attributes or characteristics of a cultural Region:***

- 1. The major criterion used in the delimitation of a cultural region is the life style (genre de vie) of the resident population.
- 2. The cultural regions are multi-featured.
- 3. The boundaries of a cultural region are more or less sharp, and are lines of discontinuity.
- 4. The core of a cultural region is not easily detectable in comparison to political or economic regions.
- 5. The concept of hierarchy carries less meaning in the case of cultural regions.
- 6. However, the attribute that is most significant in the case of cultural regions is regional consciousness.

# TYPE OF CULTURAL REGION:

A cultural region refers to an area over which the cultural traits of human group may be identified. The culture and cultural environment of human groups varies from place to place. This variation in cultural traits results into variation in human occupation and his organization of space. based on common cultural characteristics, such as language, religious beliefs, customs, and art forms. Some of the important cultural regions are –

- **1. Population regions –**

Population and its demographic characteristics establish an important aspect of cultural landscape. To define an area into the high density and low density areas are known as population regions.

- **2. Language Regions –**

All over the world, different social groups speak different languages. The definition of different language areas on a map is known as language region. Taking language as the measure the world may be divided into – **a. Indo-European b. Indo-Iranian, c. Sino-Tibetan, d. Afro-Asiatic, e. Austro-Asiatic, f. Amerindian and g. Negro Language Regions.**

- **3. Religious Regions –**

The world may be divided on the basis of religions, e.g. regions of Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism.

- **4. Political Regions –**

The most thoroughly defined formal cultural region is the national state. Its boundaries are carefully surveyed and in many cases are marked by barriers and protector pillars. There is no question of any randomly divided temporary one. But political boundaries are not necessarily permanent. The artificial political boundary in the form of Berlin Wall was demolished in 1990.

## 5. Economic Region:

Economic regionalization is among the most frequent familiar and useful employment of the regional method. The economic regions in geography identify economic activities and resources over space.

## 6. Natural Resource Regions:

The unevenly distributed resources upon which the people depend for life are logical topics of interest in regional concept. Resource regions are mapped and their raw material qualities and quantities are discussed.

## 7. Urban Regions (Megalopolis):

Urban centers may be formal or functional regions. Cities and Urban centers are the areas of production exchange, administration, distribution and consumption. They have hierarchical structure.



## 8. Agricultural Regions:

These are wheat, rice and jute regions of India and cotton belt, Corn Belt of U.S.A.

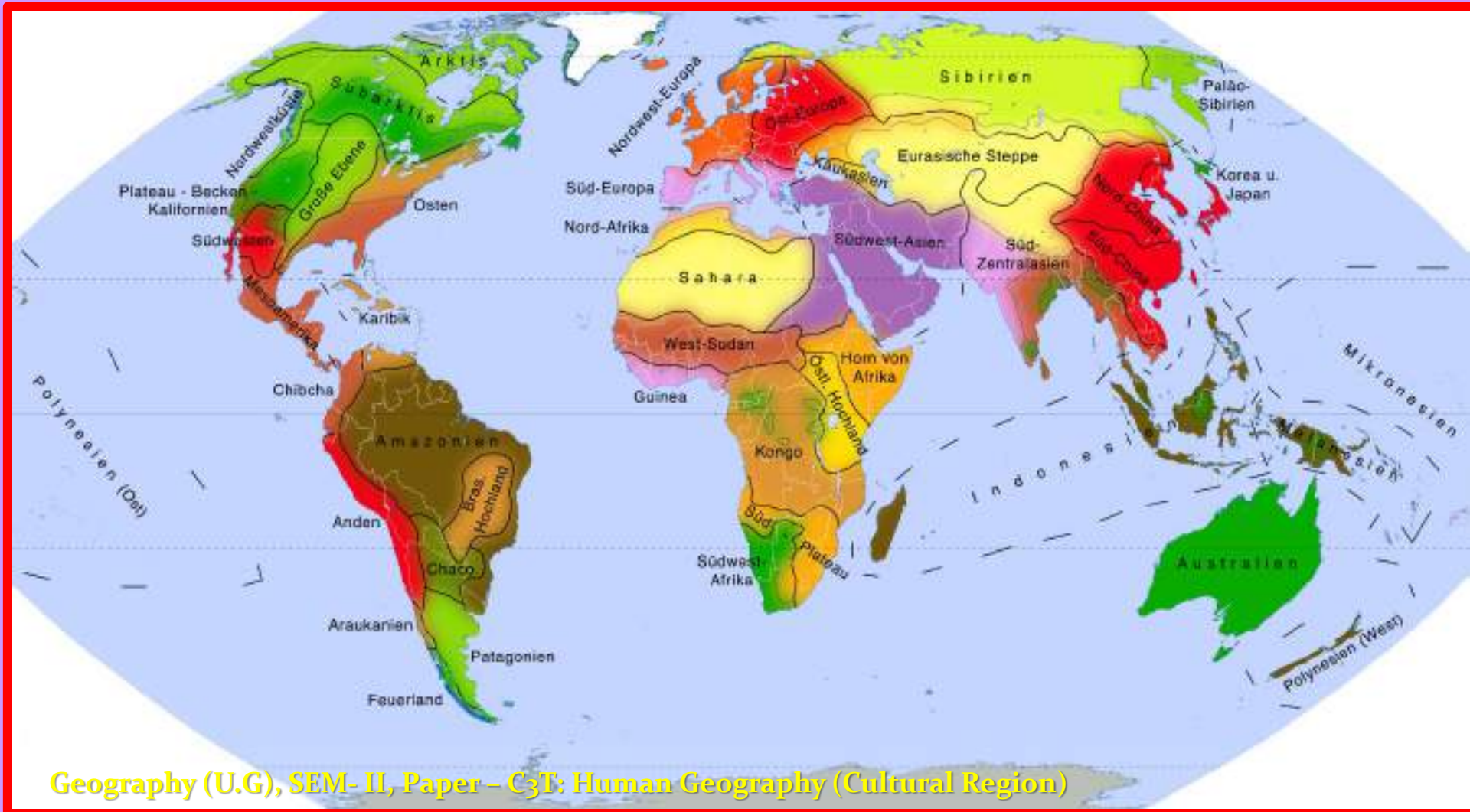
## 9. Industrial Regions:

Industrial regions are demarcated by taking into consideration the industrial parameter. Hooghly basin. Bombay-Ahmedabad region, Madras-Coimbatore region.

## 10. Mental Regions (Mental/Emotional map):

Mental region is a one-sided selfish image of place. The images which establish mental map (the political, social, cultural and economic values) held by men mixture into an overall image about the space around him. This image or mental map differs from person to person.

# WORLD CULTURAL REGIONS



## North American Culture Region:

- Canada and the United States are often considered as belonging to the same cultural region.
- The majority of the people in both countries speak English; however, you will also find Spanish, French, German, Chinese, Japanese and many other languages throughout the countries.
- The majority of the people in both countries follow Christianity but, you will also find Islam, Judaism, and Buddhism.
- Both of these nations have limited governments which means that the people have the power to elect/choose their government leaders. The government officials are limited in their power.
- There are many types of food and dance in the North American Culture region. One popular type of music is American 'Pop' music.

