

B.A. Part - III, GEOGRAPHY (HONS.)

PAPER - V - Geographical Thought

SECTION - A, UNIT - 1.

TOPIC - Definition of Geography and its relation with other Sciences

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1: Definition of Geography.

Greek scholar "Eratosthenes" has coined the word "Geography" as the "study of the earth as abode of Man".

The word Geography comes from Greek word "Geo" (earth) and "graphos" (to write). So according to Haggel

Geography is the "study of the earth's surface as the space within which the human population lives", or in simple words "the description of the earth as the abode of human beings".

Another definition of the Geography is given by "Hartshorn" according to him "Geography is concerned to provide accurate, orderly, and rational descriptions and interpretation of the variable characters of the earth surface".

Or according to the "Taaffe"

"Geography is the study of spatial organisation, expressed as patterns and processes".

Meaning and Scope of Geography.

Geography studies variations in phenomenon from place to place and its value as an academic discipline depends on the extent to which it can clarify the connections between different features of the same area i.e. the interrelated phenomenon. All the phenomenon which have a recognizable spatial distribution or can be shown on a map are basically of geographical interest.

Geography is different from other sciences in its subject matter and methodology but at the same time it is closely related to other disciplines.

Geography derives its data base from all the natural and social sciences and attempts their synthesis.

We have noted that there exist variations over the surface of the earth in its physical as well as cultural environments. A number of phenomena are similar and many are dissimilar. It was therefore logical to perceive geography as the study of 'areal differentiation'. Thus Geography was perceived to study all those phenomenon which vary over space.

Geographers do not study only the variations in the phenomenon over the earth's surface (space) but also study the associations with the other factors which cause these variations. For example cropping patterns differ from region to region but this variation in cropping pattern, as a phenomenon is related to variations in soils, climate, demands in the market capacity of farmers to invest and technological inputs available to him.

Thus the concern of Geography is to find out the causal relationship between any two phenomena or between more than one phenomenon.

The geographical phenomenon, both the physical and human are not static but highly dynamic. They change over time as a result of the interactive processes between ever changing earth and entering and ever-active human beings.

Geography thus is concerned with the study of nature and human interactions as an integrated whole. Human is an integral part of nature and nature has the imprint of human."

Nature of Geography.

Geography occupies a logically defensible position among the sciences as one of the chronological studies and attempts to consider not particular kinds of objects and phenomena in reality but actual sections of reality. It further attempts to analyse and synthesise not process of phenomena, but the associations of phenomena as related in sections of reality.

Geography attempts to integrate the materials that other sciences study separately in terms of the actual integrations which the heterogeneous phenomena form in different parts of the world.

Geography borrows from the systematic sciences all those generic concepts or type classifications that the sciences have developed in order to effectively utilize them in making its description of phenomena and interpretation of their interrelations as accurate as possible.

Finally, Geography attempts to organise its knowledge of the world into interconnected systems, in order that any particular fragment of knowledge may be related to all others that bear upon it.