


MAN-ENVIRONMENT RELATIONSHIP



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INTRODUCTION

- Man has been relating with the environment since the beginning of time. However, this man/environment relationship has been more beneficial to man with detrimental effect on the environment.
- The influence of nature in the form of the air man breathes, the water man drinks, the food man eats and the flows of energy and information. Any change in the environment cannot only result in devastating effects, but can also pose a threat to the human race (United Nation Environment Program, 2014)
- The Greek, Roman, Indian, Chinese and Arab geographers attempted to establish a relationship between man and natural environment. Kant, in the concluding part of the 18th century, advocated the impact of environment on the lifestyle and physical constitution and lifestyle the equatorial, hot deserts, Mediterranean, coastal and mountainous regions. According to Kant, the inhabitants of torrid zone are exceptionally lazy and timid, while the people of the Mediterranean region living in the mild temperature conditions are industrious, hard working and progressive.

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- The idea of defining geography in terms of man and environment relationship developed on scientific lines in the later part of the 19th century after the publication of Origin of Species (1859) by Charles Darwin
 - The concept of defining geography in terms of relationship became quite popular in Germany. The work of Darwin influenced Friedrich Ratzel, who published Anthropogeography in two volumes in 1882 and 1891 respectively.
 - Ratzel, by applying the organic theory to political geography, developed the concept of lebensraum (literally living space or the geographical area within which an organism develops)
 - Influences of Geographic Environment declared “man as the product of earth’s surface”

PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACHES

- **Determinism and Possibilism** are two philosophical approaches in human geography.
- Philosophy of Determinism is based upon the interaction between primitive human society and strong forces of nature
- Nature provides possibilities and man utilizes them according to his culture, traditions, and levels of socioeconomic development.
- **Neo-determinism**
- Australian geographer Griffith Taylor, in 1920 argued that the limit of agricultural settlements in Australia has been set by factors of the physical environment such a distribution of rainfall.
- Man is able to accelerate, slow, or stop the progress of a country's regions development
- This theory is also called "stop and go determinism".

DETERMINISM

- ▶ The idea of determinism is based upon the interaction between man –nature from primitive human society with strong forces of nature. This is first philosophy which persisted till World War II 1945. According to this, strong forces of environment control the course of human action.
- ▶ According to determinism, **man is a passive agent, and nature is active agent**, which controls and determines the action and decision-making processes of human.
- ▶ As per determinism, the human actions can be explained as a response to the natural environment.

POSSIBILISM

- Possibilism is reaction to determinism and environmental determinism. It is based upon the assumption that environment sets certain constraints or limitations, but culture is otherwise determined by social conditions. This theory says that the true and only geographical problem is that to utilization of possibilities.
- Essence of Possibilism is that:
- Nature provides possibilities and man utilizes them according to his culture, traditions, and levels of socioeconomic development.
- People are not just the products of their environment or just pawn of natural environment.
- Nature is never more than an adviser.
- There are not necessities but everywhere possibilities.

GLOBAL WARMING ??



WATER SCARCITY (ARAL SEA)



WILDFIRE IN AMAZON



FLOODS IN INDIA



TSUNAMI IN JAPAN



Source: Conservation International



Thank You