

GEOGRAPHY

Reading Around The Subject



CHANGING PLACES

"In a globalising world, place meanings and character are mostly shaped and changed by external forces."

Do you agree with this statement?

You might think geographers are only interested in volcanoes or rivers, but for some time geography research has focused on place and space; cultural geographers are interested in people's engagement with places, their experience of them and the qualities they ascribe to them, all of which are of fundamental importance in their lives.

By engaging in this project you will acknowledge this importance and engage with how places are known and experienced, how their character is appreciated, the factors and processes which impact upon places and how they change and develop over time. Through developing this knowledge, you will gain understanding of the way in which your own life and those of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places which are of fundamental importance in their lives.



"In a globalising world, place meanings and character are mostly shaped and changed by external forces."

Do you agree with this statement?

You need to be aware of key definitions before we go any further:

- ☐ **Place:** Place has been defined as location + meaning. In this equation, location refers to a position within abstract space, such as a grid reference. Meaning, as the term is used here, has two components, and it is essential to recognise both. First, places can be meaningful to individuals, in ways that are personal or subjective. These meanings may be expressed in terms of the perceptions of place, for example, or of particular associations or attributes of place such as danger or beauty. Second, places can be meaningful at a social or cultural level, such that meanings are shared, for example when some but not all members of a community or society share an understanding of a place as beautiful or significant in some way.
- ☐ **Demography:** the structure of an area's population, in relation to many factors including: age, ethnicity, income, etc...
- ☐ **Endogenous:** the local, internal characteristics which create a place's identity
- ☐ **Exogenous:** external influences on a place's identity. They are caused by a place's relationship with other places.
- ☐ **Sense of place:** refers to the emotional, experiential and affective traces that tie humans into particular environments.
- ☐ **Place meaning/s:** what a place means to an individual or group, e.g. someone's childhood home being special to them as they're attached to it emotionally having grown up there.
- ☐ **Place character/identity:** as people have unique characters/identities, so too do places. This is what the area is like and what it is known for: vibrant, multicultural, dangerous, etc...
- ☐ **Place attachment:** connection to a place due to many reasons, including religion, family, etc...
- ☐ **Rebranding:** is about improving the image of a place to attract inward investment, tourists and shoppers.
- ☐ **Re-imaging:** using a variety of media and initiatives to improve the image of a location and make it more attractive to outsiders.
- ☐ **Regeneration:** the practice of reversing the decline in urban areas by both improving the physical structure, and, more importantly, the economy of areas.

This is personal...

Before you begin, you must first realise how this topic affects YOU and those around you:

- 1) **Read** the extract on the following page and **write a diary entry** similar to this, but detailing your (virtual) walk down your local high street- use Google Maps' StreetView feature. This will help you realise (a) how unique your local area is and (b) how its identity is shaped by external forces such as migrants or international businesses.
- 2) Note down 3 **significant** changes you notice happening on your street or local high street using StreetView's back in time feature:



“Place is security and space is freedom: we are attached to the one and are longing for the other”

Yi-Fu Tuan (2001).

An extract from Doreen Massey's 1994 *A Global Sense of Place*:

Take, for instance, a walk down Kilburn High Road, my local shopping centre. It is a pretty ordinary place, north-west of the centre of London. Under the railway bridge the newspaper stand sells papers from every county of what my neighbours, many of whom come from there, still often call the Irish Free State. The postboxes down the High Road, and many an empty space on a wall, are adorned with the letters IRA. Other available spaces are plastered this week with posters for a special meeting in remembrance: Ten Years after the Hunger Strike. At the local theatre Eamon Morrissey has a one-man show; the National Club has the Wolfe Tones on, and at the Black Lion there's Finnegans Wake. In two shops I notice this week's lottery ticket winners: in one the name is Teresa Gleeson, in the other, Chouman Hassan. Thread your way through the often almost stationary traffic diagonally across the road from the newsstand and there's a shop which as long as I can remember has displayed saris in the window. Four life-sized models of Indian women, and reams of cloth. On the door a notice announces a forthcoming concert at Wembley Arena: Anand Miland presents Rekha, live, with Aamir Khan, Salman Khan, Jahi Chawla and Raveena Tandon. On another ad, for the end of the month, is written, 'All Hindus are cordially invited'. In another newsagents I chat with the man who keeps it, a Muslim unutterably depressed by events in the Gulf, silently chafing at having to sell the Sun. Overhead there is always at least one aeroplane - we seem to have on a flight-path to Heathrow and by the time they're over Kilburn you can see them clearly enough to tell the airline and wonder as you struggle with your shopping where they're coming from. Below, the reason the traffic is snarled up (another odd effect of timespace compression!) is in part because this is one of the main entrances to and escape routes from London, the road to Staples Corner and the beginning of the M1 to 'the North'. This is just the beginnings of a sketch from immediate impressions but a proper analysis could be done of the links between Kilburn and the world. And so it could for almost any place. Kilburn is a place for which I have a great affection; I have lived there many years. It certainly has 'a character of its own'.

My diary entry



Changes in my area!

Change in my area (i.e. new shop/s, buildings being renovated, new type of restaurants/pubs, etc...)	How I think it has changed my area's character/identity:
1)	
2)	
3)	

Geography matters!

For some places around the world, it is their physical geography (topography, landforms, etc...) which shape its character, identity and meanings. These are endogenous factors!

Use the following links and your own research to look into how the physical geography of TWO of these areas has contributed to their character and identity:

Place	Links
Jardines del Pedregal, Mexico City	https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/depave-paradise/transcript/ ; https://en.mxcity.mx/2016/03/natural-places-to-visit-in-mexico-city/ ; https://www.elledecor.com/it/best-of/a28707855/casa-pedregal-luis-barragan-mexico-city/ ; https://www.collater.al/en/casa-pedregal-luis-barragan-architecture/ ; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jardines_del_Pedregal ; https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/depave-paradise/
Göreme, Turkey	https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/world-heritage/cappadocia/ ; https://www.britannica.com/place/Cappadocia ; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/G%C3%B6reme ; https://theculturetrip.com/europe/turkey/articles/the-story-behind-cappadocias-famous-fairy-chimneys/ ; https://www.smithsonianmag.com/travel/fairy-chimneys-turkey-180956654/ ; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Churches_of_G%C3%B6reme ; https://www.goreme.com/forgotten-cave-churches.php
Mont-Saint-Michel, France	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mont-Saint-Michel ; https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/80/ ; https://theculturetrip.com/europe/france/articles/8-things-to-know-before-you-visit-the-mont-saint-michel/ ; https://uk.france.fr/en/normandy/article/mont-saint-michel-0 ; https://www.britannica.com/place/Mont-Saint-Michel ; https://kids.kiddle.co/Mont_Saint-Michel#Geography ; https://fiveminutehistory.com/10-fascinating-facts-about-mont-saint-michel-the-medieval-city-on-a-rock/
CHALLENGE	Constantine, Algeria; Montserrat, Spain; Venice, Italy; Kandovan, Iran; Shilong, Meghalaya (India).



"In a globalising world, place meanings and character are mostly shaped and changed by external forces."

Do you agree with this statement?