Title: Defining a contemporary "Geographic" that has currency in the Sciences and Humanities

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In 1964, Pattison argued that despite its relative successes, each of the eminent definition of geography produced since the establishment of the Association of American Geographers had concomitantly alienated professionals whose works did not conform to the restrictions embedded in those characterizations. Pattison (1964), however, identified four distinct yet affiliated traditions – space, area studies, man-land, and earth science – that could potentially represent and unite geography as a discipline. These four traditions were subsequently reduced to two variants that have substantially dominated the identity struggle of geography. They are (i) spatial-chorological science or space and (ii) human-environment science (Kates 1987, Turner II 2002).

Immanuel Kant was credited as the forefather of the tradition of geography that is based on the spatial-chorological science (Hartshorne 1958, Taaffe 1974, Turner II 2002) because, through Kant, geography is the synthesis understanding of the spatial attributes of natural phenomena on the surface of the earth which gradually leads to descriptions of the earth as a whole (Tatham 1951, May 1970). Some of the sub-identities of this tradition include the science of areal or regional differentiation, the science of region, the history and particularities of places, and the distribution studies (Tatham 1951, Hartshorne 1958, Livingstone 1992). According to Turner II (2002), these secondary identities were united under the spatial-chorological science on the condition that geography is an approach to understanding through phenomena's spatial attributes. Turner II (2002) also argued that over the past 50 years, space has been the philosophical high ground of geography. That was, as Kates (1987) argued, essentially due to, amongst other factors, the rapid rise of quantitative revolution coupled with the devastating collapse of environmental determinism, which according to Peet (1985) was geography's first entry into modern science.

In contrast to the Kantian vision, Alexander von Humboldt envisioned a geography that, based on the systematic science, seeks to analyze the individual parts of the natural phenomena without succumbing to the weight of the whole (Tatham 1951, Hartshorne 1958, Freeman 1961). Subsequently, scholars such as Schouw, Recluse, Kropotkin, and Ratzel pushed forward the concept of a systematic geographic science impelled by a phenomenon of study (Tatham 1951, Hartshorne 1958). This resulted in the formation of a geography that studies the human-environment relationships (Livingstone 1992, Turner II 2002). According to Johnson (1954), instead of utilizing the various hypotheses proposed by scholars of the time to study the human-environment condition, William Morris Darvis narrowed the subset of this new geographic understanding to the study of nature controls over society. This position was later supported by Ellen Churchill Semple and other American geographers who championed the theme of 'geographic influence' or the 'geographic factor' labels of the time for what has notoriously been known as environmental determinism (Taaffe 1974, Livingstone 1992, Turner II 2002). One of the plausible reasons for this move was because environmental determinism, at the time, justified the interests of imperialist states in pursuant of territorial acquisition, economic exploitation, militarism, and the practice of class and race discrimination (Semple 1901, Huntington 1915, Capel 1981, Campbell and Livingstone. 1983, Peet 1985). The extreme uses of environmental determinism were disastrous to the human-environment identity of geography, but eventually two alternatives emerged: (i) Sauer's Berkeley school of landscape morphology and (ii) Barrows', later White, Chicago school of resource geography emphasizing human choice among resource options (Barrows 1923, Sauer 1925, Wagner 1960, Burton et al. 1978, Livingstone 1992).

As a result, 20th century geography is confronted with dual identities – spatial-chorological and human-environment. Turner II (2002) argued that geography must seek to unite this dualism in a way that the two identities must be made equitable and coherent within one logical formation. However, attempts to define a geography that could equally integrate the interests in spatial-chorological and human-environment identities have generally been in vain. For example, Peet (1998) defines geography as the study of human-

environment relationships, but these relationships are understood only in terms of relational space. According to Turner II (2002), the nature of this argument conflates or promises to conflate the human-environment and spatial-chorological identities, such that one becomes the expression of the other. The alternative then would be to decide which of the two identities would make geography more relevant and legitimate in a variety of today's settings both in and outside the university.

Based on two interconnected reasons, the answer would be a geography that is principally dominated by the research projects developed within the human-environment realm, supplemented whenever appropriate by methods concocted through the spatial-chorological tradition. First of all, as advertised on the webpage of Clark University's Graduate School of Geography, the oldest sustained program that awarded more Ph.D.s in geography than any other program in the United States, geography is defined as the investigation of the dialectical relationships between people and the environment, with the assistance of appropriate technologies such as geographic information system software, satellite imagery and spatial databases (Clark University 2010). Evidently, exceptional and socially relevant research projects from both faculty and graduates of the program have been rooted in a geography that is based on the human-environment tradition. Representatives of the examples could be found in research projects conducted by Anthony Bebbington, Billie Lee Turner II, Colin Polsky, Deborah Martin, Dianne Rocheleau, Jean Kasperson, Jody Emel, Matt Huber, Paul Robbins, Richard Peet, Robert Kates, Roger Kasperson, and Yuko Aoyama (Kates 2001, Turner II and Whitmore 2001, Martin 2002, Robbins 2004, Kasperson and Kasperson 2005, Peet 2007, Rocheleau 2008, Aoyama 2009, Bebbington 2009, Huber and Emel 2009, Polsky et al. 2009). Thus the second argument follows, the human-environment tradition enables geographers to examine intellectually and scientifically enduring societal challenges, some of which include the understanding of human transformation of and adaptation to environmental change, rapid spatial reorganization of society and economy, sustainable development, and technological innovations (Kates 1987, National Research Council 2010). Therefore, it is categorical that not only should geography continue to strengthen its human-environment identity,

simultaneously it also needs to reiterate its significance and relevance for the academia and society through contribution from both academic and pedagogic geography.

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