

Attempt brief analysis of Schaefer- Hartshorne debate

Although Hartshorne and Schaefer both opposed the practice of emphasizing only one element in the systematic and the regional approach while ignoring the other. Their preferences or discourses led to a different inclination for the two in their final position. Even this tendency determines their methodological interests and positions.

Hartshorne's regional geography. Hartshorne strongly treats the regional geography as the foundation, core and ultimate goal of geography. For example, he not only cites Hettner's point of view, "only engaged in systematic geography work and does not cultivate regional geography, but such geographers also risk the complete departure from the geography base. People who do not understand regional geography not a true geographer". Thus, ultimately, geography is attributed to "the science of describing and interpreting the variability between the various parts of the Earth as a human world".

From this point of view, both Hettner and Hartshorne tend to regard regional geography as the core of geography. Although Hartshorne complained too many critics of the Nature of Geography and ignored his emphasis on systematic geography, his expression of the nature of geography, his narrative history of thoughts. The interest finally reflects that he still puts the "center of gravity" of geography on regional research. That is to say, although the formal rules and purpose requirements of the methodology make him reject the dualism, his personal interest and the weight of the historical view of thought are added to the regional geography, which in essence leads him to the geographical nature. The understanding is still focused on regional geography.

Schaefer's systematic geography. Schaefer draws on the examples of the development of natural science and economics and will seek the law of space. To do the ultimate goal of geography, we believe that "geography must pay attention to the spatial arrangement of regional phenomena, not the phenomenon itself; spatial relations are specialized fields of geographers, and non-spatial relations are specialized in other fields" (Schaefer, 1953). On this basis, Schaefer criticized the regional school's view that the regional geography application is regarded as the core of geography and that the application is also the implementation of the law, rather than the study of unique regions.

Differences between Hartshorne and Schaefer's geography

Hartshorne's view of geography history. Hartshorne's geography of history is concentrated in his 1958 documentary on the concept of geography. In this classic paper, Hartshorne traces the understanding of the concept of geography from Kant to Hettner, and divides this history into different stages. On the basis of different stages of the development, the views are basically consistent with general conclusions (Hartshorne, 1958). From this division, Hartshorne thinks that the evolution of the history of geography depends on the discipline itself and the modelling of geographers. He tries to find similarities between Kant, Humboldt, and Hettner. Therefore, Hartshorne's geography history view is "geography (home)" and seeks unity.

It seems that even in the case of Schaefer's fierce criticism of his methodology, Hartshorne emphasis is still on the subjective nature of geography: the region, and more emphasis on the importance of this "discipline characteristics." From the 1939s to the 1959s, during the 20 years of Hartshorne's main content, his basic ideas on the methodology of geography have not changed much. This paper of 1958 may verify the correctness of Schaefer's criticism from another level. In a sense, Schaefer's critique and some of the shortcomings of the intellectual history knowledge exposed in the process prompted Hartshorne to further strengthen his methodological beliefs.

Schaefer's view of geography history. Contrary to Hartshorne's first person who sees Kant as the concept of determining geography, Schaefer believes that Kant is the initiator of the exception theory. Schaefer believes that

Kant-Hettner-Hartshorne is in the same vein and forms the historical chain of geography "exceptionalism". Hettner not only jumps out of Kant's circle but also coincided with Kant's geography and delighted that their authority and great prestige have made the "exceptional theory" deeply ingrained. This has caused geography to be "non-scientific and even anti-scientific." Therefore, Schaefer's geography history view is "the (integral) science" standard, and it is considered that there is a major difference in geography history rather than a unified theme, which is completely contrary to Hartshorne's and regional schools. Now, Schaefer is clearly a staunch supporter of "scientism," and the actual history of geography has denied his extreme "scientism" arguments (such as humanistic geography). Therefore, another main reason for this controversy lies in two different positions and perspectives on the history of geography: Schaefer's perspective is based on the current state of geography and other trends in scientific development and is critical to history while Hartshorne's perspective is based on the historical characteristics of the discipline. It is mainly affirmative of history and believes that the history of the discipline is basically unified. Inheriting this historical characteristic is to maintain the basic nature of geography, and that this is the direction of geographers' efforts. On the whole, it can be said that different values (personal interests, preferences and purposes) and historical views determine the difference in methodology.

The reverberation of the debate. The net outcome of Schaefer-Hartshorne Debate was that geography had come increasingly to be viewed as a science requiring the use of the scientific method' so that like other sciences, it could also develop laws and theories relevant to its field of study. This brought about a distinctive shift in emphasis from 'regional' to 'systematic' studies. This meant that geography there after began increasingly to be viewed in a nomothetic perspective. This also involved a shift from 'areal' to 'locational' studies; from 'absolute' to 'relative' locations; and from 'areal differentiation' to 'spatial interaction'. With the rise of the "quantitative revolution" wave, the regional school gradually lost its momentum. However, the status of positivist geography emphasizes systematic ideas and methods which is not strong. Positivism geography has almost the same experience as the regional school of the 1960s. But it is worth noting that in the 1980s, there were some renewed calls for the revival of "regional geography" in the geography community. Representative of the American Association of Geographers, John Hart (1979) argued on his paper entitled "The Highest Form of Geographer Art", even caused him and the positivist debate on behalf of the president of the association. It is worth pondering that this argument is strikingly similar argument with Schaefer, but the impact is relatively small. It can be said that it is the aftermath of the regional and systematic dualism debate.

Unlike most other presidents' speeches, Hart's paper on this speech has caused much controversy. In this article, Hart reiterates the traditional view that geography focuses on the study area, and criticizes the "scientism" formed in the "quantitative revolution" (i.e. "narrowly believe that only the use of mathematical (quantitative) methods is correct, only in 'scientific'" advocacy), and "geography cannot lose its vitality in order to excessively pursue 'science'. Thus, systematic geography provides a general theory of regional studies, and regional geography validates this theoretical basis from reality. The regional thinking is the basic theme of the different branches of geography; the highest form of geographer art is to produce a vivid description that is easy to understand and evaluate... a geographer should respect the philosophical positions, values, and beliefs of other geographers and avoid forcing others; geography and geographers should be more tolerant than coercive and have a portal" (Hart, 1982). Compared with the previous regional and systematic dualism debate, Hartshorne's article and its controversy have a much lesser influence. In fact, it may be only the aftermath of "Schaefer-Hartshorne debate", which is the regional and systematic dualism.