

## The History of Geographical Knowledge

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### Abstract:

Geography, as a scientific discipline, has evolved over millennia to encompass various branches studying the Earth and its societies. Among these, historical geography has emerged as a field situated at the intersection of geography and history, aiming to examine spatial dimensions of past human activity and environmental conditions. Despite its rich heritage, historical geography has lacked a unified theoretical framework and consensus on its disciplinary boundaries, especially in distinguishing it from the history of geography. This article investigates the development of geographical knowledge from antiquity to the modern era, with a focus on the emergence, evolution, and scientific foundations of historical geography. The findings reveal the global and chronological breadth of geographical thought—from Eratosthenes and al-Khwarizmi to Ortelius and Darby—while outlining the core subdivisions of historical geography: natural-historical, population, economic, and political-historical geography. It also highlights methodological debates and the role of archaeology, anthropology, and toponymy as complementary sources. The paper synthesizes Eastern and Western contributions to historical geography, emphasizing underrepresented Central Asian scholars and cartographers alongside classical European figures, thereby offering a broader, inclusive historiography. The analysis supports the need for interdisciplinary collaboration and the institutionalization of historical geography as a distinct field, essential for understanding the interplay between geographic settings and historical change.

**Keywords:** Geography, Selenography, Historical Geography, Physical-Historical Geography, Population Historical Geography, Economic (Historical-Economic) Geography, Political-Historical Geography, Soviet Era, Western Europe, Archaeology

## Introduction

Geography or Jo‘g‘rofiya (from Greek: geo – “Earth”, grapho – “to describe”, “to write”, or “to map”) is a set of sciences that study the Earth’s geographical shell, its structure and dynamics, and the mutual interaction and distribution of its individual components across regions. Scholars of the ancient Western world used the word “geography” to describe the landscape of the Earth’s surface. The term “geography” was first introduced by Eratosthenes (who lived from 276 to 194 BCE) [1].

In Central Asia, starting from the 9th–10th centuries, phrases such as Surat al-Arz (“Image of the Earth”), Seven Climates, and Kitab al-Masalik wal-Mamalik (“Book of Roads and Kingdoms”) were used in the meaning of geography. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, in the Uzbek language, the word “geography” was written as “jug‘rofiya,” following the Arabic pronunciation. In the present day, it is scientifically more appropriate to use the term “System of Geographical Sciences” instead of just “Geography”.

The system of geographical sciences is divided into three main branches:

- a) Natural or physical geographical sciences – which include physical geography (encompassing general earth science, landscape studies, and paleogeography), geomorphology, climatology, inland hydrology, oceanography, glaciology, geocryology, soil geography, and biogeography;
- b) Social and economic geographical sciences – including general and regional economic geography, geography of economic sectors (such as industrial geography, agricultural geography, transport geography, etc.), population geography, and political geography;
- c) Cartography [2].

Additionally, geography includes fields such as country studies, medical geography, recreational geography, and military geography. In recent years, with the development of space exploration, disciplines such as selenography (geography of the Moon) and cosmic Earth studies have also emerged. Methods for capturing images and creating maps of the Earth’s surface from artificial satellites and spacecraft have also been developed [3].

## Methods

This article applies a historical-analytical method to explore the evolution of geographical knowledge, with a particular focus on the formation and development of historical geography as a scientific discipline. The research draws extensively on primary and secondary historical sources, including ancient manuscripts, geographical atlases, classical travelogues, and scientific works by influential geographers across different periods and civilizations. Through a chronological and comparative approach, the study examines the contributions of prominent figures such as Eratosthenes, Ptolemy, al-Khwarizmi, al-Biruni, Ortelius, and others, tracing the continuity and shifts in geographical thinking from antiquity through the Renaissance and into modern scientific traditions [4]. Moreover, the work employs content analysis to interpret and contextualize the writings of Eastern and Western scholars, integrating knowledge from disciplines such as archaeology, anthropology, and cartography. Emphasis is placed on identifying and synthesizing various views regarding the epistemological and structural foundations of historical geography, including debates over its classification, scope, and methodology. The study also leverages academic publications, archival records, and digital resources to support its claims, drawing from Uzbek, Russian, European, and Arabic-language sources. In doing so, it highlights both the regional and global dimensions of geographical knowledge formation. The integration of historical documents, archaeological findings, and scholarly interpretations enables a multifaceted understanding of how geographical knowledge evolved into a structured scientific field [5]. This methodology allows the article to assess the historical roots and future potential of historical geography within the broader context of geographical sciences.

## Results and Discussion

### The History of the Development of Geographical Science

Geography is one of the oldest sciences. After the emergence of humanity, as time passed, interactions between society and the natural environment—driven by needs such as hunting, agriculture, and trade—led people to travel both short and long distances, explore their surroundings, and communicate with various peoples. For both scientific and practical purposes, people studied sea routes, the nature of different places, their economies, and their populations. In this way, geographical information was collected, inscribed on walls and stones, and written on paper [6].

As early as the pre-Christian era, scientific conclusions were made in cultural centers of the ancient world such as Turon, Northern India, China, Babylonia and Assyria, Egypt, and Greece. The circle was divided into 360 degrees, the day was defined as 24 hours, and the concepts of latitude and longitude were introduced. The idea that the Earth is spherical emerged, supported by Greek scholars like Thales, Pythagoras, Eratosthenes, and Aristotle. The first globe and primitive maps were made by Anaximander, and names were given to the continents of the world.

The Alexandrian mathematician and geographer Eratosthenes (3rd century BCE) attempted to measure the circumference of the Earth and calculated it to be 39,816 km, which is quite close to the actual measurement. The idea of the Earth being divided into hot, temperate, and cold zones—that is, the concept of geographical zonality—was also a theoretical achievement of ancient geography [7].

At that time, some believed the Earth was mostly water, while others claimed it was mostly land. There were also differing views about the relationship between the Sun and the Earth. Some scholars (especially Ptolemy) supported the geocentric theory, which stated that Earth is the center of the universe and the Sun and planets revolve around it. Others proposed the heliocentric theory, suggesting that the Sun is at the center, and the Earth and other planets revolve around it.

The conquests of Alexander the Great in Iran, Turon, and India, as well as the Phoenicians' voyages around the Mediterranean and African coasts, significantly expanded geographical understanding. In general, Greek scholars were well aware of the scientific achievements of Eastern civilizations and incorporated their knowledge into their own works [8].

Strabo (63 BCE – 21 BCE) wrote a 17-volume book on world geography (2 volumes on general geography, 8 on Europe, 1 on Africa, and 6 on Asia). Claudius Ptolemy (90–168 CE) wrote an 8-volume work on geography and map projections.

In the sacred book of the Turonian and Iranian people, Zend Avesta, there are also some geographical references. It mentions and describes countries such as Iranvej, Sugd, Muru (Merv), Bakhdi (Bactria), Nisoim (Southern Turkmenistan), Horuyu (Herat), and Hafta Hindu (Seven Indias).

In the 6th century, the Byzantine Zemarch traveled to the Eastern Steppe of the Kipchaks. During the 9th–10th centuries, the Normans (Scandinavians) sailed across the North Atlantic Ocean and journeyed as far as Iceland, Greenland, and North America. Russian Pomors began exploring some islands in the Arctic Ocean. In the mid-13th century, Rubruck came to Central Asia as an envoy of French King Louis IX, while the Italian Plano Carpini reached as far as Mongolia [9].

One of the most influential events on European geographical knowledge in the Middle Ages was Marco Polo's 25-year journey to China in the late 13th century. Meanwhile, cultural flourishing, the rise of independent states, and the growth of trade in the East helped significantly advance the science of geography in regions such as Turkey, Iraq, Iran, India, and Movarounnahr (Transoxiana).

One of the leading figures was Muhammad ibn Musa al-Khwarizmi (late 8th–mid-9th century), who wrote the geographical work “Surat al-Ard”. It included coordinates and short descriptions of 537 cities. This work was essentially a commentary to a large geographical atlas. Al-Khwarizmi partially based his book on Ptolemy's Geography, helping preserve ancient geographical heritage. From the

9th century onward, most Arabic and Persian geographical works were based on al-Khwarizmi's book, establishing him as the founder of Eastern Geography [10].

Other important figures include Ahmad al-Fergani (9th century) and Abu Abdallah Jayhani (9th–10th centuries). Al-Fergani built a “Nilometer” in Cairo to observe Nile water levels and also confirmed the Earth's spherical shape and accurately calculated its size, closely matching modern measurements.

Abu Zayd al-Balkhi wrote the geographical work “Suwar al-Aqalim” (“Images of the Climates”), accompanied by many maps. His work was later expanded by Persian scholars Istakhri and Ibn Hawqal, who wrote “Kitab al-Masalik wal-Mamalik” (“Book of Roads and Kingdoms”).

In the 10th century, Arab geographers al-Masudi and al-Muqaddasi, and in the 12th century, al-Idrisi, played vital roles in expanding the world's geographical knowledge. Eastern science was also heavily influenced by al-Biruni and Ibn Sina (Avicenna). Many of al-Biruni's major works—“Vestiges of the Past,” “India,” “Mineralogy,” “Geodesy,” “Canon of al-Masud”—relate to geography. He was the first in the East to create a globe and calculated the coordinates of 603 places in “Canon of al-Masud.” He also added a world map to one of his books and measured the Earth's circumference while living in India. In his “Geodesy,” he described changes in the flow of the Amu Darya River and the formation of the Karakum Desert [11]. He even theorized the existence of a large landmass west of the Atlantic Ocean—five centuries before Europeans discovered America.

In the 11th century, Nasir Khusraw from Balkh traveled for 7 years, covering 15,000 km across Movarounnahr, North Africa, Arabia, and India, and wrote his travelogue “Safarnama.”

Mahmud al-Kashgari traveled from Central Asia to Asia Minor and documented the languages, customs, cities, rivers, lakes, and mountain pastures of Turkic tribes in “Diwan Lughat al-Turk.” His work also included a world map.

In the early 13th century, Abdallah Yaqut al-Hamawi, living near Merv (present-day Mary, Turkmenistan), wrote the geographical dictionary “Mu'jam al-Buldan.” The famous Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta was the greatest explorer of the 14th century, covering over 100,000 km across the Arabian Peninsula, India, China, Sumatra, Movarounnahr, Southern Europe, and the Sahara Desert over 25 years [12].

In the early 15th century, under the leadership of the Timurid ruler Mirzo Ulugh Beg, astronomical and geographical tables were compiled at the Samarkand observatory. Ali Qushji wrote geographical works in Samarkand and Istanbul.

In the early 16th century, Zahiriddin Muhammad Babur came to India and authored the famous historical-geographical work “Baburnama.”

Between the mid-15th and 17th centuries, the Great Geographical Discoveries defined the shapes of nearly all continents. Most of the Earth's surface was explored, and data on the nature and economies of previously unknown lands were gathered.

In the first half of the 17th century, Bernhardus Varenius, a Dutch geographer, wrote “General Geography,” which became the most significant geographical work of that era. He was the first to distinguish between general geography and regional geography. In the 16th–17th centuries, major advancements in cartography were achieved, including the development of map projections (e.g., Mercator's projection). During the late 18th and throughout the 19th century, geographical research was carried out in the interior regions of Africa, South America, and Australia. Scientific expeditions also began exploring Central Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries [13].

### **Scientific Views on the Discipline of Historical Geography**

As a scientific branch, historical geography is much younger compared to the long-established disciplines of history and geography. It has existed as a distinct science for several hundred years. The development of the field has been briefly covered in historical-geographical literature. For instance,

in S.M. Seredonin's book, information about the discipline is analyzed mainly through the examples of the historical geography of Kievan Rus and the Moscow State.

Even in Western literature, scientific works on the history of historical geography are quite rare. In a study by the renowned Austrian scholar Wimmer, some works related to the historical geography of the ancient world, Germany, and partially France are briefly discussed. The famous and extensive work of the French scholar Dejardin examines literature related to the historical geography of Gaul. However, both Wimmer's and Dejardin's books provide relatively little information about the overall development of historical geography. In English academic literature, Becheming's article on this field was read at a joint meeting of the History and Geography Association's Oxford chapter. It reviewed research conducted by English scholars in historical geography over the last hundred years. For a long time, scientific conclusions explaining the formation of historical geography and the factors that contributed to it were nearly absent in the literature. However, the issue had already been raised earlier in scientific circles. The prominent German historian Geeren of the late 18th to early 19th centuries, continuing Voltem's historical ideas in 1785, discussed the formation and main stages of historical geography. He presented his thoughts in a book on ancient world history published by a group of authors. Geeren considered the founder of ancient world historical geography to be Professor Clüver of Leiden University in the Netherlands (first quarter of the 17th century) [14].

Geeren divided the historical development of historical geography into three main stages:

1. From Clüver to Cellarius;
2. From Cellarius to D'Anville;
3. From D'Anville to Gatterer and Mannert.

Geeren also emphasized the significant contribution of the Gallic scholar Christoph Cellarius to the development of historical geography as a scientific discipline. During the 19th century, Geeren's views were repeatedly echoed by other researchers. In the 1840s, Forbiger, in his textbook on ancient geography, considered Clüver and Cellarius to be the true founders of historical geography. In the 1870s, Bursian described Clüver as the founder of historical geography in his biography written for the *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie*, a publication featuring profiles of notable German figures. In the 1880s, Wimmer also reiterated this view in his earlier-cited work. When a special monograph on Clüver was published by the geographer and professor Parch in 1891, the belief in Clüver's foundational role in historical geography became even more widespread. The German scholar Gettner supported Parch's views and also referred to Clüver as the founder of historical geography[15].

In Soviet-era literature, the first views on this subject were expressed by S. Rudnitskiy in 1937 and V.P. Budyanov in 1939. Thus, although it seems that the origins and emergence of historical geography follow an established tradition, the actual truth may be somewhat different. In 1930, the Belgian scholar Van der Linden, during his opening speech at the First International Congress on Historical Geography, offered a different perspective: he regarded the Flemish scholar Abraham Ortelius, who created the world's first historical atlas in the second half of the 16th century, as the founder of historical geography. Similar views were presented in 1935 by the prominent Italian expert in the history of geographical sciences, Almagia, in his article on Ortelius written for the Italian Encyclopedia. In a 1938 work, the American scholar Harry Barnes noted that the 12th-century English historian and geographer Gerald of Wales had shown serious interest in historical geography and had written works such as *Topography of Ireland* and *Journey through Wales*.

To address such discrepancies, numerous academic conferences were organized. In 1930, a special international congress on historical geography was held in Belgium, attended by scholars from Belgium, France, Germany, England, Italy, Spain, Poland, and the Netherlands. A total of 55 presentations were delivered across seven sessions. In 1950, a collection of articles on historical geography in the former Soviet Union began to be published. In 1932, the discipline of historical



geography was specifically discussed at a meeting of the English Historical and Geographical Society at the London School of Economics. That discussion helped clarify various issues related to the concept of historical geography.

Several new subfields were proposed for inclusion in historical geography, such as the history of political boundaries, the effects of natural conditions on historical processes, the impact of historical events on geographical phenomena, regional geography, geographical discoveries, and the history of geographical sciences. However, it is important to distinguish between historical geography and the history of geography, which was sometimes merged in these discussions.

Issues such as the settlement of tribes and peoples in certain territories, changes in these territories over time, and the colonization and migration of new populations were addressed as part of historical geography in M.I. Lyubavskiy's work on the historical geography of Russia. At times, efforts to define the content of historical geography have led to confusion. For example, A.A. Spitsin wrote: "Historical geography is a branch of history that studies a country's territory and population, its natural and geographical characteristics—in short, its historical landscape."

S.M. Seredonin emphasized that historical geography, above all, studies the population, borders, and roads (including colonial, trade-industrial, and military routes). In 1907–1908, S.K. Kuznetsov, in his course on historical geography at the Moscow Archaeological Institute, stated that Russian historical geography—as a concept—was extremely vague and obscure. Such opinions were later echoed by others. In 1932, Gilbert wrote: "The term 'historical geography' is vague for the historian and completely unclear for the geographer. The works that have appeared under this term differ sharply from each other in description and purpose."

In 1937, the famous French scholar Marc Bloch, in his review of a book by British scholars led by H.C. Darby, noted: "Our vocabulary is still not complete enough to provide a full understanding of the book titled *Historical Geography and its content*." In Soviet-era literature, even the existence of historical geography as a discipline was often denied. P.G. Saar argued that historical geography lacked a distinct object of study and claimed that only natural-historical geography existed, which dealt with the history of changes in the geographical environment.

However, during the 1940s and 1950s, V.K. Yatsunskiy published a series of studies analyzing the goals and tasks of the discipline, outlining the fundamental principles of historical geography. He argued that historical geography, as a historical science, studies both the geography of the past and natural-historical geography. In response to Yatsunskiy, L.A. Goldenberg argued that historians were not prepared to study the problems of natural-historical geography. Goldenberg, separating natural-historical geography from historical geography, defined it as follows: "Historical geography is a historical science that examines the historical-economic (population and economy) and political-historical geography of past peoples in connection with their historical-geographical environment." However, Goldenberg's definition failed to include historical ethnic geography, which is a significant omission. In the 1970s, a work dedicated to historical geography proposed that the discipline be divided into the following branches: natural, population, economic (historical-economic), and political-historical geography. It was suggested that issues such as the interaction between nature and humans, the impact of environmental conditions on societal development, and how humans utilize natural resources could be studied within this field. To conduct such extensive scientific research, it is crucial to have a strong background in both history and geography.

Some scholars emphasized that the history of geographical discoveries and explorations should not be limited to the history of geography but should also be considered part of historical geography. Based on the above, it is evident that scientific views on historical geography are diverse. When addressing historical-geographical problems, two main directions still exist—historical and geographical. Historical geography lies at the intersection of these fields and can be considered part of both. Just like modern geography, historical geography has its own branches, primarily consisting of four major divisions:

1. Natural-historical geography
2. Historical geography of the population
3. Economic (historical-economic) geography
4. Political-historical geography

The section on political-historical geography includes the geography of internal and external borders, political-administrative divisions, the location of cities and villages, as well as the geography of historical events, military campaigns, and national liberation movements. Economic (historical-economic) geography, on the other hand, has remained largely unchanged over the past few thousand years. It is important to study environmental changes for the development of human society and civilization, as alterations in riverbeds, the disappearance of valleys, the emergence of irrigation systems, changes in the borders of lakes and seas, forests, and the extinction of some species of fauna can be factors that lead to significant changes in human history. Since ancient times, populations have settled in areas with favorable geographical conditions. For instance, the Nile was crucial for the people of ancient Egypt, the Yellow and Yangtze Rivers for the Chinese, the Tigris and Euphrates for the peoples between the two rivers, and the Amu Darya and Syr Darya for the people of Central Asia. Natural geography also plays a role in the settlement or departure of populations in a specific area. All of these aspects are studied in the field of natural-historical geography.

The historical geography of the population studies issues such as the population of a particular region or state, its ethnic composition, and its size. The number of people and productive forces is considered decisive for a state's development. When studying the history of a state, it is also essential to examine its historical-economic and economic geography. This is because the improvement of economic relations, the development of trade, and the evolution of economic systems directly influence the development of societies, or conversely, their decline.

In the study of historical geography, various problems can arise. For example, the territorial changes of the Qarakhanid state in the 10th-12th centuries, the shifting borders of the Ashtarkhanyid state in the 16th-17th centuries, significant historical events during the time of Timur, the expansion and settlement of populations in the present-day territory of the United States during the 13th-19th centuries, the main trade routes of the Bukhara Emirate and the Khiva and Kokand Khanates in the second half of the 18th century and the early 19th century, and the political-administrative matters of Turkestan under the Russian Empire are all examples of issues in historical geography.

When studying the economic and political history of a state, it is important to first consider the development of its economic and historical geography. For example, when studying the historical geography of Central Asia from the 18th to the early 20th centuries, including the United States, the Russian Empire, France, China, Germany, and India, the political and economic geography should be examined first. These elements can include population size, its ethnic composition, the location of the population, which regions they inhabited, the state's borders, and the internal administrative structures of the region. The most challenging aspect of this study is documenting the economic geographical indicators of the area under study, such as the development and distribution of productive forces. After this, the main changes in economic and political geography can be analyzed. For example, the period of the American Civil War, the pre-reform and post-reform periods of the Russian Empire, and the pre-unification and post-unification periods of Germany are all part of this analysis. One of the important tasks of historical geography is to determine the political borders of past states, identify the locations of historical events, and study the topography of cities. This aspect of historical geography is closely related to the study of political events, the description of wars, their role in the change of state borders, and the activities of rulers.

### **The Formation of Historical Geography as a Science**

Historical geography as a science emerged in Western Europe in the 16th century. Its formation was

greatly influenced by two significant historical events: the emergence of humanism in Western European countries in the 15th-16th centuries and the Age of Great Geographic Discoveries. During the Renaissance, there was an increased interest in the ancient world. This interest led people to engage with the geography of the ancient era. The first work created in the field of historical geography was the "Atlas of the Ancient World," which was created in the second half of the 16th century by the Flemish geographer A. Ortelius. He included a modern world atlas as an addition to his work. Ortelius presented his maps with brief information about the ancient world. After Ortelius's work, historical geography became an established scientific field. According to Ortelius, his works could be described as "Geography in Historical Terms." It is worth mentioning that Ortelius accepted the information from ancient authors without a critical viewpoint and based his maps on these sources. This shortcoming was corrected in the 17th century by Professor Klyver of Leiden University, who wrote two major works on the historical geography of ancient Italy and ancient Germany.

French historians and geographers of the 16th and 17th centuries, such as the Sansons, V. Dyuval, and J.B. D'Anville, made significant contributions to the development of historical geography. They studied not only the historical geography of the ancient world but also the historical geography of the Middle Ages. From the second half of the 19th century, historical research in the field grew significantly due to the study of socio-economic historical data. One of the notable works in this direction was the publication of a book on the historical geography of England in 1936 by a scientific team led by G.K. Darby in Cambridge. This work was dedicated to the historical geography of England up to 1800. In Western Europe, scholars like A. Ortelius, F. Klyver, J.B. D'Anville, and G.K. Darby made substantial contributions to the field of historical geography.

In Russia, the founder of historical geography is considered to be V.N. Tatishchev. I.N. Boltin also paid great attention to the development of this field. From the second half of the 19th century, N.N. Barsov conducted research on the geography of Kievan Rus. In the early 20th century, the St. Petersburg Archaeological Institute and Moscow University began teaching historical geography. In St. Petersburg, S.M. Seredonin and A.A. Spitsin taught the fundamentals of this field, while at Moscow University, M.K. Lyubavskiy taught historical geography. A.N. Nasonov published his scientific research titled "Russian Land" on ancient Russian historical geography in 1951. M.N. Tikhomirov created a fundamental study titled "Russia in the 16th Century". The scientific works of I.A. Golubtsov were mainly dedicated to the development of historical cartography. M.V. Vitov, V.K. Yatsunskiy, V.Z. Drobizhev, I.D. Kovalchenko, A.V. Muravyev, L.A. Goldenberg, and M.I. Belov wrote scientific studies dedicated to the theoretical aspects of historical geography.

In the years following independence, Uzbekistan also produced a number of research works related to historical geography. For example, Sh. Kamaliddinov wrote a monograph on the historical geography of Southern Sogdiana and Tokharistan in the 9th-13th centuries, based on Arabic sources. O. Boriyev's work "Central Asia in Written Sources of the Timurid Period" discusses the administrative and territorial divisions, nature, economy, international relations, and toponymy of Central Asia in the 14th-15th centuries.

As mentioned above, historical-geographical research relies on sources rooted in the field of history. Valuable sources for historical geography include population registers, economic records, annals, and ancient geographic books. Archaeological, toponymic, and anthropological sources, as well as data from auxiliary historical disciplines, are of great importance for historical geography. Archaeology (from the Greek "archaeo" meaning ancient and "logos" meaning study) studies the life of society and human activity through material objects and ancient artifacts. For example, studying labor tools, jewelry, various vessels, and individual forts or dwellings can provide insights into the economic and ethnic history of the ancient and medieval periods. Archaeological excavations help us obtain data that may not be found in written sources.



## Conclusion

The history of geographical knowledge, as traced throughout this article, reflects a dynamic evolution of human understanding about the Earth, its features, and its inhabitants. From early mythological representations to scientifically grounded observations by ancient Greek scholars, the development of geography has mirrored the broader intellectual and exploratory growth of civilizations. The emergence of historical geography as a distinct scientific field during the Renaissance, influenced by humanistic ideals and global explorations, marked a pivotal moment in this evolution. Scholars like Ortelius, Clüver, and D'Anville laid the groundwork for integrating historical perspectives with spatial analysis, leading to the formation of specialized branches such as natural-historical, population, economic, and political-historical geography. These fields provide insights into how physical environments shaped civilizations and how societies adapted to geographical changes. In modern contexts, historical geography has become a multidisciplinary domain, drawing from archaeology, cartography, ethnography, and historical texts to reconstruct past landscapes and understand socio-political processes. Despite conceptual ambiguities in defining its scope, historical geography remains essential for analyzing territorial transformations, population movements, trade routes, and the development of political entities. The integration of historical geography with contemporary disciplines allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how past geographies influence present realities. As demonstrated in this study, the progression of geographical thought from ancient to modern times reveals not only the scientific curiosity of past scholars but also their enduring legacy in shaping current academic discourse and methodologies in both geography and history.

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