

The contemporary research of human geography is guided by 4 predominant philosophical thoughts. These philosophical viewpoints guide our interpretation of the facts observed, and techniques applied in geographic research, as well as the development of concepts, thus important to understand. The first philosophical perspective called empiricism, emphasizes the limit of pure reasoning, opposes an all-encompassing systematic philosophy. The vast majority of pre-1950s geographers can be classified as such. They consider facts prior to theoretical statements and ignored philosophical issues. The second, positivism, which gradually flourished with quantitative methods in the 1960s, is an extension of empiricism. Positivists believe that experience is the source of knowledge. But unlike empiricists, who oppose the generalization of observed phenomena, positivists promote the scientific method – they argue that geographic studies should be based on theory, testing hypotheses, and developing laws, just like other physical sciences. Besides, they believe that the world exists objectively independent of people's perceptions. The third perspective, developed in the 1970s, humanism is the exact opposite of positivism. Humanists hold that objective existence and subjective human consciousness are inseparable, so research methods and interpretation of research results are inevitably subjective products. Humanists do not have a standardized research method like positivists, and their research is individual and specific. The last perspective, Marxism, is an economic, political, and social worldview based on historical materialism. Part of this view includes the idea that the infrastructure (economic base) determines the superstructure (e.g., politics, law, social consciousness). And when the superstructure lags behind the development of the economic base, one should carry out reforms. Marxist-influenced, geographic studies usually focus on social and environmental issues.

These four schools of philosophy have been used to interpret many academic developments. For example, Marxism's view on the economic base determines the superstructure, and the superstructure plays a counter role to the economic base can help explain the development and prosperity location theory. Location theory is a theory that focuses on the geographical location of economic activities and addresses the issue of the geographical location of economic activities and the reasons for their formation (Haggett, 1967). The earliest research on the spatial structure of land use in theory and principle was conducted by J.H. von Thünen, a German classical economist and pioneer of locational theory. Thünen established a concentric circle theoretic model centering on municipalities and arranging rural land use around them, which laid the foundation for future research on the theory of urban land use structure. After the 1920s, Industrialization in Western countries has accelerated urbanization. This is the economic base of the 1920s century in Marxism. With such an economic base, in response to the problems such as the layout of urban functions, scholars in Europe and the United States have carried out the empirical analysis and theoretical hypotheses on the spatial structure of land use in terms of location, spatial structure, land rent, and price, and formed descriptive and explanatory theories on the geographic spatial structure of urban land use. These theories, as a part of the superstructure, in turn, reverse continued to promote urbanization in Western countries. After 1990, the world's political, economic, and technological landscape entered a historic stage of great reorganization and development. Globalization has moved the economy from regional development to integration. Against this historical background, modern location theory was born, and it has come onto the stage of economic theory with fruitful research results and plays an important guiding role for the global economy in the 21st century. We can clearly see that the location theory has been developing and improving with the evolution of economic forms, and the gradually enriched theoretic system has been also pushing back the economic development.

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