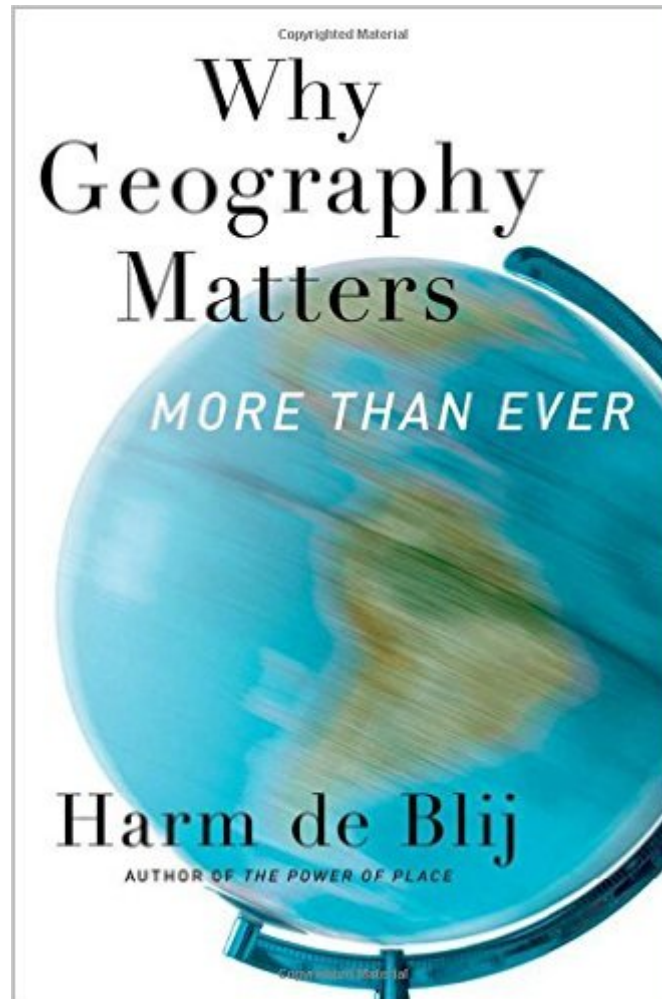


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Why Geography Matters: More Than Ever



Synopsis

In recent years our world has seen transformations of all kinds: intense climate change accompanied by significant weather extremes; deadly tsunamis caused by submarine earthquakes; unprecedented terrorist attacks; costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan; a terrible and overlooked conflict in Equatorial Africa costing millions of lives; an economic crisis threatening the stability of the international system. Is there some way we can get our minds around these disparate global upheavals, to grasp these events and their interconnections, and place our turbulent world in a more understandable light? Acclaimed author Harm de Blij answers this question with one word: geography. In this revised edition of the immensely popular and influential *Why Geography Matters*, de Blij tackles topics from the burgeoning presence of China to the troubling disarray of the European Union, from the dangerous nuclear ambitions of North Korea to the revolutionary Arab Spring. By improving our understanding of the world's geography, de Blij shows, we can better respond to the events around us, and better prepare ourselves to face the global challenges ahead. Peppering his writing with anecdotes from his own professional travels, de Blij expands upon his original argument, offering an updated work that is as engaging as it is eye-opening. Casual students of geography and professional policy-makers alike will benefit from this stimulating and crucial perspective on geography and the way it shapes our world's events. America, de Blij warns, has become the world's most geographically illiterate society of consequence. Indeed, despite increasing global interconnectivity and rapid change, Americans seem to be less informed and less knowledgeable about the rest of the world than ever. In this compelling volume, de Blij shows why this dispiriting picture must change, and change now.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Having completed high school geography 28 years ago and one year of geography and environmental science at uni 20+ years ago, I have retained a broad interest in geography and the world at large ever since. At first, I liked de Blij's style of writing and I found the book to be an engaging read. It certainly makes me want to continue to read even more more about History and Human Geography, particularly from the perspective of Muslim, African / African American and European scholars amongst others. In my opinion de Blij pushes an anti Islamic, fear China agenda and fails horribly in his chapter on Africa. It would be interesting to hear what people from the other continents have to say about the chapters on their continents, including China, Russia and Europe. To make one example from the book, de Blij writes that "Some economic geographers describe Brazil's relationship with China as a clear case of neocolonialism: in 2010 more than 80 percent of its exports to China were raw materials, while nearly all of Brazil's imports from China were manufactured goods, with a huge negative impact on Brazil's own industries. On the other hand, the growing trade in Soybeans has lifted hundreds of thousands of farmers out of poverty." What de Blij has failed to mention is that American owned companies such as South American Soy own thousands of acres of farm land in Brazil, and if the CIA World Factbook 2012 is to be trusted, then the agricultural industry only makes up 5.5% of Brazil's GDP. Brazil's unemployment rate is 21.4%. Industry makes up 27% of GDP and the services sector 67%. Brazil's agricultural sector is made up of coffee, wheat, rice, sugarcane, citrus, beef, cotton, corn and soybean.

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