Chapter 3: Canada’s People

Canada; a large country with a relatively small population.

Canada is a land of regions many of which are defined by their landforms.

Canada’s Human Landscape

Why do people live where they do?

***Population Distribution***

***population distribution*** = a description of where people have chosen to live in a particular country or area

***archipelago effect*** = a term used to describe Canada’s pockets of settlement as a group of islands

* People choose to live in different areas; ie: near the ocean or rivers, in agricultural areas or in forested areas.
* Canada’s settlement pattern is often described as archipelago as our population is spread out in pockets over 7500km
* Patterns show a large portion of Canada’s population near the border with the US but also many small “islands” of population spread across the country; normally situated around lakes or rivers
* Sometimes there are large distances between populated areas.

***Population Density***

***population density*** = a measure of how closely together people live in a given country or area

* Canada’s pop.density measured on a population of 31 million is about 3.1 people per/km2
* In comparison, the Netherlands has a pop.density of 400 or more per/km2
* It’s not that Canada’s population is very small, it’s just that Canada is very large and much of it is uninhabited.
* Main pockets or islands of population in Canada are…
  + St.John’s, Halifax, Charlottetown, Saint John, Moncton, Quebec City – Montreal, Kingston-Toronto-Windsor, Toronto-St. Catharines, Winnipeg, Saskatoon-Regina, Edmonton-Calgary, Vancouver-Victoria

***Site and Situation***

***site factors*** = features of the physical landscape (ie: fertile soil, lots of trees, lots of fish) that attract people to a particular area

***situation factors*** = factors involving the relationship of a place to other places; sometimes they are related to trade, markets, or transportation

* Reasons for locating settlements? Some examples are:
  + Transportation => where a bridge could be built, where two rivers meet
  + Defence => perhaps an island which offers protection; or harbor that offers protection from people AND weather
  + Access to Resources => to make it cheaper and easier to get resources out of ground/water

***Settlement Patterns***

***relocation*** = the forced movement of a group of people

***seigneurial system*** = a system of landholding that was used in France and, later, in Quebec; led to a settlement pattern of long, narrow lots facing rivers and roads

***township system*** = settlement system used in Ontario based on square blocks of 100 acres (40ha) of land

* Canada’s population patterns are a direct result of the interaction of history and culture with the physical landscape. For concrete examples, look at the number of First Nations territories in Eastern Canada that have been subsequently settled by European settlers (notably because of what the landscape and geography offered).
* Europeans often settled in Atlantic Canada in fertile areas like PEI, Annapolis Valley. When farming was not sufficient as an income source, settlers turned to fishing and a pattern of coastal fishing communities developed.
* New France – settlements arose close to rivers (ie: St. Lawrence) and the seigneurial system of long, narrow lots was used along the river. When roads were introduced as a further transportation method, then a secondary row of seigneurial lots arose around them.
* Ontario – river transport less important, and the township system of square farms approximately 100 acres was used.
* Prairies – land divided into grid pattern of 640 acres and then subdivided; a significant agricultural area.
* North – no significant European settlement until discovery of gold in 1858 and 1896
* British Columbia – settlement followed the development of natural resources; wherever they were, people settled

Growth and Decline of Settlements

***Growth***

* At Confederation, Canada was primarily an agricultural country.
* Atlantic Canada instead developed fishing, lumbering and shipbuilding.
* The west coast promoted fishing and lumbering (because of rugged coasts and mountains).
* Most of Canada’s big cities develop in the Great Lakes – St. Lawrence region because of site and situation factors.

***Classifying Communities***

* Even as we begin to classify communities, we need to realize that these communities are in change.
* Ways to classify communities:
  + Based on services they provide; villages have limited services while cities have many more services.
  + Population size
* Corridors (communities that offer a larger number of services) will often be created between city centres.

***Decline***

* 1881 = ¾ of Canadians lived rurally
* ***Industrial revolution*** = the transition from an economy based on agriculture to one based on manufacturing; caused populations to shift toward cities.
* In the past 60 years Canada’s population has shifted from 62% to 81% urban
* Urban = over a 1000 people or a population density of 400/km2
* It is challenging for rural communities to keep services while people begin to move to larger towns and cities; just look around your own communities.

Canada: A Regional Perspective

* Characteristics of Canadian regions can be divided into 4 categories:

1. Location = communities within a region share a geographic location
2. Physical and cultural characteristics = clearly defined like in the Prairies which is regionally different from the Shield.
3. Political perspective = while a region shares geography, it may not necessarily share the same political structure. For example, New England is geographically like Atlantic Canada but politically different.
4. Hierarchy = regions have smaller regions within them; for example Atlantic Canada can be further divided into the provinces that make it up.

***Introduction to Canada’s Regions***

Five regions in Canada:

1. ***Atlantic Canada*** – NFLD, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI; ocean climate, Appalachians, economic challenges; connection to New England; French & English speaking cultures
2. ***Central Canada*** – Ontario, Quebec; Great Lakes/St. Lawrence drainage system, extensive farmland; manufacturing; French & English speaking cultures; strong economic connection to US
3. The Prairies – Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta; prairie grassland w/ dry continental climate; agricultural connection to US; oil patch
4. British Columbia – dominated by north-to-south mountain chains; rainforests; connection to US west coast and Pacific Rim markets
5. The North – Yukon, NWT, & Nunavut; forest in the west, tundra in the east; predominant First Nations population; resource based; territories of federal gov’t

***The Core and the Periphery***

* The core is the center of a geographic region and contains the most developed area, greatest wealth and highest density population.
* The periphery is all the areas outside the core and is sometimes referred to as “the hinterland;” periphery supplies raw materials to the core
* Over half of Canada’s population is concentrated in southern Ontario and southern Quebec; most of Canada’s manufacturing takes place here.
* The Windsor-Quebec City corridor is the core of Canada’s financial and transportation services. Cities include, Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Quebec, Hamilton, St. Catherines and others. With Ottawa included it also gives this core political power.

Regional Identities

* Canadians will often identify with many regions (country, region, province, community) at different times.
* Often identity is created around historical and cultural events.
* Often regional identity is associated with industry or culture. Ie: New Brunswick identity might be that of lumberjack, or that of cowboy in the Prairies.
* Need to be careful to avoid identity being stereotyped. Stereotypes can be inaccurate and biased and promote negatives