

Canada and United States in the 21st century: A Glimpse on their politics, geography and economy

Dr. Mohd Tufail Chaudhary

M.Phil./PhD in Geography, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Post Doctorate, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

Currently: Assistant Professor (Senior Scale), PG Department of Geography, Govt. Post Graduate College Rajouri, Jammu and Kashmir, India-185133

Abstract

The United States (U.S.) and Canada have a special bond. Geographical similarities, shared ideals, shared interests, close personal relationships, and strong, multifaceted economic links have helped to establish the relationship between Canada and the United States. Border control, cooperation in foreign policy and security, bilateral commerce, and the continued implementation of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA)Footnote1 are just a few of the important subjects on which Canada and the U.S. cooperate. Additionally, we are dedicated to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, including by collaborating with Indigenous peoples.

Each physiographic province in both Canada and the United States has a unique set of landforms. An area having distinctive geomorphology and frequently a particular subsurface rock type or structural components is referred to as a physiographic province. The Rocky Mountains, Pacific Mountains, Valley and Ridge Geologic Province, Intermontane Basins and Range, and the Plateaus in between are the north-south mountain ranges that define the western section of the continent. The ancient Appalachian Highlands, a mountain range that is less rugged than the Rockies but no less influential on American history and civilization, are what define the eastern part of North America. The Interior Lowlands and the Great Plains are plains that make up the interior of the continent. The Canadian Shield, which is the oldest region of North America geologically and has poor soils, is to the north. The Atlantic Coastal Plain, a comparatively flat region that stretches from New York to Texas, is located at the southern and eastern extremities of the continent. In 2017, the number of people living in the United States went over 325 million. More than 36 million people presently live in Canada. There were 2.2 million more people living in the US in 2016 than there were in 2015. Less than half of the growth is attributable to immigration, with the remaining portion coming from birth rates. The rate of growth is faster than many other industrialized nations, including those in Europe, but it is slower than the global average. The United States actually has the third-largest population in the world.

Keyword: Geography, Economy, Politics, USA, Canada

Introduction

In general, the United States of America and Canada have good relations. The 5,525-mile shared border between the two nations—dubbed "the longest undefended border in the world"—as well as their similar history and moral principles tie them together. They have strong links in trade and business as well as shared security responsibilities with NATO and North American Aerospace Defense. In recent years, border security and cyber security projects have received a lot of attention from Canadian and American law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

The two North American nations continue to work closely each other bilaterally and through several international organizations on matters of international security and politics. Canada and the United States typically have similar foreign and defense policy. There have only been a handful of stark points of disagreement, as was the case with Iraqi policy. Since the attacks of September 11, the US and Canada have worked closely together to bolster border security and fight terrorism, notably in Afghanistan. Both nations took part actively in the NATO campaign in Libya, which was authorized by the U.N.

The largest bilateral trade relationship in the world, which has been bolstered over the past 20 years by the passage of two significant free trade agreements, still exists between the United States and Canada. The two nations have recently engaged in contentious discussions over items in a number of trade sectors, including natural resources, agricultural commodities, and intellectual property rights, even though commercial conflicts may not be as prevalent as they formerly were. The Buy America clause from the 2009 economic stimulus bill was the subject of the most recent dispute. However, only a small portion of the overall products and services exchanged are impacted by these disagreements. Energy has become a more important aspect of the trading partnership in recent years. Additionally, the United States and Canada collaborate extensively on environmental issues, including observing solid waste transfers and air quality, as well as safeguarding and preserving the standard of border waterways.

Although they are usually friendly, relations between the United States and Canada have changed dramatically over the past three decades. The "Shamrock Summits" in the middle of the 1980s—so named for the Irish heritage shared by the leaders of the two nations, Brian Mulroney and Ronald Reagan—as well as the 1989 U.S.-Canada Free Trade Agreement and the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement—were significant turning points in the relationship between the two countries during the 1980s and early 1990s. But for many Canadians, Ottawa occasionally appeared to have gotten a little too close to Washington, DC, casting Canada too freely in a supporting position.

One observer of Canada in 1994 noted that, in the realm of foreign policy, Canada "politely distances itself from the United States" in a number of ways. The newly elected Liberal Prime Minister Jean Chrétien summed up his opinion of the two countries' relationship in an interview that same year: "We like each other. Simply said, I don't want Canada to be seen as the 51st state in the union. However, many people think that this first display of restraint was merely for domestic consumption, and relations between Canada and the United States actually remained excellent. Meetings between Chrétien and President Bill Clinton are reported to have been cordial; the topics of discussion included environmental issues, collaboration on border security measures, and technology projects.

President George W. Bush met with Chrétien in February 2001. The topics of commerce, energy, and missile defense were covered. However, following September 11, coordinated initiatives to increase security both at home and abroad frequently took precedence over concerns with the economy and the environment. Canada became involved in the crisis right away and has worked closely with the US in the fight against global terrorism. Stephen Harper became Canada's 22nd Prime Minister and the first Conservative to hold the position in 12 years in February 2006, following the Conservative Party's come-from-behind victory in the election. According to observers, the Bush Administration and Harper's administration were more politically aligned in many respects.

However, despite the fact that Harper's Conservatives may have a similar policy outlook to the Republicans in Washington, there were still several areas where they differed, especially when it came to problems of national sovereignty.

Contemporary Domestic Scenario of Canada: Historical Background and Current Political Situation

By 2003, the Liberal Party, which had replaced the Conservatives as the government of Canada, was referred to as "Canada's natural ruling party."⁷ At the time, it seemed that maintaining a Liberal majority would be a sure thing, but in the early months of 2004, the "sponsorship scandal" broke out. According to a report from Canada's Auditor General, the Chrétien administration funneled \$100 million in taxpayer money for questionable contracts to Liberal-affiliated Québec advertising companies as part of a programme meant to increase support for Canadian unity.

National Unity

The position of French-speaking Québec, which is home to nearly one-quarter of Canada's population and is the country's second-largest province geographically, has been the subject of an impassioned dispute for more than 40 years. Many Quebecers fear that the rest of English-speaking Canada will trample on their language and culture. Some people think that Québec's society can only be sustained if it secedes from the rest of Canada and creates its own nation. A provincial referendum on Québec's "sovereignty-association" that was held in 1980 was lost 60% to 40%. After several years of provincial Liberal rule, Québec once more chose the separatist Parti Québécois (PQ) in the elections of October 1994. On October 30, 1995, the winning PQ staged a referendum on independence. In essence, Québécois decided whether they wanted to stay a part of Canada or break away on their own. The country should remain together received 50.6% of the vote to 49.4% against. Both separatists and federalists were astounded by the razor-thin margin. Almost two decades later, the effects of what has been referred to as a "near-death experience" are being felt throughout the nation.

The United States government has assiduously worked to maintain its official neutrality on the Québec question since the debate's inception in the 1960s. It has done this by repeatedly repeating a three-point "mantra": the United States enjoys excellent relations with a strong and united Canada; the Québec question is an internal matter that is for Canadians to decide; and the United States does not wish to meddle in Canada's domestic affairs. However, during the 1995 referendum campaign, several observers noticed a tiny "tilt" on the part of the Clinton Administration in favour of the federalists. The U.S. government would have to deal with challenging political and economic issues if Québec did decide to exit the confederation at some point in the future.

U.S.-Canada Issues of Foreign and Security Policy

Canada has traditionally placed a high priority on its relations with the United States for a variety of pragmatic and historical reasons. The two nations have a 5,500-mile shared border, speak the same language, have comparable cultures, and have important international interests. Although the amount of trade between the two nations exceeds \$1 billion every day, Canada's dependency on exports to the United States has led numerous governments to try to increase and diversify its global trade. The U.S. State Department claims that "U.S. defense arrangements with Canada are more extensive than with any other country." According to Michael Kergin, a former Canadian ambassador to the US, the defense partnership is "inter-domestic" in character.

Concerns of Environmental issues in USA and Canada

Mountain ranges run along the eastern and western borders of both the United States and Canada, with plains in the centre. In general, the climate becomes more drier and temperatures drop as you go across the continent from south to north.

Despite sharing a 5,500-mile shared border, the US and Canada work closely together to safeguard the environment. Through the International Joint Commission, the two nations have worked together to protect and oversee border waters, especially the Great Lakes, ever since they signed the Boundary Waters Treaty in 1909. The two parties ratified the Great Lakes Water Quality Accord in 1978.

The Kyoto Agreement was ratified by Canada in 2002, but in 2006 the government declared that emission goals had been exceeded. The Harper administration has set a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by 2020. It intends to accomplish that mainly by increasing the use of hydroelectric and nuclear power as well as oil sands carbon sequestration. However, it has also stated that it will coordinate its greenhouse emission strategy with the US. After declining to commit to a second phase commitment in June 2011, Canada announced its withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol in December 2011.

The diversion of Devils Lake in North Dakota's naturally overflowing waters is one point of discord. The Red River, which flows northward, receives extra water through a conduit that the state built for flood prevention purposes. The introduction of alien aquatic species could upset the ecological balance and jeopardize recreational fishing in Lake Winnipeg, into which the Red River empties, argues Manitobans who are opposed to the solution because the lake's water contains toxic chemicals from agricultural runoff.

Secondary wastewater treatment, the handling of predator fish and other invasive species transported into the Great Lakes by ocean-going vessels and the sustainability of the St. Lawrence Seaway among additionally environmental issues that the two countries have recently dealt with. A hazardous waste trade agreement was also reached between the US and Canada in 1986. More recently, transboundary solid waste shipments, particularly those from Ontario to Ohio, Michigan, and other US states, have been examined and have been the focus of US Congress legislation. The two nations are still debating how potential development in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge might affect the environment.

Geography: USA and Canada

The majority of North America is composed of up of the United States and Canada, which run from the Pacific to the Atlantic. These two enormous countries have a lot in similar geographically. Their eastern and western borders are framed by mountains, which enclose a wide plains region in the middle.

When humanity first arrived on these plains, they discovered a vast sea, but it wasn't made of water; it was made of grass. Dark, fertile soil lies beneath the gently rolling terrain. The grasslands eventually become some of the most productive cropland in the entire globe. The old, rounded Appalachian Mountains are situated to the east of the plains. The much younger Rocky Mountains, a spectacular ribbon of craggy, snow-capped peaks, are to the west. The Pacific Ranges, which follow the Pacific coastline, are located much further west. From tundra to desert to tropical savanna, these two distinct nations' borders contain almost every imaginable sort of climate. Both the eastern and western borders of the United States and Canada are bordered by mountains. Young, angular mountain ranges in the west rise above plateaus that fall to enormous, rolling plains in the middle. In the middle of the two countries, strong rivers and large lakes quench the thirst of towns, wildlife, and the surrounding vegetation. Until they meet the lower, more eroded

mountains in the east, the continent's fertile plains stretch across the entire surface. Although the Great Plains appear to be level, the ground descends progressively downward towards the Mississippi River's Central Lowlands at a rate of around 10 feet per mile (about 2 meters per km).

Demography: USA and Canada

At the end of the last glacial epoch, Asia sent its first people to America. Experts dispute on the exact date of their arrival; some believe it happened barely 10,000–12,000 years ago. The Bering Strait's sea levels at the period were low enough to permit travel across land between Siberia and Alaska, therefore the earliest settlers most likely arrived by land. Apart from a brief Viking intrusion around the year 1000 CE, which lasted until the advent of the first European explorers in the sixteenth century, the isolation of the American continent resulted from climate warming in the tenth century BCE that caused a rise in sea levels between the two land masses. The number of Native Americans who had settled on the lands of the United States and Canada, as well as elsewhere in the Americas, in 1492 was not determined by experts. Between a few hundred thousand to ten million are the range of estimates. On the huge demographic effects of the initial interactions, however, everyone is in agreement. Due to the disruption of the traditional economic system and the introduction of infectious diseases (specifically influenza, measles, smallpox, plague, typhus fever, and whooping cough), which had never before reached the American continent and to which its inhabitants had no natural immunity, the Native American population was decimated by the European conquest. This was not so much because of conflicts between indigenous people and conquistadors.

North America's three nations—Mexico, the United States, and Canada—are currently experiencing an advanced stage of the demographic change. A change from a demographic context with high, persistent levels of fertility and mortality to one with low levels of both characterizes this transition. Because the drop in mortality occurs before the decline in fertility in this pattern, it implies rapid population expansion. The history of demographic changes in Canada and its components before to the middle of the nineteenth century is extremely fragmented and is based on relatively local historical studies, the majority of which are those that focus on Quebec. Following a series of local enumerations, the first of which, encompassing only the population of New France, was conducted in 1666, the first modern census spanning the full national area was conducted in 1851. After thereafter, until the introduction of five-year intervals in 1956, the census was conducted every ten years. In 1918, the Federal Bureau of Statistics was established, replacing the numerous ministries that had previously been entrusted with planning and gathering census data. In 1971, this federal organization became Statistics Canada.

Canada has seen the lowest rates of mortality in North America since 1950, followed by the the United States. In that time period, the United States was on the verge of achieving this level. In the 1950s, Mexico's mortality rate was close to 17 fatalities per 1,000 people, greater than that of Canada and the United States, but by 2015-2018, it had dropped to little more than 5 deaths per 1,000 people, below that of the other two nations. These percentages are mostly explained by variations in the population age patterns of the three countries. While Mexico still has a young population that is currently benefiting from earlier declines in death rates, Canada and the United States have older populations. Net mortality rates obviously rise as individuals grow older. Over the course of the twenty-first century, Canada's life expectancy increased. In contrast to Canada, Mexico and the

United States have seen periods of stagnation - and even a tiny fall - in their life expectancy. According to numerous studies, the adult population in the United States is less likely to survive due to the rise in preventable diseases, which is primarily tied to the opioid crisis. However, Canada has noticed comparable patterns.

By 2020, the three nations in North America will have fertility rates that are below the replacement level of 2.1 children per woman (see Figure 4). Mexico experienced the three countries' quickest fall during the last seven decades. Mexico, the United States, and Canada all experienced declines in fertility of 26, 24, and 45 births per 1,000 people, respectively. The government's family planning programmes in Mexico, which began to enhance access to contraceptives in the 1970s and gave rise to other sexual and reproductive health regulations in the 1990s, were the main cause of this drop. Even though migration trends and demographic patterns have altered throughout the years, for the past 130 years, migration has been a key factor in the development of all three North American societies. Mexico has historically been a country of emigration, whereas Canada and the United States are two of the world's top immigration countries. There are a few cautions, but these tendencies have existed since 1950.

Regions of Immigrants

Even the Native Americans' predecessors originated on another continent. An ancient land bridge that spans what is now the Bering Strait may have allowed these people to travel from Asia to North America. In the 1500s, immigrants from Europe began to arrive. Others arrived in the centuries that followed from Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Many people choose to live on this property. Others were made to immigrate as slaves or exiles. Nowadays, the majority of people in the United States and Canada reside in cities. Major cities have a diversified ethnic population that reflects their immigrant heritage. The abundance of agriculture served as the foundation for the economies of both nations. As the region's main economic drivers, manufacturing, technology, and service industries have joined agriculture.

Conclusion

The largest bilateral trade relationship in the world, which has been bolstered over the past 20 years by the passage of two significant free trade agreements, still exists between the United States and Canada. The two nations have recently engaged in contentious discussions over items in a number of trade sectors, including natural resources, agricultural commodities, and intellectual property rights, even though commercial conflicts may not be as prevalent as they formerly were. The Buy America clause from the 2009 economic stimulus bill was the subject of the most recent dispute. However, only a small portion of the overall products and services exchanged are impacted by these disagreements. The majority of North America is made up of the United States and Canada, which run from the Pacific to the Atlantic. This pair Huge nations have a lot in common physically. Their eastern and western boundaries are framed by mountains, which enclose a wide plains region in the middle. When mankind first arrived on these plains, they discovered a vast sea, but it wasn't made of water; it was made of grass. Dark, fertile soil lies beneath the gently rolling terrain. The grasslands eventually become some of the most productive cropland in the entire globe. The old, rounded Appalachian Mountains are situated to the east of the plains. The much younger Rocky Mountains, a spectacular ribbon of craggy, snow-capped peaks, are to the west. The Pacific Ranges, which follow the Pacific coastline, are located much further west.

Bibliography

Charles Trueheart, Canada Narrows Its Foreign Policy Goals to Focus on Trade, Washington Post. November 17, 1994. p. A44.

Tad Szulc , Don't Take Canada For Granted, Parade Magazine. February 20, 1994.

Harper Tells U.S. To Butt Out On Plans For Defending Canada's Arctic." Canadian Press. January 26, 2006.

Canada: Martin on the Ropes in Funding Scandal." Oxford Analytica. February 25, 2004.

February 23, 2004. "Canada's Premier Acts to Counter Scandal." By DeNeen

L. Brown. Washington Post. February 17, 2004.

Magocsi PR, editor. Encyclopedia of Canada's People. Vol. 1. Toronto: University of Toronto Press; 1999. p. 300.

H. Jalal, J. M. Buchanich, M. S. Roberts et al., "Changing Dynamics of the Drug Overdose Epidemic in the United States from 1979 through 2016," Science 361, no. 6408 (2018): eaau1184, doi:10.1126/science.aau1184.

R. K. Masters, A. M. Tilstra, and D. H. Simon, "Explaining Recent Mortality Trends among Younger and Middle-Aged White Americans," International Journal of Epidemiology 47, no. 1 (2017): 81–88.

P. A. Muennig, M. Reynolds, D. S. Fink et al., "America's Declining Well-Being, Health, and Life Expectancy: Not Just a White Problem," American Journal of Public Health 108, no. 12 (2018): 1626–31. 7

N. B. King, V. Fraser, C. Boikos et al., "Determinants of Increased Opioid-Related Mortality in the United States and Canada, 1990–2013: A Systematic Review," American Journal of Public Health 104, no. 8 (2014): e32–e42.

F. Alba and J. E. Potter, "Población y desarrollo en México. Una síntesis de la experiencia reciente," Estudios demográficos y urbanos 1, no. 1 (1986): 7–37

M. E. Zavala de Cosío and J. Ferreiro, Cambios de fecundidad en México y políticas de población (Mexico: El Colegio de México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992).

Carl Ek, Coordinator and Ian F. Fergusson (2012) Specialist in International Relations, Canada US relations, Congressional Research Service.