



Introduction to Canadian studies from Nordic and Baltic perspectives

Summer 2021

Why studying Canada from Nordic and Baltic perspectives?

- An important nation in the world (The second largest territory / tenth economy)
- Many similitudes with Nordic and Baltic countries (population)
- Geography (lakes, mountains, rivers). Around two million lakes
- Trans-North perspective (North of North America / North of Europe)
- Geopolitical challenges (Arctic)
- Interesting example when it comes to migrations
- Protection of the First Nations
- Historical legacy: clash between two colonial empires

Identifying the Canadian model

- 1) The history of Canada
- 2) The federal organization
- 3) The philosophical approach of multiculturalism

The history of Canada

- 30.000 years ago, presence of indigenous populations, « the First Nations » (Cree, Huron, Montagnais, Micmac, Beothuk, Blackfoot). Around 1.000 A. C. came the Vikings (settlements).
- European Colonization (Giovanni Caputo, 1497) with the English Crown. At the beginning, Basque / Portuguese fishers.
- Jacques Cartier began the French colonization (1534). The French called « Canada » the territory around the Saint-Laurent.
- Many people from the First Nations / colonizers died because of diseases / The British colonies expanded
- Fur trade (beavers) with the presence of the company « Hudson Bay » (hatmakers...exportations to northern Europe)

The history of Canada

- Rivalry between the French and the English (French trappers...) with different alliances with the First Nations
- Beaver wars 1629-1701
- The colony « Nouvelle France » (Canada and Louisiana, Acadia and Plaisance)
- The French recognized the legitimacy of the Hudson Bay's company over Rupert's land.
- https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nouvelle-France#/media/Fichier:New_France_Colonies_Map.svg
- For the Hudson Bay Company
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hudson%27s_Bay_Company#/media/File:Ruperts_land.svg

The history of Canada

- Example of trading within the Hudson Bay Company
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hudson%27s_Bay_Company#/media/File:Indians_at_a_Hudson_Bay_Company_trading_post.jpg
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hudson%27s_Bay_Company#/media/File:Hbc_post_Lake_Winnipeg.jpg
- French and Indian war (1754-1763) with a confrontation between the French and the English
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_and_Indian_War#/media/File:French_and_indian_war_map.svg

The history of Canada

- The British colonists (/Iroquois, Catawba, Cherokee tribes)
- The French colonists (**Wabanaki Confederacy** member tribes, Abenaki, Mi'kmaq + Algonquin, Lenape, Ojibwa, Ottawa, Shawnee and Wyandot tribes).
- **Treaty of Paris 1763** (Deportation of French-speaking Acadians). Cajun population and identity
- At that time, conflicts of regulators in Northern America for the British Crown.
- Division of Canada (Upper Canada / Lower Canada) after the treaty of Paris (Spain had Louisiana). Most of the territories were unoccupied.
- Independence of the United States (1776). British loyalists moved to Canada

The history of Canada

- Rebellion of Patriots (1837-1838).
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebellions_of_1837%E2%80%931838
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Saint-Eustache#/media/File:Saint-Eustache-Patriotes.jpg
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rebellions_of_1837%E2%80%931838#/media/File:Young_Canada_Delighted_with_Responsible_Government_c092201-v8.jpg
- Attempt to have a Canadian republicanism (French, American and Haitian Revolutions)
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Nelson_\(insurrectionist\)#/media/File:Robert-Nelson.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Nelson_(insurrectionist)#/media/File:Robert-Nelson.jpg)

The history of Canada

- 1867 (Constitution of Act). Canada is established as a self-governing democracy (Constitutional monarchy + Parliamentarism)
- Rebellions (North-West Rebellion 1885) with Louis Riel (1844-1885) against the government of Canada
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Riel#/media/File:Louis_Riel.jpg
- Riel was a Métis leader of the rebellion, he defended Métis rights.
- Red River Rebellion (1869-1870)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Riel#/media/File:ProvisionalMetisGovernment.jpg
- The execution of Louis Riel increased the tensions between the French, English and the First Nations

The history of Canada

- Impact of the Transcontinental railroad to connect the different territories with each other and suppress the rebellions (connections between the East and the West territories)
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transcontinental_railroad#/media/File:LastSpike_Craigellachie_BC_Canada.jpg
- Klondike Gold Rush (1896-1899) with thousands of prospectors,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Klondike_Gold_Rush#/media/File:ChilkootPass_steps.jpg
- A rush in the Western territory of Yukon. Large waves of migrations to Canada (including from Northern Europe and Baltic countries) at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century.
- Canada sent troops to Europe to fight with the United Kingdom (casualties, impact on Canadian nationalism)
- Westminster passed a new status in 1931
- Great depression in the 1930s and many Canadian troops were sent during the Second World War

The history of Canada

- 1965 Canada adopted his current flag /1982 The Act that granted the right to Canada to write its own Constitution (The Queen signed the Act). Full independence of Canada as there is not need to have the approval of the United Kingdom to change the Constitution.
- Around 20% of French speakers. Strong identity of the province of Québec.
- Referenda of 1980 and 1995 on the possible independency of Québec (1995, just a short majority in favor of the « No »)
- No peaceful coexistence but the history explains the current form of Canadian politics and culture. The demand for « recognition » (Taylor 1994: 26), the base for multiculturalism and protection of minorities

Recognition for subaltern groups

- A politics of recognition (**self-esteem**)
- Breaking hegemonic narratives (the conquest of the Europeans) (Bhabha 1994)
- Resonances with the history of Nordic and Baltic countries

The federal organization

- Federal system (Ottawa)
- Provincial governments
- Territorial governments
- Territories (Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Yukon are under federal control since the Constitution Act of 1867).
- Provincial governments (legislative authority from the Constitution) with the devolution
- Provinces (sovereign jurisdictions of the Crown in Canada) with a lieutenant-governor. Territorial governments are ruled by commissioners

The federal organization

- 1870: the Hudson's Bay Company sold Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory to Canada (Graham, Yarhi 2020).
- First territory in Canadian history
- North-West Territories Act (1875): the territory could pass ordinances on roads, inheritance, justice, administration of justice, some civil rights (the rights of married women)
- 1912: the vast lands of the North-West Territories divided between Yukon (1898), Alberta and Saskatchewan (1905) and Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec (1912)
- 2014: the Northwest Territories Devolution Act granted similar prerogatives to provincial governments (control of lands and resources). No party politics, a consensus government
- Members of the Legislative Assembly

The federal organization

- Nunavut (85% of Inuit)
- Canada: one of the earliest modern federations in the world created by an **Act of Parliament in Westminster in 1867**
- United States (1787), Switzerland (1848) Australia (1901)
- Differences in language, religion, law, economy and even geography
- Two of the ten provinces (Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador) are islands
- Parliament's passage of the Official Languages Act of 1969: English and French are official languages. French is the language of the majority in Québec, large French-speaking minorities in Ontario and New Brunswick. New Brunswick is the only province to have declared itself bilingual in 1969 (Smith 2010: 76)
- Intergovernmental relations (redistribution of powers...) between provincial governments and the federal government

The philosophical approach of multiculturalism

- How is presented the notion of recognition in the text of Taylor? (15 mins)

The philosophical approach of multiculturalism

- Charles Taylor (1931-), one of the most famous contemporary philosophers building bridge between analytical and continental philosophies
- « Misrecognition »
- Dialectics of master/slave (Hegel)
- Notion of « dignity » (Taylor 1994: 27)
- Individualized identity with a notion of « authenticity » (Taylor 1994: 28)
- Equalization of conditions (abandon of the social hierarchy) (Taylor 1994: 38)
- Negotiation between universalism and cultural differences (Taylor 1994: 42)
- Model of « citizen dignity » (Taylor 1994: 51)

The philosophical approach of multiculturalism

- How do we address the « claims for distinctness » of French Canadians and of aboriginal peoples (Taylor 1994: 52).
- Law 101 in Québec that protected the French language in Québec (1977).
- In Québec, the notion of « collective goals » (Taylor 1994: 58) breaks the procedural society. A cultural community (Québec) that wants to survive in this multicultural society.
- No « complete cultural neutrality » (Taylor 1994: 62). « There must be something midway between the inauthentic and homogenizing demand for recognition or equal worth, on the one hand, and the self-immurement within ethnocentric standards, on the other » (Taylor 1994: 72). Pragmatic approach to go over political and cultural antinomies.

Conclusions

- The history of Canada reflects the clash of colonial rules. It is a decisive part of the history of North America
- Construction of a balance of power in an original federal contract (the Act of 1867). Politics of recognition for populations that were often opposed to each other (the French, the English and the Indigenous populations)
- Efficient regulation of deep cultural conflicts
- How do we articulate identity politics with cultural rights?

Some insights in the course

- Oral narratives (Newfoundland)
- Native studies (difficulties of the First Nations that fight for survival). How do the native artists perceive their own identity? How do they express a post-genocide culture?
- The specificity of Canada can be seized in multicultural narratives (connections between Canada and Nordic and Baltic countries). The integration of waves of migrations.
- The illustrations of the bilingual aspects of Canada
- History, contemporary art, literature are necessary to explore the outlines of the Canadian model

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Other sources

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zz440EuFK8Q> (The history of Canada explained in 10 minutes, 19 January 2019, last visit, 26 June 2021).
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