

CHAPTER TWO

North America



North America



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I. THE GEOGRAPHIC SETTING

- ▶ Includes Canada and the United States
 - Both “American”
- ▶ Hispanic/Latino: Refers to ethnic group of Spanish-speaking (or formerly so) people from Latin America and Spain
 - Can be any race
- ▶ Québécois: French Canadians from Québec

A. Physical Patterns

- ▶ Rocky Mountains: from Alaska to Mexico
 - Created by Pacific plate colliding with North American plate (200 million years ago)
- ▶ Appalachian Mountains: from New Brunswick to Georgia
 - Created by North American plate colliding with North Africa (much older, hence eroded)
- ▶ Central lowland: between Rockies and Appalachians (erosion and deposition)

B. Human Patterns Over Time

- ▶ Initial immigrants: Northeast Asia
- ▶ Second wave: Europe, Africa
- ▶ Today: largely Latin America and Asia
- ▶ Mobility of the population continues to be a defining characteristic of North American life

B. Human Patterns over Time

▶ Native Americans

- Bering land bridge: exposed by ice age
 - ▶ Later temperature rises led to water level rise
- Hunters crossed from Siberia to Alaska
- Domesticated corn, squash, beans
 - ▶ Subsequent urbanization (Cahokia: 30,000 people)
- Killed by disease, warfare with European settlers
 - ▶ 1492: about 18 million Native Americans
 - ▶ 1907: about 400,000 Native Americans
 - ▶ 2000: about 2.5 million Native Americans

Cahokia in 1150

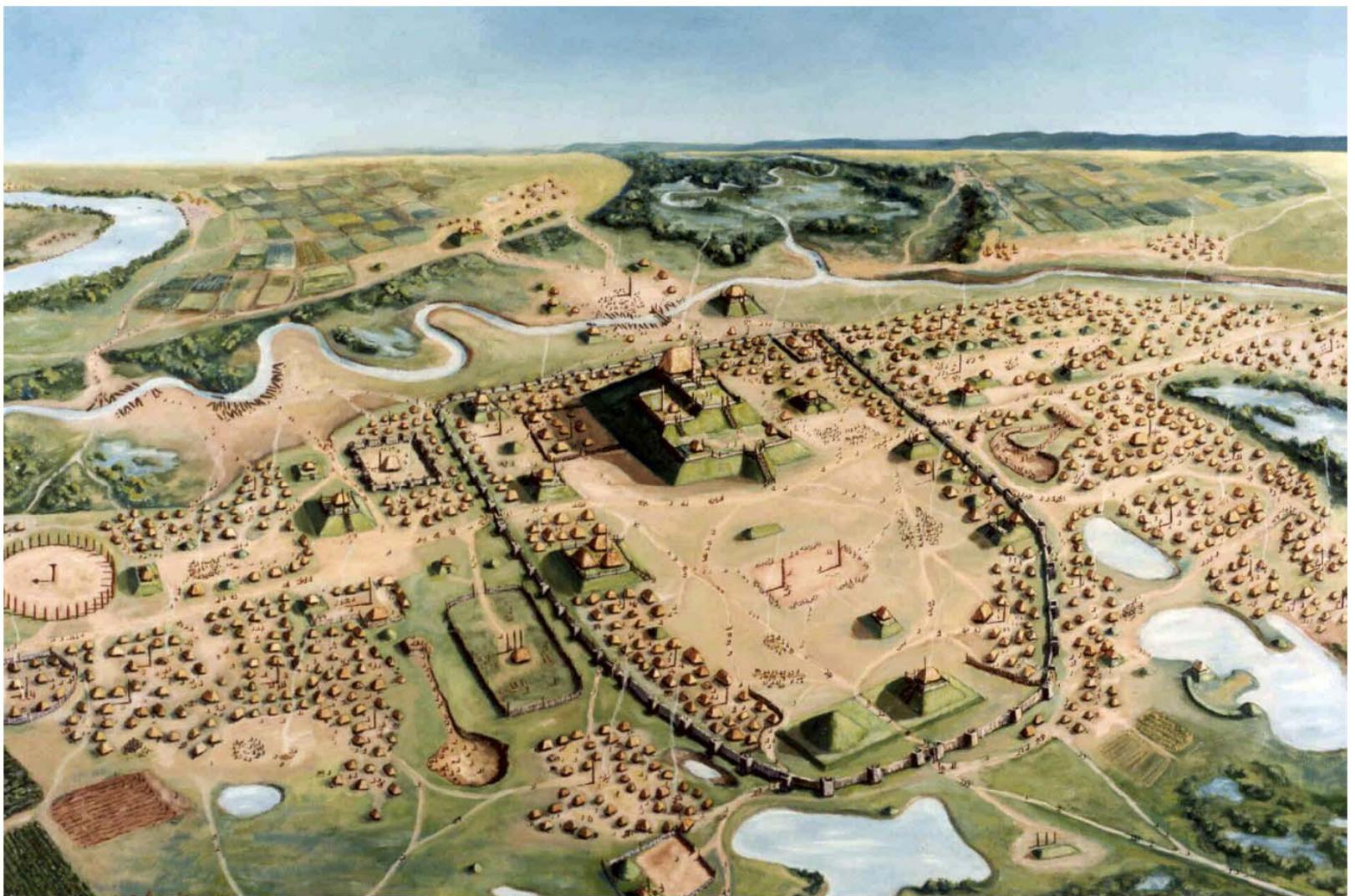


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B. Human Patterns over Time

▶ Southern Settlements

- Plantation agriculture facilitated by slavery
- Vast disparities, even among whites
 - ▶ Only 12% of population were plantation owners
 - ▶ No local market for goods
- Civil War marked end of slavery-based plantation system
 - ▶ Subsequent impoverishment

B. Human Patterns over Time

▶ Northern Settlements

- Originally, subsistence farming
 - ▶ Also, timber, trapping, fishing
- Industrialization begins in 1700s and 1800s
 - ▶ Metalworks, pottery, textiles, glass
- Later economically surpassed by Mid-Atlantic states

B. Human Patterns over Time

- ▶ Economic core (Mid-Atlantic states of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland)
 - Fertile soils, less harsh climate, great ports
 - Success of agriculture and industry
 - Connections west through Appalachians
 - ▶ Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin
 - Importance of steel industry

B. Human Patterns over Time

▶ The Great Plains

- Settled by farmers trying to adapt to more arid conditions than found in Europe
- Excellent soils
- “Dust Bowl” phenomenon of 1930s led to migration to West Coast

B. Human Patterns over Time

- ▶ Mountain West and Pacific Coast
 - Drawn by moist farmland, gold rush
 - Logging becomes critical
 - ▶ Clear-cutting: removal of all trees, regardless of age, type, etc.
 - Mormons: Migrants into today's Utah
 - ▶ Significant influence today

B. Human Patterns over Time

► Southwest

- Settled by the Spanish, from Mexico
- Taken from Mexico by 1850
- Agriculture becomes critical in California; tremendous government subsidies and environmental modification

B. Human Patterns over Time

- ▶ European Settlement and Native Americans
 - Native Americans forced to arid western lands
 - Reservations compose about 2% of USA and 20% of Canada
 - Alcoholism and unemployment (wards of the state) have been high
 - ▶ Some Native Americans receiving compensation for stolen land, from mineral wealth, legalized gambling, etc.

Choctaw Manufacturing Plant



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Courtesy of
Mississippi
Band
Choctaw
Indians.

C. Population Patterns

- ▶ 332 million people; unevenly distributed
- ▶ 90% of Canadians live within 100 miles of the U.S. border
 - 60% live in the Great Lakes region
- ▶ Northeast and Great Lakes still most heavily populated in USA
 - However, the South and the West have attracted large groups of internal and external immigrants

Population Distribution



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Population Distribution Over Time

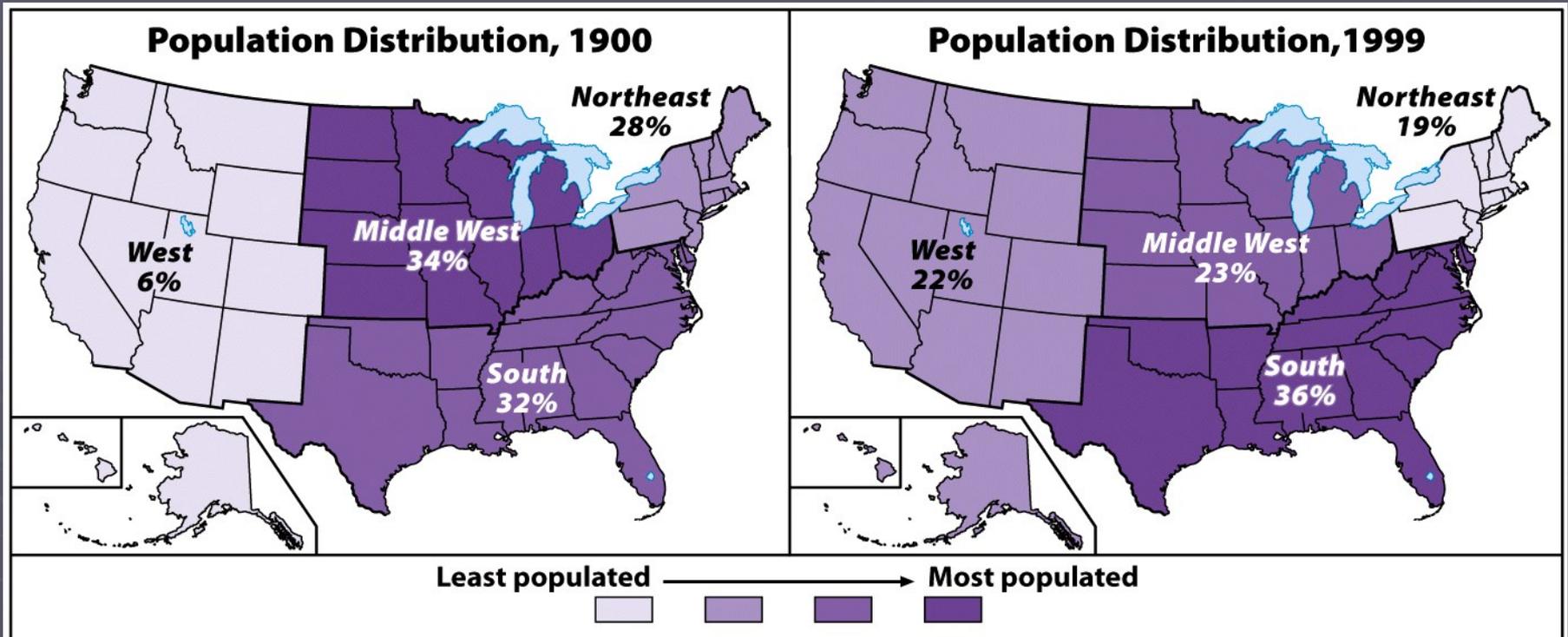


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C. Population Patterns

- ▶ Americans are very mobile – one in five moves every year
- ▶ 5000 immigrants arrive in the United States every day
 - Regions can experience gains or losses over time as the population doubles within the next 120 years
- ▶ Natural increase is low
 - Immigration adds to overall population growth

II. CURRENT GEOGRAPHIC ISSUES

- ▶ North America: politically and economically privileged, however:
 - Challenged by globalization
 - Decline in global opinion for U.S.-led War on Terror and invasion of Iraq
 - Over-dependent on oil

Sources of Crude Oil

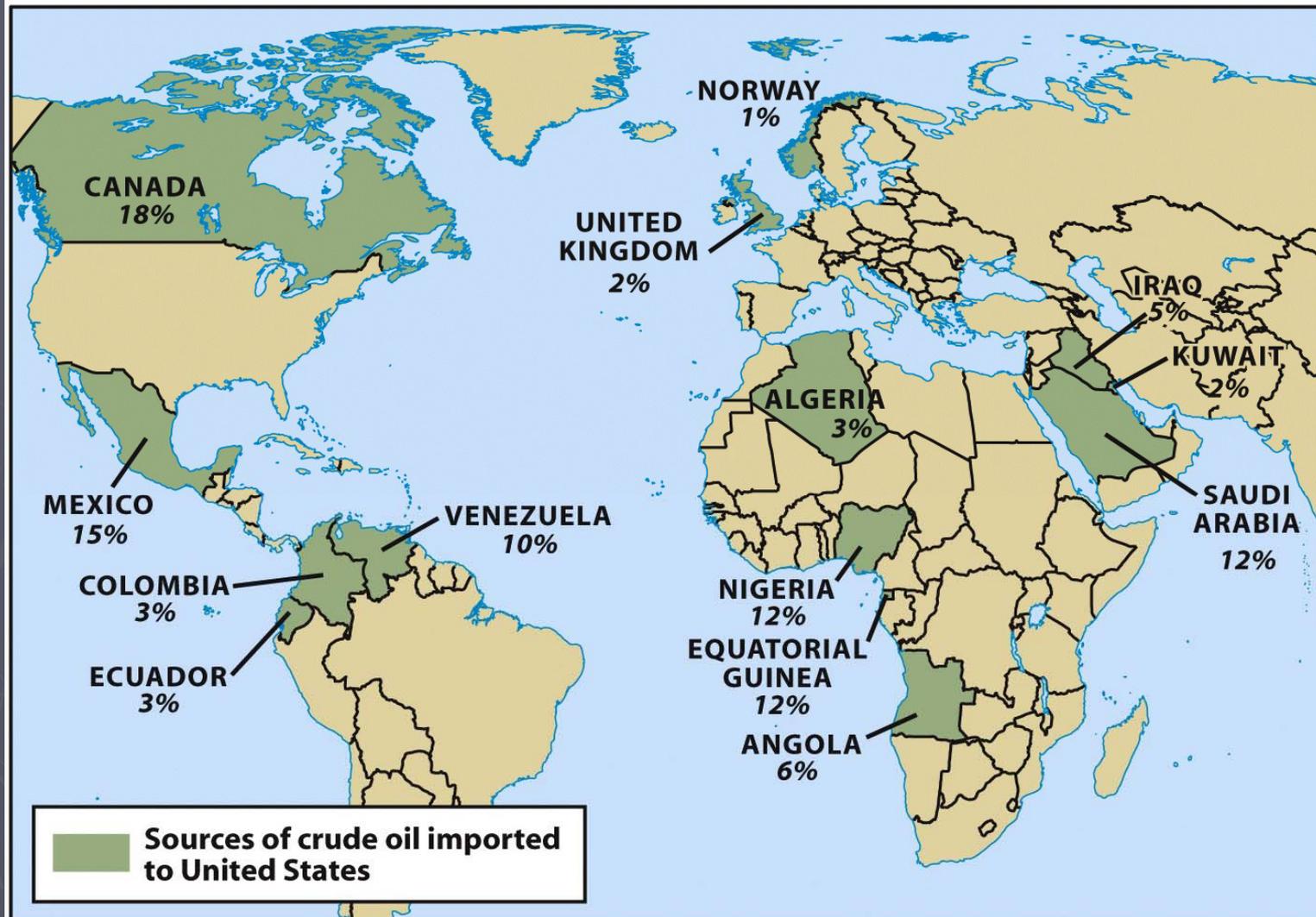


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A. Relationships Between Canada and the United States

- ▶ Asymmetries (imbalances)
 - U.S. population is almost 10x size of Canada
 - U.S. economy (\$12.4 trillion annually) is 10x that of Canada (\$1.11 trillion annually)
 - U.S. is global superpower; Canada most concerned with U.S.-Canada relationship

A. Relationships Between Canada and the United States

► Similarities

- Both are former British colonies
- Both are federations and representative democracies
- Similar legal systems
- Longest unfortified border in the world
- Similar patterns of ethnic diversity
- U.S. and Canadian cities and suburbs look alike

A. Relationships Between Canada and the United States

▶ Interdependencies

- Each is the other's largest trading partner
 - ▶ \$1 trillion annually
- Canada more dependent on U.S.
 - ▶ 85% of Canadian exports
 - ▶ 59% of Canadian imports
 - ▶ Still, 1 million American jobs depend on trade with Canada

U.S.-Canada Relationship

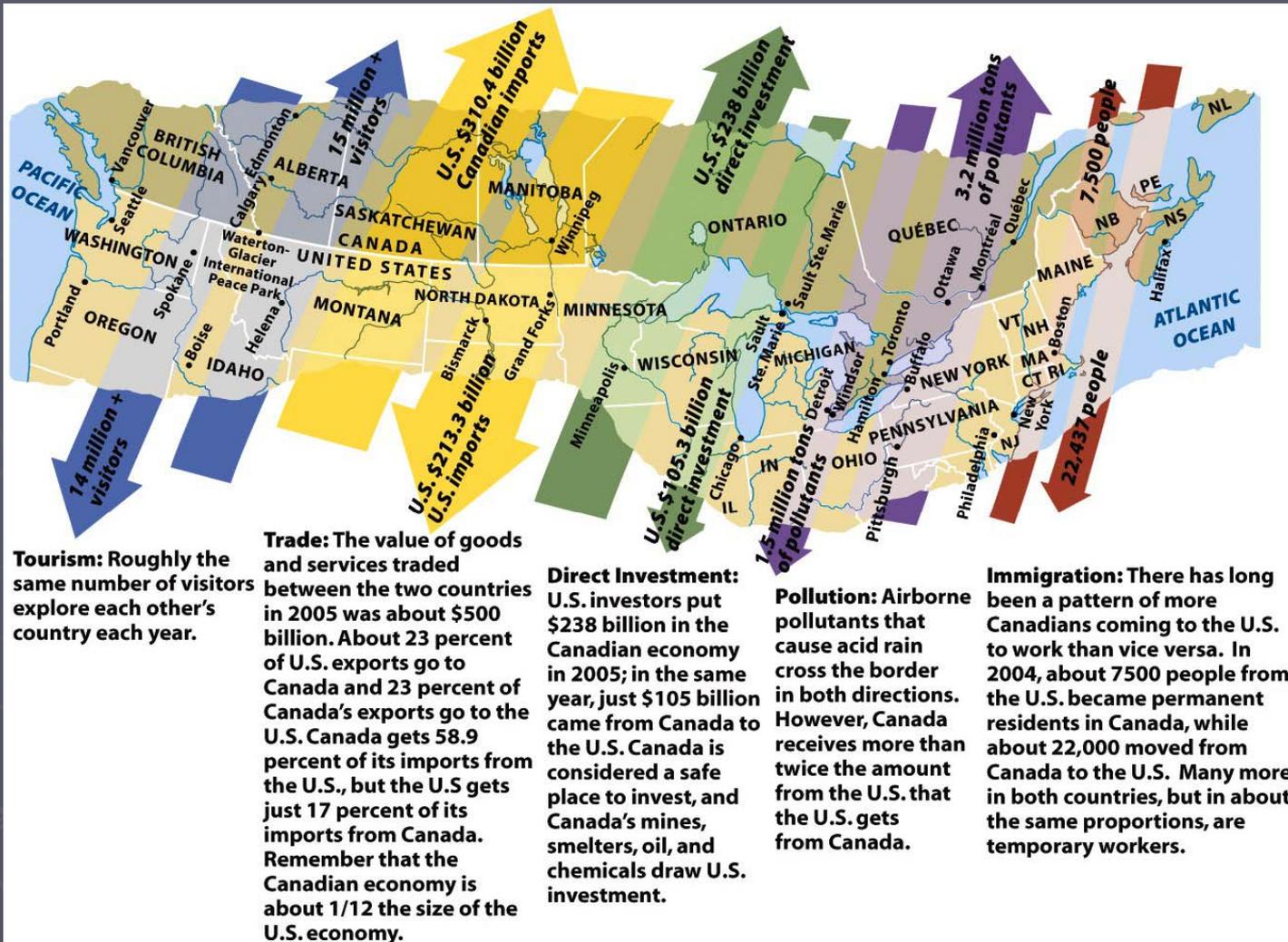


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B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Both countries have transitioned together:
 - Industrial economy, then service-oriented
- ▶ Still, different approaches to:
 - Unemployment
 - Health care
 - International relations

B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Changing Agricultural Economy
 - Small percentage (2%) of population
 - ▶ Domestic consumption (70-80%)
 - ▶ Export (20-30%)
 - 1.7% of North American GDP
 - Mechanized agriculture has largely replaced family farms
 - ▶ Genetic engineering
 - Shift from agriculture to agribusiness
 - ▶ Depressed local economies

North American Agriculture

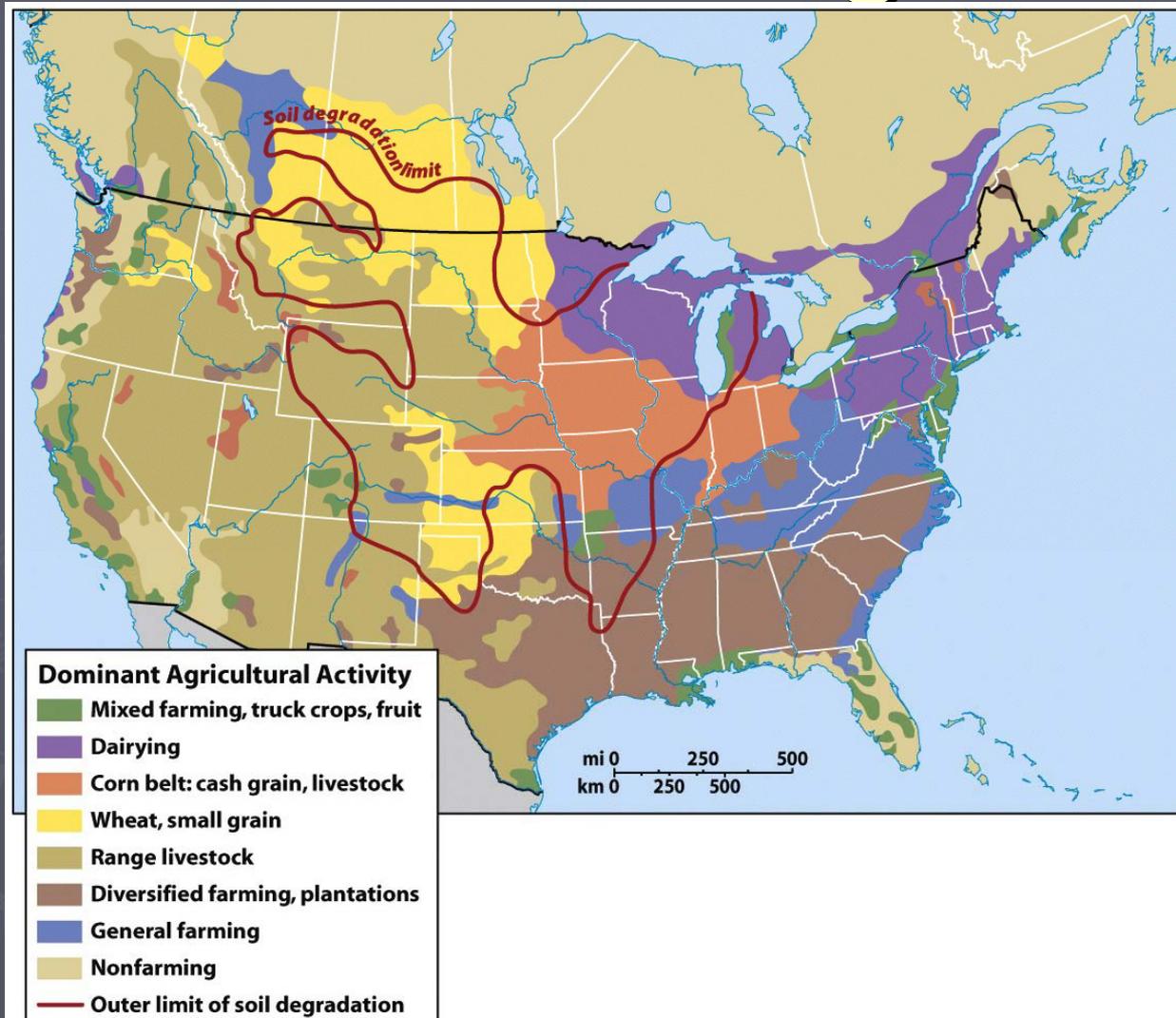


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B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Changing Transport Networks and the North American Economy
 - Decentralizing of production
 - Aided by post-WWII construction of Interstate Highway System
 - ▶ 45,000 miles
 - Hub-and-spoke model of air transportation
 - ▶ Selection of some major airports as major nodes of network
 - ▶ 700 million passengers annually

B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ New Service and Technology Economy
 - Broad and varied service sector dominates the economy
 - Decline in Manufacturing Employment
 - ▶ Relocation of many low skilled jobs overseas
 - ▶ Automation reduces the demand for labor

B. Economic and Political Issues

▶ Growth of the Service Sector

- 2000: 75% of North America's GDP and 70-80% of jobs
- Two primary categories
 - ▶ Advanced training and high paying: lawyers, advertising, etc.
 - ▶ Low-skilled jobs with very low wages: Wal-Mart and Manpower, Inc. (two largest employers in USA)

B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Knowledge Economy: management of information
 - Finance, publishing, media, higher education, research
- ▶ Special focus on Information Technology industry
 - 5% of world's pop., 22% of world's Internet users
 - 2006: 68% of North Americans use the Internet
 - ▶ 16% of the world's population use the Internet
 - Digital Divide

B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Globalization and the Economy
 - North America: extensive trading network, clout in global trade organizations (WTO, etc.)
 - Proponent of free trade
 - ▶ U.S., Canada still protect key industries from competition
 - NAFTA
 - ▶ Worsening U.S trade deficit
 - ▶ Dislocation of jobs

B. Economic and Political Issues

▶ The Asian Link

- Asia surpassed Europe as North America's biggest trading partner
 - ▶ Not just American companies producing in China, etc.
- Japanese, Korean auto plants located in the rural eastern U.S.
 - ▶ Toyota employs 38,000 Americans

Toyota in Kentucky



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AP Photo/Al
Behrman.

B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ New Competition from Developing Economies for IT Jobs
 - Information Technology jobs are increasingly outsourced
 - Forecast: 3.8 million jobs lost by 2020
 - Going to India, China, SE Asia, Central Europe, Russia
- ▶ Advantages: cost (~15% of U.S. salaries)
- ▶ Disadvantages: Language skills, time zone changes, travel costs

B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Canadian and U.S. Responses to Economic Change
 - Canada: extensive unemployment insurance; higher taxes
 - USA: little unemployment insurance; lower taxes
- ▶ Outcomes:
 - Canada: higher unemployment, slow growth
 - USA: higher crime and drug use; ill health

B. Economic and Political Issues

▶ Health Care and Job Creation

- U.S. firms locating in Canada to take advantage of universal health care
 - ▶ Canada: 100% coverage, USA: 40 million uninsured
- U.S. spends 14.6% of GDP, Canada 9.6%
 - ▶ Canada ranks higher on most indicators of health

Health-Related Indexes

TABLE 2.1 Health-related indexes for Canada and the United States

Country	Health-care costs as percentage of GDP ^a	Percentage of population fully insured	Deaths per 1000	Infant mortality per 1000 live births	Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births	Life expectancy at birth (years)	Health expenditures per capita (PPP U.S.\$) ^a
Canada	9.6	100	7.5	5	6	79	2931
United States	14.6	66	8.3	7.3	17	77	5274

^aData from 2002; PPP = purchasing power parity.

Sources: *United Nations Human Development Report 2005* (New York: United Nations Development Programme), Table 6 and Table 10; World Resources Institute, "Population, health, and human well-being," at http://earthtrends.wri.org/pdf_library/data_tables/pop2_2005.pdf, in *Health Care Spending in 23 Countries*, at <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com> and http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Health/O_Canada.html.

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B. Economic and Political Issues

- ▶ Systems of Government: Shared Ideals, Different Trajectories
 - Both have federal governments with executive, legislative, and judiciary branches
 - Canada: strong federal government has become weaker
 - U.S.: limited federal government has extended its powers

B. Economic and Political Issues

▶ Gender in National Politics and Economics

- U.S.: women tend to represent rural districts
- Canada: women tend to represent urban districts
 - ▶ Tiny minority of North American elected officials
- Women earn approximately 62% of men's wages
 - ▶ Gender equality in college attendance
 - ▶ Women comprise about half of the labor force in both countries
 - ▶ U.S. Men: 70% of US executive positions

C. Sociocultural Issues

▶ Urbanization

- Over 80% of North Americans live in metropolitan areas
- Suburban development drew large populations out of the inner cities
 - ▶ Brownfields: Old industrial sites left behind
 - ▶ ~ 1/2 of the largest U.S. cities have nonwhite majorities

B. Sociocultural Issues

▶ Urbanization

- Dense nodes: small regions with dense populations
 - ▶ Linked to high-tech industries
- New Urbanism/Gentrification: attempts to re-invest in inner cities, often displacing the poor
- Megalopolis: Several cities coalescing together
 - ▶ E.g., Boston-New York-Philadelphia-Baltimore-Washington, DC
- Urban Sprawl: The growth of low-density urbanization outward from central cities
 - ▶ Detrimental to environment

Urban Sprawl in Phoenix, AZ

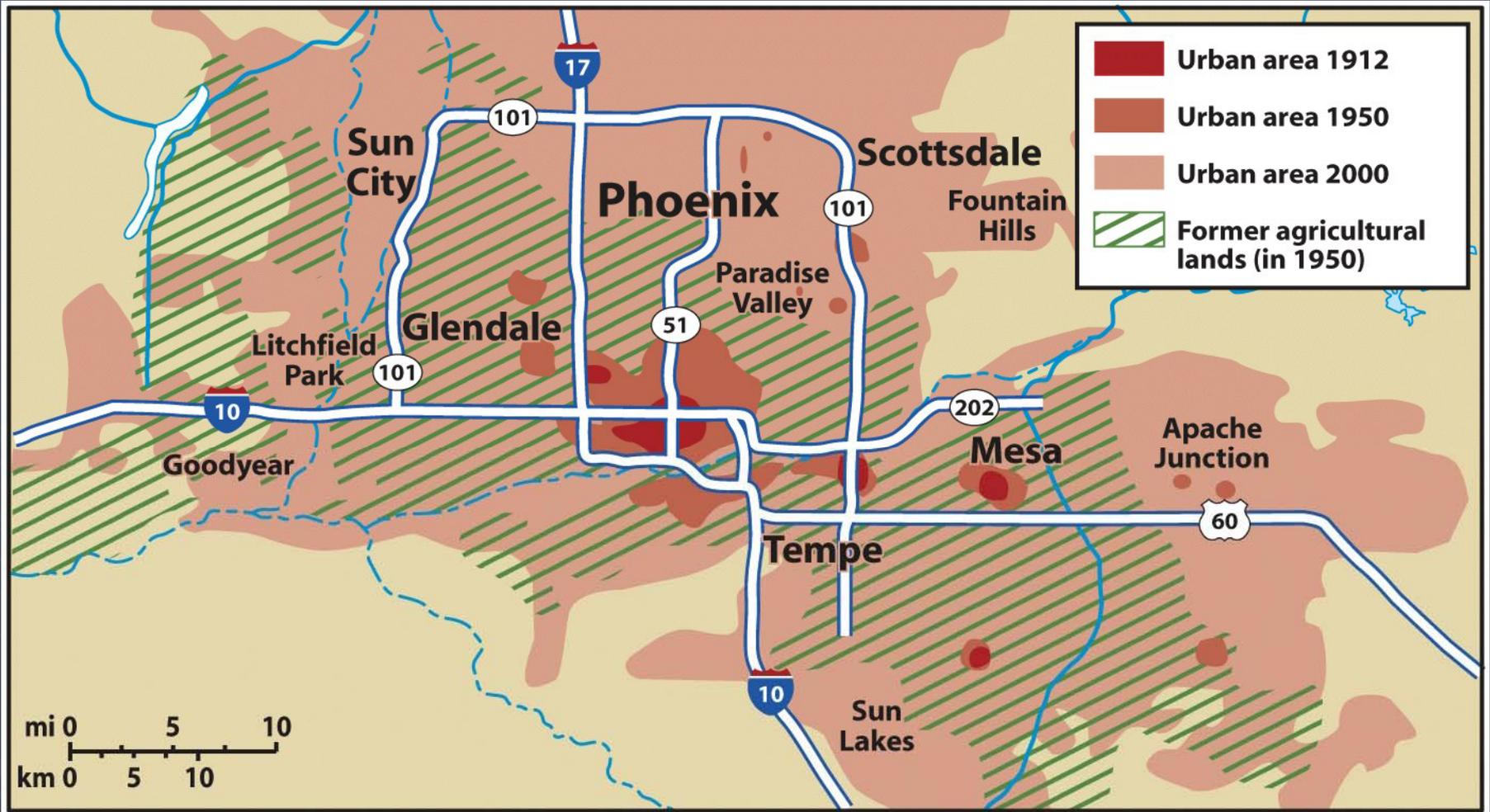


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B. Sociocultural Issues

▶ Immigration

- Chain migration: immigrant groups tend to settle near others like them
 - ▶ U.S. example: Scandinavians to the upper Midwest
 - ▶ Canadian example: Asians to Vancouver
- By 1990s: North America's immigration switched from Europe to mainly Latin America, the Caribbean, and Asia

Sources of Legal U.S.

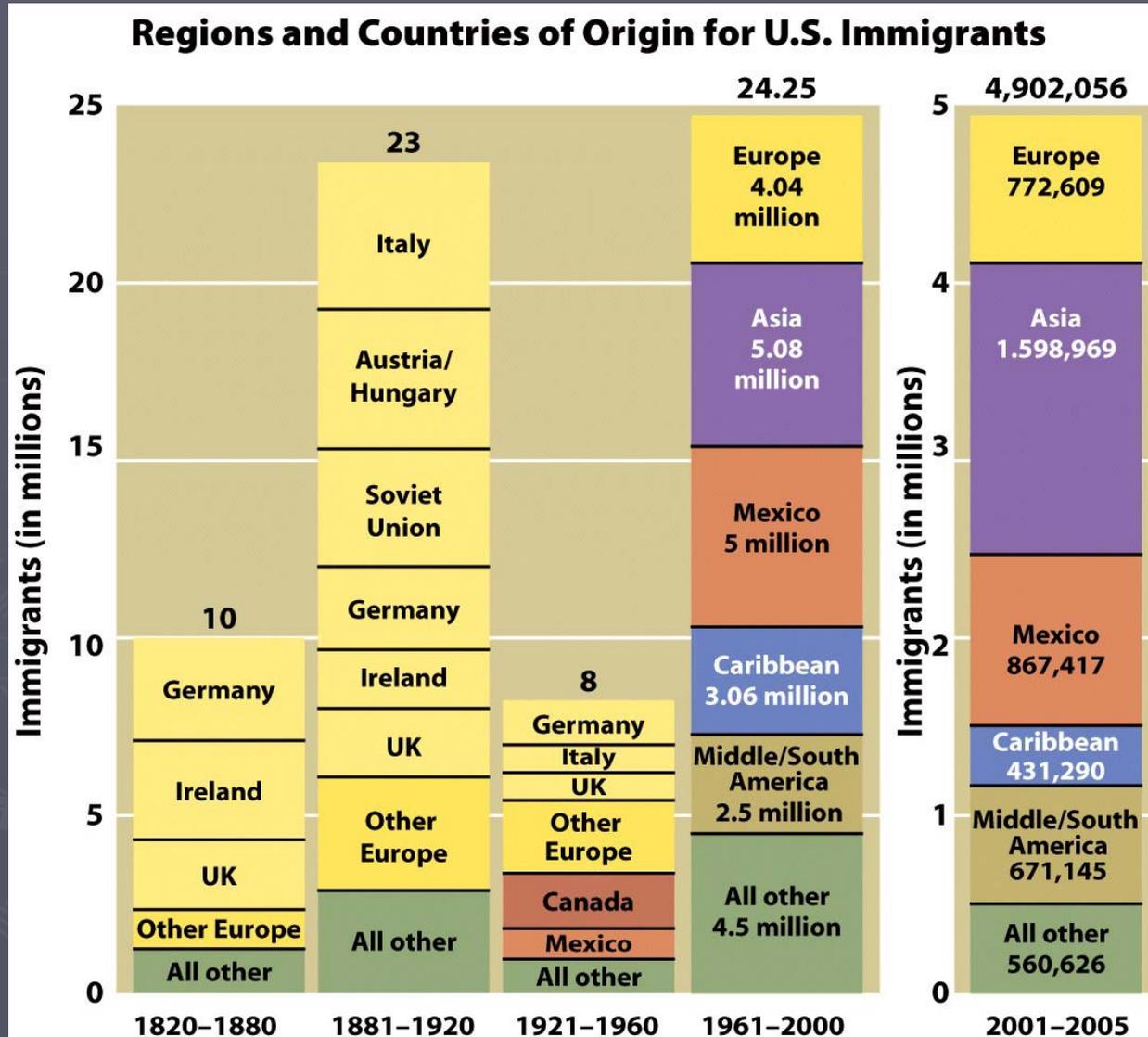


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B. Sociocultural Issues

▶ Diversity and Immigration

- Urban areas of both countries very diverse
- Canada: generally more receptive
 - ▶ Immigrants encouraged to use native language in school, holdover from Quebec
- USA: Increasing concern over immigration
 - ▶ Tied to security concerns after 9/11/01

B. Sociocultural Issues

- ▶ Race and Ethnicity in North America
 - Racism in North America: historically linked to people of African heritage
 - ▶ Legal barriers have been removed but differences in well-being remain
 - ▶ Poverty, underachievement, and poor health linked largely to economic class
 - Common to many minorities
 - Hispanics now largest minority in USA
 - Growing disparity between rich and poor

U.S. Population by Race and Ethnicity

U.S. Population by Race and Ethnicity, 1950, 2004, and 2050 (projected)

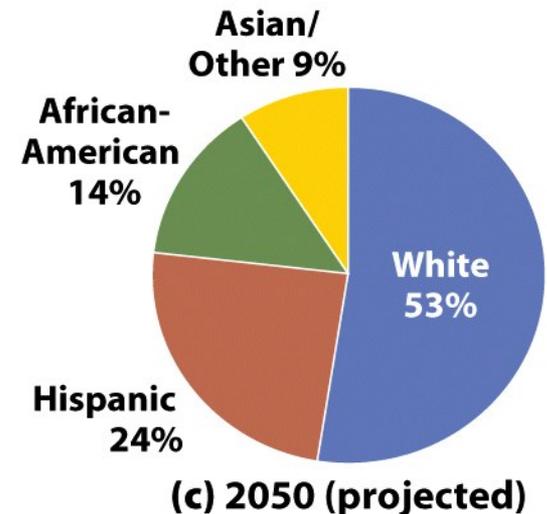
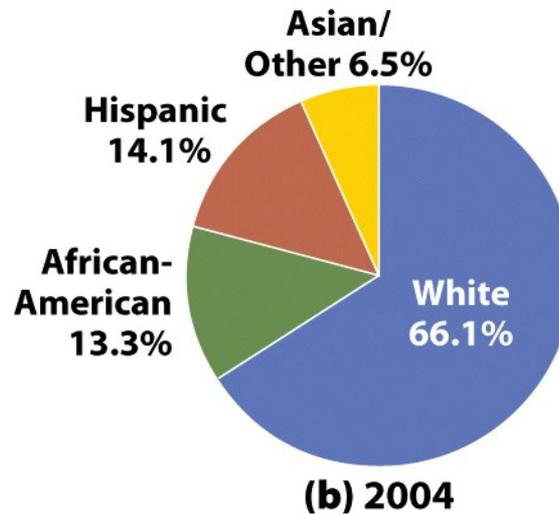
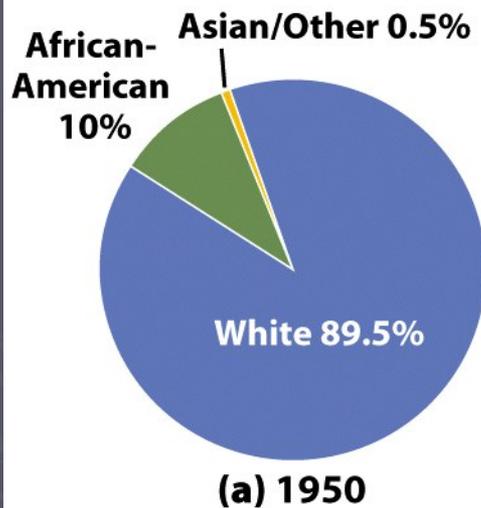


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III. SUBREGIONS OF NORTH AMERICA



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A. New England and the Atlantic Provinces

- ▶ Early European cultural hearth
- ▶ Poor farmland, but good forestry and fishing
 - Depletion of fishing stocks
 - Also, rustic tourism and retirement economies
- ▶ Boston: center for high-tech industry
 - Increasing cultural diversity in city areas

New England-style House



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Stephen Saks
Photography/
Alamy

B. Québec

- ▶ Most culturally distinct part of North America
- ▶ French colonization of 1700s
 - Long-lot system still in place
- ▶ Resource economy based on North Québec
 - Montréal: resource transportation and processing
- ▶ Quiet Revolution: assertion of Québécois identity and power

Quebec City



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C. The Old Economic Core

- ▶ Deindustrialization: produced 70% of North American steel and engine parts in 1975
 - Today, manufacturing-based cities suffering (Detroit, Pittsburgh) – “The Rust Belt”
 - Service-based cities thriving (New York, Toronto, Chicago)
- ▶ Lingering social problems caused by economic dislocation

The Rust Belt

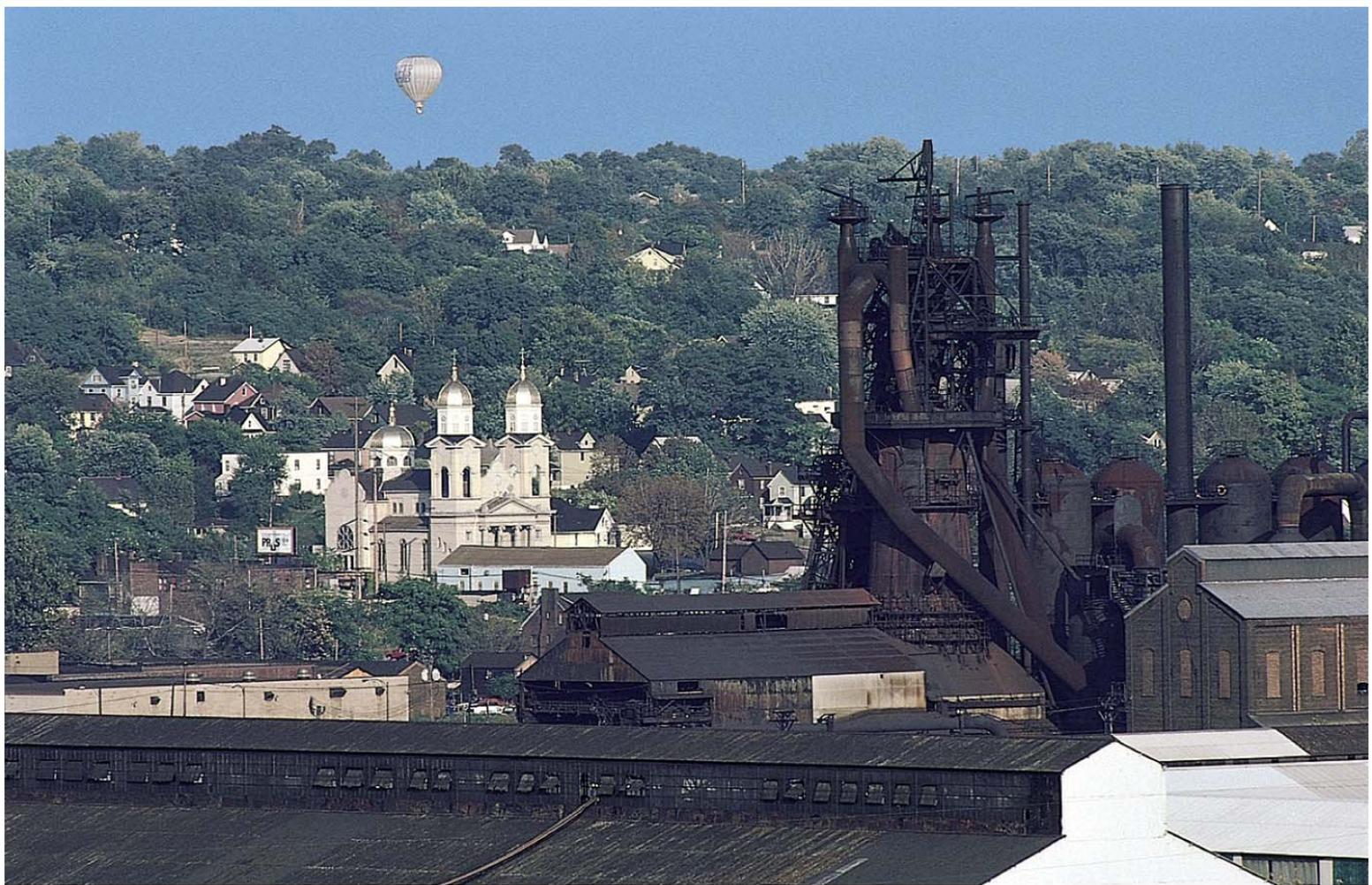


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D. The American South

- ▶ Difficult to map
- ▶ More residential integration than the Old Economic Core; increasingly diverse
 - Hispanic and African-American in-migration from 1990s-present
- ▶ Substantial poverty but improving
- ▶ Light manufacturing in addition to economies of tourism and retirement

Mexican-owned Strip Mall



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E. The Great Plains Breadbasket

- ▶ Immense grain production
 - Also, soybeans, sugar beets, sunflowers
- ▶ Cattle ranching in more arid regions
 - Soil erosion (16x faster than replaced)
- ▶ Unpredictable continental climate
- ▶ Rural areas losing population to cities

Southwestern Kansas



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F. The Continental Interior

- ▶ Enormous; extremes of landscape
- ▶ Low population densities
 - Fewer than 2 people per square mile
- ▶ Largest concentrations of Native Americans
- ▶ Most land owned by Federal governments
 - Leased out for mining and oil drilling
 - Alaskan pipeline

Irrigation in Nevada



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G. Pacific Northwest

- ▶ Economy: was logging, fishing, farming
 - Now shifting to information technology
 - Continuing export of lumber
 - Cultural conflict over natural resources
- ▶ Mild climate, orographic effect
- ▶ Glaciated coastline
- ▶ Economic and social innovation

Clear-cutting in Washington



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H. Southern California and the Southwest

- ▶ Warm, dry climate
- ▶ Cultural and economic linkages to Mexico
 - Tension regarding immigration
- ▶ CA Central Valley: leading producer of fruits and vegetables in the USA
- ▶ Diverse economies: oil, chemicals, aerospace, information technologies

Migrant Farmworkers



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