

Unit 3: Tourism and Culture

Culture: the distinctive practices & beliefs of a society, the way of life shared by a group

- Culture includes the following:

language	religion	customs	art
traditions	music	values	drink
celebrations	dance	beliefs	food
literature	history	theatre	

- A society is moulded by its culture.
- Culture shapes a lifestyle.

At times when people interact in a culture that is foreign to them, ‘culture shock’ may result.

Culture Shock - the reaction of an individual when exposed to a culture that is very different.
A failure to understand a foreign culture.

Examples of what may set off culture shock

- language differences
- differences in food / diet
- price of goods & services
- religious differences / tolerance
- transportation difficulties
- etiquette differences
- health care & health issues
- sanitation
- treatment of people
- social interaction

Tourism Impact on Culture

Demonstration Effect: replacement of local cultural aspects with those of another culture.

Demonstration effect often has negative consequences on indigenous cultures:

- local art, music, clothing styles become commercialised for the tourist industry
 - local foods often toned down for tourists or local switch to foods produced by other countries, e.g.: infiltration of fast food culture
 - traditions skills lost as more people work at tourist jobs
 - shopping changes from locally run markets to foreign owned shopping malls
 - erosion of local languages & dialects
 - seasonal work pattern develops, not year round
 - movement of people from rural based lifestyle to urban based
 - local music replaced by popular ‘western’ music
 - local people may become more westernised in their consumerism, e.g.: clothing, food etc.
- Locals may end up consuming more as they see what ‘wealthy’ tourist have (work-spend cycle)

The demonstration effect has changed the cultures of the Caribbean, N. Africa, S. America, & Asia

Cultural Conflict

Cultural conflict can be reduced while travelling by doing the following hints:

- **Have an open mind**

Realize that people & cultures differ ∴ people in other cultures have different values, do things differently & have a different perspective of life.

Accept the fact: people differ.

- **Be patient & tolerate other cultures**

Do not get upset if things are not as they are at home. You travel to see differences.

- **Educate yourself**

Do some background research on the area / culture that you are visiting. If you know something about the culture, then there will be less chance of a conflict.

- **Be prepared**

Be ready for the difference in culture, know what to expect, ∴ less chance of problems.

- Enjoy the differences
Travelling is about experiences. Part of the excitement of travelling is enjoying experiences that are not available in our culture.
- Obey cultural laws & customs
Respect the customs of other cultures.
Remember that you are intruding into their culture.
- Do not be the “Ugly Tourist”
An “ugly tourist” is one that is demanding, has little respect for others and their culture, and expects everything to be the same as in their native area.

Cultural Interaction

When various cultures mix - three geographical results may occur:

- **Adaptation:**

- take up parts of another culture, eg: dress, eat, act differently - according to the new / other culture, eg. learn the language
- keep much of your own culture

- **Isolation**

- do not accept / change with another culture,
- cultures do not mix
eg. North American business people living in foreign countries who do not mix with the locals / local culture
eg. Older generation in Chinatown in Toronto

- **Integration**

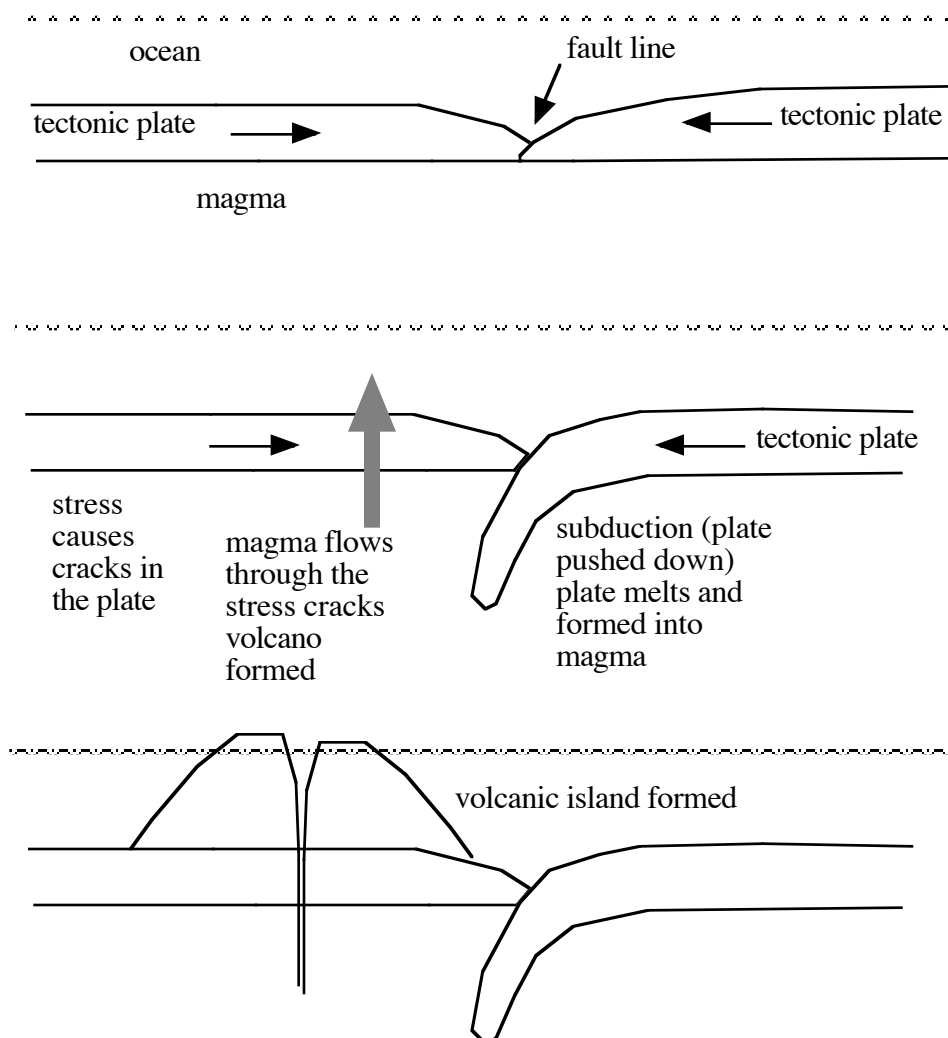
- when cultures / people mix to form a new culture
eg. Caribbean: Spanish / African / French / British mix to form the Caribbean culture:
Creole - culture of the Caribbean
Patois language - combination of African, European and Indian languages which varies from island to island
- when a person totally accepts and fits into a new culture, eg. immigrants in Canada

Cultural Region: The Caribbean

Location

- area of the Caribbean Sea
- includes a number of islands, eastern coast of Mexico and Central America, north shore of South America
- latitude ranges from 10°N to 25°N
- climate: tropical - constant temperature throughout the year - 30°C

Formation of the Caribbean Islands



Brief History of the Caribbean

Indigenous People of the Caribbean

- **The Islands: Caribs / Arawak**

- arrived in the regions approx. 300 B.C.
- Arawak - peaceful Indians, hunters, gatherers
- Caribs - warlike group, almost wiped out the Arawak

- **Mexico: Mayans / Aztec**

- 500 AD to 1500 AD
- highly civilized groups, empire builders
- farming nations, highly developed system of irrigation canals and roadways
- cut down jungle areas to produce farmlands
- use irrigation canals to aid farming
- advanced mathematics / calendar systems
- great builders of temples, pyramids, cities
- extensive trade routes in the area - traded food, tools, gold, works of art, knowledge, people

- **Spanish**

- arrived in late 1490's - Columbus searching for a route to China / India
- explored area, claimed territory for Spain
- discovered vast amounts of gold in Aztec society
- raided Aztec cities for gold
- eventually the Caribbean Sea was control by the Spanish, called the Spanish Lake
- as the gold ran out, plantations were started - main crops: cotton, sugar cane which was converted to molasses & rum
- to run plantations native people were used as slaves, but they contacted European diseases (flu, cold, small pox) & eventually died

- **Africa**

- as the native slaves died, new source of slaves were brought from Africa - today African origin people make the majority of Caribbean pop.
- much of the traditions, culture, music and language of the Caribbean originated from the African people
- African people were the backbone of the economy of the Caribbean for centuries.

- **English, French, Dutch**

- came into the region in the 1600's in an attempt to conquer the Spanish territory
- resulted in many battles / wars
- English, French, Dutch eventually took over many of the islands as Spain weakened
- their governments and cultures influenced the region

- **Independent Nations**

- many of the colony lands become independent between the 1950's to the present

Japanese Culture

Japan has a very old & traditional culture which influenced by Chinese and later Western ideas.

Japanese culture is very unique in many ways:

- Writing style is based on Chinese characters & two uniquely Japanese alphabets
- Religion: most Japanese are both Shinto (native only to Japan), and Buddhist
- old traditions co-exist with the new ideas
- traditional rituals and celebration are a key part in Japanese culture

Modernization

- since post WWII Japan has experienced a rapid process of modernization, often incorrectly called Westernization
- Japan holds true to its Oriental culture, which underlies its success in industry and technology

Economy

- second largest economic power after the USA
- ranks first in electronic & automobile production
- std of living has increased greatly since 1970
- average Japanese family saves 20% of their income, this money is loaned to various companies to develop new technology and production methods, such as robotics

- exports outpace their imports, producing the following results:
 - a large trade surplus
 - increasing the value of the Japanese yen
 - international trade disagreements
 - Japanese companies starting production in other countries
- Japan has few raw materials such as iron, coal etc., yet it is the world largest exporter of steel.
- Japan's most important resource is its population with its strong work ethic, skills, sense of duty

Life Style

- cities are densely populated causing land values to increase
- much of the pop. lives in high rise buildings
- massive public transit system (trains, subways, buses) used by majority of commuters
- group is more important than the individual in society (opposite of Western view)

Agriculture

- 70% of all food is domestically produced
- farming is extensive with high yield per acre
- hydroponics agriculture is increasing