

sedentary as more emphasis was placed on plant crops as a food source. Population pressures contributed to greater rivalry between tribal groups or villages, evidenced by the appearance of palisaded villages prior to 1000 A.D. Before 1450 A.D. cultivated beans were acquired, and squash and sunflower seeds appear even earlier, providing additional food sources to this largely sedentary existence.

In the Northern Area during the Woodland period the development that led to the historic Ojibwa, Algonkin, Cree and Montagnais is not characterized by a similar change in the subsistence pattern as with the Iroquois. This is also true of the ancestral Micmac, Malecite and other maritime populations. In these areas the social and economic system was adapted to the surrounding natural environment and does not appear to have changed significantly from earliest times.

### 2.1.2 Prehistory of western Canada

Western Canada, as described here, is the area lying west of Ontario and south of the Yukon and Northwest Territories. It is an area of extremely varied topography, climate and natural resources, features that strongly affected the distribution and density of the aboriginal population.

The date of man's first arrival in the area, coming from northeast Asia via the Bering Strait, remains uncertain. The crucial factors include the chronology of the advances and recessions of the Cordilleran and Continental glaciations and the question of the extent and duration of the Bering Strait land bridge — matters still in dispute. Human occupation has been documented to the south within the period of the last major glacial advance, indicating penetration of western Canada at some earlier date. However, evidence for such earlier movements is still under study and cannot be summarized at the present time. The oldest recognized cultures date no earlier than 9,000 to 11,000 years ago.

These cultures are represented by surface finds of projectile points of styles attributed to early big-game hunters elsewhere in North America. These are relatively large lanceolate forms characterized by longitudinal fluting, and probably used as points for spears or darts. Two major styles, an earlier Clovis and a later Folsom form are differentiated in terms of degree of fluting and other attributes. Where found to the south of what is now Canada, the earlier type is often associated with kill-sites of mammoth and mastodon, and the latter with various kinds of extinct bison. In western Canada, these point types are reported only from the southern part of the prairie area, suggesting that perhaps these cultures were replaced by later ones before the northern part of the prairie region was inhabitable. On the other hand, fluted points have been found far to the northwest, in unglaciated parts of Alaska; their absence from the intervening area would seem to indicate that they may have been destroyed by subsequent glacial action.

The succeeding complexes, generally dated from about 8000 to 5000 B.C., are characterized by lanceolate points lacking flutes and exhibiting a fine parallel flaking technique. They derived directly from the earlier point styles and are part of what is called the Plano tradition. Big-game hunting continued to be the basis of the economy, but the number and distribution of the finds indicate an increase in population and an expansion northward into areas not previously occupied.

Perhaps contemporary with the early big-game hunters of the prairies was a complex characterized by the occurrence of bipointed, leaf-shaped projectile points. The centre for this complex was in British Columbia, but similar points have been reported from the north. Radiocarbon dates indicate a relatively early occupation of one site in the Fraser River canyon. However, it has been questioned whether all points of this relatively simple form necessarily represent a single cultural group or time period. In any case, the evidence from Fraser Canyon indicates a quite different economy from that east of the mountains, one in which dependence on salmon fishing already prevailed even at this early date.

In the succeeding period, lasting from approximately 3000 B.C. to about 1 A.D., a number of changes are noticeable. One is an increase in tempo, with alterations in artifact styles, particularly projectile points, following one another in more rapid succession than previously. Another is an apparent increase in the variety of food resources exploited, although this may reflect inadequate knowledge of the food economy of earlier times. Several local cultural variants now become recognizable, but the geographic distribution of certain artifact types indicates considerable contact between these different cultural groups.