



8

Protecting Identity

The People of the World

We tried to be polite about our eating, but there were many new foods on the Mays's table, and we could not know what was a danger and what was not.

—Dave Eggers, quoting Lost Boy Valentino Achak Deng in *What Is the What*, 2006¹

Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to do the following:

- Define the concept of culture.
- Explain how Enlightenment views shaped the concepts of culture and identity.
- Explain how social forces divide people into various groupings and shape views of identity.
- Identify and compare the different academic fields that study culture and identity.
- Explain how globalization can serve as a driver for cultural integration and polarization, as well as homogenization and hybridization.

In traveling to different places, we frequently encounter objects, foods, and social practices that are new to us. Unfamiliar US sights and smells were overwhelming to Valentino Achak Deng when he first arrived in the United States from Sudan. One of the “lost boys” who fled their native homeland in the midst of civil war, Valentino had spent many years as a refugee in Ethiopia and Kenya before seeking asylum in the United States. Many foods that Americans commonly eat, such as fresh fruit, vegetables, and cow’s milk, were so different that they made him sick. But such physical discomfort was only part of what he suffered as he tried to adjust to a new culture.

The other sickness Valentino felt was from a jarring shift away from Sudanese social and cultural expectations. This reaction is commonly referred to as **culture shock**, a psychological and sometimes physical response to the challenges of traveling to or living in another country or different culture. Culture shock can occur when you are in a new realm where customs, practices, eating, and living arrangements are different. Culture shock occurs when people are removed from their comfort zone. While some people are fascinated by differences, others are overpowered by them and can even be repulsed, and still others experience all these emotions at the same time. Food was not the only thing Valentino found challenging as he entered his new life in the United States. He physically suffered from headaches and had to deal with new things he had never seen. For example, when Valentino and his fellow Sudanese roommate first moved into an apartment in Atlanta, they did not know that they could turn off the air conditioner, and in Dave Eggers’s fictionalized memoir based on Valentino’s experience, they “slept with all of [their] clothes on, covered in blankets and towels, every linen [they] owned.”²

Valentino was excited to begin his life in the United States. It was a dream come true, but initially it was overwhelming. He would go on to establish the Valentino Achak Deng Foundation (www.vadfoundation.org), which today is helping the people of South Sudan, in the wake of continuing tragic ethnic conflict. Valentino’s experience reminds us that it is very hard to know what life is *really* like in a country or region until you directly experience it. It is very easy, however, to have the illusion of knowing what it will be like—from

culture shock a physical and psychological response to cultural differences when traveling away from home

Muslim children break their Ramadan fast after sunset by eating halal Mexican tacos from a food truck, during a campaign called “Taco Trucks at Every Mosque” at the Islamic Center in Santa Ana, California.

MARK RALSTON/AFP/Getty Images.

seeing images furnished by popular media, from reading, or perhaps from having met a few people from that place. Reconciling the differences between what you expect and how things really are can be very challenging.

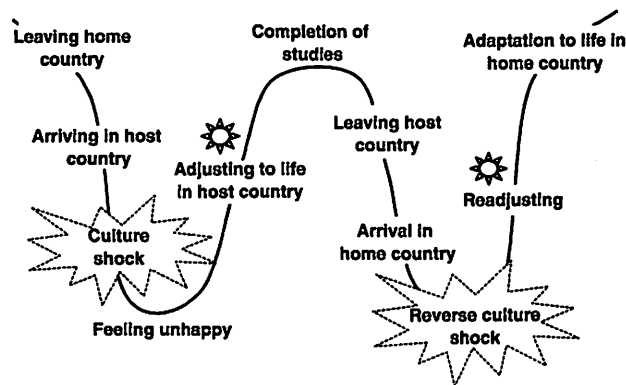
Simply recognizing another culture is not the same as living in it. Every culture has distinct characteristics. Some differences are obvious, such as language, religion, and political organization. Others can be so subtle that they are unsettling to foreign visitors, such as how to greet someone (the Japanese bow, for instance) or when dinner is served (very late in Spain). Even if you speak the same language, reality can be very different from your expectations. The popular British actress Emma Watson, who played Hermione Granger in the Harry Potter films, notes the culture shock she experienced when enrolling at Brown University: "I don't know anything about American history or presidents. I don't know what tailgating is! I've never been to an Olive Garden!"³ While visitors may be vaguely aware of such cultural differences, making adjustments is a complex process. They can feel uncomfortable and off balance for quite some time. Adaptation comes in waves, which continue upon reentry to your home country, as illustrated in the culture shock curve of a foreign student's emotions in a new host country (see Figure 8.1).

People's actions are a result of their social and cultural surroundings—where they live, where they went to school, their parents' beliefs, their ethnicity, their race, their religion, and their gender. These variables not only color how individuals experience their own cultural identity but can also affect how they relate to other cultures. It is these unique socio-cultural variables that influence human behavior.⁴ However, we cannot always see them for ourselves. It is often only when these defining characteristics are challenged that we can gain clarity on who we are and our similarities and differences. When people believe that others are trying to change their basic identity, they may move beyond uneasy feelings to a backlash against those who are challenging them. The tightening of religious beliefs along fundamentalist lines, the ethnic conflict that emerges, and even the failure of states that have not respected differences in the first place are all examples of these types of responses.

FIGURE 8.1 ● The W Curve

SHOWN HERE is what is called the *W* curve, which represents the ups and downs of cultural adjustment, from the time of leaving home to that of returning.

The "W" Curve



Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/736x/c7/71/2b/c7712b8bb8000e99fb606e7f03e5169e-culture-shock-cultural-diversity.jpg>.

Social divisions constitute another border that determines how people perceive themselves and their relationship to others. In addition to characteristics such as language, religion, and ethnicity, people also define themselves on the basis of their social standing—distinguished by birthright, relative power, and wealth. How much money people have, the value of their homes, or their status in the community can further delineate their identity.

Together, cultural and social borders significantly influence identity and the steps people will take to preserve it. They are what define us—our common practices. How we respond to differences can disorient us. Ethnicity, race, gender, and religion further delineate our identity. All these characteristics create the cultural framework in which we place ourselves. Reflecting these distinctions, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) devoted to the fostering of peace through intercultural dialogue, defines **culture** as follows: “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group . . . that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.”⁵ We can build on this definition to understand who we are and our relationship to others.

culture “the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group . . . that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs,” as defined by UNESCO

Cultural and Social Borders: Understanding Identity

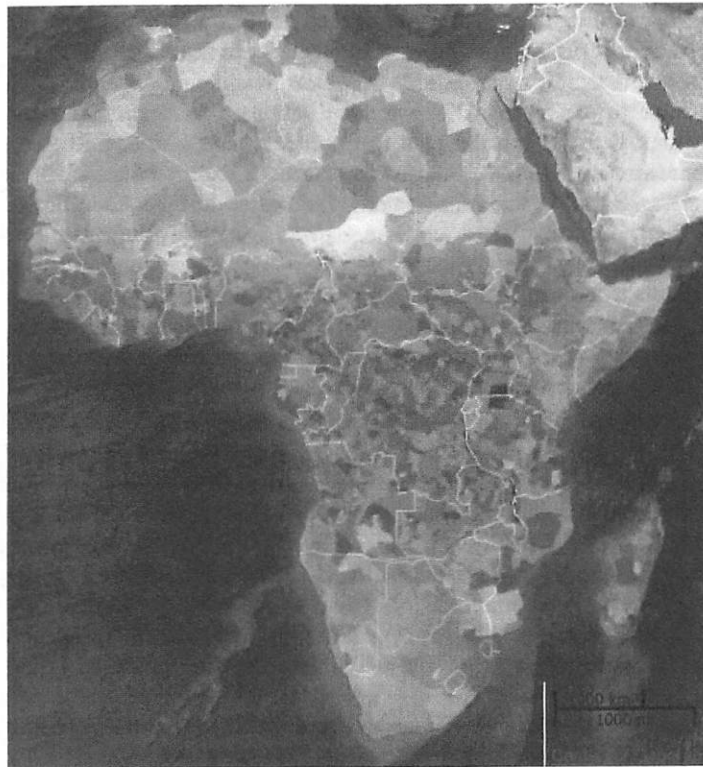
Historically, people gathered into distinct groups based on common practices and the need for survival. The naturally occurring geographic boundaries that brought people together were the primary markers of identity. The basic needs for water, food, and shelter unified them. Means of communication, religion, and societal practices further solidified their relationships. Tradition or physical strength determined leadership within the group. For each unit, a sense of identity also emerged from its shared experiences and indigenous traits.

As particular groups of people began to encounter other groups—the “other” became a defining factor in distinguishing their identity. Trade routes developed, and accounts of early long-distance journeys reflected how people saw themselves as different or superior. Cultural anthropologist Ida Magli notes that the first published “anthropological” description of Native Americans as a result of these early journeys appeared in 1512.⁶ These observations relied both on the physical characteristics of the peoples they encountered and on these people’s clothing, weapons, and customs. Englishman John White would bring these images to life with his watercolor drawings of the Algonquian Indians he encountered when he sailed with an early expedition to Virginia in 1585. His images offered Europe some of its first visual representations of this new land and its inhabitants.

Many students of culture argue that the emergence of the modern state system crossed many naturally occurring borders and became a primary source of conflict among peoples, beginning in the 1600s. Anthropologist Manning Nash goes so far as to suggest that the nation-state is responsible for “the rise and definition of social entities that are currently called ethnic groups.”⁷ While cultural diversity and political differences existed prior to the emergence of the state system, the system’s development and the diversity of people within state borders facilitated the differentiation of ethnicity. In many cases, this led to ethnic conflict. The delineation of borders in the African subcontinent provides an excellent example.

As illustrated in Map 8.1, more than 300 distinct cultures can be drawn on the same piece of land where only fifty-four states exist. Colonial powers frequently drew these political borders to enhance their own political and economic interests. By splitting indigenous groups across these newly created borders, colonizers were able to divide and conquer. At the same time, previously independent indigenous groups were forced into closer contact with others, increasing the potential for conflict.

MAP 8.1 ● A Map of Cultures in Africa



Source: "AfricaMap," WorldMap, accessed August 21, 2017, <https://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap>.

The Age of Enlightenment

While the delineation of political borders often had negative effects on different civilizations, an understanding of the concept of culture evolved concurrently with the creation of nation-states. As trade routes expanded and settled into patterns of interaction, people began to consider their identity. The emergence of this system of states and the self-inspection the Enlightenment inspired from the mid-1600s to the 1800s helped formulate the concept. European and US intellectuals advocated a society based on personal choice, guided by reason. Scholars of the day, called the *philosophes* (Enlightenment thinkers), included British (David Hume and John Locke), French (Francois-Marie Arouet de Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau), German (Immanuel Kant), and even some early US (Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and Thomas Paine) authors. Their general argument sought to move away from a worldview dominated by religion and suggested a more scientific approach to understanding the realities of the day.

Cultural anthropologist Adam Kuper identifies three schools of thought that emerged during this time to understand culture generally and justify the territorial expansion that was taking place—the enlightened view of the French, the romantic or counter-Enlightenment vision of the Germans, and the traditional outlook held by the English.⁸ The Enlightenment formed the French view of culture as a progressive, cumulative, and distinctly human achievement. Everyone could evolve to be civilized as the French

defined it: having a cosmopolitan understanding of the world. As such, territorial expansion would provide opportunity to those they encountered by giving them the option to embrace “civilization.”

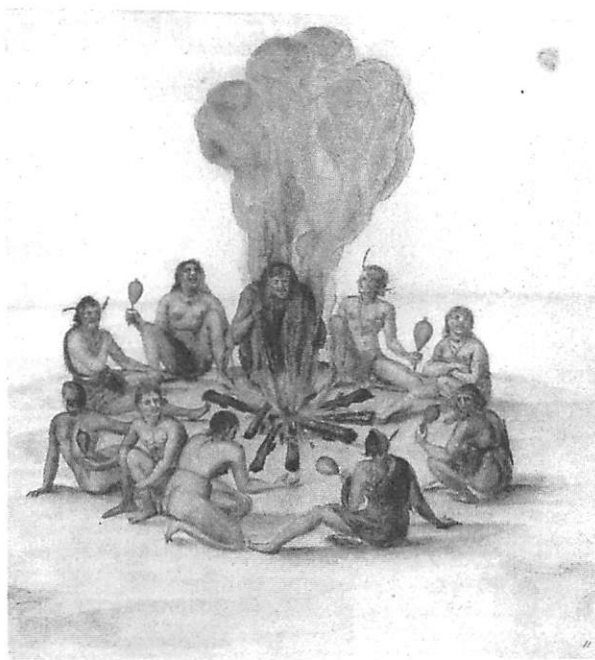
In contrast, the German perspective held that cultures were distinguished by natural and spiritual sources. This viewpoint was greatly influenced by the Reformation of the Christian church, which sought a more direct relationship between the people and religion. The splintering of the church led to a major political realignment in Europe. The promotion of a more egalitarian understanding of Christianity held that people should not be required to aspire to others’ notions of “civilization,” instead preserving the authenticity of their culture. The English relied on a classical view of the world, focusing on history, described by English poet Matthew Arnold as “the best that has been known and said.”⁹ Their world was steeped in traditions that offered a way to live. Like the French, the British believed that their practices were superior and should have been adopted by everyone they encountered. The colonial empire they built during this time flowed from these views, and many of the practices they promoted endure today.

For example, while no longer expansionist in their political objectives, British traditions continue not only in the United Kingdom but throughout many of the countries that consider themselves part of the Commonwealth. An association of fifty-two states that grew out of the British Empire (see Table 8.1), the Commonwealth was formally established in 1931 to promote “democracy, freedom, peace, the rule of law and opportunity for all.”¹⁰ Decades after the end of colonialism, this diverse group still recognizes the head of the Commonwealth as Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II of England. The elaborate practices surrounding the marriage of Prince William and Princess Kate in 2011 are another example of how this adherence to custom and ritualized behavior has been perpetuated. The royal titles attached to their young children, Prince George and Princess Charlotte, further these traditions.

Enlightenment views evolved in conjunction with a changing economic reality. The search for riches, new markets, natural resources, and slaves fueled exploration. Through this process, cultural understanding was refined but incomplete. Identity was understood, for the most part, relative to others. As the Enlightenment gave way to the Industrial Revolution, social divisions became more complex with the emergence of new classes of workers and entrepreneurs. Social status became an additional factor in the definition of identity.

Social Borders

There always have been social divisions, whether defined by birth or privilege of wealth. In some societies, this class structure is quite rigid, such that those who are of the “highest” classes are born into it. The inheritance lines of the monarchies in Morocco and Saudi Arabia are two examples. Frequently, financial riches come with this hereditary stature. The **caste system** found in South Asia is another instance of birthright determining social identity. It has deep roots in the Hindu religion but has migrated to other cultures over time as a form



© Trustees of the British Museum.

This illustration, a watercolor by Englishman John White, dates back to 1585 and depicts an Algonquian Indian fire ceremony. White's images shaped European conceptions of native American groups.

caste system a division of society based on birth that originally developed from the Hindu religion

TABLE 8.1 • Commonwealth Member Countries

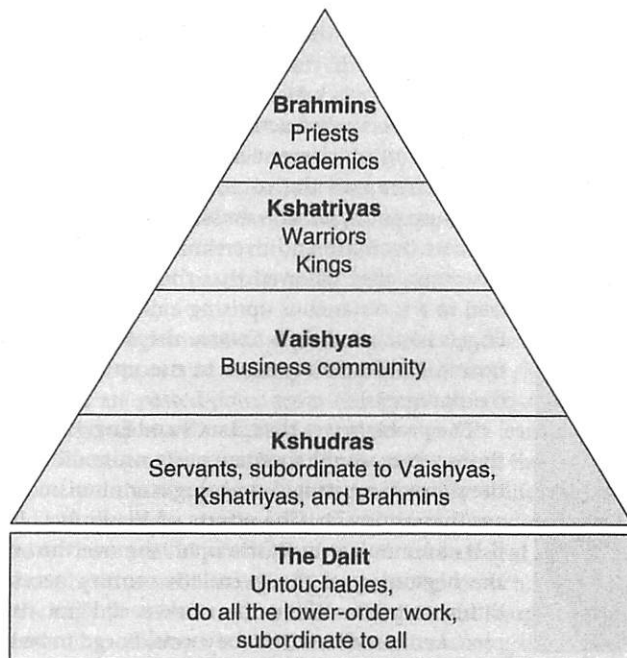
Antigua and Barbuda	Kenya	Singapore
Australia	Kiribati	Solomon Islands
The Bahamas	Lesotho	South Africa
Bangladesh	Malawi	Sri Lanka
Barbados	Malaysia	St. Kitts and Nevis
Belize	Malta	Saint Lucia
Botswana	Mauritius	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Brunei Darussalam	Mozambique	Swaziland
Cameroon	Namibia	Tonga
Canada	Nauru	Trinidad and Tobago
Cyprus	New Zealand	Tuvalu
Dominica	Nigeria	Uganda
Fiji	Pakistan	United Kingdom
Ghana	Papua New Guinea	United Republic of Tanzania
Grenada	Rwanda	Vanuatu
Guyana	Samoa	Zambia
India	Seychelles	
Jamaica	Sierra Leone	

of social stratification. There is little room to change your fate in life when it is dictated by birth. For example, caste distinctions in remote areas of Nepal perpetuate ancient practices, where women are married as children and sent to live in outbuildings during menstruation to prevent bringing "bad luck" to their families and animals.¹¹ Members of lower castes are required to wash their dishes before using them to share a meal with people from another caste, and even then, their dishes may be used only after "purifier" has been sprinkled on them.

Caste differences can also lead to violence. The rape and hanging of two young girls, ages twelve and fourteen, in Uttar Pradesh, India, horrified the nation and the world in 2014. The father of one of the girls, who was from the Dalit caste, accused members of the dominant caste in the area, the Yadavs, of conspiracy to carry out this heinous crime. In 2016, four Dalit men accused of killing a sacred cow were publicly beaten in the Indian state of Gujarat, the home base of Indian prime minister Narendra Modi. In fact, they were simply disposing of a dead cow killed by a lion, a century's old job inherited and determined by their social status.¹² A video of the beating went viral, raising awareness of the continuing injustice of the caste system, where Dalits, often referred to as "untouchables," are considered to be the lowest caste. They face widespread discrimination and only limited protection from the legal system. (See Figure 8.2.)

Where you are born can dictate your opportunities as well. In China, this distinction is applied to rural and urban birthrights. People born in rural areas have very limited opportunities, even if they move to an urban area. China has a registration system—*hukou*—that is based on one's parents' birthplace.¹³ City dwellers are entitled to public education if they have inherited an urban registration. The vast numbers of rural migrants now moving

FIGURE 8.2 • India's Caste System



to urban areas in China, however, retain their rural registration, and the only education they can get for their children must be obtained privately and is frequently substandard. As a result, children are often left with relatives in their home villages—an estimated 60 million in 2016, one-fifth of all children in China.¹⁴ The government has taken some steps to lessen the problem in cities with populations under 5 million, but it remains significant in the sixteen largest cities in China, where most rural migrants have moved.¹⁵ Leslie Chang chronicles the story of many of the women and men who come from rural areas to China's bustling cities for work in her book *Factory Girls*. These mostly young women find themselves creating a new cultural identity, as they are no longer from the rural area but do not really qualify for the privileges of urban residency.

Social identity can also be defined by the job that you perform, a concept that found new meaning with the creation of a worker class and a wealthy class of factory owners during industrialization. The wealthy group wielded political power, while the lower or working classes were those who toiled in the factories, confined to poorly paying jobs with little hope for advancement. The promise of industrialization, however, was that it would bring about a redistribution of wealth that would allow individuals to move from one social status to another.

The reality did not live up to expectations, as the underlying social stratifications were perpetuated. The writings of German-born philosophers Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels sought to explain why the workers in society would not benefit from the economic developments that were occurring during industrialization. In their classic work *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, first published in 1848, they took a historical perspective to argue that industrialization was developing in a fundamentally unequal way and created further social borders within societies.



ANDRE DURAND/AFP/Getty Images.

On March 4, 1990, in Bucharest, two Romanian workers dismantle a statue of Russian Bolshevik revolutionary leader Vladimir Ilyich Lenin to signify the demise of the communist regime.

and take charge of the revolution. The result was far from an egalitarian society and much more in line with a totalitarian state, in which members of the Communist Party became the leaders of the Soviet Union, despite their stated commitment to equality.

Class divisions that had separated people by birth now hinged on new wealth and the jobs people performed. The **bourgeoisie**, the owners of the means of production, had little respect for the **proletariat**, the workers, except for the extent to which the workers would enhance their wealth. Marx and Engels believed that the only way to address these inequities was a restructuring of the social order. They sought the creation of a new social movement—**communism**—that would champion the communal values of the worker class. It was up to those who embraced this perspective, the communists, to unite and overthrow the oppressive bourgeoisie. Moreover, they believed that the inequities of wealth would lead to a spontaneous uprising among the workers. Marx and Engels concluded their *Communist Manifesto* with an exhortation to the world's workers to rise up in a revolution against the bourgeoisie.

The problem was that Marx's and Engels's expectations that the workers would spontaneously unite did not happen, and the subsequent struggle to bring communism to bear required another approach. The efforts of Vladimir I. Lenin to establish communism in Russia upon the overthrow of the tsar in the beginning of the twentieth century necessitated a very different tactic. When the workers did not rise up on their own, Lenin realized that they would need to be led. He created the Communist Party to be the "vanguard of the people"

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

KARL MARX AND FRIEDRICH ENGELS

In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements, they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labor everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

Proletarians of all countries, unite!¹⁶

The Study of Social and Cultural Borders

Efforts to understand society, culture, and identity have led to several methods of examination—most notably the disciplines of **sociology**, **anthropology**, and **psychology**. These fields of inquiry seek to understand human behavior. Anthropology examines the

physical attributes of human beings as well as their social and cultural characteristics. Sociology focuses on people and their relationships to the societies in which they live, and psychology seeks to understand the motivations behind the decisions they make.¹⁷ The writings of Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution in the 1860s played heavily in early conceptualizations of these fields.¹⁸ The notions of evolution and survival of the fittest were groundbreaking ways to consider the plight of humankind.

In the 1940s and 1950s, some sociologists attempted to turn an anthropological understanding of cultural differences into broader, more scientific theories of human behavior. Anthropologists, however, believe that culture is learned and as such needs to be studied in context. In response, they use **ethnography**, the observation and description of people in their environment through in-depth analysis and interaction, focusing on tribal units, their linguistic patterns, and their traditional practices in remote areas to understand cultures.

What these anthropologists want to capture is a better understanding of cultural learning, recognizing that it occurs in a number of different ways. Mostly, a group's beliefs and shared traditions are passed down from one generation to another. A person's rites of passage within a group mark successful transitions in this learning process, known as **enculturation**.¹⁹ These practices, such as rituals surrounding the transition from childhood to adulthood and the acceptance of polygamy as way of life, may be unique to cultural groups and not generally accepted outside of them. The idea that cultural meaning is relative to the environment in which it exists is called **cultural relativism**. The notion here is that culture is situational and should be respected as such.

Writing in the early twentieth century, US anthropologist Margaret Mead believed that a better understanding of others could come from examining their cultural differences without intellectual bias. In her observations about the tribal people of three islands in the western Pacific, she wrote the following:

If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place.²⁰

Mead examined gender roles in other societies, as well as how children learned social patterns. Her contribution was significant in its effect on scholarly exploration of perception and cultural identification.²¹

Later authors, such as Clifford Geertz, came to understand that individuals ascribe many identities to themselves. He examined not just the ways in which people learn about themselves but also how their political and economic situations—what he called the “hard surfaces of life”—color how culture is defined and understood.²² Civilizations adapt over time to their “hard surfaces.” When people outside the immediate circle of a group embrace their manners, ideas, or identity, **cultural diffusion** occurs. Examples might range from the popularity of ethnic foods, such as sushi, around the world to the use of English as the primary language for communication. This adaptation is not universally welcomed. Indigenous identity is particularly sensitive to these changes, as languages and cultural practices are lost as a result. Estimates suggest that in the last century, 1900 to 2000, 400 languages became extinct and that 50 percent of the world's remaining 6,500 languages will be gone by the end of this century, with some putting that figure as high as 90 percent.²³

For many years, the perceived purpose of many societies was to create a common culture, such that immigrants to a new place would restructure their identity, or “melt” into a common pot. This emphasis on **assimilation** submerged cultural differences into a broader, dominant culture. Sometimes assimilation was taken to an extreme, driven by inherent

bourgeoisie the owners of the means of production

proletariat the industrial workers

communism a social movement that promotes the communal values of the worker class

sociology a field of study that focuses on people and their relationships to the societies in which they live

anthropology a field of study that examines the physical attributes of human beings as well as their social and cultural characteristics

psychology a field of study that seeks to understand the motivations behind the decisions people make in terms of their cognitive orientation

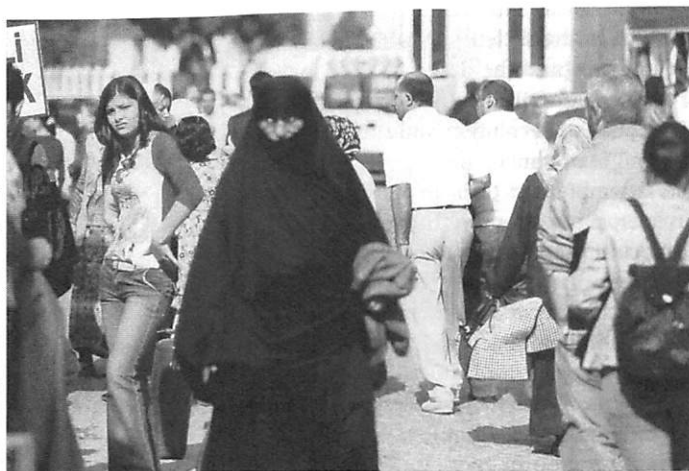
ethnography the observation and description of people in their environment through in-depth analysis and interaction

enculturation the process by which a society learns its culture

cultural relativism cultural understanding in terms of the environment in which it exists

cultural diffusion the spreading of culture beyond a specific group to be embraced by a wider audience

assimilation the submerging of cultural differences into a broader, dominant culture



In Istanbul, Turkey, a modern young Turkish girl looks at a veiled older woman.

cultural imperialism when one culture is dominated by another culture to the point that the victimized culture is forced to change its cultural practices

biases against those who were different. For example, the children of many first-generation immigrants to the United States in the early twentieth century were forbidden to learn their native languages, as their parents insisted on “English only” to succeed in their new country. Similarly, British colonizers restructured Indian society to adopt British customs, food, and dress.

Assimilation is not always a voluntary process undertaken to gain acceptance. Indigenous peoples often had little or no choice but to adopt the cultural practices and lifestyles of colonial powers. Dominating cultures routinely victimized smaller cultures in a process of **cultural**

imperialism. People were frequently forced to abandon time-honored traditions in favor of a more “civilized” course. Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe describes the colonization of his country to the great detriment of the culture of the indigenous people in his 1958 novel *Things Fall Apart*:

Does the white man understand our custom about land? How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad; and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us?²⁴

In response to the pressure to integrate into broader societies, many groups have worked to preserve their cultural identity. Instead of melting into the predominant culture, they maintain their unique attributes through ethnic neighborhoods and shops that sell familiar products, as well as places of worship that serve their religions. Difficulties remain in crossing cultural borders, given the reality of multiple identities that may exist at any particular time. Respect for these differences is critical, but there are also broader concerns that may bring people together. The following “Pro/Con” debate on whether indigenous peoples should be educated in their own languages or that of the dominant culture examines the challenges of achieving successful outcomes while respecting cultural differences.

HOW YOU CAN CONNECT

You can better understand your culture and identity by . . .

- interviewing an older family member
- exploring your family roots by researching your genealogical tree
- taking a DNA test
- connecting with groups on campus that reflect your culture
- exploring your religious roots by attending a service

PRO/CON

SHOULD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES BE EDUCATED IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGES?

Pro

Jon Todal

Professor of Sociolinguistics, Sami University College, Guovdageaidnu, Norway. Written for *CQ Global Researcher*, September 2011.

The living conditions of indigenous peoples vary across the world. In some countries they are integrated into society, while in others they are marginalized. Despite these differences, indigenous peoples share many experiences, including the attempt by nation-states to eradicate indigenous languages.

Since the 19th century countries have used schools to achieve monolingualism, or "one state—one language," and all teaching in compulsory education was in the majority language.

As a result, indigenous children struggle more at school than children from the majority population, because they must learn not only their subjects but also a new language. The policy has signaled that indigenous languages are not valued, and such negative school experiences account in part for why indigenous peoples have a lower level of education than majority peoples.

One response among indigenous peoples has been to reject schooling as irrelevant, leading to low levels of education. Another strategy has been to adjust to the schools' values. For example, parents may stop speaking the indigenous language with their children at home so that by the time the children start school they are more on a par with majority children. But this strategy halts the intergenerational transmission of indigenous languages, and the languages become endangered. In other words, both these strategies (rejection and adjustment) have a negative impact on indigenous societies.

A third strategy—to make schools in indigenous areas adjust to the children's language and culture—has produced good results. It is now supported in Scandinavia, for example, where the indigenous Sámi people can receive primary education in Sámi as a separate subject, and they may choose to have Sámi as the language of instruction in other subjects. The level of education among the Sámi is no longer lower than among the majority peoples in Scandinavia, and the Sami language has been strengthened.

Those advocating indigenous peoples receiving education in their own language can find support for their view

Con

Helen Hughes

Emeritus Professor and Fellow, Research School of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University, Canberra, and Senior Fellow, Centre for Independent Studies Sydney, Australia. Written for *CQ Global Researcher*, September 2011.

Open ended, this is a nonsensical question. However desirable for children to learn to read and write in their mother tongues, in many situations it is impractical. In Papua New Guinea, for example, a developing country with just under 7 million people, it has not been possible to train teachers and develop reading materials in the more than 800 indigenous languages spoken there.

Pretending to do so has contributed significantly to the country's failure of education. After nearly 40 years of independence, education is in crisis, with only about 20 percent of the population literate.

Some languages are dying out—not only in Oceania, but also in the Americas, India, China and many other parts of Asia and Africa—while new ones, such as Bahasa Indonesia, have been evolving. Countries must decide on language teaching that is best for their inhabitants, and this usually means compromises between resources and ideals.

Children must become articulate and literate in the principal language or languages of their country so they can function in its economy and society. They have to be able to qualify for jobs, participate in democratic decision-making and contribute to civil society. In countries made up of disparate groups, a national language or languages can make a contribution to stability, equity and economic and social development.

Fortunately, research on the human brain has demonstrated that children can absorb new languages at very early ages and can absorb several languages simultaneously when very young. Research also shows that linguistic development makes a special contribution to the development of children's brains. Teaching several languages simultaneously in pre-schools that take in children at 3 years of age and (even earlier) has made a multilingual approach to teaching languages possible.

(Continued)

[Continued]

in international conventions. However, these formal rights are not the main issue. The key points are that education in indigenous languages gives children a positive experience of their own culture and also strengthens the traditional indigenous languages. In this way children are better prepared for life both in the wider society and in the indigenous society.

For this reason education in their own language must be an important right for all indigenous peoples.

Equality of opportunity demands quality education from very early years so that children are fully articulate and literate by the end of their primary education in a country's principal language or languages. The extent to which it is sensible to teach mother or traditional tongues in practice depends on a range of factors, including the extent to which such languages are developed and used, a country's resources and parents' wishes. There is no one-size-fits-all model.

Source: Brian Beary, "Saving Indigenous Peoples," *CQ Global Researcher* 5 (2011): 447-472.

Where Do You Stand?

1. Do you think indigenous people should receive instruction in their native language?
2. Does instruction in their native language offer protection for their cultural identity?
3. Does a society have the right to demand that all people speak the dominant language?

Globalization: Homogenization or Hybridization?

Over thousands of years, group identities evolved with little influence from the outside world. Anthropologist John H. Bodley observes that "as recently as 200 years ago, 50 million people continued to live in politically autonomous domestic-scale tribal societies."²⁵ Different groups controlled large areas of the globe, and external forces such as commercial enterprise did not affect them. Bodley argues that while these tribal groups (more commonly referred to as indigenous peoples) still exist, the commercial world has penetrated and altered their realities.

The impact of globalization on culture and identity has been significant. As sociologist and cultural communications expert John Tomlinson suggests, greater mobility results in a progressive **deterritorialization** of the world that weakens the connection between culture and a particular place.²⁶ The ability to communicate instantly around the world has rendered the attachment to place less potent. Moreover, many of the issues that affect the peoples of the world, from terrorism to technological innovation, are not limited by its borders. As a result, common cultural experiences emerge.

Some people are concerned that globalization results in a **homogenization** of culture. A range of cultural activities has been incorporated into a more uniform set of values and practices, primarily Western and specifically American in nature, that threaten cultural diversity and people's ability to maintain their distinctive identities. The pressures to conform and adapt are plentiful and difficult to resist. The same stores, clothes, and services populate shopping centers around the world. KFC and other fast-food establishments are found on main streets from New York to Paris to Doha.

Not everyone shares this concern. In contrast to those who caution against the homogenizing impacts of globalization are analysts who emphasize the resilience of existing cultural forms and their ability to endure the effects of external pressures. They point to the

deterritorialization the weakening of cultural ties to specific locations

homogenization the incorporation of a range of cultural forms into a uniform set of values and practices

countervailing influence of local customs and cultural practices on these outside forces that has produced a **hybridization** of cultures—a blending that incorporates aspects of different cultures. While the concept of hybridity comes from agrarian roots, where new varieties of plants are created by grafting one plant to another, sociologist Jan Nederveen Pieterse, in his book *Globalization and Culture*, argues that hybridity occurs today due to the mobility of people, their ability to migrate, and the multicultural identities they have developed.²⁷ This extensive migration, coupled with new forms of communication that provide broader transmission of information and the creation of transnational social networking sites such as Facebook, has an impact on identity. Rather than threatening identity, this exposure simply results in a modification or adaptation as new identities may emerge. The popular *Daily Show* host Trevor Noah, born and raised in South Africa to a black Xhosa mother and white Swiss-German father, an illegal act at the time due to apartheid, represents this hybridization. Well-known golfer Tiger Woods specifically recognizes this fusion, characterizing his identity as “Cablinasian”—a blend of Caucasian, Black, Indian, and Asian.²⁸

hybridization a blending of cultures that incorporates different aspects of each culture to create a new entity

Whether globalization is contributing to the homogenization or hybridization of culture, it is clear that it is having a profound impact. A number of leading analysts see globalization as the source of significant cultural conflict, due to its complex and often contradictory components. In his 1999 best-seller, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Thomas Friedman argues that through the development and rapid spread of technology, embodied in the state-of-the-art facility manufacturing Toyota’s luxury Lexus automobile, globalization could improve the quality of life for workers who have historically been left behind. At the same time, however, he realizes that the intense desire to protect and preserve individual cultures and identities—symbolized by the ongoing struggle and often violent clashes between Israelis and Palestinians over the ownership of particular olive trees—will persist.

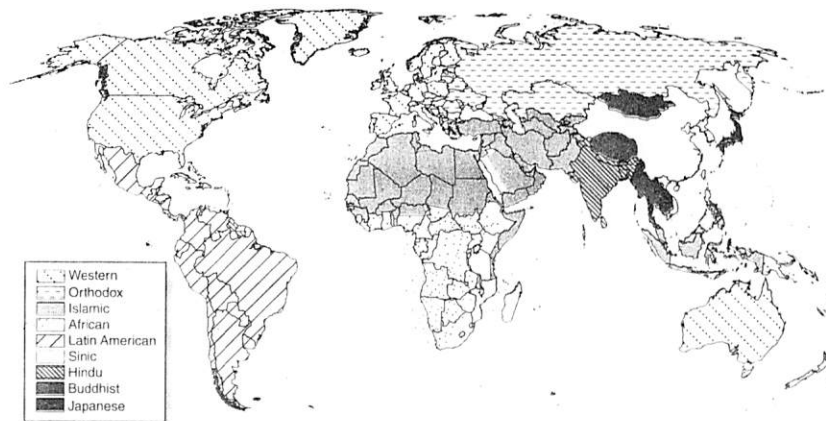
In a more dramatic scenario than Friedman’s, political scientist Samuel Huntington projects a future marked by what he terms a “clash of civilizations” (or cultures). In his groundbreaking 1996 work, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, Huntington envisioned global interactions among seven or eight major civilizations—Western, Japanese, Confucian, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and possibly African.²⁹ Future conflicts, he argued, were most likely to fall along cultural lines, with the most significant potential for discord between Islam and the West. If not addressed and contained, this conflict could result in a highly contentious global environment where the West would find itself aligned against all other major civilizations.

Huntington’s thesis provoked considerable criticism among thinkers who questioned the premise of his argument and the implications of his projections.³⁰ For some, Huntington went too far in emphasizing the hostility generated by intercultural contact. Others were concerned that he had not underestimated the differences and distinctions among civilizations but had put forward a far too simplistic scenario that was likely to provoke such policies as restricting immigration or imposing restraints on minorities. Efforts by the Trump administration to ban refugees from several primarily Muslim countries have reignited this debate. Similarly, the popularity of extreme nationalist parties across Europe embraces these distinctions as well. Such actions can reinforce existing or latent hostilities. Some have suggested that Huntington’s ideas might even be used as a rationale to justify extreme forms of ethnic violence. Nevertheless, Huntington’s clash of civilizations argument continues to be an important part of the debate that highlights globalization’s evolving and multiple impacts (see Map 8.2).

McDonald’s

Globalization’s critics love to take aim at the McDonald’s restaurant chain, whose global reach extends to 118 countries around the world. They see it as the embodiment of a

MAP 8.2 • Clash of Civilizations



Source: THE CLASH OF CIVILIZATIONS AND THE REMAKING OF WORLD ORDER by Samuel P. Huntington. Copyright © 1996 by Samuel P. Huntington. Base Map © Hammond World Atlas Corp. All rights reserved. Reprinted by permission of Georges Borchardt, Inc., for the Estate of Samuel P. Huntington.



Andrey Rudakov/Bloomberg via Getty Images

A Big Mac hamburger sits on a tray inside a McDonald's fast-food restaurant in Moscow.

dominant US cultural presence and market position across the world—as well as a prime culprit in spreading the consumption of food of questionable nutritional value. However, the ubiquitous McDonald's may bring about more than just hamburgers or the homogenization of culture. Thomas Friedman introduced the idea of a “golden arches theory of conflict prevention,” for example, suggesting that countries with McDonald's restaurants (whose presence indicates that these countries are open to global capitalism) are less likely to go to war with one another to avoid the risk of economic disruption.³¹

In his 1996 book on this topic, *Jihad vs. McWorld*, political theorist Benjamin

Barber describes two different scenarios to illustrate the integrative and the polarizing tendencies of globalization. *McWorld* symbolizes the connectivity of globalization and its capacity for bringing diverse communities into contact with one another. While this connectivity presents an opportunity for increasing mutual understanding, it is also indicative of globalization's homogenizing tendencies.

In contrast, *jihad* is an Arabic word often identified with the notion of the “holy war” that has motivated al-Qaida. ISIS and other Islamic groups seek to thwart what they perceive to be the threatening dominance of Western values and ideology. As Barber uses the concept, it refers to the resistance of these groups to the perceived cultural uniformity that has come with globalization.³²

Sociologist George Ritzer uses the term *McDonaldization* to describe the processes that have come to dominate the organization of more and more sectors of production around

the world and to impose pressure to adhere to homogenous standards and values. These principles include efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control. McDonald's has been a model of efficiency in its movement of goods from one place to another as well as its ability to capture market share. It has also been a leader in calculability, an emphasis on time and money that delivers a product quickly and cheaply to its customers. One of the hallmarks of McDonald's is its predictability—its products and service are generally the same all over, with the exception of local market adaptation. Finally, McDonald's exerts significant control over how goods are distributed in its restaurants, from drive-thru windows and line service to the appearance of its employees.³³

Other academics argue that the McDonald's effect noted by Ritzer and other commentators may be somewhat overblown, as it assumes cultural impact to be a one-way street. Political scientist Michael Veseth calls this overemphasis on the homogenizing nature of globalization *globaloney*.³⁴ In fact, he says, McDonald's must tailor its menus to local tastes and cultural practices in order to retain its competitive position. In India, where eating beef is sacrilege, the Maharaja Mac is a Big Mac made of chicken; in Chile, avocado paste is a standard fixing, with a side of cheese empanadas; and in Japan, you can order a Teriyaki McBurger made of ground pork and teriyaki sauce. McDonald's also serves different purposes in different countries—coffee shop, community gathering location, study hall, or just a place to take the kids. The adaptation of local forms of expression and identity to exposure from outside influences is a process known as **glocalization**.³⁵

glocalization the adaptation of local forms of expression and identity to outside influences

Anthropologist Arjun Appadurai has coined the phrase *global scapes* to describe the increasing flows that globalization has released. Global scapes are redefining people's identities.³⁶ They include the following:

mediascapes: flows of information through the mass media

financescapes: flows of capital

technoscapes: flows of technology

ethnoscapes: flows of people

ideoscapes: flows of ideas

Rather than imposing Western culture and values on others, Appadurai argues, these flows may help invigorate local culture by infusing a broader range of perspectives.

Music and Sport

Music and sport, two elements that often contribute significantly to defining who we are and our relationship to others, are large parts of the global scape that is redefining cultures. Technology has made local sounds global. New recording and sound production technologies have broken down old barriers to transmitting music. While digitization expands opportunities for reproduction and dissemination, the Internet offers a far wider network for exposure than the radio ever did. The ease of streaming and downloading music of all types and genres has been critical. Musicians are able to travel more easily actually and virtually than ever before, bringing new sounds to peoples in different places. This ease of sharing has created a body of world music that captures the diversity of sound from around the world. The music publication *Billboard* provides a weekly list of best-selling world albums. A recent top-ten list included albums from Germany, Ireland, Nigeria, and South Korea (see Table 8.2).

As is the case with other cultural forms, music has been a source of concern for people who fear globalization's homogenizing effects. The international nonprofit organization

TABLE 8.2 • Billboard's Top Ten World Albums October 20, 2017

Rank and Artist	Album	Website
1. BTS	<i>Love Yourself: Her</i>	http://bts.ibighit.com/
South Korean K-pop boy band		
2. Celtic Thunder	<i>Inspirational</i>	https://www.celticthunder.com/
Irish stage and vocal group		
3. Myrkur	<i>Mareridt</i>	https://www.myrkurmusic.com/
Danish musician Amalie Bauun		
4. Belinda Carlisle	<i>Wilder Shores</i>	http://www.belindacarlisle.tv/
American singer/songwriter		
5. Mordechai Shapiro	<i>Machar</i>	http://www.mordechaishapiro.com/
American Jewish singer		
6. David Maldonado	<i>Davicas</i>	http://www.davidmaldonado.com/
American classical/flamenco guitarist		
7. Celtic Woman/ The Orchestra of Ireland	<i>Voices of Angels</i>	https://www.celticwoman.com/
Irish music ensemble		
8. Jesse Cook	<i>Beyond Borders</i>	http://www.jessecook.com/
Canadian guitarist		
9. Bolbbalgan4	<i>Red Diary Page.1 (EP)</i>	http://www.kpopscene.com/bolbbalgan4/
South Korean female K-pop duo		
10. Antibalas	<i>Where the Gods Are In Peace</i>	https://antibalas.com/
American Afrobeat band		

Source: Billboard.com and artists' websites.

Global Music Project aims to preserve the uniqueness of different forms of music. Its mission is to promote collaboration and peace through music and cultural awareness.³⁷ It seeks not only to preserve musical traditions around the world but to share those traditions as well. Its website includes recommended songs from across the globe and provides free downloads. Through artist donations of songs, sponsors, and merchandise sales, the Global Music Project promotes cross-cultural appreciation for music and the unique cultures it represents.

There is little evidence to suggest that greater standardization in production has had a homogenizing effect on music. Instead, it has contributed to a greater degree of diversity.

As particular types of music originating in one locale spread to other places, musicians modify their sounds as a result of their contact with people of other cultures. These modifications enhance the meaning of the music in a way that fits more easily with existing values and experiences.

The introduction and consumption of Afro-Caribbean music in Japan is a case in point. Due to limited contact and communication between Latin America and Japan, Afro-Caribbean music was transmitted largely through the United States and Europe. While some forms such as tango and bolero were favorably received in the 1920s, others such as rumba gained little following. The differences had much to do with the extent to which these different genres resembled Japanese popular music in terms of their beat and tone and how they fit into Japan's value system.³⁸

A significant turning point came in 1984 with the creation of the Orquesta de la Luz, a salsa band of Japanese musicians with experience in playing Afro-Caribbean music. Its popularity, both inside Japan and internationally, stemmed largely from its ability to maintain the authenticity of its sound as a distinctively Japanese group. This unique collaboration demonstrated how a local culture can be enriched through its exposure to other cultural forms while simultaneously influencing the composition of those forms.³⁹ More recently, the popularity of BABYMETAL, a Japanese "girl band" whose three young members combine Japanese pop (J-pop) music with heavy metal, represents another new genre that crosses borders.⁴⁰ They have become popular around the world, opening for Lady Gaga in 2014 and the Red Hot Chili Peppers' US tour in 2017, while continuing to enjoy idol status in Japan.

This interplay of the global and local is also reflected in the development of hip-hop, a musical form with global appeal. Originating in the 1970s in the Bronx borough of New York City, hip-hop was based on themes of urban life and evolved into a broader form of expression for young people. In addition to its music, hip-hop incorporates dance, art, and fashion in reflecting a particular outlook and lifestyle. As hip-hop gained in popularity and spread to different parts of the world, it came to take on additional meaning and more varied forms of expression. Hip-hop's themes relating to personal liberation, rebellion, and social justice appealed to masses of youths in far corners of the world.⁴¹ Now a global movement, hip-hop has grown to the point where it has become a culture in and of itself.

As hip-hop spread across the globe, the genre itself underwent considerable transformation. While the message spoke to the experiences of disenfranchised or alienated youth worldwide, each community incorporated its own unique elements to reflect local conditions and circumstances. Different mixes of language and beat give hip-hop in Brazil a different feel from hip-hop in Tanzania. As local attributes distinguish and differentiate the identities of these respective varieties, they also influence the genre in turn.⁴² In the case of hip-hop, globalization has yielded glocal hybrids, not Western purebreds.

Similar impacts have flowed from the increasing globalization of sport, another agent of culture whose popularity across borders brings people together. The participation of



David Corio/Redferns.

The Notorious B.I.G. performs at Meadowlands, New Jersey, on June 29, 1995.

countries from around the world and the parade of nations that opens the Olympic games demonstrates these connections. Where and how particular games are played can be traced to broader historical patterns. South Asian countries adopted cricket as their national sports pastime from their British colonial occupiers. The Scottish games that originated as a celebration of a hunt with measures of strength and agility, such as "tossing the caber" (throwing a fourteen-foot pole similar to a log end over end) and "throwing the hammer," are now celebrated in "Highland Games" in distant places. The largest gathering of the Scottish clans globally takes place annually in a small town in the mountains of North Carolina, far from Scotland's shores.

The expanding global reach of premier US professional sport leagues goes beyond the traditional diffusion of sports through colonization or immigration. Through the leadership of its commissioner, the National Basketball Association (NBA) has made a concerted effort to penetrate new markets in Europe and beyond to enhance the profitability of the enterprise. In 2016, a record number of 113 international players from forty-one countries and territories held roster spots on NBA teams. The greatest number came from Canada (eleven), followed by France (ten), Brazil (nine), Australia (eight), and Croatia (five).⁴³ The 2015 finals were broadcast in forty-seven languages to 215 countries.⁴⁴

Marketing techniques have contributed significantly to the growing popularity of this game. They focus largely on promoting key players whose appeal elevates them to the status of cultural icons and place an emphasis on interpersonal rivalries (as opposed to team rivalries). The epic Larry Bird–Magic Johnson duels and the Michael Jordan phenomenon were instrumental in moving the process forward. The role of advertisers was critical. The Michael Jordan brand promoted by Nike was especially effective and has retained its appeal long after his retirement.⁴⁵ It even prompted one observer to note the emergence of Jordanscapes (using the Appadurai terminology) in explaining the source of the growing global appeal of the NBA.⁴⁶ This marketing strategy has continued with the latest generation of stars, such as LeBron James, Kevin Durant, and Stephen Curry.

China's Yao Ming helped broaden the worldwide appeal of the NBA during his tenure with the Houston Rockets. Although plagued by injuries throughout his career and ultimately forced to retire prematurely in 2011, Yao became a popular hero and an important symbol of China's full-scale emergence on the world stage.⁴⁷ The development of Taiwan-born and Harvard-educated Jeremy Lin, a marginal player who had a succession of electrifying performances with the New York Knicks during the 2012 season, contributed further to the expanding Asian connection in the NBA. Now with the Brooklyn Nets, Lin has yet to regain the "Linsanity" that dominated the airwaves in 2012 but has made an impressive comeback.

Major League Baseball (MLB) has also gone global. Broadcasting in 233 countries and territories, its telecasts are retransmitted in seventeen languages.⁴⁸ At the start of the 2017 season, non-US players filled 29.8 percent of team rosters, representing nineteen countries and territories.⁴⁹ Often touted as a US game, professional baseball has undergone some significant changes. The World Baseball Classic, established in 2009, brings together national teams from across the world and has contributed to the sport's growing popularity in a variety of markets.

Despite its US roots, professional baseball has long been a part of Japan's sports scene. Americans who have played for Japanese teams have often expressed their difficulties in adjusting to a different style of play that emphasizes such Japanese values as group identity, cooperation, and harmony. Tom Davey, who pitched in the Japanese majors, observes the following:

You need to keep an open mind, nod your head and do what they ask. Maybe I'm not going to do a 300-pitch bullpen, but I'll do the crazy agility drills they have. It's the Japanese Samurai mentality. They can't say, "No, I'm done." You respect it like you respect everything else here.⁵⁰

Similarly, Japan's teams have exhibited some discomfort with their US players—seeking to take advantage of their contributions while not necessarily being interested in having them upstage their local counterparts. This may be understood in terms of the country's homogeneous character and antipathy toward foreigners. Japanese players, on the other hand, are beginning to make their way into the MLB. While a few have enjoyed considerable success (most notably, Ichiro Suzuki and Hideki Matsui), many others who starred in Japan found the transition difficult and failed to live up to expectations.⁵¹ A recent Japanese star to take the United States by storm is Masahiro Tanaka of the New York Yankees. Even as he has been challenged to replicate his achievements, he has pitched opening day for the Yankees since 2015 and was the first Yankees rookie to win the American League Pitcher of the Month Award since its inception in 1979.⁵²

The most significant development with respect to the internationalization of the MLB itself has been the infusion of Latin players. While this is not necessarily a new phenomenon, given baseball's longstanding presence in parts of the Caribbean and Central and South America, it has reached impressive proportions. Unlike the NBA, the MLB does not appear to have much interest in establishing franchises overseas. Rather, it has capitalized on and sought to enhance the availability of Latin talent as a means to expand into those markets.⁵³

The player "pipeline" between the Dominican Republic, the small Caribbean country that shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti, and the United States is especially notable. In 2017 there were 93 players from the Dominican Republic on MLB opening-day rosters.⁵⁴ All thirty major league clubs have academies in the country that serve as training camps for the purpose of spotting and developing local talent. To prepare the seventeen- to nineteen-year-olds who attend, the academies offer English-language classes and workshops on anger and stress management, as well as basic American culture, etiquette, and protocol.⁵⁵ With top prospects commanding hefty signing bonuses and having the potential to land multimillion dollar contracts, baseball has become an important path out of poverty. It has also sometimes become a political headache. The story of Yasiel Puig's defection from Cuba in 2012 to join the Los Angeles Dodgers involves cross-border intrigue that includes underworld smugglers, criminal acts, death, and a great deal of money. These activities resulted in Puig's facing a federal lawsuit in Miami over his role in some of the subsequent actions that took place.⁵⁶

As would be expected, the entry of large numbers of foreign-born players (and even a handful of managers and team executives) is transforming the character and culture of the MLB. Playing styles are more varied, while the management of intercultural relationships and communications has become an important factor in maintaining team chemistry. This diversity is readily apparent not only in terms of the composition of teams but in the makeup of their fan bases. Ballparks now cater to a wider degree of tastes in terms of the foods they offer and the apparel and other items they market, both at home and internationally. For example, churros, a fried dough treat that originated in Spain, can be found at many major-league stadiums.

The globalization of sport is not a phenomenon exclusive to US efforts. In fact, soccer is the most universal sport, even as it has been slow to catch on in the United States. Soccer's progressive spread has been a lengthy and complex process that can be traced all the way back to the time of the Roman Empire. The sport's governing body—the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)—oversees its operation and development and has more than 200 national members. FIFA has very successfully promoted the commercialization of the sport, capitalizing on interest in the World Cup, which engages and mobilizes people all over the world as they root for their respective national teams. Premier teams such as Manchester United, Real Madrid, and FC Barcelona have fanatical global fan bases and are readily distinguishable by their jerseys, symbols, and styles of play. The biggest stars, like those of the NBA, are elevated to iconic or cult status.

Kyodo News via Getty Images.



The Refugee Olympic Team marches during the opening ceremony of the Rio de Janeiro Olympics at Maracana Stadium. The International Olympic Committee Executive Board agreed on July 9, 2017, to continue to support refugees by getting them involved in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

The same interplay of global and local forces is at work in soccer. Whereas the world's top professional soccer leagues and the center of FIFA power are located in Europe, top players come from all over. This process has had some important and intriguing effects. To begin with, teams in the Global South have suffered from the loss of some of their very best local players to elite teams across Europe in the premier leagues. These players have been lured by high salaries, the promise of broad exposure, and other benefits.³⁷ National teams competing in the World Cup and other championship events have worked to facilitate the relocation of talented players as a means of recruitment.

The globalization of the game has enabled certain players to attain levels of mobility and wealth that would not be possible otherwise. It has also produced its share of challenges. Soccer has traditionally been an important source of local and national identity. The styles of play of particular clubs may often mirror the cultures of their particular communities, while locals may come to the point where their sense of self is tied closely to the ups and downs of their favorite teams and players. The familiar sight of enthusiastic fans wrapping themselves in the national flag or covering their bodies with paint in their national colors is as important a part of the overall ritual as the incessant sound of the vuvuzela horns.

While potentially a key force in unifying local communities, soccer team loyalty can also serve as a source of conflict when fans of competing teams react in violent ways to the competition on the field. Globalization of the rosters of these teams can also have a significant effect. The increasing racial diversity of many European teams, for example, has resulted in any number of racially tinged taunts and incidents by fans and players alike. In a few cases, it has even led some to question the representative nature and national character of their very own teams.

Conclusion: Identity at the Crossroads

Social and cultural borders can sit on top of and across geographic, political, and economic borders. On any given day, we navigate multiple identities as students, teachers, sons, daughters, workers, and players, but we still find ourselves sharing many commonalities. The world has been drawn closer together in terms of political and economic cooperation as similar interests develop. Cultural integration has created new ground for people to work together. In response to concern over the spread of a common world culture, however, many people across the globe are revisiting their traditional and historical identities. A fear of integration and a perceived need to protect identity raise the potential for conflict. This conflict suggests that Huntington's thesis on the potential clash of civilizations continues to resonate. As we will see in the next chapter, the challenges that face individuals across social and cultural borders emerge from these tensions.

Key Concepts

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