Cultural dimension of globalization
Culture is...

- Social construction, articulation and reception of meaning (Held, et al 1998)

- The arts
  - Commodified output of the culture industries (Film, TV, Music)
  - Spontaneous expressions of everyday life
  - Complex interactions between all of these
Culture includes...

- Religion
- Ethnicity
- Nationalism
- Language
- Other forms of identity
Simply put...

Culture refers to...

“the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, clothing, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.”
Cultural globalization - concepts

- Cultural globalization: the transmission of culture globally

- Facilitated by the movement of people, objects, signs and symbols
  - Travel
  - Movement of books, cultural artifacts, later TV and internet

- Key: forms of communication and transportation
Cultural globalisation: Historical perspective

• World Religions
• Empires
• Modern national cultures
• Transnational secular ideologies
• Contemporary cultural globalization
Empires

- Role of cultural power in creating and maintaining political empires
  - Difficult to enforce rule at a distance
  - Armies and governments are expensive
  - Indirect rule (kingship, belief, religion)
  - **Diffusion of culture provides cohesion**
Roman Empire

- Capacity to deploy political power
- Accomplished through innovations:
  - Logistical capabilities and civil engineering
  - Political community
  - Shared cultural beliefs, rituals and traditions
- Literacy was key among ruling class
- Drama and poetry were used to build allegiance
The British Empire

• Most global of any formal empire: “the sun never sets on the British Empire”

• Imperial educational policy
  • English medium schools in India, etc.
  • Elites went to Oxford and Cambridge

• Imperial communications infrastructure
  • Telegraph to India by 1870
Modern national cultures

• **Nation** = community, whose shared sense of identity, solidarity and interest is rooted **in an national identity and common historical experience** (real, imagined or interpreted) and **whose central political project is the possession of a distinctive state in a bounded territory**

• **Nationalism** = psychological and cultural affiliation creating a connection with the community of the nation
  - Ethnic nationalism
  - Civic nationalism

• **National culture** = complex bodies of real and imagined practice, belief, ritual and attitude
Modern national cultures

- Non existent before 18th century: Treaty of Westphalia

- National cultures invented and developed over time

- Cultural preconditions:
  - Literacy
  - National histories, myths and rituals,
  - Importance of state powers of taxation and conscription
National cultures

• Task undertaken by diverse institutions
  • Official language
  • National schooling system
  • Postal service, communications structures and national press
  • Standing army

• Suppression or eradication of competing identities and peripheral nationalisms

• Key factors
  • Memories/histories/myths
  • Role of land/landscapes/places:
    • Monuments
    • National parks
    • sites of battle
The dominance of American market

- Globalization of culture leads to a homogenization of world culture and it largely represents the "Americanization" of world cultures.

- Reasons for the prominent role of USA in cultural globalization:
  - **The size of the U.S. market**
    With nearly 300 million consumers, the United States is one of the largest markets in the world.
  - **The wealth of the U.S. economy**
    The USA contains only 4% of the world's population, it accounts for nearly 25% of global economic output, only the European Union now exceeds the U.S. market in size and wealth. The spread of American corporations abroad has various consequences on local cultures (e.g., the McDonaldization of society).

- **A comparatively homogenous culture**
  Measured by the size of minority ethnic, linguistic or cultural groups, it can be considered relatively homogenous, 97% of the U.S. population is considered fluent in the English language as well as hundreds of millions of other people around the world.
The spread of the American political and economic culture

1. the development of a new culture of the globally connected professionals and especially business elites;
2. the proliferation of pop culture—which many critics complain is primarily American
3. the diffusion of beliefs and values about broader issues such as human rights and other social mores
The integration of cultures

• Although the United States may play a dominant role, many other countries also contribute to global culture

• American culture is also influenced by cultures from foreign countries

• Example:

  Hollywood, an industry that integrates elements from more than one culture
  • a recent explosion of American remakes of European films
  • many film-making companies, producers, and actors in Hollywood are not inherently American
The way towards the „global village“?

- vision of the multi-cultural "global village," where ideas and practices can be freely exchanged
  cultural exchange can help promote tolerance and diversity

- Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UTE0G9amZNk

- Questions:
  - Does the culture diversity still exist?
  - Is the diversity a necessity?
  - Is culture diversity in European Union positive or negative phenomenon?

- Cultural stereotypes vs cultural characteristics
  - **Stereotypes** are assumptions based on unfounded ideas about a group, not identifying particular characteristics of a group of people, exaggerated assumptions about groups of people
  - **Cultural characteristics** are aspects that identify a culture. It is a pattern of behaviour that is typical of a certain group.
  - Examples?
Stereotypes...

French: logical, cartesian, elitist, authoritarian, proud

Chinese: quiet, hardworking, enigmatic, smiling, cruel

Germans: rigid, methodical, obsessed with order & privacy, unemotional, territorial

Americans: superficial, ‘Frontier Spirit’, materialistic, over-optimistic

Italians: loud, macho, impatient, over-emotional, talkative, unorganized

British: imperialistic, ‘Island mentality’, principled, class-conscious, conservative
Globalization and local cultures: two trends

1st trend: threat to viability of local cultures

• Globalization threaten the viability of locally made products and the people who produce them (e.g. local farmers)

• Factors:
  • availability of foreign-made consumer products and disruption of traditional producers
  • international trade in cultural products and services, such as movies, music, and publications

→ the exposure of all societies to foreign cultures = it changes local cultures, values, and traditions and undermines their own cultural identity
2nd trend: reaffirmation of local culture

- some people would argue that globalization can also reinforce local cultures
- the homogenizing effect of globalization on national cultures in fact tends to produce a reaction among indigenous peoples, which leads those whose cultures are threatened to want to reaffirm their own local traditions

→ it could violent reactions against the West - rebellious movements may be seen as negative manifestations of a broader desire to reaffirm their traditional values, against the disruptive onslaught of Western beliefs (i.e. Islamic society)
Protecting languages

• Many governments around the world have attempted to protect their native cultures by imposing bans on what they declare to be foreign cultural intrusions, including the language

• Examples:
  • **France** attempts to protect its language from the immigration of foreign words (the government has attempted, with rather limited success, to replace the English words with French substitutes, similarly Canada's French Quebec or China)
  • **Americans** have grown concerned over the proliferation of other languages, due largely to the rapidly influx of immigrants into the United States
Most widely spoken languages in the world (approx. number of speakers)

1. Chinese (Mandarin) 1,917,000,000
2. Spanish 406,000,000
3. English 335,000,000
4. Hindi 260,000,000
5. Arabic 223,000,000
6. Portuguese 202,000,000
7. Bengali 193,000,000
8. Russian 162,000,000
9. Japanese 122,000,000
10. Javanese 84,300,000
World languages
A clash of civilizations?

• Harvard University **Professor Samuel Huntington**
• the concept that **culture will be the principal factor that divides the world in the future**

"...The fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics." (Huntington, 1993)
• civilization = "the highest cultural grouping of people and the broadest level of cultural identity people have.... It is defined by both common objective elements, such as language, history, religion, customs, institutions, and by the subjective self-identification of people..."

• Huntington divides the world into major cultural groups including Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American, and African civilization

• Cultural identity has become the primary objective with the end of global competition over economic ideology, the fault lines of world conflict now almost all lie along rifts between these great cultures of the world
THE DIVISION OF THE WORLD’S RELIGIONS

- Christians, 33.32%
- Muslims, 21.01%
- Buddhists, 5.84%
- Non-Religious, 11.77%
- Other Religions, 12.48%
- Atheists, 2.32%
WHEN DID GLOBALISATION START TO INFLUENCE RELIGION?

• **evolving trade routes** led to the colonization of the Asia, Africa, Central and South America

• religion became **an integral part of colonization** and later on globalization.

• religion has been **a major feature in some historical conflicts** and the most **recent wave of modern terrorism**
WHAT IS RELIGION NOWADAYS?

● it’s a symbolic system which carries our identity and marks out social/ ethic and other boundaries
● it provides powerful mechanisms for psychological and social tension
RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS

• Only in the period 1980-1995 in the world there were 72 civil wars (ethnic, national, religious and racial grounds), as well as another type of war (state against state).

• This continued after the 1995 (aggression in Yugoslavia in 1999, civil war in Angola, Liberia, Sudan and bloody ethnic conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and military intervention in Afghanistan).

• Middle East and its ongoing conflicts - the political turmoil in the whole Middle Eastern region is an issue of capitalizing on the global oil market and of political and religious dispute.
CONFLICTS INVOLVING DIFFERENT RELIGIONS AND RELIGION-LINKED TERRORIST ATTACKS
THE RESULTS OF GLOBALISATION

SECULARIZATION

RELIGIOUS
CONSERVATISM
SECULARIZATION

• Society becomes increasingly modern, religion becomes less and less important.
• A decline in religious practices within modern societies.
• Religious institutions become separated from secular institutions and spheres of influence.
• Religion has retreated into the private sphere.
Do you believe in God?

Changes in British Religious Beliefs 1968-2004

Source: Guardian based on Gallup and YouGov Surveys


"Do You Believe in God?"

1968:
- Yes: 77%
- No: 35%
- Don't Know: 12%

2004:
- Yes: 44%
- No: 35%
- Don't Know: 21%
IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

• 75% of those asked by the Eurobarometer 2010 poll expressed positive "belief in God" in Malta, Turkey, Cyprus, Romania, Greece, and Poland.

• More than 25% expressed positive Atheism in France, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands, Belgium, Estonia, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway, and Germany
• religion evaluated from a political standpoint
• globalization is seen as a threat to these traditions and a polarization factor within these defined religious identity and its practice
• Religion is one of the ways of self-identification, and thus it may lead to conservative offense
Western values and Islam

• controversy over Westernization has had major historical implications in the Middle East over the past several decades

• Examples:
  • 1960s and 70s, rapid modernization of the Shah of Iran – fundamentalist clerics railed against Iran’s “westoxification,”
  • Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has likewise adopted an approach with the motto “modernization without westernization”

• clash between Western values and Islam culture reached an all-time high on September 11, 2001

• during the recent Arab Spring, western cultural values were used to achieve popular political goals in the Middle East
Video

- The Fundamentalists - Religion or Lunacy?
- Video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFDP8-nILJA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wFDP8-nILJA)
Mohammad cartoons – case study
Cartoon crisis

• Biggest Danish diplomatic crisis since WWII
• 12 cartoons of Mohammad in Jyllands-Posten, 30. 9. 2005
• Protests from Danish Muslim Community
• 12. 10. – 11 Muslim ambassadors letter to Danish PM – meeting?
• November: international dimension => protests and criticism
• New Year statement of Danish PM - tolerance
• SA calls its ambassador, boycott
• I./II. 2006: PM speeches on TV – personal view
• Embassies and flags burned => escalation
Charlie Hebdo

- French satirical magazine
- Secular, left-wing, anti-racist
- 1970-1981, pause, 1992 ->
- 2006: reprinted Mohammad cartoons
- 2011 and 2015 terrorist attacks
  - November 2011: bombs, website hacked
    - Response to the introduction of sharia law in Libya and the victory of the Islamist party in Tunisia
  - January 2015: 12 persons killed, 11 wounded
    - "the Prophet is avenged“
Charia hebdo

http://i.huffpost.com/gen/2462554/thumbs/o-100-LASHES-570.jpg?5
Charlie Hebdo – immigration crisis
CONCLUSIONS

• Religion is definitely the integral part of globalization, thus they should not be studied separately

   TWO TRENDS: secularization and conservative offense

• Impacts:
  • Multiculturalism
  • religion used as a tool to fulfill political gains (i.e. terrorist groups)
  • Stereotypes about religious groups – strengthen by media / freedom of speech
  • religion-based conflicts on the rise