

Impact of Globalization on Culture, Migration and Indigenous People

Navdeep Kaur

This paper aims to capture the impact of globalization on culture, migration and the indigenous people. It is argued that contacts between the people and their values, ideas and ways of life have experienced phenomenal changes in the wake of globalization. Cultural goods and services, cultural industries, and flow of people have all experienced important changes which have far-reaching implications in the future. It concludes that multi-cultural policies are needed to manage trade and above all globalization needs to be inclusive in that the interests of indigenous people do not get adversely affected.

Globalization has increased contacts among people and their values, ideas and ways of life in unprecedented ways. People are travelling more frequently and more widely. Television now reaches families in the farthest rural areas of China. From Brazilian music in Tokyo to African films in Bangkok, to Shakespeare in Croatia, to books on the history of the Arab world in Moscow, to the CNN world news in Amman, people revel in diversity in the age of globalization¹. The rise of global corporations such as Hitachi, Disney, Microsoft, Levi Strauss whose products and operations can be found round the globe, are creating the conditions for the merging of cultures. With McDonald's hamburgers in China, and MTV everywhere helping to foster a ubiquitous youth culture, globalization has pervaded all the cultures across the world. At the same time one must not ignore important countertrends, such as the shift towards Islamic fundamentalism in several countries, the separatist movement in Quebec, Canada, or the continuing ethnic strains and separatist movements in Russia. Such countertrends in many ways are a reaction to the pressures for cultural convergence. Just because people the world over wear blue jeans and eat at McDonald's, one should not assume that they have also adopted American values for more often than not, they do not.

For many people globalization has brought cultural diversity which is exciting, even empowering, but for some it is disquieting and disempowering. They fear that their country is becoming fragmented, their values lost as growing number of immigrants bring new customs and international trade and modern communication media invade every corner of the world, displacing local cultures. Some even foresee a nightmarish scenario of cultural homogenization - with diverse national cultures giving way to a world dominated by the western values and symbols. Indian activists protest the patenting of the neem tree by foreign pharmaceutical companies. Anti-globalization movements protest treating cultural goods the same as any other commodity in the global trade and investment agreements. Groups in Western Europe oppose the entry of foreign workers and their families. What these protesters have in common is the fear of losing their cultural identity and each contentious issue has sparked widespread mobilization.

Culture Defined

Culture gives an individual an anchoring point, an identity, as well as code of conduct. Of the more than 160 definitions of culture analysed by Kroeber and Kluckhohn, some conceive of culture as separating humans from nonhumans, some define it as communicable knowledge, some as the sum of historical achievements produced by man's social life². All of the definitions have common elements : culture is learned, shared, and transmitted from one generation to the next. Culture is primarily passed on from parents to their children but also transmitted by social organisations, special interest groups, the government, schools, and churches. Common ways of thinking and behaving that are developed are then reinforced through social pressure. Geert Hofstede calls this the "Collective programming of the mind"³. Culture may be defined as an integrated system of learned behaviour patterns that are characteristic of the members of any given society. It includes everything that a group thinks, says, does and makes - its customs, language, material artifacts, religion, and shared systems of attitudes and feelings⁴. Every person is encultured into a particular culture, learning the "right way" of doing things. Problems may arise when a person encultured in one culture has to adjust to another one. The process of acculturation - adjusting and adapting to a specific culture other than one's own - is one of the keys to success in international operations.

In this paper the impact of globalisation on culture is studied. It studies mainly three aspects i.e. trade in cultural goods, immigration and the impact of globalization on indigenous people with special emphasis on extractive industries and traditional knowledge.

Trade in Cultural Goods and Services

Trade in cultural goods has grown exponentially over the last two decades. Between 1980 and 1998, annual world trade of printed matter, music, visual arts, cinema, photography, radio, television, games and sporting goods surged from US \$ 95,340 millions to US \$ 387, 927 millions⁵ (Study on International Flows of Cultural Goods, 1980-98, Paris, UNESCO, 2000). Yet most of that trade was between a relatively small number of countries. In 1990, Japan, USA, Germany and UK were the biggest exporters, with 55.4 per cent of total exports. Imports were also highly concentrated with the USA, Germany, United Kingdom and France accounting for 47 per cent of total imports. The high concentration of exports and imports of cultural goods among a few countries diminished, but not substantially changed in 1990s. There are however, new players in the scenario. By 1998, China was the third most important exporter, and the new "big five" were the source of 53 per cent of cultural exports and 57 per cent of imports.

Although we lack precise statistics of global cultural trade, overall trade volumes of cultural goods have increased dramatically since 1991. The US \$ 38,671 million global retail sales of recorded music (LPs, MCs and CDs) in 1998 compared with the US \$ 27,000 million in 1990 (figures cover sales in over seventy countries surveyed on an annual basis by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry)⁶, reflect the growth of content-based industries and the size and magnitude of the global cultural trade today. In 1996, cultural products (films, music, television programs, books, journals and computer software) became the largest US export, surpassing, for the first time, all other traditional industries including automobiles, agriculture, aerospace and defence.

Despite the vast problems of statistical reliability, comparability and standardization of classifications, the given data suggests global trade in cultural services is growing very fast, just as other commercial services that are growing faster than traditional exports of merchandise goods. Definitions of cultural services also vary widely. In the “films and television” category of the “OECD publication services statistics on International transactions 1970-1994”, for example, data for Japan is defined as “film rentals”, for Germany as “films and television”, for France as “audiovisual programmes”, for Canada as “films and broadcasting”, and for Austria as “culture and entertainment”. Another biggest difficulty in consolidating and interpreting trade figures for cultural services is the fact that much intra-firm trade is not registered, whether it is between overseas affiliates or foreign owned affiliates.

Overall, the rapid expansion of international cultural trade has responded to the rising demand for cultural goods and services. Changing consumption patterns in industrial and developing countries have created more leisure time and spare incomes, together with cheaper products, all of which have helped generate this new demand and are the building blocks of the emerging information society.⁷

To understand the international trade in cultural goods and services, the concepts of cultural goods and services, cultural industries and cultural exception must be discussed.

Cultural Goods and Services

The concepts of “cultural goods” and “cultural services”, which appear clearly distinct, are sometimes difficult to disassociate. In fact, their respective definitions and meanings are one of the key issues currently being discussed at the international level. The combination of both terms is commonly referred to as “cultural products”, and could be tentatively defined as follows⁸ :

∩ **Cultural Goods** generally refer to those consumer goods which convey ideas, symbols, and ways of life. They inform or entertain, contribute to build collective identity and influence cultural practices. The result of individual or collective creativity - thus copyright based cultural goods are reproduced and boosted by industrial processes and worldwide distribution. Books, magazines, multimedia products, software, records, films, videos, audiovisual programmes, crafts and fashion design constitute plural and diversified cultural offerings for citizen at large.

∩ **Cultural Services** are those activities aimed at satisfying cultural interests or needs. Such activities do not represent material goods in themselves : they typically consist of the overall set of measures and supporting facilities for cultural practices that government, private and semi-public institutions or companies make available to the community. Examples of such services include the promotion of performances and cultural events as well as cultural information and preservation (libraries, documentation centres and museums). Cultural services may be offered for free or on a commercial basis.

Cultural services include performing services (theatre, orchestras and circuses), publishing, publication, news, communication and architectural services. They also include audiovisual services (distribution of films, television/radio programs, and home videos; all aspects of production such as dubbing and print duplication ; exhibition of films ; and ownership and operation of cable, satellite, and broadcast facilities or cinemas ...), library services, archives, museums as well as other services. So far, there are no common definitions, nor a single standardisez system of descriptions for traded cultural

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CULTURE, MIGRATION AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

services. Furthermore, different conceptions exist regarding the nature of certain products such as books or films, which can be made available on-line and also have their hard copy equivalent.

Cultural Industries

It is generally agreed that this term applies to those industries that combine the creation, production and commercialisation of contents which are intangible and cultural in nature. These contents are typically protected by copyright and they can take the form of goods and services. They generally include printing, publishing, and multimedia, audio-visual, phonographic and cinematographic productions, crafts and design. For some countries, this concept also embraces architecture, visual and performing arts, sports and manufacturing of musical instruments, advertising and cultural tourism.

Cultural Industries add value to contents and generate values for individuals and societies. They are knowledge and labour-intensive, create employment and wealth, nurture creativity- the “raw-material” they are made from, and foster innovation in production and commercialization process. Cultural industries are central in promoting and maintaining. cultural diversity and in ensuring democratic access to culture. Today, globalization offers new challenges and opportunities for their development

Cultural Exception

Whether to treat cultural goods like any other commercial good or to make them an exception has become a hotly contested issue in international trade negotiations. The Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiations in 1994 provided a precedent for other trade agreements to allow countries to exempt cultural goods from trade agreements and adopt policies to protect such industries at home. As cultural goods convey ideas, symbols and lifestyles and are an intrinsic part of the identity of the community that produces them, there is little disagreement that cultural products need some public support to flourish. Subsidies for museums, ballet, libraries and other cultural products and services are widespread and accepted in all free market economies. The disagreement is over whether films and audiovisual products are cultural goods or merely entertainment. As they are powerful conveyors of lifestyles and carry social messages therefore they are considered to be cultural goods.

The cultural exception has mobilised public support. It touches people’s concern that their national cultures might be swept away by the economic forces of the global market, threatening their cultural identity. The most extreme advocates of the cultural exception fear that foreign films and television programmes will spread foreign culture and eventually obliterate local cultures and traditional values. In the film industry US productions regularly account for about 85 per cent of film audiences worldwide. In the audiovisual trade with the European Union alone, the United States had US \$ 8.1 billion surplus in 2000, divided equally between films and television rights. The international dominance of US films is just one aspect of the spread of Western consumer culture. New satellite communication technologies in the 1980s gave rise to a powerful new medium with global reach and to such global media networks as CNN. Consumption patterns are now global. Market research has identified a “Global Elite”, a global middle class that follows the same consumption style and prefers “global brands”. Most striking are “global teens”, who inhabit a “global space” a single pop culture world, soaking up the same videos and music providing a huge market for designer running shoes, t-shirts and jeans.⁹

Flow of People - Immigration

Globalization is quantitatively and qualitatively reshaping international movement of people, with more migrants going to high income countries and wanting to maintain their cultural identities and ties with their home countries.

Table I
Cross Sectional Pattern of Migrant Population in Top 10 Cities (2000-01)

<i>Country</i>	<i>(in per cent)</i>
United Arab Emirates	68
Kuwait	49
Jordan	39
Israel	37
Singapore	34
Oman	26
Switzerland	25
Australia	25
Saudi Arabia	24
New Zealand	22

Source: Human Development Report, 2004, 87.

People have always moved across borders, but the numbers have grown over the last three decades. The number of international migrants- people living outside their country of birth - grew from 76 million in 1960 to 154 million in 1990 and further to 175 million in 2000¹⁰. Almost half the people in Toronto and Los Angeles are foreign born, and more than a quarter are in Abidjan, London and Singapore.

Table II
Cross Sectional Pattern of Foreign Born Population in Top 10 Cities (2000-01)

<i>City</i>	<i>(in per cent)</i>
Miami	59
Toronto	44
Los Angeles	41
Vancouver	37
New York City	36
Singapore	33
Sydney	31
Abidjan	30
London	28
Paris	23

Source: UN Habitat 2004; US Census Bureau 2004; World Cities Project 2002; Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001; Statistics Canada 2004.

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CULTURE, MIGRATION AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

In the meanwhile it is not impertinent to mention that the telephone, the internet and the global media bring the realities of life across the globe into the living room, making people aware of disparities in wages and living conditions - and eager to improve their prospects. But more than the numeric increase, the **structure of migration** has changed radically¹¹.

- ⌋ **Changing Demographics** - For Western Europe, Australia and North America, the growth in migration in the last decade was almost entirely concentrated in flows from poor to rich countries. In the 1990s the foreign born population in more developed regions increased by 23 million¹². Today, almost 1 in 10 people living in those countries was born elsewhere¹³.
- ⌋ **Irregular Migration**- has reached unprecedented levels: up to 30 million people worldwide do not have legal residency status in the country where they live¹⁴.
- ⌋ **Circular Migration** - People who decide to migrate today are more likely to return to their place of birth, or to move on to a third country, than to stay in the first country to which they migrate. With cheaper communication and travel, migrants stay in closer touch with their home communities.
- ⌋ **Diaspora Network** - Having friends and family abroad makes migration easier. Diaspora networks provide shelter, work and assistance with bureaucracy. So migrants coming from the same country tend to concentrate where others have settled. For instance, 92 per cent of Algerian immigrants to Europe live in France, and about 81 per cent of Greek immigrants in Germany¹⁵.
- ⌋ **Remittances** - In a little more than 10 years remittances to developing countries increased from US \$ 30 billion in 1990 to nearly US \$80 billion in 2002¹⁶.
- ⌋ **Asylum Seekers and Refugees** - About 90 per cent of the world's migrants are refugees (16 million people). Europe hosted more than 2 million political asylum seekers in 2000, four times more than North America¹⁷.
- ⌋ **Feminization** - Women have always migrated as family members, but today more women are migrating alone for work abroad, leaving their families at home. For the Philippines, women made up 70 per cent of migrant workers abroad in 2000.

Managing the inflow and integration of foreign migrants requires responding to anti immigrant groups, who argue that the national culture is threatened, and to migrant groups, who demand respect for their ways of life. Anti immigrant groups often defend national identities in the name of tradition. This narrows their choices as well by shutting countries off from the socio-economic benefits of immigration, which brings new skills and workers to an economy. According to Human Development Report 2004, closing doors to immigration is neither practical nor in the interest of national development. Economists have for long argued that the gains from liberalizing migration dwarf those from removing barriers to world trade. From Indian technology entrepreneurs in Silicon valley in the United States to Western African nurses throughout Europe to Chinese investors in Australia to Filipino domestic workers in Saudi Arabia, immigrant's contributions to innovations, enterprise and skills are daily reminders of their value to society. In today's knowledge economy countries compete by creating and attracting talent. In 1990, for example, foreign born students earned 62 per cent of engineering doctorates in the United States, and more than 70 per cent of foreign born students who get doctorates

in the United States stay on in the United States. Often among the more entrepreneurial in society, immigrants invest in small businesses and rejuvenate urban neighborhoods in Europe they are creating commercial zones in abandoned areas to generate thousands of jobs.

Today, countries of Western Europe and Japan, facing the prospect of aging and shrinking populations, are in dire need of fresh inflow of people. Western Europe's working age population is predicted to fall from 225 million in 1995 to 223 million by 2025. According to UN Population Division estimates, Europe will have to double its intake of immigrants just to maintain its population size by 2050. Efforts to reverse the flow of people fight against the tide of globalisation.

Combating social prejudice and Xenophobia is critical to building social harmony and unity in diverse societies. Greater respect and understanding for cultures can be fostered by providing positive and accurate images in the media, teaching history of other cultures in schools and preparing museum, exhibitions that demonstrate respect for cultural diversity and address socio-economic discrimination and inequalities. Countries with historically large numbers of immigrants have followed two approaches to integration, differentialism and assimilation. Differentialism means maintaining clear boundaries between groups and respecting them as separate communities. The other approach, assimilation, seeks to make immigrants become "more like us". The state and other institutions encourage immigrants to learn the predominant national language and adopt the social and cultural practices of the receiving community. These two approaches, effective in earlier decades, are inadequate in diverse societies that need to build respect for differences and a commitment to unity. Multiculturalism has recently become a third approach which not only recognizes different value systems and cultural practices within society, it is also about building a common commitment to core, non-negotiable values, such as human rights, rule of law, gender equality, diversity and tolerance.

Indigenous People, Extractive Industries and Traditional Knowledge

Indigenous people are proponents and representatives of humanity's cultural diversity. Historically, however, indigenous peoples have been marginalised by dominant societies and have often faced assimilation and cultural genocide. Indigenous people see globalisation as a threat to their cultural identities, their control over territory and their centuries-old traditions of knowledge and artistic expression. They fear that cultural significance of their territories and knowledge will go unrecognised or that they will receive inadequate compensation for these cultural assets. In these situations globalization is often blamed. Preserving cultural identity need not require staying out of the global economy. There are ways of ensuring the cultural and socio-economic inclusion of indigenous people based on respect for cultural traditions and the sharing of the economic benefits of resource use. Central to ensuring the inclusion of indigenous people in the global world are how national governments and international institutions deal with investments in indigenous territories and protect traditional knowledge. The historical territories of indigenous people are often rich in minerals, oil and gas deposits. That can set up the potential for conflict between promoting national economic growth through extractive industries and protecting the cultural identity and economic livelihood of indigenous people. The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous people, developed over many generations and collectively owned by the community, can have practical uses in agriculture,

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CULTURE, MIGRATION AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

forestry and health. Conflict can arise between recognising collective ownership and following the modern intellectual property regime, which focuses on individual rights.

The cultural identity and socio-economic equity of indigenous people can be threatened in several ways by the activities of extractive industries. First, there is inadequate recognition of the cultural significance of the land and territories that indigenous people inhabit. Indigenous people have strong spiritual connections to their land, which is why some of them oppose any investment in extractive industries within their territories. Second, there is plausible concern about the impact of extractive industries on local livelihoods. When mineral extraction leads to the widespread displacement of communities and loss of their farmlands, it affects both their sense of cultural identity and their source of sustainable livelihood. Third, indigenous groups complain about unfair exclusion from decision-making. Fourth, Indigenous people feel cheated when their physical resources are misappropriated without adequate compensation.

These issues highlight the conflict between national sovereignty, over resources and the special rights of indigenous people to their territories and the mineral resources they contain. Opportunities for benefit sharing in extractive industries are extensive, including education, training, preferential employment for local people, financial compensation, business opportunities and environmental commitments. Indigenous people have dynamic living cultures and seek their place in the modern world. They are not against development, but for too long have they been victims of development and now demand to become participants in and also benefit from-development that is sustainable¹⁸.

Globalization has also heightened demand for knowledge as an economic resource. Indigenous people have a rich resource of traditional knowledge – about plants with medicinal value, food varieties that consumers demand and other valuable knowledge. Entrepreneurs were quick to see the market potential if they could patent and sell this knowledge. So traditional knowledge is increasingly misappropriated, with many “inventions” falsely awarded patents. Examples include medicinal properties of the sacred Ayahuasca plant in the Amazon basin (processed by indigenous communities for centuries); and a pesticidal extract from the neem tree used in India for its antiseptic properties (common knowledge since ancient times). But indigenous groups are increasingly becoming assertive. Globalization has made it easier for indigenous people to organise, raise funds and network with other groups around the world, with greater political reach and impact than before. The United Nations declared 1995-2004 the International Decade for the Worlds Indigenous People, and in 2000, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous issues were created.

The traditional knowledge of indigenous groups has attributes of communal ownership and sometimes has spiritual significance. Intellectual property regimes fail to recognise either the community ownership or spiritual significance of traditional knowledge. These laws protect the work of individuals identifiable authors or inventors and spell out how others can use their work.

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognizes traditional knowledge, in contrast to the global intellectual property rights regime administered under the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). Article 8 (j) of the agreement stipulates that contracting parties must preserve and maintain the knowledge and innovations of indigenous and local communities. It also seeks the wider application

of traditional knowledge, “With the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge” and encourages the “customary use of biological resources in accord with traditional cultural practices”. The issue, is to find ways to reconcile the provisions of different international intellectual property regimes in order to protect traditional knowledge for the benefit of the indigenous community and promote its appropriate use within wider society.

Documenting traditional knowledge is often essential for protecting it, as is being done by the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library in India. It preserves knowledge in written form and prevents others from claiming it as their own. By promoting flows of investments and knowledge, globalization can bring recognition to indigenous people who have developed their resources over the centuries. But national and international rules on global trade and investment must also account for the cultural sensitivities and customary property rights of the indigenous people. Respecting cultural identity and promoting socio-economic equity through participation and benefit sharing are possible as long as decisions are made democratically by states, by companies, by international institutions and by indigenous people¹⁹.

Conclusion

In this paper, an attempt has been made to study the impact of globalization on culture, migration and the indigenous people. Though the trade in cultural goods and services has grown exponentially over the last two decades, yet most of the trade is between a smaller number of developed countries. Whether to treat cultural goods like any other commercial good or to make them an exception has become a debatable topic. As cultural exception touches people’s concern therefore trade in cultural goods should be exempted from trade agreements and such policies should be adopted that protect such industries at home. Globalization is quantitatively and qualitatively reshaping international movement of people, with more migrants going to high income countries and wanting to maintain their cultural identities and ties with their home countries. More than the numeric increase the structure of migration has changed radically. Managing the inflow and integration of foreign migrants is posing challenge to the host countries. Multicultural policies, therefore are needed to manage trade, immigration and investment that recognise cultural differences and identities. Indigenous people also see globalization as a threat to their cultural identities, their control over territory and their centuries old traditions of knowledge and artistic expression. In case of extractive industries, the indigenous people should become participants in and also benefit from a development that is sustainable. Regarding traditional knowledge there is a need to reconcile the provisions of different intellectual property regimes in order to protect it for the benefit not only of the indigenous community but also of humanity at large.

Notes

1. *Human Development Report 2004. Cultural Liberty in Today’s Diverse World*, New York, UNDP, Oxford University Press, 85.
2. Kroeber, Alfred and Clyde Kluckhohn. 1985. *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, New York : Random House, 11.

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON CULTURE, MIGRATION AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

3. Hofstede, Geert, "National Cultures Revisited", *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management*, September 1984, 22-24.
4. Kohls, Robert L. 1979. *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*, Chicago : International Press, 3.
5. UNESCO, 2000, *Study on International Flows of Cultural Goods - 1980-98*, Paris.
6. [http : // www.ifpi.org/](http://www.ifpi.org/) (accessed on 5 Nov 2005).
7. [http : // www.unesco.org /](http://www.unesco.org/) (accessed on Nov. 2005).
8. UNESCO, 2000, *Study on International Flows of Cultural Goods - 1980-98*, Paris.
9. *Human Development Report 2004-Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, UNDP, New York, Oxford University Press, 87.
10. Nord, Lega, 2004, 'Stop Ai Clandestini', [[http : //www.leganord.org/a-2-docpolitici-clandestini.html](http://www.leganord.org/a-2-docpolitici-clandestini.html)] March (accessed on 5 Nov. 2005).
11. *Human Development Report 2004 - Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, UNDP, New York, Oxford University Press, 87.
12. Bhagwati, Jagdish, "Borders beyond Control", *Foreign Affairs*, 82 (1), 2003, 98-104.
13. International Organisation for Migration. 2003. "Integration of Migrants : The IOM Approach", Geneva.
14. Niessen, 2000, "Diversity and Cohesion : New Challenges for the Integration of Immigrate and Minorities", Council of Europe, Strasbourg.
15. Geddes, Andrew, 2002, Europe's Ageing Workforce, BBC online, 20 June [[http : //news.bbc.co.uk/1/world/europe/2053581stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/world/europe/2053581stm)] accessed on 6 Nov. 2005.
16. *The Economist*, 2002, Survey on Migration, 2nd November.
17. *Human Development Report 2004 -Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, UNDP, New York, Oxford University Press, 87.
18. *Ibid.* 91.
19. *Ibid.* 86-100.
