



Forum: Environmental & Cultural

Issue: Protection of national cultures in the epoch of globalization

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Introduction

The impact of globalizing cultural trends on variety of national cultures nowadays has become one of the modern burning issues. These days globalization is often seen as a discourse affecting all possible forms of culture worldwide, both in post-modern and traditional societies. The major consequences of globalization have been the following: the complete change of traditional religions and belief systems; the beginning of the disintegration of the traditional social norms, elimination of cultural identities and disappearance of whole national cultures and peoples.

It is no longer possible to neglect or ignore the most powerful processes of globalization happening in the world linked to the vast cultural interactions leading to disappearance of national cultures and other negative effects. Therefore, it is extremely important to find the solution for this emerging issue.

Definition of key terms

Globalization – acceleration and intensification of economic interaction among the people, companies and governments of different nations.

Nation state – a state in which the great majority shares the same culture and are conscious of it.

National culture – the set of norms, behaviors, beliefs, customs, and values shared by the population of a sovereign nation.

Homogenization – an aspect of cultural globalization, listed as one of its main characteristics. The term refers to the reduction in cultural diversity through the popularization and diffusion of a wide array of cultural symbols – not only physical objects but customs, ideas, and values

Disintegration – the tendency for society to decline or disintegrate over time, perhaps due to the lapse or breakdown of traditional social support system.

Cultural globalization – process of the transmission of ideas, meanings, and values around the world in such a way as to extend and intensify social relations.

Indigenous peoples – those peoples, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them.

Background information

Globalization is often exclusively associated with worldwide economic integration and the emergence of a borderless global market.

Cultural interactions are historically responsible for much of the great advancements and evolution in art, science, language, even food and much more. However, some are concerned that the changes brought by globalization threaten the viability of locally made products and the people who produce them.

Globalization, of course, does more than simply increase the availability of foreign-made consumer products and disrupt traditional producers. It is also increasing international trade in cultural products and services, such as movies, music, and publications. The expansion of trade in cultural products is increasing the exposure of all societies to foreign cultures. And the exposure to foreign cultural goods often brings significant changes in local cultures, values, and traditions.

The current era of globalization, with its increase in the global flows of capital, labor, and information, is having a homogenizing influence on local culture. Besides positive effects, it may also bring a loss of uniqueness of local culture, which can lead to loss of identity, exclusion and even conflict. This is especially true for traditional societies and communities, which are vulnerable to rapid 'modernization' based on models imported from outside and not adapted to their context. Balancing the benefits of integrating into a globalized world against protecting the uniqueness of local culture requires a careful approach. Cultural globalization brings next aspects: educational standardization, mass media, new pastimes, rapid sociocultural change, social media.

Major countries and organizations involved

Globalization is a widespread process, so at the present stage it affects almost all countries, not only the developed ones. International community puts efforts to solve this issue. Most notable are the following:

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

A specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) based in Paris, France. Its declared purpose is to contribute to promoting international collaboration in education, sciences, and culture in order to increase universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and human rights along with fundamental freedom proclaimed in the United Nations Charter.

UNESCO is affiliated with other bodies such as:

- 1) International Federation of Coalitions for Cultural Diversity (IFCCD)
- 2) International Fund for Cultural Diversity (IFCD) 2005
- 3) World Commission on Culture and Development (WCCD) 1992

UNESCO protects the cultural heritage by means of:

- standard-setting activities (concerning the preparation and implementation of international legal instruments, and acting as Secretariat in that regard);
- technical and scientific assistance, and support for training and capacity-building;
- policies to combat illicit trafficking and for the return and restitution of cultural property;
- preservation, safeguarding, rehabilitation and conservation measures (assistance for developing conservation tools and techniques, and museums, stressing the concept of access and the role of museums as places of exchange and education);
- policies to promote, educate, raise awareness and inform aimed at the general public and professionals.

The UNESCO Database of National Cultural Heritage Laws is one of the tools to promote, raise awareness and inform the general public and professionals in pursuance of the protection of the cultural heritage.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

- 1) United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) 2002

Relevant treaties and UN resolutions

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples 2007 (UNDRIP)

According to the UN website, the Declaration was adopted on September 13, 2007, *“a majority of 144 states in favour, 4 votes against (Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States) and 11 abstentions (Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burundi, Colombia, Georgia, Kenya, Nigeria, Russian Federation, Samoa and*

Ukraine)". However, by the 2020 those countries that did not support the Declaration have changed their position. The significance of the UNDRIP is determined by its content, as it "*establishes a universal framework of minimum standards for the survival, dignity and well-being of the indigenous peoples of the world*"

Annual State of the World's Indigenous Peoples (SOWIP)

The need for a report on the situation concerning indigenous peoples was firstly articulated at the first session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII). The first report, published in 2009, focused on the following topics: Poverty and Well-being; Culture; Environment; Contemporary Education; Health; Human Rights and Emerging Issues. Since that time the Report promotes awareness of indigenous peoples' issues within the United Nations system, with States, academia and the broader public.

Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003

The purposes of this document are formulated as following: to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage; to ensure respect for the intangible cultural heritage of the communities, groups and individuals concerned; to raise awareness at the local, national and international levels of the importance of the intangible cultural heritage, and of ensuring mutual appreciation thereof; to provide for international cooperation and assistance.

UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity 2001

The Declaration was adopted by the General Conference of the UNESCO and consists of 12 Articles. This Declaration describes the essential role that cultural diversity plays in our society, and outlines and defines what is included in the term *cultural rights*.

UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005

This convention elaborates on several articles of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity and clarifies several issues. Among them are the relationship between identity and cultural goods and services, the responsibility of Member States for the protection of cultural diversity, and the importance of international cooperation on relevant issues.

The Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention 1989

The Convention is the main international document concerning the rights of indigenous people. Its forty-four articles cover numerous aspects of the issue from

general policy to more specific questions such as education or contacts and cooperation across borders.

Convention for the protection of the world cultural and natural heritage 1972

In its first articles, this document defines cultural and natural heritage, stresses the duty of each State to protect it, describes conditions for international assistance, and establishes an Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage as well as a Fund for Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Possible Solutions

Speaking about possible solutions to this problem the following ways should be mentioned:

- Introducing and implementation of government's control policy of the mass media
- Rational State's demography
- Stimulation and rewarding social initiatives and promotions of national cultures
- Developing programs of preserving and restoration of national cultures
- Solution of environmental issues
- Special financial benefits for individuals and organizations which promote and protect national cultures
- Encouraging and involvement of youth (courses in educational institutions)

“Many societies, particularly indigenous peoples, view culture as their richest heritage, without which they have no roots, history or soul. Its value is other than monetary. To commodify it is to destroy it” – Maude Barlow

Useful links

- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00131857.2018.1442307>
- <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>
- <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/69/2>
- https://www.theepochtimes.com/the-history-of-globalization_2581127.html
- <https://ich.unesco.org/en/dive&display=threat>
- <https://www.un.org/en/ga/69/meetings/indigenous/#&panel1-1>
- <https://en.unesco.org>
- <https://www.globalization101.org/uploads/File/Culture/cultall.pdf>
- <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2015/11/sowipmain.png>
- <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/culture-and-development/the-future-we-want-the-role-of-culture/globalization-and-culture/>