

**CONCOURS COMMUNS  
POLYTECHNIQUES****ÉPREUVE COMMUNE - FILIÈRES MP - PC - PSI - TSI - TPC****LANGUE VIVANTE A  
ANGLAIS****Mercredi 2 mai : 14 h - 17 h**

*N.B. : le candidat attachera la plus grande importance à la clarté, à la précision et à la concision de la rédaction. Si un candidat est amené à repérer ce qui peut lui sembler être une erreur d'énoncé, il le signalera sur sa copie et devra poursuivre sa composition en expliquant les raisons des initiatives qu'il a été amené à prendre.*

**L'usage d'un dictionnaire et de machines (calculatrice, traductrice, etc.)  
est strictement interdit.**

**Rédiger en anglais et en 400 mots une synthèse des documents proposés, qui devra obligatoirement comporter un titre.**

Indiquer avec précision, à la fin du travail, le nombre de mots utilisés (titre inclus), un écart de 10 % en plus ou en moins sera accepté.

Vous aurez soin d'en faciliter la vérification, en mettant un trait vertical tous les vingt mots.

Toute fraude sera sanctionnée.

Vous indiquerez, en introduction, au minimum, la source et la date de chaque document. Vous pourrez ensuite, dans le corps de la synthèse, faire référence à ces documents par « doc.1 », « doc. 2 », etc.

Ce sujet comporte les 4 documents suivants qui sont d'égale importance :

- **document 1** - Negative Effects of Globalization on Culture, Eleanor McKenzie (extrait et adapté de *classroom.synonym.com*, last accessed: 03/10/2017).
- **document 2** - Is it inevitable that globalisation will create one uniform culture? Andrew Hennigan (extrait et adapté de *www.quora.com*, 19/01/2015).
- **document 3** - Does globalization destroy culture? Joseph Sunde (extrait et adapté de *blog.acton.org*, 05/01/2017)
- **document 4** - Mincing-machine and nationals (extrait de *moziru.com*, *Culture clipart globalization*, last accessed: 05/10/2017).

## **Document 1 - Negative Effects of Globalization on Culture**

Eleanor McKenzie, *classroom.synonym.com* (last accessed: 03/10/2017)

Globalization is not easily defined. For some, it is a positive process leading to shared social values worldwide. For others, the term has a negative meaning, and critics see it as marginalizing less dominant cultures, particularly those in the developing world. Some critics refer to it as the "McDonaldization" of culture, due to global advertising campaigns that undermine cultural diversity.

Large multinational companies promote their products globally, and there are few countries where the logos for Coca-Cola and Nike haven't appeared. The negative effect of global marketing is that local companies are edged out of the market and the multinational companies impose American or European consumer trends on other cultures. Similarly, the fast food industry promotes values of production efficiency. As a result, traditional cuisine appears less cost-effective and profitable than fast food, causing traditional food outlets to lose business.

Another criticism is that Western nations, particularly the United States, impose cultural values on others through media and popular culture. Critics of globalization call this "cultural imperialism," because the West promotes its culture as having more worth, or being more correct, than other regions' cultural values. The domination of news media and Internet services by Western companies helps maintain this influence over local views, according to critics.

Language is a key expression of cultural diversity. Critics of globalization claim it marginalizes some languages and may even cause some languages to die out. Others say this is a myth. Because the world's dominant economies speak English, it is often seen as the main culprit in making other languages less important. Certainly, English is widely used as a second or third language, and this helps the globalization of business trade; however, if business communities see more benefits in speaking Spanish or Chinese, they learn those instead.

Some United Nations members, including the Vatican City, claim that globalization increases poverty amongst young people, the old, women, indigenous peoples and migrants, which has a cultural impact. A representative from Cuba said one result of globalization was that 20 percent of the world population consumed 80 percent of global production, leaving 80 percent of the population in increased poverty. One way to reduce poverty in these groups is for wealthy nations to accept more imports from developing countries.

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## **Document 2 - Is it inevitable that globalisation will create one uniform culture?**

Andrew Hennigan, *www.quora.com*, 19/01/2015

This is a question I have been asked many times in culture workshops over the years by people who have seen familiar logos and products wherever they go. The answer is definitely no; cultural differences will continue to persist as they have always done so and here are three reasons why.

Just because Coca Cola, McDonalds, Kikkoman and other global brands are pretty much everywhere does not mean that the consumers have all adopted the same culture. Culture is much deeper than the superficial signs that you see around you and concerns much more the attitudes that people have to time, relationships, the world around them and so on. Culture at this level is not directly visible – though you can sometimes see visible signs, like when someone bows to a superior – and in some cases people are not even aware of their own culture. American fast food chains can successfully export their products and their business model but they still operate within the context of a local culture. The "employee of the month", for example, is a management technique that works in the individualistic USA but is perceived in a very different way in other cultures. Local managers follow the company rule book and select the employee but are aware that this is seen as a negative incentive - sometimes shameful or at best embarrassing to the employee singled out in this way.

People all over the world have adopted the world-wide web and many other technologies, but this does not mean that they also adopt the original cultural context. Try, for example, to build a wiki in an Asian company and you will find that their different attitudes to hierarchy make it hard to convince people to edit the pages created by others. You see it also in the different ways people use social media. This is hardly a new observation. In the seventies, people across the globe adopted Japanese Walkman personal cassette player technology, but they did not adopt the original Japanese concept of using headphones to avoid disturbing other people; they used them to avoid others disturbing them. Many other technologies have been adopted globally in the past independently of the culture of the creators. Almost everyone adopted Arabic numerals during the Middle Ages, but they did not adopt the Hindu culture that created them. Later people adopted steam power, electricity, radio, TV and many other good ideas, always without the original cultural matrix. In earlier times the same happened presumably with stone tools, fire and iron working.

Regardless of brands and technologies, cultures tend to persist because they are much more resilient than people imagine. Today people grumble that the world-wide web undermines local cultures but to be fair they said exactly the same about radio, TV and Hollywood movies. In spite of a century of movies, cultural differences are still going strong and many countries have evolved their own independent movie cultures. Try comparing also American and Indian dating websites to see how the same idea and the same technology can lead to radically different implementations. Yes, the whole world has embraced the idea of having dating sites but the way they work is very different. At the same time cultures can and do change. Some aspects of your culture will be lost in your own lifetime, but this is how culture works. The culture you have today is a mixture of innovations – like mutations in the cultural DNA – and borrowings from other cultures. Many of the notions of western law come from the Romans, and many concepts of politics come from Greece. Maybe today China imports *The Simpsons* but they have contributed many things to western culture over the years – including such concepts as using written tests to choose the best person for a job. Some aspects of culture might align with a cultural import, but at the same time new subcultures emerge that are the seeds of new trends. I don't believe it is even possible to have a standard global culture. There have even been some deliberate attempts in history to forcibly standardize a culture, rarely with any success even when the most violent means are used.

So to answer the original question: no, neither global brands nor new technologies will ever create a uniform global culture. Maybe you see that there is a McDonalds wherever you go, but look more closely at how it fits into the local cultural context. When someone says "Meet you at McDo (that's what the French call it) at 4pm" do you expect they will be there at 16:00:00 or maybe 15 minutes later? Do men and women who are not married to each other sit at the same table? Do people pay separately or does someone insist on paying for everyone? Apart from the signs, you will find that almost everything else is actually different if you look carefully enough.

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### **Document 3 - Does globalization destroy culture?**

Joseph Sunde, *blog.acton.org*, 05/01/2017

Globalization is routinely decried for its disruptive effects, particularly as it relates to local culture and community enterprises and institutions. Even as it's proven to drive significant economic growth, questions remain about its steamrolling influence on the culture.

"Even if we grant that global competitive markets create prosperity, is it worth the fast food chains and the big box chains we see everywhere we go?" asks Michael Miller in an excerpt from *PovertyCure*. "What about a sense of vulgarity and bringing things to the lowest common denominator? And perhaps most important, does globalization destroy local culture?"

The threats to culture are real and pronounced. It is undeniable that globalization *can* and *has* and *will* diminish or destroy certain cultures, traditions, and enterprises. Yet as Miller and others remind us in, we are not powerless in our response, whether as creators or consumers.

Indeed, globalization also presents a tremendous opportunity for cultural diversity.

In Ireland, for example, increased participation in global trade not only boosted and diversified the Irish economy; it also allowed the Irish to spread their culture around the world, whether through beer or film or music and dance. Simultaneously, the influx of competing cultural influences has increased awareness of their cultural identity, spurring citizens to defend, preserve, and restore the cultural features they care about the most (e.g. the recent renaissance of the Irish language).

As Irish economist Marc Coleman explains, even though the predominant push of globalization represents a "secularized, individualized view of the world," that message is an opportunity for more traditional or family-oriented cultures to harness those same channels for their voice and cultural perspective. "Instead of complaining," he says, "let's actually use globalization to fight back and push our view of the world."

It's a reorientation that we would all do well to heed, and it doesn't just apply to more tangible cultural artifacts. Whether we're trying to spread a particular message through more direct communications or cultivating culture and serving our neighbors in the day-to-day economic order, the channels are already there, and they're only continuing to expand.

"Man cannot live by bread alone," concludes Coleman. "It's very important that developing countries do not see the global market and the opportunities of a global market as a substitute for their native culture and values. It's extremely important to know who you are and what your culture is."

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#### Document 4 - Mincing-machine and nationals

*moziru.com, Culture clipart globalization (last accessed: 05/10/2017)*



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