

# Globalisation Impact on the Western and Eastern Cultures

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**Abstract:** The investigation of the consequences of globalisation on the cultures of West and East is an important aspect in the study of modern world history. Technology and global commerce are rapidly developing, as a result of which, today, we can observe rapid cultural transformation. The aim of this paper is to study the impact of globalisation on the cultures of Western and Eastern countries. The author analyses how the globalisation affects each individual culture, and also models the possible ways of the world development, in the context of globalisation and the interaction of foreign cultures. The main research methods in this paper are: the comparative method, methods of analysis and synthesis of data, the historical method, and theoretical analysis of scientific literature on the topic, namely, globalisation and culture. The concepts of Western and Eastern culture were studied, the distinctive features of these cultures were analysed, as well as the religious prerequisites for the establishment of different worldviews. The results obtained in the course of the study will provide an opportunity to assess the prospects for the further development of Western and Eastern cultures in the modern world.

**Keywords:** Intercultural interaction, international relations, worldview, unity of opposites.

## INTRODUCTION

Globalisation, as a process of economic, political and cultural integration, opens up new perspectives for society and provides an opportunity for interaction between different cultures. The main reason for its occurrence, scientists call the world division of labour, labour and capital migration, standardisation of the legal framework, development of economic and technological processes. All of the above factors have led to the convergence and fusion of cultures of different states. Globalisation, as a phenomenon, affects all spheres of human life (Chumakov 2017). One of the key aspects of globalisation can be considered the dependence of subjects on each other, as well as the emergence of common problems for a group of related states.

Modern historians and scientists highlight five main stages in the establishment of globalisation. The first stage in the emergence of the foundations of globalisation took place from 14th to late 19th centuries. This stage is characterised by emergence of the concept of globalisation, subsequently the formation of the international economy, global trade and the appearance of the first components of the world commodity market (Khiltukhina 2003). The second stage is the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century. It is characterised by the transition of the capitalist system into monopolistic (Held 2016). At this stage, the monopolisation of

production processes was launched, and there was also a sharp export of capital abroad. At the second stage of the establishment of globalisation, the forms of international relations expanded, the processes of active economic interaction between countries were launched, and the basis for the international division of labour was laid.

The third stage took place between the First and Second World Wars. In this period of history, the financial system of most countries was characterised as unstable and volatile. At this stage, in the period after 1917, the world economy was divided into two types: capitalist and socialist. The fourth stage began after the end of World War II and lasted until the early 1990s. This stage can be described as the restructuring of international relations. At this stage were formed world organisations for regulating economic development, such as: International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, United Nations and World Trade Organisation. The fifth stage of globalisation continues from the early 1990s to the present day.

The main distinguishing feature of the current stage of globalisation, scientists indicate the fall of real socialism and the transition of socialist countries to a more open economy (Flew 2020). The following factors are considered the peculiarities of the current stage of globalisation: the internationalisation of economic life, the liberalisation of foreign economic relations, the integration of the regional economy, the unification of the rules of economic life, the transnationalisation of capital and production. The process of globalisation has influenced the world culture. Globalisation has

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become a point of collision between the Western and Eastern countries. As a result of the cultural collision of different worldviews and ways of life, a new cultural phenomenon is gradually emerging (Rodrik 2014).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodological basis of this study is the integration of theoretical methods of cognition. In the course of writing this paper, the following methods of scientific knowledge were used: the historical method, the comparison method, methods of synthesis and analysis. The historical method consists in the study of historical facts and documents, involves the study of topics by analysing the reliability of historical facts and events. Using this method, a relationship was found between the stages of the introduction of globalisation and certain historical periods. This method makes it possible to trace the relationship between the globalisation and the development of technology, a change in political and economic direction in different countries.

The comparison method is one of the most common methods of scientific knowledge, it provides an opportunity to trace the similarities and differences between objects and phenomena, in the context of this paper, between Western and Eastern cultures. This research method has indicated the similarities and distinctive features of the cultures of the West and the East. Also, the comparative method became the basis for assessing the impact of the globalisation on Eastern and Western culture and on culture in general. The use of this method revealed the polarity of the culture and worldview of the West and the East. The distinctive differences between cultures, which have formed in the West and East different types of thinking and worldview, are noted. The difference in the system of values and priorities for Western and Eastern society is determined.

Synthesis and analysis methods have been used to study the concept of globalisation and its cultural impact. Using the method of analysis, the concept of globalisation was decomposed into its components, the stages of its emergence and influence of this concept on the modern world and culture were analysed. The relationships and causes of the globalisation impact on culture and society are tracked and analysed. Using the method of synthesis, the information is collected and systematised into a single system. Analysis and synthesis of available information on the historical preconditions of establishment of Western and Eastern

cultures, provided data for comparing these cultures. This method made it possible to highlight similar and different aspects in the worldview of certain society. It was possible to trace the close relationship between culture and religion. The method of synthesis and analysis made it possible to understand how religion shaped the worldview of Eastern society, and also indicated the independence of Western society from religion and traditions of the past.

The analysis of scientific works on to the subject matter made it possible to study the problem of globalisation and its influence on Western and Eastern cultures. In the course of writing this paper, scientific papers from international publications were analysed, a comparative analysis of Western and Eastern cultures was carried out, and the influence of globalisation on the establishment of modern of society was considered. The scientific works of foreign researchers study the Eastern and Western culture in different contexts. During the research, the issue of the worldview of Western and Eastern cultures, issues of religion and its importance for society in the modern world were considered. Most researchers who have studied the topic of culture in the context of globalisation note that Western society has long been aimed at progress, democracy and the introduction of innovations into everyday life, while the East is still aimed at harmony with nature, religion and observance of the traditions of the past. The study of scientific works provided an opportunity to develop theories regarding the further development of Western and Eastern culture. Analysed the possibility of preserving their authenticity, existing separately from each other or merging the West and East into a single culture.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Concepts of “Western” and “Eastern” Culture, Worldview of These Cultures

For a long time, the cultures of the West and the East seemed to be polar to each other. Western culture refers to Europe and North America. The countries of Central, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and North Africa represent the East. The main factors dividing these cultures are different worldview, values and priorities of society, territorial location, political structure of the country, and religion. According to modern classifications, the division of cultures is primarily geographical. Western culture includes most of the developed European countries, for example: France, Italy, Spain, England and Germany. Historically,

**Table 1: Distinctive Features of the Western and Eastern Mentality**

West	East
Industrial civilization	Traditional culture
One main religion. Christianity	Variety of religions. Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism
Objective reality and rationalism	The idea of non-being and irrationalism
The world is perceived as imperfect. A person must transform it	The world is harmonious and does not need improvement
Individualism. The purpose of life is self-actualisation	Collectivism. The purpose of life is to do as was foretold
Orientation towards innovation, modernisation and development	Orientation towards preservation of traditions and respect for the past, stability
Social structure: democracy	Social structure: despotism, authoritarianism

researchers refer to the oriental countries: Japan, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, India and China. A distinctive feature of Western culture is an orientation towards a dynamic lifestyle and technological progress (Alexandre 2018). The culture of the East immerses a person more in his inner world and considers human existence as a constant interaction between people and nature (Qian *et al.* 2019). The fundamental difference is the worldview. The main distinctive features of the worldview of the West and the East are presented in the Table 1.

Oriental civilization is based on the following religious teachings: Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. The Eastern worldview relies on the ancient religious teachings mentioned earlier. The Eastern sages perceived the world in this way: there is a single world, subject to natural laws (Khiltukhina 2016). A person, according to their worldview, is a part of the world, but not its central component. Eastern sages believed that a person is strong only when it acts in unity with nature, the surrounding world and society. Consequently, oriental religions and worldview muffle the subjective, personal principle in a person. The strength of the East lies in the observance of the most ancient traditions even in the modern world, they still rule their society today. A distinctive feature characteristic of oriental culture is the division into groups. Within each individual group, there is a strong bond between people, however, conflicts and misunderstandings often arise between different groups. The division of society into the groups mentioned occurs along ethnic, religious, class and other grounds (Welzel and Dalton 2016).

Another distinctive feature of the cultures of the East and West is the attitude of society to work. Western society is characterised by the following features: meeting of the goals, hard work and

perseverance. Whereas in the East, work for the purpose of accumulation, which can be used to further expand, for example, personal business, is not encouraged and is often condemned. For Western culture, work that was aimed at progress and results has always been encouraged and appreciated. However, it is important to note that Eastern society also valued a certain work, namely, the work of individual masters of their craft. As a result of this factor the East has always been known for its unique cultural works: porcelain, weapons, silk, architecture (Cseh and Oliver 2020). Particular attention should be given to the attitude towards wealth in Oriental culture. According to the teachings, it is believed that the world and society as a whole can only have a certain amount of wealth. Consequently, if an individual person has a large amount of material accumulations, then a smaller part of this wealth can be transferred to the others. The state plays an important role for Eastern society. History shows that in most cases the states of the East were theocratic. They were ruled by kings, emperors and sultans, and spiritual and political power was concentrated in their hands. The government of the East has always had a characteristic, pronounced, despotism. The government mainly defended the interests of the wealthy nobility, however, it always tried to ensure social stability in society (Khiltukhina 2009).

The worldview of a westerner is distinguished by his interest and desire to understand the world in which he lives. Also, the Western worldview is characterised by the active influence of a person on the surrounding world and interaction with it (van den Haak and Wilterdink 2019). Throughout history, Western culture has undergone dramatic changes. The society does not attach much importance to traditions and religion. Researchers believe that this factor may be one of the points of misunderstanding between societies under discussion (Lauronen *et al.* 2018). Observance of

traditions is one of the key factors of the Eastern worldview, while for the westerner, the desire for a market economy is more relevant. Western society is striving towards democracy, innovation and popular culture. In this regard, a conflict of worldviews occurs. A person with a Western worldview considers himself independent of nature and its forces, he always believed that he is the centre of the world (Driscoll and Grealy 2018). Western society strives for self-expression, while Western people want to be unique, stand out from the crowd and achieve success in society. In the East, the world order was presented as something harmonious, ideal, something with which it was necessary to merge. Western man, on the other hand, believed that the world is chaos, a frightening abyss, and man must bring order to this chaos. In Western culture, man initially sought to break the relationship with nature. When the forceful scenario was promoted and implemented in the West, the theory of nonviolence dominated in the East.

### **The Clash of Western and Eastern Culture in the Context of Globalisation: Ways of Development and Interaction of Cultures**

World history and culture, the benefits of which we can observe today, have come a long way of establishment. The development of the culture and history of the West and the East was achieved through economic, social and political contradictions that have occurred throughout the world over the past twenty years (Salvatore *et al.* 2018). At the moment, the world is characterised by the disintegration of time frames and connections. This factor is a hindrance to rational discussion and the establishment of an objective Russian self-esteem in world culture, in the global and inner world (Karjalainen 2020). Russia occupies a certain place in the chronological flow of global culture, moreover, the state is in the centre of a cataclysm, which revealed one of the rarest time rifts. Today, the past, future and present appear before us as axiologically symmetrical. They exist equally and in parallel. This process takes place not only in theory, but also in practice in the daily life of society. The past puts pressure on the way of thinking and behaviour of society. The present and the future are virtually identical to each other, since they are fundamentally open to progress and development that take place in the world (Tierney and Kan 2016). This circumstance makes possible the collision of the past, present and future. And also, it allows us to highlight the values of our modern existence in culture, correlating post-Soviet Russia with the course of history (Zorkin 2016). The

future is a unity of opposites. It includes the past, which represents the traditional Eastern culture, as well as the present, represented by the innovative West and its material culture. There is also a well-established belief that the world has long been divided into two poles: East and West. These two civilizations have been interacting with each other since ancient times, enriching each other, and also fighting each other. Many scientists consider these two poles to be antagonists. They tend to believe that these two civilizations will never understand each other.

However, the problem of cultural interaction is relevant today. The development of Western and Eastern culture takes place in parallel, both cultures develop in accordance with the time of postmodern, information technologies and noosphere development of the world. Modern scholars and researchers suggest two main ways of cultural development, in the context of the modern globalised world. The first way is the clash of Western and Eastern culture. It is characterised by the preservation of the authenticity of each culture. Scientists suggest that East and West are able to retain their uniqueness and their own distinctive features. According to the second theory, the development of Western and Eastern culture presupposes a complete fusion and, as a consequence, the emergence of a new multicultural civilisation. The second way of development assumes that both cultures will be combined and merged into one, through the process of exchange of traditions and knowledge. In the context of the second theory, we will be able to observe the emergence of a new society of people, which will unite the West and the East. Initially, scientists noted the positive influence of Eastern culture on the West, however, today the opposite process is observed. The influence of Western culture on the East is due to the growing level of material culture, both in Western and Eastern societies. Due to the post-industrial development of the world and the globalisation processes, there is a convergence of peoples and cultures, which mutually complement each other and feed both development within culture and, in a natural way, affect the improvement of global culture. There is a natural interaction of two opposite cultures, which begin to unfold in a new quality: the East emerges from its own inner being, and the West seeks to turn its face to itself, into its inner world. This is the result of the globalisation.

### **CONCLUSION**

After analysing all available sources of information on the subject matter, the author can draw a number of

conclusions about Western and Eastern cultures in the context of the globalisation. The possibilities of the development of each individual culture as an authentic phenomenon have been studied, and the second way of the possible development of Western and Eastern culture, as a result of which the two cultures will be united, has been analysed. It should be noted that there is an ongoing transformation of Western and Eastern cultures, caused by globalisation as a phenomenon, and there is also an increase in the level of material culture in society. Scientists and researchers note the processes of the influence of the Western culture on the East, as well as of the Eastern on the West. These processes are associated with the emergence of multicultural cities and countries where both cultures exist in a single society.

This paper, aimed at studying Western and Eastern cultures, investigates the history of the cultural development. In the course of the study, the characteristic differences in the worldview of both societies were analysed. The main difference is the religious denomination. Eastern culture assumes the confession of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. This culture honours and observes the traditions of the past, prefers unity with nature and the world. According to the teachings of East, a person is a constituent part of the world, but not its central object. Western culture, on the other hand, has long abandoned the traditions of the past; Western society is not as religious as Eastern. The main values of the westerners are: material wealth, self-actualisation, implementation of technologies and innovations. Researchers note the great influence of Western culture in the East, which is the consequence of globalisation. In the modern world, with its pace of development of technology and society, there are two ways for Western and Eastern cultures. The first way will allow each culture to develop independently, and the second will unite them, creating a new civilisation and a new multicultural society.

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