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For the first time in the whole history of the world we face the phenomenon of, not just globalisation, but CULTURAL GLOBALISATION. But does it really exist and, if so, so what?

Undoubtedly cultural values and identities are being shaped and reshaped with the media playing a significant role in our daily lives. Many of our ideas about the world, our understanding of what is happening everyday and, it can be argued, even our values come from beyond our personal experience – they are formed by what we see and hear via the media.

We receive ideas about the world as “packaged” or “bite-sized” versions of events and issues from the media and we just know this has a strong influence on individuals and ultimately society as a whole. With the spread of the media to even remote places on the planet, its influence brings out important issues concerning the affect on national or local cultures and their responses. Young people of the MTV generation around the world probably have more in common with each other than with their parents. But MTV reflects the attitudes and values of western countries, especially America, and is argued to be contributing to the homogenisation of global culture – which, according to research, is expanding rapidly.

Cultural globalisation is a result of the economic activities in developed countries of news and entertainment – the media that produce television programmes, music and movies and distribute them across the world. This happens because they can, whilst other nations can’t. American dominance in this respect is uppermost because of a powerful economy and the English language. Even the statistics on book translations shows the number of American books translated from English far out weighs those being translated into English. However, this American dominance would not have come about without the economic power of the big corporations.

In some countries, American television constitutes 50% of the programs as the host country does not have the resources to fund the cost of production and distribution of their own. Expensive, blockbuster American movies have been a dominant force but are seen to represent “a type of homogeneous, uniform culture permeated by western capitalistic values full of elaborate technical effects and focus on stunts, action, and violence instead of character and emotion”. Undoubtedly, action movies are more easily understood in non-English speaking , diverse cultures – in other words they can travel.

To a large extent CULTURAL GLOBALISATION is happening by default – because of economic advantage. That of the US. However, all is not lost. India has become the world’s leading producer of fiction films, with Bollywood circulating films to Indian Asia, Indian Africa and the UK. France, too, has retained a strong film industry which has received Government subsidies.

If Cultural Globalisation is an accident of economic power then we can argue that as other countries rise in economic power Westernisation or Americanisation will lessen and the world will be treated to a greater variety of media input.

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Hello, I'm Deborah Swallow and, for the last fifteen years, I've worked in over thirty countries addressing the complexities of people working internationally across multiple cultures or a [cross cultural communication barriers](#) so individuals and organizations alike can gain an authentic competitive edge and win in international markets.

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