

Cambridge AS & A Level · Sociology 9699 · Notes

Globalisation and identity A2

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Read first: [Perspectives on globalisation](#), [Social identity and change](#)

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What you need to know

By the end of this topic you should be able to:

1. **Explain how globalisation affects identity**, including three particular responses:
 - **ethnic revitalisation**: groups reviving and taking new pride in their language, traditions and ethnic identity;
 - **cultural defence**: holding on to (or hardening) a culture, often through religion or nationalism, because it feels threatened by outside forces;
 - **hybrid identity**: a new identity made by combining parts of two or more cultures.
2. **Weigh cultural divergence against cultural convergence (homogenisation)**: is globalisation making the world's cultures more alike, or keeping them different and producing new mixtures?
3. **Explain the role of Western ideology in shaping identity, and the idea of Westernisation**: how Western values such as consumerism, individualism and liberal democracy spread, and how far people around the world adopt, adapt or reject them.

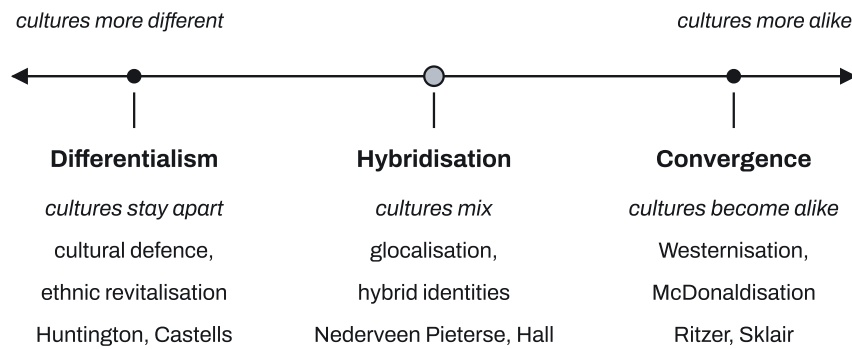
Every exam question on this topic so far has been the same debate seen from one end or the other: **is globalisation creating one global culture, or more cultural diversity?** You need the concepts above as the ammunition for both sides.

Understand it

Culture, identity and why globalisation matters to them

Culture is the shared way of life of a group: its language, beliefs, values, norms, food, music, dress and media. **Identity** is how people see themselves and how others see them, and much of it comes from the cultures they grow up in (ethnicity, nationality, religion, class, gender).

Globalisation (see *Perspectives on globalisation*) speeds up the movement of goods, images, people and ideas between societies. **Harvey's time-space compression** means a song released in Seoul can top charts in São Paulo within days, and a family in Lagos can watch the same streaming series as a family in London. So the question is what happens when cultures that were once fairly separate are in constant contact. Sociologists give three broad answers, which **Nederveen Pieterse** sorted into three "paradigms":



- **Convergence** (homogenisation): cultures become more and more alike, usually on a Western, especially American, model.
- **Hybridisation**: cultures mix and produce new forms that are neither purely local nor purely global.
- **Differentialism** (divergence): cultures stay distinct, and contact can even make people hold their own culture more firmly.

Hall put the same three outcomes in terms of identity: globalisation might **erode** national and ethnic identities, **strengthen** them as people resist, or replace them with new **hybrid** identities. Most good essays argue that all three happen, to different people, in different places and in different parts of culture.

Cultural convergence: the case for one global culture

The convergence view says differences between societies are shrinking because the same products, media, language and values now reach almost everywhere.

How sameness spreads.

- **Consumer goods and brands.** **Sklair** argues that transnational corporations spread a **culture-ideology of consumerism**: the belief that a good life means buying branded goods. Teenagers in very different countries want the same trainers, phones and soft drinks. **Ritzer's McDonaldisation** goes further: the fast-food principles of **efficiency, calculability, predictability and control** spread into shops, universities, hotels and call centres worldwide, so daily life itself becomes standardised.
- **Media and platforms.** **Tunstall** wrote that "the media are American", and **Schiller** described **cultural (media) imperialism**: a few Western media corporations sell their films, music and TV shows cheaply around the world, crowding out local production. Today a handful of mainly US-based companies, plus a few Chinese ones, own the most-used search engines, video sites, streaming services and social-media apps, and their algorithms decide what billions of people see. Global stars in sport, music and film, and online influencers, become role models in every continent.
- **Language.** English has become the language of international business, science, aviation, tourism and much of the internet. Parents in many countries pay for English lessons because it opens doors. Meanwhile many small languages have few young speakers and are expected to die out within a few generations, and with each language a way of seeing the world is lost.

- **Values and institutions.** Western-style schooling, employment contracts, nuclear-family ideals, romantic love, celebrity culture and ideas of beauty travel through media and advertising. The same airports, malls and hotel chains appear in every major city, which **Augé** called **non-places**: spaces that look the same anywhere and carry no local identity.

Two versions of convergence. Pessimists (Marxists such as Sklair and Schiller) see it as **Westernisation** or **Americanisation**: a one-way flow from the rich West that serves capitalist profit and devalues local cultures. **Optimists** (some globalists) welcome a shared global culture as the basis for cooperation, tolerance and human rights, a "global village" in **McLuhan's** phrase.

Western ideology and Westernisation

An **ideology** is a set of ideas that presents one group's interests or way of life as natural and normal.

Westernisation is the spread of Western ways of life, values and institutions to the rest of the world, so that people come to judge themselves by Western standards.

Which Western ideas are spreading?

- **Consumerism**: identity is built through what you buy (Sklair).
- **Individualism**: personal choice, self-expression and self-fulfilment matter more than duty to family, clan or religion. This shows up in choosing your own partner, smaller families and living apart from parents.
- **Liberal democracy and free markets**: **Fukuyama** claimed, after the end of the Cold War, that Western liberal democracy had won the battle of ideas and would become the final form of government everywhere ("the end of history").
- **Secularism and science**: religion as a private matter rather than the basis of law and public life.
- **Western ideals of the body**: thin or muscular body shapes, light skin, Western fashion. The large markets for skin-lightening creams in parts of Asia and Africa are often given as an example of identity being shaped by a Western standard of beauty.

How Western ideology shapes identity:

- **Through representation.** **Said's Orientalism** argues that the West has long pictured non-Western peoples as exotic, backward or dangerous, the opposite of a "rational, modern" West. When global media repeat these images, people in the West and outside it can come to see non-Western identities as inferior.
- **Through development and aid.** Modernisation theory (see *Perspectives on globalisation*) treats Western values as the route out of poverty, so schools, aid projects and international bodies such as the IMF promote them. **Latouche** argued that "development" itself is a form of Westernisation.
- **Through desire.** Western brands and lifestyles become symbols of being modern and successful, especially for young urban people, which can make local traditions look old-fashioned.

Criticisms of the Westernisation idea.

- **Audiences are active, not empty.** **Liebes and Katz** showed episodes of the American soap opera *Dallas* to groups from different cultures in Israel and the USA. Each group read it through its own values: some saw it as a warning about greed, some focused on family loyalty, some disliked its morality. Watching

Western media does not mean adopting Western values.

- **Flows go both ways. Thussu** describes **contra-flows**: Indian films, Korean pop and dramas, Nigerian "Nollywood" films, Turkish TV series, Latin American telenovelas and Japanese anime all reach huge audiences outside their home regions. Yoga, sushi and K-pop have changed Western lifestyles, too.
- **Modern does not have to mean Western.** Japan, South Korea, China and the Gulf states became wealthy and high-tech while keeping distinctive family values, religions and politics. Many sociologists speak of **multiple modernities** rather than one Western model.
- **The West is not one culture.** American, French and Scandinavian ways of life differ a lot, and Western societies are themselves multicultural because of migration.

Glocalisation and hybrid identity: cultures mix

Glocalisation (Robertson) is the blending of the global and the local. Global companies adapt products to local tastes (a burger chain selling a teriyaki burger in Japan and closing for prayer times in some Muslim-majority countries), and local people take what arrives and reshape it to suit their own lives, as when hip-hop is rapped in local languages about local problems.

Hybridity is mixing that produces something new. **Steger** and Nederveen Pieterse argue that this mixing, not uniformity, is the main cultural outcome of globalisation: Nederveen Pieterse calls the result a **global mélange**. **Hannerz** uses the word **creolisation** for the same process. **Appadurai** argues that global culture moves in many directions at once through overlapping flows of people, media, technology, money and ideas, so there is no single centre sending culture out.

A **hybrid identity** is the personal side of this: a sense of self that draws on more than one culture and is not simply a "half and half" of each.

- **Hall** studied the **diaspora** (communities living away from their ancestral homeland) and argued that migrants and their children build "new ethnicities" from their heritage and the society they live in. Identity becomes something people make, not something fixed at birth.
- **Johal** found that young British Asians often had a **dual** or **hyphenated** identity ("Brasian"), switching between cultures depending on the setting: one style of speech and dress with family, another with friends (**code-switching**).
- **Back** found white and black young people in South London creating shared **neo-ethnicities**, borrowing music, slang and style across ethnic lines.
- Bhangra music mixed with electronic dance music in Britain, Afrobeats blending West African rhythms with American hip-hop, and "fusion" cooking are examples at the level of culture.

Careful: a hybrid identity is about **culture**, not about having parents of different ethnic backgrounds. Someone of mixed heritage may or may not have a hybrid identity, and someone with two parents from the same background may well have one.

Postmodernists add that global media give people a huge "menu" of identities to choose from. Identity is fluid and chosen, a pick-and-mix of global and local elements, rather than inherited.

Cultural defence and ethnic revitalisation: cultures resist

Contact with global culture can also make people value their own culture **more**.

Cultural defence. **Bruce** uses this term for religion acting as a symbol of a group's identity when it feels threatened by an outside power. Catholicism in Poland under Soviet-backed communist rule and the 1979 Islamic revolution in Iran (partly a reaction against a ruler seen as imposing Western ways) are his kinds of example. Today, religious **fundamentalist** movements (strict, literal readings of a faith that reject modern liberal values) can be seen as cultural defence against Western secularism and consumerism. **Castells** calls these **resistance identities**: identities built by groups who feel pushed aside by global change, around religion, nation, ethnicity or locality.

Barber summed up the clash as **"Jihad vs McWorld"**: the more the world is drawn into one consumer culture ("McWorld"), the more some groups turn to tribal, religious or national loyalties in reaction. **Huntington** went further with the **clash of civilisations**: he argued that after the Cold War the world would divide along large cultural and religious blocs (Western, Islamic, Chinese and others), and that contact between them would sharpen differences rather than remove them. Critics say Huntington treats civilisations as fixed and uniform and ignores how much they borrow from each other.

Ethnic revitalisation is the revival of a group's culture and pride in its identity. Globalisation can trigger it, because people notice what they might lose, and can help it, because cheap media and the internet let small groups publish, broadcast and organise.

- In New Zealand, Māori-language preschools (kōhanga reo) began in 1982, and te reo Māori is now heard far more in schools, media and public life.
- In the UK, Welsh-medium schools and the Welsh Language Act of 1993 helped the language recover after a long decline, and Scottish national identity grew strongly, leading to the independence referendum of 2014.
- Indigenous groups worldwide use social media to teach languages, record elders and campaign for land rights.
- **Nationalism** has risen in many countries, partly as a reaction to migration, global institutions and global culture.

Cultural transition is the other side of Bruce's argument: for migrants, religious and ethnic communities ease the move into a new society by offering support and a sense of belonging, so migration can keep heritage cultures alive abroad rather than dissolving them.

Cultural divergence: the case for more diversity

Putting this together, the **divergence** view is that globalisation increases or preserves cultural differences, in four ways:

1. **Mixing makes new forms**: glocalisation and hybridity add new cultures rather than removing old ones.
2. **Resistance hardens old forms**: cultural defence, revitalisation, fundamentalism and nationalism.

3. **Movement spreads diversity**: migration, travel and tourism put many cultures side by side in global cities such as London, Dubai, Toronto or Singapore, and the internet gives minority cultures a global audience.
4. **Reach is uneven**: hundreds of millions of people, especially in poor rural areas, are only lightly touched by global media, and **sceptics** (see *Perspectives on globalisation*) argue that globalisation has been exaggerated.

Transformationalists (Held, Giddens) take the middle view: globalisation is real and changes cultures, but the outcome is mixed and uneven, not one culture.

The key point for evaluation: which part of culture?

Convergence is easiest to see at the **surface**: brands, fast food, pop music, films, fashion and technology. It is much harder to find in **deep** culture: religion, family and kinship, language spoken at home, ideas of honour and duty, ways of raising children. A young person in Jakarta may drink global coffee, wear global trainers and stream global music while praying five times a day and expecting to care for elderly parents. So the answer to "are cultural differences disappearing?" depends on which part of culture you look at, and **who** you look at (young urban consumers, rural elders, migrants, elites).

	Convergence	Hybridisation	Differentialism
What happens to cultures	Become alike, usually Westernised	Mix into new forms	Stay distinct or harden
Effect on identity	Local identities erode	Hybrid, chosen identities	Stronger ethnic, religious or national identities
Key thinkers	Ritzer, Sklair, Schiller, Tunstall, Fukuyama	Robertson, Nederveen Pieterse, Steger, Hall, Johal, Back, Appadurai	Bruce, Castells, Barber, Huntington
Linked perspective	Marxist (pessimist), globalist (optimist)	Postmodernist, transformationalist	Sceptic; critics of Westernisation
Typical evidence	Global brands and platforms, English, global celebrities	Fusion music and food, glocal menus, contra-flows, diaspora youth	Fundamentalism, nationalism, Māori and Welsh revival

Key facts and formulas

There is no formula list in Sociology. "Learn it" means you must remember it.

Key term	Status
Cultural convergence (homogenisation): cultures becoming alike; cultural divergence: cultures staying distinct or mixing into new forms	Learn it
Westernisation / Americanisation: Western values, lifestyles and institutions spreading worldwide; cultural (media) imperialism (Schiller, Tunstall)	Learn it

Key term	Status
Western ideology: consumerism (Sklair, culture-ideology of consumerism), individualism, liberal democracy (Fukuyama, end of history), secularism, Western body ideals; Said (Orientalism); Latouche	Learn it
McDonaldisation (Ritzer): efficiency, calculability, predictability and control	Learn it
Glocalisation (Robertson); hybridity (Steger, Nederveen Pieterse: global mélange); creolisation (Hannerz); global flows (Appadurai)	Learn it
Hybrid identity: a new identity combining two or more cultures; Hall (new ethnicities, diaspora), Johal (Brasian, code-switching), Back (neo-ethnicities)	Learn it
Cultural defence and cultural transition (Bruce); resistance identities (Castells); Jihad vs McWorld (Barber); clash of civilisations (Huntington)	Learn it
Ethnic revitalisation: reviving a group's language, traditions and pride (Māori kōhanga reo 1982, Welsh Language Act 1993, Scottish referendum 2014)	Learn it
Evaluation evidence: Liebes and Katz (<i>Dallas</i> , active audiences); contra-flows (Thussu); multiple modernities; surface versus deep culture	Learn it
Paper 4: two essays from different sections, each 35 marks: AO1 9, AO2 11, AO3 15, so $9 + 11 + 15 = 35$	Learn it

How to do it

We have tagged 11 questions for this topic (2021–2025, all from Paper 4), 10 different (the November 2023 Paper 41 repeated the Paper 43 question). Every one is a 35-mark "Evaluate this view" essay on whether globalisation makes cultures more alike or more diverse. None mix two types.

Question type	Questions
Evaluate the view that globalisation is creating one global culture (essay)	7
Evaluate the view that globalisation is increasing cultural diversity (essay)	4

The two types are the same debate with the view reversed. Read the quotation carefully: whatever it claims is the side you explain first and in most detail, and the other side becomes your evaluation. Paper 4 lasts 1 hour 45 minutes for two essays, so allow about 50 minutes for each, including 5 minutes to plan.

The essay plan that works for both types.

- 1. Introduction** (3–4 sentences): define globalisation and culture; name the view (cultural convergence or cultural divergence/diversity) and the opposite one; say you will test it against Hall's three outcomes.
- 2. Explain the view in the question** (AO1/AO2), with named thinkers and real cultural examples (music, food, film, language, religion, dress).

3. **Evaluate** (AO3) using the opposite side, but make each paragraph argue: "this suggests the view is wrong/overstated **because...**". Use the four questions below to keep the evaluation sharp.
4. **Conclusion**: answer the exact words ("disappearing", "single global culture", "greater diversity"). A strong verdict usually says the answer depends on the level of culture and the group.

Four questions to ask of any claim about global culture. They are your own way to organise evaluation and work in either direction.

- **The depth question**: is the change only in surface culture (brands, pop music) or also in deep culture (religion, family, language at home)?
- **The direction question**: does culture flow only from the West, or also back and sideways (contra-flows)?
- **The response question**: do people adopt global culture, adapt it, mix it, or resist it?
- **The reach question**: who is actually connected? Young urban consumers, or also rural, poor and older people?

1. Evaluate the view that globalisation is creating one global culture (essay) (7 questions)

Asked as: cultural differences between people are disappearing as a result of globalisation (2, one a repeat); globalisation is leading to (or has led to) cultural convergence (2); cultural differences between countries are disappearing (1); cultural differences have been replaced by a single global culture (1); cultural differences are disappearing as a result of globalisation (1).

Building the case for the view (AO1/AO2). Group your points by the channel through which sameness arrives, and give each one a thinker and a real example.

- **The channel of time and space.** Start with Harvey's time-space compression: the internet, satellite TV, cheap flights and phones mean ideas and products now cross borders almost instantly, so nothing technical now stands in the way of one shared culture. McLuhan's "global village" names the optimistic version.
- **The channel of shopping.** Sklair's culture-ideology of consumerism and Ritzer's McDonaldisation: the same brands, the same fast-food principles and the same shopping malls everywhere, and teenagers above all measuring status by which global brand they own. Augé's non-places show it in the built environment.
- **The channel of screens.** Schiller's cultural imperialism and Tunstall's American media: Hollywood films, and the apps and streaming sites run by a small group of American (and a few Chinese) firms, shape what billions watch, and their global celebrities are role models everywhere.
- **The channel of words.** English as the shared language of trade, science and the internet, while many small languages may have no speakers left in a few generations.
- **The channel of values.** Westernisation: individualism, consumerism, Western beauty ideals and liberal democracy (Fukuyama) spread through media, schooling and development programmes. Pessimistic Marxists see this as a one-way, profit-driven flow that makes people in poorer countries look down on their own traditions.

- **The pull of the host culture.** Migrants' children often adopt the language and lifestyle of the country they grow up in, so migration can feed convergence as well as diversity.
- **Even resistance can support the view.** Fundamentalist and nationalist movements fight so hard against Western influence precisely because it is so powerful; their reaction is a sign of how far convergence has gone.

Building the case against the view (AO3). Organise the criticism by the four questions, bringing in each counter-theory as an argument, not as a separate description.

- **The response question: people adapt and mix.** Robertson's glocalisation (local menus, local-language hip-hop); Nederveen Pieterse's global *mélange* and Steger's hybridity; Hall's new ethnicities and Johal's *Brasian* youth. The result is new cultures, not one culture, which is what postmodernists and transformationalists predict.
- **The response question: people resist.** Bruce's cultural defence and Castells's resistance identities: religious revival, fundamentalism and rising nationalism. Ethnic revitalisation, such as the Māori and Welsh language revivals, shows that globalisation can strengthen local identity.
- **The direction question.** Thussu's contra-flows (K-pop, Indian cinema, Nollywood, telenovelas, anime) and the take-up of yoga and sushi in the West show the West is changed by others too, so "Westernisation" is too simple. Global firms themselves borrow from many cultures to sell more widely.
- **The depth question.** Liebes and Katz's *Dallas* study shows audiences read the same media through their own values. Surface consumer culture may converge while religion, family life and politics change much more slowly.
- **The reach question.** Large parts of the world are only lightly connected, and sceptics argue globalisation is exaggerated; differences between, say, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and Japan remain huge.
- **Huntington's clash of civilisations** suggests contact sharpens differences between large cultural blocs, the opposite of convergence (though critics say he overstates how fixed those blocs are).

Judgement. For example: convergence is real in consumer and popular culture, and Western ideology has unequal power in shaping it, but differences have not disappeared; people mix, adapt and resist global culture, and deep culture changes slowly. The transformationalist picture of uneven change, with more hybridity than uniformity, fits the evidence better than "one global culture".

2. Evaluate the view that globalisation is increasing cultural diversity (essay) (4 questions)

Asked as: globalisation has resulted in (or has led to) greater cultural diversity (2); globalisation is leading to greater cultural diversity (1); globalisation is leading to increased cultural diversity (1).

Name the view as **cultural divergence** in your introduction and link it to postmodernists and transformationalists.

Building the case for the view (AO1/AO2). Here the four processes of divergence become your main argument.

- **New forms from mixing.** Robertson's glocalisation, Nederveen Pieterse's global *mélange*, Steger's hybridity and Hannerz's creolisation. Use real mixtures: Afrobeats, British bhangra, fusion food, local versions of global TV formats. Diversity grows because mixtures are added to the world's cultures.
- **Old forms revived.** Cultural defence (Bruce), resistance identities (Castells), fundamentalism, nationalism and ethnic revitalisation (Māori, Welsh, Scottish) keep cultures distinct, and some long-established civilisations, such as Islamic societies or China, are growing in global influence rather than fading.
- **Identities as choices.** Postmodernists argue global media offer a menu of identities; Hall's new ethnicities and Johal's code-switching British Asians show hybrid identities forming in diaspora communities.
- **People on the move.** Migration, tourism and study abroad put many cultures side by side; global cities are more varied than ever, and Bruce's cultural transition shows migrants keep and adapt their heritage. Social media lets minority voices and small cultures reach a global audience.
- **Uneven reach.** Sceptics show globalisation touches some places far more than others, so cultural differences between countries remain wide.
- **Global companies sell difference.** TNCs adapt products for each market and borrow styles from many cultures, so the global market itself spreads variety. Thussu's contra-flows show non-Western media reaching worldwide audiences.

Building the case against the view (AO3).

- **The depth question, reversed.** Much "diversity" is surface variety sold by the same few corporations in the same malls: Sklair's consumerism and Ritzer's McDonaldisation mean the menu changes but the system is uniform.
- **The direction question, reversed.** The flows are unequal. Schiller and Tunstall: Western, especially American, media and brands dominate; the main platforms that carry "diverse" voices are owned by a few US and Chinese firms whose algorithms favour what sells globally. Western ideology (individualism, consumerism, Western beauty ideals) shapes identities even inside hybrid forms.
- **Disappearing languages and lifestyles.** English spreads while many small languages lose their last young speakers, a real loss of diversity.
- **Global icons.** The same celebrities, sports clubs and influencers are followed everywhere.
- **The pull of the host culture.** Later generations of migrants often assimilate into the mainstream culture, so migration can reduce diversity over time.
- **Resistance as a sign of convergence.** The strength of fundamentalist and nationalist reactions shows how powerful global culture is, rather than proving diversity is winning.

Judgement. For example: globalisation adds new hybrid forms and provokes the revival of some old ones, so diversity is not simply vanishing; but the mixing happens on unequal terms, dominated by Western capital and media, and some forms of diversity (small languages, local ways of life) are being lost. "Greater diversity" is true of the mix of cultures visible in global cities and online, less true of the power to shape culture.

Using identity in these essays

Identity concepts give you strong evaluation in either type: **hybrid identity** supports diversity; **ethnic revitalisation** and **cultural defence** show resistance to convergence; **Westernisation** shows Western ideology reshaping identity. If a question names identity, use Hall's three outcomes (erosion, strengthening, hybridity) as the backbone of the essay.

Worked examples

Each example is a new 35-mark essay. The marks are given the way the levels mark scheme works: by assessment objective and level, not by points. In the exam, write each bullet as a full paragraph.

Example 1

'Globalisation is a process of Westernisation.' Evaluate this view. [35]

Introduction. Westernisation is the spread of Western values, lifestyles and institutions so that people elsewhere come to judge themselves by Western standards. Pessimistic Marxists say this is what cultural globalisation amounts to; postmodernists and transformationalists say the flows are mixed and many-sided.

For the view (AO1/AO2).

- **Ideology through consumption:** Sklair's culture-ideology of consumerism links identity to Western-branded goods.
- **Ideology through media:** Schiller and Tunstall; most global platforms are US-based, spreading individualism and celebrity culture.
- **Ideology through ideas of progress:** Fukuyama's claim that liberal democracy had won; Latouche on development as Westernisation; modernisation theory promoted by aid and the IMF.
- **Identity shaped from outside:** Said's Orientalism; Western body ideals and the sale of skin-lightening creams.

Against the view (AO3).

- **Contra-flows** (Thussu): K-pop, Bollywood, Nollywood and anime travel west; yoga and sushi are now Western habits.
- **Active audiences:** Liebes and Katz show viewers reading *Dallas* through their own values.
- **Multiple modernities:** Japan, South Korea and China are modern and wealthy without becoming Western in family or political life.
- **Resistance:** Bruce's cultural defence (Iran 1979), Barber's Jihad vs McWorld, and ethnic revitalisation all show rejection rather than adoption.
- **Hybridity:** Robertson and Nederveen Pieterse show Western elements absorbed into new local forms.

Conclusion. Western ideology has more power than any other in global culture, especially through consumer capitalism and media ownership, but "Westernisation" overstates a one-way flow; the outcome is unequal mixing.

How it would be marked. Westernisation explained with Sklair, Schiller, Fukuyama and Said (AO1 7–9), every point tied to "Westernisation" (AO2 10–11), and sustained weighing through contra-flows, active audiences and resistance to a justified verdict (AO3 12–15).

Example 2

'Globalisation strengthens ethnic identities rather than weakening them.' Evaluate this view. [35]

Introduction. Hall gives three possible outcomes for identity under globalisation: erosion, strengthening and hybridity. The view chooses strengthening.

For the view (AO1/AO2).

- **Ethnic revitalisation:** Māori kōhanga reo from 1982, Welsh-medium schooling after the Welsh Language Act of 1993, Scottish national identity and the 2014 referendum.
- **Cultural defence and resistance identities:** Bruce and Castells; religious revival among groups who feel threatened.
- **Cultural transition:** diaspora communities keep heritage alive through places of worship and community groups.
- **The internet** lets small ethnic groups teach languages and organise across borders.

Against the view (AO3).

- **Erosion:** convergence theorists (Ritzer, Sklair) show young people adopting global consumer identities; small languages are dying.
- **Hybridity rather than strength:** Johal's BrAsian youth and Back's neo-ethnicities are new mixed identities, neither the old ethnic identity strengthened nor erased.
- **Postmodernists:** ethnicity becomes one choice among many, worn lightly.
- **Uneven effects:** revival is strongest where groups have a state, language law or media of their own; elsewhere erosion is more likely.

Conclusion. Globalisation does strengthen some ethnic identities, mainly as a reaction, but it also weakens others and creates hybrid ones; Hall's view that all three happen is more convincing than "strengthens rather than weakens".

How it would be marked. Revitalisation, defence and hybridity with named studies (AO1 7–9), applied to "ethnic identities" and "rather than" (AO2 10–11), and an explicit comparison of the three outcomes leading to a verdict (AO3 12–15).

Example 3

'Hybrid identities are the most significant cultural outcome of globalisation.' Evaluate this view. [35]

This is the hardest kind of question: it asks you to rank one outcome against the others, so the whole essay must compare.

Introduction. Define hybrid identity (a new identity combining two or more cultures, not mixed parentage) and set it against convergence and differentialism.

For the view (AO1/AO2).

- **Hybridity is everywhere you look:** Nederveen Pieterse's global *mélange*, Steger, Hannerz's creolisation, Appadurai's many-directional flows.
- **Identity studies:** Hall's new ethnicities, Johal's code-switching, Back's neo-ethnicities.
- **Even global firms produce hybrids:** glocalisation (Robertson) means global and local are always mixed.
- **Postmodernists:** pick-and-mix identities are the normal condition of late modern life.

Against the view (AO3).

- **Convergence may matter more:** the terms of mixing are set by Western capital (Sklair, Ritzer); a "hybrid" built from global brands is still a consumer identity.
- **Resistance may matter more:** fundamentalism, nationalism and the clash of civilisations (Huntington) have shaped politics and conflict more than fusion music has.
- **The reach question:** hybrid identities are strongest among young urban people and diaspora communities; many rural people are barely affected.
- **"Significant" for whom?** Hybridity is visible in culture, but Westernisation and resistance may matter more for power and politics.

Conclusion. Hybridity is the most common cultural outcome in global cities and diasporas, but it happens under unequal Western influence and alongside powerful resistance; the most significant outcome depends on whether you judge by everyday culture or by power.

How it would be marked. All three paradigms with named writers (AO1 7–9), applied to "most significant" throughout (AO2 10–11), and a comparison that weighs hybridity against convergence and resistance to a reasoned verdict (AO3 12–15).

Common mistakes

- **Writing about globalisation in general, not culture.** Examiners repeatedly report answers about trade, TNCs or poverty with little or nothing on cultural effects. Every paragraph must be about culture or identity.
- **Explaining one side only.** Many low and middle answers set out convergence (or diversity) well and give the other side a line or none. AO3 is worth 15 of the 35 marks, so the counter-argument needs real space.
- **Evaluation by juxtaposition.** Describing convergence, then describing hybridity, without saying what one shows about the other, is not evaluation. Link them: "this challenges the view because...".
- **No examples of cultural forms.** Higher-scoring answers use concrete cultural forms (music, food, films, dance, language, religion). Assertions such as "everyone wears Western clothes now" without a thinker or example stay in the low bands.

- **Confusing hybrid identity with mixed race.** Examiners have noted answers describing mixed relationships and mixed-race children instead of cultural hybridity. Hybrid identity is about combining cultures.
- **Treating Westernisation as the only flow.** Strong answers recognise the power imbalance in global culture but also use contra-flows and active audiences to question it.
- **No real conclusion.** "There are arguments on both sides" is not a judgement. Say how far cultures are converging, in which areas of culture and for whom.

How to get the marks

- **"Evaluate this view" (35 marks):** one long essay, marked by levels for each assessment objective.
- **AO1 knowledge and understanding (9):** the top level (7–9) needs a range of detailed points with good use of concepts and theory or research. Use the key terms (convergence, divergence, homogenisation, Westernisation, glocalisation, hybridity, cultural defence, ethnic revitalisation) and name thinkers.
- **AO2 interpretation and application (11):** the top level (10–11) needs material that is accurate and **consistently applied to the question**. Keep returning to the question's words ("disappearing", "single global culture", "greater diversity") and use named cultural forms and countries as application.
- **AO3 analysis and evaluation (15):** the top level (12–15) needs evaluation that is **explicit, detailed and sustained**, with contrasting views showing the complexity of the issue. An outline of the other side that is only implicitly linked to the view stays in the 4–7 band; explicit evaluation that is not kept up through the essay reaches 8–11.
- **Answer two questions from different sections** (Globalisation, Media, Religion); the paper is out of $2 \times 35 = 70$. Number each answer clearly.
- **Sociological material** for this topic: Harvey, McLuhan, Sklair, Ritzer, Schiller, Tunstall, Augé, Fukuyama, Said, Latouche, Liebes and Katz, Thussu, Robertson, Steger, Nederveen Pieterse, Hannerz, Appadurai, Hall, Johal, Back, Bruce, Castells, Barber, Huntington, Held and Giddens.

Quick check

1. Define cultural defence and give an example.
2. What is the difference between a hybrid identity and having parents from different ethnic backgrounds?
3. Name Ritzer's four principles of McDonaldisation.
4. Give two pieces of evidence against the view that globalisation is simply Westernisation.
5. Which paradigm is linked with each idea? (a) Barber's Jihad vs McWorld. (b) Sklair's culture-ideology of consumerism. (c) Robertson's glocalisation. (d) Te reo Māori revived through kōhanga reo.

Answers

1. Cultural defence (Bruce) is when a group holds on to its culture, often its religion, as a symbol of identity because it feels threatened by an outside power. Example: Catholicism in communist Poland, or the 1979 Iranian revolution as a reaction against Western influence.
2. A hybrid identity is cultural: it combines elements of two or more cultures into a new sense of self (Johal's BrAsian youth). Mixed heritage is about ancestry and does not by itself mean a person has a hybrid identity.
3. Efficiency, calculability, predictability and control.
4. Any two: contra-flows such as K-pop, Indian films or Nollywood (Thussu); active audiences reading Western media through their own values (Liebes and Katz's *Dallas* study); multiple modernities in Japan, South Korea or China; resistance through cultural defence or fundamentalism; glocalisation and hybridity reshaping Western products.
5. (a) Differentialism (resistance). (b) Convergence. (c) Hybridisation. (d) Differentialism (ethnic revitalisation).

Past questions to try

- **9699/42/M/J/25 Q1**: essay on whether globalisation has resulted in greater cultural diversity.
- **9699/43/M/J/24 Q1**: essay on whether a single global culture has replaced cultural differences between countries.
- **9699/42/O/N/22 Q1**: essay on whether globalisation has led to greater cultural diversity.
- **9699/42/F/M/22 Q1**: essay on whether globalisation has led to cultural convergence.