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Westernization

Westernization (US) or **Westernisation** (UK),

also **Europeanization/Europeanisation** or **occidentalization/occidentalisation** (from *the Occident*), is a process whereby societies come under or adopt Western culture in areas such

as industry, technology, politics, economics, lifestyle, law, norms, mores, customs, traditions, values, mentality, perceptions, diet, clothing, language, alphabet, religion, and philosophy. During colonialism it often involved spread of Christianity.^[1]

Westernization has been a growing influence across the world in the last few centuries, with some thinkers assuming Westernization to be the equivalent of modernization,^[2] a way of thought that is often debated. The overall process of Westernization is often two-sided in that Western influences and interests themselves are joined with parts of the affected society, at minimum, to change towards a more Westernized society, with the putative goal of attaining a Western life or some aspects of it, while Western societies are themselves affected by this process and interaction with non-Western groups.

Westernization traces its roots back to Ancient Greece. Later, the Roman Empire would take on the first process of Westernization as it was heavily influenced by Greece and created a new culture based on the principles and values of the Ancient Greek society. The Romans emerged with a culture that would lay the new foundations of Europe^[anachronism] and grow into a new Western identity based on the Greco-Roman society.

Westernization can also be compared to acculturation and enculturation. Acculturation is "the process of cultural and psychological change that takes place as a result of contact between cultural groups and their individual members."^[3] After contact, changes in cultural patterns are evident within *one* or *both* cultures. Specific to Westernization and the non-Western culture, foreign societies tend to adopt changes in their own social systems relative to Western ideology, lifestyle, and physical appearance, along with numerous other aspects, and shifts in culture patterns can be seen to take root as a community becomes acculturated to Western customs and characteristics – in other words, Westernized. Westernization can include Christianization, Americanization and Europeanization, with historical versions including Romanization, Hellenization, Francization, and Germanization.^[citation needed]

The phenomenon of Westernization does not follow any one specific pattern across societies as the degree of adaption and fusion with Western customs will occur at varying magnitudes within different communities.^[4] Specifically, the extent to which domination, destruction, resistance, survival, adaptation or modification affect a native culture may differ following inter-ethnic contact.^[5]

Definition

The "West" was originally defined as the Western world. Ancient Romans distinguished between Oriental (Eastern, or Asian) cultures that inhabited present-day Egypt and Occidental cultures that lived in the West. A thousand years later, the East-West Schism separated the Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Church from each other. The definition of Western changed as the West was influenced by and spread to other nations. Islamic and Byzantine scholars added to the Western canon when their stores of Greek and Roman literature jump-started the Renaissance. Although Russia converted to Christianity in the 10th century, the West expanded to include it fully when Peter the Great deeply reformed the country's government, the church and modernized the society thanks to the ideas brought from the Netherlands.^[6] Today, most modern uses of the term

refer to the societies in the West and their close genealogical, linguistic, and philosophical descendants, typically included are those countries whose ethnic identity and dominant culture are derived from European culture. However, though sharing in a similar historical background, it would be incorrect to regard the Western world as a monolithic bloc, as many cultural, linguistic, religious, political, and economical differences exist between Western countries and populations.

Western civilization is commonly said to include the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, European Union (and at least the EFTA countries, European microstates).^{[7][8]}




The definition is often widened, and can include these countries, or a combination of these countries:

- **European countries outside of the EU and EFTA** – Due to sharing of the general European culture and Christian faith, these countries are included in the definition of the West.
- **Latin America.** Most countries in Latin America are considered Western countries, largely because most of its peoples are descended from Europeans (Spanish and Portuguese settlers and later immigration from other European nations), and their society operates in a highly Westernized way. Indeed, most countries in Latin America use their official language, either in Spanish or Portuguese. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, there has also been considerable immigration to Latin America from European nations other than Spain and Portugal (for example, from Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, etc.—see Immigration to Argentina, Immigration to Brazil, Immigration to Uruguay or Immigration to Chile).^[9]

Countries significantly influenced by Westernization

The process of Westernization comes when non-Western societies come under Western influence or adopt Western culture in different areas such as industry, technology, law, politics, economics, lifestyle, diet, clothing, language, alphabet, religion, philosophy, and values.^[10]

The following countries or regions experienced a significant influence by the process of Westernization:

-  **Azerbaijan.**^[11] Geographically located in the Caucasus mountain range (natural border between Eastern Europe and Western Asia), it is the most westernized and modernized Turkic country. In addition to being the first Muslim-majority country to have operas, theaters and plays, it is one of the Muslim countries with greater support for secularism and religious tolerance. The country also participates in Western organizations linked to the European Union, such as the Eastern Partnership, Council of Europe and GUAM. It is usually a member of European organisations for sports and cultural events such as UEFA and the Eurovision Song Contest.
-  **Turkey.**^[12] Although geographically only 3% of Turkey lies in Europe and the rest in the Middle East, Turkey has a similar economic system, has a customs union with the European Union in addition to being an official candidate for membership, and is a member of typical Western organisations such as OECD, Council of Europe, and NATO. It is usually a member of European organisations for sports and cultural events such as UEFA and the Eurovision Song Contest.
-  **Israel.**^{[13][14]} Although Israel is geographically located in the Middle East, many Western cultural influences were brought in Israel by Jewish returnees from the diaspora, particularly countries like the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, France and Germany. It is a member of the OECD. It is often a member of European organisations for sports and cultural events such as UEFA and the Eurovision Song

Contest, which is due in large part to Israel's ouster from their respective Asian counterparts. According to Sammy Smooha, a professor emeritus of sociology at Haifa University, Israel is described as a "hybrid," a modern and developed "semi-Western" state. With the passage of time, he acknowledged, Israel will become "more and more Western." But as a result of the ongoing Arab-Israeli dispute, full Westernization will be a slow process in Israel.^[14]

-  **Lebanon.** Although Lebanon is geographically located in the Middle East north of Israel, Lebanon has almost 40% Christians who are heavily influenced both culturally and socially by Western countries (particularly France with whom they share historical ties dating as early as the Crusader's state of County of Tripoli founded by Raymond IV of Toulouse that encompassed most of present-day Lebanon. The French legacy within the whole Lebanese society is the widespread fluent knowledge of the French language). Western influence brought in by the country's Christians spread to the rest of its population, making today's Lebanon a unique blend of East and West. Lebanon's comparatively progressive society and the culture and features of metropolitan Beirut, known as Paris of the Middle East,^[15] are a testament to its westernization. In 2005, Lebanon intended to participate in the Eurovision Song Contest but decided to withdraw.^[16]
-  **Iran.** Prior to the Iranian Revolution, Iran (then known as the Imperial State) is located geographically in the Middle East and had a secular (although Shia Islam is still the country's official religion), democratic government with a free market economic system and a unique high standard of living following the 1963 White Revolution.
-  **Japan** and  **South Korea.** Although are geographically located in the Far East, they have democratic form of government, free market economic system, high standard of living and major contributions to Western science and technology, and could be described as "hybrid," modern and developed "semi-Western" states since a number of United States army bases are stationed in the two countries.
-  **Hong Kong**,  **Macau**,  **Singapore** and the  **Taiwan.** Due to the heavy influences of European (particularly British and Portuguese) and American culture these territories are considered westernized.
-  **The Philippines.** Due to the heavy influences of European (particularly Spanish) and American cultures in the culture of the Philippines, the country is considered westernized. Moreover, the Christian population makes up about 90% of the Philippines.^[17]
-  **Republic of South Africa.** Due to the heavy influence of European culture (particularly Dutch and British) in places like South Africa, it could be said that the country has achieved Westernization. Moreover, white South Africans make up about 9% of South Africa. Another 9% are of mixed race. Unlike black South Africans who have maintained their own native languages, most mixed South Africans speak Afrikaans as a first language. Likewise, most Indian South Africans speak English natively today. Therefore, it can be argued that this collective 20% of native English and Afrikaans speakers (both European-derived) live in heavily Western influenced cultures. Similarly, whites and coloureds are over 10% of the Namibian population. They primarily speak Afrikaans and German as a first language. In addition to that, many Black South Africans and Namibians speak European languages, e.g. Afrikaans and English, fluently and are also considered speakers of those languages.

Widening the definition of countries influenced by Westernization may cause controversies.

Different view

Kishore Mahbubani and Westernization[editKishore Mahbubani's book entitled *The Great Convergence: Asia, the West, and the Logic of One World* (Public Affairs), is very optimistic.^[why?] It proposes that a new global civilization is being created. The majority of

non-Western countries admire and adhere to Western living standards. However, he warns us that this newly emerging global order has to be ruled through new policies and attitudes. He argues that the policymakers all over the world must change their preconceptions and accept that we live in one world. The national interests must be balanced with global interests and the power must be shared. Mahbubani urges that only through these actions can we create a world that converges benignly.

He states there is conflict between "the West and the Rest." and offers three forms of general action that non-Western civilizations can react toward Western countries.^[18]

1. Non-Western countries can attempt to achieve isolation in order to preserve their own values and protect themselves from Western invasion. However, Huntington argues that the costs of this action is high and only a few states can pursue it.
2. According to the theory of "band-wagoning" non-Western countries can join and accept Western values.
3. Non-Western countries can make an effort to balance Western power through modernization. They can develop economic, military power and cooperate with other non-Western countries against the West while still preserving their own values and institutions.

The End of Westernization

Mahbubani counters this argument in his other book, *The New Asian Hemisphere: The Irresistible Shift of Global Power to the East*. This time, he argues that Western influence is now "unraveling", with Eastern powers such as China arising. He states:

...the 5.6 billion people who live outside the West no longer believe in the innate or inherent superiority of Western civilization. Instead, many are beginning to question whether the West remains the most civilized part of the world. What we are witnessing today...is the progressive unwrapping of these many layers of Western influences.^[19]

He goes on further to explain the decline of Western influence, stating reasons as to the loss of Western credibility with the rest of the world.

1. There is an increasing perception that Western countries will prioritize their domestic problems over international issues, despite their spoken and written promises of having global interests and needs.
2. The West has become increasingly biased and close-minded in their perception of "non-Western" countries such as China, declaring it an "un-free" country for not following a democratic form of government.
3. The West uses a double standard when dealing with international issues.
4. As the biggest Eastern populations gain more power, they are moving away from the Western influences they sought after in the past. The "anti-Americanism" sentiment is not temporary, as Westerners would like to believe – the change in the Eastern mindset has become far too significant for it to change back.

Samuel P. Huntington and Westernization

In contrast to territorial delineation, others, like the American political scientist Samuel P. Huntington (see *The Clash of Civilizations*), consider what is "Western" based on religious affiliation, such as deeming the majority-Western Christian part of Europe and North America the West, and creating 6 other civilizations, including Latin America, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu and Slavic-Orthodox, to organize the rest of the globe.^[20]

Furthermore, Huntington claims that after the end of the cold war, world politics had been moved into a new aspect in which non- Western civilizations were no more the exploited

recipients of Western civilization but become another important actor joining the West to shape and move the world history.^[21]

Huntington believed that while the age of ideology had ended, the world had only reverted to a normal state of affairs characterized by cultural conflict. In his thesis, he argued that the primary axis of conflict in the future will be along cultural and religious lines.^[22]

Edward Said and Westernization[edit]

In *Orientalism* Edward Said views Westernization as it occurred in the process of colonization, an exercise of essentializing a "subject race" in order to more effectively dominate them. Said references Arthur Balfour, the British Prime Minister from 1902–1905, who regarded the rise of nationalism in Egypt in the late 19th century as counterproductive to a "benevolent" system of occupational rule. Balfour frames his argument in favor of continued rule over the Egyptian people by appealing to England's great "understanding" of Egypt's civilization and purporting that England's cultural strengths complemented and made them natural superiors to Egypt's racial deficiencies. Regarding this claim, Said says, "Knowledge to Balfour means surveying a civilization from its origins to its prime to its decline – and of course, it means being able to...The object of such knowledge is inherently vulnerable to scrutiny; this object is a 'fact' which, if it develops, changes, or otherwise transforms itself...[the civilization] nevertheless is fundamentally, even ontologically stable. To have such knowledge of such a thing is to dominate it." The act of claiming coherent knowledge of a society in effect objectifies and others it into marginalization, making people who are classified into that race as "almost everywhere nearly the same." Said also argues that this relationship to the "inferior" races, in fact, works to also fortify and make coherent what is meant by "the West"; if "The Oriental is irrational, depraved (fallen), childlike, "different..." then "...the European is rational, virtuous, mature, normal." Thus, "the West" acts as a construction in the similar way as does "the Orient" – it is a created notion to justify a particular set of power relations, in this case the colonization and rule of a foreign country.

Process of Westernization

Colonization (1400s–1970s)

Europeanization

From 1400s onward, Europeanization and colonialism spread gradually over much of the world and controlled different regions during this five centuries long period, colonizing or subjecting the majority of the globe. Following World War II, Western leaders and academics sought to expand innate liberties and international equality. A period of decolonization began. At the end of the 1960s, most colonies were allowed autonomy. Those new states often adopted some aspects of Western politics such as a constitution, while frequently reacting against Western culture.^[citation needed]

Westernization in Asia[

General reactions to Westernization can include fundamentalism, protectionism or embrace to varying degrees. Countries such as Korea and China attempted to adopt a system of isolationism but have ultimately juxtaposed parts of Western culture into their own, often adding original and unique social influences, as exemplified by the introduction of over 1,300 locations of the traditionally Western fast-food chain McDonald's into China.^[23] Specific to Taiwan, the industry of bridal photography (see Photography in Taiwan) has been significantly influenced by the Western idea of "love". As examined by author Bonnie Adrian, Taiwanese bridal photos of today provide a striking contrast to past accepted norms, contemporary couples often displaying great physical affection and, at times, placed in typically Western settings to augment the modernity, in comparison to the historically prominent relationship, often stoic and distant, exhibited between bride and

groom.^[24] Though Western concepts may have initially played a role in creating this cultural shift in Taiwan, the market and desire for bridal photography has not continued without adjustments and social modifications to this Western notion.

In Korea, the first contact with Westernization was during the Chosun Dynasty, in 17th century. Every year, the emperor would dispatch few envoy ambassadors to China and while they were staying in Beijing, the Western missionaries were there. Through the missionaries, Korean ambassadors were able to adopt the Western technology and culture. In 19th century, Korea started to send ambassadors to the foreign countries, other than Japan and China. While Korea was being Westernized slowly in late 19th century, Korea had the idea of "Eastern ways and Western frames (東道西器)", meaning that they would accept the Western "bowl", but use it with Eastern principles inside.^[citation needed]

In Japan, the Netherlands continued to play a key role in transmitting Western know-how to the Japanese from the 17th century to the mid-19th century, as the Japanese had opened their doors only to Dutch merchants before US Navy Commodore Matthew Perry's visit in 1852. After Commodore Perry's visit, Japan began to deliberately accept Western culture to the point of hiring Westerners to teach Western customs and traditions to the Japanese starting in the Meiji era. Many Japanese politicians have since also encouraged the Westernization of Japan using the term *Datsu-A Ron*, which means the argument for "leaving Asia" or "Good-bye Asia". In *Datsu-A Ron*, "Westernization" was described as an "unavoidable" but "fruitful" change. After Japan's surrender to the United States and its allies ended World War II, the Westernization process of Japanese culture was further intensified and today, Japan is notably among the most Westernized countries in Asia.^[citation needed] However, in contrast, despite many advances in industrial efficiency, Japan has managed to sustain a culture of strict social hierarchy and limited individualization.^[25]

In Iran, the process of Westernization dates back to the country's attempt to westernize during the beginning in the 1930s, which was dictated by Shah Rezā Khan and continued by his son during the Cold War and agitated the largely conservative Shia Muslim masses of the country, was partly responsible for the 1979 Iranian Revolution.^[citation needed]

In Turkey, the process of Westernization dates back to the 19th century, known as the Tanzimat (*reorganization*) period. The Ottoman Empire began to change itself according to western science, practice and culture. The Empire took some innovations from the West. Also, by the contribution of foreign engineers the Empire repaired its old arm systems. Newly-found schools, permanent ambassadors, and privy councils were essential improvement for the Empire. All these reforms had good impact at the point of collapse. Also, the innovation brought from European countries shaped the Empire as a nation run along modern lines.^[citation needed] The Westernization efforts continued under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, with the adaptation of the Latin-script alphabet and the French concept of secularism. As a result, Turkey is one of the most Westernized majority-Muslim nations.

Globalization (1970s–present)

Westernization is often regarded as a part of the ongoing process of globalization. This theory proposes that Western thought has led to globalisation, and that globalisation propagates Western culture, leading to a cycle of Westernization. On top of largely Western government systems such as democracy and constitution, many Western technologies and customs like music, clothing and cars have been introduced across various parts of the world and copied and created in traditionally non-Western countries.

However, Westernization has been also reversed in some countries following wars or changes in regime, for example: China excluding Taiwan after 1949, South Vietnam after Communist takeover in 1975, Afghanistan after the Soviet invasion and Iran after the 1979 revolution.[†] The main characteristics are economic and political (free trade) democratisation,

combined with the spread of an individualised culture. Often it was regarded as opposite to the worldwide influence of Communism. After the break-up of the USSR in late 1991 and the end of the Cold War, many of its component states and allies nevertheless underwent Westernization, including privatization of hitherto state-controlled industry.^[citation needed]

With debates still going on, the question of whether globalization can be characterized as Westernization can be seen in various aspects. Globalization is happening in various aspects, ranging from economics, politics and even to food or culture. Westernization, to some schools, is seen as a form of globalization that leads the world to be similar with Western powers. Being globalized means taking positive aspects of the world, but globalization also brings about the debate about being Westernized. Democracy, fast foods, and American pop-culture can all be examples that are considered as Westernization of the world.

According to the "Theory of the Globe scrambled by Social network: a new Sphere of Influence 2.0", published by Jura Gentium (the University of Florence), an increasing role in Westernisation is ruled by Social Media. The comparison with Eastern realities, who decided to ban the American Social Medias (as Iran and China with Facebook, Twitter), marks a political desire to avoid the process of Westernisation of own population and way to communicate.^[26]

Consequences

Due to the colonization of the Americas and Oceania by Europeans, the cultural, ethnic and linguistic make-up of the Americas and Oceania has been changed. This is most visible in former settler colonies such as the United States of America, Argentina, Australia, Canada, Cuba, Brazil and New Zealand, where the traditional indigenous population has been predominantly replaced demographically by non-indigenous settlers due to transmitted disease and conflict. This demographic takeover in settler countries has often resulted in the linguistic, social, and cultural marginalisation of indigenous people. However, even in countries where large populations of indigenous people remain or the indigenous peoples have mixed (mestizo) considerably with European settlers, such as Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Ecuador, relative marginalisation still exists.

Due to colonization and European immigration, the prevalent native languages in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, Northern Asia and part of South Africa and Central Asia, are now usually European languages or creoles based on them:

How does westernization have an impact on India and it's culture?

Introduction to westernization.

Westernization is a process in which societies adopt western cultures in areas such as industry, technology, law, politics, economies and lifestyles, clothing, language etc. Today, there are many people who are westernizing themselves among many cultures.

Westernization has become common in the world especially in India. People normally get a plastic surgery to look western is because it gives the back a round and a perkier shape, it also straightens hair. People want to change themselves like this because they are not satisfied of the way they are. They also think that being western is superior, and because they have a dominant history. Westernization does not only include plastic surgery, but people also change their lifestyles to become like a western person.

The Indian culture

The Indian culture is one of the oldest and richest cultures, it has a long shaped history and

an ancient heritage. There are many festivals and celebrations which happen in India every year. This country has a population of more than 1 billion and is a culture in which there are more than 700 languages spoken. This culture however, is now being impacted by westernization and everything is slowly changing and is becoming western.

Westernization impact on the Indian culture.

Westernization is a kind of globalization which is spreading throughout Asian countries especially in India. The Indian culture is one of the oldest and the richest cultures however, now that the western culture is kicking in, e.g. goods, festivals, dressings, foods etc., it is impacting on the Indian culture in many ways. The western culture is that it is replacing itself with the Indian culture.

Negative impacts of westernization on the Indian culture.

Dressings.

Westernization is ruining the traditional clothing of the Indian culture. For example, in India, the traditional dressing is sari, dhoti and kurta however, today there are lots of people wearing more of a western clothing like jeans, tee-shirts and girls are wearing short skirts tops etc. In India, there is approximately 25% of western clothing. The change of fashion in India is now leading to reduction of the importance of the Indian culture to many people.

Festivals.

The western culture is impacting on the Indian festivals in many ways too. All Indians greatly celebrate their festivals every year and enjoy them very much. Today, large numbers of people in India are not celebrating their own festivals like Holi or Diwali, but instead, they are celebrating more of western cultures like Christmas or Halloween. Also, in the Indian religion, no boy or girl are allowed to date each other however, today in India, many youngsters are breaking these laws and are celebrating valentines day and are not alert of their religion and this is reducing the value of the Indian religion for them.

Foods

The Indian plate has welcomed many western foods (e.g. pizza, burgers, steak tacos etc.), and Indian foods like Golgapa, curry etc., are being less popular in India, however are becoming common in Europe while the western foods are growing stronger and are becoming more popular in India. Western foods contain too much fat and this causing the obesity rate in India to increase. In the Indian religion, you are not allowed to eat pork or meat however, since the western foods have kicked in, many Indians are no longer respecting their religion and are eating things against their religion. This is causing the value of the Indian religion to decrease and is changing many people's lifestyles. Today in India, there are more western restaurants like KFC, or Mac Donald's compared to the Indian restaurants there are.

Language

In India, there are more than 700 languages spoken. However, many of these mother tongue languages are beginning to fade away. As usual, to get a good job, you must know the basic language (English) or other additional ones. So many many people today are focusing on these languages and are forgetting about their mother tongue thus, this is making their religion less important.

Lifestyles and People

Westernization has changed many peoples lifestyles. Now, there is no particular lifestyle that is Indian. Most things have changed like respect to the young ones and elders, importance of a family, marriage making, clothing, festivals, foods, names, languages and even getting a plastic surgery to look more western. People are changing themselves and are trying to adapt like western people. Westernization is also reducing the equality of lifestyles in India. In the Indian culture, in order to visit a temple, you must have the right clothing although, it is shocking to see that today, there are many teenagers who are dressing as modern people e.g stylish haircuts, jeans, tee-shirts etc., when entering a temple. In the Indian culture, people had respect for the young and elders however, since the western culture has arrived, the respect had gone and now the behaviors of many people have changed.

Music

The Indian music has changed greatly due to in taking of the western culture. Indians have their own traditional music and instruments like flute, drums, etc., however, today they are using different instruments like guitars to make their music and now, Indian songs sound completely different and are nothing like what they sounded before.

Positive Impacts of westernization on the Indian culture.

Modernization

The western culture has impacted on India in many negative ways however, it has also influenced India in many ways too. For example, it is making India more modern. The Indian culture is a very old culture and is staying the same however, now the western culture is changing it to become more modern. Today, the western media is now making many people in India especially teenagers dressing more modernly like jeans, tee shirts etc. Modernization has also enabled to increase the economic growth of India.

Public Health

Due to westernization influence, sanitation and public health has improved greatly in India. Many western doctors have immigrated into India and have made medicines which have helped reduce sicknesses, diseases in large parts because health care has become accessible.

Labor

The presence of western traders in India have increased the demands for goods and services in India. As a result of that, Indian artisans, craftsmen and weavers have employed. These artisans and craftsmen have grown in numbers and now the Indian labor force and become more skilled and handy.

Education

Westernization has also benefited areas of education in India. When the British occupied India, they build many schools throughout the country and this made the literacy increase and the poorest class of society had access to knowledge.

Films and movies

Westernization has brought media as well in India. For example, in America, India now has a famous movie making media called 'Bollywood' which came from Hollywood in America. Bollywood's films now traditionally feature India, its culture, tradition and religion. Bollywood is now quiet popular in India and many people know about it. So media in India has also

improved due to the western culture.

So is westernization a good thing or a bad thing?

Westernization has brought many negative impacts on India however, it has also brought many benefits as well although, there are more advantages of westernization compared to the disadvantages. Still, India should take care of this globalization because in the future, it will change India and destroy it's religion, culture and tradition.
