

# Global and Folk Cultures

As the case study of the Aboriginal Artists of Australia introduced, the social customs, norms, and mores of a people can be closely tied to the location where those people live. In today's exercise we are going to examine the geography of these folk cultures in contrast with global popular culture. We will be looking at how these two cultural forces are interacting in different parts of the world to produce changes and new cultural phenomena to emerge. To begin we will read and discuss a short article highlighting how these folk beliefs can contrast with popular beliefs.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2005/07/13/international/europe/13elves.html>

Think about the interaction between folk and global pop culture in the article and discuss it in your groups.

## Global Cultures: China & India

Today we will be creating a graph and a map of some cultural experiences in two countries: China and India. We have provided examples of 5 cultural scenarios in China and India that express this tension between global culture and traditional culture.

1) Look at each of the cultural scenarios that we have provided you. Create political maps for China and India (including capitals and 5 major cities) and Then place each of these scenarios onto the proper map in its proper place.

### Cultural Scenarios *(first one read aloud together to model)*

#### 1) Beijing, China

- 2) 1. Read the summary
- 3) Go to the website
- 4) 2. Read the article
- 5) 3. Find the city location and plot on map
- 6) 4. Graph the culture.
- 7) Starbucks [http://www.bjreview.com.cn/eye/txt/2007-05/08/content\\_63380.htm](http://www.bjreview.com.cn/eye/txt/2007-05/08/content_63380.htm)

Since opening its first store in Beijing's China World Trade Center in 1999, Starbucks has tried to make inroads into Chinese culture by offering, if not entirely introducing, the typical Western coffee house experience--complete with Western prices and ambiance. For many young Chinese, a visit to Starbucks is a glimpse into Western culture, as it is difficult to spot anything Chinese about the place. How ironic then that the relatively newfangled company is worried about losing its character and panache back home, when it was not long ago that an argument erupted on a Chinese website about the Starbucks located inside the Forbidden City. Thousands signed an Internet petition to have the store closed down. It would seem many more Chinese are concerned with Starbucks attacking their own culture than about any commoditization of the brand itself.

Indeed, in many ways Starbucks is the living proof that you can take the coffee shop out of the West, but you cannot take the West out of the coffee shop. There are already 436 Starbucks locations on the Chinese mainland, in Taiwan and Hong Kong, with the company intent on expanding.

## 2) Dharamasala , India

1. read the summary  
Go to the website
2. Read the article
3. Find the city location and plot on map
4. Graph the culture.

<http://www.dalai-lama-dharma-dharamsala-miniguide.com/norbulingka-dharamsala.html>

The Norbulingka Institute of Tibetan Culture was founded by the Department of Religion and Culture to preserve and promote Tibetan Art and Culture in exile.

It derives its name from the His Holiness the Dalai Lama's beautiful summer residence, the 'Norbulingka' (Jewel Garden), set in parkland two kilometers from Lhasa. Fearing for the future of Tibet's cultural heritage, the Seventh Dalai Lama, Kelsang Gyatso, established institutes of arts and science there in 1754.

Today, with occupied-Tibet undergoing the bleakest period in its history, the Norbulingka Institute in Dharamsala has taken the initiative to preserve the roots of Tibetan culture in exile. The institute is sited in a scenic valley below Dharamsala. It also includes a Centre for Higher Tibetan Learning.

## 3) Internet cafe closures cause hacktivist activities in **Beijing**.

1. Go to the website
2. Read the article
3. Find the city location and plot on map
4. Graph the culture.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/china/7366883/Chinese-hackers-seek-revenge-over-internet-cafe-closures.html>

An Qi, a prominent businesswoman from the southern city of Chongqing, suggested that all private internet cafés should be shut down because they were breeding grounds for social problems. Hours later, she discovered to her cost that, even without democracy, China's 380-million-strong band of internet users have potent ways of making their voices heard.

Ms Yan, a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), said she had proposed the internet café ban to protect China's youth from a range of social ills, including truancy, video game addiction and pornography.

"Many serious problems are linked to internet cafés and businesspeople usually ignore their social responsibilities," Ms Yan was quoted as saying. "Desperate diseases must have drastic cures, which is to ban them all."

However, China is seeking greater control of its internet which has grown rapidly in recent years, with the country now estimated to have more than 140,000 internet cafés.

Despite the angry response to Ms Yan's suggestions, many Chinese parents do have concerns about the potentially harmful aspects of the internet, with some even sending their children to special clinics to cure their internet addiction.

## 4) **Maxim** magazine debuts in India

1. Go to the website
2. Read the article
3. Find the city location and plot on map
4. Graph the culture.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/4633216.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4633216.stm)

## 5) India's War on Valentine's Day

1. Go to the website
2. Read the article
3. Find the city location and plot on map
4. Graph the culture.

<http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/288257/20120126/india-valentine-s-day-shiv-sena-protest.htm>

3) Consider the events you marked as being related to global popular culture. How does global media culture influence these events? Which specific types of media are involved?

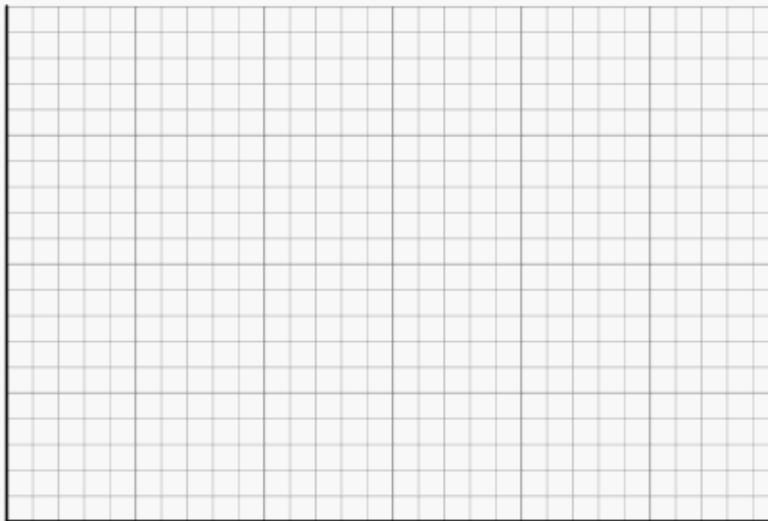
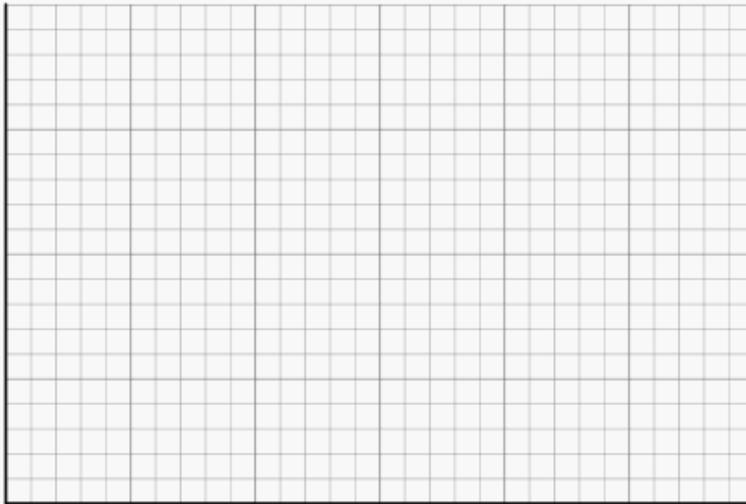
4) Consider the events that you labeled as being related to folk culture. What types of media are influential in these cases? Are there differences between how folk culture and pop culture spread (explain your answer)?

5) Do you think that global media could be used to promote traditional culture and values, if so how and if not why not?

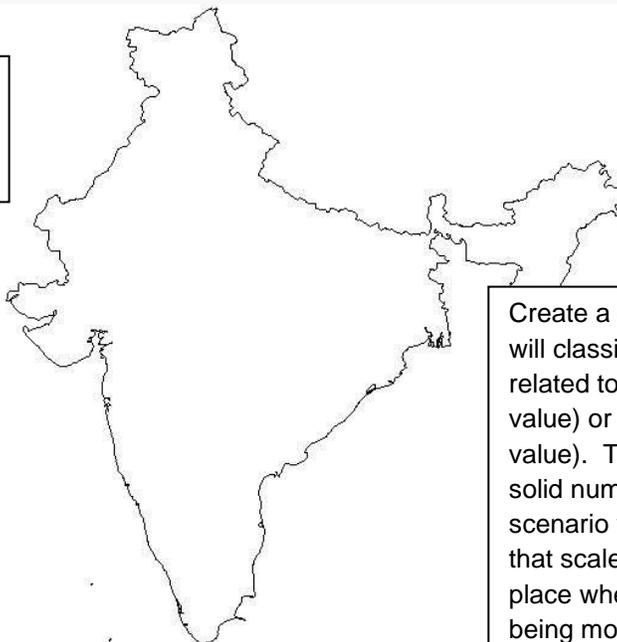
6) What types of traditional folk culture may be lost to global culture in the future?

7. Describe rural culture in India as being more traditional or more popular/Global

8. Describe urban India as being more traditional or more popular/global.

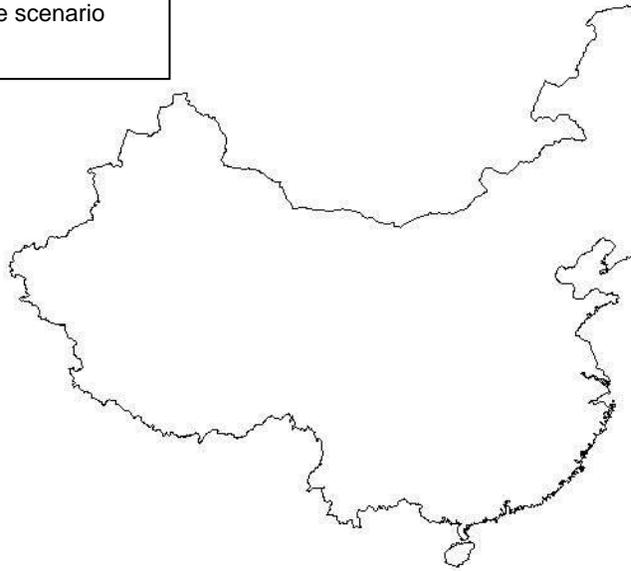


Label the capital, 5 major cities and the scenario location



Create a graph: **The Y axis** of the graph will classify the scenario as being more related to traditional culture (a lower value) or global popular culture (a higher value). There is no easy way to put a solid number on this value, so place the scenario where you feel appropriate on that scale. **The X axis** will classify the place where the scenario occurs as being more urban (lower value) or rural (higher value).

Label the capital, 5 major cities and the scenario location



Create a graph: **The Y axis** of the graph will classify the scenario as being more related to traditional culture (a lower value) or global popular culture (a higher value). There is no easy way to put a solid number on this value, so place the scenario where you feel appropriate on that scale. **The X axis** will classify the place where the scenario occurs as being more urban (lower value) or rural (higher value).

