CHAPTER 4

Local Culture, Popular Culture, and Cultural Landscapes

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FIGURE 4.1 New York, New York. An Asian woman and child walk past the closed Italian eatery Positano in Little Italy. Little Italy is getting pressure from all sides. Chinatown is expanding from the south, and real estate developers are creating trendy, expensive neighborhoods that are pushing in from the west and north. The *New York Post* reported that eight Italian eateries closed within a year's time, when new landlords doubled rents on Mulberry Street.

A young man with a thick New York accent offered a few expletives as he looked at me and said, "This used to be an Italian restaurant. Not anymore." Pointing up at the Positano sign, he predicted, "It's probably gonna be a Chinese restaurant next."

Positano once stood next to dozens of other Italian restaurants on Mulberry Street, at the heart of Little Italy, an ethnic neighborhood in New York City that dates to 1880 (**Fig. 4.1**). In 1900, 10,000 Italian immigrants lived in Little Italy, which covered 50 square blocks of Manhattan. Little Italy now covers 3 square blocks of Mulberry Street, and only 5 percent of the 8600 people living in the area identify as Italian American.

Migrants develop ethnic neighborhoods in world cities as a home base, a place where they build restaurants, churches (or mosques or temples), stores, and schools to support and maintain their culture. Ethnic neighborhoods change when new migrants move in and reshape the cultural landscape. In the early 1900s, Chinese migrants developed Chinatown next to Little Italy, and it keeps growing even as Little Italy shrinks. But today Chinatown is not only Chinese: Many of the Asians living in Chinatown are newer migrants from Vietnam and Malaysia.

This chapter explores how people develop and maintain cultures and shape cultural landscapes in both cities and rural areas. It also discusses how local cultures use traditions and customs to strengthen identities and how global, popular culture is constructed and diffused.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

4.1 Explain local cultures and popular culture.
- Local Culture
- Popular Culture
- Local and Popular Culture Together

4.2 Understand how people sustain local cultures in rural and urban areas.
- Withstanding Efforts at Assimilation
- Persisting: Regenerating Local Culture Through Customs
- Rural Local Cultures
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- Cultural Appropriation, Commodification, and Authenticity

4.3 Explain how global, popular culture is created and diffused.
- Social Networking
- Time–Space Compression
- Creating Popular Culture
- Reterritorialization of Popular Culture
- Replacing Old Hearths with New: Beating Out the Big Three in Popular Sports
- Balancing Popular Culture and Local Culture

4.4 Compare and contrast how local and popular cultures are reflected in cultural landscapes.
- Cultural Landscapes of Popular Culture
- Cultural Landscapes of Local Cultures

4.1 Explain Local Cultures and Popular Culture.

A **culture** is a group of belief systems, norms, and values practiced by a people. Although this definition of culture sounds simple, culture is complex. People who share common beliefs can be recognized as a culture in one of two ways: (1) They may call themselves a culture or (2) Other people (including academics) can label them as a culture. Traditionally, academics label cultural groups as either folk cultures or as part of popular culture. The idea is that a **folk culture** is small, incorporates a homogeneous population, is typically rural, and maintains cultural traits by passing them down through generations. **Popular culture** is large, incorporates heterogeneous populations, is typically urban, and quickly changes cultural traits.

Folk culture is a limiting and arbitrary concept because it requires us to create a list of characteristics and look for cultures that meet the list. This methodology leaves much to be desired. Once we have our list of characteristics, we have to test each culture, whether Amish or Navajo, to decide if it is a folk culture—a frustrating and relatively futile process. It is not how academics define a culture that counts; it is how the people define themselves that matters.

We would rather ask how the Amish create and maintain cultural practices and navigate through the onslaught of shifting popular culture. We want to understand why a group of Americans in a small town identify themselves as Swedish Americans and hold festivals to commemorate important Swedish holidays, while other Swedish Americans in other parts of the country function completely unaware of the Swedish holidays. We are curious why ethnic holidays like St. Patrick's Day transcend ethnicity to be celebrated as a part of popular culture.

Instead of classifying cultures as either folk or popular, we recognize that people create and maintain cultures both locally and globally, so we chose to use the concept of local culture rather than folk culture. A **local culture** is a group of people in a certain place who see themselves as a collective or a community, who share experiences and traits, and who work to preserve distinct customs in order to claim uniqueness and to distinguish themselves from others.

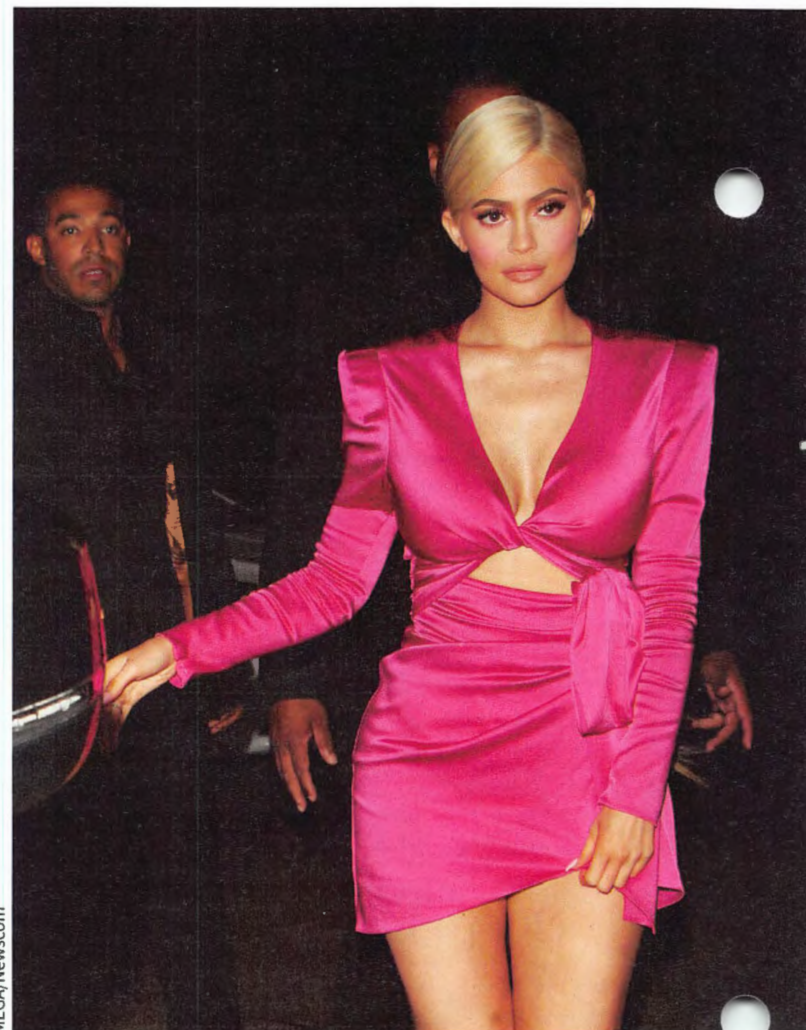
Local Culture

Local and popular cultures operate in the same places and spaces, manifest in different ways, and are constantly being shaped. In an era of globalization, popular culture diffuses around the globe instantly, being embraced by some and rejected by others. Local cultures persist, and in many places the communities thrive, but they face constant pressure from the enveloping popular culture. Local cultures choose to accept, reject, or alter the diffusion of popular culture. Local cultures may rely on religion, community celebrations, family structures, or a lack of interaction with other cultures to maintain their culture.

Local cultures are constantly redefining or refining themselves based on interactions with other cultures and the diffusion of cultural practices. Local cultures also affect places by establishing neighborhoods, building churches or community centers to celebrate important days, and expressing their material and nonmaterial cultures in certain ways. **Material culture** includes things people construct, such as art, houses, clothing, sports, dance, and foods. **Nonmaterial culture** includes beliefs, practices, aesthetics (what is seen as attractive), and values. What members of a local culture produce in their material culture reflects the beliefs and values of their nonmaterial culture.

Popular Culture

Unlike local cultures, which are found in relatively small areas, popular culture is everywhere and can change in a matter of days or hours (**Fig. 4.2**). Popular culture is practiced by a



MEGA/Newscom

FIGURE 4.2 Los Angeles, California. Kylie Jenner celebrates her 21st birthday wearing a fuchsia satin dress designed by Peter Dundas. Fashion Nova sold a knock off version online within 24 hours.

heterogeneous group of people—people of different races, ethnicities, genders, and ages. Like local culture, popular culture includes music, dance, clothing, food preferences, religious practices, and aesthetic values. The main paths of diffusion of popular culture are the transportation, marketing, and communication networks (including social networks) that interlink vast parts of the world.

Fashion, a form of popular culture, diffuses incredibly quickly today. On her to her 21st birthday party on a Friday night, Kylie Jenner wore two outfits: a fuchsia dress designed by Peter Dundas that she wore to her birthday dinner (see Fig. 4.2) and an $8000 pink romper encrusted with Swarovski crystals that she wore later in the night. By Saturday, Fashion Nova posted a look-alike model wearing a knock-off dubbed "Birthday Bash Sequin Romper" on Instagram with a price point of $34.99. Fashion Nova advertises the romper on its website with its own look-alike model, customer photos, and the original Instagram photo Jenner posted of herself in the LaBourjoisie original. Fashion Nova's "Birthday Behavior" collection included knock-offs of Jenner's romper, her fuchsia dress, and the pink cutout dress Kim Kardashian wore to her party.

In popular culture, fashion trends spread very quickly through fast fashion; it is a classic case of **hierarchical diffusion**. Hierarchical diffusion can occur through a hierarchy of people. In this case, a designer is the **hearth**, celebrities and influencers are the first adopters, fast fashion companies such as Zara, H&M, Primark, and Fashion Nova create knock-offs, and followers and customers adopt the fashion.

Hierarchical diffusion can also occur through a hierarchy of places. The hierarchy in the fashion world typically begins with the runways of major fashion houses in world cities, including London, Milan, Paris, and New York, which act as the **hearth**, the place of origin. The next tier of places includes flagship stores for the fashion house and editorial headquarters of fashion magazines, also located in world cities. Department store brands interpret the runway fashions for consumption by a larger audience, and the suburban mall receives the innovation.

Local and Popular Culture Together

Local and popular culture are not separated physically. You may go to a major department store such as Target or Walmart and see Hutterites or Mennonites dressed in distinctive local clothing in the midst of the ultimate in popular culture: a major international department store. Traditions such as painting henna on one's hands or practicing mystical Kabbalah beliefs are carried from centuries-old customs of local cultures to the global popular culture through a popular culture icon or through the corporations (such as marketing firms) that work to construct popular culture (**Fig. 4.3**).

Both local and popular cultures are constantly navigating through customs diffused from each other and across scales, through a complex of political and economic forces that shape and limit their practices, and through global communications and transportation networks that closely link certain parts of the world and distance others. Local and popular culture impact each other. Local cultures are sustained despite the onslaught of popular culture, and popular culture diffuses and is practiced in unique ways around the world.

Josiah Kamau/BuzzFoto/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.3 **New York.** In a truly global fashion, New York City tattoo artist Keith McCurdy flew to the Dominican Republic to ink a design based on traditional Indian henna over an existing tattoo based on a traditional New Zealand design on the hand of Barbados-born singer Rihanna.

TC Thinking Geographically

The fast fashion industry takes runway looks and turns them into low-cost, disposable clothing immediately available to consumers. The fashion industry accounts for $1.2 trillion globally, and the amount of clothing being produced has doubled since 2005. How has **time-space compression** enabled fast fashion to knock off a celebrity look and make it available to consumers in 24 hours?

Follow-up: In 1960, the United States generated 1.7 million tons of textile waste (mostly clothing), and in 2015, it generated 16 million tons of textile waste (15 percent of the 16 million was recycled, 9 percent burned, and the rest placed in landfills). Thinking about waste, fabrics used, and factories, how is fast fashion evidence of the **Anthropocene**?

4.2 Understand How People Sustain Local Cultures in Rural and Urban Areas.

Local cultures are sustained through **customs**, practices that a group of people routinely follow. People have customs regarding all parts of their lives, from eating and drinking to dancing and sports. To sustain a local culture, people must retain or regenerate their customs. Customs change in small ways over time, but they are maintained despite the onslaught of popular culture.

Local cultures desire to keep popular culture out, keep their culture intact, and maintain control over customs and knowledge. Geographers also recognize that through these actions, places become increasingly important. In rural communities or urban ethnic neighborhoods, local cultures can sustain their customs, see and interact with each other, and access goods and services important to their local cultures through shops and restaurants. Living together helps members of a local culture reinforce their culture and resist both assimilation and cultural appropriation by the dominant culture.

Withstanding Efforts at Assimilation

During the 1800s and into the 1900s, the U.S. government had an official policy of **assimilation**, forcibly suppressing Native American customs and replacing them with customs of the dominant culture. The federal government wanted to assimilate indigenous peoples into the dominant culture in order to make Native Americans into "Americans" rather than "Natives" or "Indians." Canadians, Australians, Russians, and other colonial powers adopted similar policies toward indigenous peoples, using schools, churches, and government agents to discourage Native customs and undermine local culture.

Following this policy, the United States forced tribal members to settle in one place and farm rather than hunt or fish. Government agents rewarded the Natives they deemed most "American" with citizenship and jobs in the formal economy. The U.S. government also took Native American children from their homes and placed them in boarding schools, where teachers punished children for using their Native language and forcibly cut their hair. The federal government employed east coast women from 1888 until 1938 to live on reservations and show the Native women how to be "good housewives" by teaching them Victorian ways of cooking, cleaning, and sewing.

Several churches and governments have apologized for these assimilation policies. The government of Australia officially apologized to the Aboriginals in Australia. The Australian Parliament unanimously passed a motion stating: "We apologize for the laws and policies of successive parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians." Former Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd apologized specifically for the government's policy of taking Aboriginal children from their homes and placing them in residential schools—a policy that lasted from the 1800s until the late 1960s.

Canadian prime minister Stephen Harper also cited the disastrous outcomes of assimilation policies in his apology to Canada's 1.3 million indigenous people—the First Nations and the Inuit. He apologized for the abuse and the lasting negative effects of Canada's residential schools, stating: "We now recognize that it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant cultures and traditions, that it created a void in many lives and communities, and we apologize for having done this. We now recognize that, in separating children from their families, we undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for generations to follow." Speaking to the indigenous people seated in the House of Commons, he continued, "Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience, and for this we are sorry."

Persisting: Regenerating Local Culture Through Customs

Official assimilation policies were practiced by American, Canadian, Russian, Australian, and New Zealand governments and were designed for the express purpose of disrupting and changing **indigenous local cultures**. Western, democratic governments no longer have official policies of assimilation. Yet, for people in many local cultures and in regions that are not hearths of popular culture, popular culture itself can feel like assimilation.

Historically, the economic activities of Native American tribes were the focal point of daily life. Numerous customs and festivals revolved around activities like whale or bison hunting, salmon fishing, or wild rice growing. In the early 1800s in North America, Plains Indians tribes migrated during the year based on the bison. They made tools, shelter, and clothing out of the bison, and they held dances and ceremonies that surrounded the bison hunt.

When a Native American local culture discontinued its major economic activities of hunting bison and whales, it faced the challenge of maintaining the customs built around those economic activities. This, in turn, made it difficult to sustain the local culture. Nevertheless, Native Americans across the United States persisted through a century of assimilation. To regenerate and sustain their local cultures, tribes such as the Oglala Lakotas and Makahs are embracing traditional customs.

Thunder Valley: Oglala Lakotas Native American tribes now fund programs and set up schools to teach children Native languages. On the Pine Ridge Reservation, Oglala Lakota families are creating a planned community centered on traditional spiritual ceremonies, sustainable building

AP Images/Sean Ryan

FIGURE 4.4 **Thunder Valley.** Thunder Valley community in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, is a regenerative community created by young Native leaders. It includes a Lakota-language immersion childcare center and elementary school. Nick Tillson, Thunder Valley's founder, shows the front porch of the first home under construction in the community. Watch the story of Thunder Valley at https://thundervalley.org/learn-more/our-story.

techniques, and food production and consumption (**Fig. 4.4**). The Thunder Valley community is using green building practices, helping families build their own homes, and creating community gardens. Through this grassroots development, Thunder Valley is creating a place centered on customs that also help Oglala Lakota combat endemic poverty.

The vision for Thunder Valley came to a group of young Oglala Lakota, including founder Nick Tilsen, who wanted to regenerate spiritual ceremonies, including the sun dance. Nick Tilsen explained in the community's video why the families who began the Thunder Valley community chose to raise their children on a reservation where 80 percent of the people lived below the poverty line: "It's important for us to raise our kids amongst our own people." Living with each other, practicing ceremonies, revitalizing the Lakota language through immersion childcare and schools, building homes and workforce skills, producing food as a community, and developing economic opportunities sustains, revitalizes, and empowers indigenous local culture.

Whale Hunts: Makah

In the late 1990s, the Makah Native Americans of Neah Bay, Washington, did what environmentalists considered unthinkable: reinstated the whale hunt. Makah had hunted whales for 2000 years. When the Makah tribe entered a treaty with the U.S. government that ceded land, it specifically and explicitly preserved whaling rights. However, the U.S. government stopped the whale hunt in the 1920s because the gray whale had become endangered. In 1994, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) removed the eastern North Pacific gray whale from the endangered list.

In 1999, when Makah reinstated the whale hunt, tribal members interviewed by journalists spoke of their traditional culture as their reason for returning to the hunt (**Fig. 4.5**). They needed to return to their past, they said, to understand their ancestors, to recreate and solidify their local culture. Amid a popular culture onslaught, Makah sought refuge in customs and ceremonies around the whale hunt that the tribe describes as "deeply spiritual."

Although Makah wanted to hunt whales as their ancestors did, the 1999 hunts took place in a completely different **context** from that of a century before. This time, Makah hunted whales under the watchful eye of the International Whaling Commission. They faced numerous protests by Greenpeace and local environmentalists, and they found themselves in federal court with the George W. Bush administration on their side supporting the reinstatement of the whale hunt.

Makah wanted to hunt with traditional canoes and harpoons because they wanted to hunt as the tribe's elders and ancestors did. However, in the context of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the choice of tools for the Makahs' hunt was not up to them alone. Actors at the regional, national,

DAN LEVINE/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.5 **Neah Bay, Washington.** The whale hunt is a traditional Makah custom. Support for maintaining the custom is a way of resisting the forces of assimilation.

and global scale influenced not only whether Makah could hunt whales, but also the methods they used. The International Whaling Commission dictated that Makah hunt gray whales with a .50 caliber rifle, arguing that the rifle would kill the whale more quickly and humanely than harpoons. In May 1999, Makah hunters killed a gray whale using a .50 caliber rifle.

Makah have not been legally allowed to harvest a gray whale since 1999. The Makah hunt is currently held up by environmental impact studies in the U.S. government. The Makah tribe continues to pursue legal permission to hunt whales because "for the Makah Tribe, whale hunting provides a purpose and a discipline which benefits their entire community" (Makah).

Rural Local Cultures

Members of local cultures in rural areas often have an easier time maintaining customs because of their isolation. By living together in a rural area, members of a local culture can more easily keep external influences on the outside. Rurality enables local cultures to define their own space, to create a place, town, or rural landscape that reflects their values, and to practice customs relatively unfettered.

Rural local cultures have something in common: Each is surrounded by a popular culture that challenges its place in the world, and each has chosen to maintain or reconnect with its local culture. Central concerns for indigenous cultures discussed in the last section include thinking in their own language, defining and writing their history, and coming to know who they are despite what others have done to subvert their identity. For some rural local cultures, the goal is to maintain what they have, to adopt only those technologies that advance their agricultural pursuits, and to limit those that challenge their religion. Other local cultures may use festivals to celebrate the immigrants who made the place unique and connect with their community.

Hutterites

Hutterites are an Anabaptist ethnic group who migrated to North America from Ukraine in 1874 (Evans and Peller 2018). During the Protestant Reformation, Anabaptists broke from both the Catholic Church and the new Protestant churches. Followers of the new religion were called Anabaptists, meaning baptized again, because of their belief in adult baptism, despite having been baptized as infants in the Catholic or Protestant churches.

Anabaptists broke from the state as well as the church and stressed pacifism, and they soon suffered persecution. They migrated from German-speaking areas of western Europe east to Moravia and Austria, and then to Russia and the Ukraine. Continually moving to rural areas to live apart and avoid persecution, a group of Anabaptists eventually migrated to North America in the second half of the 1800s. This group was called Hutterites, named after leader Jacob Hutter.

Old Order Anabaptist groups are often shown in stereotypical ways in the popular media, but major differences exist across Old Order Amish, Mennonites, Hutterites, and Brethren. Hutterites are the only Anabaptist group who live communally (**Fig. 4.6**). Rather than living with immediate family on a farmstead, Hutterites live in colonies of about 100 people, with individuals ranging in ages from infant to elderly. Hutterites have more than 520 colonies in North America, with the majority in South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba (**Fig. 4.7**). They locate colonies in rural states and provinces to "set themselves apart, as far as they are able, from contagion and all that is 'worldly'" (Evans and Peller 2018, 360).

In their book *On the Backroad to Heaven*, Donald Kraybill and Carl Bowman explain that the linchpin of each colony is the Hutterite religion. Members of the colony join for a 30-minute service every night as well as on Sundays. The most prominent position in a colony is held by the minister, who speaks in archaic German, reading sermons written in the sixteenth century.

Unlike Amish, Hutterites readily accept technologies that help them in their agricultural pursuits. However,

Photo by E.H. Fouberg. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.6 Stratford, South Dakota. A Hutterite boy who lives in the Hutterville Farm colony near Stratford, South Dakota. Distinctive dress and ways of living help to sustain group identity.

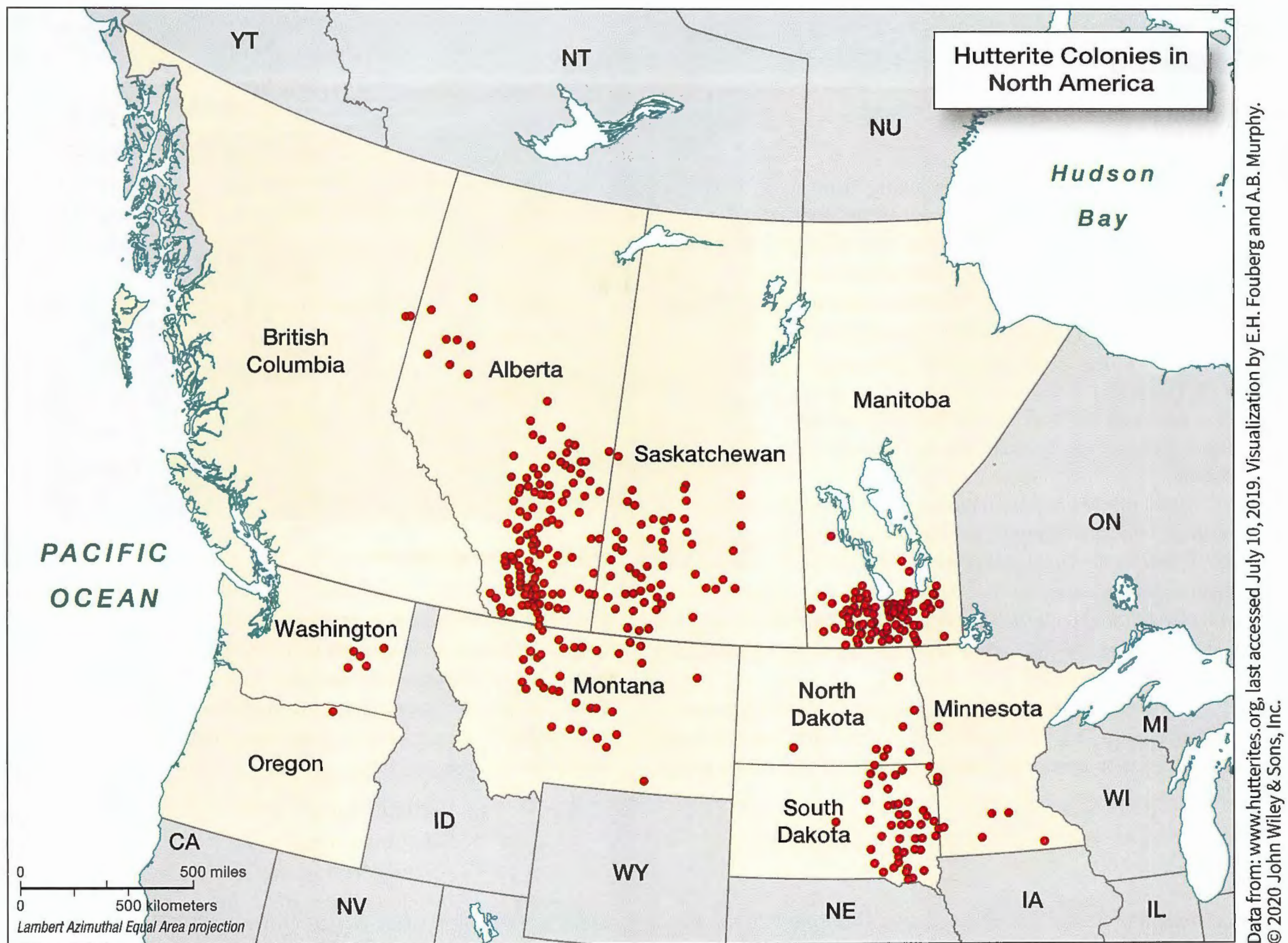


FIGURE 4.7 Hutterite Colonies in North America. The first Hutterites who migrated to North America came from Ukraine and settled in three colonies in eastern South Dakota. When a colony's population reaches a certain size, its members purchase new land, split the population, and form a daughter colony. Hutterite colonies are clustered, with large concentrations in eastern South Dakota, southern Manitoba, and Alberta.

their colonies were generally slow to accept technologies such as cameras and cell phones out of concern that they would encourage individualistic behaviors or undermine Hutterite religion. Today, it is common for young adult Hutterites to use cell phones and Hutterite dating sites to find suitable marriage partners in colonies in other states or provinces.

Colonies assign separate jobs and tasks to men and women, which reinforces a patriarchal social structure. Kraybill and Bowman explain that marriages happen across colonies, and women move to their husband's colony after marrying. If a Hutterite woman from Alberta meets a Hutterite man from North Dakota through a Hutterite dating site, and they eventually decide to marry, the Canadian woman will move to the United States. As a result, a single colony is usually composed of only one or two surnames. Moving to their husband's colony perpetuates women's weaker political position in the colony. Women are expected to rear many children, currently averaging five or six, but the colony as a whole is responsible for raising and disciplining the child.

Hutterite colonies specialize in diversified agriculture, raising feed, food, and livestock on up to 10,000 acres. Hutterite men often barter with neighboring farmers to fix machinery, trade goods, and lend help. The minister and other male leaders in the colony work with lawyers and bankers to keep the colony corporation operating smoothly and profitably. The most economically successful colonies have created products used in agriculture that they produce in their shops and sell to other farmers. One colony produces stainless steel animal feeders, and another colony markets its own animal feed. Some colonies also invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in computerized milking systems for their dairy operations, in computerized systems for feeding and raising hogs, or even in livestock processing plants.

The spatial layout of a Hutterite colony reflects the importance of community, church, education, and agriculture (**Fig. 4.8**). When the population of a colony reaches between 120 and 150 people, Hutterites start the process of dividing the colony. Colony leaders purchase farmland and erect buildings

Guest Field Note Living Communally on a Hutterite Colony in Alberta, Canada

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University of Calgary

The Hutterites are a German-speaking ethnic group who can boast of 400 years of history. Arriving in North America from the Ukraine as forced migrants in 1874, they established three colonies in Dakota Territory. It is their religion which binds them together. Like the early Christian church they "hold all things common." It is the colony – not the individuals who make it up – that owns the land and the tools of production, and provides for each member from birth to death.

The Hutterites are fascinating to geographers because when a community reaches a threshold size of about 150 people, it divides into two, and a daughter colony is established. This has resulted in a regular diffusion pattern as the original three colonies have grown to number more than 500, spread over four Canadian provinces and six states.

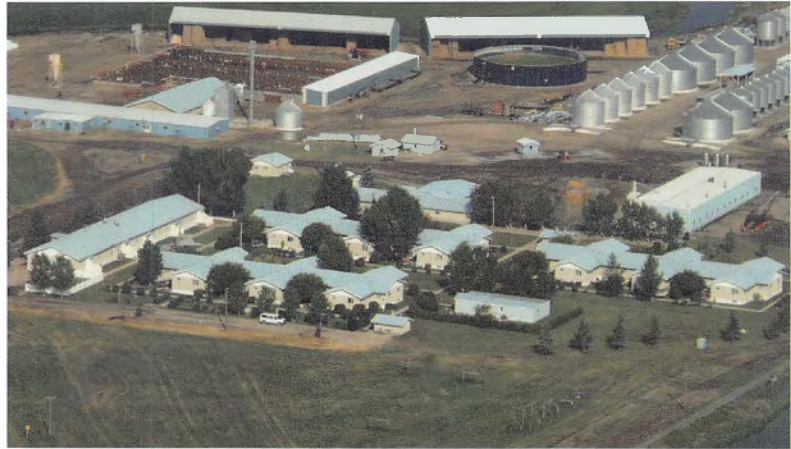

FIGURE 4.8 **Crossfield, Alberta, Canada.**

As shown in the photograph, Hutterite colonies have a distinctive layout. The residential area is set apart from the barns and ringed with trees and bushes. On the left side of the photo, communal housing units (3 residential units each housing 6 families) are grouped next to the kitchen-dining room complex (far left in the photo) where the Brethren meet for meals three times a day. Barns, corrals, and grain storage are in the background. The growing number of colonies adds a significant element to the cultural landscape of the Great Plains.

over a period of about five years (Evans and Peller 2018). Each colony has a common industrial kitchen and dining room where the community eats. Housing for 15 to 20 families is built around or near the kitchen, and a chapel space for daily services is built near the housing and kitchen. Some colonies have schools, and all colonies have farm buildings.

Little Sweden, U.S.A.

Throughout the rural United States, immigrants from Europe built small towns, and many local cultures have defined entire small towns as places to maintain their culture and to teach others about their customs and beliefs. Residents of Lindsborg, Kansas, proclaim their town Little Sweden, U.S.A. Geographer Steven Schnell asked why a town of 3300, which a few decades ago had little or no sign of Swedishness on its landscape, transformed itself into a place where Swedish culture is celebrated every day in gift stores on Main Street and in restaurant buffets (**Fig. 4.9**).

Cynics would argue that the reason is purely economic. But Lindsborg residents benefit from promoting a sense of a shared history and a common place. In the 1930s, the townspeople shared stories about the roles of Swedes in American history and the importance of their Swedishness to Lindsborg. From that base, the townspeople began to celebrate their Swedish heritage in the 1950s, highlighting the "everyday existence" (the local culture) of the Swedes who immigrated to Lindsborg. During festivals today, the townspeople, whether Swedish or not, dress up in peasant clothes modeled after those worn by Swedish immigrants in the 1800s. Geographer James Shortridge (1996) refers to this as **neolocalism**, seeking out the regional culture and reinvigorating it in response to the uncertainty of the modern world.

Urban Local Cultures

Some local cultures have successfully built a world apart, a place to practice their customs, by constructing tight-knit **ethnic neighborhoods** within a major city. For example, Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn, New York, and Italian Americans in the North End of Boston, Massachusetts, maintain their distinct local cultures in urban environments.

Runners of the New York City marathon can see the ethnic neighborhoods of New York City's boroughs firsthand. Running through Brooklyn, they pass through a predominantly Mexican neighborhood full of Mexican flags and mariachi bands, followed in sharp contrast by a Hasidic Jewish neighborhood with streets lined with men and boys on one side and women and girls on another, all dressed in clothes modeled after eighteenth-century Russian and Polish fashions (**Fig. 4.10**).

In the North End of Boston, the Italian community still celebrates the feast days of Italian saints. Twelve religious societies, each focusing on an Italian saint, hold festivals between June and September. Members of the societies march through the North End holding a statue of their saint, collecting money,

Guest Field Note Shaping a Swedish Identity in Lindsborg, Kansas

Steven M. Schnell
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Lindsborg, Kansas, founded by Swedish Lutherans in 1869, has remade itself in recent decades as "Little Sweden, U.S.A." Swedish gift shops, restaurants, and ethnic festivals, along with faux-Swedish storefronts, all attract visitors interested in the Swedish American heritage. Here you see a Dala horse, a traditional Swedish folk craft that has been adopted as the town symbol. Note, too, the Swedish and American flags flying in the background. Most visitors to the town assume one of two things: Either the town is an island of nineteenth-century culture passed on unchanged for generations, or it is a crock of Disneyesque fakery cooked up to draw in gullible tourists. The fascination of fieldwork is that it undermines any such simplifications. I found ethnicity here to be complex, quirky, ever-changing, and very much a part of the people's lives. Swedishness in Lindsborg has been invented and reinvented time and time again through the decades, as people constantly look for answers to that most basic of questions: Who am I?

© Steven Schnell

FIGURE 4.9 **Lindsborg, Kansas.**

Author Field Note Running through Ethnic Neighborhoods in New York, New York

"One of the most amazing aspects of running the New York City marathon is seeing the residents of New York's many ethnic neighborhoods lining the streets of the race. Running through the Hasidic Jewish neighborhood in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, was striking. Even before noticing the traditional dress of the neighborhood's residents, I noticed that the crowd was much quieter—the people were not yelling, but they were clapping and quietly cheering."

– E.H. Fouberg

M. David Leeds/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.10 **Williamsburg, Brooklyn, New York.**

Martin Thomas Photography/Alamy Stock Photo

FIGURE 4.11 Boston, Massachusetts. North End residents and Italians from around Boston and the region gather during festivals to honor Italian saints, including Saint Anthony, every summer.

and adorning the saint with it (**Fig. 4.11**). The Roma Band, an Italian band that has been in existence since 1919, leads each society through the streets of the North End. Each march ends with a street celebration, including vendors selling everything from fried calamari to hot dogs.

Having their own ethnic neighborhood enables members of a local culture in an urban area to set themselves apart and practice their customs. Schools, houses of worship, food stores, and clothing stores all support the aesthetics and meet the needs of members of the local culture. The greatest challenge to local cultures in cities is the migration of members of other local cultures or ethnic groups into the neighborhood. Local cultures in Brooklyn and the North End work to maintain their culture and customs as young professionals move into their respective neighborhoods. Rents and housing costs are climbing, and cultural landscapes are starting to reflect the neighborhood's new residents. For example, a young, urban, hipster community has inundated the traditionally Hasidic neighborhood of Brooklyn called Williamsburg.

Brooklyn became a destination neighborhood for migrants after the Brooklyn Bridge opened in 1883. The Williamsburg Bridge opened in 1903, and Jewish migrants who lived in Manhattan walked across the bridge, attracted to the much lower rents in Williamsburg. The subway connected Manhattan and Williamsburg in 1908. In the 1980s, artists and students in Manhattan crossed into Williamsburg also looking for lower rents and converted warehouses into studios and apartments.

Since the 1990s, Williamsburg has undergone more **gentrification**, the renewal or rebuilding of a lower-income neighborhood, than any other neighborhood in New York's five boroughs. It became a neighborhood of art galleries, coffee shops, breweries, restaurants. Warehouses converted into condominiums have filled blocks radiating from subway stations and Bedford Avenue. Rents have risen by 78.8 percent since 1990 (compared to 22.1 percent for the entire city).

In Boston, young professionals gentrified the North End starting in the 1970s. The Big Dig, a 10-year project finished in 2007, moved an elevated interstate between the North End and the rest of Boston underground. The North End is connected by pedestrian-friendly boulevards to Boston. The roads are now at ground level and are surface roads designed for much lighter traffic than the interstate below ground. Drawn to the North End's increasingly favorable location and the quaintness of Italian restaurants, shops, and wine stores, young professionals continue to flock to the North End, choosing apartments that give them a walking commute to jobs in the financial district and city center.

Cultural Appropriation, Commodification, and Authenticity

A local culture may set itself apart in rural and urban areas not only to maintain customs, but also to avoid **cultural appropriation**, the process by which other cultures adopt customs and knowledge and use them for their own benefit. Cultural appropriation is a major concern for local cultures because people from outside often privatize the knowledge of a local culture, including natural pharmaceuticals or musical expression, to accumulate wealth or prestige. Local cultures work to keep their customs and knowledge to themselves to avoid cultural appropriation and to prevent others from appropriating their customs for economic benefit. Anthropologists and geographers have studied how others are using local cultural knowledge, customs, and even names. For example, the estate of Crazy Horse (a Lakota Indian leader) sued a brewery that produced Crazy Horse beer.

The process through which something (a name, a good, an idea, or even a person) that previously was not regarded as an object to be bought or sold becomes an object that can be bought, sold, and traded in the world market is called **commodification**. Commodification affects local cultures in numerous ways. First, their material culture—their jewelry and clothing, their food and games—can be commodified by themselves or by nonmembers. Similarly, their nonmaterial culture—their religion, language, and beliefs—can be commodified, often by nonmembers selling local spiritual and herbal cures for ailments. Local cultures may also be commodified as a whole—think of tourist buses "observing" the Amish culture of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, or travel agencies

Walter Bibikow/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.12 **Sun City, South Africa.** The Lost City resort in Sun City evokes the mystical images of Africa described in a legend. Landscapes such as this blur what is "authentic" and what is not.

offering trekking trips with "traditional" Nepalese guides on spiritual journeys through the Himalayas.

When commodification occurs, the question of **authenticity** follows. When a local culture or custom is commodified, usually one image or experience is typecast as the "authentic" image or experience of that culture, and it is that image or experience that the tourist or buyer desires. However, local cultures are dynamic, and places and people change over time. To gain an "authentic" sense of place, people need to experience the complexity of a place directly rather than its stereotype. An "authentic" local culture does not fit into a single experience or image; rather, an "authentic" local culture is one that is complex and not stereotyped.

The act of stereotyping local culture is quite confusing for the members of the local culture because rarely is there consensus that all things must be done in one traditional way. Tourists in Lancaster County, for example, may be disappointed to see some Amish driving tractors across their fields. European, Canadian, American, or Australian trekkers in Nepal desire the same "authentic" experience that a travel website promotes. However, the "authentic" experience may be one the travel company constructed for tourist consumption.

Authenticity of Places

During the process of colonization, Europeans tagged many cultures they encountered as savage or mystic. "Authentic" tourist destinations are often designed to exploit the mystical in local cultures. A South African theme park, the Lost City (built on the site of the resort Sun City), capitalizes on mystical images of Africa described in a legend, thereby "freezing" the continent to a time that never existed (**Fig. 4.12**).

In tourism, authenticity of local culture is constructed. The city of Branson, Missouri, is capitalizing on a local culture in the Ozarks, melding several perceptions in one place for tourists to consume. Geographer Johnathan Bascom studied the processes by which the city of Branson has effectively tapped its local customs, such as food preferences, history, and music, to create an "authentic" identity for Branson that sets it apart from neighboring towns. Branson becomes "authentic," and surrounding towns that try to capitalize on their rural, country heritage become "copies."

Guinness and the Irish Pub Company

Theme parks and entertainment venues overtly choose a stereotype and perpetuate it, but a discerning tourist or consumer may be aware of what is occurring. The act of corporations commodifying the mystique of local cultures to drive profits can, however, be less obvious to the consumer. The Guinness Brewing Company of Dublin, Ireland, created a business plan in 1991 aimed at capitalizing on the global mystique of the traditional Irish pub. Guinness saw the sales of its stout beer declining in Ireland and the United Kingdom and decided to go global.

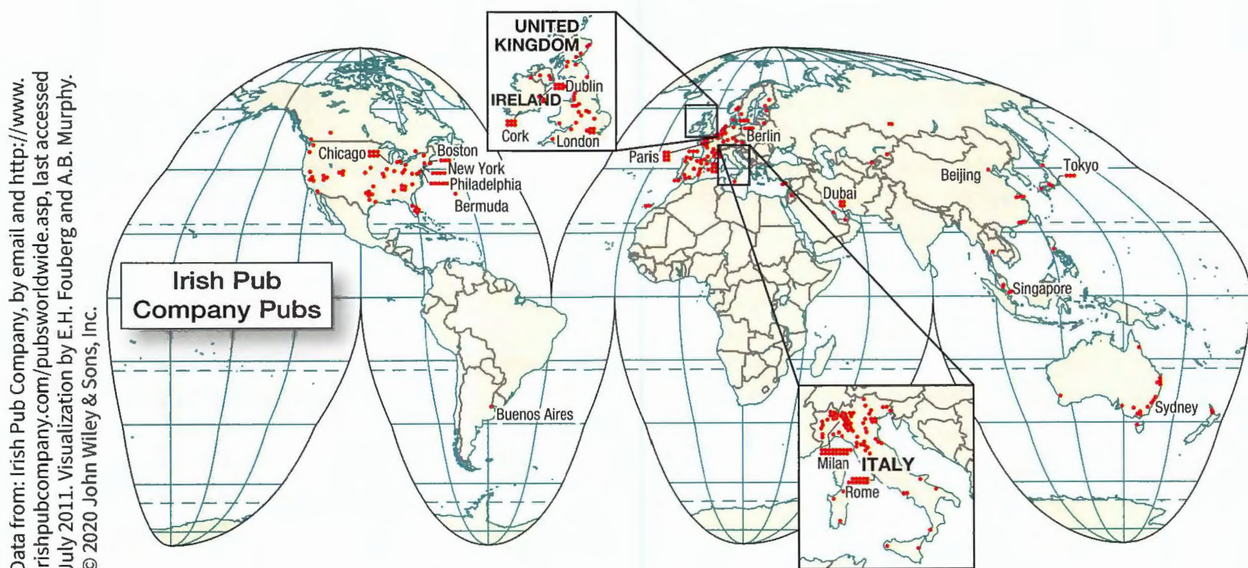
LensCapp/Alamy Stock Photo

FIGURE 4.13 **Dubai, United Arab Emirates.** An old Irish truck marks the entrance to an Irish Pub Company pub in Dubai.

Guinness formed a partnership with the Irish Pub Company, which has offices in Dublin, Atlanta, the United Arab Emirates, and Australia. The Irish Pub Company studied traditional Irish pubs and created five Irish pub prototypes— shop, country, Victorian, Celtic, and brewery. A hotel owner in Naples, Florida, or a businessperson in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (**Fig. 4.13**), to cite two examples, might work with the Irish Pub Company to choose a good site and to choose the pub type. The specifications are sent to Ireland, and the pub itself is built in Ireland and shipped abroad. Along with the pub, the Irish Pub Company provides food recommendations, training, music suggestions, and, notably, Irish bartenders trained in their Dublin "pub school." The Irish Pub Company also sells bricabrac (Irish antiques and reproductions) to give the place the feel of an Irish pub. Of course, every pub has Guinness on tap. All of these components create what the Irish Pub Company refers to as ambience that leads to *craic* (an Irish term for fun). Guinness and the Irish Pub Company have built over 1000 pubs in 40 countries around the world (**Fig. 4.14**).

Remarkably, dozens of the pubs are in Ireland proper. The most enigmatic of the pubs is in Las Vegas, Nevada. The Irish Pub Company designed and built a pub called Nine Fine Irishmen that spans 9000 square feet in the New York-New York Hotel & Casino and spills an additional 20,000 square feet onto Las Vegas Boulevard. The "authentic" Irish pub in "authentic" New York in the "Disneyfied" Las Vegas is one mashup we can chew on for a while.

The commodification of local customs freezes customs in place and time for consumption, with claims of "authenticity" abounding. The search for "authentic" local cultures implies an effort to identify peoples who are seemingly untouched



Data from: Irish Pub Company, by email and http://www.irishpubcompany.com/pubsworldwide.asp, last accessed July 2011. Visualization by E.H. Fouberg and A.B. Murphy. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.14 **Irish Pubs Designed by the Irish Pub Company.** The distance decay principle is evident here, with the greatest number of pubs located in Europe and North America, where the Irish Pub Company headquarters are. The map also highlights the diffusion of popular culture to world cities, including Buenos Aires and Singapore.

Author Field Note Enjoying Live Music in Dingle, Ireland

"The tip of the Dingle Peninsula and the Basket Islands off its shore are the westernmost points in all of Ireland. During British control, Irish on the remote Dingle Peninsula maintained the Irish language, song, and dance more so than many other places in the paths of the British. Dingle, a town about three-quarters of the way down the peninsula, was once a fishing village and is now a frequently visited tourist destination on Ireland's west coast. Shops and pubs on the main road through town are painted different, bright colors. An Droichead Beag means "The Little Bridge," and this pub is known for its mighty sessions of traditional Irish music and its small dance floor that attracts revelers nightly. The building dates back to the 1700s but only became a pub in 1986. The pub is owned by a local family and is the kind of pub that the Irish Pub Company replicates."

– E.H. Fouberg

Photo by A.B. Murphy. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.15 **Dingle, Ireland.**

by change or external influence. However, all local cultures (rural and urban) are dynamic, and all have been impacted by external influences throughout their existence (**Fig. 4.15**). The search for an "authentic" local culture merely perpetuates myths about local cultures. Members of local cultures are constantly renegotiating their place in this world and making sense of who they are in the midst of the popular culture onslaught.

TC Thinking Geographically

What are cultural traits, and what role do cultural traits play in maintaining and reinvigorating local culture? Examine the website for Thunder Valley, the Ogallala Lakota community (http://thundervalley.org/#). How do the **site** and **situation** of the community help support cultural traits and values?

4.3 Explain How Global, Popular Culture Is Created and Diffused.

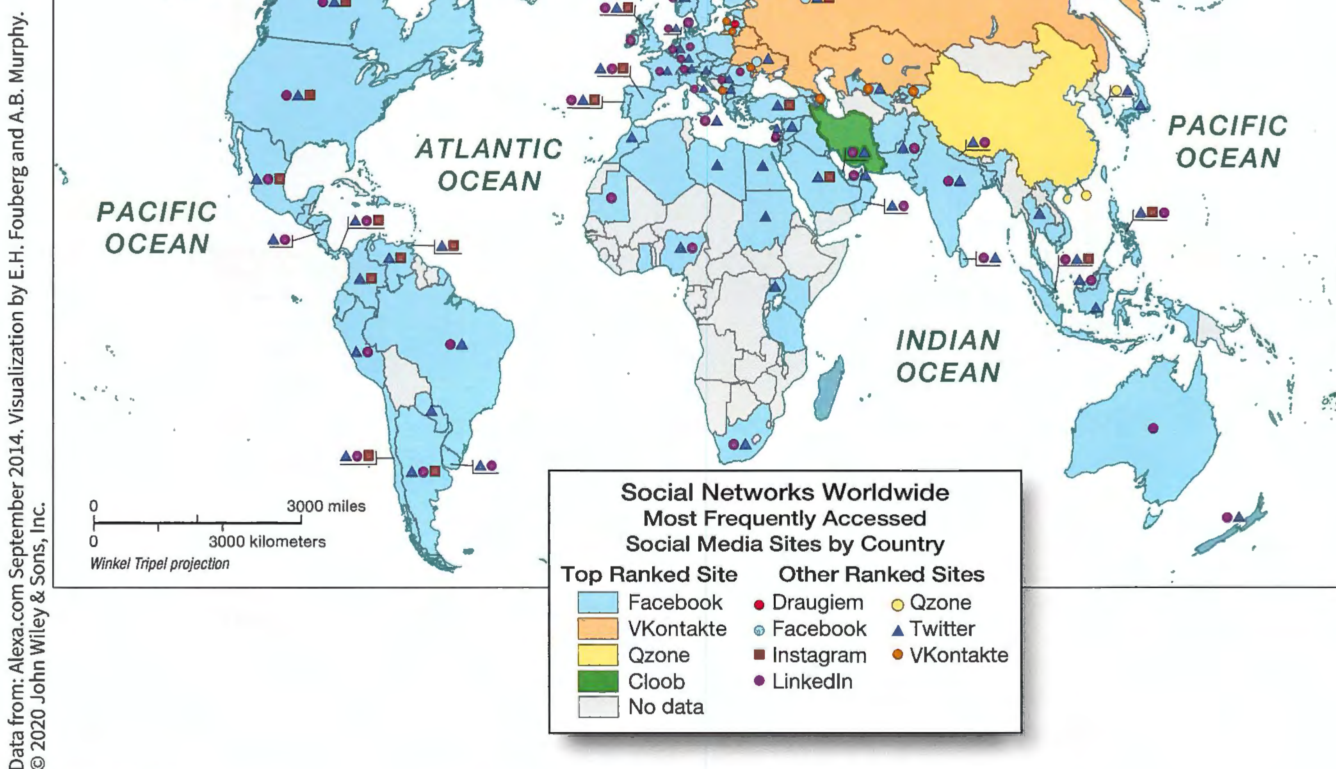
Popular culture was once created in hearths and diffused in clear paths around the world. During the twentieth century, the United States and United Kingdom influenced movies, television, music, sports, and fast food. Japan influenced electronic games, new technologies, and children's television. Western Europe functioned as a hearth for fashion, television, art, and philosophy. South Korea has been a hearth for television dramas, movies, and music, and India has been a hearth for movies.

Paths of diffusion and hearths of popular culture have changed radically in the twenty first century with the growth of the Internet, social media, and streaming. YouTube has made it possible for a singer's basement to be a hearth, and streaming platforms like Twitch have made it possible for viewers to interact directly and in real time with celebrities of popular culture. Social networking and YouTube have shortened the distance and accelerated the diffusion of popular culture by intensifying time-space compression. Popular culture is constantly being constructed, consumed, commodified, and reterritorialized around the world.

Social Networking

Social networking cuts the distance between knower and follower, enabling instant sharing across the globe through messaging and postings. Social networking site Facebook has the largest number of monthly active users globally, followed by YouTube and Instagram. Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook, which had 500 million subscribers worldwide in 2010 and reported 2.23 billion monthly users at the end of 2018.

The map of Facebook users (**Fig. 4.16**) highlights the interconnectedness of individuals around the world, and it also points out the lack of interconnection between individuals in China with the rest of the world via this social media tool. In 2009, China banned Facebook, Twitter, and Google. Chinese who want to use Facebook have to use proxy servers to get around the government's ban. Chinese social networks have grown in place of Facebook. The top social media networks in



Data from: Alexa.com September 2014. Visualization by E.H. Fouberg and A.B. Murphy. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.16 **Social Networks Worldwide.** The most popular social networks vary across the world, with Facebook having the largest imprint in terms of territory. Qzone in China is monitored and censored by the Chinese government. Cloob battled Iranian censors for 12 years until officially closing in 2017.

China are WeChat, which is seen as the Facebook of China, and SinaWeibo, the equivalent of Twitter in China.

WeChat is described by *New York Times* writer Yuan Ren as "all your phone apps" rolled into one. WeChat's 1 billion monthly users can hail cabs, book doctor's appointments, chat with friends, and purchase goods and pay for them, all within the app. Weibo has a bit less than half the monthly users of WeChat, but is China's most popular microblogging app. The information shared on Weibo is highly censored and controlled by the Chinese government. "Official news channels have large followings" on Weibo, "but there is little political content that is user-generated because censors quickly remove anything that is deemed sensitive" (Ren 2018).

China's Social Credit System Controlling information flow is a primary goal of China's government. WeChat can activate microphones and cameras at any time and collect and use the data. It has censors that monitor all postings for topics the Chinese government does not want discussed online. In 2019, censors removed WeChat posts with #MeToo, posts that mentioned the China-U.S. trade dispute, and posts about a concern over a vaccine scandal in China (**Fig. 4.17**).

In addition to Chinese government censors, Chinese citizens tend to self-censor Internet posts and receive pressure from family and supervisors to voluntarily remove posts that could be censored. Widespread monitoring goes into a social credit

FIGURE 4.17 **Beijing, China.** Citizenlab used three phones, one in China, one in the United States, and one in Canada, to test how Chinese censors handled incoming and outgoing messages about political leaders and issues in China. In this exchange, the Chinese account on the left is receiving texts from the U.S. account on the right. Individual words did not trip the censors, but the string of words asking about leaked information from the 19th Party Congress tripped the censor, and the Chinese phone did not receive that message.

system the Chinese government enacted that gives each Chinese citizen a score for his or her social behavior and compliance with the government, like a financial credit score in the United States. The Chinese social credit score is designed to encourage Chinese to follow the government line; those with low social credit scores are denied freedoms like travel by air or rail, have slower Internet speed, are prohibited access to the best schools, and are denied opportunities for the best jobs (Ma 2018).

Time–Space Compression

Extraordinary changes have occurred since 1900 in the time it takes for people, innovations, and ideas to diffuse around the world. The innovation of agriculture took nearly 10,000 years to diffuse globally. In much more recent times, the diffusion of developments such as the printing press or the Industrial Revolution took 100 years or more. During the twentieth century and now into the twenty-first century, however, the time period for diffusion has shrunk to months, weeks, days, and in some cases even hours or minutes. Simultaneously, the spatial extent of diffusion has expanded, so that more and more places and people are affected by ideas and innovations from far away.

Transportation and communication technologies have altered **distance decay**. No longer does a map with a bull's-eye surrounding the hearth of an innovation describe how quickly the innovation will diffuse to areas around it (**Fig. 4.18A**). Rather, what geographer David Harvey called **time–space compression** explains how quickly innovations diffuse and refers to how interlinked two places are through transportation and communication technologies (**Fig. 4.18B**). Time–space compression, or time–space convergence, is the increasing connectedness between world cities from improved communication and transportation networks.

In the past few decades, major world cities have become much closer to one another as a result of modern technologies, including jet planes, high-speed trains, expressways, cellular phones, broadband wireless, email, and social media. All the new technologies create the infrastructure through which innovations diffuse. Because technologies link some places more closely than others, ideas diffuse through interconnected places rapidly rather than diffusing at constant rates across similar distances. Places that lack technologies are now more removed from interconnected places than ever. When disconnected places grow technologically at a slow rate and the most connected places continue to grow technology at a fast pace, connected places become more connected and disconnected places lag farther behind.

Popular culture diffuses hierarchically in the context of time–space compression, with diffusion happening most rapidly across the most compressed spaces. Even local customs practiced for centuries in one place can be swept up into popular culture. How does a custom, idea, song, or object become part of popular culture? It is relatively easy to follow the communications, transportation, and marketing networks that account for the diffusion of popular culture, but how do we find the hearths of popular culture, and how do certain places establish themselves as those hearths?

Creating Popular Culture

All aspects of popular culture—music, sports, television, food, and dance—have a **hearth**, a place of origin. Typically, an idea first begins to diffuse from a hearth through contagious diffusion.

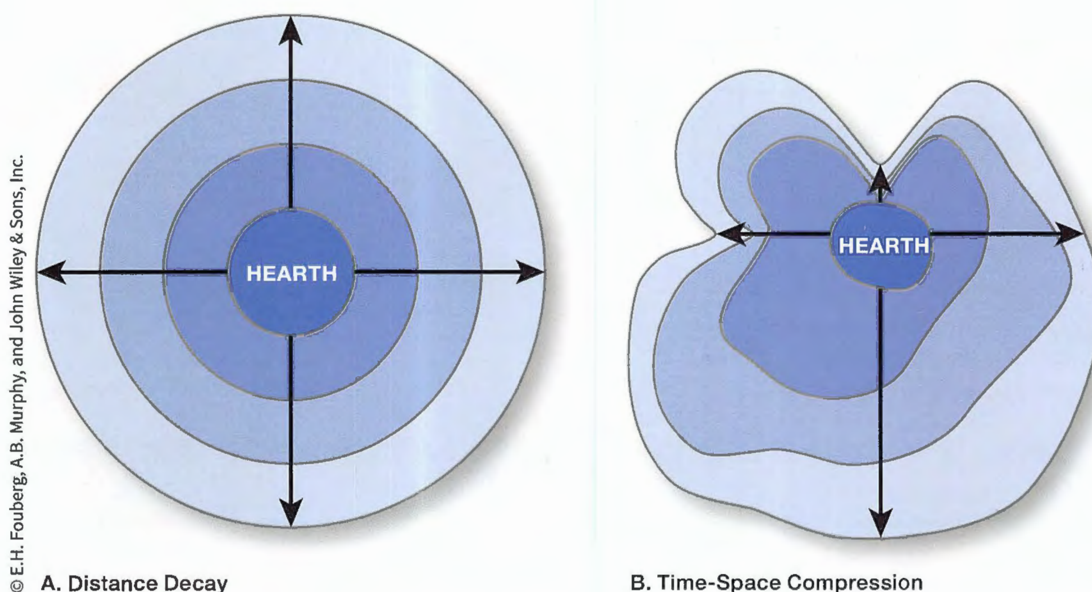


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FIGURE 4.18A and B Distance Decay and Time–Space Compression. With distance decay, the likelihood of diffusion decreases as time and distance from the hearth increases. With time–space compression, the likelihood of diffusion depends on connectedness, the degree of communication, and ease of transportation among places.

Developers of an idea or innovation may find they have followers who dress as they do or listen to the music they play. In the 1980s and 1990s, bands such REM, Hootie and the Blowfish, and the Dave Matthews Band began as college bands or in college towns. They played a few sets in a campus bar or at a campus party and gained followers. They then started to play for bars and campuses in nearby college towns, and soon they produced their own music and sold it at their concerts. Bands that begin on college campuses or in college towns and build from their base typically establish a hearth for their sound, which diffuses first through contagious diffusion rooted in a place and then through hierarchical diffusion among connected places and people. College towns such as Athens, Georgia; Burlington, Vermont; and Charlottesville, Virginia, are the perfect nesting spaces for new bands.

Since 2000, accelerated use of the Internet, proliferation of music streaming services, and social media have changed how and where new music is produced and consumed. Certain places, including Los Angeles, Nashville, New York, and Las Vegas remain important music production centers and attract musicians in large numbers. Musicians are attracted to the live music venues, potential collaboration with songwriters, creativity fueled by performing with other talented musicians, and the music production companies housed in these cities.

With social media, performers can make their basements or local clubs the hearth of their music and gain followers through YouTube and other platforms. Singer-songwriter Billie Eilish was homeschooled in suburban Los Angeles and began writing songs at age 11. At 15, she released her first single to SoundCloud and attracted a following that led to record label contracts. Eilish's story is not unique, as physically starting in a major label's recording studio or in bars in a college town is no longer essential to making it in music.

Music Festivals

How music is diffused has fundamentally changed as well. Streaming services made chain record stores obsolete. Record stores were once the hub of music sales. At its peak in the late 1990s, Tower Records had around 200 stores in 15 countries. The company filed bankruptcy in 2004, and it closed in 2006. Independent record stores, like independent bookstores, still have followers, but making a profit in either music sales or book sales is increasingly difficult with online and digital competition. As music stores declined, music consumers turned to live music festivals as important places to discover new music, see artists perform live, connect with other music followers, and shape their identities.

While much of music diffusion and consumption takes place in digital space, music festivals demonstrate that physical spaces are still important. The first **music festival** in the United States was the Newport Jazz Festival in 1953, but the hearth of the culture around the modern music festival is Woodstock, which was held in rural upstate New York in 1969. Woodstock drew 500,000 people to see acts including The Who, the Grateful Dead, and Jimi Hendrix perform live in a three-day event. Festivals including South by Southwest, Lilith Fair, and Lollapalooza grew followers in the 1980s and 1990s (Florida 2019). The music festival took off after 2000. Coachella was founded in 1993 after Pearl Jam played a concert at a polo field outside of Los Angeles to protest Ticketmaster, which charged high fees and controlled access to tickets in arenas around the country. Pearl Jam proved the polo field could be used for a concert (Desert Sun 2016).

The first Coachella Music Festival was a one-day festival held on the same polo grounds in 1999, and it's still the venue for one of the largest music festivals in the United States. (**Fig. 4.19**). The Coachella Music and Arts Festival is held annually each spring over two consecutive weekends and is one of the highest earning festivals held annually. Tickets in 1999 were $50 and today are around $500 for regular admission

Matt Winkelmeyer/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.19 **Indio, California.** Coachella kicks off festival season in the United States each spring. Fans, celebrities, and social media influencers attend the event that has become a hub for brand promotions. Festival goers and social media influencers post hundreds of thousands of photos like this one on social media during a single festival.

and $1000 for VIP admission for one weekend pass. Coachella attendees are there for the music and experience and to see and be seen. Among the festival goers at the well-publicized event are celebrities and social media influencers, all of whom take and post photos. The first weekend of the 2018 festival led to over 460,000 social media posts and had a total Media Impact Value of $116 million (*Insider* 2019). Coachella also generates revenue online by livestreaming the festival on YouTube. Coachella generates profit for the concert promoters, sales tax for local governments, and revenue for hotels, airlines, food trucks, alcohol distributers, influencers, and brands.

Coachella's epic rise in popularity and revenue inspired hundreds of other festivals, large and small. Each spring, Coachella marks the beginning of festival season in the United States (**Fig. 4.20**). The majority of major festivals are held in major cities. Governor's Ball in New York launched in 2011 and is held in early June on an island off Manhattan in the East River. Among the top music festivals in the United States, only Bonnaroo, Exit 111, and WE Fest are held in rural areas. Los Angeles hosts the largest number of major music festivals annually, with nine festivals attracting at least 25,000 fans each. New York, Chicago, San Jose/San Francisco, and Las Vegas follow in numbers of festivals hosted annually.

Music festivals are a global phenomenon that generates billions in revenue annually. Live music events, including festivals and concerts, generate more revenue in the music industry than download sales and subscriptions from streaming music. Globally, festivals attract audiences much larger than Coachella or the Governors Ball in the United States. The largest music festival is in Austria on an island in the Danube River. The three-day Danube Island Festival (Donauinselfest) hit the Guinness World Record for attendance in 2015 with 3.3 million people. The festival grounds hold 350,000 fans, but the event is free and fans walk onto and off the grounds periodically over the three days, generating an annual attendance of over 2 million and a world record in 2015.

YouTube YouTube launched in 2005 and started its partner program in 2007, which pays YouTubers for the content they post. Instant online access to content has radically changed how musical artists launch, as a video can get millions of followers in a short time. In this sense, YouTube serves as a hearth of popular culture, where artists post clips and find followers. YouTube is also a site of diffusion, which can be seen in the list of top YouTube videos of all time. Music videos are 15 of the top 15 most viewed videos on YouTube, and 85 percent of Generation Z reports using YouTube daily. The intensity and frequency of interaction on YouTube enable videos to go viral, reaching millions of viewers in hours.

Generation Z is almost always online telling everyone what they like and why, interacting with others of similar interests or fandoms, and tracking what their favorite social media

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FIGURE 4.20 Major Music Festivals. Each of the music festivals on this map had at least 25,000 people in daily attendance. While music festivals like Woodstock create the perception that festivals are held in remote locations, all but three of the music festivals on this map were held in major urban areas.

influencers and celebrities are posting. Using big data mined from users' social media behavior and likes, media companies can analyze celebrities' followers and gauge commonalities among their fans in order to carefully plan marketing campaigns for new products, movies, and music.

Influencers cross platforms from Instagram to Twitter to YouTube and use their large fan base or fandom to leverage corporate sponsors and advertising opportunities. An influencer's fame is an online currency used in media campaigns to create what is worthy of following or thinking about in popular culture (Koughan Rushkoff).

Social networks create opportunities for constant contagious and hierarchical diffusion. Teens become knowers of new trends both contagiously through friends' posts and hierarchically by social media influencers.

Finding a Niche in Popular Culture: South Korean Hallyu South Korea has made a mark on popular culture from television to popular music. In 1995, Chinese television stations began broadcasting South Korean television dramas. The dramas typically aired late at night, often after midnight, but they quickly gained a large following in China. After the Chinese government changed a law that restricted Korean content on television to 15 percent of airtime, South Korean popular television dramas took off in China. An entire wave of South Korean popular culture, including television shows, movies, fashions, and music, diffused throughout China, Japan, and Southeast Asia. **Hallyu** (also called Hanryu) are waves of South Korean popular culture that move quickly through Asia and that have resulted in significant growth in the South Korean entertainment and tourism industries (**Fig. 4.21**).

Beginning with television dramas and movies, Hallyu expanded to music in the early part of this century. South Korean popular music, known as K-pop, has followed the same path of diffusion. The Chinese government allowed the Korean band H.O.T. to play in a stadium in Beijing in 2002. Today, K-pop bands, including Super Junior (called SuJu) and Girls Generation; K-pop recording artists, including Psy, Rain, and BoA; and Korean movie stars, including Bae Yong Joon, have fans throughout East Asia, Southeast Asia, and increasingly in the Middle East.

Ironically, South Korea was quite protective of its entertainment industry in the post–World War II era for fear that Japan, which formerly colonized South Korea, would export its entertainment industry and overpower South Korea's entertainment industry.

Hallyu has diffused not only to China but also to Japan. In turn, millions of Japanese and Chinese are taking Korean language classes, traveling and studying abroad in South Korea, and adopting South Korean fashions. Hallyu, especially television, has diffused throughout "East and Southeast of Asia, including Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines and later even to the Middle East and East Europe" (Kim et al. 2009). Interest in South Korean celebrities has crossed over into interest in South Korean fashion, food, and even plastic surgery throughout Asia.

Reterritorialization of Popular Culture

With viral videos that can criss cross the world in hours, we might expect popular culture to act as a blanket, evenly covering the globe. But even as popular culture diffuses throughout the world,

Author Field Note Consuming Popular Culture in Seoul, South Korea

"Just days before the Japanese tsunami in 2011, I walked out of the enormous Lotte department store in Seoul, South Korea, and asked a local where to find a marketplace with hand-crafted goods. She pointed me in the direction of the Insa-dong traditional market street. When I noticed a Starbucks sign written in Korean instead of English, I knew I must be getting close to the traditional market. A block later, I arrived on Insa-dong. I found quaint tea shops and boutiques with handcrafted goods, but the market still sold plenty of bulk-made goods, including souvenirs like Korean drums, chopsticks, and items sporting Hallyu stars. Posters, mugs, and even socks adorned with the faces of members of Super Junior smiled at the shoppers along Insa-dong."

– E.H. Fouberg

Photo by E.H. Fouberg. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.21 **Seoul, South Korea.**

it does not blanket it, hiding all existing local cultures underneath it. Rather, one aspect of popular culture (such as music or food) will take on new forms when it encounters a new locality and the people and local culture in that place. Geographers and anthropologists call this the **reterritorialization** of popular culture, a process in which people start to produce an aspect of popular culture themselves, doing so in the context of their local culture and place and making it their own.

An example of reterritorialization is a popular culture restaurant, such as McDonald's or Starbucks taking on a local culture feel in each country it enters. McDonald's has more than 36,000 locations in more than 100 countries. It offers menu items unique to each country, merging local culture tastes with global food production. For example, it produces a Nutella burger in Italy, poutine in Canada, a white burger made of fish in Hong Kong, and a matcha Oreo McFlurry in Japan. Combining local foods with global restaurant chains is a form of **stimulus diffusion** (see Chapter 1).

Another form of reterritorialization happens when migrants take their local food to a new place and redesign it to make it appealing to masses even if it no longer resembles the food of its cultural origin. The local food spreads through **relocation diffusion** and a new, unique form is created and commodified in the new place.

In the United States, Chinese food was the first local cuisine to be "highly commodified" and served in restaurants across the country (Chen 2017). In the 1800s, Chinese migrants brought local cuisine from the Canton province of China through relocation diffusion, and by 1856 migrants who had arrived in California to work in the gold mines had developed 33 grocery stores and 5 restaurants in San Francisco's Chinatown, producing food mainly for consumption by Chinese migrants. As anti-Chinese violence increased in the late 1800s, culminating in the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, Chinese Americans and Chinese migrants moved from rural to urban areas for safety in numbers and opened laundries in non-Chinese neighborhoods. Then, in the early twentieth century, Chinese entrepreneurs opened Chinese restaurants in neighborhoods near established laundries and tweaked recipes to make foods sweeter and more attractive to working-class Americans.

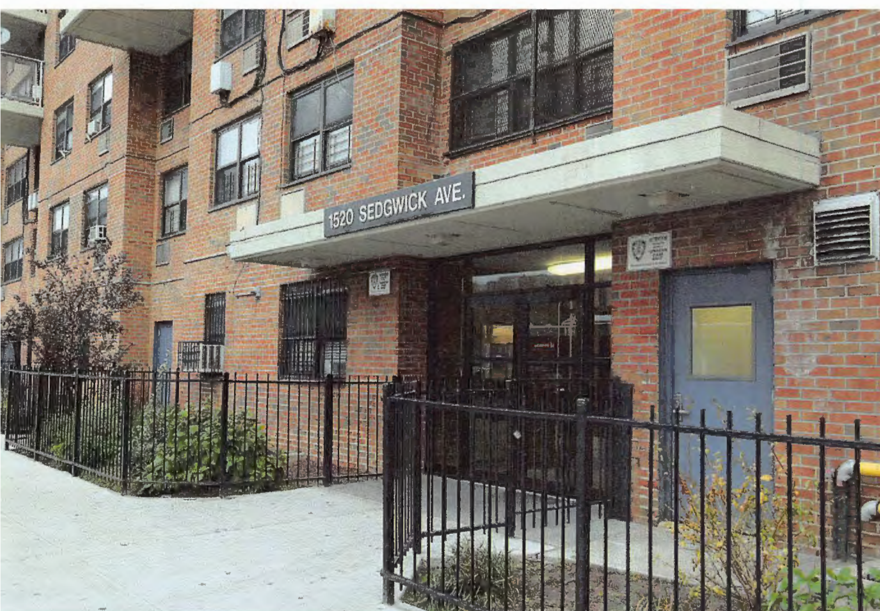
With the Immigration Reform Act of 1965 (see Chapter 3), the United States changed the quota system to be based on skills and worker needs instead of race. As a result, Chinese migration rapidly increased. Between 1970 and 2000, the number of people who identified as Chinese in the United States rose from under 500,000 to over 2,400,000 (Chen 2017). A steady supply of Chinese migrant workers enabled Chinese restaurants to expand to nearly every city and even rural towns. Migrants in this period came from throughout China, and offerings of Chinese cuisine changed to incorporate additional local Chinese foods. Chinese food in the United States today varies from more expensive, destination Chinese restaurants, including P. F. Chang's, to inexpensive Chinese buffets. Chinese food has been commodified for American tastes. One of the most popular, orange chicken, has no equivalent in China proper.

Hearth and Reterritorialization of Hip-Hop

Hip-hop and rap grew out of a hearth in the Bronx (New York) in 1973, when DJ Kool Herc hosted a back-to-school party in the first-floor community room of his apartment building at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx (**Fig. 4.22**), charging a small entrance fee to raise money for his sister to buy back-to-school clothes. Here DJ Herc originated and popularized an extended dance break. During the extended dance break, DJ Herc emceed, which helped launch break dancing. The apartment building at 1520 Sedgwick Avenue is recognized as the birthplace of hip-hop and is eligible for a place to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Hip-hop diffused from the Bronx to include Compton (Los Angeles) in the 1980s, memorialized by N.W.A.'s album *Straight Outta Compton*, released in 1988. A third coast emerged in the South, centered on Atlanta, around the same time a distinct Midwest sound came out of Detroit (Eminem), Chicago (Kanye West and Chance the Rapper), and St. Louis (Nelly). The hearth in the Bronx and the three secondary hearths on the west coast and in the South and Midwest developed into the authentic spaces of hip-hop and rap. Neighborhood venues became the best place to enjoy an authentic performance, and the lyrics reflected the importance of local places.

In the 1990s and 2000s, hip-hop from the east coast, west coast, South, and Midwest diffused abroad, especially to major cities in Europe. MC Solaar, Die Fantastischen Vier, and Jovanotti each made hip-hop their own by writing music that connected with the youth of their country



Al Pereira/Getty Images Entertainment/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.22 Bronx, New York. 1520 Sedgwick Avenue in the Bronx, New York, is the hearth of hip-hop and rap.

(France, Germany, and Italy, respectively). As hip-hop diffused throughout Europe, it mixed with existing local cultures, experiences, and places, reterritorializing the music to each locale.

As hip-hop has diffused and grown, artists have addressed major concerns of their local cultures in their lyrics. Hip-hop and rap artists in the United States wrote about social issues in the 1970s and 1980s, and some wrote about violence, crime, and surviving urban life in the gangsta rap of the 1980s and 1990s. Other artists write more about having fun and partying. In France and Germany, American hip-hop music diffused first to migrants living in major cities. In France, for example, some of the first hip-hop artists were African, Arab, and Spanish migrants writing about the racism they experienced in France.

The French government helped promote hip-hop artists who rapped in French. France has several policies designed to maintain French as the language of music, film, and television popular culture (see Chapter 6). In the 1990s it required that 40 percent of on-air time be in French. Of the 40 percent, half must be new artists. These policies directly benefited the French hip-hop industry. By performing in French, the new artists received quite a bit of air time on French radio.

The results of reterritorialization are seen in the ways hip-hop artists around the world compose lyrics about the real problems surrounding them and sample local music in their music. Tunisian hip-hop artist El Général's (**Fig. 4.23**) protest anthem "Rais Lebled" played a critical role in the 2011 Arab Spring. El Général was influenced by Tupac Shakur, a west coast American rapper who spoke primarily about social issues. By posting "Rais Lebled" on YouTube, El Général helped spur massive political change. He addressed the lyrics to Ben Ali, the corrupt dictator who had ruled Tunisia for more than 30 years. "Mr. President, your people are dying / People are eating rubbish / Look at what is happening / Miseries everywhere Mr. President / I talk with no fear / Although I know I will only get troubles / I see injustice everywhere." Protestors in Tunisia and Egypt heard, memorized, and rapped his lyrics, and El Général helped inspire revolutionaries in both countries.

FETHI BELAID/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.23 **Tunis, Tunisia.** Tunisian hip-hop artist El Général helped spark the Arab Spring with his anthem "Rais Lebled."

Replacing Old Hearths with New: Beating Out the Big Three in Popular Sports

Baseball, football, and basketball are historically the big three sports in the United States. During the 1800s and 1900s, they all benefited from advances in transportation technology, communication technology, and institutionalization. First, the railroad connected cities across the country, allowing baseball teams to compete and professional baseball to diffuse. The telegraph enabled newspapers to report baseball scores, which added to the sport's following. In the late 1880s, electric lighting made basketball a nighttime spectator sport, played inside gymnasiums. The founding of the National Football League in 1920 helped institutionalize the sport of football by creating institutions to support it, formalize it, and regulate it, with rules for the game remaining relatively unchanged since then.

During much of the twentieth century, the big three dominated sports popular culture. Figures including Mark McGwire, Michael Jordan, and Brett Favre found their way onto Wheaties boxes and reached icon status. In the last decades of the twentieth century, advertising contracts and corporate sponsorship padded and eventually surpassed the salaries of the biggest sports heroes.

Extreme Sports While the big three continued to draw millions of fans and huge crowds to their venues, a growing number of alternative sports captured the imagination of young sports fans. For example, popular films of the 1960s (including *Endless Summer*) immortalized the freedom of surfing. In the 1970s, sidewalk surfing, now known as skateboarding, diffused from its hearth in southern California. Then in the 1980s, snowboarding found a following but initially met strong resistance on ski slopes in the United States.

The debut of ESPN's X Games in 1995 and the proliferation of video games involving extreme sports propelled previously alternative sports into popular culture. Snowboarding debuted as a winter Olympic sport in 1998. Video games sparked interest in such sports, even among kids who had never tried them before. Tony Hawk, the famous skateboarder, was one of the first non–big three athletes to gain corporate sponsors, create his own brands, and sign lucrative advertising deals. He worked with Activision to create several versions of Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. Hawk, who retired from competitive skateboarding in 1999, is worth $140 million today, generating revenue through investments, sponsorships, skate tours, and sales of his skateboards, clothing lines, and video games.

DAVID MCNEW/AFP/Getty Images

FIGURE 4.24 **Burbank, California.** The New York Excelsior (left) and Shanghai Dragons play during an Overwatch League match at the Blizzard Arena, which was designed to host Esport competitions.

Several forces helped drive extreme sports into popular culture. Advertisers who court the 12–34 age demographic, fans looking for athletes who are outside of major league sports, and fans who desire a sport that is different from their parents' first drove extreme sports into popular culture. These same forces are now are driving esports, or competitive video gaming, into popular culture.

Esports The advent of streaming, which enabled people to watch video content online in real time instead of downloading for later consumption, also enabled the rapid expansion of esports as the newest competitive arena in sports. Esports are watched online through streaming services like Twitch and in huge arenas designed to allows fans to see teams compete (**Fig. 4.24**). It draws more unique viewers annually than the entire regular season of the National Football League, and revenue in esports is predicted to exceed $2 billion by 2021.

Like new music or other forms of popular culture, esports are now becoming popular, mainstream, and commodified. Fan bases have formed around the best athletes in esports and around particular games. Corporate sponsors begin to tap into the new popular sport, helping it follow the same path to popular, mainstream, and commodified status. Esports are also taking positions on college campuses, where student-athletes are recruited to compete and fans gather to watch competitions.

Major video games, including League of Legends, Overwatch, and Call of Duty, have professional athletes who are outstanding at playing the game individually or on a team and who have millions of followers. Esports fans appreciate their degree of real-time access to the athletes they follow. There are different levels of access, and higher-paying fans can comment and interact with esports athletes through Twitch and other paid-streaming platforms. Esport athletes with large fan bases garner a huge share of the potential revenue streams through sponsorships, ticket sales, and product endorsements. Recent research found that a small proportion of streamers, 10 percent, account for 95 percent of viewers.

Balancing Popular Culture and Local Culture

Identity and the desire to remain at the forefront of popular culture will continue to spur the creation of new sports and innovative ways to tap into loyal followers and generate revenue. The constant creation of new products, delivery methods, and connections fills an insatiable desire for companies to make the "next thing." It is a never-ending search for what will be attractive to the younger generations who drive purchases in music, entertainment, and athletics.

When popular culture displaces or replaces local culture, it will usually be met with resistance. Concern over the loss of local distinctiveness and identity is not limited to particular cultural or socioeconomic settings. We find such concern in everything from the rise of religious fundamentalism to the establishment of semiautonomous communes in remote locations. We also find this concern in efforts to promote local languages, religions, and customs by constructing barriers to the influx of cultural influences from the popular culture. We find concern over the loss of local and national distinctiveness among political elites seeking to promote a nationalist ideology that is explicitly opposed to cultural globalization. And we find concern among social and ethnic minorities who seek greater autonomy from governments who promote acculturation or assimilation to a single national cultural norm.

Geographers realize that local cultures will interpret, choose, and reshape the influx of popular culture. People interpret individual cultural productions in very different ways, depending on the cultural context in which they view them. What people choose to adopt from popular culture, how they reterritorialize it, and what they reject help shape the character and culture of people, places, and cultural landscapes.

TC Thinking Geographically

What role does language play in the **diffusion** of popular culture? Think about the diffusion of hip-hop from France to former French colonies in Africa, like Tunisia. Then explain how Arabic-language hip-hop can diffuse throughout North Africa and Southwest Asia (the Middle East). Explain where South Korean Hallyu has diffused, and determine how language influences its popularity in Asia and the Americas. Finally, using Figure 6.3, explain why American and British music are popular globally and predict what the next **hearth** of popular culture may be and what language will be used.

4.4 Compare and Contrast How Local and Popular Cultures Are Reflected in Cultural Landscapes.

The tension between popular culture and local culture can be seen in **cultural landscapes**, the visible imprint of human activity on the landscape. Human imprint includes everything from how people have changed and shaped the environment to the buildings, signs, fences, and statues people erect. Cultural landscapes reflect the values, norms, and aesthetics of a culture. On major roadways in North American towns and suburbs, the landscape is a series of big-box stores, gas stations, and restaurants that reflect popular culture (**Fig. 4.25**). As you drive down one of these roadways, one place looks like the next. You drive past Chipotle, Applebee's, Walmart, Target, and McDonald's. Then, several miles down the road, you pass another cluster of the same stores with the same architecture. Geographer Edward Relph coined the word **placelessness** to describe the loss of uniqueness of place in the cultural landscape to the point that one place looks like the next.

Cultural Landscapes of Popular Culture

Globalization and the widespread diffusion of popular culture have led to the **convergence** of cultural landscapes worldwide. Three developments are at the heart of convergence: (1) architectural forms and planning ideas have diffused around the world; (2) individual businesses and products have become so widespread that they now leave a distinctive landscape stamp on far-flung places; and (3) the wholesale borrowing of idealized landscape images has promoted a blurring of place distinctiveness.

The global diffusion of the skyscraper provides a clear illustration of the first point. Architectural forms and planning ideas have diffused around the world, making many places look alike. In the second half of the 1800s, with advancements in steel production and improved costs and efficiencies of steel use, architects and engineers created the first skyscrapers. The fundamental difference between a skyscraper and another building is that the outside walls of the skyscraper do not bear the major load or weight of the building. Instead, the internal steel structure or skeleton of the building bears most of the load. The Home Insurance Building of Chicago is typically credited as the first building to meet these specifications.

From Singapore to Johannesburg and from Caracas to Toronto, the central business districts (CBDs) of major cities are dominated by tall buildings, many of which were designed by the same architects and engineering firms (**Fig. 4.26**). Skyscrapers require substantial land clearing in the vicinity of individual buildings, as well as the construction of wide, straight streets to promote access. Additionally, transportation systems need to be reworked around a highly centralized CBD model. The proliferation of skyscrapers in Taiwan, Malaysia, and China in the 1990s marked the integration of these economies into the major players in the world economy (**Fig. 4.27**). Today, the growth of skyscrapers in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, signals Dubai's world city status.

Reading signs is an easy way to see the second dimension of cultural landscape convergence: the far-flung stamp of global businesses on the landscape. Walking into the parking lot of the Great Wall of China, you will see a Subway restaurant. The main tourist shopping street in Prague hosts Dunkin' Donuts and McDonald's. A tourist in Munich, Germany, will wind through streets looking for the city's famed beer garden dating from 1589, the Hofbräuhaus, and will happen upon

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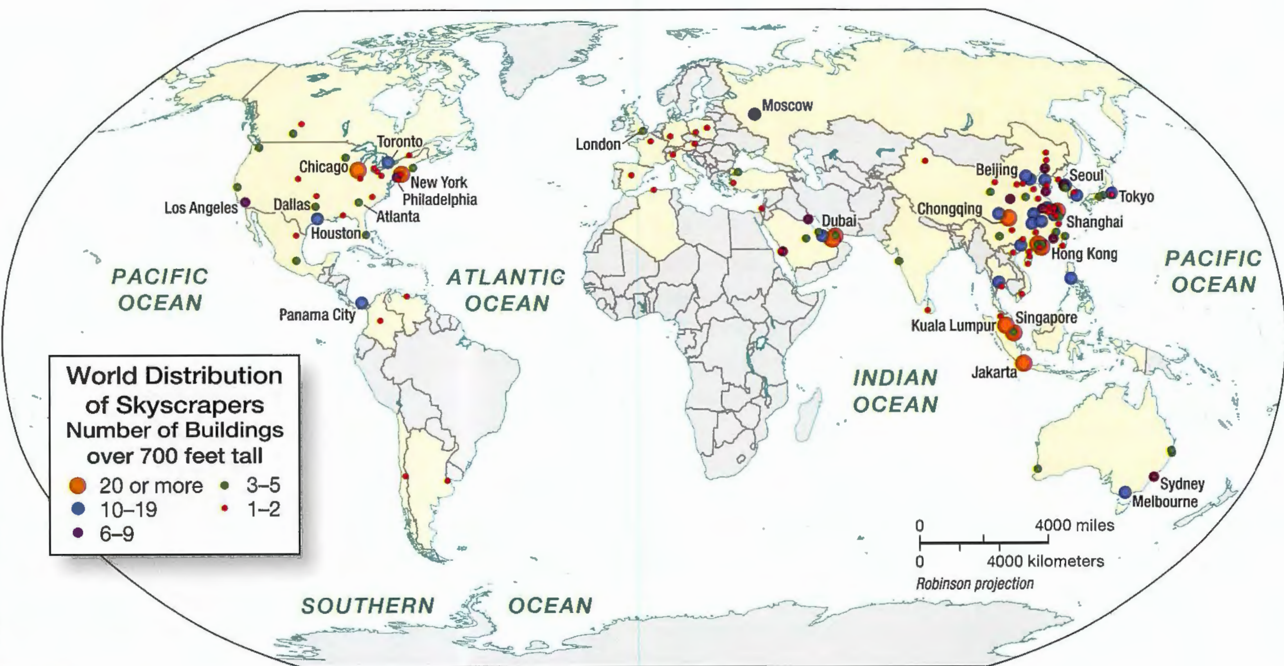
FIGURE 4.25 **Roseville, Minnesota.** A series of signs advertising national chains creates a nondescript landscape on Snelling Avenue in this St. Paul suburb. Across the street from where this photo was taken is the site of T1, the first Target store ever built, which was recently torn down and replaced with the largest Target store in the world.



Data from: Emporis, Inc., 2005. Visualization by E.H. Fouberg and A.B. Murphy. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.26 World Distribution of Skyscrapers. The map reflects the growing importance of East Asia as a business center—particularly China. But Dubai stands out as well, a city that has staked its future on its role as an international commercial node.

Photo by A.B. Murphy. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.27 Kuala Lampur, Malaysia. The Petronas Towers. When the Petronas were completed in 1998, they were the tallest buildings in the world. They were overtaken by Taipei 101 in 2004, which in turn was dwarfed by the Burj Khalifa in Dubai in 2010.

the Hard Rock Café right next door (**Fig. 4.28**). If the tourist had recently traveled to Las Vegas, he might have déjà vu. The Hofbräuhaus Las Vegas stands across the street from the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino. The storefronts in Seoul, South Korea, are filled with Starbucks, Dunkin' Donuts, and Outback Steakhouses.

Placeless landscapes can be found everywhere from international airports to shopping centers. Global corporations that develop spaces of commerce have wide-reaching impacts on the cultural landscape. Architectural firms often specialize in building one kind of space—performing arts centers, stadiums, medical laboratories, or international airports. Property management companies have worldwide holdings and encourage Gap, the Cheesecake Factory, and other companies to lease space in all their holdings. Facilities such as airports and college food courts begin to look the same even though they are separated by thousands of miles.

The third dimension of cultural landscape convergence is the wholesale borrowing of idealized landscape images across the world. As you study the cultural landscape, you may notice landscape features transplanted from one place to another—regardless of whether the landscape feature even "fits."

The strip in Las Vegas, Nevada, represents an extreme case of the tendency toward convergence, with various structures designed to evoke different places in the world. The popular Venetian Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas replicates the Italian city of Venice (**Fig. 4.29A and B**), including canals. In 2007 the Las Vegas Sands Corporation, a casino developer and owner, built another Venetian hotel and casino in the port city of Macao, which was once a colony of Portugal but reverted to Chinese control in 1999. The Venetian Macao resort cost $2.4

Courtesy Munich Tourist Office

FIGURE 4.28 **Munich, Germany.** In modern-day Munich, the famed Hofbräuhaus shares a street corner with the Hard Rock Café. The juxtaposition of different cultural-commercial traditions is increasingly common.

billion and is three times the size of the largest casino in Las Vegas (**Fig. 4.29C**). Gambling is illegal in mainland China, but Macao's recent incorporation into China and its special status allow gambling to flourish on the small island.

The borrowing of landscape is not confined to grand-scale projects like the Venetian. A more common borrowed landscape in North America is the town center. Town centers popping up in suburbia in North America have a similar look—one that is familiar if you have walked on Main Street, U.S.A., at Disneyland or Disney World, or if you have visited the centers of any number of "quaint" historic towns on the eastern seaboard. Each town center is designed to make you think of all things American and to feel immediately at home.

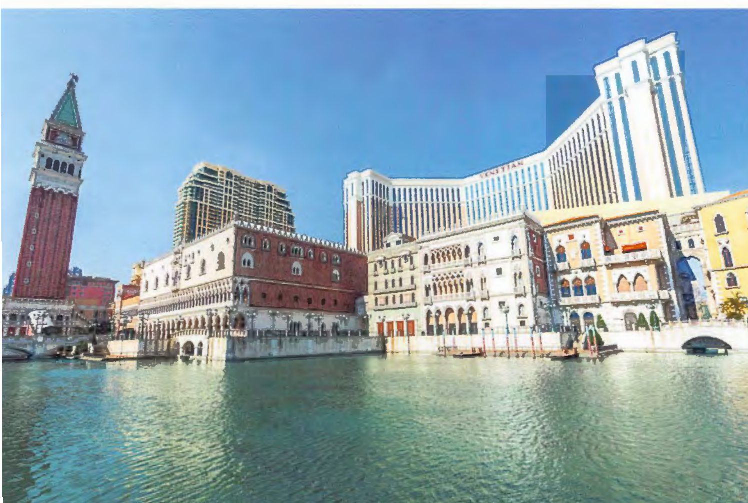
In less obvious ways, cultural borrowing and mixing are happening all around the world. The global–local continuum emphasizes that what happens at one scale is not independent of what happens at other scales. Human geography is not simply about documenting the differences between places; it is also about understanding the processes unfolding across scales that produce differences. What happens in an individual place is the product of interaction across scales. People in a local place mediate and alter regional, national, and global processes, in a process called glocalization. The character of place ultimately comes out of a series of dynamic interactions balancing local distinctiveness and global popular culture.

Photo by A.B. Murphy. © 2020 John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

FIGURE 4.29A Venice, Italy. UNESCO World Heritage Site. Designation as a World Heritage Site is reserved for sites with great cultural-historical significance. But as the two photos below suggest, knock-offs of such sites are not uncommon—eroding the distinctiveness of places.

nobleIMAGES/Alamy Stock Photo

FIGURE 4.29B The Venetian Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.



siraphol/123RF

FIGURE 4.29C The Venetian Hotel and Casino in Macau, China.

Cultural Landscapes of Local Cultures

What makes travel interesting for most people is the presence of variety in the cultural landscape. Travel beyond the tourist sites and the main roads, and one will easily find landscapes of local cultures, even in higher income countries such as the United States and Canada. By studying cultural landscapes, you can gain insight into the social structures of local cultures. In everything from the houses to the schools to the churches to the cemeteries, a local cultural landscape reveals its foundation.

For example, founders and early followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints created the Mormon landscape of the American West as they migrated westward under persecution and in search of a place where they could practice their religion freely. The Mormon Church began in New York, and then Joseph Smith and his followers moved westward to Independence, Missouri. From there, Mormons migrated farther west to present-day Salt Lake City, Utah. The easiest places to see the foundations of the Mormon cultural landscape are in the small towns established by Mormons throughout Utah and stretching into Arizona, Nevada, and Idaho (**Fig. 4.30**).

Geographers, including Donald Meinig, Richard Francaviglia, and Allen Noble, have studied the Mormon landscape and found the roots of the Mormon culture inscribed in the local landscape. If you drove from Chicago west to Nevada and traveled through the rural areas of Nebraska and Utah on your path, you would immediately notice one fundamental difference in the landscape: farmsteads in the plains replaced by farming villages in the west. In the Great Plains, the Homestead Act encouraged farmers to establish single farmsteads, where a farm family lived alone on their 160 acres and the nearest neighbor was down the dirt road. In the rural Mormon landscape, early settlers established farming villages with houses clustered together and croplands surrounding the outskirts of the village (**Fig. 4.31**). Such clustering allowed Mormons to protect one another, a paramount concern because the religion's followers were experiencing persecution in the East and because the settlers' fears were raised by stories of Native Americans attacking villages in the West. Equally importantly, through clustering, they sought to join together for services in each village's chapel.

Geographer Richard Francaviglia describes several factors that delimit the Mormon landscape in the western United States and Canada, including symmetrical brick houses that look more like houses on the east coast than other pioneer houses, wide streets that run due north–south and east–west, ditches for irrigation, poplar trees for shade, bishop's storehouses for storing food and necessities for the poor, and unpainted fences. Because the early Mormons were farmers and were clustered together in villages, each block in the town was quite large, allowing for one-acre city lots where a farmer could keep livestock and other farming supplies in town. The streets were wide so that farmers could easily turn a cart and horses on them.

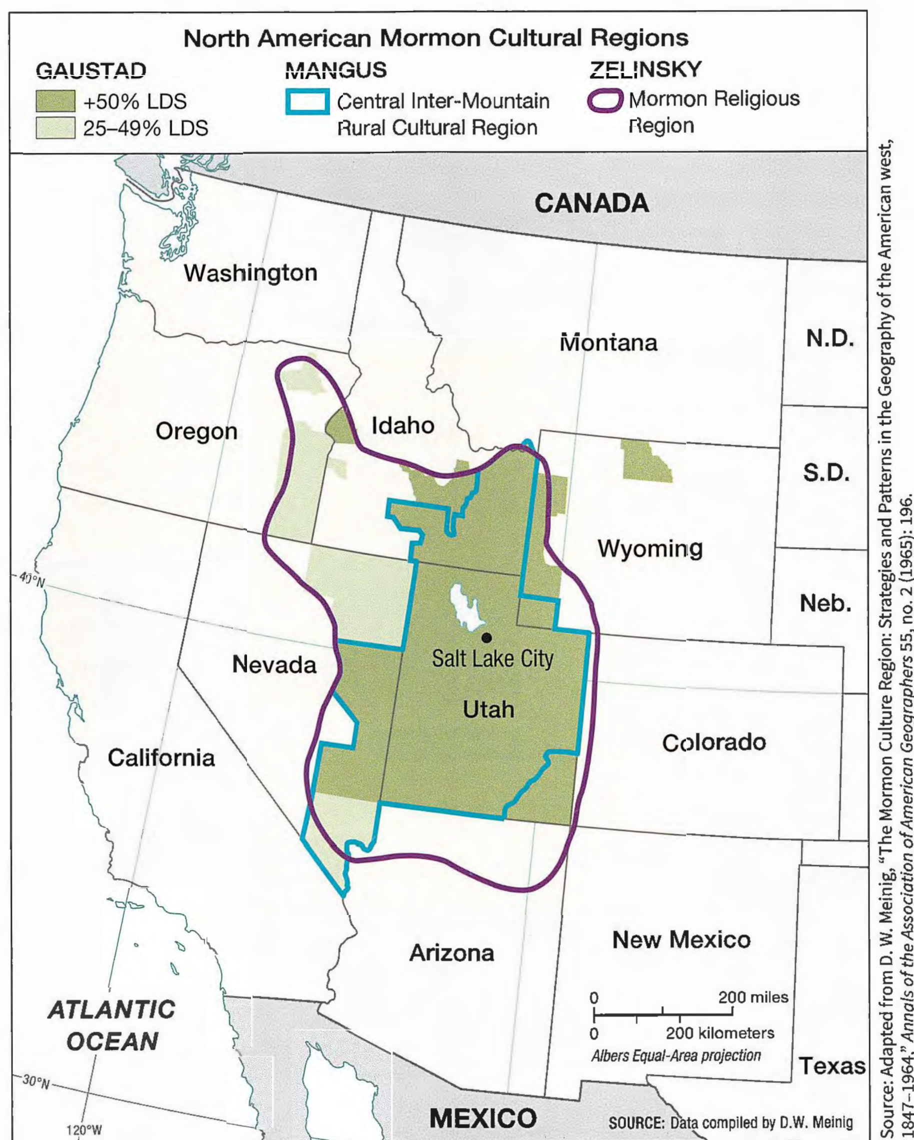


FIGURE 4.30 **The Mormon Cultural Region.** The Mormon cultural region surrounds Salt Lake City, Utah, where Mormon migrants established farms and farming communities. The religion diffused both through migration and missionary work to solidify a Mormon cultural region in North America. From this base, Mormon missionaries have diffused the religion to widespread parts of the world.

The **urban morphology**, the size and shape of a place's buildings, streets, and infrastructure, tells us a lot, and so too can the shape and size of a local culture's housing, as the Mormon case illustrates. Distinctive housing styles are not unique to the Mormon culture. Figure 4.8 shows the distinctive housing style of Hutterite colonies, where multiple families live in elongated housing complexes, arranged near a central common space. Amish also have a distinctive housing style, pragmatically and plainly designed to house large families. Across the world, local cultures have created housing styles that reflect their values, the materials available to them for building, and their design aesthetic.

TC Thinking Geographically

Focus on the **cultural landscape** of your college campus. Think about the concept of placelessness. Determine whether your campus is a "placeless place" or whether the cultural landscape of your college reflects the unique identity of the place. Imagine you are hired to build a new student center on your campus. How could you design the building to reflect the uniqueness of your college?

Guest Field Note Cataloging the Mormon Cultural Landscape in Paragonah, Utah

Richard Francaviglia
Geo.Graphic Designs, Salem, Oregon

I took this photograph in the village of Paragonah, Utah, in 1969, and it still reminds me that fieldwork is both an art and a science. People who know the American West well may immediately recognize this as a scene from "Mormon Country," but their recognition is based primarily on their impressions of the place. "It is something about the way the scene looks," they may say, or "it feels like a Mormon village because of the way the barn and the house sit at the base of those arid bluffs." These are general impressions, but how can one prove that it is a Mormon scene? That is where the science of fieldwork comes into play. Much like a detective investigating a crime scene or a journalist writing an accurate story, the geographer looks for proof.

In this scene, we can spot several of the 10 elements that constitute the Mormon landscape. First, this farmstead is not separate from the village, but part of it—just a block off of Main Street, in fact. Next we can spot that central-hall home made out of brick; then there is that simple, unpainted gabled-roof barn; and lastly the weedy edge of a very wide street says Mormon Country. Those are just four clues suggesting that pragmatic Mormons created this cultural landscape, and other fieldwork soon confirmed that all 10 elements were present here in Paragonah. Like this 40-year-old photo, which shows some signs of age, the scene here did not remain unchanged. In Paragonah and other Mormon villages, many old buildings have been torn down, streets paved, and the landscape "cleaned up"—a reminder that time and place (which is to say history and geography) are inseparable.

© Richard Francaviglia

FIGURE 4.31 Paragonah, Utah. Photo taken in 1969.

Summary

4.1 Explain Local Cultures and Global, Popular Culture.

1. A culture is a group of belief systems, norms, and values practiced by a people. We can think of cultures in terms of local culture and popular culture. A local culture is a group of people in a place who see themselves as a collective or a community and who share customs and traits. Popular culture is large, incorporates different groups of people, is typically urban, quickly changes cultural traits, and covers a larger area: national, regional, or global.
2. The values and aesthetics of a culture can be understood by studying the material culture and nonmaterial culture of a group. Material culture includes things people construct, such as art, houses, clothing, sports, dance, and foods. Nonmaterial culture includes beliefs, practices, aesthetics (what is seen as attractive), and values. The nonmaterial culture of a group is reflected in its material culture.
3. Popular culture diffuses both hierarchically and contagiously. With hierarchical diffusion, the most important and most connected people or places learn the trait or practice first, and then it diffuses to the next most important in the hierarchy. With contagious diffusion, we see a cultural trait or practice from someone nearby us, and we adopt it.

4.2 Understand How People Sustain Local Cultures in Rural and Urban Areas.

1. Local cultures are sustained through customs. Sharing customs creates a connection among members of a local culture. Customs are passed down from generation to generation. For a local culture to sustain its customs, it must have a place to practice them. Local cultures create ethnic neighborhoods in cities and ethnic small towns in rural areas as a home base where people can practice their customs, and access the goods and services they need to maintain them.
2. During the 1800s and into the 1900s, the U.S. government had an official policy of assimilation, forcibly suppressing Native customs and replacing them with customs of the dominant culture. Through several specific programs, the U.S. government tried

to end or remove Native American customs, including sacred dances and clothing. The government also removed children from their homes, placed them in boarding schools, cut their hair, and prohibited them from speaking their Native languages.

3. A local culture that is working to reinvigorate their group and individual identities may reinstitute traditional customs and practices, teach the native language, and practice sacred ceremonies. Living in rural areas of the northern Great Plains and plains provinces of Canada has made it possible for Hutterites to live communally and maintain their identity and many cultural traits and practices.

4.3 Explain How Global, Popular Culture Is Created and Diffused.

1. At the global scale, North America, western Europe, Japan, India, and South Korea exert the greatest influence on popular culture at present. Each region acts as a major hearth for certain aspects of popular culture: North American influences are seen mainly in movies, television, music, sports, and fast food. Japan's influences are primarily in children's television programs, electronic games, and new entertainment technologies. Western Europe's are in fashion, television, art, and philosophy; South Korea's in television dramas, movies, and popular music; and India's mainly in movies.
2. Popular culture is created or manufactured. While college towns and major cities such as Nashville, Seattle, New York, Boston, and Los Angeles are still important in establishing new artists, online space is a growing way to launch artists. Corporations use big data culled from users' social media accounts and cell phones to track commonalities among celebrities' followers. Information can be used to create new trends, relaunch a celebrity, or market products.
3. Popular culture can take aspects of regional and local cultures. The hearth of hip-hop is the Bronx, New York. Hip-hop diffused from the Bronx to include Compton (Los Angeles) in the 1980s. A third coast emerged in the South, centered on Atlanta. Around the same time, a distinct Midwest sound came out of Detroit, Chicago, and St. Louis. From its hearth in the Bronx and the three secondary hearths on the west coast, South, and Midwest, hip-hop diffused around the world, reterritorializing in each place. It took on a distinct French sound in France and then diffused from France to North Africa. In North Africa, hip-hop became a way for young people to voice their political and social concerns.

4.4 Compare and Contrast How Local and Popular Cultures Are Reflected in Cultural Landscapes.

1. The cultural landscape is the visible imprint people make on the land. Cultural landscape includes buildings, forms of cities, methods of defining land ownership, and statues and memorials. Globalization of popular culture has led to convergence. With convergence, places that are not near each other look similar. Popular culture is reflected in the cultural landscape through building types and architecture that is common across the world. For example, skyscrapers are part of popular culture architecture and can be found in every world city. Restaurant chains build structures and signage that look similar around the world.
2. Local cultures create distinct cultural landscapes. The Mormon landscape in the western United States is a good example of a local culture visible in the cultural landscape. Mormon leaders had distinct guidelines that their followers used when they built towns in Utah and surrounding states. In the rural Mormon landscape, early settlers established farming villages where houses clustered together and croplands surrounded the outskirts of the village.

Self-Test

4.1 Explain local cultures and global, popular culture.

1. Members of a local culture may work to keep out popular culture. All of the following would help people keep out popular culture except:

- a. practicing a religion unique to the local culture.
- b. celebrating festivals important to the local culture.
- c. learning to speak English and using it with one another.
- d. limiting interaction with others by living away from others.

2. Popular culture usually follows ________ diffusion, from most important people or place to the next most important.

- a. relocation
- b. hierarchical
- c. stimulus
- d. contagious

3. What members of a local culture produce in terms of art, houses, clothing, sports, dance, and foods are all part of ________ culture.

- a. nonmaterial
- b. consumption
- c. material
- d. collateral

4.2 Understand how people sustain local cultures in rural and urban areas.

4. When members of a local culture live together in ethnic neighborhoods or rural small towns, it helps them resist these two negative influences of popular culture:

- a. acculturation and federation
- b. customization and placelessness
- c. syncretism and stimulation
- d. cultural appropriation and assimilation

5. The U.S. government had an official policy of ________ toward Native Americans. Native Americans resisted and are reinvigorating their cultures by reviving their ________.

- a. customization / nonmaterial culture
- b. assimilation / customs
- c. cultural appropriation / material culture
- d. syncretism / cultural landscapes

6. Ogallala Lakota families on Pine Ridge are building a community called Thunder Valley. Community members designed the ________, the layout of streets, houses, and community buildings, to reflect their culture.

a. functional zonation

b. reterritorialization

c. urban morphology

d. placelessness

4.3 Explain how global, popular culture is created and diffused.

7. China prohibits some social networks and monitors and censors other social network sites. The government uses peoples' posts and communications to track behavior and calculate a ________ score for each Chinese person.

a. assimilation

b. social credit

c. reciprocity

d. social capital

8. Places in the world are not evenly connected. Innovations diffuse quickly between places that are tightly interlinked through transportation and communication technologies, creating what geographer David Harvey called:

a. time–space compression.

b. distance decay.

c. accelerated diffusion.

d. forward linkages.

9. South Korean Hallyu are waves of popular culture that diffuse from a hearth in South Korea throughout East Asia and Southeast Asia. The biggest influences of South Korean popular culture have been in all of the following except:

a. music.

b. video games.

c. television.

d. fashion.

4.4 Compare and contrast how local and popular cultures are reflected in cultural landscapes.

10. The loss of uniqueness of place in the cultural landscape happens because popular culture diffuses at the ________ scale.

a. local

b. national

c. regional

d. global

11. Cultural landscapes are converging, creating placelessness. Geographers have identified three developments at the heart of convergence, including all of the following except that:

a. architectural forms and planning ideas have diffused around the world.

b. individual businesses and products have become so widespread that they now leave a distinctive landscape stamp on far-flung places.

c. city planners around the world follow recommendations from the United Nations Urban Planning Commission when designing cities.

d. the wholesale borrowing of idealized landscape images has promoted a blurring of place distinctiveness.

12. Local cultures create distinct cultural landscapes. One defining feature of the Mormon cultural landscape is:

a. farming villages where houses are clustered together and croplands surround the outskirts of the village.

b. single farmsteads where a farm family lives alone on their 160 acres and the nearest neighbor is down the dirt road.

c. farming villages where houses are laid out along rivers and long lots for agriculture stretch behind each house.

d. square sections of land where four farm families live one mile apart on each corner of the square.