

## Cultural Patterns and Processes

AP Human Geography ■ Unit 3

AP Human Geography



Cultural Patterns and Processes

### What we will cover

- 1 Culture & landscape
- 2 Cultural patterns
- 3 Types of diffusion
- 4 Causes of diffusion
- 5 Religion & language
- 6 Effects of diffusion

# 1

## Culture

## Culture and cultural landscape

- **Material culture** 物质文化 = objects; **nonmaterial culture** 非物质文化 = ideas, beliefs.
- The **cultural landscape** 文化景观 is the visible human imprint on the land.
- **Sequent occupance** 连续占用: successive cultures layered on one place.



*The visible human imprint on land*

## Cultural patterns

- **Universalizing religions** 普世宗教 seek converts; **ethnic religions** 民族宗教 tie to one people.
- **Centripetal** 向心 forces unify; **centrifugal** 离心 forces divide.
- Shared language, religion, ethnicity form cultural regions.



*Ethnic enclaves mark cultural regions*

# 2 Diffusion

## Types of diffusion

- **Relocation diffusion** 迁移传播: spreads as people move.
- **Expansion diffusion** 扩展传播: spreads outward, stays at source.
- Expansion = contagious, hierarchical, or stimulus.

## Causes of diffusion

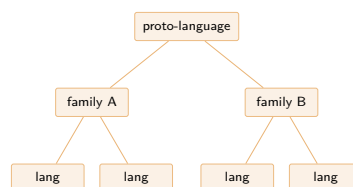
- Historical: **colonialism** 殖民主义, trade routes, migration.
- Contemporary: **globalization** 全球化 and communication technology.
- **Time-space convergence** 时空收敛 makes places feel closer.



*Trade and media shrink cultural distance*

## Religion and language

- A **language family** 语系 shares a common ancestor.
- A **lingua franca** 通用语 is a shared language across groups.
- A **pidgin** 皮钦语 becomes a **creole** 克里奥尔语 when learned as a first language.



*a family shares a common ancestor*

## Worked example – name that diffusion

Classify each: (a) Italians carry pizza to New York; (b) a dance trend spreads friend-to-friend; (c) a chain opens in Tokyo, Paris, then small towns; (d) Europeans see Chinese porcelain and invent their own.

- (a) **relocation** – the people moved.
- (b) **contagious** – near-neighbour contact.
- (c) **hierarchical** – biggest places first.
- (d) **stimulus** – the **idea** spread, not the thing.

Ask **one** question first: did the source **keep** the trait? If yes it is expansion (then pick the sub-type); if the trait **travelled with people**, it is relocation.

## Effects of diffusion

- **Cultural convergence** 文化趋同 vs **divergence** 文化趋异.
- **Acculturation** 涵化 keeps some identity; **assimilation** 同化 loses it.
- **Syncretism** 文化融合 blends cultures into something new.

## Key points

**Relocation** = people move;  
**expansion** = idea spreads

**Contagious/hierarchical/stimulus**  
are expansion types

**Universalizing** religions convert; **ethnic** pass by birth

Diffusion causes **convergence**,  
**syncretism**, assimilation

## Worked example – the command word is the question

**“Explain how food preferences can be a culture trait.” (real AP question)**

*“Many dishes use ingredients or ways of cooking unique to one culture group – a national dish, say – so choosing and eating that food expresses belonging to the group, which is what makes it a culture trait.”*

**Explain** needs a **link**, not a definition: connect the food preference **to** the idea of a shared culture. Listing foods earns **zero**.

## Check yourself

- 1 Contagious or hierarchical: a trend spreading from big cities down?
- 2 What is relocation diffusion?
- 3 Give one element of a cultural landscape.
- 4 Which diffusion carries the idea, not the people?

**Answers** 1. hierarchical 2. people migrate and carry the culture with them 3. buildings, signs, land use, religious sites 4. expansion diffusion