

Icons of contemporary global culture

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The paper "Icons of Contemporary Global Culture" is an outstanding example of a culture essay. Three well-known icons of contemporary global culture are the McDonald's golden arches, the 5-ring symbol of the Olympic Games, and the crucifix of the Christian religion. Each stands as a symbol readily recognized anywhere in the globe. The McDonald's golden arches are first and foremost a commercial symbol of global capitalism. The original and ongoing intent of their creators was to sell McDonald's food, specifically burgers. Through the construction of restaurants in many countries across the world and by funding and carrying out a massive advertising campaign, McDonald's restaurants have made their arches one of the most recognized symbols in the world. For consumers, they have come to signify a place where one can get a meal, the same meal, no matter where the restaurant. Though the quality of that meal is not exactly the highest, it does for the most part guarantee to the consumer a precise and universal product. Anywhere an individual sees those arches, he/she knows what to expect. I chose the arches because they are a quintessentially modern symbol, symptomatic of today's fast-paced lifestyle. People want their food quick and cheap. The 5-ring symbol of the Olympic Games, though probably not as universally recognized as the McDonald's arches, do nonetheless enjoy widespread recognition. Their value is not commercial but rather a geopolitical. Originating in Ancient Greece, the modern Olympics provide an opportunity for athletes and peoples of all nations to come together peacefully in the spirit of sportsmanlike competition. The rings symbolize that coming together. The purpose is political, the tone is peaceful. I found this to be a good symbol to offer in contradistinction to the McDonald's arches because it represents another aspect of modern life: the merging of <https://assignbuster.com/icons-of-contemporary-global-culture/>

countries and peoples. The Christian cross, or crucifix, is surely the oldest and most prolific of the three symbols which I chose. It represents what Christians believe to have been the suffering of Christ at the hands of the Romans. Its meaning and interpretation depend of course on the viewer. For a Christian it is a symbol of great importance: it is the most widely known icon of his/her religion. For a non-Christian, however, particularly a Muslim, it can be a symbol of war and militancy. It evokes images of the Crusades when Christians invaded the Middle East, and modern conflicts between Muslims and Westerners. I chose this icon because, unlike the others which concern commerce or politics, the cross is a decidedly religious. It represents one of humanity's oldest institutions: religion.