

# Lecture 2. Culture and its constituents

## Etymology

**Latin:** *cultura*, lit. “cultivation”

Cicero (1st c. BCE) : "cultura animi" (cultivation of the soul).

**English:** Mid-15c., "the tilling of land“;

about 1500, "cultivation through education“;

1805, "the intellectual side of civilization“;

1867, "collective customs and achievements of a people"

# Typical dictionary definitions

1. the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action;
2. the total range of activities and ideas of a group of people with shared traditions, which are transmitted and reinforced by members of the group: *the Mayan culture*;
3. a particular civilization at a particular period;
4. the artistic and social pursuits, expression, and tastes valued by a society or class, as in the arts, manners, dress, etc;
5. the enlightenment or refinement resulting from these pursuits;
6. the attitudes, feelings, values, and behaviour that characterize and inform society as a whole or any social group within it: *hippie culture*;
7. the cultivation of plants, esp by scientific methods designed to improve stock or to produce new ones;
8. **Stockbreeding**: the rearing and breeding of animals, esp with a view to improving the strain
9. the act or practice of tilling or cultivating the soil;
0. **Biology**: the experimental growth of microorganisms, such as bacteria and fungi, in a nutrient substance (= culture medium), usually under controlled conditions; a group of microorganisms grown in this way.

- 1. a. the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time**
  - *a study of Greek language and culture* ▪ *today's youth culture* ▪ *Her art shows the influence of pop/popular culture.***b. a particular society that has its own beliefs, ways of life, art, etc.**
  - *an ancient culture* ▪ *It's important to learn about other cultures.*
- 2. a way of thinking, behaving, or working that exists in a place or organization (such as a business)**
  - *The company's corporate/business culture is focused on increasing profits.* ▪ *There was a culture of success at the school.* [=the school's policies and environment encouraged its students' success]
- 3. a. artistic activities (such as music, theater, painting, etc.)**
  - *an area that has been criticized for its lack of culture.***b. appreciation and knowledge of music, theater, painting, etc.**
  - *She is a person of culture.* [=a cultured person]
- 4. (technical) a. the act or process of growing living material (such as cells or bacteria) in controlled conditions for scientific study**
  - *Scientists have been refining techniques for the culture of living tissue.***b. a group of cells, bacteria, etc., grown in controlled conditions for scientific study**
  - *bacterial/tissue cultures*
- 5. (technical) the act or process of raising or growing plants, insects, etc., in controlled conditions**
  - *bee culture* ▪ *the culture of grapes*

# Scholarly definitions

- ❖ Culture refers to the cumulative deposit of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religion, notions of time, roles, spatial relations, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual and group striving.
- ❖ Culture is the systems of knowledge shared by a relatively large group of people.
- ❖ **Culture is communication, communication is culture.**
- ❖ Culture in its broadest sense is cultivated behavior; that is the totality of a person's learned, accumulated experience which is socially transmitted, or more briefly, behavior through social learning.
- ❖ A culture is a way of life of a group of people - the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.
- ❖ Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other hand, as conditioning influences upon further action.
- ❖ Culture is the sum of total of the learned behavior of a group of people that are generally considered to be the tradition of that people and are transmitted from generation to generation.
- ❖ **Culture is a collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people.**