

# Unit 2

## The Fundamentals of Society

# Culture

- What is a culture?
- The term culture refers to the groups shared belief , practices and values for a living . culture is the total peoples or groups way of life , from routine everyday interactions to the most important parts of group members lives. It includes everything produced by a society such as peoples way of talking , dressing ,cooking, mourning, eating, marrying,etc including all of the social rules. Adherence to a culture makes one an integrated member of a society.
- Sociologists often study culture using the sociological imagination.

- “as the handiwork of man and as the medium through which he achieves his end.”-B. Malinowski
- “design for living”-Clyde Kluckhohn
- Features or characteristics of culture
- Culture is inherent in society: culture exists in the social system, it influences the people's behaviour
- Culture satisfies human/social needs:
- Culture is not inborn
- Culture is shared: It is transmitted through different institutions
- Culture is dynamic and adaptive: changes as change in environment
- Culture is transmissible in nature: Transmitted through one generation to other by language, signs, symbols, etc through imitation or instruction.
- Culture varies from society to society

- Culture is symbolic : the meaning of culture is rooted in symbols.
- Culture is social not individual
- Culture is ideational : helps man in formation of ideals and norms.

# Cultural traits and culture complexes

- The smallest unit of culture is called a trait which means that trait cannot be reduced to further smallest part. For example dance is a collection of traits such as dance steps, formula for selecting the performers and musical accompaniment. Moreover dance has a meaning, which may mean religious, ceremonial, a magical rite, a courtship activity etc. All these traits (elements) combine to form a culture complex.
- A cultural complex is a cluster of related traits. The culture complex is intermediate between the trait and institution.

# What is cultural lag?

- An American sociologist W.F. Ogburn, introduced the concept of 'cultural lag' in his book "social change" published in 1920. 'cultural lag' refers to the phenomenon that occurs when changes in material culture occur before or at a faster rate than the changes in non material culture.

# Functions of culture

1. Culture is a treasury of knowledge with instincts they adapt to environment.
2. Culture shape our daily activities.
3. Culture defines attitudes, values and goals.
4. Culture decides our career
5. Culture provides behaviour pattern
6. Culture molds personality of individuals

# Sub-cultures and counter cultures

- Culture of a place or nation is not always homogenous but there are heterogeneous language , religion , customs and traditions as there are various sub groups within dominant culture known as sub cultures.



# Types of sub-culture

1. Nationality: Although we all are Asians due to sub-culture we are called Nepalese.
  2. Geographical location : As we call himali , pahadi , madhesi
  3. Religion
  4. Caste/ethnicity
  5. Gender: According to it we can divide into feminine and masculine .
  6. Age: every age group have the distinct values and belief.
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subcultures which are in active opposition to the dominant culture are called counter culture for e.g. the delinquent gang with no standards or moral values . Youths trained in this culture are influenced against the dominant cultural norms.

# **CULTURE AND PERSONALITY**

- **culture refers to the shared values, beliefs and norms of a specific group of people.**
- **Culture, therefore, influences the manner we learn, live and behave. Because of this, many theorists believe that culture is an important shaper of our personality.**
- **One of the general assumptions asserting the effect of culture to personality is that people who are born and bred in the same culture share common personality traits.**

- According to Franz Boas, pioneer of Psychological Anthropology for the study of the relationship between culture and personality, personality is obtained through culture and not biology.
- His theory called Cultural Relativism gives a comprehensive understanding of the underlying relationship between culture and personality.

## *Culture and human intelligence*

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**Human intelligence is a mental quality that consists of the abilities to learn from experience, adapt to new situations, understand and handle abstract concepts, and use knowledge to manipulate one's environment.**

- **There is relationship between culture and human intelligence.**
- **Human intelligence cannot fully or even meaningfully be understood outside its cultural context.**
- **Behavior that is considered intelligent in one culture may be considered unintelligent in another culture, and vice versa.**

- *Moreover, people in different cultures have different implicit (folk) theories of intelligence.*
- *The relationships between different aspects of intelligence can vary across cultures, with correlations that are positive in one setting proving to be negative in another.*

- **Culture and society**
- Culture and society are intricately related.
- A culture consists of the “objects” of a society, whereas a society consists of the people who share a common culture.
- When the terms *culture* and *society* first acquired their current meanings, most people in the world worked and lived in small groups in the same locale.

- Sociologists define **society** as the people who interact in such a way as to share a common culture.
- The **cultural bond** may be ethnic or racial, based on gender, or due to shared beliefs, values, and activities.
- The term *society* can also have a *geographic* meaning and refer to people who share a common culture in a particular location.
- For example, people living in arctic climates developed different cultures from those living in desert cultures.
- In time, a large variety of human cultures arose around the world.



# Nation

- A nation is a group of people who see themselves as a cohesive and coherent unit based on shared cultural or historical criteria.
- Nations are socially constructed units, not given by nature.
- Their existence, definition, and members can change dramatically based on circumstances.
- Nations in some ways can be thought of as “imagined communities” that are bound together by notions of

- unity that can pivot around religion, ethnic identity, language, cultural practice and so forth.
- The concept and practice of a nation work to establish who belongs and who does not (insider vs. outsider).
- Such conceptions often ignore political boundaries such that a single nation may “spill over” into multiple states.
- Furthermore, states  $\neq$  nations: not every nation has a state (e.g., Kurds; Roma; Palestine).
- Some states may contain all or parts of multiple nations.

# Bases of Nationhood

- Language
- Culture
- Autonomy
- Freedom
- Coexistence
- Psychological Unity
- National Indivisibility
- Sovereignty
- Unity in diversity and national feelings created by that

- We feeling
- Good Governance
- Participation
- Regional, Religious and Cultural Unity

# Components of Culture

- Norms:- These are the guidelines people are supposed to follow in their relation with one another. They indicate what people should or should not do in specific situation. They indicate the standard of propriety, morality, legality, and ethics of a society that are covered by sanctions when violation are made.

- Types of Social norms
- a. Folkways – these are everyday habits; customs, traditions and conventions people obey without giving much thought to the matter.
- b. Mores- these are the norms people consider vital to their wellbeing and most cherished values; they are special customs with moral and ethical significance, which are strongly held and emphasized
- c. Laws- these are formalized norms enacted by people vested with legitimate authority.

## BELIEFS, VALUES

- Beliefs refer to a person's conviction about a certain idea.
- Values are abstract concepts of what is important and worthwhile, they are
- general ideas that individuals share about what is good or bad.

- 1. Material Culture
- From material culture we understand material and physical objects. For instance, house, road, vehicles, pen, table, radio set, book etc. these are the products of human efforts to control his environment and make his life conformable and safe.
- 2. Non-material culture
- In non-material culture we include non material objects. For example religion, art, ideas, customs, values system, attitudes, knowledge etc. it does not have physical shape. It is very important in determining human behavior and has strong hold on an individual.
- Both parts are inter-related with each other.



- 3. Real Culture:
- Real culture is that which can be observed in our social life. The culture on which we act upon in our daily life is real culture. It is that parts of culture, which the people adopt in their social life, for example. If a person/ says that he/she is Muslim, will be, when followed all the principles of Islam is the real and when doesn't follow, is not a real one.

#### 4. Ideal Culture:

- The culture which is presented as a pattern to the people is called ideal culture. It is the goal of society and never achieved fully because some parts remain out of practice. This culture is explained in books, speeches etc.

4. Symbols:- It refers to an object, gesture, sound, color or design that represents something “other than itself”.

# Material Culture and Technology

- Technology itself is a material culture.
- Technology differs from culture to culture, however the purpose (to make life easier and comfortable) of technology is almost same in every society.
- The culture of using technology to make our daily life easier and comfortable is called “techno-culture” of everyday life.
- We have become habituated to using technology and our behavior is guided and human interactions shaped by material culture i.e. technology.
- For e.g. using a lawnmower to level the ground, decorating one’s body etc.

# **New Information Technology and Culture**

- The globalization of world markets has led to the introduction of information technology, most often developed in western cultures, to other societies.
- Cultural values were embedded in the design and use of these technologies.
- Often, the receiving society did not embrace the technology because of their culture.

# Cultural Universals

- Often, a comparison of one culture to another will reveal obvious differences. But all cultures share common elements.
- Cultural universals are patterns or traits that are globally common to all societies. One example of a cultural universal is the family unit:
- Every human society recognizes a family structure that regulates sexual reproduction and the care of children. Even so, how that family unit is defined and how it functions vary.
- In many Asian cultures, for example, family members from all generations commonly live together in one household.

- In these cultures, young adults will continue to live in the extended household family structure until they marry and join their spouse's household, or they may remain and raise their nuclear family within the extended family's homestead.
- In Canada, by contrast, individuals are expected to leave home and live independently for a period before forming a family unit consisting of parents and their offspring.

- Anthropologist George Murdock first recognized the existence of cultural universals while studying systems of kinship around the world.
- Murdock found that cultural universals often revolve around basic human survival, such as finding food, clothing, and shelter, or around shared human experiences, such as birth and death, or illness and healing.
- Through his research, Murdock identified other universals including language, the concept of personal names, and, interestingly, jokes.

- Humor seems to be a universal way to release tensions and create a sense of unity among people (Murdock1949).
- Sociologists consider humor necessary to human interaction because it helps individuals navigate otherwise tense situations.



# Globalization, Diffusion and Technology

- Technological globalization is accelerated in large part by technological diffusion, or the spread of technology across borders.
- In the last two decades, there has been rapid improvement in the spread of technology to peripheral and semi-peripheral nations, and a 2008 World Bank report discussed both the benefits and ongoing challenges of this diffusion.
- In general, the report found that technological progress and economic growth rates were linked, and that the rise in technological progress helped improve the situations of many living in absolute poverty (World Bank 2008).

# Globalization, Diffusion and Technology

- The report recognized that rural and low-tech products such as corn can benefit from new technological innovations, and that, conversely, technologies like mobile banking can aid those whose rural existence consists of low-tech market vending.
- In addition, technological advances in areas like mobile phones can lead to competition, lowered prices, and concurrent improvements in related areas such as mobile banking and information sharing.

- As with any improvement to human society, not everyone has equal access.
- Technology, in particular, often creates changes that lead to ever greater inequalities. In short, the gap gets wider faster. This technological stratification has led to a new focus on ensuring better access for all.

- There are two forms of technological stratification. The first is differential class-based access to technology in the form of the digital divide.
- This digital divide has led to the second form, a knowledge gap, which is, as it sounds, an ongoing and increasing gap in information for those who have less access to technology. Simply put, students in well-funded schools receive more exposure to technology than students in poorly funded schools.
- Those students with more exposure gain more proficiency, which
- makes them far more marketable in an increasingly technology-based job market and leaves our society divided into those with technological knowledge and those without.

# UNIT IV

- **SOCIAL**  
**INSTITUTIONS**  
**AND PROCESSES**

# Social Structure

- **Social structure**, in [sociology](#), the distinctive, stable arrangement of institutions whereby [human](#) beings in a society interact and live together. Social structure is often treated together with the concept of [social change](#), which deals with the forces that change the social structure and the organization of society.

- Studies of social structure attempt to explain such matters as [integration](#) and trends in inequality. In the study of these phenomena, sociologists analyze organizations, social categories (such as age groups), or rates (such as of [crime](#) or birth). Examples of social structure include [family](#), [religion](#), [law](#), [economy](#), and [class](#).

# Types of societies

- **Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft**, ideal types of social organizations that were systematically elaborated by German sociologist [Ferdinand Tönnies](#) in his influential work *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (1887; [Community and Society](#)).
- Tönnies's [conception](#) of the nature of social systems is based on his distinction between the *Gemeinschaft* (communal society) and the *Gesellschaft* (associational society). In the rural, peasant societies that typify the *Gemeinschaft*, personal relationships are defined and regulated on the basis of traditional social rules. People have simple and direct face-to-face relations with each other that are determined by *Wesenwille* ([natural will](#))—i.e., natural and spontaneously arising emotions and expressions of [sentiment](#).
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- The *Gesellschaft*, in contrast, is the creation of *Kürwille* ([rational will](#)) and is typified by modern, [cosmopolitan](#) societies with their government [bureaucracies](#) and large industrial organizations. In the *Gesellschaft*, rational self-interest and calculating conduct act to weaken the traditional bonds of family, kinship, and religion that permeate the *Gemeinschaft*'s structure. In the *Gesellschaft*, human relations are more impersonal and indirect, being rationally constructed in the interest of [efficiency](#) or other economic and political considerations.

- **Mechanical and organic solidarity**, in the theory of the French social scientist [Émile Durkheim](#) (1858–1917), the social cohesiveness of small, undifferentiated societies (mechanical) and of societies [differentiated](#) by a relatively complex [division of labour](#) (organic).
- Mechanical solidarity is the social [integration](#) of members of a society who have common values and beliefs. These common values and beliefs [constitute](#) a “collective conscience” that works internally in individual members to cause them to cooperate. Because, in Durkheim’s view, the forces causing members of society to cooperate were much like the internal energies causing the molecules to cohere in a solid, he drew upon the terminology of [physical science](#) in coining the term *mechanical solidarity*.

- In contrast to mechanical solidarity, organic solidarity is social integration that arises out of the need of individuals for one another's services. In a society characterized by organic solidarity, there is relatively greater division of labour, with individuals functioning much like the interdependent but differentiated organs of a living body. Society relies less on imposing uniform rules on everyone and more on regulating the relations between different groups and persons, often through the greater use of contracts and laws.

# Main's Status and Contract

- In his works, especially in *Ancient Law* (1861), Maine contrasted early societies in which social relations are dominated by *status* with “progressive” (complex) societies in which social relations are predominantly determined by *contract*.

- By status Maine meant **“a condition of society in which all the relations of Persons are summed up in the relations of Family”** .
- These relations are ascribed to the individual as a member of a kinship group.
- **By contract Maine meant individual obligation arising “from the free agreement of individuals.”**

# Spencer's Militant and Industrial societies

- The evolutionary progression from simple, undifferentiated homogeneity to complex, differentiated heterogeneity was exemplified, Spencer argued, by the development of society.
- He developed a theory of two types of society, **the militant and the industrial**, which corresponded to this evolutionary progression.

- **Militant societies tend to be dominated by the regulative system, whereas industrial societies are characterized by their more highly developed sustaining systems.**
- **Militant society, structured around relationships of hierarchy and obedience, was simple and undifferentiated.**
- **Industrial society, based on voluntary, contractually assumed social obligations, was complex and differentiated.**

# Culture and Civilization

- Civilization is described as a process of civilizing or say developing the state of human society, to the extent that the culture, industry, technology, government, etc. reaches the maximum level. The term 'civilization' is derived from a Latin term 'civis' which indicates 'someone who resides in a town'.
- The term 'civilization' is not confined to town; rather it talks about adopting better ways of living, and making best possible use of nature's resources, so as to satisfy the needs of the group of people. Further, it stresses on systematising society into various groups that work collectively and constantly to improve the quality of life, regarding food, education, dress, communication, transportation, and the like.



- **Key Differences Between Culture and Civilization**
- The following points are noteworthy, so far as the difference between culture and civilization is concerned:
- The term 'culture' refers to the embodiment of the manner in which we think, behave and act. On the contrary, the improved stage of human society, where members have the considerable amount of social and political organisation and development, is called Civilization.
- Our culture describes what we are, but our civilization explains what we have or what we make use of.

- Culture is an end; it has no measurement standards. As against this, civilization has precise measurement standards, because it is a means.
- The culture of a particular region can be reflected in religion, art, dance, literature, customs, morals, music, philosophy, etc. On the other hand, the civilization is exhibited in the law, administration, infrastructure, architecture, social arrangement, etc. of that area.

- Culture denote the greatest level of inner refinement, and so it is internal. Unlike, civilization which is external, i.e. it is the expression of state of the art technology, product, devices, infrastructure and so forth.
- Change in culture is observed with time, as in the old thoughts and traditions lost with the passage of time and new ones are added to it which are then transmitted from one generation to another. On the flip side, civilization is continuously advancing, i.e. the various elements of civilization like means of transportation, communication, etc. are developing day by day.

- Culture can evolve and flourish, even if the civilization does not exist. In contrast, civilization cannot grow and exist without culture.

# SAVAGE AND CIVILIZED

- A **civilization** (or **civilisation**) is any **complex society** characterized by the development of a political state, social stratification, urbanization, and symbolic systems of communication beyond natural spoken language (namely, a writing system).
- Civilizations are intimately associated with additional characteristics such as centralization, the domestication of plant and animal species (including humans), specialization of labour, culturally-ingrained ideologies of progress, monumental architecture, taxation, societal dependence upon farming, and expansionism.

- The term was inevitably pejorative, since evolutionary theory saw social development as also involving a 'civilizing' process. Thus 'savagery' was meant to convey **a condition of brutal backwardness, the very opposite of the civilized manners, morals, intellect and taste of Europe's privileged classes.**
- We see Savage as meaning humanity in its natural state, humanity in nature.

# **Political Institution**

# Meaning of Political Institution

- Every society needs some force and power to keep organized manner. This force or power controls the social behavior of its members.
- In the primitive societies, folkways, mores, norms, customs, were enough to control the social behavior. In the modern complex society, laws have implemented to check on deviant behaviors.
- In political institution, some personnel are responsible for executing such functions to control social behavior with the help of government or authority.
- It is this institution, which deals with operation of power. It also gives the power to the elected or chosen personnel.
- This shows that any institutionalized power controls the ways of thinking, feeling and behaving of the people. However, some people are ranked higher than the others to control the social behavior.



# Definition of Political Institution

- Political institution can be defined as the sets of established agreements that specify dominance of higher ranked people to the other.
- For e.g., the government, political party, judiciary etc.
- State is the most powerful political organization, which regulates the social relationship of man.
- The state controls other institutions of the society with the help of its institutions such as government and judiciary.

# Aspects of Political Institution

1. **A system of Control:** Political institution has the authority and power that helps to control its members and to provide the justice.
2. **An organization for control:** Political institution has its bureaucracy where people are ranked in a hierarchy. The members belonging to the low hierarchical order are controlled by the members of the high hierarchical order.
3. **Use of force for control:** Political Institution has power to influence the behavior of individual. The power uses the force and controls the citizen.

# **Economic Institution**

# Meaning of Economic Institution

- The father of sociology Auguste Comte states man as the social animal. Man can also be termed as the economic animal since he mostly involves in the economic activities.
- Economic activities include provision of goods and services to fulfill the wants of people.
- Sociologists believe that this economic system is one of the sub-systems of the wider society but the economist just emphasis the economic activities and seem to ignore the social activities.
- Thus it can be concluded that man has developed certain economic structure for the fulfillment of his needs. These procedures and rules, which are developed by man to gain their necessities, are known as the economic institutions.

# Definition of Economic Institution

- “Economic institutions are the activities of man in relation to food and property”. – ***Ogburn and Nimkoff***
- “Those that are engaged mainly in economic procedures, the procedures of completing and bargaining in the production, distribution and exchange of goods and services”. – ***MacIver and Page***
- These definitions of the sociologists show that economic institution is a system of rules and procedures of the economic activities.
- The economic institution in a society is as important as any other social institutions.

# Growth of Economic Institution

- Economic activities of man have been changing from time to time, and this can be the cause for the growth of social organizations. The growth can be summarized under the following sub-headings.
1. **Hunting and food gathering stage:** It includes of the direct utilization of the products of nature without any alteration brought to it. E.g., collecting fruits, collecting hunted animals and their meat.
  2. **Simple transformative economy:** It includes domesticating animals, farming, producing fire followed by cooking and using simple tools like wooden plough.
  3. **Early industrialism:** This stage includes use of machine or domestic animal, storage of good grain, division of labour, surplus production and, settled habitation etc.
  4. **Modern industrialism:** it includes arrival of industrial revolution. Man used the mechanical energy and the division of labour was highly specialized.
  5. **Post Industrial System:** it includes a high level of scientific professionalism, use of computer and advanced educational system.

# **Impact of Economic Institution on Society**

- Disintegration of joint family
- Lessen the value of arrange marriage
- Change in the condition of female
- Commercialized recreation
- Urbanization and over-population
- Emergency of new class
- Industrialization
- Emergence of new culture and civilization
- Affects on political institution

## **Aspects of Economic System**

- Economic exchange
- Division of labour
- Property

# Property

- ‘property’ refers to the whole pattern of rights and obligations with respect to the possession, use, acquisition and disposal of scarce valuable things. It is to be noted that the term ‘property’ is used both for rights and for the things in which rights are held. The context should always make it clear which reference is intended.