

Culture

Culture is an integrated pattern of human knowledge, belief, and behaviour that is both a result of and integral to the human capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeeding generations. This learned behaviour is socially transmitted, such as language, ideas, beliefs, customs, taboos, codes, tools, techniques, works of art, rituals, ceremonies, and symbols; everything in society which is socially, rather than biologically transmitted. This is also the way of life of a people, including their attitudes, values, beliefs, arts, sciences, modes of perception, and habits of thought and activity.

Culture is the primary factor affecting the way in which individuals and societies respond to the environment. It has played a crucial role in human evolution, allowing human beings to adapt the environment to their own purposes rather than depend solely on natural selection to achieve adaptive success.

Every human society has its own particular culture, or sociocultural system. Variation among cultures is attributable to such factors as differing physical habitats and resources; the range of possibilities inherent in areas such as language, ritual, and social organization; and historical phenomena such as the development of links with other cultures. An individual's attitudes, values, ideals, and beliefs are greatly influenced by the culture (or cultures) in which he or she lives. Culture change takes place as a result of ecological, socioeconomic, political, religious, or other fundamental factors affecting a society. The *cultural landscape* is the man-made landscape as an expression of the response of a culture to its natural surroundings.

The ways of behaving and the ultimate goals of society; the norms and values of a society. Sociologists stress the importance of culture in determining human behaviour; thus, the attitude of individuals may be greatly influenced by the culture.