

Culture and Anarchy

-Matthew Arnold

- **Culture and Anarchy**, major work of criticism
- Culture - “the study of perfection,”
- Arnold classified English society into the Barbarians (with their lofty spirit, serenity, and distinguished manners and their inaccessibility to ideas)
- The Philistines (the stronghold of religious nonconformity, with plenty of energy and morality but insufficient “sweetness and light”)
- The Populace (still raw and blind)

Culture:

- As described by Velkley: The term "culture," which originally meant the cultivation of the soul or mind, acquires most of its later modern meanings in the writings of the 18th-century German thinkers, who on various levels developing Rousseau's criticism of "modern liberalism and Enlightenment". Thus a contrast between "culture" and "civilization" is usually implied in these authors, even when not expressed as such.

- Two primary meanings of culture emerge from this period: culture as the folk-spirit having a unique identity, and culture as cultivation of waywardness or free individuality. The first meaning is predominant in our current use of the term "**culture**," although the second still plays a large role in what we think culture should achieve, namely the full "expression" of the unique or "authentic" self.

- A word, a concept and the most complicated term to define in English language.
- Latin: *cultura*. It had a range of meanings: inhabit, cultivate, protect, honour with worship.
- Later on the noun 'Culture' began its complicated modern history.
- Culture was a new social and intellectual movement. It was first related with 'cultivation' and 'cultivated'. The independent noun 'civilization' also emerged in its relation to 'culture'.
- Civilization or culture -- the historical self-development of humanity.

- What is civilization?
- Herder in his unfinished *Ideas on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind* (1784--9 1) he wrote of *Culture*: 'nothing is more indeterminate than this word, and nothing more deceptive than its application to all nations and periods.'

- He wrote: Men of all the quarters of the globe, who have perished over the ages, you have not lived solely to manure the earth with your ashes, so that at the end of time your posterity should be made happy by European culture. The very thought of a superior European culture is a blatant insult to the majesty of Nature.
- Culture and cultures??? cultures in the plural: the specific and variable cultures of different nations and periods, but also the specific and variable cultures of social and economic groups within a nation.

- This sense was widely developed, in the Romantic movement, as an alternative to the orthodox and dominant 'civilization. It was first used to emphasize national and traditional cultures, including the new concept of **folk-culture**. It was later used to attack what was seen as the MECHANICAL character of the new civilization then emerging: both for its abstract rationalism and for the 'inhumanity of current Industrial development.

- It was used to distinguish between 'human' and 'material' development.
- The decisive innovation is G. F. Klemms *Allgemeine Kulturgeschichte der Menschheit* -- 'General Cultural History of Mankind (1843-52)-- which traced human development from savagery through domestication to freedom.

- Culture: (i) the independent and abstract noun which describes a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development, (ii) the independent noun, whether used generally or specifically, which indicates a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general, from Herder and Klemm. But we have also to recognize (iii) the independent and abstract noun which describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity.

- **culture** is music, literature, painting and sculpture, theater and film. A **Ministry of Culture** refers to these specific activities, sometimes with the addition of philosophy, scholarship, history.
- Variations in the term
- **culture** and **cultural** and **sub-culture**

Anarchy:

- A state of society without government or law.
- Political and social disorder due to the absence of governmental control: *The death of the king was followed by a year of anarchy.*
- **Synonyms:** lawlessness, disruption, turmoil.
- Lack of obedience to an authority; insubordination: *the anarchy of his rebellious teenage years.*

- absence of government
- a state of lawlessness or political disorder due to the absence of governmental authority
- a utopian society of individuals who enjoy complete freedom without government
- absence or denial of any authority or established order
- absence of order : DISORDER
- the term "anarchy" to refer to a society without a publicly enforced government or violently enforced political authority

- When used in this sense, anarchy may or may not be intended to imply political disorder or lawlessness within a society.
- Others, including most individuals who self-identify as anarchists, use the term to imply a system of governance, mostly theoretical at a nation state level.
- There are also other forms of anarchy that attempt to avoid the use of coercion, violence, force and authority, while still producing a productive and desirable society. Anarchy is also a technical issue of economic science.

Arnold's views on Culture:

- Culture, harmonious perfection, developing all sides of humanity, developing all parts of our society; as a general perfection.
- **Hebraism and Hellenism:**
- Arnold talks about the great idea to know and the great energy to act. They should be in harmony by the light of reason. He insists on the balance of the both thought and action.

- He points out that the Greek philosophy considers that the body and its desires are an impediment to right thinking, where as Hebraism considers that the body and its desires are an obstacle to right action. The root idea of the both is the desire for reason and the will of God, and the desire of love of God. Hebraism studies the universal order and observes the magnificence of God apparent in the order.

- Hellenism follows with flexible activity. Thus Hellenism acquires spontaneity of consciousness with a clearness of mind, and Hebraism achieves a strictness of conscience with its clarity of thought. In brief, Hebraism shows stress on doing rather than knowing, and follows the will of God. Its primary idea is absolute obedience to the will of God.

- The other class is **the middle class** or the Philistines, known by its mundane wisdom, expert of industry and found busy in industrialization and commerce. Their eternal inclination is to the progress and prosperity of the country by building cities, railroads and running the great wheels of industry. They have produced the greatest mercantile navy. So, they are the Empire builders. In this material progress, the working class is with them. All the keys of progress are in their hands.

- The other class is **the working class** or the populace. This class is known raw and half-developed because of poverty and other related diseases. This class is mostly exploited by the Barbarians and Philistines. The author finds democratic arousing in this class because they are getting political consciousness and are coming out from their hiding places to assert an English man's heaven-born privilege of doing as he likes, meeting where he likes, bawling what he likes, and breaking what he likes.

- He further says that all three classes find happiness in what they like. For example, the Barbarians like honour and consideration, field sports and pleasure. The Philistines like fanaticism, business and money making and comfort and tea meeting, but the Populace class, hated by the both classes, likes shouting, hustling and smashing and beer.