



***Postindustrial 12 : The mechanisms of culture***  
*(Read this schema from left to right)*

*Because it's a living system, a society is constantly undergoing mutation. To adapt to numerous changes, a society uses its language and its culture to process the information which gives it its feel, its milieu.*

*Culture is the engine of social coherence. It resides in the collective memory of groups and reveals its identity (see above, at right). It allows us to understand our reality, and therefore modify it. For a society, its culture becomes the image that the society creates for itself. This combination of knowledge and know-how (at left, above) becomes the heritage by which the actors both understand themselves and become empowered . And because culture is built upon a system of values which belong to that society, there is by logical definition no one society which is superior to others.*

*Culture is developed by the accumulation and knitting together of a large number of signals, images and symbols (on the left, above) which serve to give sense to the information emerging from the chaos of all the human interaction in the areas of politics, economics, environmentalism, etc.*

*The culture shared between the members of a group is the key to its ongoing development. It is that sharing which enables the changes in behaviour necessary to adapt to major mutations. Ever since the emergence of the current series of parallel crises we are now witnessing, we have begun to hear, here and there: « we must change the culture of our institutions ». Soon, we will hear added to that call « .. and the culture of citizens and consumers ».*