

The a hand plough or  
the currency and



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The products of civilisation are such that they can be measured quantitatively on grounds of efficiency. We can easily say that a motor car is superior to a hand plough or the currency and the banking system are superior to the primitive barter system. But we cannot measure the cultural products. We can only assess the cultural products by our personal judgment; but we cannot measure or quantify them. If somebody were to say that the literary works of Kalidasa are better than those of Shakespeare, we cannot prove or disprove it, but we can only agree or disagree with that statement. Cultural things such as values, opinions, ideas, ideologies, morals, customs, beliefs, fashions, etc.

, are beyond measurement. Different ages and different groups have their own standards of judgements with regard to these cultural things. 2.

Civilisation is always advancing but not Culture: According to MacIver and Page, civilisation always marches on if there is no break of social continuity. It always shows a persistent already stored upward trend. Every generation adds its own achievements to the already stored up energy and intelligence. Thus every technical achievement is an improvement on the past. Once our instrument is discovered man goes on improving it. Change from mud road to tar road and then to cement concrete road, from bow and arrow to the machine gun and then to atom bomb – indicate improvement. The progress of civilisation is assured. Progress in the case of culture is not assured.

Culture is not always advancing. The height reached by Gautama Buddha, Shankaracharya and Swami Vivekananda in the field of religion and spirituality had not been reached by their followers. In the same way

Kalidasa, Bharavi and Bhasa of the Sanskrit literature still maintain their supremacy. But in the field of civilisation, what Newton or Edison discovered became the basis for further discovery. We cannot, however, say that culture is changeless.

There is development in culture though it may not always indicate progress.

3. The products of Civilisation are more easily communicated than those of Cultured: The products of civilisation are open to all. Knowledge regarding civilisation can be passed on very easily and without much effort. The work of an engineer or mechanic is not just for other engineers or mechanics. We can enjoy the products of civilisation without sharing the capacity which creates them. Millions may use radio, television, telephone, camera, etc., without understanding their techniques and mechanism.

Products of culture, on the other hand, can be communicated only between like-minded. Those who have poetic talent can alone appreciate poetry. The work of an artist is only for a man with artistic appreciation. 4. Civilisation is borrowed without loss or change but not Culture: People can borrow the products of civilisation very easily. Technical devices and plants can easily be borrowed or transferred. It will be easy for an Indian to borrow a scientific technique invented in the West, but it will be difficult for a foreigner to borrow the Indian cultural elements. Hence civilisation is far more widespread than culture.

Different group^ may make use of similar products, and yet may possess different cultures. Many of the Eastern countries have borrowed West- era technology but all of them have retained their original cultures. Though there

may be some “ cultural-borrowings” (Example: dress styles, speaking styles, fashions, fads, food habits, entertainment, etc.). They are insignificant compared to the borrowing of civilisation.

5. Civilisation is external, but Culture is internal Civilisation is external, mechanical and utilitarian in character. It caters to the external needs of man. Civilisation is a means. In a way it reflects the material wealth of mankind.

Culture is something internal. It refers to the intrinsic values. It is the expression of our modes of living and of thinking, in behaving and in acting, in art and literature, in philosophy, and religion, in morality, in recreation and enjoyment, in dance, drama and music. As philosopher Kant has pointed out, civilisation is a matter of outward behaviour whereas culture requires morality as an inward state of man. As MacIver and Page have said “ Civilisation is what we have, culture is what we are.” 6.

Finally, the products of culture reveal the nature of an individual or a social group or a nation but not the products of civilisation In the realm of culture, an artist or a poet, or a painter can express his love of beauty, his admiration for literature, his fascination towards art by means of his artistic, literary or painting works. On the other hand, an engineer cannot express his personality, his love of beauty, his likes and dislikes, his morals and values by means of his machines, discoveries or inventions.