

Question

How Islam protects dignity and respect? Discuss in the light of minority rights in Islam.

I. Introduction

Islam is a Deen which guarantees the dignity and respect of every human being. It gives man the status of best creatures, bestows man of knowledge a high position, had the angels prostrate before man, clarifies that the differences are only for identity and ensure the equality of mankind. Moreover, the rights of everyone, even the minority are well established. They have the right to life and property, religious rights, political rights, legal rights and exemption from Jihad. Islam thus protects the rights of both men and women irrespective of the caste, creed, or religion.

II. The Dignity and Respect of Mankind in Islam

Islam ensures that man gets his due respect and dignity. So much so that the subject of Quran is 'Human Being'. Islam assigns man the best status among all

creatures, it uplifts man of knowledge; moreover, humans status has been so supreme that the angels were made to prostrate before Adam (AS). The Quran clarifies that differences are for recognition only and also ensures equality of all men.

A. Islam considers Man as the Best of all Creatures

The status of man is elevated so high in Islam that his dignity and respect remain intact. Allah mentions

In the Quran,

لقد خلقنا الإنسان في أحسن تقويم

"certainly, We created man in the best form" (al Quran).

The man is thus given a status even above angels.

B. Allah Created a Man of Knowledge and Intellect

Man is the most intelligent being on Earth. Allah created man, instilling in him sense and knowledge. This is the dignity and respect Islam gives to man.

الذي علم بالقلم

"Who taught man by the pen -

علم الانسان ما لم يعلم

"Taught humanity what they knew not."

(al Quran)

C. Man is So Dignified That Angels Were Made to Prostrate Before Him

When Allah created Adam (AS),

He asked the Angels and the

Jinns to bow before Adam (AS). This

was the reason that ~~angels~~ refused

for a man was kept above all.

Allah said

واذ قلنا للملائكة اسجدوا لادم فسجدوا

"And when We said to the Angels, "

Prostrate before Adam' and they prostrated."

D. Islam Clarifies That the Differences are Solely for Identity

In a world of billions of

people, every single human being

is different. They differ in

caste, color, ~~appearance~~ and

socio-economic status. Other

religions justify some men having

superiority over others. For example, Hinduism exalts the Brahmins over other people. In Islam, however, there is no such hierarchy. As the Quran says,

يا ايها الناس انا خلقكم من ذر واثي
وجعناكم قبائل لتيانوا

"O humanity! We have created you of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other."

E. Islam Views Every Man As Equals

Islam guarantees the dignity and respect to mankind by declaring that all men are equal and nothing makes me superior except in piety.

The Prophet (PBUH) stood in Jabal al Rahmah and said in his farewell sermon:

الا لا افضل لعربي على عجمي ولا نجسي على عربي
ولا اعرابي على اسود ولا اسود على اعمر الا
بالتقوى

"No Arab has superiority over a non-Arab, and no non-Arab is superior over an Arab."

No white has superiority over a Black

and no Black has any superiority over a White, except in piety."

III. Rights of Non-Muslims in Islam

Islam provides rights to everyone including non-Muslims. They were given rights during the time of Holy Prophet (PBUH) setting a precedent for the rights of them.

A. Financial Rights : Right to Property

The minorities in an Islamic state have complete financial rights. These were given to the Christians of Najran by messenger (PBUH). The Charter mentioned that,

* The Christian tribe of Najran shall be under the protection of God and His Prophet (PBUH). Their life, property, their territory are to be guaranteed to be respected and protected. →

B. Religious Rights : Freedom of Religion

The non-muslim subjects of the Islamic state enjoy the freedom of religion. As long as they do

not disrespect the sanctity of Islam,
They can worship whatever they want.
As Allah says,

لا إكراه في الدين

"There is no compulsion in religion."

And also,

لكم دينكم ولي دين

"For you is your religion, for me is mine."

(al Quran)

C. Political Right : Right to Vote

Modern democratic nation-states
are of the view that the right
to elect a ruler is their novel
creation. Such a trend existed
1400 years ago in Medina.

For equality of minorities, Article
23 of charter of Medina says,

"The Jews of Bani Araf will be
considered a community along
with the Muslims."

Thus, by calling the Jews of
Bani Araf as a part of one
community gives the the political
rights equal to the rest.

D. Legal Rights : Equality Before Law

The non-muslims have a dignified status in the Islamic state. They are given their due rights in front of the law. This was clearly manifested in a case of Jew v/s Hazrat Ali (RA). In event of lack of evidence by Ali (RA), the judge issued a verdict in the favor of the Jew.

Moreover, the non-muslims can be tried against their religious and personal laws.

E. Exemption From Jihad

Since the non-muslims are not to fight for Islam and they pay Jizya, they are exempt to participate in Jihad. Thus, they do not have to provide military services. However, if a non-muslim wants to participate voluntarily in military, he may do so.

Add and highlight references/examples against these arguments

IV. Non-Muslims In Modern Muslim Countries

Modern countries have evolved and adapted

to many newer ways. Jizya is not taken from the non-muslims since they are inducted in military. They enjoy complete equality and freedom.

V. Rights of Minorities in Pakistan

The rights of minorities in Pakistan are constitutionally guaranteed as well. The demography of the state is such that 96.34% are Muslims and 3.66% are non-Muslims. Article 36 distinctly recognizes them as, "The state shall safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of minorities."

Add more arguments

VI. Conclusion

In conclusion, Islam safeguards the dignity and respect of all mankind. It has exalted man to a high position, given him intellect and honour and considers everyone equal. The minorities, similarly, have their rights secured. They have financial, religious, political, and legal rights. They enjoy exemptions and in modern Muslim countries they can voluntarily work in the military. All in all, they enjoy full freedom in the Islamic state.

Attempt and upload a single qs at a time for evaluation

Question

Islam introduces its own culture and civilization. What are the constituents and characteristics of Islamic culture and civilization. Describe in detail.

I. Introduction

Civilization and culture are a result of social evolution. They come into existence when man, through various trials and tribulations, accepts one form of lifestyle - the best he can do. The concept of both civilization and culture are different in West as compared to Islam. Western culture and civilization are social, economic and political. Islamic civilization is all-encompassing. It has religion, self-purification, dignity of man, rule of state law, and moral value. Islamic values are deeply inseminated in Islamic culture and civilization.

II. Defining Culture and Civilization

Culture is the pattern of behavior of a certain group. Robert Redfield defines culture as,

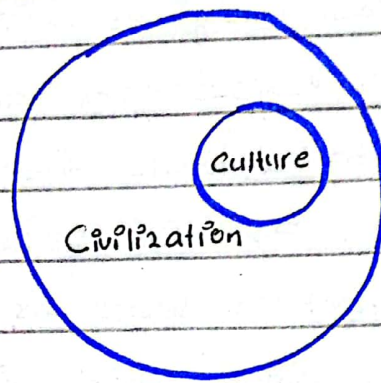
"An organized body of conventional

understanding manifested in art,
which persist through tradition."

Civilization is a broader term. Albert
Schweitzer defines it as,

"the sum of all progress made by
man's every sphere of action."

Culture is thus a part of civilization.



III. The Western Concept of Culture and Civilization

The concept of civilization can be well-explained by Will Durant's enumeration of the elements of civilization. He says, a civilization consists of:

- A. Economic Provision:** This means it must have a source of sustenance.
- B. Political organization:** It implies rule under law and government.
- C. Moral Tradition:** It means there must be values to make it morally correct.
- D. Pursuit of Knowledge and Arts:** This is

so that the civilization keeps growing and does not die.

IV. Islamic Concept of Culture and Civilization

Islamic culture and civilization is an amalgamation of all the positive aspects of Western civilization along with some additional elements.

"Never even for a single moment did Islam stand in the way of civilization and progress."

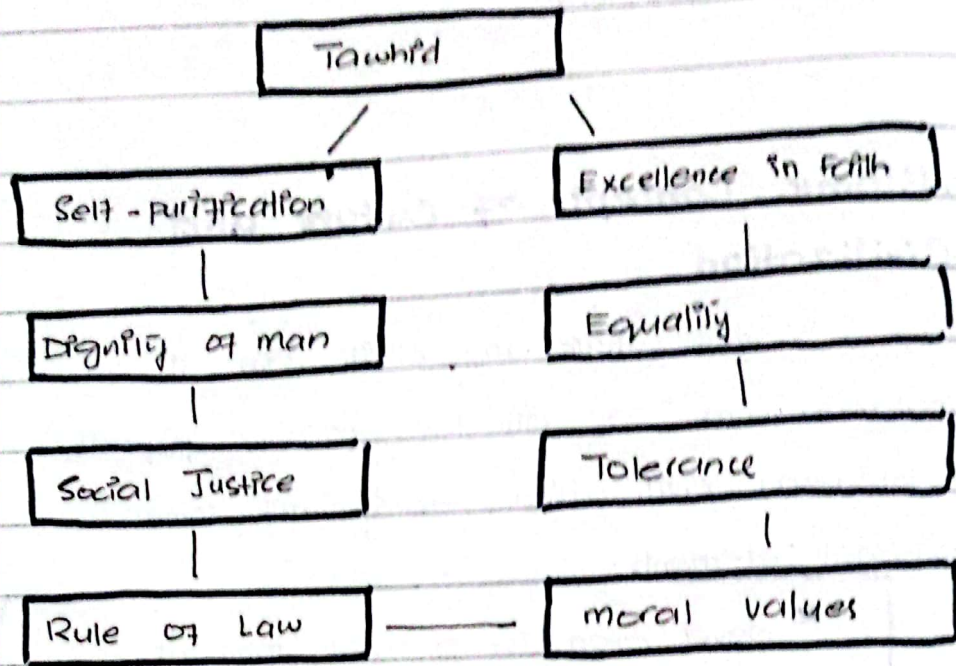
Syed Qutb • Islam: A Misunderstood Religion

contrary to the belief that Islamic civilization is regressive, it is in fact very progressive. Unlike civilizations that came and perished, Islamic system is a self-sufficient one.

V. Characteristics of Islamic Civilization and Culture

Islamic civilization is a broad network of progress and sustainability. The constituents

of Islamic civilization are as follows:



A. Tawhid: Belief in Oneness of God

Khurshid Ahmed writes,

"The starting point of Islam is this belief in the unity of God."

Tawhid sets the cornerstone of Islamic civilization. This belief has impact on all other pillars of Islamic civilization.

Unity in God → Unity in message → Unity in general aims (social justice, goodwill) → unity in humanity.

Abu Haneefa, Malik, Ash Shafei, al Kindi, Ghazali, Ibn Rushd were all

from different regions, but united under the banner of Islamic civilization.

B. Tazkiyah tul Nafs : Self purification

Another important aspect of Islamic civilization is self-purification.

meaning of Tazkiyah

Tazkiyah means the removal of impurities of the soul.

The Quran mentions Tazkiyah in the following words:

قد افلح من زكاهها - وقد فاب من دساها -

"Successful is the one who purifies his soul, and doomed is the one who corrupts it."

Amin Insan Islahi says, that the ultimate objective of religion and shariah and sending prophets is teaching tazkiyah.

C. Ihsan : Excellence in Faith

The word 'Ihsan' comes from Arabic 'ahsana' meaning doing things better.

Thus, the Holy prophet talks about Ihsan in following words:

'Verily, Allah has prescribed Ihsan in all things. Thus, if you kill, kill well; and if you slaughter, slaughter well. Let each one of you sharpen his blade and let him spare suffering to the animal he slaughters.'

(Hadith)

Ihsan is the highest level of faith as mentioned in Hadith Qudsi, the stages are:

- 1) Islam: The outward submission to Allah
- 2) Iman: Faith
- 3) Ihsan: Spiritual Excellence

D. Dignity of Mankind: An Essential of Islamic Civilization

Islam puts man at an exalted position. The dignity and respect that man receives is above any other creature. As Allah says,

وَلَقَدْ كَرَّمْنَا بَنِي آدَمَ

"Indeed, We have dignified the children of Adam."

(al-Burān)

E. Social Justice: An Important Element of Islamic Civilization

Islam advocates for fairness for every individual with respect to social, economic and other rights. Allah says,

ولا تقتلوا اولادكم خشية اطلاق

"And do not kill children for fear of poverty."

F. Tolerance: A Distinguishing Feature of Islamic System

The Islamic culture and civilization is based on tolerance for fellow Muslims and non-Muslims. Example:

the millat of Ottoman Empire and al Andalus' culture of coexistence

Tolerance is the defining characteristic of Islam.

- Tony Blair.

G. Rule of Law And Equality of mankind

The Islamic civilization keeps no reservation and privileges for anyone. When a woman committed theft and was brought before Muhammad (PBUH) for pardon, he said,

"Communities before you strayed

because when the high committed theft they were set free, and when the low committed theft the Law was imposed. By God, even if Fatima, daughter of Muhammad, committed theft, Muhammad would certainly cut her hand."

H. Moral Values in Islamic Civilization

Islam focuses on enjoining what is good and forbidding the wrong. As mentioned,

تأمرن بالمعروف وتنهون عن المنكر

"You enjoin what is good and forbid the wrong." (al Quran)

VI. Conclusion

To conclude, Islamic culture and civilization are all-encompassing entities. Being the broader system, Islamic civilization is distinguished from its features. It is based on Tawhid, purification of soul, excellence in faith, dignity of mankind, social justice, tolerance, rule of law, and moral values. Thus, it is a progressive and complete civilization with a comprehensive culture.