

what views are found in today's Muslim circles about Western Civilization? Identify and analyze them.

Outline

1) Introduction:

The views about Western world in today's Muslims circles can be divided into two broad categories. One category of Muslims is clearly in awe of the achievements of Western world. It is actively adopting Western ideals into their own lives and advocate others should do the same. The other circle of Muslims has segments that harbour distrust for the Western world. Extremist elements within this circle are quite vocal about their loathing for the West and are waging war with Western civilization.

Views of 2) Muslim Circles That Are In Awe of Western Civilization :-

The Muslims that generally have positive views about Western world hold the following opinions.

i) Are Inspired by Western Advancement in Science and Technology

This is the main area that is viewed positively by Muslims. The progress that the West had made in Science and Technology is truly inspiring. Western research culture is the best in the world and Muslims aspire to achieve such standards.

ii) Appreciation of Western Culture of Simplicity and Equality

Unlike oil-rich nations of

The Muslim world, the West has promoted a culture of simple lifestyle for its people. This simplicity is highly evident in the governmental structures in Western nations. The principle of equality and collective defence as exhibited by NATO is laudable.

iii) Appreciation and Adoption of Western Economic Model

These circles have also been very much impressed by the economic policies of the West and have been adopting them on large scale. Adoption of IMF and their Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) in the (1980s) by several Muslim countries is an ~~ex~~ example.

iv) Adoption of Western Family Norms :-

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This is evident with the fact that many Muslim nations are accepting nuclear family as the norm. Rate of late marriages and divorces is also increasing. This highlights the rise of individualism in Muslim world.

3) Views of Muslim Circles that Defy Western Influence:-

These views lie on the other end of the spectrum.

i) Economic Policies Being Seen as Neo-colonialism

In this circle, economic policies of west are seen to be new forms of colonialism. According to Harvard Economist, Robert Whittman, "Globalization has benefitted west the most". This is what Muslims believe too.

ii) Seen as Usurper of Muslim Unity

Western civilization is viewed by some as the main sabotaging force behind global Muslim unity. Allama Iqbal presents view in the following words:-

ہم وفاقہ کش کہ موت سے ڈرتا ہیں ذرا
روح محمد اس کے بدن سے نکال دو
فلکِ عرب کو دے کہ فرنگی تخیلات
اسلام کو حجاز و یمن سے نکال دو

iii) Seen as Promoter of Licentious- -ness :-

Western cultural invasion is promoting obscenity and moral depravity via its media too.

iv) Is Pushing New Muslim Generation Away from Its Roots

This is especially true for countries like Turkey where the

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new generation is growing distant from its ancestors and birth rate has fallen to dangerous level.

The government has declared period from 2026 to 2035 as the decade of the family

4) Analysis of Positive Views:-

For the vast number of Muslims that are viewing Western civilization as a role model and ideal, there is nothing wrong to get inspired from good examples but caution is required. Blind following of a civilization that has opposed Muslim world for centuries can lead to disastrous outcomes

It is good to follow ideals like unity and simplicity but when it comes to economic issues, Muslims should remember

the commendment :-

كلوا وشرابوا ولا ترفوا (Al-Ayemaf)

Eat and Drink but don't be extravagant.

5) Analysis of Cynic Views:-

A cautious attitude towards the west is valid but extremely negative views are a recipe for civilizational clash. To avoid such it is crucial for Muslims to remember the principles of peaceful co-existence.

لا تغلوا في دينكم (Al-Nisa: 171)

Exceed not the limits in your Deen.

6) Conclusion:-

Current Muslim world is a mix of people who have positive views about Western world and people who have confrontational approach. Striking a balance between these extreme viewpoints is necessary to ensure peaceful co-existence of both civilizations.