

Q Explain in detail characteristics of Islamic civilization.

Islamic Civilization

Islamic civilization is totality of spiritual, intellectual, political, economic, religious, social institutions developed under the guidance of Quran and Sunnah. It is a comprehensive way of life that harmonizes spiritual values with social organization in accordance with Divine sovereignty. The characteristics of Islamic civilization include implementation of Shariah (Islamic law), emphasis on moral integrity, social welfare, urban development and architecture, technological and material progress.

Characteristics of Islamic Civilization

1- Implementation of Shariah (Islamic law)

For instance, during the reign of Caliph Umar (R.A.) punishment of 40 lashes was imposed for drinking alcohol. as

Fig: Characteristics of Islamic Civilization

Implementation of Shariah

Focus on Social Justice

Emphasis on Islamic social order

Promoting Social Welfare

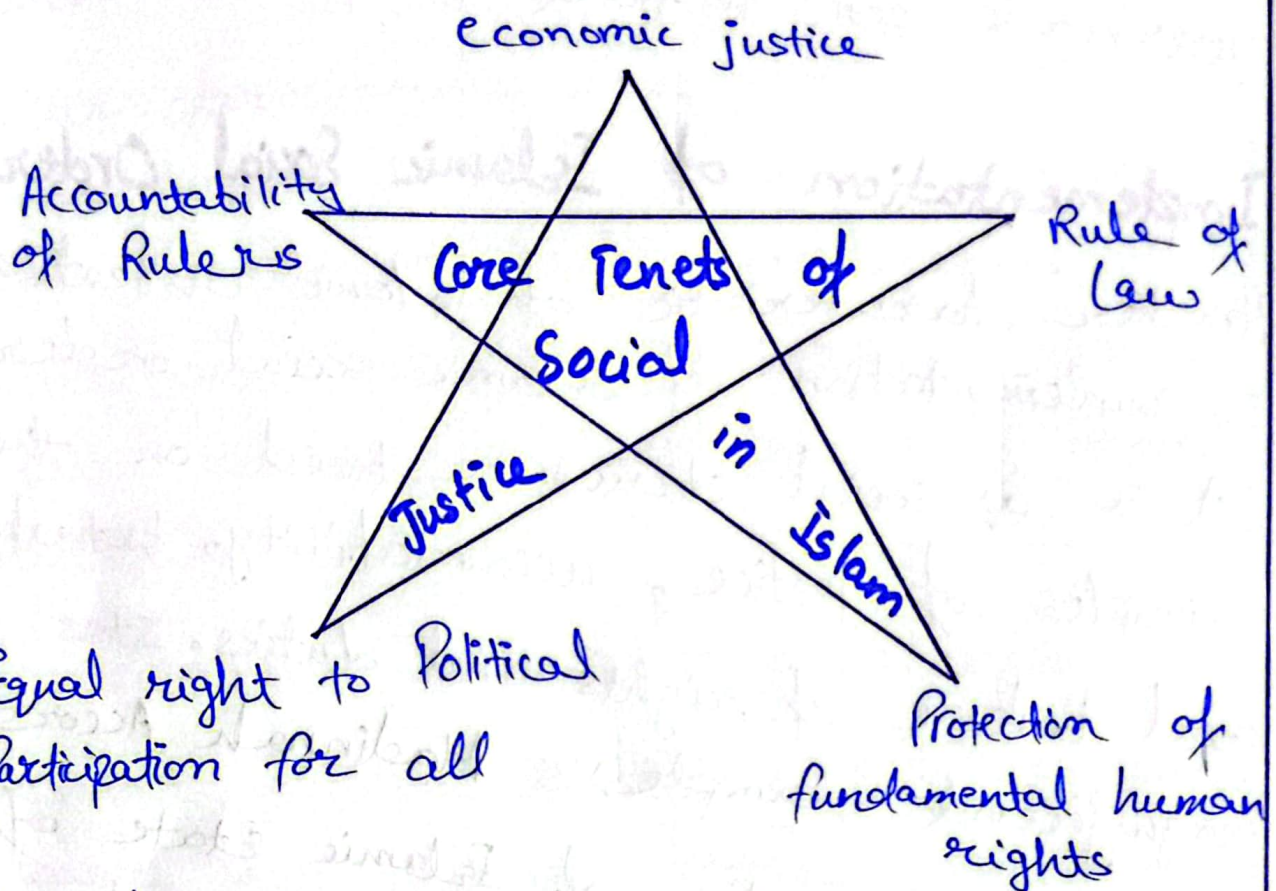
Introduction to fair economic system

Focus on Urban development and architecture

Focus on Technological and Material progress

2. Focus on Social Justice

Fig: Core Tenets of Social Justice in Islam



Example: The perfect example is Rashidun Caliphate in which everyone was given right to political participation and there was strong accountability of rulers.

Moreover, this era serves as golden standard for rule of law (core tenet of social justice). For example, when the son of Amr ibn al Aas (governor of Egypt) strike a Coptic Christian Egyptian during the reign of Caliph Umar (R.A.)

the ^{Christian} Egyptian complained to Caliph who gave him a whip and told him to strike governor's son in front of public

3. Implementation of Islamic Social Order

Another characteristic of Islamic civilization is implementation of Islamic social order.

It is a social structure based on the principles of justice, accountability, brotherhood, and balance of rights and duties. Its magnificent example is Madinnah Accord leading to formation of Islamic state of Madinnah based on above mentioned principles.

4. Promoting Social Welfare

For instance, during the reign of Caliph (Abu) Usman (R.A.), public feasts were organized in which everyone (including non-Muslim laborers) ate same high quality food as that of rulers. Moreover, stipends from public treasury (Bait al Mal) were fixed

for the poor, orphans, old and needy.

5. Introduction to Fair Economic System

Another characteristic of Islamic civilization is introduction to fair economic system which focuses on institutionalization of Zakat, and prohibition of interest and unfair economic dealings. The Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) says

“Whoever hoards is a sinner.”

Moreover, Caliph Abu Bakr (R.A.) announced to wage war against those who do not pay Zakat, thereby ensuring circulation of wealth in society.

6. Institutional Development

Islamic civilization is characterized by institutional development.

i- Education institutions: During the reign of Nizam ul Mulk Turi, Nizamiyah Madrasahs were established.

- ii- Administrative institutions: During the reign of Caliph Umar (R.A.), Diwan system (bureaucratic register system) was introduced to administer salaries of state officials.
- iii- Judicial Institutions: During the reign of Caliph Abu Bakr (R.A.), Qadi system was established to ensure rule of law.
- iv- Economic Institutions: During Abbasid Caliphate, Hisabah institution was established for market inspection.

7. Urban Development and Architecture

For instance, under Abbasid Caliphate city of Baghdad had circular architecture and incredible defence architecture (watch-towers, four main gates), and different zones were established for residential areas, administrative offices and markets.

8. Technological and Material Progress

For instance, Al-Jazari invented crankshaft; (A*) Al-Zahrawi designed 200 surgical instruments and paper mills were established in Baghdad under Abbasid Caliphate. Moreover, agricultural innovations were introduced in Muslim Spain (Al-Andalus).

9. Intellectualism

For instance, under Abbasid Caliphate House of Wisdom was established in Baghdad in which Muslims, Christians, Jews and Sabian scholars worked together.

10. Focus on Moral Integrity

Islamic civilization focused on noble morals like justice, humility, reconciliation, patience, forgiveness, and enjoining good and forbidding evil. The life of Holy

Prophet (P.B.U.H.) is practical embodiment of noble morals. Allah Almighty says in Holy Quran

“Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you will find perfect example.”
(Surah Al-Ahzab)

Concluding Thoughts

Islamic civilization is a comprehensive way of (way) life that harmonizes spiritual values with social organization in accordance with Divine sovereignty. The characteristics of Islamic civilization are implementation of Shariah, urban development and architecture, focus on moral integrity, intellectualism, technological and material progress.
