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Islamic Studies

Test-2

Question 1

Culture and civilization are important because they shape a society's identity, provide a framework for social order, and foster personal well-being through shared values, customs, and institutions. What is meant by culture and civilization? Describe the characteristics of Islam Culture.

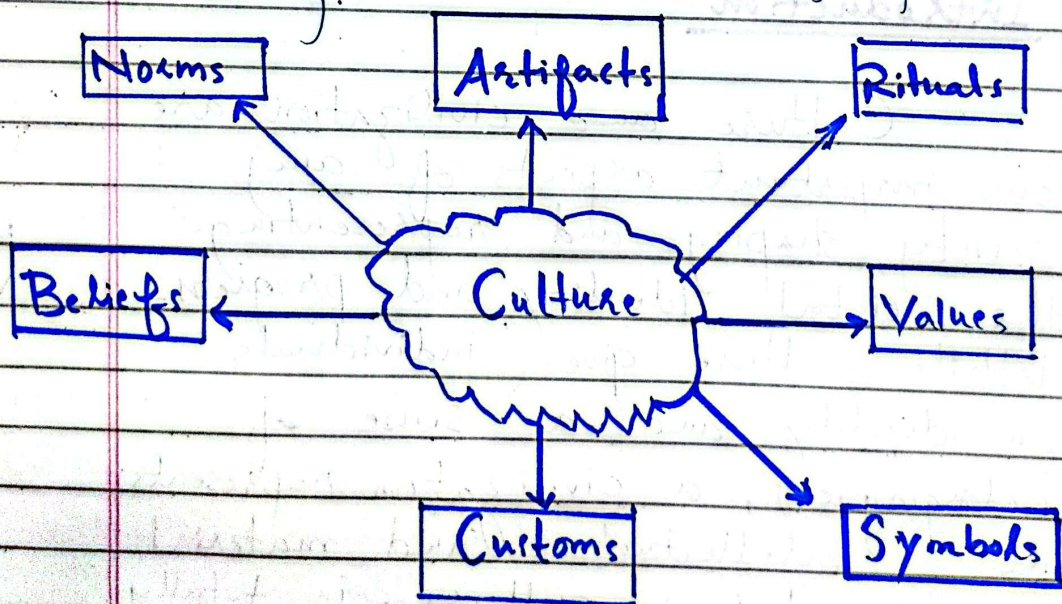
1. Introduction

Culture and civilization are two important aspects of any society shaping and representing the societal identity and progress. While culture gives individuals an identity and a sense of belongingness, a civilization represents its intellectual and material progress. Islamic culture is totally based on the principles of

Quran and Hadis. It is a comprehensive concept that covers all aspects of social life i.e. family ties to business ethics, and lifestyle. Hence, Islamic culture denotes beliefs, customs, and practices in keeping with Quran's teachings.

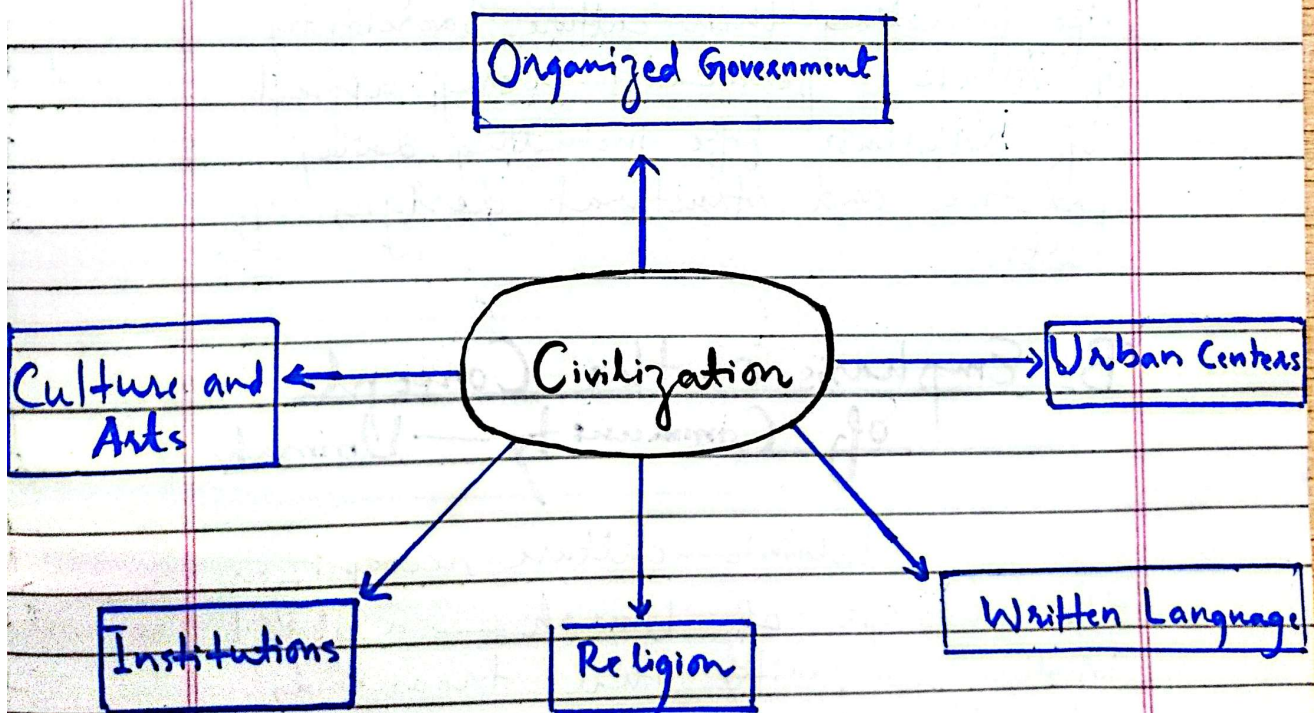
II. Defining the Concept of Culture

Culture refers to a set of beliefs, customs, values, norms, rituals, and artifacts shared by a community. Culture represents the identity of a group and gives a sense of belonging to a community. Culture is learned through experience, is not static but evolves over time. Culture is shared by a group of a society.



III. Defining the Concept of Civilization

Civilization refers to an advanced state of intellectual, material, and social development. It denotes advancement of a human society both on the spiritual and the material level such as the level of educational advancement and the technological advancement in a society. It is a more comprehensive concept and extends to institutions, religion, language, and political government in a society.



IV. Characteristics of Islamic Culture

Islamic culture has been derived from Quran and Hadis which lay down societal values and divine codes for the Muslims anywhere in the world. Islamic culture is a rich tapestry ~~were~~ woven with centuries of social movements. It is not a monolithic culture as it is based on diverse regions, languages, and ethnicities.

A. Centrality of Tawheed

Belief in the unity of Allah (Tawheed) shapes every aspect of Muslims' life including their culture. Sovereignty of Allah permeates every aspect of Muslims' life including daily practices and structural designs of arts.

B. Emphasis on the Concept of Community — Ummah

Islamic culture recognizes the concept of Ummah — a global Muslim community that transcends all cultural, linguistic and ethnic national boundaries. There are certain communal

practices that are shared by all such as fasting, Eid festivals, and Tammah prayers.

"The believers are but one brotherhood. So make peace between your brothers. And be mindful of Allah so you may be shown mercy." [Al-Quran]

C. Guidance from Quran and Sunnah

Islamic culture is dependent on guidance from the principles of Quran and Hadis which are the primary sources of guidance. They lay down the socially acceptable ways of behaving and acting. For instance, Islamic laws on diet prescribe the halal dietary principles in a Muslim society and the modest dress codes such as Hijab for women—all are derived from Quranic guidance or the teachings of Hadis.

D. Integration of Faith and Daily Life

Faith has been integrated in all aspects of life in a Muslim society. This includes business

ethics in market to dressing style and rituals.

E. Emphasis on Family and Social Structure

Islamic culture lays great emphasis on a close-knit family ties and calls for strengthening relations among families and relatives. It also requires Muslims to form stronger bonds with spouses, parents, siblings etc.

"The best of you are those who are best to their wives." [Hadis]

F. Artistic and Aesthetic Sensibility

Islamic culture celebrates beauty (Ihsan) in all forms. This can be seen in elaborate designs of mosques and the Arabic calligraphy.

G. Moral and Ethical Conduct

Islamic culture focuses on values of integrity, social justice, humility, and equity. It prescribes moral values for all aspects of life.

H. Commentary by Will Durant

Will Durant, a European historian very aptly summed up the role of Islamic culture in his comment "Thanks to the Quran and Islam, the Muslims' culture and conduct was developed. They were protected from oppression and violence and elevated to new heights."

V. Conclusion

Culture and Civilization form the backbone of a society. Culture gives identity while civilization gives structured stability and material development. Culture represents the values, norms, and customs, whereas, civilization denotes the standard of its intellectual, technological, and social advancement. When it comes to Islamic culture, it is based on the teachings of Quran and Hadis and is a comprehensive system that lays down the values, beliefs and practices for the Muslims.