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Islamic Studies (Test-2)

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Q.2

1- Introduction

Culture and civilization together shape the moral, social, and intellectual identity of a society. While culture represents the spiritual and moral fabric of life, civilization reflects material and institutional progress. Islam provides a comprehensive cultural system grounded in faith, morality, and justice, guiding humanity toward a balanced way of life.

2- Definition of Culture

According to UNESCO culture is:

"Set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs."

Culture is the way of life shared by

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a group of people, including their language, religion, customs, arts and social habits.

3- Characteristics of Culture

- 1- Learned: Culture is acquired through learning, not inherited.
- 2- Shared: It is collectively practiced by members of a community.
- 3- Based on Symbols: Language is the most significant symbolic element.
- 4- Integrated: All cultural elements are inter connected, forming a coherent system.
- 5- Dynamic: Culture evolves and adapts through interaction with other societies and changing environments.

4- Definition of Civilization

According to Oxford Dictionary, it is "the process by which a society or place reaches an advanced stage of social and cultural development and organization."

Civilization refers to an advanced state of living that includes laws, social systems, culture, social norms, among others.

5- Difference between Culture and Civilization

	Culture	Civilization
1-	Culture is ^{remains} relatively stable.	1- Civilization is always advancing and progressive.
2-	Culture cannot be borrowed.	2- Civilization can be borrowed.
3-	Culture is the end.	3- It is a means to an end.
4-	Culture ^{remains} more or less the same.	4- It is prone to constant change.
5-	Culture cannot be easily transmitted.	5- Civilization can be easily passed on to the next generation.

6- Characteristics of Islamic Culture

Islamic culture is universal and faith-based. Despite regional and linguistic diversity, all Muslims share a unified cultural identity rooted in the **Quran and Sunnah**.

a) Faith-based

Islamic culture is built upon belief upon belief in Tauheed and adherence to Shari'ah. Anything prohibited by Islam cannot become part of Islamic culture.

"Surely, the true Deen in the sight of Allah is Islam."
(Al-Quran)

b) Moralistic

Morality and ethics form the essence of Islamic culture. Islam emphasizes honesty, humility, justice, patience and compassion.

"Indeed the most beloved among you to me, ... is the best of you in character."

(Al-Hadith)

c) Balance and Moderate

Islam promotes moderation, avoiding extremes in all aspects of life.

"In the same way we made you a moderate Ummah."

(Al-Quran)

d) Human Dignity and Equality

All human beings, regardless of faith, race or color, are equal in dignity and rights.

"An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; ... (none have superiority over another) except

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by piety and good action."
(Al-Quran)

Q) Promotion of Good and Prevention of Evil
Muslims are commanded to promote good and forbid evil.

"You are the best Ummah
ever raised for mankind.

You bid the fair and
forbid the unfair, and
you believe in Allah."

(Al-Quran)

7- Conclusion

Culture and civilization together form the backbone of a society's identity, while civilization ensures material advancement, culture preserves moral and spiritual values. Islamic culture, being faith-based and morally grounded, provides a balanced framework for personal growth, social harmony, and universal brotherhood.



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Status of Mankind in Islam

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Introduction

Philosophically and religiously, Islam

places mankind in a unique position among all creations. Humans are blessed with reason, free will, and moral consciousness, making them capable of reflection, accountability, and spiritual elevation. The Quran declares humankind as **Ashraf-ul-Makhloqat** (the most superior creation) and **Khalifah** (vicegerent) of Allah on earth. Islam, therefore, grants every individual dignity, honors rights, and responsibilities within a divine framework of justice and morality.

1- The Most Superior Creation (Ashraf ul-Makhloqat)

Humans are distinguished above all other creations by intellect, conscience, and moral choice, granting them inherent honor and value.

"We have honored the Children of Adam, and greatly favored them over many of those we created."

(Al-Quran)

2- Created in the Best Form

The physical, intellectual, and spiritual perfection of human creation reflects divine craftsmanship and purpose:

"We created man in the

best design." (Al-Quran)

3. Man as Allah's Vicegerent

Allah appointed humans as His representatives on earth, entrusting them with the task of stewardship and justice.

"I am going to place a successive (human) authority on earth."

(Al-Quran)

4. Endowed with Knowledge

Knowledge and intellect are divine gifts that elevate humans above other creations. They enable understanding, reflection, and moral reasoning.

"And He taught Adam the names, all of them, then presented before the angels..."

(Al-Quran)

5. Subject of Divine Reverence

The command to angels to prostrate before Adam symbolizes man's distinguished spiritual position and Allah's recognition of human potential and nobility.

"And when We said to the angels, "Prostrate before Adam" so they all did, but not Iblis, who refused and acted arrogantly, becoming unfaithful." (Al-Quran)

6- Granted Free Will and Moral Responsibility

Humans are free to choose their path but are accountable before Allah for their moral choices.

"Whoever wills, let them believe, and whoever wills, let them disbelieve."

(Al-Quran)

7- Divine Purpose of Creation

The ultimate purpose of mankind is the recognition and worship of Allah, leading to spiritual fulfillment.

"I did not create the jinn and the humans except for the purpose that they should worship Me."

(Al-Quran)

8- Every Other Creation is Subjected For Humans

Allah has subjected the universe for human benefit, emphasizing mankind's privileged position.

"It is Allah who created the heavens and the earth,..... And He ^{has} granted you all that you asked Him for."

(Al-Quran)

9- True Source of Dignity - Piety

Despite all superiority, the real honor

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of man lies in his piety and righteousness.

"Surely the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you." (Al-Quran)

II - Conclusion

In Islam, mankind is a unique creation - honored, responsible, and spiritually capable. Man's excellence stems from his knowledge, reason, and obedience to Allah. As Khalifah, he is tasked to uphold justice, protect life, and live in harmony with divine law. His power and dignity in the sight of Allah is not by power or intellect, but by Taqwa.