

Islam and the West



What is meant by civilisation?

- Civilisation is the sum total of common beliefs, common thinking, common habits, ways of living, architectural heritage and culture of a people living in a specific region in a specific period of time. A particular civilisation can be defined by reading the culture, character and personality of individual, literature, philosophies, religions, political system, economic conditions, social order, standards of morality and several other similar factors of the people sharing a common territory in a particular age.

History of the Western or European Civilisation

- The term European civilisation or Western civilisation has come to apply to countries whose history is strongly marked by European immigration, such as the countries of the Americas and Australasia, and is not restricted to the continent of Europe.
- Historical records of Western civilisation begin with Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. After the Roman Emperor Constantine-I became the first emperor to embrace Christianity in the 4th century, Christianity was made the state religion leading to a marked impact of Christianity on the European civilisation.

Christianity vs Islam

- The period from the 4th century to the 14th century is marked by the dominance of Christianity, sectarian wars among the Christian sects and the rise of Catholicism.
- Islam came into the world in 610 CE when Muhammad bin Abdullah from Arabian peninsula proclaimed prophethood inviting opposition from the dominant Roman/Christian empire of the time.
- Islam survived the challenge inflicting heavy blows to the Christian world order becoming the perennial/eternal adversary of the European civilisation. The crusades organised by the Catholic Church in the 11th and 12th centuries also failed to dismantle the Islamic civilisation and dominance in the world.

The European Renaissance

- In the late medieval ages the religious order/orthodox church was alleged to be impure, immoral, illogical, unscientific, incorrect, oppressive and power hungry.
- The European Renaissance in the 15th century diminished the value of the church, and in turn religion, alleging it of being a ploy of the religious clerics to keep their dominance and importance in the world. Many things mentioned in the Bible were rejected by the scientific discoveries and inventions. It put a question mark on the authenticity of the Bible, and hence, every such book.

Modern European Civilisation

- The modern Western civilisation is based on the concept that man has become mature enough to judge the right from the wrong and now he does not need “*any supernatural source of knowledge and guidance*” to deal with the day-to-day affairs of fast changing life. Now he does not depend on fabricated concepts of “*holy scriptures*” which he had created in his age of unawareness and ignorance.
- The European People made human REASON the standard of justification for everything and consider that the source of knowledge is their experience, observation and logic. They have discarded DOGMAS of every religion.

Modern European Civilisation

- Regarding the laws or principles of morality the Western civilisation believes that the standards of morality are variable as they are the convergence of opinions of a particular group and they are relative.
- The western civilisation does not believe in the the Day of Judgement and the life Hereafter, and hence for them the life of this world is the ultimate end in itself.

Modern European Civilisation

- The modern man of Europe does not believe in the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ. Even the religious minded people do not accept Muhammad as the prophet of God. Though in rank the belief in One God comes first, yet in order, the belief in the prophethood of Muhammad ﷺ comes first as belief in him leads believer to other beliefs. Since the man of the West does not believe in him, the whole message of Islam is unacceptable to him.

Main Pillars of Western Civilisation

- Making human reason their torch bearer, the modern day Western civilisation boasts of democracy, education, science and technology, human rights, freedom of people, women's emancipation and empowerment, economic excellence by means of free trade economy, and the rule of law.
- Religion, according to the Western civilisation is something to be allowed in private life "only".

The Origin of Conflict

- Whereas the Western civilisation asserts that religion is an obsolete idea and should only be practised in private life, Islam being a complete code of life envisions a society in which Islam is the guiding principle of collective as well as individual life. For a Muslim, faith is everything: he believes in God and the Day of Judgement and he believes that he has to live his life according to the laws and principles given to him by Allah. Hence, it is but natural that the people having the same ideology will like to live together in the form of a society that will be dyed in the colour of Islamic ideology.

Clash of civilisations

- The Islamic way of life, culture, rituals and festivals, system of collective prayers, morality system, economic system, judicial system, social norms et cetera are way apart from the Western civilisation.
- So, establish your own state and live in its Islamic society! What's wrong in it?

Dar-al-Islam and Dar-al-Kufr

- In the previous centuries the world was divided in distinctly marked regions or countries belonging to Dar-al-Islam and Dar-al-Kufr.
- However, the old concept of Dar-al-Islam and Dar-al-Kufr have become obsolete now owing to the mass immigration of Muslims from the Muslim countries into the Western world, and globalisation owing to rapid means of communication.

The geneeses of the clash of civilisations

- Initially the Muslims migrated from their own countries to the European countries and got their citizenship. These initial people did not pose any threat to the western civilisation, political order, culture, norms and lifestyle. Those people followed the law of the land and did not disturb the order of the day. However, their next two generations have been born and bred in the host countries which they claim to be theirs. These two generations have increased the Muslim population in the European countries to a prominent size and now the Muslims have been claiming their seats in their senates and national assemblies. Some have grabbed mayorships of key cities like London and Montreal.

Muslim Population in major European cities

City	Country	Muslim Population
Morseille	France	20%
Roubaix	France	20%
Leicester	UK	18.5%
Malmo	Sweden	18%
Manchester	Uk	15.8%
Birmingham	UK	15%
Amsterdam	Netherlands	14%
Rotterdam	Netherlands	13.3%
Cologn	Germany	12%
Frankfurt	Germany	12%
London	UK	10%
Paris	France	10%

Muslim Population statistics

- The current Muslim population in Europe is around 3 %. However, by 2030 it is expected to be around 10 % in France and around 8 % in European Union.

Impact of the Global War on Terror

- Though a vast majority of the Muslims living in Europe were not practising believers, the global war on terror which maligned the Muslim faith and identified terrorism with Islam caused the Muslims, especially those belonging to the 2nd and 3rd generation of the immigrants, to become possessive and defensive against their religion.

Islamophobia: is it the manifestation of the clash?

- The Western societies which had overthrown the yoke of religion and rendered it obsolete considering it conservative, unscientific, incorrect, illogical and unwanted; are now apprehensive of Islam as it once again threatens their modernism. The conditions in the backward Muslim countries and the instances of ignorance exhibited by the uneducated people in Muslim countries terrify the Western societies about Islam. They do not want to let an orthodox religion—which according to them is not compatible with the modern world—dominate their societies. Hence the most prudish and sensitive people of those societies have started retaliating against the Muslims. The waves of Islamophobia have swept country after country.

Measures to be taken

The denial of the very existence of Islamophobia/anti-Muslim racism/anti-Muslim hate crime in Europe by many demonstrates the need for an appropriate effort and political will to tackle this normalised racism and its manifestations that are deeply entrenched in European societies, institutions, and states.

- Use of social media be regulated to discourage trends based on hatred towards Muslims in the name of freedom of speech. Free speech should have limitations.

More Measures

- The Muslims living in Europe and other Western states have become protective about their religion. They have started thinking seriously about their religion, getting its proper education, and practise it in their life.
- They have started organising themselves as a community which is a step in the right direction.
- They have started establishing institutions of public welfare, education, community get-togethers and prayers; and are conducting conferences and seminars, media debates, corner meetings, political campaigns for Muslim candidates etc.

- The Muslims must also engage the religious scholars in interfaith dialogues to lessen tensions between religions.
- They should take active part in politics as Muslim vote-bank is considered a substantial factor in all types of elections.
- The Muslims should try to exert political influence for the annulment of laws banning Muslim women's burqa, headscarf and veil in France, Belgium, Germany, Austria and Denmark.
- The Muslims should contest such xenophobic laws in the European High Court.

- The Muslims living in the backward countries should get education to improve their understanding about the modern world.
- The Muslim states should improve the state of human rights under their jurisdiction.
- The Muslim terrorists who are the greatest cause of maligning the image of Islam and posing threat to the peaceful world are, first and foremost, the duty of the Muslim world to be handled
- Counter-terrorism policymakers should work with Muslim communities, not against them, in the so-called “de-radicalisation” programs.

- The European governments should be asked to work sincerely to eliminate discrimination against Muslims' at workplaces, institutions, organisations and public places.
- The European Parliament should adopt a resolution on combatting Islamophobia with concrete policy recommendations and ways forward – as it did to combat anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsism.
- EU member states should adopt national action plans against racism addressing Islamophobia as a specific form of racism.