

**HUM 101: WORLD CIVILIZATIONS AND CULTURES**

Weekly Worksheet #6 (on Session 15 and 16)

Spring 2022

**Part 1-**

1. **Multiple Choice:**
2. *Dar al-Islam* can be best expressed as:
3. Muslim Ummah; (b) Rashidun Caliphate; (c) Dome of the Rock; (d) House of Islamic intellectuals; (e) House of Islam.

**ANS:** (e) House of Islam

1. Umayyads ruled Damascus till 750 AD as was thrown by which of the following clan?

(a). Seljuks; (b) Jews of Yathrib; (c) Abbasids; (d) Kharijites; (e) None of the mentioned points

**ANS:** (c) Abbasids

1. Early legal Islamic scholars placed which of the following groups at the heart of Islam:
2. Kings; (b) Worriers; (c) Military personals; (d) Ulamas; (e) Shia Imams.

**ANS:** (d) Ulamas

1. Ibn Sina was known as in the West as?
2. Avicenna; (b) Averroes; (c) Al-Kindi; (c) Musā Khwārazmi; (d)Taftazani; (e) Jami.

**ANS:** (a) Avicenna

1. **True/False:**
2. Islam crossed the Sahara and entered Africa carried by the Ulamas: **FALSE**
3. The Umayyads moved the core of Islam away from Arabia. **FALSE**
4. **Definitions/Identifications (1 or 2 sentences):**
5. Bayt al Hikmah:

**ANS:** Bayt-al-Hikmah is known as The House of Wisdom. It is also known as the Grand Library of Baghdad.

1. The Fatimids:

**ANS:** The Fatimids, a dynasty of Arab origin, trace their ancestry to Muhammad's daughter Fatima and her husband 'Ali b. Abi Talib, the first Shi'ite imam.

1. Safavid Empire:

**ANS:** Safavid Empire is one of Iran's most significant ruling dynasties reigning from 1501 to 1736.

**Part 2**

1. **Please answer ONE of the following questions in your own words.** (350-500 words)
2. Explain a couple of reasons why the Umayyads were facing oppositions from several quarters of Islamic cultures?
3. Why do you think Caliph Al-Ma’mun supported the Mu’tazilites and favor those Islamic school of thoughts who opposed to “literal-mindedness” attitude of the Ulamas?
4. Explain this paragraph,

In general, the *Quran* was followed on sexual and other matters when it was not too inconvenient or repugnant to men or the patriarchal family to do so, and not followed when it was. The divergences went mostly in the direction of reviving and reinforcing patriarchal tribal customs as in rules of inheritance, or else in adoption customs from the Byzantines and Persians, such as veiling and seclusion, and reading those customs back into the *Quran* (Black, *The History of Islamic Political Thought* 155)

1. Critically explain in what ways was the Ottoman legal system a mixture of both Islamic Sharia law and Ottoman *Kanun* or *Kanuni Osmani*.
2. What, according to your understanding, are some of the main causes behind the major sectarian divide in Islam, commonly referred to as the Shia-Sunni divide?

# Answer to the question no: 02

Abdullah Al-Ma’mun (786-833) was the seventh caliph of the Abbasid dynasty. He was one of the greatest patrons of philosophy and science in the history of Islam. According to Islamic Scholars, Caliph Al-Ma’mun was a Shia Muslim. He established the Bayt-al-Hikmah, which is known as The House of Wisdom and also known as the Grand Library of Baghdad. He supported the Mu’tazilites and favor those Islamic school of thoughts who opposed to “literal-mindedness” attitude of the Ulamas.

The Mu’tazilites were a group that was active in the 8th and 10th centuries AD. Their ideas lasted and had deep impact on the Shia’s theology. According to them, “Humans must have total free will as God, who is perfectly wise and good, cannot cause evil, yet evil exists”. Mu'tazilites believed that humans naturally do not follow law and are bound to do bad if there is no presence of a sovereign. This belief would naturally produce an impression to the general mass about the importance of Caliphate in a society. In Mu'tazilite’s principle, social and political value was justice. So there had to be someone to take care of the justice (as a Legislator) and a coercive ruler.

The views of the Mu’tazilites perfectly aligned with the view of Caliph Al-Ma’mun. Besides, the Mu’tazilites also valued the importance of knowledge and science in their theology. That’s why, Caliph Al-Ma’mun supported the Mu’tzilites. The Mu’tazilites also accepted him on the role of a Caliph they believe in. Combining each other’s view, they developed a unique system of thought.

Moreover, Caliph Al-Ma’mun favored the Islamic school of thoughts. He promoted them because of their belief of independent deputyship. As through the teachings of these schools and intellectuals he would be able to solidify his authority as a Caliph.

However, the Ulamas were against the doctrine Mu'tazilites and the school of thoughts. The Ulamas had a view called literal-mindedness. This concept means to understand words and statements in the most basic way without having much imagination. The Ulamas also denied the authority of deputyship. All these were continuously opposing Caliph Al-Ma’mun’s view of order. As a result, Caliph Al-Ma’mun united with the Mu’tazilites and the school of thoughts to prevent the Ulamas to spread their view. By this way, Caliph Al-Ma’mun was able to get rid of the opposing reporters as well as building strong command over his Caliphate.