

**Convergence Strategies in the Islamic World
(With Emphasis on the Role of I.R. Iran)**

Document Type: Case- Study

Alireza Naderi*

Received: 2023/06/31

Sayyed Yahya Rahim Safavi**

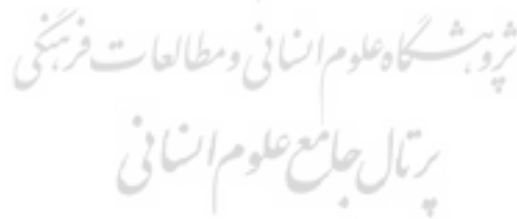
Accepted: 2023/08/22

Abstract

The approach of convergence in the Islamic world as a prelude and path for Islamic countries to become a new pole of power in the world has been proposed and discussed for a long time among the thinkers and elites of Islamic countries. In this regard, various perspectives and strategies have been presented to achieve this geopolitical goal. Considering Iran's special geopolitical position as the gateway to the heartland of the world and the prospect of becoming a trans-regional power, the authors sought to describe the factors of this convergence and then provide an analysis of different strategies to achieve convergence in the Islamic world with Iran as its pivot. For this purpose, in this research by using a descriptive and analytical method, the five factors of convergence categorized by document collection, and then the strategies to achieve convergence have been mentioned with emphasis on the special capacity of the Islamic Republic to build civilization and play a role in future scenarios.

Keywords:

Islamic world, OIC, convergence, Iran, Futures studies.



* PhD candidate of regional studies, Imam Hossein University, Tehran, Iran

Alireza1993naderi@chmail.ir

** Professor, Political Geography, Imam Hossein University, Tehran, Iran

Info.iiwfs@gmail.com

Introduction

The political view on the issue of unity among Muslims, which has the clear position of the Holy Qur'an as a religious and divine basis in the background, has created a geopolitical approach in the Islamic world under the title of convergence. Since the Holy Qur'an emphasizes on maintaining the unity of Muslims and avoiding division, it is up to religious and political thinkers to design and compile the path and tools of maintaining this unity, which is called "convergence in the Islamic world" in this research. The path of convergence passes through factors and fields that also require the adoption of strategies; that we intend to present in this research to reach the goal. For this purpose, in the first part, by defining the concepts related to convergence and the ideas raised in this field, we express the selected theory of transnationalism. In the second part of the research, we will discuss the five factors of convergence and then the statistics of convergence strategies in the Islamic world with Iran as the focus.

problem posing: To reach a pole of global power and a new order in West Asia, the Islamic world needs to follow a path through factors and strategies that make it possible to achieve the desired; For this purpose, there is a need for a road map and a clear mechanism, and the identification of factors and strategies is a prerequisite for providing such guidance. Since the Islamic revolution of Iran as an emerging regional power is a claimant for the formation of the world government of Islam, identifying these strategies centered on Iran is a question that the current research is trying to answer.

Necessity and goals: The Holy Qur'an in various verses such as "And hold firmly to the rope of Allāh all together and do not become divided"(the holy Quran, Sura Āl-'Imrān:Verse.103) and "And indeed this, your religion, is one religion, and I am your Lord, so fear Me(the holy Quran, Sura Al-Mu'minūn:verse 52)" emphasized on the preservation of unity and avoiding division. (Bangash, 2015:p.83). In addition, Islamic states' possession of energy resources, especially oil and gas, the existence of important international straits and waterways such as the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal, the Bosphorus, and the Dardanelles, and their unique geographical location, are tools that can exert pressure on hostile countries in the field of cooperation between Islamic parties more than before. The existence of nearly one billion and six hundred million Muslims in at least 50 countries has created a wide consumer market that can provide economic cooperation between governments and provide for each other's needs, which brings Islamic societies closer to each other. Benefiting from the capabilities of the era of communication and social networks can lead to the increasing unity of the Islamic nation and the public opinion of Muslims in the face of

the challenges facing Muslims, such as how to deal with the brutal policies of the Zionist regime in occupying Palestine; and adopt a unified approach about it. "The cause of the liberation of Palestine" that A new spirit was breathed into it with the Al-Aqsa storm, presented an opportunity to raise the awareness of these communities against the developments of The Islamic world and the international community.

In the past century, the Islamic world has seen many times the formation of international working groups consisting of all or some members, whose purpose has been to improve relations between governments, draw a common future with similar interests, and adopt united positions against challenges. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Arab League are two examples of such organizations, unfortunately, the realization of their goals has remained incomplete after years. With the real realization of convergence between Islamic countries, which requires practical cooperation in the political, economic, cultural, security, etc. fields, a day will come when the movement towards the formation of the Islamic Union will be felt as a strategic necessity by all countries. The primary result of such an event will undoubtedly be the liberation of Al-Quds and the elimination of the Zionist regime. The realization and continuation of such a solution will lead to the establishment of peace, justice, progress, and stable security at the regional and international levels for the Islamic Ummah (Safavi, 2013). In such a geopolitical environment, identifying the factors, strategies, and opportunities to determine a principled mechanism and a clear vision of convergence in the Islamic world centered on Iran is an important necessity, because Iran with the encirclement of the heartland belt on the one hand and access to open waters on the other It has the best communication and strategic position both to threaten the heartland and to defend it (Mottaghi, 2012: p.30).

Research background: The study history of the subject in the political Islamic thought journal shows there are two published articles: Gohari Moqaddam & Esmaeili (2016) in *The Integration of the Muslim World and Revival of Islamic Civilization* addressed the issue of sovereignty in Islamic political thought and raising the concept of Islamic Ummah as an important pillar of power in the future world. Esmaeili (2022) in *Sectarianism, Hybrid War and Rebuilding New CENTO; Finding a Transnational Initiative for Revival of Muslim Ummah* By examining the various dimensions of the Cento Pact and its various challenges, it proposes to update it in order to create unity between the Islamic Ummah against the hybrid war of the West.

General History of research can be categorized in two sections: The first category of research based on classical theoretical foundations: Poor Ahmadi and Piroozi (2018) in "*Explaining the Modern Islamic Discourse in International Relations with an Emphasis on the Concept of Convergence*" comparing the Islamic discourse with the conventional theories of convergence in international relations, concludes that the modern Islamic discourse with the approach of benefiting from global opportunities as hopes for applying openness, instead of inefficient confrontation, while protecting the semantic space, it pays attention to building efficient mixed identities. Safavi (2008) in "*The Unity of the Islamic World, Future Perspective*" by looking at the factors and areas of convergence in the Islamic world, has emphasized the need to create scenarios and provide strategies based on a favorable perspective in this field.

Sajjadi (2004) in "*Globalization and the Islamic World: Opportunities and Threats*" introduced globalization as having a liberal nature and as a threat to the unity of the Islamic world and introduced regionalism as its replacement.

Chegnizadeh (2013) in "*Iran, the Islamic World and the Change in the Geometry of International Power*" discusses the philosophical capabilities of Iranian and Islamic culture in the process of changing the geometry of international power during the transition of power and the degree of acceptance of other nations in line with the evolution of the idea of Islamic government. then concludes that the foundation of creating the will to change in global relations is the expansion of brotherhood policies on the Islamic regional basis.

Aghaei and Hosseini (2013) in "*A Perspective on the Geopolitics of the Islamic World in the Global Power Game; Challenges and Opportunities*" emphasize the geopolitical power and capacities of the Islamic Republic of Iran answer the question that the geopolitics of the Islamic world, with its high economic, military, strategic and ideological capabilities, can compete among other great powers on the way to achieving the position of global leadership.

The second category of research based on religious foundations: Eyvazi (2007) In "*Political Challenges of the Islamic World and the Future of Iran*" listed the challenges facing the Islamic Republic to build a civilization in the mirror of the unity of the Islamic world and the costs of these differences for Islamic countries.

Hadi (2011) in "*Unity from the Perspective of the Qur'an and the Sunnah*", has presented the principles of unification and the areas of convergence between different Islamic religions and thoughts from the Qur'anic and hadith sources.

Hakim (2019) in the book "*Islamic Unity from the Perspective of the Qur'an and Itrat*", looking at the issue of civilization and its challenges, explained the principles and principles of the convergence of religions and Islamic unity from the perspective of the Qur'an and Itrat.

Such theoretical research has each dealt with the opportunities and areas of unity and convergence in the Islamic world, which is considered a strong point for the current research in terms of theoretical studies, but the weakness in providing specialized strategies is evident, although in some cases general strategies have been presented in this regard. Therefore, the innovation of this research is paying attention to Iran's special position and providing convergence strategies in the Islamic world centered on the Islamic Republic.

1. Conceptual literature

1-1. Islamic world: The concept of the world of Islam has been defined by different criteria and discussed from different aspects according to its application in various research; Indicators such as the percentage of the population, the date of application of this concept, and cultural criteria and shares (Raja, 2013:p.32). In this research, we consider the 57 member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) as the "Islamic World". These countries include large parts of the two continents of Asia and Africa and small parts of Europe and America. The entire Islamic world with an area of more than 31 million square kilometers covers about 22% of the land area of the earth.

1-2. Unity: is a synonym of alliance, which in the word means unity and oneness (Farahidi, 1414Ah: p.142). In the Arabic language, unity is considered to mean becoming one: "*Al-Wahda fi al-Ma'ani al-Tawhid*" (Ibn Manzoor, 1412Ah:p.449). The concept of unity considered in this research means putting aside differences and emphasizing commonalities to progress and reach prosperity. As Amir al-Mu'minin (peace be upon him) in the 192nd sermon, the honor and glory of the previous nations depend on unity and unity as the factor of victory (Jamali, 2000:p.142). This unity in the Islamic Ummah is achieved by trying to correctly recognize the Muslim sects from each other, which evokes the concept of "Islamic unity".

1-3. Convergence: in the culture of political science is called a process in which societies ignore the will and power of independent guidance of their

major and fundamental policies and try to reach joint and coordinated decisions and transfer decision-making to central institutions. The study of convergence, with the publication of David Mitrani's work, in the middle of the two world wars, was one of the topics of interest to international relations researchers for a long time, and it is still of great importance. integration relies on convergence means the existence of similar characteristics among cultural, racial, and similar groups in different places without previous connection with each other(Dougherty, & Pfaltzgraff 1997:p.10). From this point of view, the convergence between countries and governments is not caused by predestination and emergency but is the product of similar characteristics and a homogeneous will to join based on those characteristics.

2. Theoretical foundations and convergence factors

The theory of transnationalism is one of the liberal interpretations of convergence in the field of evolving international relations. Transnationalism, unlike the traditional view of international relations, which considers governments to be the main actors in the international arena, emphasizes relationships beyond the relationships of governments and between actors other than governments, which also affect government actors and the relationships between them. One of the first works in international relations that emphasized the formation of fundamental changes in the international system through changes in actors and their relative importance and processes of international relations, was the first joint book by Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye entitled *Transnational Relations and World Politics*. In this book, the editors and most of the authors emphasize the importance of non-state actors such as multinational companies and the relations between them at the transnational level, the role of revolutionary groups, the importance of economic relations in global interactions, and the evolution of the world (Moshirzadeh,2009:p.107).

This perception was a challenge against one of the main assumptions of the field of international relations, namely the exclusive activism of governments and their control over world politics, the main argument of this book was that governments lose their control over events more or less. It is true that governments still maintain their legal sovereignty, but they lose their autonomy, and different actors in different subject areas are clustered in different ways and are related to each other and governments (Moshirzadeh. 2008: p.108). In the theory of transnationalism, 5 elements are discussed to create convergence between countries(Nye & Keohane,1971:p.330):

- Attitudinal changes
- Advancing international pluralism

- Creating interdependence
- Creating new influencing tools
 - The emergence of new autonomous and quasi-autonomous activists in global politics

In the meantime, the convergence among nations passes through factors that can be summarized in 4 cases:

2.1. Religious and cultural factors:

Disagreement and division among any people, nation, or society leads to the domination of foreigners over that society and nation. Throughout the history of human life, people with every idea and ritual, in case of unity and coordination, have been able to realize their goals and hopes, as Ali bin Abi Talib, peace be upon him, in Sermon 25 of Nahj-al-balagha replayed to his companions when they heard the news of Basr bin Artaa's domination over Yemen: "And this, and God, I think that these people are more powerful than you because they have unity against their falsehood and you are divided in defending the truth" (Imam Ali,2006:p.48).

2.2. political factors:

An important factor that adds to the political aspects of convergence is the sense of common danger. Today, national security is beyond national borders, because with the advent of the revolution, the communication of the small global village has become closer to the border of reality. The risk of air pollution, population growth, etc., are all issues that increase the need for global cooperation. But still, issues such as nation-state, racial, ethnic, and ideological issues cause the formation of hostilities and lead to war and conflict. In the last half-century, although we have witnessed various political convergences at the international level, we are also witnessing regional and global conflicts and crises. The important point is that in addition to political convergence, convergence in other dimensions, including a common position against Israel in international communities, securing the interests of Islamic countries by supporting each other in international communities, etc., can bring political units closer to each other. (Safavi, 2010:11,p.15). On the other hand, political cooperation in the path of progress reduces threats increases the potential for economic and cultural growth, and increases the fields of development in the region.

2.3. Geographical factors:

Currently, Islamic countries are located on a vast land with 11,000 kilometers in length and 5,000 kilometers in width. This situation has caused

many Islamic countries to be geographically close to each other and have a common border and economic, political, cultural exchanges, etc. This is considered an important potential and a suitable platform for unity and convergence. Geographically, the largest expansion of the Islamic world is in the two continents of Asia and Africa, and the rest of the Islamic countries are also located in the two continents of Europe and America. In terms of geopolitics, the Islamic world consists of three parts: First, the center of the Islamic world, which is located in the Middle East and plays the role of communication between the Islamic world. Second, the West of the Islamic world, which starts from the Suez Canal and includes the Muslim countries of the African continent; An important feature of this part of the Islamic world is its territorial unity. Third, the east of the Islamic world, which starts from the eastern borders of Iran and includes the Muslims of Central Asia, India, and Southeast Asia. In a ranking in terms of geopolitical importance, the center of the Islamic world is in the first place, the West of the Islamic world is in the second place, and the East of the Islamic world is in the third place. In addition, most Islamic countries control sensitive geopolitical areas such as communication routes, water straits, gulfs, and important seas of the world like Dardanelles and Bosphorus, Suez Canal, Bab al-Mandeb, Strait of Hormuz, Strait of Malacca and Strait of Gibraltar, Persian Gulf, Sea of Oman, and the Red Sea play an important role in shortening sea and land distances between East and West (Safavi, 2010, 12:p.10) Also, in the discussion of economic exchanges, the issue of logistics and transportation of goods is always considered as one of the basic issues that the countries of the Islamic world benefit from a special privilege in this area due to their proximity to each other and the ease of transportation routes.

In terms of its position relative to the surrounding geopolitical areas, Iran has a central position relative to its neighboring countries; as a country with a high geopolitical ratio, it can be present in all the geopolitical areas around it and play an effective role in the emergence of regional organizations and the activation of geopolitical areas and their functions, and shape the political process of these areas (Safavi, 2008: p.70). Iran's prominent position provides great opportunities for it; Of course, it is in a region known for instability; It also makes it vulnerable. As Iran has seven land borders with neighboring countries and six water borders with Persian Gulf countries, it should expect consequences such as the influx of refugees due to conflicts in neighboring countries (Palizi, 2006: pp. 5-6). In terms of location, Iran has a high number of neighbors in the world, along with China and Russia (Karimipour, 2010: p.24). Iran is adjacent to fifteen independent countries. This country is bordered by the independent nation-states of

Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman from the south, Pakistan and Afghanistan from the east, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia from the north and Turkey and Iraq from the west. The region of Southwest Asia is the interface between the three continents of Asia, Europe, and Africa, and Iran is located in this geopolitical region, in any case, any kind of event that takes place in these continents or the political, military, economic and cultural relations between Three continents will affect Iran in different ways(Mottaghi, 2012: p. 29), also Iran could affect them.

2.4. Economic factors:

The countries of the Islamic world region have the potential for cooperation in various economic fields, including agriculture, industry, underground reserves, etc., and its manifestations have reached the operational stage in the form of the Economic Cooperation Organization. Most of the world's oil needs are supplied from the Islamic world, especially the Persian Gulf region. The Persian Gulf region alone contains 55% of the known oil reserves and 40% of the known gas reserves of the world, and in terms of the volume of energy reserves, it cannot be compared with any other region of the world. (Mir Torabi and Esmaili, 2012: p. 131) (quoted by Aghaei and Hosseini, 2014: p.56)

Oil and gas are some of the resources whose special attractions are unique for all countries of the world, both developed and developing. Considering the share of 41% of oil and 36% of gas resources in Islamic countries, it is possible to understand the depth of intervention of imperialist and colonialist countries in this strategic area. The opportunities and capabilities of the Islamic world are not only limited to oil and gas or coal, and this becomes more tangible with a glance at the world's gold and silver reserves as the most valuable metals.

As the research and studies show, Uzbekistan, Sudan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and Mali have the richest gold resources in the world. Along with gold, there is a lot of wealth in the silver sector in this geographical area, that led by the countries of Kazakhstan, Morocco, Turkey, Indonesia, and Uzbekistan. According to Statista data, the total gross domestic product of the world in 2022 is a figure equal to 100 trillion dollars, of which the share of Islamic countries is estimated to be only 9.9 trillion dollars. which means that only about 10 percent of the gross domestic product of the total global amount belongs to Islamic societies.

The presence of underground and natural reserves and suitable economic growth, such as Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Malaysia,

and Egypt, can be used for expanding economic relations between Islamic countries and lay the foundations for economic unity, which is the basis for political and military unity between Islamic countries.

Islamic countries can become one of the biggest economic powers in the world by creating a large market of several hundred billion dollars. Some motivations and numerous indicators that can bring about economic convergence among Islamic countries are 1- Creating a suitable environment for the full use of natural and human resources for economic growth and development, considering the differences in the facilities and abilities of each country. 2- Creating and strengthening a strong economic foundation; 3- Increasing the ability to enter international markets and expand domestic markets; 4- Increasing the power of competition in the case of countries relying on a single-product economy; 5- Reducing political pressure caused by differences in economic levels; 6- Achieving greater economic stability; 7- Developing the money market by forming regional banks, creating a common currency, etc.; 8- Expansion of statistical exchanges and economic information and development of the decision-making field.

2.5. Defense security factors

It is a bit difficult to draw a clear vision of the future of Islamic countries in the field of defense and security because the current conflicts raging in these countries often lead them to diverge. This situation will probably weaken convergence in other areas as well.

The rate of military and civilian conflicts between member countries of the Islamic world is higher compared to the conflicts that occurred with non-Islamic countries. In other words, most of the conflicts were within the Islamic world. The negative competition between the member countries of the Islamic world has caused the logic of the power equations in this area to approach the zero-sum game. (Eftekhari, 2001:p. 505) From this point of view, the growth and development of the capabilities of an Islamic country is evaluated by other countries as a potential threat, and therefore their weakening is preferred for other actors.

Compilation and drawing of ideas, models, examples, and futures of convergence and unity among the Muslims of the world and especially Islamic countries requires achieving conceptual and practical common ground. From a conceptual point of view, the consensus and insistence on principles, goals, and common interests, as opposed to insistence on religion or specific intellectual and ideological affiliation, is considered one of the most important areas of convergence. As a result, Islamic unity is not aimed at eliminating religions eradicating religious beliefs, and eliminating all

differences and tendencies, but it is aimed at the commitment of Muslims to the principles of Islam. Islamic unity oversees the cooperation between the followers of Islamic religions based on common, fixed, and certain Islamic principles and adopting the same position to realize the goals and interests of the Islamic Ummah and a united position against the enemies of the Ummah while respecting the ideological and practical obligations of every Muslim towards his religion.

Islamic convergence and unity and the creation of a powerful Islamic block are some of the most important ideas and ideals that Muslim thinkers and reformers have been pursuing until now, relying on Islamic teachings, and confronting the global domination system, it is a program with a strategy in dimensions and Various forms have been presented according to the conditions and requirements of the time.

3. Strategies

Now that the general factors of convergence among Islamic countries have been determined, to achieve this goal, strategies should be adopted in the following fields, besides Perception of common goals and interests is the first step to achieve convergence through these strategies (Hafeznia, 2015: p. 374).

3.1. Religious and cultural

Instincts and emotions are the reason for the survival of human life, and if they are removed from human life, man will be destroyed, but at the same time, if they are not adjusted and their limits and boundaries are not defined, and man becomes the plaything of his instincts, then he will use all his capital under command its instincts, he can't see anything but it and this lustful love cast a thick veil over his intellect and thoughts. The worldly and lust-worshippers, who do nothing but achieve wealth and position, and in critical moments and social problems, instead of giving space to worthy people, they emphasize maintaining the power and position of their party and faction, are the biggest stumbling blocks on the way of Muslims unite; instead of holding on to Allah's rope as the axis of unity, they resort to the rope of Satan, which is worldliness, and create division.

Worldly seekers and followers of whims and fancies are examples of this blessed verse from the Holy Qur'an which says: "When they see merchandise or diversion, they scatter off to it"(the holy Quran,Surah Al-Jumu'ah: Verse.62). Ali bin Abi Talib (pbuh) in Sermon 113 of Nahj-al-balagha has criticized this characteristic and said the main source of conflict and social division is the selfish desire: "You are brothers in God's religion.

Nothing but internal impurity and inner ugliness separates you and that's why you don't help each other at work and you don't want each other's good and you don't forgive each other and you don't make friends with each other" (Imam Ali, 2006:p.222).

The first person in Islam who was hit by this issue was Ali bin Abi Talib (pbuh), who was accused of Excommunication by the Kharijites after the incident of arbitration in Safin because he obeyed the opinion of the judges, and because of this, Islam became very vulnerable for many centuries. whose infelicitous side effects were irreparable and still appear in other forms from time to time in the Islamic Ummah (Al-Hurr al-Amili, 1409ah: p. 62). Therefore, the revival of Islamic values by focusing and emphasizing religious commonalities instead of ethnic differences and Western nationalism, restoring civilizational identity, and reviving past heritage such as financial, legal, social, and educational systems, make Muslims aware of the unifying capacities of Islam; Ayatollah Khamenei, says in this regard:

"To create an Islamic civilization - like any other civilization - two basic elements are necessary: one is the production of thought and the other is the cultivation of human beings. Islamic thought is like a deep sea; it is an ocean. Whoever went to the edge of the ocean cannot claim that he knows the ocean; also, anyone who walked near the shore or sank a few meters into the water at one point, cannot say that he has known the ocean. walking in this great ocean and reaching its depths and discovering it - which can be done by the Quran and Sunnah- it is something that everyone should do; it is something that should be done over time. It is possible to produce thought at any time according to the need of that time from this great ocean of knowledge. The second condition is human development. Now in Where Thought and Man should be produced, see who are the role-players. These role-players are the ones who should be able to guide the thoughts. This is important Because this path can only be traveled with the foot of faith and the power of faith and love. There should be those who can cultivate the spirit of faith in people. There is no doubt that the managers of society are among the role makers; politicians are among the role makers; thinkers and intellectuals are among the role makers; Each of the people can play a role according to their talent. But the role of religious scholars, the role of those who use religious methods in the way of cultivating people's faith, is unique." (Khamenei, 2017: 24).

3.2. Economic

The existence of cultural and religious commonalities can also be the basis for maximum benefit from existing economic capacities. Traditions such as endowment and zakat can be used as an economic-cultural strategy to reduce poverty. On the other hand, Islamic financial foundations for the development of Islamic countries, away from usurious economic principles, can achieve economic growth in the member countries.

The formation of multinational companies to support the interests and needs of the Muslims of the world and to be profitable for the countries is one of the proposed economic solutions, which has sometimes worked in cases such as the Halal brand. Also, the conclusion of monetary contracts and joint investments in the financial and commercial markets is important both from the aspect of sharing knowledge and technology and from the aspect of carrying out development projects, especially the refining of petroleum derivatives.

In the customs field, the application of customs discounts or exemptions to strengthen common markets is a strategy that plays an important role in the operational policies of governments. The Supreme Council of Free Zones of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has a suitable capacity in this field in the framework of industrial free zones and creating a common market with neighboring Islamic countries, which requires the formulation of common strategies and positive and constructive action in the direction of political marketing and pursuing common interest programs.

3.3. Political

Governments and statesmen, as elements whose decisions and will play an important role in moving towards cultural, religious, and economic convergence, must believe and understand the idea of convergence before any action. Therefore, political convergence is considered an important step in the process of convergence of the Islamic world and requires the following requirements and strategies: 1- First of all, Islamic states must believe in unity as an indisputable principle and make it the basis of their public policies. One of the most important results of this is the design of a policy that can bring the Islamic Ummah to unity. The most important of these policies is the move towards eliminating bigotry and sectarianism, which is important both for creating political unity in countries and for creating convergence in the Islamic world as a whole. 2- Adopting a strong policy of cooperation between Muslims and setting common policies will guarantee the regional and global interests of Muslims. If governments need

legitimacy to govern, serious efforts must be made to renew their political traditions and democratize the political process to allow for public participation. People should be given more authority to advance national interests. Leaders should be held accountable and responsible for their actions, and individual rights and freedoms should be defended against various forms of injustice and discrimination. 3- From the political point of view, the Islamic world can define for itself the role of regional power and thus provide a basis for the key interests of the member Islamic countries to be achieved in the area of defining and establishing the Union of Islamic States. The validity and reliability of such a role and position is due to the following reasons:

- The benefit of the Islamic world from credible centers is to create power and have an extroverted ideology that can project itself on a global scale and is socially acceptable at least in the territory of the Islamic world.
- The significant contribution he has made to the global communication network is due to its ability to produce thought.
- The possibility of upgrading its military organization and turning it into an effective power at the regional level.
- Being able to use a vast geographical area that has a high population;
- Sensitive geopolitics and influence in the world system

Among the political strategies, the establishment of the "Union of Islamic States" can be mentioned as a major goal, which is considered the most effective structural alternative for the new world order in the current century. From this point of view, national actors play a role by redefining themselves in the form of "regional power blocs" and trying to improve their regional position in the structure of the global system. In other words, the world of future politics will be the world of regions and not national powers and not even hegemonic powers (Safavi, 2010:15:p.17). Also, in the form of diplomatic cooperation, including the creation of regional and extra-regional organizations and unions, such as the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council or OPEC, it is necessary to pay attention to the promotion of moral and prophetic policy to optimize the benefits of cooperation for Muslim countries. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a regional power with cultural and political capacity in this field, should have an active and leading presence in mobilizing existing alliances and presenting new initiatives such as the Axis of Resistance and the Shiite Crescent.

3.4. Security

Today, it has been accepted as a fact that the formation of a great union of all Muslim countries and nations, which is accompanied by the acceptance of all

advantages and merits and tolerance of each other's disadvantages and shortcomings, can be presented as a comprehensive model for gaining power in the Islamic world. It seems that the necessity of planning and explaining the unity and convergence of the Islamic world can be explained in the following cases: 1- The urgency and priority of Islamic unity are revealed when we witness the efforts of world powers to conclude regional and global agreements to weaken the grounds of Islamic unity and convergence. 2- The necessity of the unity of Muslims from every nation, race, nationality, and religion in such a way that they stand in a single line to protect the interests and Expediency of Muslims and the high Islamic values against the system of global domination. 3- The prerequisite for gaining power and placing the Islamic world in the power structure of the international system and its growth and development is its regional stability and security. Achieving this stability and security is in the shadow of the unity of Muslim countries in the form of "Islamic Ummah". Therefore, by strengthening and deepening the unity of the Islamic world, the bloc of Islamic countries can enter the ring of world powers, and the major actors of international politics can no longer ignore this new power in the arena of world games.

In this regard, to deal with common threats and solve issues such as Nagorno-Karabakh, Yemen, and Palestine, as a prelude, it is necessary to conclude a non-aggression pact between Islamic countries with Iran as a pioneer, and then through this pact, the path of defense and security cooperation will be made possible. The issue of Palestine is a clear issue that none of the Islamic religions have any doubts about the obligation to defend it (Rajabi, 2018: p. 75).

3.5. Science and Technology

One of the components of national power, which is a prerequisite for the development of countries, is progress in scientific fields and new technologies; Therefore, the weakness of thought-forming and elite institutions in the Islamic world is one of the challenges of convergence in the Islamic world. Since religion is also a supporter and encourager of science, for this purpose, in addition to striving to lead in the fields of technology, the Islamic Republic of Iran should have constructive cooperation with neighboring countries to create thought-making institutions, so that elites away from the influence of outsiders and with thinking Convergence among Islamic countries should be fostered (Eyvazi, 2007, p. 161). In this regard, accepting students from Islamic countries and strengthening scientific cooperation between think tanks and universities is a strategy that should be seriously pursued by the Ministry of Science.

Conclusion

In the era when globalization is followed as the political thought of the West in the countries of the South, Islamic countries in the form of regionalism seeking to achieve the pole of power to influence the process of globalization, and play a constructive role in determining the destiny of the Islamic world, need a positive and practical convergence that passes through 5 factors are obtained: religious and cultural factors, political factors, geographical factors, economic factors and security-defense factors. Therefore, the member countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, as the Islamic world with a common culture, religion, and beliefs, have good opportunities to cooperate in the aforementioned areas through the passage of these commonalities. These countries to benefit from this potential and move towards operationalizing the convergence process; They need strategies and paths that will secure the common interests of the Islamic world and strengthen the member countries. For this purpose, Muslim countries should take operational steps to become a pole of global power such as cooperation and creation of common economic markets, common security understandings, multilateral policies, and strengthening cultural and religious commonalities. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a regional power with demographic and political capacities as well as cultural and historical background, can take advantage of its geostrategic position to carry out comprehensive programs- in the field of action and diplomacy- to achieve the vision of Islamic countries becoming a world power centered on Iran. In this regard, we must follow a path of five strategies: religious and cultural strategies to create unity and brotherhood and avoid disputes and economic strategies such as reforming customs and creating common interest markets as well as using local currency should take a positive and constructive step towards this convergence. In the field of political and security strategies, the strengthening of Islamic alliances the conclusion of non-aggression pacts, and the foundation of defense cooperation is a path. Also, in the field of science and technology, inter-university cooperation, the establish of regional and extra-regional think tanks, as well as student exchange should be carried out as five strategies to achieve convergence, and the Islamic Republic of Iran should design and implement its programs in this framework.

References

The Holy Quran

- Aghaei, Seyyed Davoud & Hosseini, Seyyed Mahmoud (2013). A perspective on the geopolitics of the Islamic world in the game of global power and leadership; Opportunities and challenges (with emphasis on the geopolitical power and capacities of the Islamic Republic of Iran). *Islamic Revolution Studies*. No. 36. pp. 70-49.
- Al-Hurr al-Amili, Muhammad Bin Hasan (1409 AH) Details of Shia's means to the study of Shari'ah issues (I), Qom, Al-Bayt Foundation
- Bangash, Zafar (2015). *Islamic world; Opportunities, Challenges and Missions* (Yaser Asgari, compilation). Qom: Supreme Leader's Representation Institution in Universities, Education Publishing Office
- Dougherty, James E & Pfaltzgraff, Robert L (1997). *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*. London: Pearson College.
- Eftekhari, Asghar (2010). The logic of national security equations. *Strategic Studies*, No. 14, pp. 505-526
- Esmaeili, Amir Muhammad (2022). Sectarianism, Hybrid War and Rebuilding New CENTO; Finding a Transnational Initiative for Revival of Muslim Ummah. *Islamic Political Thought*, Volume 9, Issue 1, March 2022, Pages 39-53.
- Eyvazi, Mohammad Rahim (2007). Political challenges of the Islamic world and the future of Iran. *Political science*, number two, pp. 157-185
- Farahidi, Khalil bin Ahmad (1414 AH). *Al-Ain order*, (Volume 1, edited by Islamic Publication Institute). Qom: Islamic Publishing House.
- Gohari Moqaddam, Abuzar & Esmaeili, Amir Muhammad (2016). The Integration of the Muslim World and Revival of Islamic Civilization, *Islamic Political Thought*, Volume 3, Issue 1, March 2016, Pages 33-51.
- Hadi, Gurban Ali (2011). Unity from the point of view of Quran and Sunnah. *Andish-e- Taghrib*. No. 24. 96-69
- Hafeznia, Mohammad Reza (2015). *Principles and concepts of geopolitics*, Mashhad: Papli Publications.
- Hakim, Seyyed Mohammad Baqir (2019), *Islamic unity from the perspective of the Qur'an and Itrat*, translated by Faqih zadeh, Abdul Hadi. Qom: Bostan Kitab
- Ibn Manzoor (1412 AH). *Lisan al-Arab* (Volume 3). Beirut: Arab Heritage Revival Institute.

- Imam Ali (2006). Nahj-al-Balagha. Compilation and arrangement: Seyed Razi, translated by Dashti, Mohammad, Tehran: Vejdani Publications.
- Jamali, Nusrat-allah (2000). The causes of the fall of governments in the Qur'an and Nahj al-Balagha (Volume 1). Qom: Nahavandi.
- Joseph S. Nye, Jr. and Robert O. Keohane (1971). Transnational relation and world politics. University of Wisconsin. Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 329-349
- Karimipour, Yadullah (2010), an introduction to Iran and its neighbors (sources of tension and threats), first edition, Tehran: Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research.
- Khamenei, Seyyed Ali (2017), Modern Islamic Civilization. number 2. Tehran: Office of Preservation and Publication of the Works of Grand Ayatollah Khamenei.
- Mir Torabi, Saeed and Mustafa Esmaili (2011), review and categorization of the biggest players in the world oil market » Middle East Studies, Year 19, Number 3
- Moshirzadeh, Homeira (2008). Evolution in theories of international relations. Tehran: The Organization for Researching and Composing University textbooks in the Humanities (SAMT).
- Mottaghi, Afshin (2012). Geopolitical analysis of the power components of the Islamic Revolution in the Islamic world, Research Journal of the Islamic Revolution, No. 6, pp. 27-48
- Palizi, Fariba (2006). Iran and its neighbors and regional crises, series of articles on Middle Eastern Studies. Tehran: Middle East Center for Scientific Research and Strategic Studies
- Poor ahmadi, Hossein and Piroozi, Pooya (2018). Explanation of modern Islamic discourse in international relations with emphasis on the concept of convergence. Scientific quarterly of Political and International Approaches. No. 57. pp. 51-32
- Raja, Ali Asghar (2011). Criteria for defining the Islamic world. Imam Khomeini Educational and Research Institute's M'arafet Journal, 170, 31-43
- Rajabi, Hadi (2018). The strategies of the Islamic world unity based on the views of the Supreme Leader. Quarterly Journal of Political Research in Islamic World, No. 3, pp. 61-85.
- Safavi, Seyed Yahya (2008). the unity of the Islamic world; The perspective of the Islamic world. Tehran. The Institute for Islamic World Futures Studies

- Safavi, Seyed Yahya (2010). the unity of the Islamic world; Future vision (part 1). Quarterly of Geographical Data. No. 74. pp. 9-19
- Safavi, Seyed Yahya (2010). the unity of the Islamic world; Future vision (part 2). Quarterly of Geographical Data. No. 75. pp. 9-15
- Safavi, Seyed Yahya (2010). the unity of the Islamic world; The future perspective of the Islamic world (Part 5). Quarterly of Geographical Data. No. 79. pp. 9-19
- Safavi, Seyed Yahya (2013). Strategic necessities of achieving unity and convergence in the Islamic world. The Institute for Islamic World Futures Studies: www.iiwfs.com
- Sajjadi, Seyyed Abdul Qayyum (2012), Globalization and the Islamic World: Opportunities and Threats. Proceedings of the 16th International Islamic Unity Conference (3), by Seyyed Taha Merghati. Tehran: The World Forum for Proximity of Islamic Schools of Thought.
- statista.com/statistics/268750/global-gross-domestic-product-gdp





پروہشگاہ علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرہنگی
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی