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Future Studies on the Process of Convergence and Unity of the Islamic World from a Historical Perspective

Abstract

This study has attempted to map the internal and external challenges to the unity of the Islamic world. Through this, the trends in the Islamic world have been explained to determine whether the current situation indicates convergence or divergence in the Islamic world. The goal pursued by this research is to determine whether, based on the realities existing in the international system and the trends in the Islamic world, it is possible to achieve the unity of the Islamic world in the future. This research has also achieved results by using the future research method. An analysis of the current situation in the Islamic world reveals that due to the conflicting interests of Islamic states, at least in the short term, we will not witness the unity of Muslims. In order to overcome this situation, a plan for the unity of the Islamic world must first be agreed upon by the intellectual and governmental elites of the Islamic world, and then practical measures and joint programs must replace the promotion of hostility and the suppression of extremism.

Keywords: Convergence, Islamic Unity, Islamic World, Future Studies, Islamic Ummah

Tarihsel Perspektiften İslam Dünyasının Yakınlaşma ve Birlik Süreci Üzerine Gelecek Çalışmaları

Öz

Bu çalışma, İslam dünyasının birliğine yönelik iç ve dış zorlukların haritasını çıkarmaya çalışmıştır. Bu sayede İslam dünyasındaki eğilimler açıklanarak mevcut durumun İslam dünyasında yakınlaşmaya mı yoksa ayrışmaya mı işaret ettiği belirlenmeye çalışılmıştır. Bu araştırmanın amacı, uluslararası sistemde var olan gerçeklere ve İslam dünyasındaki eğilimlere dayanarak, gelecekte İslam dünyasının birliğini sağlamanın mümkün olup olmadığını belirlemektir. Bu araştırma aynı zamanda gelecek araştırması yöntemini kullanarak sonuçlara ulaşmıştır. İslam dünyasındaki mevcut durumun analizi, İslam devletlerinin çatışan çıkarları nedeniyle en azından kısa vadede Müslümanların birliğine şahit olamayacağımızı ortaya koymaktadır. Bu durumun üstesinden gelmek için öncelikle İslam dünyasının entelektüel ve hükümet elitleri tarafından İslam dünyasının birliği için bir plan üzerinde anlaşmaya varılmalı ve ardından düşmanlığın teşvik edilmesi ve aşırıcılığın bastırılmasının yerini pratik önlemler ve ortak programlar almalıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Yakınlaşma, İslam Birliği, İslam Dünyası, Gelecek Çalışmaları, İslam Ümmeti*

Introduction

The unity and solidarity of the Islamic world stems from the Muslim ideal of a "single nation." Although this ideal is currently facing numerous challenges and harms, the interest of Muslims in the reconstruction of "Islamic civilization" has led thinkers in the Islamic world to consider the solution to the problems in the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world. The findings of this study indicate that the current trends in the Islamic world are more indicative of divergence than convergence, and that the project of unity and convergence in the Islamic world is more of a mental matter than a tangible one. By focusing on the issue of the unity of the Islamic world, government elites and intellectual thinkers in the Islamic world can, by combining and paying attention to both the physical and mental components, shape and strengthen the unity of Muslims, and consider a position for enhancing the power of Muslims and reshaping Islamic civilization in the international system. In this study, a futures research method is used and an attempt is made to present and analyze the current trends in the Islamic world, to present a picture of the future of Muslim unity, and to introduce the effective and efficient factors of the unity of the Islamic world.

1. Research Method

1.1. Layered Causal Analysis Theory

The method used in this study is based on the "Layered Causal Analysis Theory", which is one of themethods of "futures research". Layered causal analysis, as its name suggests, is concerned with discovering the roots of a problem in different vertical and horizontal layers. This approach suggests that the roots of the problem be explored in a critical and participatory manner at four vertical levels. These levels are:

1- Litany layer (objective problem): This layer is the visible layer of the problem, where clinical experts generally agree on the roots and symptoms; but they often believe that there is no specific solution to the root cause of this problem.

2- Causal systems layer (social causes): Causal systems are the set of systems that can potentially or actually cause the problem. These systems are broad and range from political, economic, social, and cultural systems to legal, managerial, and communication systems. The method of layered analysis of causes, by passing through the first layer, quickly enters the second layer; that is, the systems layer, and examines the roots of the issue in question in these layers.

3- Discourse-Worldview Layer (Worldview and Dominant Discourse): This is the third vertical layer that seeks the roots of the problem in existing and dominant discourses and worldviews and asks what discourse or attitudes among officials and the people have caused the problem to arise?

4- Myth-Metaphor Layer (Myths and Metaphors): In a society, as a rule, few people deal with myths (ideals, models) and metaphors (mental representations of various subjects). This work is usually the domain of artists and thinkers. In this layer, we must see which of the ideals and mental explanations are involved in the creation of the problem.

Layered root cause analysis does not limit itself to exploring the roots of the problem at the vertical and horizontal levels; rather, at each level, it also suggests the scenarios and strategies necessary to overcome the problems arising from that level (layer), and it is precisely for this reason that it is considered a future research method. This method was first proposed by Sohail Anaitullah, a Pakistani Muslim by origin, in 1998 in an article titled "Topical Layer Analysis: Superstructuralism as a Method" in Futures magazine and later perfected it (Hosseini, 2010).

1.2. Hypothesis

The trends and challenges in the Islamic world have made it impossible to achieve the convergence and unity of the Islamic world in the short term.

1.3. Research Questions

1.3.1. Main Question

Do the trends in the Islamic world indicate the achievement of the unity and convergence of the Islamic world?

1.3.2. Sub-Questions

What are the internal challenges to achieving the unity of the Islamic world?

What are the external challenges to achieving the unity of the Islamic world?

What is the role of the intellectual and governmental elites of the Islamic world in achieving the unity of the Islamic world?

2.Theoretical Discussions of Research

2.1. Futures Studies

Futures studies are an effort to understand what can happen or should happen in the future. (Taqvi & Ghaffari, 2000). It is the systematic study, discovery, creation, presentation, testing and evaluation of possible, tolerable and desirable futures. Futures research presents individuals and organizations with various options regarding the future and helps them select and shape the most desirable future (Bell, 2003). In addition to the systematic study of possible, probable, and desired futures, futures research seeks to identify the worldviews and myths that shape each future (Inayatollah, 2007). Futures research not only involves understanding possible futures, but also has a deep focus on preparing for better future decision-making. Futures research begins with the examination and identification of various future options, and by examining these options, it determines their probability of occurrence and desirability. In fact, it is after this stage that the selection of options is carried out based on the versions of possibility 1 and desirability 2 (Khazai & Dehqi, 2012). The most important goal of futures research is to recognize and correctly understand emerging and new issues and how to deal with or confront them, as well as to carry out long-term and short-term planning and prevent the harmful consequences of unforeseen events (Amara, 1991). The main goal of futures research is "to inform and inform about perceptions, alternatives, and choices about the future." In other words, futures studies or futures research insists on understanding alternatives or preferences, future priorities, and possible developments and striving to achieve a desired future (Bell, 1993). Political science is "future-thinking"3 and "future-oriented"4 in nature. Decision-

making and policy-making are future-oriented categories. Decision-making and policy-making require constructing images of alternative realities and then selecting one of those images as the desired image. For this reason, many futures researchers consider the role of political science and the teachings of this science to be colorful (Bell, 2003). Futures studies, although a new field of study in the postmodern era of the Western world, tries to base its study on possible, possible, and desired futures of humanity; However, the study of the future is not unique to the Western world, and all societies and civilizations, including Islam, have their own version of the future. The first systematic efforts to study the future began in 1948 at the Rand Corporation.

These studies were mainly based on prediction, which sought to identify possible war events, and later were also applied to non-military and economic issues. In the course of these studies, elementary and simple forecasting methods were developed to understand and explore the future. The first efforts in this field were based on the assumption that for every choice made today, a possible future can be imagined (Forda Development Foundation, 2005). From the 1980s onwards, the concept of futures research moved beyond its initial origins in the military sphere and penetrated the realm of policy-making. For the first time, the Japanese in the 1980s used futures research as a policy-making tool, and other countries followed suit, engaging in futures research activities in accordance with their national needs; As government and private organizations currently have future research programs on a sectoral, regional, and national scale in various fields of science, technology, culture, environment, etc. in their work programs. The importance of futures research activities is such that any effort for planning and policy-making without relying on these activities at the policy-making and executive levels is incomplete, unreliable, and requires evaluation (Khazai & Dehqi, 2012).

2.2. The Islamic Ummah

The Ummah means the collective existence of people; that is, a group whose members have relationships and bonds based on a set of ideas, ideals, and principles, and these common bonds link them together in some of their strengths and talents. This is the community that the Quran has interpreted as the Ummah. The word ummah has also been used by some Islamic thinkers in a sense close to nation. Of course, in this usage, ummah means a large group of people who share a common language, a common religion, or a common geographical territory (Ibrahimi, 2014). According to Louis Garde, a well-known French Islamic scholar, the concept of ummah has had a great influence on the hearts of Muslims for many centuries. Ummah is a word of Arabic origin for which no synonym can be found in European languages. Ummah is

the same community as the tribe and nation in that unit; it includes those who wish to live together. The call of Islam is the rejection of all racial privileges or any other superiority.

At the heart of the political doctrine of Islam, the Ummah and the Islamic community are bound together only by the bonds of faith. Within the Islamic community and the Ummah, all people had an equal position and there was no distinction of rank or class; rather, distinctions existed in practice. The internal organization of the Ummah was based on a common religious faith. The fabric of society was maintained and defined first by the acceptance and obedience of the Sharia, and then by any secular and secular authority (Lambton, 2001). Above all, Islam emphasizes the unity of its nation; although after the first forty years of Islamic history, various economic and political divisions emerged, and although after the end of the Umayyad Caliphate in the East in the second century AH, the political unity of Islam was never established; however, the ideal of the unity of the nation has existed strongly throughout the history of Islam and has manifested itself in the forms of various movements in contemporary times. Despite the passage of time and numerous ups and downs, Islam was able to unite communities to a great extent and create a nation that stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean, eleven thousand kilometers long and five thousand kilometers wide, with a very diverse composition (Ezzati, 2009). But today, the Islamic Ummah is geographically and politically divided in an unprecedented way and is faced with multiple internal and external challenges.

2.3. Islamic Unity

The unity of the Islamic Ummah means the achievement of Islamic unity within the Islamic Ummah and throughout the Islamic world; As it is, ultimately, the promise of forming a single Islamic nation is: "And this is your nation; one nation, and I am your Lord. So fear M

e. "وَ اِنّ هَذِهِ اُمَّتَکُم اُمَّة وَاحِدَة وَ اَنَا رَبُّکُم فَاتَّقُون :» (Al-Mu'minun, 52) In Islam, unity never means excluding other religions. Islamic unity, through the use of the tools of achieving a united nation, will be the ultimate goal at the level of the Islamic communities and the world: "And hold fast to Allah. He is your protector. So excellent is the protector and excellent is the helper." وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِاللَّهِ هُوَ مَوْلَاكُمْ فَنِعْمَ الْمَوْلَى وَنِعْمَ النَّصِيرُ (Hajj, 78). Therefore, conceptually, Islamic unity, in terms of its method and tools, includes all decision-making, policy-making, adopting unified methods, utilizing common possibilities, and measures, the result and consequence of which is the achievement of Islamic unity. Therefore, God says: "And hold fast to the rope of Allah, all of you, and do not become divided." «وَاعْتَصِمُوا بِحَبْلِ اللَّهِ جَمِيعًا وَلاَ تَفَرَّقُوا» (Aal-Imran, 103)

From the perspective of the verses of the Quran, the unity of the word of the Islamic nation is religious and Islamic unity, and it is considered as a method, a tool, and a means of achieving religious and divine goals and objectives (Azin, et al, 2014). Therefore, unity is a desirable thing from a religious perspective, and it has been strongly recommended and emphasized that the establishment of religion is in the light of the unity of the Islamic nation. This unity is called political unity in the territories, governments, and communities of Islam, and among Muslim nations (Foladi, 2008).

2.4. The Islamic World

The Islamic world currently has a heterogeneous set of geopolitical characteristics. The numerous challenges to the unity of the Islamic world, if properly managed, controlled, and mitigated, can lead to the revival of the past greatness and glory of Islamic civilization in the geometry of world power; although the dependence of states on the West is currently the most important obstacle to the escape of the unity of the Islamic world; however, the major and prominent role of some regional powers in strengthening Islamic unity should not be overlooked (Azin et al, 2014). Islamic countries that questioned the foundations of Western development created a new value in development, which was that social development did not require recourse to Western models. According to Giddens, the general global process that was moving towards secularization and the marginalization of religion, with the Islamic Revolution in Iran we are witnessing the realization of the opposite of this issue; that is, the general global process has started the opposite trend and is moving towards religiosity (Giddens, 1994). Therefore, today the Middle East region is more commonly known as the "Islamic World" than as the "Oriental World" or the "Developing World" (Azin Et al, 2014). Islamic countries have brought the "Islamic World" literature into the geometry of global power; just as the term "Islamic World" has also become common in Western political literature; However, until two or three decades ago, the Islamic world was a forgotten term in the political literature of secularism (Mehdizadegan, 2005). The Islamic world has no choice but to unite and turn to the "universal principles and rituals of Islam" that take precedence over nationalism. The basis of the unity of the Islamic nation is not the common enemy of the West, but "Islam" (Khanmohammady, 2006).

2.5. Cohesion

Cohesion is a situation in which groups, organizations, institutions, or countries cooperate extensively with each other to protect collective interests and move towards a kind of unity. Cohesion has been the basis for the formation of human societies and its traces can be seen in

the writings of Aristotle, Plato, Augustine, Ibn Khaldun, and Hegel (Kazemi, 2008); But convergence as a theory was first proposed by the English researcher David Mitrani in the years between the two world wars. Convergence between countries and states is not the result of coercion or necessity; rather, it is the product of similar characteristics and a common will to unite based on those characteristics. Convergence can be defined as both a process and a state. The state of convergence is the conditions in which actors arrive at a new community. The process or processes involved in it also include: the means and tools through which the community is achieved. The convergence process must be voluntary and based on consensus. In other words, integration is understood as a process of political unity or a state or end product of political unity (Coulumbis & Wolfe, 1990). Countries in the form of integration and union have a common destiny and cannot act without consensus. In other words, under the umbrella of a union, countries are locked into each other, providing the structural foundations of peace, and because they pool their abundant resources, they can pursue and achieve important goals. Among the thinkers of convergence theory are Joseph Nye, 2 Haas, 3 Ashmeyer, 4 Mitranis, and others who believe that countries begin the convergence process with bilateral or multilateral trade and economic exchanges and, under the shadow of economic convergence, achieve security, military, political, and cultural convergence. Mitrani's theory is important in terms of paying attention to the importance of various economic sectors and the possibility of cooperation in each of these sectors, paying attention to inter-governmental players and the role of functional institutions (Puchala, 1971). Also, convergence, according to Bruce Russet, 1 is based on beliefs, abilities, and responsiveness, and he distinguishes between two types of abilities: one is the capacity to act, which is associated with the traditional view of power, and the other is the responsiveness, which includes the facilities of a specific system in terms of precision of communication and mutual recognition (Russet, 1963). Carl Deutsch 2 to The main theoretical title of the communication approach in international relations is the belief that the intense flow of communication between nations and states can gradually lead to the emergence of a world-political community. According to Deutsch, communications play a major role in the closeness of societies, therefore, the more communications there are in the fields of transportation, tourism, postal services, trade and migration, the closer these societies become to each other and instead of conflict, they turn to cooperation and form security societies. Therefore, with the comprehensive expansion of communications, convergence comes to fruition. Karl Deutsch defines integration as the transformation of previously independent units into coherent military components (Deutsch, 1971). He defines convergence as a process by

which political leaders of several different countries become convinced and willing to direct their loyalty, expectations, and political activity toward a new center whose institutions have the legal authority and the voting power of the nation states (Kazemi, 2008).

2.6. Political Unity

"Amitay Etzioni"1 believes that political unity is a process through which political convergence is achieved as a state of affairs and that unity increases or strengthens the existing bonds between the constituent units of a system (Dougherty & Robert, 2010). He describes four stages for achieving unity:

1- The situation before unity: In his opinion, for unity to be created, it is necessary between the units of In other words, it can be said that in the pre-unity stage of a discipline, a number of factors play a key role, the type and extent of which have a significant impact on the creation of unity, including cultural homogeneity, economic interdependence, and geographical proximity.

2- Forces of Unity: Etzioni identifies three forces for creating unity:

A) Arab force, including military and regulatory weapons;

B) Material force or economic, technical factors, and administrative and organizational capabilities;

C) Ideological and identity force, including: values, symbols, and cultural and ideological beliefs.

3- Unified sectors: At this stage, the exchange of goods and individuals takes place, and the connection between political units increases, and the creation of unity in one sector spreads to other sectors.

4- Final stage: In this stage, the system, consisting of multiple units, begins to do the things for which it was created. In other words, unity is not an end in itself; Rather, the political, economic and social effects that follow are important (Kazemi, 2008).

3. Challenges in the Islamic World

In the path of unity of the Islamic world, from the perspective of the future research method, the challenges must first be analyzed. In this regard, the internal and external challenges of the Islamic world are first studied, and then the trends in the Islamic world are presented on that basis.

3.1. External Challenges to Islamic World Unity

One of the most important challenges to Islamic world unity is the West's negative portrayal of Islam, and especially political Islam, in the media. Islamophobia, which is

considered the West's strategy to highlight the danger of Islamists and Muslim countries, has provided a suitable environment for the West's expansionist behavior (Qaidi, 2006). Western expansionism, following the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the September 11, 2001, incident, with American overtones, has also faced Islamic countries with challenges and turmoil. The United States, in an expansionist effort, has sought to present political Islam as an irrational, violent movement and a symbol of terrorism, and to portray it as a serious security threat to American and Western interests (Jafarinjad & Qaidi, 2013). In such a visual format, the representatives of political Islam are presented as irrational, sectarian, and violent currents that are not only unable to align themselves with globally accepted principles and standards such as democracy and human rights; but also face such contradictions among themselves that they act to violently eliminate each other; These are tactics used to discredit the discourse of political Islam and Islamist forces. Political Islam, as a socio-intellectual movement that seeks to preserve the independence and identity of the Islamic world against the West, has always made unity among Muslims and reducing the gaps between them one of its primary goals.

Islamic countries strengthened the idea of Islamic unity against the West and the pro-Western states and forces in Islamic countries. Regarding the impact of the development and expansion of Islamic countries on the developments in the Islamic world and the Middle East, Alexander Haig says: "In my opinion, more dangerous than these international problems are the consequences of the spread of political Islam, which has taken root in Iran and now threatens the stability of all Middle Eastern regimes in the region. This phenomenon, if left unchecked, will jeopardize the interests of the superpowers in the most dangerous way (Drezerner, 2011). If Arab movements move towards democratic-Islamic governments, the possibility of these movements being inspired by the Islamic Revolution in Iran will increase significantly, and this could jeopardize American national interests in the Middle East, which are based on liberal democratic values (Greenburg & Smith, 2011). The grouping of protesters, There were abundant signs that the protests, compared to the Islamic Revolution in Iran, might be defined at a different level; But they can move towards the model of the Iranian theocratic government (Guirguis, 2011). It seems that, at the macro level, America's strategic policies in the Middle East geostrategic region revolve around five main axes: Islamophobia, Shiaphobia, Sunniphobia, fear of the Islamic revolution, and Iranophobia. (Fischer, 2006). Joseph Nye, on the combination of soft power and hard power He calls it smart power. In his view, America must deal intelligently with Islamic countries, including Iran, which are aligning their interests with other threats to US interests in the Middle East. America must be concerned about

strategies that help its enemies unite disparate forces under one banner. The United States has good stories to tell; but its failures to combine hard and soft power in a smart strategy mean that it often goes its own way and tells its own story, and this can be destructive" (Nye, 2004).

3.2. Internal Challenges to the Unity of the Islamic World

The study of trends and events related to the developments of Islamic civilization shows that the glorious revival of this civilization requires attention to the convergent and divergent factors of its constituent elements. Islamic countries are the most important shaping elements of Islamic civilization in the world today and in the world to come. Strengthening Islamic civilization as one of the poles of power in the future world requires strengthening the convergence between Islamic countries and minimizing the role of divergent factors in the interactions of these countries.

A new wave of the rise and revival of Islamic civilization has begun with the victory and development of Islamic countries. According to some thinkers, the Islamic Revolution in Iran was a reaction to the renewal and self-satisfaction against the West and an attempt to elevate Islam and Muslims, the scope of which has now included not only the general uprising in Islamic countries, but also non-Muslim countries, and Muslims consider such communities to be among the most active and dynamic religious minorities in the aforementioned countries. Considering the provision of the conditions for the revival of Islamic civilization after the victory and development of Islamic countries and taking into account a set of convergent and divergent factors, it seems that the desired future of the Islamic world is the convergence of Islamic countries within the framework of the great Islamic civilization as one of the poles of power in the future world.

Using the 1-layered causal analysis method in the field of futures studies and based on the study of historical events and processes of the unity of the Islamic world, scenarios for achieving convergence of Islamic countries can be presented in a range of objective and subjective factors, as explained below: (Inayatollah, 2004).

1- The objective issue layer is the most objective and obvious level shaping the future of Islamic civilization.

The world's Muslim population, the geopolitical position of Islamic countries, the comparative and competitive advantages of Islamic countries in the field of economy, the possession of vast energy reserves, and the vastness of the Islamic world are the tangible and tangible grounds for the revival of Islamic civilization (Elmanadjra, 1990); For example, Middle Eastern oil reserves account for 60 percent of the world's oil reserves, and the region

supplies 40 percent of the world's oil consumption. Therefore, the scenarios presented in this layer are objective-level scenarios. The creation of an Islamic common market is one of these scenarios that implies convergence at an objective and tangible level.

2- The layer of social causes is responsible for economic, political and historical factors. The experience of the periods of glory and power of Islamic civilization in the historical memory of Muslims provides the historical context for the revival of this civilization. In addition, promoting integration and cooperation among Islamic countries in various political and economic fields, both at the regional and international levels, requires the creation of alliances or organizations that, while enjoying formal structures, operate on a multilateral basis based on agreements between states.

Therefore, institutionalization and creation of networks of people's power, establishment of financial and political institutions for the purpose of exercising power in the international sphere; are among the scenarios related to the social factors layer of achieving Islamic civilization. Accordingly, joint and conscious efforts are being made to facilitate exchanges between Islamic countries and collective actions through regional and international Islamic organizations that have a permanent framework.

3- The third layer is concerned with understanding the structure, worldview, and discourse that shape the social causes that gave rise to the first and second layers. In this layer, the recognition of the cultural, linguistic, and social structures that are part of the Islamic civilization is considered.

One of the components of Islamic civilization is the Islamic worldview. The word "Ummah" has been mentioned in the Glorious Quran in more than 60 cases alone and about 20 cases in the form of adverbs or conjunctions. At the beginning of the Prophethood of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the term "Ummah" was temporarily applied to the people living in Mecca and then Medina; however, at the end of the Prophethood of that Prophet (PBUH), the core of the formation of the Islamic Ummah was the foundations of belief and religion.

In fact, the Arab nation became the Muslim nation and expanded to the point that after the death of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), it extended beyond the borders of Arabia and brought together nations and tribes of different languages, races, and locations under the banner of the "Ummah of Islam." Therefore, the scenario presented in this layer emphasizes the discourse of "one nation" as a link between all Muslims of the world, regardless of ethnic, religious, racial, linguistic and cultural differences. (Inayatollah, 2007). Internationalizing this

discourse among Muslims and presenting it as the best alternative to the dominant discourses of the time can be a ground-breaking step for the revival of Islamic civilization.

4- The fourth layer is concerned with the understanding of symbols, metaphors, and values that unconsciously contribute to the shaping of the worldview and dominant discourse that has shaped social causes and the objective issue. In this layer, the deepest narratives, schemes, and mental images that shape the future of Islamic civilization are explored. These narratives, schemes, and images are not only in thought; Rather, they are rooted in the feelings and beliefs of Muslims.

The belief in the victory of right over wrong, of the weak and the arrogant, of the oppressed over the oppressor, and the achievement of the ideal society promised in the Quran and Hadith, all form the basis for the scenario of achieving the desired future of Islamic civilization at the deepest level of this conceptual model.

Considering the fact that the victory of truth over falsehood is predicted in the verses of the Quran and Hadiths, and the axis of truth is determined based on the beliefs of Muslims to move on the path of monotheism with the help of the guidance of the Quran, it is possible to arouse Muslims to change the existing situation in order to achieve the desired situation. Therefore, considering the aforementioned layers, the four selected scenarios related to each layer can be described as follows: -1: Creating an Islamic common market; -2: Institutionalization and creation of power networks; -3: Presenting a unified nation discourse; 4-: Emphasis on the belief in the victory of truth over falsehood and the weak over the arrogant. One of the prominent research activities in the field of the future of Islam is the book "The Future of Islamic Civilization" by (Sardar,1998). According to Sardar, Islam is the critical foundation of contemporary thought. Sardar is hopeful about the religious dynamism and intelligent future thinking of the Muslim Ummah and, therefore, is optimistic about the formation of Islamic civilization: "Prepare yourselves for the re-emergence of a dynamic and vibrant civilization of Islam. This civilization will not appear in the near future. It will take decades or even half a century. These civilizations are largely rooted in history and tradition; but they will be a completely different entity. With the development of new interpretations of Islam and efforts to reform the Sharia, they are in the process of developing a disciplined moral vision of the future. It is only through intelligent contemplation of the future that Muslims will achieve their most far-reaching goals and once again return to the enlightened social order and human spirit tf Islam (Sardar, 2006). Sardar emphasizes that in order to meet future challenges and changes, the Islamic Ummah must work through three levels of action:

1- Systemic development of consciousness and As a result, creating inner changes through the process of self-improvement (purification), cooperation among the nation, and the development of unity that encompasses the entire nation, Muslim communities, and individuals.

2- Examining the changes taking place around the world and their consequences, as well as strategic planning 1 for the future.

3- Adapting and adapting oneself to changes through the process of filtering out the negative and destructive aspects of other civilizations and also accepting their positive and constructive aspects (Sardar, 1998).

4. Future Research on Convergence and Unity of the Islamic World

It seems that the trends and challenges existing in the Islamic world make it impossible to achieve convergence and unity of the Islamic world in the short term, and some of these trends will be discussed below.

4.1. The trend of creating a gap between Arab and non-Arab Muslims

One of the main gaps among Muslims is between Arabs and non-Arab Muslims. Arabs not only make up about 20 percent of the world's Muslims; but interpretations of Islam, political issues, and the international face of Islam are disseminated around the world from Arab perspectives and media.

Much of the discourse about Muslims and the challenges they face is, in fact, directed at Arabs and their challenges. The Arab world, due to historical and cultural reasons, has shown more economic, social and political instability than other regions of the world (developing countries). This trend is also expanding.

4.2. The trend of expansion of secular states in the Islamic world

Non-Arab countries of the Islamic world (especially in South and East Asia) have a more enlightened political outlook, which will lead to the strengthening of the majority of democratic or partially democratic and secular states in the future. On the other hand, the cultural and propaganda activities of Western media and the inadequacy of Arab officials in managing the country's affairs have led to increased public dissatisfaction and attention to the approach of Western countries.

4.3. The process of shifting the center of gravity of the Islamic world away from West

Asia Although the West Asian region has long been considered the core and center of the Islamic world; however, innovative and effective activities are currently underway in other regions such as Indonesia and Malaysia, which have caused these countries to act more dynamically in religious matters and attract the attention of the Muslim people. Just as the Shiite

center of power has temporarily shifted from the holy city of Najaf in Iraq to the city of Qom in Iran, this issue is also ongoing for the entire Islamic world, and it seems that in the future, the countries of Indonesia and Malaysia will play a key role in determining the political, cultural, and social orientations of the Islamic world. For example, the secular Indonesian government was recognized in 2006 by the Peace House Research Institute as the only Islamic country worthy of a free state where democracy has been established. As the most populous Islamic country in the world, Indonesia has achieved political and economic stability despite ethnic and religious differences in the past and has been presented by Hillary Clinton and Obama as a model for Islamic states. In Indonesian elections, most secular parties are the winners, and less than 20 percent of the vote goes to Islamic parties.

4.4. The trend of increasing nationalism

Sanders considers the most important structural gaps in political systems to be social gaps related to religious groups and ethno-linguistic groups. In summarizing the results of various studies and approaches, he emphasizes that the results and facts seem to indicate the obvious importance of religious-ethnic divisions in the emergence of violent conflicts, and that deep-rooted ethnic and linguistic divisions inevitably create complex problems for political unity and ensuring political order and social stability (Benihashemi, 2003). Nationalism is one of the important factors in strengthening and spreading sectarianism and religious extremism. On the other hand, sectarianism strengthens nationalism by weakening religious ties, and in fact, nationalism and sectarianism complement each other. Nationalists, in the first stage, strive to highlight ethnic symbols and even nomadic traditions in order to prove their presence and in the later stages, to survive and exercise power over others. In order to counter the influence of culture, and advanced and powerful religious, sectarian and political currents at the national and supranational levels, they strongly strengthen and support backward, dissenting and tribal absolutist intellectual, cultural and religious currents, which are sometimes created and paid for by arrogant powers. Nationalists consider their religious sect to be so superior and absolute that they use any means to make it global. Takfir, terrorism, genocide, and occupation are methods that ultra-nationalist sectarians use to dominate others. This is, in fact, a kind of cosmopolitanism that removes the rational and logical criteria of convergence for the globalization of religious extremism of a particular nation. The sectarianism based on cosmopolitanism is strongly opposed to the positive aspects of nationalism, which is the struggle against colonialism and encroaching powers.

On the other hand, America and the West, by imposing the theory of "religious and political pluralism" in the Islamic world, have contributed to the spread of sectarianism and paved the way for national divergence. The spread of ethnic nationalism and sectarian conflicts are among the background to the goals of the regime of power in changing the socio-political situation of the region and the Islamic world.

Today, the Islamic world, from the Horn of Africa to Southeast Asia, is burning in the flames of extremist sectarianism. Sectarian groups in various Islamic countries, especially Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, threaten national loyalty in their own countries with war, insecurity, and merciless killings, and challenge national loyalty through hostility toward genuine Islamic movements and some independent countries. This is exactly what America needs to dominate the Islamic world, and the sectarians are implementing the Americans' plans in the name of fighting America.

4.5. The trend of expansion of fundamentalism and religious extremism

Islamic fundamentalism is a movement that believes in the fundamental values of Islam and sees the victory and prosperity of Islamic countries in returning to those values and does not follow a Western or Eastern model.

This movement, which has emerged as an emotional, spiritual and moral reaction of Muslims to an economic, social and political crisis, is not only due to the fear of Westernization of Islamic culture, but also due to the direct intervention of the West in Islamic lands (Akhtashami, 2002). In other words, it can be said that Islamic fundamentalism is thinking and acting based on the ideas and It is the behavior of the predecessors that is rooted in religious beliefs and manifests itself in the political arena.

Shirin Hunter writes: "Fundamentalism means applying the laws in their original and pure form. From this perspective, Islamic fundamentalism is indeed fundamentalist; but this is not its only characteristic. Indeed, what distinguishes Islamic fundamentalism and makes it so threatening is its political and ideological take on Islam" (Hunter, 1986). The fundamentalist's superficial view of Islam has led a group of thinkers to point out the incompatibility of Islamic theology with modern life, new knowledge, technology, and democracy, and to portray Islam as a violent, fanatical, and unmanageable religion (Lewis, 1993). The widespread failure of post-independence economic and political models in Arab countries (and, to a lesser extent, most Muslim countries) has caused serious damage to these countries and created many vulnerabilities in their political and cultural environments. These economic and political failures and failures have led to the emergence of extremism among Muslims. This situation,

due to the beliefs of the people of this region that they hold America and Western governments responsible for their failure and lack of progress, has led to an anti-Western attitude among Muslims and opposition to some policies of Western countries (especially America) that only provide the concepts and opportunities to express this anger. This is fundamentally different from the anti-American sentiment that arises from opposition to American policies. Sectarian violence arises from intense religious fanaticism towards a particular religion or set of beliefs over other religions and groups, and not from a designed political program aimed at power, which is the basis of ideological violence. Sectarian fanaticism causes its followers to see the absolute value and truth as specific to their religion and to consider other religions as absolute errors and deviations. If this fanaticism leads to the dominance of one group, other religions and groups are exposed to attack and destruction, and sectarian violence spreads as a result. In the modern history of the Islamic world, the most prominent group that has had this religious fanaticism and used this type of sectarian violence against others has been the Wahhabi group. Wahhabism, a form of fanaticism based on the beliefs of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, considers itself the center of Islamic truth and considers other schools of Islamic jurisprudence to be heretical. The history of Wahhabism, from the late eighteenth century onwards, has been marked by the use of sectarian violence against other Muslims, both in the Arabian Peninsula and in the surrounding regions.

4.6. Islamic and tribal convergence trends:

Although the literature on the relationship between nationalism and religious belief is not yet well developed, a review of regional approaches suggests that extremist religious tendencies are growing strongly in tribal and family societies. Tribal conservatism, a cultural trait, and extremism, a religious trait, are mutually reinforcing. In the absence of opposing forces, such as a central authority, these two characteristics form a powerful combination that leads to the formation of powerful terrorist groups like bin Laden.

4.7 The trend of the spread of failed states in Islamic countries:

One of the important indicators related to the legitimacy of governments is the quality of governance and the effectiveness of governments in managing and carrying out various activities in relation to civil society. " Good governance" versus "bad governance" is a term that has been coined since the 1980s.

Good governance means: improving the practices of governance and government based on close interaction between the government and the people, providing better services to the people in various fields, government accountability and responsibility, improving the standard

of living of the people or increasing the level of living standards, and attracting the cooperation and loyalty of the people for better governance.

The efforts of governments to establish justice, security, stability, reduce taxes, expand infrastructure for employment development, and the like are also important signs and indicators of good governance (Sardarnia, 2009). Conversely, violence and protest movements against governments are largely caused by corrupt, discriminatory, and weak governance.

In many Middle Eastern countries, the concept of nation in its modern sense; That is, the nation's loyalty to common goals and interests, which freed the nation-state from ethnic-tribal ties, has not emerged. In fact, the process of state-nation building has not undergone its natural and spontaneous course and has often been carried out with the intervention of external forces and regional powers. What is central to the process of state-nation building is the increase in cohesion between different social groups and the strengthening of national culture and orientations rather than local identities; however, not only has this process not led to greater cohesion and cohesion; but it has also led to more conflicts, disagreements, and violence among different groups. As a result, it can be said that in addition to the intervention of external factors that led to the imposition of the nation and the emergence of rootless states, the rule of authoritarian governments, cultural disintegration and the challenge of ethnic geopolitical (ethnic and cultural disintegration), economic challenges and the rentier state and the state's dependence on oil revenues and economic corruption, the increasing role of the military in political power, the crisis of identity and unity that is reflected in the demarcation of borders The colonial artifact has its roots in the fact that it has prevented the proper formation of state-nation building in these countries. Weak governance and the escalation of violence. Of course, social capital and trust at the community level and between the state and society can be effective in strengthening the mutuality of the two, continuous interaction and cooperation between them, and the stabilization of government and order. Otherwise, the government and society will become more fragile, providing a breeding ground for violence and civil war, even in a fragmented society. In such societies, social capital and trust have been very weak due to ethnic and religious conflicts and divisions, and the gap between the state and society. As a result, this society cannot overcome the crisis of identity and unity, and the gap between the government and society, and these crises are exacerbated.

Conclusion

It seems that the Islamic world now has capabilities, attractions, and potentials that it did not have in the past centuries; but this is not a reason for the convergence or unity of the Islamic

world in the short or even medium term. In order to form the convergence and unity of the Islamic world, it is necessary to first provide some prerequisites, which are still areas of divergence. For the convergence and unity of the Islamic world, first the necessary will must be formed in the government elites and statesmen of Islamic countries, which is currently not evident in practice. An Islamic common market must be formed, although there is no incentive to form it. Institutionalization and creation of power networks at the state-nation level, and national order were put in place, and "one nation" became the dominant discourse in the Islamic world, which is not the case with the current trends in the Islamic world. But the interest and inclination of Muslims based on the need for unity and belief in the true promises of Islam is the greatest motivation, which, in addition to avoiding the reduction of the blows caused by Islamophobia, may bring the states to the negotiating table and gradually achieve convergence. The research hypothesis, "The trends and challenges in the Islamic world have made it impossible to achieve convergence and unity in the Islamic world in the short term," was confirmed after being put to the test; because convergence and unity of Islamic states is not possible in the short term, for several reasons. Because the current trends, telling of the gap between Arab and non-Arab Muslims, the expansion of secular states in the Islamic world, the spread of nationalism, the growth of extremism in the Islamic world, and the prospect of the unity of the Islamic world have become difficult. In addition to these internal factors, the role of external factors; The prominence of Islamophobia by Western media and governments, as well as the dependence of Islamic states on the West, have diminished the hope of Islamic unity taking shape in the short and even medium term.

It seems that the project of unity and harmony in the Islamic world should be moved away from a purely idealistic and mental state and should also be put into practice by the government and intellectual elites, and the elites should change their past approach of maximumism and mere advice and advice to practicing small examples of unification. They should take the existing political realities of the Islamic world seriously and expand the areas of cooperation instead of promoting hostility. A review of the functioning of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in this regard is important, because the idea of the unity of the Islamic world must be realized in both material and mental dimensions with the help of state and political elites and religious and intellectual intellectuals, and through an effective international center.

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