

From Historical Caliphate to Modern Governance Alliance: Tracing the Origin and Evolution of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation

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Abstract: Founded in 1969, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) bears a modern iteration of the traditional notion of Islamic caliphate, embodying the leadership ideals of the Islamic world. Historically, the caliphate symbolised a unified system of good governance under individual rulers, with the fall of the Ottoman Empire marking its end and heralding significant ideological transformations within the Muslim community. In the wake of modernity and postcolonialism, as traditional Islamic governance structures were reevaluated amidst the rise of nationalism and nation-states, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict crystallised these shifts, fostering a collective Islamic identity through the OIC. This cooperation not only seeks to uphold religious identity and political influence but also to perpetuate Islamic governance in the contemporary milieu. This paper investigates the OIC's evolution from historical caliphate ideals to modern polity, assessing its ideological foundations, pivotal role and enduring relevance in today's global landscape.

Keywords: OIC, caliphate, ummah, Muslim organization, Islamic political thought

Introduction

The establishment of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in 1969 is deeply rooted in the historical and philosophical/theological concepts of the *ummah*, caliphate, *shura* (consultation) and the notion of good governance or *maslahah*. The historical evolution of the OIC is actually a depiction of how these concepts have matured into highly relevant modern tools of political organization. The ultimate aim of the OIC was seemingly to establish a worldwide community of Muslims who are

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connected by their religious beliefs, with the goal of encouraging unity and a shared sense of identity. This unity has effectively mobilised a variety of nations with Muslim-majority populations to collaboratively tackle shared socio-political, economic, and cultural obstacles. The interconnected nature of the founding socio-religious principles of the OIC as well as its relevance to the Muslim communities of the past and the contemporary period compels one to extensively examine the influential origins of the organization. This must be done through an in-depth evaluation of how these origins are intricately reflected into the OIC's manifesto or charter.

In what follows, we discuss at length the historical context of the OIC and in turn, delve into its conceptual tenets reflected throughout its formation and evolution. Subsequently, we evaluate how these tenets govern the seven charter principles of the OIC. It will be established here that the OIC is a methodical endeavour to construct a modernised model of Islamic caliphate, palatable for the modern world.

The Ottoman Context

In examining the intellectual and historical factors that catalysed the establishment of the OIC, it is imperative to first consider the broader milieu of the Muslim caliphate that preceded it. This contextualisation is essential for understanding the impetus behind the formation of the OIC and its ongoing role in the modern landscape of Islamic governance.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, the Ottoman Caliphate, after having enjoyed an unprecedented political glory, encountered internal vulnerabilities and external obstacles that greatly influenced the Muslim community's history and prompted a re-evaluation of beliefs regarding solidarity. The once-mighty Empire faced challenges with inefficient governance and economic standstill, leading to its ultimate collapse. The central administration was afflicted by pervasive corruption and inefficiency, intensifying economic stagnation and rendering governance ineffectual. In addition, an outdated tax structure along with reliance on outdated agricultural methods further hindered economic progress, leaving the Empire unprepared to adapt to the quickly industrialising globe controlled by European countries (Voll 2019, 44-46).

Exacerbating these economic difficulties was the inability to industrialise at a rate equal to Western countries, resulting in an increased dependence on foreign loans, investments, and imports. The increasing wave of nationalism among various ethnic groups within the Empire's extensive domains further undermined its unity. Driven by nationalist feelings, ethnic groups such as Arabs, Greeks, Serbs, and Armenians wanted independence or greater autonomy, putting pressure on the delicate unity of the Empire (Lewis 2002, 38).

The internal conflicts within the Empire were evident through frequent rebellions and the worsening of ethnic tensions, particularly during significant events like

the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. Although the revolution initially aimed to modernise and strengthen the empire, it unintentionally highlighted long-standing ethnic divisions and added to the political instability (Lewis 2002, 112-114).

The Empire's susceptibility was further exposed through a sequence of military setbacks and territorial relinquishments during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly during the Balkan Wars (1912-1913) and the Italo-Turkish War (1911-1912), resulting in the surrender of Libya and substantial reductions in Ottoman influence in Europe (Lewis 2002, 67-69). These losses not only reduced the Empire's territorial extent but also greatly damaged its military reputation and the morale of its citizens, indicating deterioration in the culture and manner of life that had previously characterised a substantial portion of the Muslim world.

One finds it obvious that the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was not merely the result of military engagements, but it was deeply entrenched in multifaceted internal weaknesses and external influences. These included administrative inefficiencies, economic vulnerabilities, rising nationalist and ethnic tensions, and the overarching impacts of global conflicts and economic subjugation. Such a confluence of factors led to the erosion of coherent leadership, complicating the Empire's capacity to effectively manage both its internal dynamics and external relations, ultimately culminating in its downfall.

The convergence of these circumstances during World War I was a pivotal moment for the Ottoman Empire, leading to its eventual dissolution and exerting a profound impact on the intellectual principles that would subsequently mould the OIC. This era of turbulent transformation created an environment in which fresh concepts of governance and solidarity within the Muslim world could be considered, paving the way for the rise of groups and organizations that sought to redefine the *ummah* or the Muslim community at large in a world after imperial rule (Davison 1981, 190-192).

A Stint with Modernity during the Initiation

Generally speaking, World War I had already caused major consequences for the Muslim world, calling for the need to rejuvenate and redefine Islam as a political force. The war first discredited and then removed the caliph-centered traditionalist view of Islamism. For example, in a final effort to secure the continuity of Ottoman independence, the Sultan called the *ummah* to jihad on behalf of the Central Powers (Kayaoglu 2015, 12). However, this religio-political appeal to fight the Western Allies was largely ignored by Muslim colonial subjects in far too many regions and areas. These individuals largely supported allied war efforts. The subsequent abolition of the Caliphate in 1924 by the nascent secular Turkish Republic marked a decisive end to this traditionalist Islamic institution, prompting a profound re-evaluation of its relevance and legitimacy among Muslim intellectuals. This ideological schism

was notably articulated by thinkers such as Rashid Rida, who fervently defended the Ottoman Caliphate's necessity for the Muslim unity, and Ali Abd al-Raziq, who contended that the notion of caliphate was a contingent historical institution, maintained more through coercive power than divine mandate (Ibidem).

In other words, these debates highlighted a critical juncture in Islamic thought, reflecting a shift towards redefining Islamic governance in a world increasingly dominated by the nation-state paradigm. It was this period, during which the landscape of the Islamic world was significantly marked by a surge in what would later be termed as pan-Islamic activism, particularly characterised by the geopolitical reconfigurations following World War I. This era, marked by widespread European dominion over Muslim territories and a rising tide of nationalist sentiments, witnessed the convening of numerous transnational assemblies aimed at fostering Islamic unity. Between 1926 and 1964, nine major international *mu'tamars* (conferences) were held, culminating in the establishment of the Muslim World Congress (*Mu'tamar al-'Alam al-Islami*) in 1949. Although the congress itself did not achieve substantial practical outcomes, it played a pivotal role in reinforcing the conviction among Muslim intellectuals and leaders of the imperative for unity—a sentiment foundational to the subsequent formation of the OIC (Kayaoglu 2015, 12).

Upon investigating the geopolitical circumstances of the said period, it becomes clear that in the aftermath of World War II, the decolonization process emerged as a critical precursor to the creation of the OIC. Newly introduced sovereign Muslim states, liberated from European colonial rule, were propelled by a desire to assert their independence and engage actively on the international political scene. These nations found solidarity particularly appealing, largely due to the anti-European undercurrents that had fuelled their national liberation movements. The economic frailties of these nascent states also motivated their pursuit of collaborative ventures with other Muslim countries, aimed at enhancing their economic infrastructures.

Put briefly, it was the dissolution of the Ottoman Caliphate (Pankhurst 2013) that precipitated a profound crisis of leadership within the Muslim world, compelling the Muslim leadership to seek a modern equivalent that could encapsulate the unity and governance once provided by the Islamic caliphate. This historical exigency underpinned the formation of the OIC, intended as a contemporary avatar of the typical caliphate, embodying the fundamental values and aspirations of Islamic governance (Hallaq 2012, 143-145). Interestingly, a juxtaposition of the geographic distribution of contemporary OIC member states against the territorial extent of the Ottoman Empire reveals a significant overlay, symbolically linking the 'new' geopolitical landscape of the OIC with the 'old' world of the caliphate.

The Formation

The establishment of the OIC could be considered closely linked to the decolonisation movements that occurred throughout the Muslim world after World War II, as well as the subsequent reaffirmation of Islamic identity in the geopolitical sphere. After colonial control ended, newly independent states faced the task of redefining their national identities and foreign alliances. In this period, the concept of a cohesive Islamic identity resurfaced as a persuasive alternative to Western influence and as a tactic to enhance collective bargaining strength on the international platform.

During the early 1960s, the necessity for a cohesive Islamic coalition became more evident due to the influence of Cold War tensions on global alliances. During this era, there were notable diplomatic endeavours led by influential figures such as King Faisal of Saudi Arabia. He had a vision of forming an alliance that could effectively utilise the combined resources and political determination of the Islamic world (Al-Rasheed 2010, 142-143). His journeys around the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia played a crucial role in rallying support for an intergovernmental organization that would represent the political and spiritual desires of the Muslim community (Al-Rasheed 2010, 144-145).

The political milieu of this era was additionally characterised by regional disputes that emphasised the necessity for cohesion. The foundation of the OIC was primarily triggered by the Arab-Israeli conflict, specifically the consequences of the 1967 Six-Day War. The Muslim world was deeply shocked by the loss of Jerusalem to Israeli control during the conflict. This event increased the need for a united Islamic response to global concerns (Shlaim 2015, 302-305). Moreover, the changing dynamics in regions with a predominantly Muslim population, where nationalist groups were gaining strength, highlighted the intricate challenges of establishing a cohesive Islamic entity. The varied reactions to secular nationalism and the pursuit of modern statehood sparked substantial ideological discussions among Muslim scholars and leaders. Leaders like Gamal Abdel Nasser from Egypt promoted pan-Arabism, while others aimed to strengthen national identity by emphasizing Islamic precepts (Dawisha 2003, 189-191). These different methods reflect the many perspectives on modernization and governance within the Muslim world.

The historical nuances discussed had a crucial role in creating the fundamental ideas of the OIC, with the goal of connecting different Islamic traditions with the political needs of the post-colonial state system. The foundation of the OIC in 1969 was not solely a response to current political challenges, but rather the result of a larger historical movement aimed at redefining Islamic unity within the framework of global modernity.

The OIC was supposed to act as a catalyst for strengthening this unity, especially in addressing pressing historical issues like the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which played a crucial role in its creation. Throughout history, the caliphate symbolised the highest

point of political and religious authority in the Muslim world, embodying the concept of united Islamic rule until it came to an end in 1924 (Dawisha 2003, 192-193). The lasting impact of the organization appears to have influenced the fundamental principles of the OIC, advocating for a collaborative approach to leadership and coordination in global affairs, without necessarily reviving a single political system.

One may conclude that the formation of the OIC can be seen as a response to peculiar political-theological intellectual currents among the Muslim elite, aiming to foster a collective mechanism for Muslim nations to navigate the complexities of modern statehood and international relations, while still endeavoring to embody the spiritual unity and cooperative ethos of the *ummah*. The OIC's emphasis on voluntary cooperation and member state participation, for example, until now underscores this modern reinterpretation of Islamic political unity, striving to harmonise traditional Islamic principles with the exigencies of contemporary governance (Hallaq 2012, 220-223).

The Saudi Contribution

As already discussed in some detail, during the crucial decade of the 1960s, the fundamental ideas and structures for the establishment of the OIC were developed. Due to the efforts of King Faisal in the early 1960s, representatives from several Muslim nations were sent invitations to Saudi Arabia, resulting in the formation of the Muslim World League (MWL) (Husain 2022, 45-63). This NGO, financed by Saudi Arabia, was initially founded with the objective of fostering worldwide solidarity among Muslims. Nevertheless, the efficacy of the initiative was constrained by its narrow focus on specific academic subjects and target groups, so limiting its capacity to generate a broad-reaching impact and influence within the broader Muslim community (Kayaoglu 2015, 13; Liu and Fan 2018, 13).

The foundation of the OIC was significantly influenced by the political dynamics at both regional and international levels (Lewis 2004, 118-122). Capitalising on the intense mood of the Muslim world at large, it was King Faisal, in cooperation with King Hassan of Morocco, who organised the Islamic Summit in 1969 in Rabat, Morocco. This summit, attended by twenty-four Muslim states and with the Palestine Liberation Organization as an observer, was a significant event that marked a crucial time in Islamic unity. The results of the summit, although not significant, were fundamental, creating a model for future gatherings and building a structure for the formation of the OIC. In the subsequent year, during a gathering in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, the resolution was made to create a secretariat for the OIC. By 1972, a charter was officially ratified, clearly stating the OIC's goals and emphasising its dedication to advocating for Muslim interests worldwide (Voll 2019, 230-234).

In every sense of the term, the OIC's formation and its initial outlook were

significantly influenced by Saudi Arabia's strategic foreign and security policies during the reign of King Faisal. The absence of essential leadership and resources was the primary reason for the failure of previous attempts by countries such as Pakistan and Malaysia to establish an intergovernmental Islamic organization. Nevertheless, the necessary resources and guidance were provided by Saudi Arabia's substantial hydrocarbon reserves and King Faisal's diplomatic abilities. King Faisal perceived the pan-Arabism and socialism advocated by Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt as prospective threats to the monarchical systems in the Gulf, including his own kingdom. To counteract these ideologies, he aimed to establish a pan-Islamic cooperative framework. Nasser's creation of the United Arab Republic and the United Arab States, as well as the secular and nationalist leanings of the League of Arab States, emphasised the need for Saudi Arabia to develop an alternative platform that could exert influence throughout the Islamic world (Beling 2019, 184-201)

The Ideological Foundations

The OIC's worldview and leadership model is intrinsically inspired by Islamic history and theology. Its stature among the Muslim states could not have been justified otherwise. In addition, one of the primary arguments here is that the OIC is actually a modern reincarnation of the Islamic caliphate and, hence, it is supposed to be founded upon sound theological grounds, which are also appropriate for modern-day polity. It becomes quite compelling, therefore, to appreciate these concepts and their extension and interpretation in the form of the OIC charter. The following first invokes a theoretical discussion of these ideological foundations of the OIC, and follows it with a detailed analysis of the principal clauses of the OIC's charter.

To begin with, the *ummah* is a well-established religious concept of a global community of Muslims bound by their faith, with an emphasised sense of unity and collective identity. This principle fostered a sense of solidarity among diverse Muslim-majority nations, motivating them to collaborate on common issues and support each other politically, economically, and culturally. The OIC emerged as a platform to strengthen this unity, addressing challenges facing the *ummah*, such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which was the most immediate historical catalyst for its creation. The *khilafah* or caliphate, on the other hand, in historical terms is the political and religious leadership of the Muslim world, symbolising the ideal of unified Islamic governance (Lewis 2002, 45-47; Mayer 2018, 98-102). Although it was technically abolished 1924, its legacy influenced the OIC's establishment by providing a model for cooperation and leadership among Muslim nations. The OIC aimed to revive this spirit of collective governance without seeking to re-establish a single political entity, and instead, they promoted cooperation and coordination in international affairs. Both the *ummah* and caliphate represent the means for good governance which in

Islamic thought is characterised by justice, consultation or *shura*, and welfare of the people or *maslahah*.

Shura and Global Diplomacy

Shura aligns closely with modern democratic practices (Esposito *et al.* 1996; Voll 2019, 52-55) particularly in international bodies like the United Nations, where consultation and consensus are essential. This principle can be expanded to illustrate how the OIC's decision-making processes mirror global standards of diplomatic engagement, promoting a form of governance that is both traditionally legitimate and internationally recognisable. This principle drives the organization's efforts to enhance political stability, spur economic development, and advance social justice across its member states. By fostering dialogue, pre-empting and resolving conflicts, and supporting initiatives that embody Islamic governance ideals, the OIC strives to maintain these values.

Maslahah and International Development

Maslahah extends beyond the confines of the Muslim community (Hallaq 2012, 278-282), touching on global issues like poverty, health, and education, which are also focal points of international development agendas such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This section can explore how the OIC's initiatives, underpinned by *maslahah*, contribute to broader global welfare and align with international efforts to tackle pressing humanitarian challenges.

It is actually these principles that guide the OIC to promote political stability, economic development, and social justice among member states. The organization strives to uphold these values by fostering dialogue, resolving and pre-empting conflicts, and supporting development initiatives that align with Islamic principles of good governance. Together, these concepts shape the OIC's foundation, aiming to unify the Muslim world, provide collective leadership, and address the contemporary challenges and aspirations of the global Muslim community. The following will offer an interpretation of the charter and examine how these principles of the OIC can be interpreted with these foundational concepts that have been outlined in this analysis.

The OIC through the Lense of its Charter

As discussed above, the final catalyst for Muslim unity was an arson attack on the Al-Aqsa Mosque on August 21, 1969 (Kayaoglu 2015, 12). The following is an orderly analysis of this charter (OIC 2024, 373) which essentially reflects the ideological

foundations of the OIC.

(1) “To promote Islamic solidarity among member states”.: This is a principle which is directly related to the concept of the *ummah* and it emphasises the unity and collective identity of Muslims worldwide. Through the promotion of Islamic solidarity, the OIC seeks to strengthen the bonds among member states and this reflects the historical role of the caliphate for uniting the community within a single leadership. As a form of solidarity, the goal is to ensure that Muslims support each other and also foster a sense of community and mutual responsibility and this is key to the notion of good governance.

(2) “To consolidate cooperation among member states in the economic, social, cultural, scientific, and other vital fields, and to arrange consultations among member states belonging to international organizations”. This is a principle that is a reflection of the caliphate’s role in governing various aspects of life and also the general promotion of the welfare or well-being of the Muslim community. The ‘*umma*’ collective well-being is achieved through the cooperation of Muslim’s in these areas. Partnerships in this context are to be governed in accordance with the Islamic principle of *maslahah*. This is to ensure that all members will derive advantages from the pooled resources and advancements that foster the overall growth and prosperity of the community.

(3) “To endeavour to eliminate racial segregation and discrimination and to eradicate colonialism in all its forms”. The Islamic legal principles that ensure equality and justice are central to good governance. The ‘*umma*’ is inclusive and opposes both racism and discrimination. Good governance will also promote justice and equality for all citizens and systematically ignores race or ethnicity. The OIC’s commitment to combating discrimination and colonialism embodies these values and promotes a just and equitable society as defined within Islamic writings and teachings.

(4) “To take necessary measures to support international peace and security founded on justice”. The concept of the ‘*umma*’ embodies the notion of a peaceful and just community. Historically, the caliphate has made a goal of maintaining peace and security within its territories. The OIC’s mandate to support international peace and security is a demonstration of this Islamic notion of resolving conflict while avoiding aggression and this is essential for good governance. As a principle, this reflects the significance of justice as the foundation for enduring peace.

(5) “To coordinate efforts to safeguard the Holy Places, to support the struggle of the people of Palestine, and help them to regain their rights and liberate their land”. This principle highlights the *umma*’s goal of recognizing and supporting oppressed Muslims. Historically, the caliphate has acted as the defender or protector of both land and rights. The OIC’s efforts to protect and preserve holy places and also to support the Palestinian cause reflects their protective role and further, it emphasises justice and the defense of Muslim rights which are critical elements of Islamic governance.

(6) “To strengthen the struggle of all Muslim people with a view to safeguarding their dignity, independence, and national rights”. The protection of dignity,

independence and basic rights for Muslims is aligned with the caliphate's responsibility for maintaining the justice and protection of rights for all citizens. This principle of the OIC demonstrates the collective obligation to support each other in times of need and it also promotes the just protection of the vulnerable within the community and these are core ideas within the notion of Islamic governance.

(7) "To create a suitable atmosphere for the promotion of cooperation and understanding among member states and other countries". This principle aligns with the concept of shura (consultation) in Islam, which is essential for good governance. By fostering cooperation and understanding, the OIC seeks to create an environment where member states can work together harmoniously and this is a reflection of the caliphate's role for maintaining unity and order within the 'umma'. As a form of collaboration, this ensures that governance is both participatory and inclusive and this is a solid reflection of key Islamic principles including mutual respect or recognition and collective decision-making.

One clearly appreciates that the principles or, rather, the mandate of the OIC are fundamentally linked to the foundational ideological concepts through which the OIC aims to uphold Islamic good governance. The charter in this sense reflects the OIC's role for fostering unity, cooperation, justice, and the collective welfare of the global Muslim community.

A Modern Caliphate

In articulating the convergence between the foundational ethos of the OIC and its modern relevance, it is imperative to acknowledge its embodiment of the leadership ideals once ascribed to the historical Islamic caliphate. The OIC actually represents a contemporary recalibration of the traditional governance systems that marked the Islamic polity, particularly those exemplified by the caliphate prior to its dissolution following the decline of the Ottoman Empire. This modern institution, while invoking the legacy of the caliphate, also confronts the ideological and structural transformations necessitated by the emergence of modernity and postcolonial nation-states, notably exemplified by the dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Such conflicts have not only underscored the shifts within the Muslim community but have also catalysed a re-evaluation of governance models, resulting in a collective endeavour to sustain Islamic identity and influence in the global sphere.

The OIC's mission to perpetuate Islamic governance is thus refracted through a prism of modern challenges and the need for an adaptive approach that respects historical traditions while addressing contemporary realities. This institution serves not merely as a diplomatic entity but as a paradigm of 'mutual recognition' among its members, each of whom adheres to shared values despite diverse linguistic, cultural, and national backgrounds.

Relevance to Modern Philosophical and Political Theories

Here, the notion of ‘mutual recognition’—rooted deeply in the philosophical musings of Hegel and later appropriated by postcolonial theorists like Frantz Fanon—becomes crucial. Fanon’s reinterpretation of Hegel’s dialectics, emphasising the recognition of identities (Fanon 2008, 189-191) as understood by the subjects themselves, resonates profoundly with the OIC’s foundational principles.

Contrary to Samuel Huntington’s thesis in which he posits inevitable conflicts between monolithic cultural blocks (Huntington 1996, 45-48), the OIC exemplifies a counter-narrative of cooperation and mutual understanding that transcends simplistic dichotomies between the Islamic world and the West. Huntington’s framework, while influential, often overlooks the nuanced interactions and the shared principles of law and governance that bridge these supposed civilizational divides. The organization and efforts of the OIC demonstrate a combination of Islamic legal traditions and the democratic principles that form the foundation of modern international relations.

To discuss it more extensively, the OIC is a cooperative that is bound by a shared or mutual recognition among members as having a shared set of values and vision. They are a body that seems opposed to Western interests even if they are collectively aligned with their own. Such an opposite to a ‘clash’ or conflict might be a mutual recognition among different political bodies. Frantz Fanon significantly introduced the philosopher Hegel’s concept of ‘mutual recognition’ into the lexicon of post colonial thought in his homeland of Algeria in the 1950’s (Habib 2017, 68). It is a good way of describing the principles of a modern caliphate, but with Western concepts from International theory. As a principle, and a democratic one specifically, any given individual wants to be recognised in the very terms that they see themselves according to Fanon’s reading of Hegel. As a phenomenological position in philosophy it is one where the bond is established by seeing a person or a collective of them in the very same way that they understand themselves. There is a natural desire to be recognised and understood in the very terms any individual sees or knows themselves (Habib 2017, 68-69). As ‘dialectic’ or a relationship, it is bound to fail or never a perfect union and it is known as the tragic failure of mutual recognition in Hegel’s system. It is sometimes impossible to have equality and mutual recognition in a society defined by certain forms of unequal power. In Fanon’s time, he probably believed the one way to begin to make the colonial nation states think of how pervasive their ‘knowledge systems’ were and that such a transition needed a cohesion that should begin with some basics about defining a civilization like mutual recognition.

The OIC is a group of 58 nation states where only five of the members have less than a majority of Islamic populations. It is a group of nation states that is represented by 26 distinct language and linguistic groups. Arabic is the national language spoken in 10 of these nation states, and there are exactly the same number of nation states that are officially bilingual or recognise two languages. The European regional languages

are represented in this co-operative as well and include nation states with languages like Albanian, English (5), French (9), Portuguese (2) languages (Citaristi 2022). There is no point and regionally identifying the language groups except to point to an organization that is linguistically diverse. Huntington maintained that in the post-Cold War era the future would be divided into Islam, the West/Occidental, Sino, Japanese, Hindu, Latin American and the Orthodox or Coptic Christian worlds (Samuel P., 2011). His categories demonstrate a blend of those that are founded specifically on a religion like Islamic, Orthodox or Hindu or those that are based on civilizations like the Chinese or Japanese. Beyond how complex a religious group or civilization might be to accurately define the geographical definitions of Africa and Latin America are easier to draw on a map. Huntington's taxonomy includes regions, civilizations and linguistic groups like the SinoChinese and Japanese nation states, and religion-based nation states. His own group are constitutional democracies that are distinct because they are based on the rule of law and not the right for a cleric and Caliph to change or make laws using the Qu'ran as the ideal primary legal source. This is a legal system that recognised in itself that it had no way of anticipating copyright law in the seventh Century but it is easily a matter of International affairs for any nation state who trades in books and ideas, music and film, etc. There are jurisprudence or legal theory differences, is one way of stressing that there are some mutual recognition points of intersections. There are sometimes more points of 'mutual recognition' than is often understood when looking at Islam through a colonial historical gaze or one that begins with the assumption that there is a 'clash' even to begin with. Huntington fails to recognise that there are religious exceptions that make his 'binary' distinctions between civilizations not so easy to draw.

The main point to be made about a co-operative of nation states versus a 'civilisation' as Huntington draws the distinction, is that cooperative states are bound by a form of mutual recognition. They co-operate on the basis of the principles of the OIC, and while there are intersections with older forms of Islamic law and rule, there are a number of significant modern components. Although there is an attempt to rebuild a 'form' of the caliphate, it is not the same form of building as reinstating it. The principles may be timeless but the institution itself is built entirely on the cooperation and free participation of the member states. This is a form of 'mutual recognition' and it is not at odds with some ideas in the West given that it shares many of the basic democratic principles that the modern West was built on. While it does appear to be a distinct 'civilization' because of the observance of religious law within a modern state, it has been stressed that this is not an 'exceptional' feature and that these spiritual exceptions are also a part of Huntington's Western civilisation. Unless the West can see the and mutually recognise the OIC, it will continue to see this institution and others as one that it will have a potential 'clash' with. However, understanding more about the principles of the OIC, it is much clearer to see that there are more similarities than clashes and that cooperating with this co-operative holds value. The OIC was

recognised by the United Nations in 1977 and by the European Union (Kayaoglu, 2015, 14-15) and this suggests that while there might be no perfect mutual recognition outside of non-members, there can be a greater recognition and understanding and the hope that there are no future clash's but harmonious partnership building.

The OIC's inclusive stance is demonstrated by its linguistic and cultural variety, which includes states where Arabic is not the only tongue but where different languages and dialects coexist. This fosters a wider debate within the Islamic world. This diversity challenges Huntington's categorical divisions and highlights the fluid intersections of culture, law, and religion that the OIC navigates. It is through such navigation that the OIC seeks not just to address immediate geopolitical challenges but also to articulate a broader vision for global Islamic solidarity.

Thus, the OIC should be seen not merely as a continuation of the caliphate in a new guise but as a modern iteration that strives to reconcile the historical ideals of Islamic governance with the exigencies of the contemporary global order. It represents a collective effort to forge a pathway that respects the autonomy and dignity of diverse Muslim communities while engaging constructively with the wider world. This model of mutual recognition and cooperation could indeed serve as a foundational stone for a future where clashes are replaced by collaborations, reflecting a shared commitment to justice, peace, and sustainable development across nations and cultures.

OIC and Contemporary Issues of the Muslim World

The OIC has been facing a complex global landscape marked by significant technological change, increased global interconnectivity, and crucial security challenges. One of the critical areas where the OIC has actively engaged is in addressing the rise of international terrorism. Through initiatives like the Voice of Wisdom (*Sawt al-Hikma*) center (OIC 2019), the OIC has attempted to counter radical narratives and promote moderation, particularly through digital platforms that reach a global audience. This initiative exhibits an understanding of the digital revolution's role in shaping ideologies and the necessity of presenting peaceful alternatives through the same channels. In addition, the OIC's involvement in crisis regions like Syria and Myanmar illustrates its commitment to addressing humanitarian crises. Likewise, in Syria and neighbouring regions, the OIC has condemned violence and called for peace initiatives, supporting resolutions on international platforms like the United Nations. For the Rohingya issue, particularly, the OIC has been instrumental in mobilizing support and raising international awareness about the plight of Muslim minorities, advocating for human rights and providing humanitarian aid (OIC 2021).

Future Outlook of the OIC

Looking forward, the OIC faces several global trends that will shape its role in international politics. As nationalism rises globally, the OIC may need to navigate more assertively the political landscapes of member states that prioritise national over collective Islamic interests (Juergensmeyer 2008, 142-145). This could challenge the OIC's unity but also offers an opportunity to redefine its relevance by mediating and reconciling divergent national policies within its framework. On the other hand, the rise of China and its investment in the Middle East and Africa, regions with significant OIC member states, presents both an opportunity and a challenge (Ehteshami and Horesh 2018, 88-92). The OIC could leverage Chinese investments to bolster economic development within member states, aligning these with broader Islamic economic collaboration initiatives. However, it is imperative to also guarantee that these partnerships do not compromise the independence or the Islamic cultural authenticity of the member states. Most importantly, due to the high vulnerability of numerous OIC member states to climate change, the organization has the potential to significantly influence and promote sustainable development and climate action. Possible initiatives could encompass the promotion of renewable energy projects, sustainable urban planning, and the implementation of water conservation technologies specifically designed to meet the requirements of Islamic countries.

Criticisms

It is quite obvious that the OIC is playing a crucial role in the unification of Muslim nations under a cooperative framework. Yet, it has faced considerable scrutiny about its effectiveness and the achievement of its goals. Critics have argued that the OIC has been showing poor effectiveness in dealing with internal conflicts among Muslim nations, such as those occurring in Syria, Yemen, and Myanmar. The organization's inclination to react to crises rather than implementing proactive remedies is often recognised as a weakness. In addition, the OIC's efforts to resolve divergent political objectives among its member nations have been constrained by the diverse political, economic, and cultural contexts of these countries. The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran illustrates broader sectarian tensions, which significantly hinder the unity and operation of the OIC (Labisch 2019, 85-90).

From an economic perspective, the OIC's goal is to promote economic growth. However, differences in economic capabilities and objectives among member states have resulted in uneven levels of commitment and investment in collaborative projects. The persistence of cultural problems hampers the progress towards modernization and integration into the global economy, since measures to enhance educational and technological cooperation among all member states have been sluggish to materialise.

In hindsight, it is important to note that where the countries once controlled colonies, corporations that are foreign owned now have a significant impact and it is one of the reasons that the OIC exists in terms of recognizing economic and not just political sovereignty and independence. However, the problem of this trade imbalance remains an important feature of the OIC. Interestingly, it was the lack of coherent and unified leadership that once made it difficult for the Ottomans to address its financial and military internal and external challenges effectively, ultimately leading to its collapse (Zürcher, 2019, 12-15).

Comparison with Other International Organizations

Distinct contrasts and similarities occur when comparing the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) with other regional or international entities, such as the African Union (AU) or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Similar to the OIC, the AU encounters difficulties associated with political instability and economic differences among its member nations. Nevertheless, the AU has demonstrated a greater level of initiative in engaging in political interventions within its member states, as seen by its peacekeeping operations and the implementation of stricter political supervision systems.

Contrarily, ASEAN has achieved remarkable success in establishing a vibrant economic region and promoting extensive market integration among its members, a goal that the OIC has faced difficulties in attaining. The ASEAN's strategy for resolving conflicts and achieving economic integration, which emphasises consensus-building and a non-interference policy, presents a potential model that the OIC might potentially adopt. This is especially relevant in the areas of economic cooperation and resolving problems among its member states (Acharya 2009, 87-89).

Conclusion

To conclude, the OIC emerges distinctly as a modern incarnation of the historical Islamic caliphate, instilled with the core principles of the *ummah*, the caliphate, and Islamic good governance. Established in 1969 amidst the throes of postcolonial transitions and the quest for Islamic unity, the OIC articulates a vision of unity, justice, cooperation, and mutual support, mirroring the collective ethos and ethical standards traditionally associated with the Islamic community. This initiative seeks to safeguard the well-being and cohesion of Muslims globally, navigating beyond the traditional ethnic and national delineations to foster a transcendent Islamic identity.

The foundational ideology of the OIC deeply intertwines with the historical constructs of *ummah*—a term that signifies the global community of Muslims bonded by faith. This concept historically underscored the unity and collective

identity among Muslims, serving as a counterpoint to the fragmenting tendencies of modern nation-states. The fall of the Ottoman Caliphate in the early twentieth century marked a significant ideological shift within the Muslim world, setting the stage for the OIC to inherit and adapt these traditional governance structures to the contemporary global landscape.

The aim of revitalising the principles of the caliphate within the framework of the OIC is to revive the fundamental concept of unified Islamic leadership and representation worldwide. The charter of the OIC is based on the principles of justice, consultation (*shura*), and the welfare of the people (*maslahah*), as outlined in the Quran and the prophetic traditions. Its goal is to promote a comprehensive approach to addressing the social, economic, and political challenges faced by the Muslim world in the present day. The OIC aims to preserve the fundamental principles of Islamic governance and also to incorporate these principles into contemporary world politics and global diplomacy. The integration of traditional and modern elements is essential for ensuring the continued significance and effectiveness of Islamic administration in meeting the current requirements of the Muslim community. The OIC's charter incorporates principles aimed at guaranteeing that governance within member states conforms to the Islamic values of equity, responsibility, and safeguarding of human rights.

Therefore, the OIC plays a crucial role in the realm of worldwide Islamic politics, representing a significant entity that fosters mutual acknowledgment among its member nations based on common principles and shared goals. This reciprocal acknowledgment is crucial in promoting a unified and vibrant Islamic identity that is adaptable to the demands and possibilities of the contemporary world. The OIC not only reflects the historical authority of the caliphate, but also redefines it, guaranteeing its lasting significance and efficiency in advancing Islamic unity and governance on the modern global platform.

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Од историјског халифата до савременог савеза управљања: Порекло и еволуција Организације исламске сарадње

Сажетак: Основана 1969. године, Организација исламске сарадње (ОИС) представља савремену итерацију традиционалне представе о исламском халифату, оличавајући идеале лидерства исламског света. Историјски гледано, халифат је симболизовао уједињени систем доброг управљања под појединачним владарима, при чему је пад Османског царства означио његов крај и најавио значајне идеолошке трансформације унутар муслиманске заједнице. У условима модернитета и постколонијализма, када су традиционалне структуре исламског управљања преиспитиване у контексту успона национализма и националних држава, израелско-палестински сукоб је кристалисао те промене, подстичући колективни исламски идентитет кроз ОИС. Ова сарадња настоји не само да очува верски идентитет и политички утицај, већ и да одржи исламско управљање у савременом контексту. Овај рад истражује еволуцију ОИС-а од историјских идеала халифата до модерне политичке заједнице, процењујући њене идеолошке основе, кључну улогу и трајну релевантност у данашњем глобалном окружењу.

Кључне речи: ОИС, халифат, ума, муслиманска организација, исламска политичка мисао