



THE ISLAMIC KHILAFAH PREVENTS EDUCATION FROM BECOMING AN IMPERIALIST COMMODITY IN THE MUSLIM LANDS (Seeking the Form of a World-Class Education – Part 2)

Allah (swt) has in fact defined the quality that arises from the process of education in Islam, with individuals becoming qualified as *Ulul Albab* and as a generation becoming *Khoiru Ummah*. In future, the quality of such a generation would be capable of leading their nation into becoming a great, powerful, and leading nation, even to the extent of becoming a leader of the world in civilization and in technological development. This article is the last part of the discussion about the Islamic concept of a world-class university.

EDUCATION IS A GREAT INVESTMENT FOR A CIVILIZATION

Long before the awakening of Europe and America, the Muslim Ummah with their civilization had been successfully leading the world in civilization and development of technology for 13 centuries. No triumph by any other nation could survive that long. Hunke and Al-Faruqi well describe the background of the Islamic society during the era of the Islamic Khilafah, where they attribute two main causes for its success in acquisition and development of science and technology.¹

Firstly, the paradigm that developed in the Islamic society, that generated from the Aqeedah. This proclaims knowledge as being the "twin brother" of faith, learning as a form of ibadah - one way to know Allah (*ma'rifatullah*) - and the people endowed with knowledge as being the inheritors of the prophets, while superstition is a form the shirk. This paradigm replaced the *jahiliyyah* paradigm, which was also the paradigm of ancient Rome, Persia and India, and that had made knowledge a caste-privilege and restricted from ordinary people. On the contrary, Hunke used the term "one nation go to school" to illustrate that this paradigm had been so revolutionary that there was an awakening of science and technology. Motivation in pursuit of knowledge emerged from the hadiths such as....

«طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ عَلَى كُلِّ مُسْلِمٍ» **"The seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim..."**, «اطلبوا العلم من المهد إلى اللحد» **"Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave"**, «اطلبوا العلم ولو في الصين» **"Seek knowledge, even if you have to go as far as China"**, «فَضْلُ الْعِلْمِ أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ فَضْلِ الْعِبَادَةِ» **"It is better to teach knowledge one hour in the night than to pray all night."** etc. Even wealthy people were very enthusiastic and proud to do something to increase the level of knowledge or education of society, such as building a public library, observatory, or laboratory, as well as hiring experts.

Secondly, the role of the state was powerful in providing positive stimuli for the development of science. Although the political situation could change, the attitude of the rulers of the Muslim lands in the past towards science was much more positive than the present ones. The state showed high respect towards teachers, scholars and scientists, guaranteed their needs, seriously empowered them in their roles and even encouraged them to master the highest levels of science with their motivation based in the Quran and Sunnah.

The second point is the focus of this paper. It is indisputable that the independence of the state and the strength of its vision are the most important factors in mastering knowledge/science and directing the design of a quality education system. It is because the political system of the state will direct the management of its entire resources (both natural and human resources) to achieve its political goals.

In Islam, politics means to look after the affairs of people via the Islamic rules both domestic and foreign (*ri'ayah shu'un wa al Ummah dakhilian kharijiyan*). Political activities are performed by the people (the Ummah) and the government (the State). A state is an institution that regulates these affairs in practical terms. On the other hand, the Ummah

provide corrections (*muhasabah*) to the government in carrying out its duties. Meanwhile, the political goal of Islam is to preserve the lives of people with Islamic laws in important aspects of life, namely: preservation of progeny, mind, honor, human life, property, religion, security, and country.²

Within education, in order to achieve the political goal of Islam in the preservation of mind, the state is obliged to encourage people to seek knowledge, conduct *tadabbur* and *ijtihad*, as well as various cases which can develop the potential of the human mind, and it also praises the existence of people with knowledge (See: TMQ. al-Maidah: 90-91; TMQ az-Zumar: 9; TMQ al-Mujadilah: 11). The Islamic system's state policy will design the educational system along with the entire supporting systems. Not only in terms of the budget, but also related to the media, research, labor, industry, to the level of Foreign Policy. The Islamic government is truly aware that education is a future investment for the survival of Islam.

I. DOMESTIC POLITICS OF ISLAM: ENSURING EDUCATION IS NOT COMMODIFIED

Allah (swt) says in the Quran: ﴿وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَاكَ إِلَّا رَحْمَةً لِّلْعَالَمِينَ﴾ **“And We have not sent you, [O Muhammad], except as a mercy to the worlds.”** (TMQ. al-Anbiya [21]: 107). Islam was revealed by Allah (swt) as a mercy to the universe. This mercy of Islam is realized by creating good for all through the ability of Islamic law to resolve all of life's problems for all humans in the world. It is the same thing in education. The Khilafah will not discriminate when providing education. A quality free education from basic to intermediate level will be provided to all citizens regardless of religion, *mazhab*, race, ethnic, or gender. For higher education, the Khilafah will provide it according to its ability.

In the era of the Islamic State that began with the leadership of the Prophet (saw) in Madinah, the model of providing education was initiated with the Prophet being a head of state who highly appreciated knowledge. During the era of the next Islamic Khilafah, education was provided to all citizens without charge. Thus, it has never been the case throughout Islamic history, that the government sought profit or charged the people for education. This is due to the paradigm of the state that mapped education as a primary need of the people that must be met. It then became a spirit in economic politics in Islam, i.e. the guarantee of the fulfillment of all primary needs (*al-hajat al-asasiyah/basic needs*). The primary needs for each individual are food, clothing, and shelter. All three are basic needs for every individual. As for the primary needs of the people as a society, these are security, medicine, and education.

The domestic politics of Islam ensures education be prevented from becoming a business or economic commodity. Moreover, if the people are charged a certain fare for education, this will lead to discrimination against the people, because it will be as though there are two types of education, i.e. education for the wealthy people and education for the general public. In response to this, therefore, it is necessary to understand the basic principles of mastery of knowledge via the educational system, which are as follows:³

1. Mastery of science and technology must be conducted systematically by the state.
2. Mastery of science and technology can only be conducted upon state policies, not be driven by private interests, let alone foreigners.
3. The Muslim Ummah should live under the system of the Khilafah State, which is the Islamic state that implements Islam and carries the da'wah of Islam to all corners of the world so that Islam is applied to form *rahmatan lil 'alamiin* (mercy to the world).

Thus, three (3) basic principles must be fulfilled by the Muslim Ummah that is given the title by Allah as *khayru ummah* (the best nation). It must be remembered, that the peak of achievement in the mastery of science and technology seen in the glory days of the Muslim Ummah of the past cannot be separated from the establishment of the Khilafah system,

wherein it has a command system that is globally integrated and the political role is aligned with the religious role. We also get an overview from history that the figures of the previous leaders were pious people and statesmen who were reliable and qualified, as well as '*wara ulama*' who feared their Lord, loved knowledge, and loved their people. In this aspect we can see the integration of the three main pillars in the formation of the Islamic civilization, i.e. religion, politics, and knowledge, integrated under one control of the Khilafah system under the leadership of a Khalifah (Caliph).

Meanwhile, the benchmark for measuring ability in whether a state has mastered science and technology systemically, if:

1. capable of forming the education system in accordance with the views of life of the state as well as the problems faced by the state
2. capable of forming the ability of research leading to the solving of the problems faced by the state
3. capable of forming an industrial system applying the research results
4. capable of forming an industrial system able to obtain economic benefits fairly
5. capable of directing the industrial system to solve the problems faced by the state, set off from the vision and mission of the state.

Based on these basic principles, it can be seen that a strong and independent state will synergize all strategic components in order to master science, starting from the educational system, and including research capabilities, its industrial system, mapping patterns of employment, up to the politics of diplomacy and international relations with other countries. All are designed in synergy set off from the political lines of the state.

II. FOREIGN POLITICS OF ISLAM: PREVENTING EDUCATION FROM BECOMING AN IMPERIAL TOOL

For a state founded upon the ideology of capitalism, science and technology are the most significant economic agents, beside politics, law, and socio-cultural changes. Therefore, in order to revive the economy, they need the rise of science and technology. Look at the industrial centres of higher education which are worldwide and truly enthralling, such as Boston, New York, California; Toronto, British Columbia; London, Manchester, Cambridge; or Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra. These industrial areas began the process of 21st century capitalization of science and technology, especially when it is understood that economic growth is driven by knowledge – *knowledge-and-technology-driven economic growth*.

Therefore the analysis of Susan Strange, a British scholar of international relations, is true, that science and technology are one of the strengths of the world; "*knowledge is power, whoever is able to develop or acquire and to deny the access of others to a kind of knowledge respected and sought by others will exercise a very special kind of structural power.*"⁴ Thus today's practices of monopolizing knowledge have become a kind of requirement for a state to be able to lead the world. This is what the West has undertaken against the Islamic countries, which has led to their increasingly high level of dependency on the West, in terms of the development of science.

This dependence is a really ironic condition. Because in fact the Muslim Ummah had once been at the forefront in the mastery of science. Muslim scientists had made many discoveries that were compiled in books of knowledge and then developed continually through research. Great scientists such as Ibn Sina, al-Farabi, Ibn Khaldun, al-Khwarizmi, and others have proven that Islam once led the glory of science.

Along with the deterioration of Islam, Islamic scientists have been decreasing in number, and even the sources of knowledge found in thousands of books have either been destroyed or taken by the West to be developed. Finally, it is the West that has been making rapid

developments in science, not Islam. It is because the study, research, and development of science is actively undertaken in the West. Meanwhile the regimes of the Muslim countries are not serious about these activities and so are constantly lagging behind in the mastery of science.

To address the problem of the dependence of the Islamic countries upon Western countries in terms of science and technology, this section of the paper will specifically review how foreign politics in Islam addresses the issue of mastering science and technology. Foreign politics in Islam has a political line which prevents education being used as a tool of Imperialism, whether the Islamic State is the subject or object. In other words, the Islamic State will not colonize another country in the name of education nor allow itself to be colonized because of the need for knowledge.

The Khilafah State will end the foreign policies of the Islamic countries today, which is characterized by weakness and subservience to the West, to be replaced by a new model on the basis of Islam. Based on Islamic law, the Khilafah will build relationships with other countries in the fields of economics, politics, culture, or education. In all foreign affairs, the Khilafah will ensure that the da'wah of Islam can be delivered to all mankind in the best way. The Prophet (saw) said:

«أَمَرْتُ أَنْ أَقَاتِلَ النَّاسَ حَتَّى يَشْهَدُوا أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ وَيُعِينُوا الصَّلَاةَ وَيُؤْتُوا الزَّكَاةَ فَإِذَا فَعَلُوا ذَلِكَ عَصَمُوا مِنِّي دِمَاءَهُمْ وَأَمْوَالَهُمْ إِلَّا بِحَقِّ الْإِسْلَامِ وَحِسَابُهُمْ عَلَى اللَّهِ»

“I have been commanded to fight against people, till they testify Laa ilaha illa Allah Muhammadur Rasulallah. And when they do it, their blood and riches are guaranteed protection on my behalf except where it is justified by law, and their affairs rest with Allah.”

The Islamic Khilafah State will implement a foreign policy based on an unchanged certain method (*tariqa*), namely da'wah and jihad. This method has not changed even though the rulers of the Islamic State have changed. This method has not changed since the Prophet (saw) established the state in Madinah, until the collapse of the Islamic Khilafah. When the Prophet (saw) governed in Madinah, he always prepared the army and initiated jihad to eliminate various forms of physical barriers that obstructed the da'wah of Islam. The Quraish were one of the physical barriers that prevented the spread of Islam, therefore they had to be fought. Rasulallah successfully eliminated the physical barriers of the governmental institutions of Quraysh and other tribes in the Arabian Peninsula, until Islam spread throughout the world. Meanwhile, the relationships of the Khilafah with other countries will be built with the following principles:

There is a very fundamental difference between knowledge (science and technology) and *thaqafah* (culture). Knowledge - including science and technology- is universal, not owned nor monopolized by any particular nation. Anyone has the right to obtain and study it. The Khilafah State - as an ideological state— must preserve the *thaqafah* of its generations so that the Muslim Ummah will have the typical and noble Islamic Personality (*shakhsiyah Islamiyah*). By doing so, the Khilafah state obliges all systems, programs, and curriculum of education that are applied throughout the educational institutions existing under the auspices of the Islamic Khilafah State, to refer to the system, program and curriculum of the Khilafah State. In addition, the state must ensure that the education system taking place in its country is free from the influence of any ideology or understandings that are contrary to Islamic belief, as well as free from foreign cultures.

In terms of education, the Islamic Khilafah with its foreign policy line and diplomatic strategy will proactively cooperate with countries other than those that are hostile to it. This could be undertaken to exchange teaching staff and send delegations between the two countries in order to spread the culture and language to each other. The principles governing international agreements of the Khilafah in Education are as follows :⁵

1. The Islamic State implements a curriculum of education with a certain policy to shape the *Shakhsiyah Islamiyah* (Islamic Personality).

2. The Islamic Sharia enables teaching and learning activities in the framework of developing knowledge that benefits the Ummah and the world.

3. The Islamic State could make agreements to bring teachers and lecturers in the field of experimental sciences from abroad because the teacher is tied to the state curriculum and should not deviate from it.

4. It is forbidden to make an agreement in which its content involves allowing other countries to spread wrong ideas and ideology contrary to Islam, or open private schools among the Muslim Ummah.

5. It is forbidden to make an agreement in which its content is requiring the Islamic state to be bound by any program which is not in accordance with its education policies that must be held onto firmly.

With its noble principles, Islam ensures all relations and agreements with other countries will always be symmetrical and not manipulative, because the methodology of foreign policy in Islam is not imperialism like that of Capitalism, but is comprised of da'wah and jihad to uphold humanitarian values. Besides, the principle of Islamic diplomacy is concerned with national interests without ignoring the interests of other countries.

TACTICAL STEPS OF THE KHILAFAH STATE IN THE POLITICS OF MASTERY OF KNOWLEDGE

A. Strategy in Building the State's Ability in Mastery of Knowledge

The first strategy is linked to the construction of three (3) sub-systems that support the state's ability to master the highest knowledge.

i. Building a visionary **education system** from the level of primary, secondary to tertiary of higher education where philosophy and scientific tradition are sourced only from the Islamic Aqeedah, so a generation with the qualities of a mindset of leadership and the integrity of a *Mu'min* (believer) will be born, with a variety of skills and areas of expertise.

ii. Building a **system of research and development** (R & D), that has the ability to conduct integrated research both from the state research institutes, departments, and from universities; where all are controlled, encouraged, and fully funded by the state.

iii. Building a **strategic industrial system** owned and managed independently by the state and based on its up-to-date military requirements and the fulfillment of the basic needs of the people. To guarantee the independence of industry including the ability to control, manage and ensure the security of supply of the important components of that industry, namely: raw materials, technology, expertise, engineering, finance, the ability to form a complete industrial chain, as well as policy.

B. Strategy in Taking Knowledge from Other Civilizations

i. Cooperation of Knowledge, Science, and Technology with Kufr *Mu'ahid* (in treaty) States

Agreement in the field of science and technology is allowed absolutely, because Islamic law does allow for it. Therefore, such cooperation is permitted depending on the form of this cooperation, while continuing to observe the international political scenario, and the Khalifah is allowed to accept or reject such an agreement for the sake of Islam.

ii. The State Submits Groups of Scientists to Seek Knowledge in Specific Country.

It is the state with its political line that will send groups of scientists to study abroad to benefit the strategic interests of the Khilafah State. So when the Khalifah saw that in order to enhance jihad against the superpower Rome he required a strong navy, he sent delegations from the Muslim Ummah to learn the techniques of shipbuilding, navigation with astronomy

and compass, gunpowder, and so on. And for this they must study in China -who was the first to develop knowledge of the compass or gunpowder- so they went there, even if the journey was hard, and they had to learn several foreign languages. Contrast this to what happens today, where scholarships abroad for Muslim scientists are mostly financed by foreign parties, not by the state. In fact, it is a foreign country that funds them. The government only acts as a mere facilitator.

iii. Hiring Foreign Scientists to Teach the Muslim Ummah

In certain political situations, some intelligence measures may be taken, especially when dealing with enemy countries to the Islamic Khilafah, as in times of Sultan Muhammad al-Fatih (1453 CE) where attempts were made to set free a prisoner Orban, an expert, engineer, cannon-maker, from the prison of Constantinople. He was imprisoned by Emperor Constantine to prevent him from being employed by the Uthmani military power. After serious steps were taken, Orban was freed and came before Sultan Al-Fatih. He was then employed with a salary tens of times higher than when he worked in Constantinople. Finally, a huge cannon was made, which was the most advanced at that time.

Reflecting on this story, if a Muslim country has seriousness towards the mastery of science and independence of vision, it should make attempts to employ famous scientists from today's world-famous education centers with a high wage. They are to educate the sons and daughters of the country, on certain knowledge that wasn't mastered yet, which aims to match the ability of developed countries. A Harvard professor for example, should be highly paid dozens of times his salary in the US to teach the latest mining technology in the Islamic world, and he will teach in accordance with the state curriculum and should not deviate of it.

Rebuilding the glory of Islam is possible for the Islamic world if they are united as a civilization to become a "new power" on the world political scene. The Muslim Ummah will soon be back to lead the world in civilization and technological development, if the quality of their current generation is immediately redirected to becoming a generation of leaders. Because the Muslim countries have an enormous power with regards to human resources and natural resources, which, if united under the shade of the Khilafah, no country or nation can match.

This will necessarily solve the dependence of the Muslim Ummah on technology from Western countries. The politics of the monopoly of knowledge conducted by the West will be faced by the Muslim Ummah with the independence and strength of vision of their ideology. And slowly but surely, the position will change. It is the West that will become dependent on the Islamic Khilafah, Inshaa Allah.

Wallahu A'lam bis Sowab – Allah knows Best

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¹ Fahmi Amhar, *Integrasi Sains dan Islam*, 2004

² Muhammad Husain Abdullah, *Dirasat fil Fikri al Islami*, 1990, hlm. 61

³ Dr. Andang Widiharto, *Perkembangan Ilmu Pengetahuan Dan Teknologi Dan Posisi Kaum Muslimin*, file presentasi dalam bentuk ppt

⁴ Susan Strange, *States and Markets* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1989)

⁵ Iyad Hilal, *Perjanjian-perjanjian Internasional Dalam Pandangan Islam*, Pustaka Thariqul Izzah