

## **Islamic World and Globalization: Beyond the Nation State, the Rise of New Caliphate**

### **Preface**

Ko Nakata

Half a century ago, the late Tadao Umesao, a Japanese scholar of comparative civilization, suggested that there were four self-contained worlds – Chinese, Indian, Russian, and Mediterranean and Islamic – in the Old World excluding the West and Japan, and that the national structures of these worlds were completed in the early modern age, under the rule of the Qing Empire, the Mughal Empire, the Russian Empire and the Turkish Empire, respectively. After the end of colonization by the West, he argued, these worlds began the process of reconstruction individually, a process in which the Mediterranean and Islamic world has seen the least progress.

Today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, countries around the world are striving to form regional blocs and to restructure to ensure their survival amid globalization. Specifically, the EU elected a President of the European Council in November 2009, while even in Africa, the East African Community Common Market was launched in July 2010 by five African countries – Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda – marking the first step toward establishing a unified government. The Islamic world has lagged behind international society in this process of regional integration and restructuring. “The Arab Revolution” in 2011 reconfirms the fact that the Arab World is closely interrelated culturally, socially, and politically despite of disintegration because of the “territorial nation state” system.

In recent years, however, the Islamic world has finally begun to show signs of reintegration, a trend which I temporarily call “new-caliphate.” First, consider the Republic of Turkey, a direct descendant of the last caliph state, the Ottoman Empire. Since abolishing the caliphate, the Republic of Turkey has adopted a secular national policy. In the domestic politics of Turkey, however, the Justice and Development Party (AKP), which is considered to be an Islamic party in nature, has seized both the prime ministership and presidency. AKP has succeeded in making constitutional revisions to pave the way for Islamic governance and been working to improve diplomatic relationships with surrounding countries. Especially, the Israeli attack on Turkish aid ships sent to the Gaza Strip to help resolve the Palestine problem dramatically raised the pres-

ence of Turkey in the Islamic world in the Middle East, and it would appear that Turkey intends to play a leading role in this region.

Next, consider the Malay world, especially Indonesia, which, although it is located on the periphery of the Islamic world, has the largest Muslim population. In Indonesia, the liberalization that followed the fall of the Suharto regime gave momentum to Islamic political movements. For example, Indonesia legalized the world's only international Islamic political organization, Hizb Attahrir, and in 2007, successfully organized the International Caliphate Conference which was attended by 100,000 people.

Unlike Arab Muslim states where Islam is the state religion, both Turkey and Indonesia are non-Islamic "secular" states that explicitly preclude religion from public and political life. This is a fact of huge importance, as it indicates that the "new-caliphate" that is now emerging in Turkey and Indonesia is the result of serious ideological confrontation with Western secularism, and is founded on an understanding of the international order advocated by the West and criticism of the political philosophy of the West.

The Ottoman Empire was a caliph state that governed the entire Islamic world and yet it was also an important political actor in European international politics during the early modern age. The Malay world, on the other hand, was a major constituent of East Asia, home for multiple religions, ethnic groups and cultures. For this reason, it is crucial to monitor the development of the new-caliphate, as this will indicate whether the modern world is likely to achieve harmonious coexistence of civilizations.

Mr. Pankhurst argued that the Caliphate is the best system of governance for today's Muslim political community for the following reasons. First, the nation-state system is no longer capable of meeting the needs of the world, in light of the growing complexity of identities and the accelerated movement of labor and capital across borders. Rather, we need a super-national community that can implement multicultural policy measures. Second, people are calling for independent government elected by themselves and the rule of law, as shown by the recent popular uprisings in Middle Eastern countries. As a system of governance, the Caliphate can perfectly satisfy these conditions.

However, Prof. Dr. Hamit Bozarslan discussed the background of the official abolishment of the Caliphate by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and the Caliphate had already been considered obsolete by 1924 when it was abolished, and focus of discussions in those days was the future of the Republic of Turkey, while the legitimacy of the Caliphate was given only secondary importance.

Prof. Dr. Recep Şentürk discussed the possibility of global ethics in Islam from a theoretical perspective, centering on the concepts of "*khalifah* (caliph)," "*adamiyyah* (personhood)," and "*ummah*." The term "caliph" has been consistently used to mean an "agent of God on Earth," which is of a more fundamental nature than the position of a statesman of "*dar al-Islam*" (home of Islam) as defined by Islamic law. The term "caliph" in the latter sense can be seen also in the

Qur'an. In the Islamic view of the world, man is a "caliph" (agent) of the Creator on Earth and is differentiated from other creations for his "*'aql* (reason)," "*amanah* (trustworthiness)," and "*karamah* (dignity)." Given these qualities of a caliph, man is naturally provided with properties such as life, fortune, reason, religion, and family.

Mr. Yusanto from Indonesia argued that widespread support is now given to the Caliphate and the Indonesian Liberation Party. Statistical data shows that an increasing number of Indonesian people have declared their support to implementation of the *shari'ah*, the revival of the Caliphate, and the policy of the Indonesian Liberation Party. A wide range of social organizations, as well, offer their support to the Indonesian Liberation Party, while those who are opposed to the Caliphate are gradually losing power.

The importance of the reestablishing of the Caliphate has come to be felt more and more among Muslims all over the world in the age of the "globalization," but it is also obvious that the Caliphate can't be revived as same form as the last Ottoman Caliphate even though we find many positive legacies deserve reconsideration.

Therefore, what is now required for us is a new concept of the "Caliphate" which is nothing but the "Rule of Law" applicable to the whole human beings which liberates the earth from the jail of "territorial nation state system." This "New Caliphate" is to be duly called the true driving force of true globalization.