13637 - “Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China” is a false hadeeth

the question

I study in USA. When I go to my University I cover myself with loose clothes and wear hijab. But, still that University is coeducation. I try to avoid talking to Non Mahram but sometimes I have to talk to them.

I want to complete my education here and then want to live in some Islamic country. Is it right for me to study in USA? Does this hadith "Even if u have to go to China to earn knowledge, go" applies to woman too?

Detailed answer

Praise be to Allah.

With regard to girls studying in these mixed societies and in this corrupt environment, please see the answer to Question # 5384 .

With regard to the hadeeth mentioned, “Seek knowledge even if you have to go as far as China, for seeking knowledge is a duty on every Muslim,” Shaykh al-Albaani said in Da’eef al-Jaami’: “(It is) fabricated.” (no. 906).

The proven hadeeth is that which was narrated by Ibn Maajah from the hadeeth of Anas ibn Maalik, who said: “The Messenger of Allaah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: ‘Seeking knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim.’” (220. Classed as saheeh by al-Albaani in Saheeh Sunan Ibn Maajah. What is meant by knowledge here is knowledge of sharee’ah (Islamic knowledge). Al-Thawri said: “It is the knowledge for which no person has any excuse for not knowing.”

And Allaah knows best.