Reconstructing Human-Environmental Relations on the Basis of Islamic Eco-Ethical Spiritual

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Abstract. By providing Islamic religious and environmental ethics, this study seeks to recreate the current framework of reciprocal control between people and the environment. The approach is literary, drawing on written works that discuss Islam and the environment in-depth. A qualitative method with a descriptive, comparative, and constructive attitude was used to examine the data. Because they are entwined in an exploitative connection that pushes both people and nature to the verge of extinction, the author concludes that issues with the interaction between humans and the environment in the current setting arise. An ethical corridor that refers to the morals of the Islamic spiritual environment is required to control the connection pattern. Three Islamic tenets—the notion that people are Allah's caliphs, the universality of Islam as an ethical foundation, and the Islamic perspective on the environment—have the potential to serve as the moral basis.

Keywords: Perennialism, Modernity, Spirituality, and Islamic Environmental Ethics

1 Introduction

Many environmental observers, like Paul Shepard, have demonstrated how humans must treat nature ethically by acting as though it is an extension of themselves. As a result, humans and nature ought to be able to establish a mutually beneficial symbiotic connection. Shepard understands that the primary and essential component for human and other living things' life is their natural resources, which include forests, water, air, and minerals. It will be impossible for humanity to fulfill their life purpose without these natural resources' assistance. Therefore, in order to ensure that different natural resources continue to exist from generation to generation, it is desirable and ethically required of humanity to conserve the environment and natural resources. In this situation, knowledge of the detrimental effects of different types of resource exploitation becomes imperative. Excessive resource exploitation will lead to resource depletion, which will ultimately result in a variety of unpredictable environmental effects for humans [1].

Given that humans have been abusing the earth and its natural resources for several centuries, leading to a variety of disasters, the author in this instance, concurs with Shepard's thesis as well as those of other notables like John Houghton who have also stated the need for environmental awareness in modern humans [2] [3]. Unlike the preceding illustration, though, the author's idea

of a remedy results from tying Islamic perspectives to the contemporary environmental crisis issue. Islam views people as khalifat al-Lah fi al-Ardh, meaning that while they have the power to use natural resources, they must do so while considering moral and ethical considerations. To accomplish sustainable environmental development, humans—rational, religious, clever, and ethical creatures—must also consider factors like land appropriateness, potential value, and consistency. In other words, people need to be able to consider the surroundings when exploiting nature. This implies that consideration for the effects that resource exploitation will have on the environment must be balanced with resource exploitation.

This kind of knowledge, according to the author, is necessary to recognize that nature and the environment serve as the guidelines for the human caliphate and that people are God's caliphs over them. At this point, further research is required to fully understand how Islamic ethics views the interaction between people as subjects and the environment as objects. The intention is to offer a conceptual-normative foundation for admirable environmental conservation efforts.

2 Methods

This study is based on library data obtained from primary sources, which are written works that discuss Islam and the environment explicitly. Data was gathered using documentation approaches, and in order to expand on the developer's ideas and draw conclusions from the available data, analysis was done using a qualitative approach with a descriptive, comparative, and constructive attitude.

3 Results and Discussion3.1 Environmental Crisis in Modernity

These days, the environmental issue has grown to be a terrifying specter that worries the entire globe. Because of human avarice and a sense of independence and "connection" to nature, there has been an intellectual understanding of the environmental problem's threats since the Industrial Revolution [4]. Even religious treatises' bearers have attained a transcendental understanding of this. The international society is now more conscious of the environmental situation, particularly in light of the Stockholm Conference that took place in June 1972 [5] [6].

Although the goal of the Industrial Revolution, which began in England and extended throughout Europe and the rest of the globe, was to make humans more like each other, it had unanticipated negative effects on the environment and on humanitarian issues. The transition from an agrarian culture to one centered around metals has brought about rapid and profound changes to the planet. A double change: beneficial in that it increases humankind's understanding of science and technology, but also bad in that it has potentially harmful effects on the environment. Revolution, the "Consumption Revolution," was the source of the Industrial Revolution's detrimental effects, according to E.F. Schumacher [7]. The "Consumption Revolution" is merely another name for the "Greed Revolution," which ignores the depletion of natural resources in favor of any and all types of environmental exploitation.

The overindulgent use of natural resources is a direct outcome of this "Consumption Revolution." As a result, as has already been mentioned, the earth's material resources have run

out, and commodities like wheat, metals, oil, and gas have been fully utilized. In addition to mineral resources, biological natural resources have also been utilized by contemporary people, and their quantity is now decreasing. Large-scale forest clearing has occurred in order to make way for homes or agricultural land. In this way, tropical forests—which are crucial to preserving the equilibrium of the climate—have likewise been overrun, pillaged, and exploited. Half of the world's living species—plants and animals—have been wiped off by this fact [7] [2].

Simultaneously, the speed at which the mining sector operates and the emissions from different kinds of vehicles in large cities have led to carbon dioxide air pollution. Due to the loss of the ozone layer, which creates a greenhouse effect and raises global temperatures, some of these events alone have caused significant harm to the ecosystem. According to Jonathan Bate, this led to the melting of land ice at the North and South Poles, which raised sea levels, the occurrence of acid rain, which was hazardous to living things, the decline in forest cover and expansion of desert areas, the emergence of new diseases, the extinction of various species, and extreme climate change [8], which is now being felt by people all over the world.

The pattern of human connections with their environment, or human understanding of their environment, is essentially linked to the environmental problem mentioned above. The fact that the world's population is expanding uncontrollably and quickly makes this worse because, naturally, there will be a greater demand for natural resources. Nature is being exploited to an endless extent to meet the demands of human existence.

As a result of realizing this, several professionals started advocating for attitudes to be changed to protect the environment, as demonstrated by Sandra Postel. Al Gore also issued a warning about the extinction of humanity. Based on what he had learned from the past, Al Gore concluded that a severe environmental disaster may be the catalyst for human extinction. Al Gore also disclosed that, as was the case with the Maya civilization in 950 AD, a number of the world's major civilizations perished as a result of deforestation, a water crisis, or a lack of soil fertility [2] [9]. Intellectuals have called for change, but it hasn't been able to stop the numerous environmental catastrophes of today.

Therefore, solving the environmental issue is actually a very challenging undertaking. One way that religious groups might contribute to this endeavor is by incorporating their normative beliefs into environmental conservation initiatives. This indicates that in order to save nature, which is presently at a crucial point, a spiritual revolutionary movement is urgently required. The idea of eco-spirituality has also been advanced by individuals like David Tacey, who claims that it has the power to resuscitate natural spirituality and alter our perception of the natural world. Tacey aims to promote a new paradigm about nature and the environment by applying the concept of eco-spirituality. This is anticipated to increase human concern and love for nature, which in turn is hoped to raise awareness that nature is a gift from children and grandchildren, not a legacy from their ancestors. This indicates that the moment has come for contemporary people to comprehend nature via the lens of profound spiritual awareness [4] [10]. Several modern Islamic academics appear to be beginning to accomplish what Tacey desires.

3.2 Islamic Intellectuality and Environmental Concepts

Though it may seem to have faded from use in Islamic scientific discourse, the term "environment" is still present in Islamic scientific understanding. Many Islamic philosophers,

including the Ikhwan al-Shafa, have been interested in this term since the Islamic classical era. They understand that there are two planes of the cosmos: nature as a macrocosm and humans as a microcosm, both of which are inseparable entities that are interrelated and support one another [11]. Based on his ideas on *wahdat al-wujūd*, Ibn Arabi's Sufistic holistic view of humans as the fullest embodiment of God's *tajalli* also demonstrates this. He asserts that although Allah's nature is absolute, He manifests Himself in a finite cosmos, and that of all His creations, humans are the most ideal vehicle for His manifestation (*tajalli*) [12] [13]. According to this perspective, nature is a representation of divine divinity.

Though not intensely, environmental concerns are receiving greater attention in the present setting, according to certain Islamic scholars, including Syed Hossein Nasr, Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi, and Ziauddin Sardar. It would be worthwhile to examine the ideas of modern Islamic thinkers in order to gain insight into comprehending environmental issues from an Islamic standpoint. Famous for his theories on a sacred science, Syed Hossein Nasr disclosed that Islam forbids its followers from ruthlessly subjugating and plundering the natural world. Humans can use natural resources in compliance with divine directives. Nasr also attacked modernity, arguing that its attempt to dominate nature would only lead to a catastrophe for the environment [14]. Isma'il Raji al-Faruqi concurs with Nasr's assessment that the impact of Western foreign policy is to blame for the ill state of Muslims in modern times. Muslims and contemporary people in general have lost their role as the earthly caliphs of Allah [15], whose duty it is to uphold Allah's trust by refraining from over-exploitation of nature [16]. Accordingly, Islam holds that if people are unable to fulfill their obligations to preserve the environment, they will be worthless.

Aside from that, a number of modern Islamic philosophers have indirectly influenced environmental preservation initiatives. For instance, some groups view Maurice Buceile's ideas as works with a lot of apologetic emotional content. However, several scientific findings—particularly those pertaining to the environmental concept he discovered in the Koran—have raised awareness of the need to protect the environment and the natural world found in the al-Qur'an. He claimed that the Qur'an is an order from Allah [17].

The effects of Ziauddin Sardar and Ali Shari'ati's critique of Modern Western ideology, which has an effect on environmental conservation consciousness, further demonstrate this. There is an indirect effect (implication) of Ali Shari'ati's critique of Modern Western ideology, particularly capitalism, Marxism, and Existentialism, on environmental conservation initiatives. Shari'ati claims that despite the distinctions between these three philosophies, they are all driven by the same objective—fulfilling global needs via the avarice of natural resources by viewing everything as anthropocentric (focused upon humans). This is what ultimately turns modern people into material worshippers, which manifests as materialism [18]. Ziauddin Sardar asserts that the primary cause of the present environmental disaster is the worship of this substance. This component is not autonomous, though, since it is also influenced by a number of other variables, chief among them being the moral and spiritual crises that modern humanity is currently facing. Because contemporary people are experiencing a crisis in their physical, psychological, and ethical foundations, Sardar believes that the current environmental problem is a constant crisis [19].

The opinions expressed by Islamic intellectuals above represent a small portion of Muslim voices concerned about the environment, but they can demonstrate awareness of contemporary

phenomena and the idea that the loss of transcendent noble values has led to an environmental crisis for modern humans. It can slow down how quickly people's avarice for natural resources is growing. Because of this, developing environmental ethical standards based on religion—more specifically, environmental ethics based on Islamic norms—is an effective way to address environmental catastrophes and revive ecological protection.

The goal of using Islamic normativity to provide a foundation for ecological ethics is not a priori since, as Jalaluddin Rakhmat puts it, ethics is the "moral guardian" of science. It is thus intimately tied to both conduct and science. Several nations have created "moral guardian" organizations for science, demonstrating how much the world has grown to understand the importance of ethics in advancing research. This indicates that ethics is still seen as the moral compass that guides science and the conduct of those who utilize it.

3.3 Islamic Ecological Ethics: Fundamentals

Islam, as stated in the word of Allah QS. al-Ma'idah/5 verse 3, is a Dīn that is shāmil (integral), kāmil (Perfect), and mutakāmil (perfecting all other systems) since it is a living system and was revealed by the All-Knowing, All-Wise [20]. "...On this day I have perfected your religion for you, and I have completed my blessings upon you, and I am pleased with Islam as your rule of life..." (Al-Ma'idah, QS. 5: 3). This passage shows that Islam encompasses all the necessities for human existence, not just the shari'ah component but also morality and rules for other people as well as regulations pertaining to the environment and the natural world. Therefore, Islam encompasses various life and relationship values, including those pertaining to humankind's connection with God, with one another, and with the natural world. Three Islamic principles—the Islamic normative view of the environment, universality as an ethical ideal basis, and the idea that humans are God's earthly caliphs—can serve as an ethical foundation for developing environmental ethics based on Islamic spirituality.

First, the Islamic normative context. Qur'an verse 22, QS. al-Baqarah/2, means "(He) who made the earth a bed for you and the sky a roof, and He is the One who sends down water (rain) from the sky, then He produces with it (rain) fruits as sustenance for you." These verses and many other explanations about the environment found in Islamic teachings, particularly the Koran, illustrate these points. Therefore, even if you are aware of this, do not establish conflicts with Allah. Alternately, read QS. Al-Rum/30 verses 41–43: "Human actions have caused damage to the land and the sea; therefore, Allah will make them feel some of the consequences of their actions and force them to return (to the right path)." Say: Set off on a voyage across time to discover what became of the individuals who came before you. Those who associate partners with (Allah) make up most of them. Thus, face the straight path of Islam before the approach of a day that cannot be denied by Allah, for that day they will be split apart."

In addition to the verses mentioned above, the Koran has other passages sporadically placed throughout that describe the surroundings, including QS. al-Nazi'at/79, verses 27–33, and QS. al-Anbiyā'/21, verses 16–18. In addition, other passages in the Koran describe different components found in nature, such as verses 60 and 164 in QS. al-Baqarah/2, verse 79 in QS. al-Nahl/16, verse 30 in QS. al-Anbiya'/21, verse 40 in QS. Al-Nur/24, verses 40, 43, or 45, and so on.

The verses from the Qur'an mentioned above clearly demonstrate how the Qur'an discusses the environment in a variety of contexts, from the explanation of different natural events to the effects of environmental harm caused by humans.

The second is universality as the cornerstone of moral principles. Universalism, which means "universe/world" in Latin, is the root of universality and universality. The adjective universalis-which means "general, all-encompassing, and comprehensive"-is derived from this word. The Latin term universalis is translated as "universal" in English. This term can refer to a "general concept" that can be applied to reality. For instance, it can refer to the idea of humanity, which is applicable to all people regardless of their socioeconomic standing, ethnicity, religion, or skin color. The name "universalism" comes from the Latin "universalis" or "universal." Universalism holds that all people are the same and share a common humanity. When it comes to other people, everyone has the same responsibilities worldwide. People worldwide must thus live and behave like humans because they are human. For instance, applying logic and common sense, listening to one's inner guidance, employing the will to make decisions, including the heart and emotions when appreciating art, and so on. People may not be able to, or may even choose not to, carry out their civic obligations. One can, for instance, give up their right to vote, but they are ultimately unable to be really accessible to give up their commitments and responsibilities as a person, such as upholding moral standards in daily life [21].

All of the ideas formed in Islam during the previous 23 years, from the religion's official founding in June 610 AD, have confidently survived and progressed through history, emerging as a substitute for human organization. Its universalistic ethical value system has the power to improve not just the natural world but also humankind's ability to live in harmony and peace. Islam is a worldwide religion with a set of laws and a way of life aside from that.

The term "peace" or "an attitude of surrender to God" found in the words of al-Islām itself is the source of the theological idea of the teachings of Islamic universality. Therefore, since all authentic faiths preach peace and surrender to God, they must all be Islamic. The concept of prophetic oneness and human unity will result from this sort of reading. These two ideas flow from the concept of Tawhid, the All-Powerful God. Islam is cosmopolitan and has the potential to benefit all of nature (*rahmatan li al-'ālamīn*) because of all these notions of oneness [21]. Whereas several Qur'anic verses have shown unity from the beginning, as indicated in QS. al-Anbiya'/21 verse 92 and also QS. al-Mu'minun/23 verse 52.

Now, the debate is whether the scripture above refers to unity among Muslims only. In response, Shihab outlined the several connotations associated with the word ummah, which appears 51 times in the Koran. Al-Qur'an dictionary *al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an* was created by language specialist Raghib al-Isfahani. He defines ummah as "a group gathered by something, whether religious similarities, time, or place, whether grouping either by force or of one's own will." Shihab argues that the Qur'anic definition of ummah is extremely malleable and simple to apply; it has no upper or lower bound for a single, cohesive group of individuals.

Surprisingly, as a feature of the ummah, the word wahidah was used with the word ummah nine times. The phrases "wahdat al-ummah" and "tauhid al-ummah" (unity/unification of the ummah) are not found in the Qur'an at all. For this reason, the explanation of Mahmud Hamdi Zaqzuq, the former dean of the Ushuluddin al-Azhar Faculty, that the Qur'an stresses the unity of the Ummah rather than its unification, is accurate. This indicates that variety and diversity

within oneness are acknowledged in the Qur'an. "If Allah willed that He would make you one people (only), but Allah would test you regarding His gifts to you, then compete in doing good deeds," Allah states in QS, al-Maidah/ 5 verse 48. Al-Ma'idah (QS. / 5: 48). Additionally, the Qur'anic verses that address humanity with the phrase "O all humans" or "Ya Baniy Adama" (O children of Adam) can be used to teach the principles of Islamic universality in general. These verses are known as Makkiyah verses, and they speak broadly to humankind [22] [23].

Islamic universalism (*al-'alamiyah*), which is founded on the ideas of Rabbaniyyah, *insaniyyah* (humanistic), syumul (totality), which includes elements of eternity that touch all aspects of human beings, *wasathiyah* (moderate and balanced), *waqi'iyah* (realistic), and integrating the permanent and the elastic, is considered by Yusuf al-Qardhawi to be one of the great characteristics of Islam. The idea behind the Islamic universality principle is that all individuals of all racial and national backgrounds and at all social strata are meant to hear the message of Islam. It is not a manual for a certain country that believes it is the chosen country and that all people should surrender to it. Islam's doctrine is that all people should follow Allah and that all of His slaves, including the natural world, are worthy of kindness[24]. His words are the timeless declaration of this manifesto. The verse 107 of QS. al-Anbiya'/21 states, "*And We did not send you (Muhammad) except as a mercy for all the worlds." Or QS. al-A'raf/ 7 verse 158: "Think of Allah and His Messenger, the Prophet, who is an ummi who believes in Allah and in His words (His books), and follow him, so that you may be guided. Verily, I am the messenger of Allah to you all, namely Allah who has the kingdom of the heavens and the earth; there is no god but Him, who gives life and causes death."*

The Makkiyah passages can serve as a foundation for disputing the claims made by certain orientalists, who contend that the Prophet Muhammad did not announce his mission to the entire world at the outset of his teachings but rather did so only after defeating the Arabs [24]. The aforementioned verses demonstrate Islam's universality as they speak to all people, regardless of color, country, or religion, as well as to the natural world. This universality is demonstrated by the Qur'an's understanding of humanity as the descendants of Adam and Eve, as evidenced by QS. al-A'raf/7 verse 172, which states that humans essentially descended from one source: Nature and Eve. "And (recall) the moment when your Lord raised the offspring of Adam from their groves and testified against their souls, saying, 'Am I not your Lord?' "Yes, we are witnesses," was their response. (We do this) so that you would not say, "Yes, we, the offspring of Adam, were those who were ignorant of this (the Oneness of God)," on the Day of Resurrection."

In this sense, Islam's universality may be shown in many significant ways. Still, its teachings, which touch on morality, shari'ah, and religion, are the finest since they demonstrate how much emphasis is placed on humanitarian concerns. This is evident from the broad goals of sharia, which include protecting religion, the body, the mind, the lineage, the property, and the honor. In addition, Islamic treatises exhibit admirable social values—justice, ukhuwwah, freedom, and honor—which might be considered the fundamental objectives of Sharia [25]. But Islamic universality truly encompasses not only humankind but also the entire cosmos. This is demonstrated by the Prophet's life, which revered every aspect of the natural world, including people, animals, and plants. Because of this, the author believes that respect for nature as a whole is a part of the universality principle of Islamic ethics. Islam is known as Rahmat al-'Alamin in this setting.

The Prophet's life demonstrates that Islam is universal in that it respects all of nature, including humans, animals, and plants. This indicates that Islam is not limited to humankind alone but rather encompasses the entire universe. An ethical precept of Islam calls for reverence for the natural world.

Third, as a working foundation, the idea is that people are God's earthly caliphs. Islam acknowledges that as people play the role of earth's caliphs, protecting the environment and nature needs ethical behavior on the part of humans. This implies that the goal of the human caliphate is essentially a useful guideline for people to follow while forming connections with other living things, including the natural world. Verse 30 of QS. al-Baqarah/2 describes the seriousness of the duty of the human caliphate itself [24].

The goal of the human caliphate on Earth is to restrict human use of the natural environment in accordance with Islamic religious and ethical principles, not to establish human rulers capable of governing nature at will. According to M. Quraish Shihab, as God's caliph on earth, people should be able to build positive connections with the environment and with one another, not in the manner of conquerors and conquerors, but rather in relationships of unity under Allah [25]. Musthafa Abu Sway saw this right away when he underlined that if people could not fulfill their responsibilities to manage and preserve the environment, their role as caliphs would be meaningless. Abu Sway also underlined that protecting the environment ranks as the greatest priority among the shari'ah goals, or al-maqashid al-syar'iah. Al-maqashid al-syar'iah, which is expressed in the five principles of Islam—protecting religion, soul, reason, heredity, and property rights—is said to only have significance in situations when the environment is harmed or about to grow worse. Stated differently, the existence of al-maqashid al-syar'iah is contingent upon the many environmental contexts that humans encounter [15].

Given a more realistic ecological, ethical framework, the Prophet Muhammad—who is credited with bringing mercy to all of nature—serves as an example of a caliphate with an ecological, ethical component. For instance, the Prophet named inanimate items he owned because he knew that doing so would convey the idea that these objects had personalities and encourage other parties to treat them with kindness and courtesy, just as he should treat live objects. This indicates that the Prophet instilled in his followers an appreciation of nature from a young age, regardless of how tiny; this is a component of Islamic ethics toward nature and would eventually lead to human responsibility for protecting nature [25].

It was discovered that the Prophet and his followers had established a monotheistic and religiously-based example of environmental management. As is well known, Islam places a high value on environmental cleanliness. The growth of Cordoba was affected by these ideals. Resulting in this city having the greatest degree of civilization at that time in all of Europe. A metropolis home to seven hundred thousand book collections housed in seventy libraries, nine hundred public baths, and the epicenter of all the most advanced vocations of the time [26]. The city's pristine condition and aesthetic appeal have set the norm for the growth of other European towns.

3.4 Ecological Ethics in Islam

The aforementioned explanation demonstrates how rich ecological ethical principles are in Islamic normativity, allowing for further exploration of these ethical values by focusing on different aspects that might serve as a foundation for the growth of Islamic ecological ethics.

For example, the following claim on ecological ethics may be formed using the explanation provided above.

The first claim is that only Allah is the source of knowledge and that He alone created heaven and earth (the cosmos). Additionally, the second proposition—which holds that humans were meant to rule as caliphs on Earth—was derived from the first. It is necessary to clarify in this regard that a person's birth does not automatically make them a caliph on Earth. A man cannot become a caravan unless he has proven himself capable. As a result, monotheism, the third postulate, is required to hold the second postulate together [15] [26]. This will provide an ecologically ethical statement with a subtle transcendental spiritual quality. Islam seems to base its ecological ethics around tawhid. Since monotheistic acknowledges Allah as the only God and that He is the universe's creator, it is one of the keys to comprehending natural and environmental issues.

The aforementioned reasons may be expanded upon, with a certain goal in mind—namely, the preservation of nature and the pursuit of a closer relationship with Allah—based on astute analysis, institutions, knowledge, and environmental preservation initiatives. The Indonesian environment is the standard by which success is measured. Finally, the phenomenon of numerous environmental damages that are occurring globally now serves as an indicator of the effectiveness of this mission's implementation.

Conclusion

Naturally, it is unrealistic to anticipate that the establishment of the aforementioned morally significant postulates will immediately address the many environmental harms that exist now. Due diligence is therefore required to carry out the functions of the various tools that are owned to achieve the mission of environmental preservation, both individually and institutionally, from government, private, local, regional, and global elements to collaborate in environmental preservation, in addition to the development of eco-ethics based on Islamic norms. Of course, the primary prerequisite for establishing the aforementioned framework in this instance is legal supremacy. This indicates that the aforementioned advancement in ecological ethics is essentially a long-term goal that requires effective environmental law enforcement.

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