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Humanity, Nature: towards Sustainable Environmental Ethics

- **Editorial:** » When Ethics Lose Their Purpose
- **Focus:** » Human Master or Caliph of Nature?
 - » Climate Change as Embodiment of Luxury Theological
 - » Environment between Environmental Secularism, Religious Spirituality
 - » Ethical Contract with Nature
 - » Mahdist Project, Environmental Justice
- **Studies and research:**
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 - » Islam, Environment

Humanity, Nature: towards Sustainable Environmental Ethics

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■ Magazine Message:

The magazine seeks to achieve many goals, which we summarize as follows:

- ▶ Spreading genuine culture on contemporary issues in faith, theology, and philosophy of religion.
- ▶ Confronting contemporary suspicions raised by the West related to these issues, especially the movements of atheism, skeptics, and agnostics.
- ▶ Criticizing of contemporary Arab thought according to the “Westerners” who represent an extension of Western thought and its suspicions.

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Editorial

When Ethics Lose Their Purpose

Critique of Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Environmental Discourse.

Editor -in- chief

Dr. Mohammad Mahmoud Mortada

It is difficult to conceive of the contemporary environmental crisis as merely an imbalance in nature or a scarcity of resources. Rather, it has become a revealing sign of a deeper dysfunction in humanity's conception of existence, and in the way that human beings have redefined their relationship with the Creator and the world around them. The manner, in which nature is perceived, is a direct extension of the doctrinal and epistemological framework that determines humanity's place, the limits of his action, and the meaning of his presence in the universe. Modern intellectual trend, through its gradual separation of religion from the natural world, has contributed to reducing the environment to a purely technical issue, managed by the tools of science and economics and detached from the question of purpose. Through this separation, nature has been stripped of its ethical dimension, and the transcendent moral question has been marginalized in favor of a logic of management and control, rather than one of trust [al amanah] and responsibility. From this perspective, the environmental problem is approached as a crisis in doctrinal conception before it is a crisis of resources or policies. Rethinking the human nature relationship thus ultimately entails a critical reexamination of the epistemological and theological foundations that have governed our understanding of the world and paved the way for a mode of relationship severed from purpose.

First: Nature in Modern Western Metaphysics

The transformation that modern Western metaphysics introduced in its understanding of nature represents one of the most consequential epistemic shifts that has reshaped the human relationship with the world. At its core, this transformation amounted to an ontological reorientation: a shift that relocated nature from being a meaningful and purposive domain to a closed system governed by chance and necessity, one that neither points beyond itself nor calls forth questions of creation or wisdom. From this perspective, the contemporary environmental crisis cannot be disentangled from this profound metaphysical shift, which redefined natural existence outside the horizons of meaning and sacrality.

In philosophical and theological frameworks preceding modernity, whether in late Greek thought or in religious philosophies, nature was understood within a meaningful cosmic order. The natural world was not conceived as a mere aggregation of entities, but rather as an ordered whole governed by purpose and linked through causal relations open to the first cause. In this view, the cosmos was not self-sufficient; it existed through and pointed toward that which transcends it. Consequently, the study of nature was, at its depth, an act of contemplation of the cosmic order. This understanding rendered nature a domain of moral and spiritual knowledge no less than one of rational inquiry.

The modern Western metaphysics, however, emerged through the systematic dismantling of this teleological horizon. Nature was redefined as extended matter subject to strict laws, operating according to an internal regularity that required no reference to transcendent purpose or wisdom. In this way, the natural world was stripped of its symbolic and meaningful character in favor of a model grounded in causal self-sufficiency, wherein every phenomenon is explained from within the system itself, without recourse to anything beyond it. This shift entailed a comprehensive reconfiguration of the relationship between the human being and the world. The removal of teleology from nature necessarily led to a redefinition of causality. Whereas causation had previously exceeded mechanical explanation to encompass questions of wisdom and purpose, it was now reduced to value-

neutral causal relations devoid of any ethical or symbolic dimension. With this transformation, the natural world no longer possessed any meaning beyond its status as an object of observation and experimentation. Human beings were no longer called to stand before nature as a field of moral questioning. Rather, they stand as an object of control and manipulation.

This epistemic transformation had direct implications for the reconstruction of the image of the human being itself. The human, once understood as an entity embedded within a broader cosmic order, came to be conceived as an autonomous subject standing in opposition to nature rather than within it. With the separation of subject from world, a reifying relationship emerged, in which nature was transformed into an “object” confronting a knowing and controlling “subject.” As a result, the question of the limits of human action ceased to be posed as an ethical question and became instead a matter of technical capability. What could be done scientifically came to be regarded as morally permissible, insofar as the natural world had been divested of any sacral or transcendent significance.

Within this context, the modern metaphysical shift paved the way for legitimizing exploitation in the name of science and progress. When nature is conceived as a purposeless system, its subjugation appears as a rational act that raises no ethical concern. Indeed, domination over nature is presented as evidence of the maturity of human reason and its liberation from metaphysical illusions. Thus, the notion of progress became closely tied to humanity’s capacity to control the natural world rather than to live in harmony with it. Science was transformed from a means of understanding the cosmic order into a tool for reshaping it in accordance with human desires and expanding needs.

The seriousness of this trend lies in the philosophical foundation that grants it legitimacy. When nature is understood as mute, devoid of meaning and purpose, all forms of depletion become justifiable so long as they serve the logic of growth and progress. Accordingly, any attempt to address the environmental problem from within this metaphysical horizon will remain incapable of reaching the true roots of the crisis.

Therefore, the recovering of the environmental question requires a fundamental interrogation of this metaphysical transformation. Prior to examining policies of protection or techniques of sustainability, it is necessary to reassess the conceptual framework that has governed the understanding of both nature and the human being. No viable environmental ethics can be established within a worldview that denies purpose, marginalizes creation, and reduces the world to a closed causal order.

Second: Shortcomings of Western Environmental Ethics from Theological Perspective

Despite the significant momentum that environmental ethics has gained in contemporary Western thought, a careful theological and philosophical examination reveals a profound structural inadequacy that extends beyond questions of application and policy to the very foundations upon which this field is constructed. The problem does not lie in a lack of environmental awareness or in insufficient reformist intentions, but rather in the philosophical framework through which these ethical systems have sought to ground themselves, a framework that has remained captive to an intellectual paradigm that severed ethics from theology and disconnected values from transcendent meaning.

Most Western environmental ethical theories are structured around one of two principal models: the social consensus model and the utilitarian model. In the former, environmental values are conceived as the product of human agreement or contract, with their standards determined by what a given community deems appropriate for safeguarding its interests and sustaining its way of life. The latter model, by contrast, links the moral value of an action to the degree of benefit it produces, whether for the individual, for society, or even for the ecosystem insofar as it constitutes a condition for the sustainability of human life. Despite their apparent differences, both models share a fundamental premise: they ground ethics within a closed human horizon, without recourse to a transcendent reference that exceeds human will. From a theological standpoint, the core deficiency of this foundation lies in the fact that ethics, when reduced to consensus or utility, lose

their stable normative character and are transformed into relative systems subject to reformulation in accordance with shifting interests and circumstances. Social consensus, however rational it may appear, remains contingent upon prevailing power relations and dominant economic and political interests. What is regarded today as a supreme environmental value may tomorrow be redefined as an obstacle to growth or progress. Utility, for its part, is inherently incapable of providing a binding moral principle, as it is always measured by calculations of gain and loss rather than by considerations of right and obligation.

The absence of a transcendent reference in these approaches does not constitute a partial shortcoming that can be remedied by the addition of supplementary values; rather, it represents a structural weakness at the very core of the ethical conception itself. When ethics are detached from theology, they are stripped of their capacity for deep internal obligation and reduced to a set of regulatory or advisory guidelines rather than an existential commitment. Environmental ethics thus come to resemble a collection of recommendations that may be suspended or overridden whenever they conflict with overriding interests, rather than a moral covenant for whose violation human beings are held accountable as a breach of the meaning of their very existence.

The moral obligation cannot be properly understood except within the framework of a comprehensive conception of existence that situates both the human being and nature within a purposive created order. Within this horizon, ethics constitute a direct extension of the human relationship with the Creator and an embodiment of the human being's normative vocation in the world. When this dimension is eliminated, the moral question loses its deepest root and is reduced to a managerial issue governed by calculations of immediate interest. This helps to explain the fragility of environmental commitment in modern societies, despite the density of moral discourse that surrounds it.

This inadequacy becomes particularly evident when Western environmental ethics are tested in moments of acute tension between environmental concerns and economic imperatives. In such contexts, considerations of growth, energy security,

and economic competition frequently take precedence over any long-term moral commitment to nature. This outcome is not merely the result of moral hypocrisy or weak willpower; rather, it reflects the absence of a normative foundation capable of imposing non-negotiable limits. When nature is valued only insofar as it serves human interests, its worth inevitably diminishes whenever it is perceived as an impediment to those interests. By virtue of its separation from theology, this ethical paradigm ultimately reproduces the anthropocentrism it purports to critique. Even when nature or non-human beings are granted a form of «rights,» such rights are typically justified on the grounds that they are necessary for the continuation or well-being of human life, rather than because nature possesses intrinsic value derived from its belonging to a broader created order. As a result, nature remains captive to an instrumental logic, albeit articulated in a more refined ethical language.

From this perspective, ethics can recover their binding force only when they are reconnected to their ontological source, that is, to their relationship with theology. Ethics are not a positive legal construct, but a manifestation of divine will that governs the relationship between human beings and the world. When environmental conduct is situated within this horizon, it is transformed from a negotiable moral option into a duty grounded in trust [al amanah] and caliphate.

The shortcomings of Western environmental ethics do not negate the significance of the debates they have generated, but they do reveal their ultimate boundaries so long as they operate within a philosophical horizon that separates ethics from the unseen and values from purpose. Overcoming these shortcomings therefore requires a re-foundation of the moral question itself upon a different doctrinal and epistemological basis. At its deepest level, the environmental crisis is a crisis of the source of moral obligation and of the reference that endows human action with its meaning and necessity.

Third: Human Being, Nature in Islamic Philosophy of Religion

The Islamic philosophy of religion grounds the relationship between the human

being and nature in a metaphysical framework that stands in radical contrast to modern conceptions that have separated the world from creation and existence from purpose. In the Islamic worldview, nature is neither an autonomous given nor a closed system operating under blind necessity; rather, it is part of an ongoing divine act of creation and is therefore situated within a horizon of meaning rather than outside it. This metaphysical grounding situates the human natural world relationship within a comprehensive doctrinal framework that allows the environment to be understood as a constituent of the created order, an order that defines the human position, regulates the limits of human action, and imposes a moral responsibility that transcends immediate utility.

This conception proceeds from the principle of divine creation as the primary foundation for understanding nature. The universe, with all its beings and systems, is neither self-subsisting nor eternal in itself; it is created by Allah, Almighty, sustained by His will, and governed by His wisdom. This meaning fundamentally reshapes the epistemic and moral relationship with the world, nature is no longer a mute entity available for unrestricted manipulation, but rather a being with a determinate ontological status, created, related to the Creator, and integrated into a purposive order. Accordingly, the interaction with nature cannot be reduced to a purely technical engagement, for every action within it is, at its deepest level, an act performed within the domain of creation.

This understanding of creation decisively breaks with tendencies that separate theology from natural philosophy, reconnecting scientific inquiry with creed without negating the autonomy of scientific investigation or its governing laws. In the Islamic philosophical perspective, natural laws are neither denied nor marginalized; rather, they are understood as divine laws, not as substitutes for divine will, nor as negations of teleology. Nature thus remains a legitimate field of inquiry and knowledge, yet it is not emptied of meaning nor reduced to a domain surrendered to unchecked human will. This is what enables Islamic philosophy of religion to provide an ethical grounding for the human nature relationship without falling into conflict with scientific knowledge.

Within this framework, the concept of caliphate emerges as a central key to understanding the human position in the world. In the Islamic vision, the human being is neither the master nor the owner of nature, but its caliphate. Caliphate here denotes a normative position defined by responsibility and accountability. The caliph does not act in their own name, nor do they possess the right to corruption or depletion; rather, they are bound by the principles of trust [al amanah] and justice on behalf of the One who entrusted them.

This understanding stands in sharp contrast to conceptions that have rendered the human being the center of the universe and the ultimate end of existence, granting them absolute dominion over nature. In theology, the human being is conceived as a morally accountable agent rather than as an entity, transcending the cosmic order and their dignity derives from bearing the trust. Accordingly, the relationship with nature becomes a moral trial: how does the human being act toward what has been placed in their care? How do they balance their needs with the demands of justice within the created order?

This conception leads to a redefinition of the very essence of the environmental crisis. From an Islamic perspective, the problem lies in a disruption of the normative, entrusted relationship between the human being and the world. When creation is forgotten, Caliphate is emptied of its meaning, and trust is reduced to a general ethical discourse devoid of binding force, nature is transformed into an open field for exploitation. The environmental crisis thus becomes a manifestation of a deeper doctrinal crisis rather than an issue detached from it.

This philosophical grounding makes it possible to transcend the false dichotomy between the human being and nature. Instead of portraying the relationship as a confrontation between a knowing subject and a dominated object, it is reconstructed as a relationship of inclusion within a single order, in which the human being is a responsible participant rather than an absolute center. This understanding does not negate human distinctiveness, but situates it within its created context and prevents it from becoming a justification for domination.

Fourth: Environmental Ethics in Islam as Extension of Monotheism

The environmental ethics in Islam cannot be understood as an autonomous system or as a partial moral field later appended to an already complete religious structure. Rather, at its core, it constitutes a direct extension of the centrality of the monotheism as the organizing framework of the Islamic conception of existence as a whole. The monotheism is not limited to affirming the oneness of the Creator in an abstract doctrinal sense; it establishes a comprehensive unity of the cosmic order, within which the relationship between Allah, the human being, and the world is integrated into a single meaningful structure. From this perspective, Islamic environmental ethics emerge from a holistic vision that understands nature as part of a unified order, rather than as a separate or value-neutral domain detached from meaning and purpose.

The centrality of the monotheism imposes a distinctive conception of the natural world, one that stands in sharp contrast to views that separate theology from nature. Within the monotheism vision, the universe is understood as an integrated system governed by a single will and a single wisdom. This unity does not imply an identity between Creator and creation, but rather signifies the harmony and coherence of the cosmic order under a single divine reference. Nature thus appears as a manifestation of a system expressive of divine wisdom, calling for a particular mode of human engagement grounded in respect and responsibility rather than absolute domination.

Within this horizon, environmental ethics are not derived from utilitarian or contractual considerations, but from an awareness of the unity of the cosmic order and the coherence it requires in human action. When the Creator is one and the order is one, any disruption introduced by human activity is understood as a violation of the very implications of the monotheism. The environmental ethics thus become an essential doctrinal dimension, for disruption of the cosmic order ultimately constitutes a disruption of the proper relationship with the Creator.

This meaning is clearly articulated through the concept of balance, which constitutes one of the central keys to understanding environmental ethics in Islam.

The balance represents a cosmic principle governing the order and equilibrium of the world. In the Islamic conception, the world rests upon a precise balance that neither subsists by itself nor persists automatically, but rather reflects a divine wisdom that has embedded an integrated order within creation. Any disturbance of this balance, whether in nature or in human relations, is therefore understood not merely as a failure of management, but as a deviation from the requirements of this order.

Understanding the balance as a universal principle fundamentally transforms the approach to the environment. Preserving ecological balance becomes a moral obligation rooted in respect for the order upon which existence is founded. Sustainability thus emerges as an ethical necessity tied to the preservation of the balance that sustains the world. The human being, as a morally accountable agent, is required to observe this balance in action, as part of fidelity to the balance covenant.

Closely associated with the balance is the concept of corruption, which in the Islamic worldview provides a precise description of what occurs within the cosmic order when this balance is violated. The corruption is understood here as the direct consequence of human action becoming detached from the requirements of the balance. It represents the inverse of a sound relationship between the human being and the cosmic order, and expresses a deviation at the level of conception prior to any failure of practice. Environmental corruption, therefore, constitutes a profound moral problem related to how human beings understand their role and position within existence.

This understanding renders environmental degradation a sign of a deeper crisis in doctrinal consciousness. When the world is reduced to a resource for exploitation and stripped of its purposive dimension, corruption becomes a logical outcome rather than an accidental deviation. Within the balance vision, however, corruption is understood as a breach of trust [al amanah] and caliphate, and as a violation of the balance upon which existence is founded. Consequently, resistance to environmental corruption cannot be separated from the reconstruction of a doctrinal awareness that reconnects the human being with the world within the

horizon of the balance.

The concept of corruption contrasts with the concept of prosperity, which constitutes the positive dimension of environmental ethics in Islam. The prosperity refers to a pattern of human action in harmony with the cosmic order, based on improvement rather than destruction. In this context, the prosperity is a quintessential ethical act because it presupposes an understanding of balance, respect for it, and a striving to preserve and activate it instead of destroying it. Therefore, sustainable civilization is a concept rooted in the monotheistic worldview.

The interrelation between the balance, the corruption, and the prosperity reveals that sustainability in the Islamic perspective is understood as a mode of human existence regulated by the values of the monotheism. Sustainability here emerges as a natural consequence of a sound relationship with the world. When human action is aligned with the requirements of balance, sustainability is realized as an outcome rather than pursued as an isolated goal. When this horizon is severed, however, all attempts at sustainability are reduced to temporary measures that quickly collapse under the pressure of competing interests.

This vision reaches its culmination when the relationship with nature is understood as an integral part of worship rather than as a separate domain. In the Islamic worldview, worship is not confined to rituals and devotional acts, but encompasses the totality of human action insofar as it conforms to divine will and purposes. The engagement with nature, through preservation, care, and reform, thus lies at the heart of worship, as it embodies fidelity to caliphate and trust. The environmental ethics, in this light, are no longer an auxiliary or secondary concern, but an essential dimension of religious life.

This understanding decisively breaks with conceptions that confine worship to a purely spiritual realm and sever it from material reality. When environmental conduct is integrated into the horizon of worship, it is transformed from a negotiable moral option into a devotional obligation with a doctrinal foundation. Preserving nature thus becomes an act grounded in a religious consciousness that views the

world as a divine trust and the human being as a responsible servant rather than a domineering owner.

Integrating environmental ethics within the structure of the monotheism endows them with a binding force absent from approaches that separate ethics from doctrine. When environmental action becomes part of worship, it acquires an existential dimension that transcends immediate calculations and connects to the human being's ultimate destiny. Ethics thereby regain their capacity for resilience in the face of temptation and pressure, for they are no longer grounded in fragile consensus or shifting utility, but in a commitment rooted in the very core of doctrinal understanding.

From this perspective, environmental ethics in Islam are not an add-on to an established religious discourse, but an expression of its inner depth. They arise from the monotheism. In addition to that, they are embodied in the balance, tested through resistance to the corruption, realized in the prosperity, and integrated into worship as a comprehensive mode of existence. Within this integrated vision lies the possibility of articulating an environmental ethical framework capable, both theoretically and practically, of transcending the limitations of modern approaches, for it neither addresses the environment in isolation from the human being nor the human being in isolation from the Creator, but reunites all three within a single horizon: the horizon of the monotheism.

Fifth: Toward Alternative Theological Philosophical Horizon in Environmental Thought

This critical trajectory leads to a central conclusion: the contemporary environmental problem cannot be adequately addressed within the same Western philosophical frameworks that contributed to its emergence. The prevailing approaches, regardless of their labels, continue to operate within a single epistemic horizon that separates the divine from the natural and treats environmental degradation as an issue of management or applied ethics rather than as a symptom of a deeper doctrinal crisis in the conception of the world. Hence arises the need

for an alternative horizon, one that does not merely critique the existing model but seeks to reconstruct environmental thought from its roots by integrating the question of the environment into the heart of contemporary theology and philosophy of religion.

Integrating the environmental question into contemporary theology and philosophy of religion necessitates the reactivation of the original function of these disciplines: the organization of the relationship between God, the human being, and the world. Theology and philosophy of religion have never been purely defensive sciences; rather, they have served as theoretical frameworks for understanding existence in its entirety and for determining the human position within it on doctrinal and epistemic grounds. Modern transformations, coupled with the retreat of theology into partial issues or historical debates, have contributed to the exclusion of major questions, including those concerning nature and the environment, from the theological field of inquiry.

Reintegrating the environment into contemporary theology requires restoring this comprehensive horizon so that the natural world is not perceived as an external datum outside the scope of doctrinal concern, but as an integral part of the created order in which the meaning of the monotheism, the purpose of caliphate, and the limits of human action are established. When theology reconnects with the natural world, it provides the metaphysical and ethical framework that governs any subsequent environmental thought. In this sense, the environment is not a «new subject» for theology; rather, it serves as a revealing field that demonstrates the vitality of doctrinal conceptions and their capacity to address contemporary challenges.

At the level of philosophy of religion, the need to redirect environmental discourse beyond reductionist frameworks, those that confine it to abstract ethics or public policy, is no less pressing. Philosophy of religion, with its analytical tools, is capable of critically examining the metaphysical assumptions underlying modern environmental discourse, whether concerning the concept of nature, the conception of humanity, or the notion of purpose. In this way, philosophy of religion can perform a dual function: it can simultaneously critique the foundations

that have emptied the world of meaning and construct an alternative conception that reconnects values with existence.

However, this approach requires moving beyond defensive frameworks that often confine themselves to demonstrating that Islam supports the environment or that religious texts contain environmental references that can be invoked. While such discourse has preliminary significance, it remains reactive in logic, addressing the problem through citation rather than foundational reconstruction. What is required is a transition from defense to construction, from expedient reconciliation to radical critique, and from mere textual invocation to rebuilding the vision that grants these texts their meaning and scope.

Constructing an alternative theological-philosophical horizon in environmental thought entails, above all, reestablishing environmental ethics on a clear doctrinal foundation rather than on transient consensus or fluctuating cultural sensitivities. Ethics, when derived from creed, are understood as a logical consequence of the existential conception itself. The environmental conduct thus emerges naturally from the human understanding of their position within the created order and their responsibility toward what has been entrusted to them. This alternative horizon does not reject the achievements of contemporary environmental thought, nor does it deny the importance of environmental sciences or international policies. Rather, it situates them within their proper context. The science, within this framework, is a tool for understanding and diagnosis, not a source of meaning. Policies, no matter how precise, remain incapable of achieving genuine sustainability unless grounded in an ethical conception capable of resisting the temptations of utility and the pressures of interest. In this sense, the theological-philosophical horizon does not compete with these fields; it establishes them and provides a metaphysical and ethical depth that they lack in their prevailing forms.

Ultimately, this approach opens a path toward reconnecting what has been separated, the divine and the natural. The separation entrenched by modernity was, first and foremost, a division within consciousness itself, rendering nature a meaningless field and religion devoid of cosmic efficacy. Reconnection here entails

restoring a unified vision in which the natural world serves as a domain for the manifestation of meaning, and religion provides the framework for understanding and organizing that meaning.

Conclusion: Environment as Test of Monotheism, Meaning

The foregoing demonstrates that the crisis of nature cannot be reduced to environmental imbalances or technical failures; rather, it is rooted, at its core, in the human conception of the relationship with God and the world. When existence is redefined outside the horizon of creation and nature is severed from its teleological significance, human action becomes boundless, and corruption emerges as a logical consequence rather than an incidental deviation. Thus, what appears as an environmental crisis is, in reality, a crisis in the doctrinal and epistemic vision that has governed human presence in the universe, rearranging values in a manner that separates power from responsibility and knowledge from meaning.

In this context, the Islamic environmental ethics are presented as a restoration of a lost horizon, the horizon of existence and meaning within the framework of the monotheism. The environmental ethics are therefore inseparable from the essence of religious commitment; they are not reducible to prescriptive behaviors, but are founded as an existential obligation arising from a particular understanding of the human position within creation.

Restoring this horizon entails situating scientific achievements in their proper context. The science explains the how but does not determine the why; policies regulate interests but do not generate meaning. Ethics, when divorced from their doctrinal foundation, lose their capacity for long-term binding force and become hostage to transient consensus and situational concerns. In contrast, the monotheism perspective endows environmental ethics with a depth that transcends the immediate moment, linking human action to responsibility before the Creator rather than to utility alone.

Thus, this volume does not offer ready-made answers but opens a space for discussion and foundational reflection. It invites reconsideration of the environment

as a mirror of a deeper crisis in human conceptions of existence. It also calls for the theology and philosophy of religion to be integral to this reflection, not marginal, and to contribute to the construction of environmental ethics with doctrinal roots capable of addressing the challenge by reestablishing the relationship between the Creator, human beings, and nature based on meaning and responsibility.

In this regard, the tenth issue of Eitiqad journal is dedicated to exploring the human–nature relationship under the title:

«Humans, Nature: toward Sustainable Environmental Ethics.» The prominent scholars, in the «Focus» section, examine various aspects of this relationship, who are:

(Ramadan Khalaf Mohammad Reslan - Egypt), writes the research: «Human Master or Caliph of Nature? Critique of Western Perspective Regarding Philosophy of Caliphate.» (Shaykh Shadi Ali - Egypt), with «Climate Change as Embodiment of Luxury: Theological Reading of Relationship Between Consumption, Destruction.» (Prof. Mohammad bin Ali - Algeria), his research is under the title: «Environment between Environmental Secularism, Religious Spirituality: From Ethics of Preservation to Philosophy of Worship.» (Dr. Lina Hamidoush - Syria) her research is «Moral Contract with Nature: Islamic Philosophical Reading in Confrontation with the Western Social Contract.» Finally, there is (Mr. Hisham Hasan Murtada - Lebanon), and his research is: «Mahdist Project, Environmental Justice: Toward Cosmic Vision of Harmony between Humanity, Universe.»

In the «Studies and Research» section, the issue includes (Dr. Mahmoud Kishaneh - Egypt) with his paper «Al-Afghānī, Critique of Western Materialism.» In «Reviewing a Book» section, (Ms. Lina Al-Saqar - Syria) reviews Shaykh Abdullah Jawadi Amoli's book, which under the title: «Islam, Environment.»

As we present this issue, we hope it will meet the expectations of our readers, to whom we remain deeply grateful and welcome their valuable feedback.

Praise be to Allah, the First and the Last.

Human Master or Caliph of Nature?

Critique of Western Perspective Regarding Philosophy of Caliphate

Dr. Ramadan Khalaf Mohammad Reslan⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract

In this research, I addressed a philosophical issue that has preoccupied many philosophers and thinkers in both the East and the West: The place of humanity in this universe: Is man to be its master? Or its caliph and trustee? From this fundamental question, I have attempted to provide an answer by studying the issue through the lens of Western thinkers and contrasting their perspectives with an authentic monotheistic vision in light of the Islamic philosophy of caliphate. This philosophy has made humanity a caliph of nature, even a guardian responsible for preserving its sanctity and the divine order upon which it was created. According to this Islamic perspective, man is entrusted with a great responsibility, which is to cultivate and improve the earth, in contrast to the Western perspective, which has made man the master and owner of nature, free to do with it as he pleases based on his intellectual capabilities.

Keywords:

Humanity, Nature, Caliphate, the West, Western Perspective, Responsibility.

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■ Climate Change as Embodiment of Luxury Theological Reading of Relationship between Consumption, Destruction

Shaykh Shadi Ali⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract

This study aims at analyzing the dialectical relationship between the concepts of consumption and destruction from a theological perspective grounded in the Islamic intellectual tradition. It examines how, under the dominance of the capitalist model, the human being has shifted from the position of stewardship based on cultivation and reform to one of consumption based on depletion and corruption. It argues that climate change is not merely a physical phenomenon but also reflects a spiritual and moral imbalance resulting from the dominance of luxury as an existential mode that transforms humans into consumers. It demonstrates that the environmental crisis represents the activation of universal and historical laws as an inevitable response to human transgression and the disruption of balance, in accordance with the Qur'anic view that links corruption to human behavior.

The study also addresses the concept of the destruction of cities as a normative law that connects economic luxury with civilizational and cosmic collapse. It concludes by highlighting the limitations of technical solutions in light of the Jevons Paradox, which shows that increased efficiency may lead to greater consumption.

In contrast, the study proposes an ethical alternative based on reviving the concepts of the "good life" and economy understood as moderation. This alternative draws inspiration from the model of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib, emphasizing the cultivation of the earth and the reinforcement of the principle of stewardship and environmental responsibility in order to protect human existence from destruction.

Keywords:

Luxury, Climate Change, Cosmic Laws, Consumer Capitalism, Prosperity of the Earth.

1 - Researcher in Islamic studies from Egypt, student at a religious seminary [Hawza] in Lebanon.

Environment between Environmental Secularism, Religious Spirituality from Ethics of Preservation to Philosophy of Worship

Prof. Mohammad bin Ali⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract

The term “environment” is not new; rather, what is new is the renewed understanding associated with the concept. It has come to be linked to problems that threaten the natural order and, consequently, the future of humanity. Environmental problems today are no longer seen merely as disturbances in the natural system, but as the result of the way humans think and perceive the world. This research seeks to examine the environmental question through two competing perspectives that struggle over space and domination in today’s world. The first is a spiritual and religious vision, grounded in the idea of humanity’s ultimate purposes, viewing the human being as a bearer of a mission and a witness to civilization, within a framework consistent with the comprehensive nature of religion and its purposive objectives.

In contrast, the research highlights the features of environmental secularism, which has accompanied a materialist view of the human being and existence. This perspective is centered on the self and considers the human being as solely responsible for their condition and their humanity. It aspires to offer a vision that takes into account the broader dimensions of religion, leading to solutions that address environmental problems resulting from ongoing violations of nature amid the growing spread of materialist tendencies based on consumer culture. This culture has not only violated the environment but also undermined human dignity, confining the human being to a purely consumptive dimension.

Keywords:

Religion, Secularism, Environment, Spirituality, Religious Spirituality, Ethics, Worship.

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Ethical Contract with Nature

Islamic Philosophical Reading in Confrontation with Western Social Contract

Dr. Lina Hamidoush⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract

This research examines the Islamic philosophical perspective on nature and its fundamental differences from Western philosophy, particularly the philosophies of the social contract theorists. The research aims at clarifying the position of social contract philosophers on nature, starting from the concept of private property and the resulting social and political inequality in modern Western society. In this context, the research discusses the social contract theory, which examines the transition of humanity from a state of nature to a social and political state, and how proponents of this theory justified the political inequality that, in turn, led to economic class inequality, and the role of nature in reinforcing this inequality. It also addresses the concept of economic utility, treating nature and the environment merely as material resources contributing to wealth accumulation and creating relationships of exploitation and conflict due to the absence of a moral framework in dealing with the environment and nature.

The researcher also aims at clarifying the differences between Islamic philosophy, through its major sources, and Western philosophy, particularly regarding spiritual matters that, in Islam, make the environment and nature a matter of faith and moral responsibility.

Keywords:

Ethical Contract, Nature, Social Contract, Environment, Caliphate, Sustainable Development.

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Mahdist Project, Environmental Justice

toward Cosmic Vision of Harmony between Humanity, Universe

alsayed Hisham Hasan Murtada⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract:

This research approaches the environmental crisis as a spiritual and worldview crisis before it is a technical or economic one. The modern humanity has lost its sacred relationship with nature, transforming it from a realm of balance and generosity into a resource for exploitation. The research begins by diagnosing environmental disturbances caused by human activities, such as pollution, global warming, and the loss of biodiversity, and argues that these are the result of an unsustainable development model based on greed and excessive consumption. It compares the reality of global environmental injustice, where poorer countries bear the burden of pollution produced by wealthier nations, with the Qur'anic and spiritual vision offered by the Mahdist project, which is presented as a divine model for restoring harmony between humanity and the universe.

The state of Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his reappearance) is not merely a political project, but a comprehensive cosmic environmental reform through which the balance of the earth is restored and environmental and social justice are achieved together. In this vision, nature becomes a partner in goodness rather than an object of exploitation. The research calls for renewing the spiritual relationship with the universe and drawing inspiration from the Mahdist vision to build a humane environmental consciousness that reforms the earth through the reform of the human being himself.

Keywords:

Environmental Justice, Mahdist Project, Humanity and the Universe, Cosmic Reform, Divine Caliphate, Environmental Crisis, Existential Harmony.

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Studies and Research



Al-Afghani Critique of Western Materialism

Dr. Mahmoud Kishaneh⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract

This research examines Jamal al-Din al-Afghani's stance on materialism within Western philosophical traditions, both classical and modern. It elucidates the critiques leveled by this Islamic reformer against materialist doctrines, particularly emphasizing his deep concern for Islamic unity and his efforts to galvanize the Muslim world to transcend civilizational decline. Al-Afghani argued that such progress could only be achieved through a correct orientation toward science, rather than an adoption of destructive materialist and atheistic ideologies. He underscored the significance of religion as a civilizational foundation alongside science.

It is structured around several key themes: al-Afghani's attitude toward Western civilization, whether critical or favorable; his critique of Western materialism and the reasons behind it; and the fundamental principles of materialist philosophy. Furthermore, the study reviews atheistic materialism in antiquity, particularly as espoused by Democritus, Epicurus, and others, followed by an analysis of modern materialism, notably Darwin's theory, which al-Afghani viewed as having detrimental human, scientific, and ethical implications. The research culminates in a detailed examination of al-Afghani's critique of modern materialist thought.

Keywords:

Al-Afghani, Western Materialism, Ancient Materialism, Modern materialism, Eternalism, Atheism, Darwin, Theory of Evolution.

1 - Egyptian writer and researcher.

Reading a Book



Islam, Environment

Ms. Lina Al-Saqr⁽¹⁾

■ Abstract

In this book, we explore the vital relationship between humans and their environment, emphasizing humanity's responsibility to preserve the ecological balance established by Allah. The Earth, with all its natural components, requires human care and the protection of its resources. From both religious and scientific perspectives, the book discusses how humans should interact with the environment in accordance with Islamic teachings, which advocate for the Earth's cultivation and preservation. It also highlights the dangers of pollution and environmental neglect resulting from the disregard of these principles.

Within the chapters of his book, the author addresses humanity's responsibility to utilize the Earth's resources sustainably, emphasizing that humans are not merely creatures driven by their desires but are stewards of the Earth and all living beings. The book underscores the importance of adhering to divine commandments that safeguard the environment and maintain balance in life. Additionally, it stresses the necessity of seeking lawful means of sustenance and preserving the purity of the environment, the soul, and the body. The author concludes by affirming the importance of peaceful coexistence among religions and peoples as part of humanity's responsibility to maintain societal harmony.

Keywords:

Environment, Humanity, the Holy Qur'an, Natural Resources, Divine Commands, Evil Deeds, Good Deeds, Ideal city.

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