Islam and Ecology Bibliography

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This essay links the ethical framework of the Qur'an and the misinterpretation of that framework by males in positions of authority. Though, as the author makes clear, the Qur'an is clear in setting out an ethic of equity and justice for all, sadly it has been perverted, especially by Muslim fundamentalists, into an ideology of hatred, oppression and violence against women. The author suggests that Muslim women must regain access to the land and to nature in order to enjoy and attain true freedom. In some areas women are taking active roles in reestablishing this link through the Qur'an and Islam and through a variety of women's organizations.


From the Publisher: The process of regulation in the field of international environmental law belies the complexity of environmental issues that need to be addressed in managing global environmental resources. Although the regulatory process has succeeded in elevating the acknowledgement of a new set of ideas and concepts toward sustainable development, it has not had success in elevating those concepts into a set of determinative norms or rules. This book, written by an international lawyer, stresses the futility of a state-centric approach to a planet-wide phenomenon that the environmental issue presents.
Utilizing a revelatory methodology, Ammar proposes the concept of hay’a (shyness with reverence and respect) as a guiding principle for Muslim environmental action. She focuses on issues such as Muslim economic and political livelihood, distributive justice, rights of the community over the individual, just leadership, attitudes toward women, and women’s relationship to population control.

With no intention to present the Islamic view, Ammar introduces an Islamic ethical paradigm supported by the Qur’an, Hadiths, Sunnah, and Sharia’h. She explains that the meaning of “ethics” can be understood in Islamic terms as hay’a, the state of respect and/or practice of good deeds. Ammar provides clear ethical guidelines regarding natural resources (conservation, sharing, treating with kindness), and protected and preserved land designations. She concludes with the suggestion that any discussion on the environmental crisis should remain sensitive to cultural issues.


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Originally prepared for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in English, French, and Arabic, this document was later considered to have international appeal. Beginning with a description of an Islamic attitude toward the universe and human/nature relations, the document broadens its scope to include topics on conservation of natural resources, protection from harmful impacts of products and processes generated by humans, and viable legislative principles, policies, and institutions.

Ba Ubaid, Ali Yeslam. "Environment, Ethics, and Design: An Inquiry into the Ethical Underpinnings for a Contemporary Muslim Environmentalism and its Environmental Design Implications." Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1999. This dissertation begins with a survey of historical shifts in the idea of nature in Western thought and the frustrations of the prevailing paradigms of modernism. Building on the dynamic nature of Islam as a framework for thought and life, the author then re-constructs some relevant Islamic precepts in support of a higher sensitivity towards nature and environment and still relevant to contemporary living. The final product of the study depicts actual and potential applications for the aforementioned set of ecological design principles and themes in the recent experience of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The conclusions point out a future direction for local environmental design thinking and practice.


Ban, E.G. *The Constant Feud: Forest vs. Desert*. New York, NY: Gefen, 1999. From the Publisher: This controversial book argues that human history is determined by the environment and human behaviors alone. As a result of the last ice age, a once verdant garden of Eden was transformed into the barren deserts of today's North Africa and the Middle East, while Europe's glacier cover to be gradually replaced by thick, fertile forests. According to author, it is this environmental shift - which spurred the advent of agriculture, civilisation and modern religion - that is the root cause of today's conflict between Islam and the West.


Bivins, Mary W. "Women, Ecology, and Islam in the Making of Modern Hausa Cultural History." Ph.D. diss., Michigan State University, 1994. This dissertation is a study of Islamic Hausa women in the West African Republics of Nigeria and Niger from the 1800s to the present, and the unique roles they played in shaping, even at times defining, modern Hausa culture. The dissertation concludes that the blending of Hausa notions of gender, ethnicity and Islam empowered Hausa women's participation in the economic transformation of the nineteenth century Hausa landscape and the Hausa response to European conquest. The historical connections between women, gender, ethnicity and Islam are essential to understanding the influence of the past on the present in Hausa culture and political movements.

Bousquet, G. “Des animaux et de leur traitement selon le Judaisme, le Christianisme et l'Islam.” *Studia Islamica* 9 (1958): 31–48. Bousquet distinguishes the religions of the Far East and India from those of the West by virtue of their understanding of human and animal nature. However, while there are fundamental similarities among the Western religions, Bousquet states that there can be large differences in their details. He draws on the legal, scriptural, and philosophical texts of the Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions in order to support his observation that Christianity has less to say about the treatment of animals than either Islam or Judaism.

Bryer, Jenny Banks. "Science and the Environment Symposium II: The Black Sea in Crisis." *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 10 (March 1999): 69-76. This article explores the history of the “Religion, Science, and The Environment” initiative in the Easter Mediterranean/Black Sea region, which dates to 1988. This initiative brings Jews, Muslims, and Christians (Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant), and environmental scientists together to discuss how best to protect and rehabilitate the ecosystem of the Black Sea (and the Rivers that feed into it, especially the Danube). This article focuses on the outcome of the September 1997 conference, at which a set of principles for protecting
the Black Sea was articulated.

Analyzed in terms of the despotic, stewardship, and citizenship models introduced by Callicott, Islam is found to be “unambiguously” anthropocentric. In this short section, he focuses on one tenth-century manuscript, The Case of the Animals versus Man Before the King of the Jinn, in order to demonstrate its environmental ethic based on an Islamic understanding of humankind’s rule over the earth guided by virtues of obedience to God, good character, and good works.


Erdur demonstrates how the American environmental movement began as a radical critique of Western modernity and was subsequently absorbed into it. He proceeds by illustrating how the struggle against Western modernity and its secular values is actually at the root of the Turkish Islamist environmental agenda. He provides an analysis of both the Islamist stance on overconsumption and population control as well as their proposed collectivist counter-economics which he finds in direct response to Western capitalism.


This edited volume presents Islamic perspectives on a number of proposed water-management policies, including water demand management, wastewater reuse, and fair pricing. The book adds to our knowledge of some of the influences on formal policy and informal practice, and makes these ideas available to a broader public. It dispels common misconceptions about the Islamic view on water-management practices, and serves as a concrete example of the benefit of examining development in the context of values and culture. Contributors Include: Odeh Al-Jayyousi, Hussein Amery, Walid Abderrahman, and Dante Caponera. It can be found online at: http://www.idrc.ca/en/ev-9425-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html.


This is the first comprehensive study of the role of animals in the Islamic tradition. Drawing on a wide range of sources, including classic texts in philosophy, literature and mysticism, Foltz traces the development of Islamic attitudes towards animals over the centuries and confronts some of the key ethical questions facing Muslims today.


This edited volume provides an overview of how Muslim activists are responding on the ground to the global environmental crisis. Chapters by Muslim environmentalists survey environmental initiatives in Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Malaysia. Issues are detailed pointing out both successes and failures and describing the unique challenges facing the world's very diverse Muslim societies in striving to balance development and social justice with preserving the integrity of the earth's life support systems. Contributors include: Ibrahim Özdemir, Safei al-din Hamed, Ali Raza Rizvi, Ali Ahmad, Fazlun Khalid, and Ayman Ahwal.


This anthology explores current environmental and ecological issues amidst the various worldviews, cultures, and traditions that constitute the world’s major religions. Part one presents the global conceptual landscape with selections that focus on the spiritual and environmental crises associated with modernity. Part two distills all of the major world religions’ perspectives—Eastern, Western, and newly emerging—on contemporary ecological issues. Part three rounds out this collection with an exploration of other cross-cutting motifs in today’s enviro-cultural criticism, including radical environmentalism, ecofeminism, ecojustice, and the rising voice of the Global South.

Foltz briefly outlines the scriptural foundation for an Islamic environmentalism and proceeds directly into a critique of the Islam subsection of the World Religions and Ecology conferences held at Harvard Divinity School’s Center for the Study of World Religions. He finds the majority of Muslim scholars more focused on social rather than environmental injustices. Giving examples of environmental legislation implemented by the governments of Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Pakistan in order to illustrate the Islamic tradition of *aql* (rational intelligence), Foltz contrasts this litigation with what he observes as unbalanced and passive responses of *tawakkul* (trust in Allah) to the present environmental crisis experienced by Muslims in other parts of the world.


This chapter is an introduction to an Islamic understanding of sacred order, the anthropocentrism of Islam, and the notion of nature’s temporality. Forward and Alam emphasize the Qur’anic revelation that all creation is a sign of Allah and essentially Muslim (submitted to Allah). Other topics include: the spirit-world, science, rights of ownership, human vicegerency, and Allah’s sovereignty.

GŸrsel, D. *'evresizsiniz (You Are Environmentless)*. Istanbul: Insan Yayincilik, 1989 (In Turkish).


This is an anthology of spiritual perspectives on nature and the environment, highlighting the human role in honoring and maintaining the balance. While themes from the Qur’an introduce each chapter, it also includes the wisdom of other faith traditions. Part One looks at the “Basic Principles” of Unity, Interdependence, Power & Beauty, Communication, Adaptability, Creativity & Transformation, Endurance & Rejuvenation. Part Two includes sections on the Four Elements and The Communities (Species) of Life. The Final Section is “Caring for God's Creation.”


This article explores the work done in Islam and Ecology by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. Nasr argues that any Environmental understanding founded in Islam must include: the notion of transcendence, a correspondence between the microcosm and macrocosm, a critique of the dogma of Darwinian evolution (which he argues destroys any notion of nature as sacred), a critique of fundamentalist versions of Islam, and a better understanding of the human place in nature through the concept of vice regency. Finally the authors compare Nasr’s ecological “way” with that of Thomas Berry.


Husaini provides a brief background on the role of revelation and reason in the Qur’an linking each with systems of personal and social ethics as well as with *shari’a* (revealed) and *fiqh* (substantive) law. He proceeds to focus in detail on the relationship of environmental engineering systems planning with Islamic philosophy of knowledge and education, jurisprudence, state and comparative politics, and welfare economics. Husaini concludes by evaluating the possibility of a socio-cultural rejuvenation of developing Muslim countries with regard to primary values found in *shari’a* and secondary values provided by *fiqh*, thereby suggesting that a humanistic-social science component derived from an Islamic ideological perspective be included in engineering education.


Goodman’s thorough introduction to this translation shows how contemporary concepts such as ecosystems, eco-niche, succession, and interdependence are hidden in this moral tale about animals’ dissatisfaction with the actions of humankind. He also provides the historical background and philosophical underpinnings of the Brethren of Purity.


Given that “environmental ethics” is often seen as a Western import in the Muslim world, this book develops an Islamic understanding of environmental issues based upon the Qu’ran and Hadith. The author argues that the concepts of hima [protected zones], shumul [comprehensiveness], tarazan [balance], waqi’iyya [positivism], and “purity in all things,” provide support for the conclusion that Islam teaches an inherent respect for nature.

Kilic, Sadik. "The Message of the Risale in Islamic texts/practices. This volume includes a significant number of Qur'an and Hadiths references illustrating Islam’s spiritual perspective on nature. Other topics include: ethics and the environment, science, natural resources, trade, commerce, desert reclamation, and notions of conservation in Islamic texts/practices.


Khalid, Fazlun, and Joanne O’Brien, eds. Islam and Ecology. New York: Cassell, 1992. This volume includes a significant number of Qur’an and Hadiths references illustrating Islam’s spiritual perspective on nature. Other topics include: ethics and the environment, science, natural resources, trade, commerce, desert reclamation, and notions of conservation in Islamic texts/practices.


Johnson-Davies, D. The Island of Animals, Adapted from an Arabic Fable. Austin, Tex.: University of Texas Press, 1994.

Johnston, David. "Toward Muslims and Christians as Joint Caretakers of Creation in a Postmodern World." Ph.D. diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2001. This dissertation develops a Muslim-Christian theological discourse about humanity and creation. A first section makes explicit issues surrounding the transition from modernity to postmodernity. The second section presents quranic data surrounding the vision of humankind as God's mandated trustee of creation and then looks to the Bible’s understanding of the imago. The Genesis account of humanity's dominion over the earth and their creation in the image of God neatly parallels the quranic concept of the human caliphate. The third section deals development theory, finding that whereas the goal of “sustainable development” is inevitable to some extent, “earth community” is a more appropriate paradigm. In concluding, the author suggests that working on these problems together, Muslims and Christians will find common ground.


Abstract: An ethical system must do two things: It must envision a particular way of life and it must work out a path to the realization of that way of life that is internally consistent, yet workable in the real world. Surprisingly, recent ecological ethics have failed to realize these two components of an ethical system. From Leopold's Land Ethic to Deep Ecology, no coherent ethical system was born. Most of the prevailing ecological ethics suffer from being too abstract or utopian in principle. The dissertation asserts that Islam, as a religion and a way of life, is capable of providing man with a comprehensive ethical system. Islamic environmental values represent the theoretical part while the Islamic Institutions and laws provide the operational component of the ethical system. "Earth as a Mosque" ideal is a proposed concept that combines theoretical and operational principles, and can provide an alternative Islamic environmental ethic. The dissertation deals with major policy conflicts that have arisen in developing agriculture and water resources in Saudi Arabia. Recently, the Kingdom's strategy for achieving self-sufficiency in food commodities has created serious environmental conflicts. Severe groundwater depletion, soil salinity, inefficient use of irrigation technology, lack of land use management and control, and inefficient administrative organization are all symptoms of policy and decision-making conflicts. The assertion is that the integration of Islamic environmental planning principles--derived from the Islamic Shari'ah--with the existing Saudi policies for agriculture and water development can generate many solutions to these problems. Tazkiah, an Islamic alternative to conventional Western "development" concept, is introduced as an integral part of Islamic environmental principles. The dissertation proposes a new Ministry for the Environment in Saudi Arabia. The new Ministry is inspired by the traditional Islamic institution of Hisbah. The consolidation of relevant environmental affairs within the proposed Ministry is a response to the existing sectoral approach dealing with the environmental problems. The proposed Ministry is based on the holistic Islamic approach and the Islamic values of justice, modernation and equilibrium. The proposed ministry is responsible for producing an environmental impact statement based on the Shari'ah injunctions.


While lamenting the fact that scripture in all religions has ceased to be taken seriously, Masri utilizes Qur'an and Hadiths extensively. Drawing particular attention to animal consciousness, Masri suggests that animal consciousness, although not like human consciousness, is significantly more than simply instinct and intuition. Masri also elaborates on other important concepts such as the "homo geneous organism" of life and "joint tenancy." This text is provided in both English and Arabic.


Masri addresses the moral implications of the religious claim that humans are the apex of value in the world. His essay reflects on animal psyches and communities, humanity’s place in the order of species, and animal welfare (e.g., the preservation of species, fair share in natural resources, Islamic law, traditional slaughter, cruelty to animals, and pain and disfigurement in animal experimentation).


Abstract: Faith-based teachings on the environment have been identified as a potentially effective form of conservation outreach but one that remains largely untested. Indonesia contains 10% of the world’s tropical rainforests and is the most populous Muslim country. A faith-based approach to conservation could therefore yield significant conservation benefits here. Within Islam several key principles in the Qur’an underpin and outline the role of humans in nature conservation. Here, we report on a Darwin Initiative project component that sought to assess the applicability of Islamic teachings to conservation action in West Sumatra. We developed water-conservation-themed sermons that were delivered by project-trained religious leaders in 10 mosques and nine Islamic boarding schools during the holy month of Ramadan. We conducted entry–exit questionnaire surveys to assess levels of concern, awareness and intent to act amongst male (n = 389) and female (n = 479) worshippers. The results revealed that greater attention should be paid to raising awareness of the linkages between Islam and conservation rather than on conservation principles alone, which were already adequately understood. This study provides the first insights into the important role that women could play within a faith-based project. Female respondents demonstrated greater knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings about the environment and the services provided by watershed forests. They were also more likely to contribute to conservation activities, suggesting that future projects should seek to involve this often marginalized stakeholder group fully, as well as provide practical ways for men and women to transform words into action.


Based on his University of Chicago lectures (1966), this book describes how the positivist tradition has de-ontologized science. Nasr provides a history of the environmental crisis, its intellectual and historical causes, the metaphysical principles of nature, and their application to the contemporary situation. He emphasizes the possibility of remaining true to revelation while also meeting the rigorous demands of intellectual pursuit.


Compiled from the University of Birmingham's Cadbury Lectures (1994), this book gives a historical critique of the orientations toward nature found within world religions and various Western philosophical traditions. Nasr stresses that studying across religious frontiers has the potential to enrich and/or remind one of the sacred encounter with nature.


Taken from an address given at the Middlebury College “Spirit and Nature Symposium” (1990), this text argues that religion has both an ethical and intellectual component. Succinctly elucidating the history of scientific method in both Western and Islamic scholarship, Nasr suggests that the environmental crisis can only be cured through the spiritual healing of humankind.


Nasr argues that Islam has served as an intermediary between Western and Eastern epistemologies. This conjunction of thought, expressed best in the Sufi tradition, provides the basis for a qualitative/quantitative science that Nasr believes would unveil the unicity and interrelationship of nature, thereby providing potential solutions to the ecological crisis.


This book draws extensively upon joint World Bank and ARC/WWF projects worldwide. It shows, through stories, land management, myths, investment policies, legends, advocacy and celebration, the role the major faiths play in ecological well-being. The book explores issues of climate change, forestry, asset management, education and biodiversity protection and does so using the techniques of the great faiths - storytelling, example and celebration. Part II offers "Faith Statements on Ecology" by many of the world's religious traditions. The challenge of living with integrity in a pluralist world underlies the book and it offers models of how diversity is crucial in attempting to ensure we have a sustainable world.


Recent political and social events as well as advances in science and technology have posed challenges to the traditional Muslim discourse on ethics. In this book produced by the Institute of Ismaili Studies, the author examines these challenges, and through a critical analysis of the implications of emerging initiatives in political pluralism and civic culture, in bio-medicine and environmental conservatism, considers how the contours of public ethics in Islam may be redefined to provide shared conceptions of the good in pluralist societies.


This edited volume is divided into two sections: thought and epistemology, and science and the environment. After questioning the epistemological and methodological foundations of modern natural and social sciences, Sardar proposes an Islamization of knowledge that would help develop conceptual categories and values from within Islam. Other essays include: S. Parvez Manzoor, on the crisis of Muslim thought and the future of the Ummah (Muslim community); Seyyed Hossein Nasr, on Islam and the problem of modern science; Hussein Mehmet Ateshin, on urbanization and the environment, and Ayyub Malik, on the recent history and possible future of Muslim cities.


This book consists of 25 essays dealing with the environmental knowledge and beliefs of cultures outside of the United States and Europe. In addition to articles surveying Islamic, Chinese, Native American, Aboriginal Australian, Indian, Thai, and Andean views of nature and the environment, among others, the book includes essays on Environmentalism and Images of the Other, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Worldviews and Ecology, Rethinking the Western/non-Western Divide, and Landscape, Nature, and Culture. The
essays address the connections between nature and culture and relate the environmental practices to the cultures which produced them.


Shankland provides a thorough historical background of how Islam functions politically, institutionally, and legislatively in secular Turkey. More specifically, Shankland follows the rise and fall of Erbakan, the leader of the widely-supported Islamist party, as well as other minority groups such as the Alevis and various tarikats (religious orders). This book provides insights into environmental issues through its exploration of the complex relationship between morality, religious and secular agendas, and policy implementation.

Stewart searches for a religiously informed management strategy which would relieve the stress of large flocks of livestock on sensitive lands during Muslim holy times. He describes contemporary problems such as: the lack of diversity in livestock due to a focus on the numbers of sacrificial animals, the problems of human population increase coupled with the breakdown of extended families producing more heads of household and therefore more stock per unit area, and the expansion of grazing lands into forests and agricultural lands. Stewart concludes by offering technical solutions such as improving range management, reducing flock size to only sacrificial animals, improved marketing, and conserving meat to spread out the period of availability. He also suggests religious solutions, however admittedly out of his field, by drawing on the Qur’an, Hadiths, and the history of Islamic law in which he finds the possibility of reducing the number of people obligated to make an animal sacrifice under Qur’anic law.


Timm asserts that the sovereignty of Allah in Islamic creation theology is fundamental to any hermeneutic on the role and duties of human vicegerency (stewardship). He challenges the widespread opinion that monotheistic creation theologies implicitly support exploitation of the environment. He finds that socioeconomic and colonial factors, such as poverty and the influx of Western science and technology with its concomitant secularization, account for environmental degradation found in contemporary Islamic countries.


Wersal surveys ecological works written by Muslim scholars in order to demonstrate the centrality of Qur’an and Sunnah in the Islamic decision-making process. She cites Islam’s emphasis on community and consensus and the synthesis of fact and value in traditional Islamic science as potential paradigms for a world community that faces mounting global environmental challenges.


Wescoat outlines the doctrinal underpinnings of the “right to thirst” in Islamic law by utilizing traditional terminology found in the Qur'an, hadiths, and fiqh (jurisprudence) about pollution and purity, as well as historical precedents set in the seventh to the eighth century CE. He highlights the themes of Allah's beneficence, creaturely dependence on Allah, and the moral imperative for humans to recognize these facts in Islamic law, and examines their relevance in Pakistan and Colorado. With his comparative approach, Wescoat argues that it will be difficult to implement Islamic law in Pakistan due to its colonialisih history and politics. Wescoat also suggests that the moral depth of Islamic law can provide a way for Colorado residents to assess the adequacy of their own water laws.


Observing the emphasis in Mughal studies on the physical attributes of gardens and paradise, Wescoat hopes to further the study of landscape and religion with his exploration of the relationship between aesthetics and theology. Drawing on Qur'anic garden references, he investigates not only garden form but also the faith and conduct that admits humans into the Garden. Wescoat focuses his attention on the gardens of Lahore, distinguishing between Mughal and Sufi shrine gardens. He argues that while the former is exemplative of Qur'anic descriptions of paradise, the latter is an example of the theological meaning of paradise because of its ability to stimulate religious experience.


Zaidi argues that the ecological crisis is actually a moral crisis and he demonstrates why the ecological crisis warrants an ethic grounded in a religious matrix that acknowledges a law with divine principles. Zaidi concludes by stating that faith in Islam translates into action, through what he terms “the process of decision-action”—a process that encompasses characteristics such as justice, piety, and knowledge.

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