



Environmental Theology and Its Relevance to Islamic Law: Perception of Makassar Muslim Scholars, Indonesia

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Abstract: This article discusses environmental theology with Islamic law from the perspective of scholars and scholars in Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The research uses qualitative methods with a theological approach and Islamic law as an analytical tool. Theology is used to analyze Islamic concepts of the environment as opposed to Islamic law. In obtaining the data, researchers interviewed religious figures who became role models for the people of Makassar, in addition to using literature study techniques. The results showed that Makassarese Muslim scholars are well aware that environmental theology is an alternative solution to overcome the environmental crisis. They believe that the two main sources of Islam, the Quran and Hadith, pay great attention to the protection and maintenance of the environment. Similarly, Prophet Muhammad PBUH is the best example among leaders who care deeply about the environment. Furthermore, this study also concludes that first, environmental theology is a theology that not only discusses man's relationship with God but also discusses man's relationship with social, cultural, environmental, and social reality. Environmental theology focuses on the extent of human concern for nature and the environment. Second, the foundation of environmental theology can be traced from two main sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an, and Hadith. The Qur'an pays great attention to the protection and preservation of the environment. Likewise, Prophet Muhammad PBUH, in his various traditions also emphasized the importance of protecting and maintaining the environment. Third, environmental theology is closely related to Islamic law specifically ecological fiqh, which focuses on practical explanations of how to protect the environment. If environmental theology is oriented towards philosophical foundations in environmental conservation, then Islamic law requires the importance of protecting the environment as a benefit for humans and nature.

Keywords: Environmental, theology, Islamic law, *muslim* scholar

Abstrak: Artikel ini membahas teologi lingkungan hubungannya dengan hukum Islam dalam perspektif ulama dan cendekiawan di Kota Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan. Penelitian tersebut menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan teologis dan hukum Islam sebagai alat analisisnya. Teologi digunakan untuk menganalisis konsep-konsep Islam tentang lingkungan yang terkait dengan hukum Islam. Dalam memperoleh data, peneliti mewawancarai tokoh-tokoh agama yang menjadi panutan bagi masyarakat Makassar, di samping itu juga menggunakan teknik studi literatur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa para cendekiawan Muslim Makassar sangat memahami bahwa teologi lingkungan merupakan solusi alternatif untuk mengatasi krisis lingkungan. Mereka percaya bahwa dua sumber utama Islam, Al-Quran dan Hadis, memberikan perhatian yang besar terhadap perlindungan dan pemeliharaan lingkungan. Demikian pula Nabi Muhammad adalah contoh terbaik di antara para pemimpin yang sangat peduli terhadap lingkungan. Selanjutnya, kajian ini juga menyimpulkan bahwa pertama, teologi lingkungan adalah teologi yang tidak hanya membahas hubungan manusia dengan Allah tetapi juga membahas hubungan manusia dengan realitas sosial, budaya, lingkungan, dan sosial. Teologi lingkungan berfokus pada sejauh mana kepedulian manusia terhadap alam dan lingkungan. Kedua, landasan teologi lingkungan dapat ditelusuri dari dua sumber utama Islam, yaitu Al-Qur'an, dan Hadis. Al-Qur'an memberikan perhatian besar terhadap perlindungan dan pelestarian lingkungan. Demikian juga Nabi Muhammad SAW, dalam berbagai tradisinya juga menegaskan pentingnya menjaga dan memelihara lingkungan. Ketiga, teologi lingkungan terkait erat dengan hukum Islam khususnya fiqh ekologis, yang berfokus pada penjelasan praktis tentang bagaimana menjaga lingkungan. Jika teologi lingkungan berorientasi pada landasan filosofis dalam pelestarian lingkungan, maka hukum Islam mewajibkan pada pentingnya menjaga lingkungan sebagai sebuah kemaslahatan bagi manusia dan alam.

Kata Kunci: Lingkungan, teologi, Hukum Islam, ulama

Introduction

The environmental crisis in today's globalized world is increasingly alarming. The environmental crisis is characterized by increased population mortality and natural disasters are also a direct effect, such as floods, landslides, and forest fires.¹ World Health Organization 2016 data shows that 24 percent of global deaths are associated with environmental damage. Even according to WHO, between 2030 and 2050, it is estimated that the worldwide death rate will

¹Otashexov Zokirjon, "Environmental Crisis: Ways to Exit from Ecological Crisis," *Eurasian Journal of Medical and Natural Sciences* 3, No. 2 (2023). Subhan Ansori and Ramadan Yusuf, "Addressing the Global Environmental Crisis: Strategies for Sustainable Development," *West Science Social and Humanities Studies* 1(02) (2023), p. 63-75.

increase by around 250,000 people per year due to environmental damage, which impacts the emergence of malnutrition, malaria, diarrhea, and stress.²

This environmental damage is characterized by air pollution inside and outside the home. WHO Health Statistics (2017) notes that Indonesia is the third largest country, after China and India, the most significant contributor to the death rate due to air pollution. Of the 210,800 deaths in Indonesia, 165,000 died due to air pollution.³ This figure is certainly concerning for a country where 90 percent of the population is Muslim, 9 percent is Christian, and the rest are Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucianists.⁴

Correspondingly, referring to data from the National Disaster Management Agency (*Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana*/BNPB) 2021, at least 5.402 natural disasters occurred in Indonesia due to environmental damage.⁵ Even more worrying, according to The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) 2021 data, Indonesia loses 650 thousand hectares of forest yearly due to illegal logging and forest burning.⁶ In addition, other effects of environmental damage also result in global warming. The Indonesian Forum for the Environment (*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia*/WALHI) noted that the earth's temperature has now increased by 1.1 degrees Celsius.⁷

In the context of Makassar, WALHI South Sulawesi, they noted three significant issues that Makassar residents face due to environmental degradation: flooding, waste, and the availability of clean water. These three issues are still severe problems that still need to be addressed adequately by the local government.⁸ Every year, the city is subject to flooding during the rainy season,

²World Health Organization, Public Health and Environmental, <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/themes/public-health-and-environment>, Accessed on 24 July 2022. Myriam Verena Thoma, et.al., "Clinical Ecopsychology: The Mental Health Impacts and Underlying Pathways of the Climate and Environmental Crisis," *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 12 (2021).

³Warga Indonesia Meninggal Tahun karena Pencemaran Udara Segera Beralih ke Energi bersih, <https://aeer.info/warga-indonesia>, Accessed on 25 July 2022.

⁴ Muhaemin Latif, "Multicultural Attitudes in Islamic Boarding School in South Sulawesi," *Cogent Education* 8, No. 1 (2021), p. 2.

⁵BNPB Verifikasi 5.402 Kejadian Bencana Sepanjang Tahun 2021, <https://bnpb.go.id/berita/bnpb-verifikasi>, Accessed 25 July 2022.

⁶Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), Global Assessment Report of The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Bonn, Germany, 2019.pdf. Accessed on 26 August 2023. Rizki Zakaria, "Optimization of Asset Tracking in Law Enforcement of Illegal Logging in Indonesia," *PADJADJARAN: Journal of Law* 8, No. 1 (2020).

⁷Kondisi Lingkungan Hidup di Indonesia di Tengah Isu Pemanasan Global. <https://www.walhi.or.id/kondisi-lingkungan-hidup-di-indonesia>, Accessed on 27 August 2022.

⁸WALHI Sebut 6 Masalah Penting Lingkungan Hidup di Kota Makassar, <https://sulsel.suara.com/read>, Accessed on 25 July 2023.

and the garbage that accumulates in the landfill (*Tempat Pembuangan Akhir/TPA*) is also a prolonged problem. Frequent flooding and poor waste management have led to poor water quality.

Indeed, the environmental damage above cannot be separated from the lack of human awareness in understanding their environment. Humans play an essential role in the injury that leads to the destruction of the living environment. This is often emphasized in theological teachings, especially Islam, which says that environmental damage on land and sea is inseparable from human actions and efforts (QS. Al-Rum: 41-42).⁹ That is why theology is vital in guarding humans from damaging their environment, which can damage the broader ecosystem of life. This assertion is not only a concern of Islam, but Christian theology also pays special attention to the importance of protecting and preserving the environment. According to Bergman, Christian theology likens nature to an "image of God" that cannot be separated from God as its creator. Nature was created to be nurtured and preserved to represent God. Destroying this nature means destroying God's creation.¹⁰

The explanation above illustrates how closely related environmental theology with Islamic law. Environmental theology can be a solution to reducing the level of damage to nature that humans do. This article will discuss the perceptions of Muslim Scholars in Makassar to interpreting environmental theology in relation to Islamic law. This article will also explain the meaning and genealogy of theology and its relation to modernity, considering the ecological crisis generated by modernization.

This study uses qualitative methods using Islamic theological and legal approaches. Theology is used to analyze Islamic concepts of the environment associated with Islamic law.¹¹ The research was conducted for three months, from January to March 2023. In obtaining data, researchers interviewed religious figures who are role models for the people of Makassar. In determining the religious figures who became the object of this research, the researcher selected participants through purposive sampling with consideration of the same character among them. In addition, the researcher also had the opportunity to observe several places in Makassar which have become icons of Makassar to see firsthand

⁹Agus Taufiqur Rohman and Aminullah Ibrahim, "A Discourse of Islamic Law on Environmental Protection and Sustainability: How are Religious Values Transferred into Indonesian Environmental Law? *Indonesian Journal of Environmental Law and Sustainable Development* 1, No. 2 (2022), p. 139-164.

¹⁰ Sigurd Bergman, "Environmental Theology, *Encyclopedia of Science and Religions*, (2013), p. 744-751

¹¹M. Amin Abdullah, *Studi Agama: Normativitas dan Historisitas*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1996. Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2018. Aria Nakissa, "Cognitive Science of Religion and the Study of Islam: Rethinking Islamic Theology, Law, Education, and Mysticism Using the Works of al-Ghazālī," *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 32, No. 3 (2020), p. 1-28.

the environmental conditions. Researchers also collected various documents related to ecological theology taken from scientific reference books and can be scientifically accounted for. The collected data were then selected and compared with other data to obtain accuracy.

Redefining the Meaning of Theology

The word theology comes from the Greek theologian, a combination of two words Theos (God or Allah) and logos (science or language). So, theology can be interpreted as a science related to God or Allah. The term theology itself first appeared in Plato's Republic, then was modified by Aristotle by including it in the discussion area of metaphysics. Aristotle termed it "theological philosophy" and "theological knowledge," which he placed as the third science after mathematics and physics. The word theology comes from the Greek theologia, which is a combination of two words, theos (God or Allah) and logos (science or language). So, theology can be interpreted as science related to God or Allah. The term theology itself first appeared in Plato's Republic, then was modified by Aristotle by including it in the discussion area of metaphysics. Aristotle termed it "theological philosophy" and "theological knowledge," which he placed as the third science after mathematics and physics.¹²

If theology is logos or science, then in principle, theology is dynamic as the nature of science itself. It will dialogue and debate with the times surrounding it where theology lives and develops. Theology must avoid a static attitude, stagnation, and stagnation. The breath of theology is progressive and revolutionary. With this attitude and paradigm, theology will be eternal in every age and time. In the context of Islamic theology, this is where it is known as Islam shalih li kulli zamaan wa makaan (actual and adaptive Islam in all space and time).

Theology is the interpretation of a religion. In this context, theology must be distinguished from religion. Religion is holy, sacred, and absolute truth, while theology is profane. The truth can be wrong because theology is an interpretation of a religion. This means that every religion has a theology because everything related to understanding the religion is theology. Religion cannot be uninterpreted because it negotiates with the circumstances in which humans become actors of that interpretation. Meanwhile, human heterogeneity necessitates differences. The above conditions also cause that every religion usually has a variety and plurality of theology. Even within one internal theology, for example, in Islamic theology, known as Shia theology, this theology has many inner sects. Because once again, theology is a matter of interpretation of one religion that can be interpreted differently between groups. Likewise, with other major religions that live under this sky, for example, in the Christian tradition, many sects arise from

¹² Jean Yves Lacoste, *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p.1555.

this religion, which not only differs in terms of understanding but also often differs in the procedures for worship and places of worship.

Although theological terminology is essentially part of the long history of Christians transforming their theology,¹³ The term theology in its development no longer limits itself to areas where Christians are the majority, such as in Western countries. In the context of Muslims in Indonesia, who are usually only familiar with the science of kalam, ushuluddin science, and science of tawhid, Muslims are more likely to use the term theology itself than their terms derived from Arabic. They no longer seem to be concerned with the genealogical issue of the term theology itself, which comes from other religious traditions.

The terminology difference no longer affects how Muslims see the meaning of theology. Even Muslim books or works use the term theology, not kalam, tawhid, or ushuluddin science, such as the book "Islamic Theology" by Harun Nasution. This book contains classic themes and becomes a kalam and tawhid science student handbook within the scope of Islamic Religious Universities (PTKI).¹⁴ In addition, the book written by Sukidi, also mentions the term theology in his book, "Cak Nur's inclusive theology". This book contains Nurckholish Madjid's inclusive understanding of Islam regarding various issues of divinity and humanity.¹⁵

In the discourse of Sufism, theology is also an important term in explaining the thought of a Sufi. For example, the model and perspective of Sufism developed by Ibn Arabi are known as "negative theology."¹⁶ The three books mentioned above indicate that the meaning of theology derived from the Christian tradition is no longer an essential issue in Islamic studies. Theology can also be interpreted as kalam science, monotheism, ushuluddin science, and aqidah science.

Because theology is a matter of interpretation, theology in its development does not only talk about classical issues, such as the question of great sin, God's justice, God's absolute power, and so on. Theology then responds to societal changes that always transform with the changing times. Indonesian Muslims then felt this situation in the 1970s and 80s, and theology developed, integrating with contemporary issues close to social reality. For example, the terms development theology, transformative theology, and peace theology emerged.¹⁷

¹³ Jean Yves Lacoste, *Encyclopedia of Christian Theology*, p.1556.

¹⁴ Harun Nasution, *Teologi Islam: Aliran-Aliran, Sejarah Analisa Perbandingan* (Jakarta: UI-Press, 2009).

¹⁵ Sukidi, *Teologi Inklusif Cak Nur* (Jakarta: Kompas Media Nusantara, 2001).

¹⁶ Muhammad Al-Fayyadl, *Teologi Negatif Ibnu Arabi: Kritik Metafisika Ketuhanan* (Yogyakarta: LKiS, 2012).

¹⁷ M. Amin Abdullah, *Falsafah Kalam di Era Posmodernisme* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1997), p.79.

Not only in Indonesia, but in Egypt, at the same time, liberal thinkers such as Hassan Hanafi, who is famous for his leftist idea of Islam (*yusr al-Islam*), also gave birth to a new theology that was relatively not a concern for the classical Islamic world, or at least escaped the attention of classical Muslims. Hassan Hanafi calls the term "land theology" in his writings. This term appeared in his work based on his anxiety and anxiety at the Egyptian government, which did not pay much attention to agricultural issues in its development. The point of the annexation of land owned by small community groups by capitalists and the seizure of no man's land by the holders of power (oligarchy) did not concern Egyptian scholars at that time.¹⁸

Ironically, the Egyptian government considered that these issues were unrelated to Islam's teachings, so there was no need to voice them in their ulema council. The people victimized by these issues did not need to be defended because religion did not oppress them. This condition is the philosophical basis for the emergence of "land theology" in Hassan Hanafi's perspective. He views land as an essential issue in internal Muslims, even an important part of Muslim religious life, because the problem of land is a matter of life, property, and honor of Muslims that every Muslim must guard.¹⁹

The issue of theological transformation is not only active in Indonesia but in other parts of the world. Theology develops along with the issues or problems certain groups face. For example, countries in Latin America, such as Lima, Venezuela, Colombia, and Argentina, live in structural and cultural poverty, especially in the 70s. This condition did not become a severe concern for the churchmen, who considered poverty a good shape for the church congregation. According to the churchmen, poverty is a condition of life that should be a dream for Christians then, because life in the future will favor the poor. In other words, poverty has become a dogma for Christians. This condition ignited the emotions of Gustavo Gutierrez to give birth to a voice of liberation from a society that he thought had been oppressed theologically and politically. He then declared a voice of resistance which he later called liberation theology.²⁰

This liberation theology is not just a monopoly of Latin American society,²¹ This theology is also present as a liberation effort for Asian communities who also experience the same conditions as Latin America. These include Minjung Theology from Korea, Theology of Struggle in the Philippines,

¹⁸ Hassan Hanafi, "Pandangan Agama tentang Tanah: Suatu Pendekatan Islam" *Prisma*, April 1984.

¹⁹ Hassan Hanafi, "Pandangan Agama tentang Tanah: Suatu Pendekatan Islam" *Prisma*, April 1984.

²⁰ Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* diterjemahkan oleh C. India dan John Eagleeson 1971 (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1973).

²¹ Lowy, Michael. *Teologi Pembebasan*, terjemahan Roem Topatimasang. Cet. III: Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2003.

Dalit Theology in India, and Liberation Theology in China and Indonesia. This spirit of liberation has become a characteristic of significant religions worldwide. This means that liberation is an important part of a religion. It's just that religion is often politicized into a tool of state legitimacy that often does not side with its people. Whereas the state itself is built on the foundation of the interests of its people. Ironically, religion, at certain times, does not reveal its critical power towards various oppressions and social inequalities that occur. In this context, theology as an interpretation of religion must continue to dialogue and debate with the conditions and times surrounding it.

The relationship between theology and various issues that are close to the social reality of society has become a concern for contemporary intellectuals. Even in the current context, environmental theology has developed in many Christian and Islamic traditions. This theology is often described as a worldview with a spiritual breath in maintaining and preserving the surrounding environment. In other words, this theology is an ethical view for religionists to ground religion with the environment.²²

Environmental theology has been a theme discussed in the 12th century AD. Saint Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) is considered an essential figure in Western literature behind the emergence of this theology. His concern for animals and their environment is regarded as the historical root of environmental theology. However, the most attention-grabbing literature related to environmental theology is the historical root of our ecological crisis, written by Dr. Lynn White Jr. in 1967.²³ This book explains that the ecological crisis can be traced to the anthropocentric character of philosophy. This philosophy asserts that humans are the subjects of this universe, while nature is an object that serves humans. This philosophy, in turn, becomes the basis of human arguments in exploring nature excessively.

The discourse of environmental theology includes two crucial elements, first as a belief system and second as a system of action. As a belief system, environmental theology requires belief in the relationship between God as the creator and nature as a creation that cannot be separated from both. Linking theology with the environment is part of the effort to build a strong relevance between theology and societal issues, including environmental issues. It is important to note that the current ecological crisis cannot be separated from the influence of modernism. The emergence of scientific and technological advances has had a far-reaching impact on nature and the environment. Excessive exploration of nature in the logic of modernism is a necessity and reasonableness.

²² Robert J. Jacobus, "Understanding Environmental Theology: A Summary for Environmental Educator," *The Journal of Environmental Education*. Vol 35 (2004). P 35-42.

²³ Lynn White Jr, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" *Science* Vol 155 (3767), p. 1203-1207.

Therefore, it is vital to link theology with modernity, as illustrated in the following description.

Theology and Modernity

Linking theology and modernity is a necessity. As an interpretation of one religion, theology must respond to issues born and developed with modernity. Theology cannot walk alone as an understanding of one religion, and it must be backed up with a modernity analysis knife. This point is essential because modernity is not limited to an era or phase in the life of humankind. Modernity has become a framework of thinking that has a necessary influence on human progress. Theology, whose presence precedes modernity, must undoubtedly have a strategy to go hand in hand with modernity without losing the spirit and identity of one theology.

Although in terms of sources, theology and modernity are two different things. If theology and its studies refer to God, then modernity is more directed to the times created by humans. Theology cannot be separated from time or era. Theology will cross space and time, and modernity is one of those times. So, once again, theology and modernity have a strong relationship and deserve to be discussed more deeply. But before linking theology and modernity, it is worth listening to the following description of modernity

Linguistically, modern comes from the Latin "modernus or moderna" which means new, current, or present. This term began to be used in the 15th century AD, marked by significant changes in the human life system. According to Arnold Toynbee, modernity emerged when Westerners no longer thanked God but instead thanked human prowess in overcoming the hegemony and confinement of medieval Christianity.²⁴ At this point, humans no longer make religion an epistemological footing in navigating life.

Modernity concerns not only the period, time, or era, but modernity is a form of collective consciousness owned by humans in the 15th century related to novelty. Therefore, change, progress, revolution, and growth are part of modern vital words. Modernity has three essential characteristics as a form of consciousness: subjectivity, criticism, and progress. With subjectivity, the man realizes he is a subject of this nature. Man becomes the epicenter in various matters of his life. Man becomes an individual who upholds his ego as a subject. In other words, humans become the solution to various life problems. A concrete example that can be an indicator of the ego is the statement of Rene Descartes (1596-1650), "cogito ergo sum" (I think then I exist).

The statement "I think, therefore I exist" was so famous in the 15th century even though this term entered the human mind not only in the 15th century, even

²⁴ Suadi Putro, *Mohammed Arkoun tentang Islam dan Modernitas* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1998), p. 43.

now, its influence is still felt. This statement is a form of declaration and evidence of how humans, as the only thinking beings, place themselves as subjects.²⁵ This human subjectivity is declared and campaigned as a form of human victory over the domination and hegemony of the church. The technological leap developed by humans has increasingly placed the church in an inferior position while humans assert themselves as superior. The church is accused of being most responsible for human inaction and regression.²⁶

Criticism is also an essential feature of modernity. Through criticism, humans place themselves as the owner of the authority of truth itself. With their racial abilities, humans can escape various shackles or traditions that often keep them away from individual freedom. The principle of always being critical of numerous human life issues has also inspired Immanuel Kant to formulate criticism of reason. Kant said that criticism is a form of courage to think for oneself outside the demands of tradition or authority. He even said that criticism is like "waking up from a dogmatic sleep" that frees from the prejudices of traditional thinking.²⁷

Combining these two critical elements of modernity implies the birth of progress, which is also essential in modernity. In other words, the condition of progress is the presence of subjectivity and criticality in human beings. Progress is the fruit and logical consequence of integrating humans as subjects and holders of the authority of truth itself with their critical consciousness. Modernity as a period or era, these three consciousnesses emerged in the 16th century, so about a century after the emergence of the renaissance, which was the revival of the Western world after a long sleep.

The trinity of modernity above (subjectivity, criticism, and progress) has characterized classical Greek thinkers often referred to as the ancient West. This means that the renaissance of the Western world is the return of Greek culture, where humans become subjects in their lives after being confined to ecclesiastical doctrines for so long. Greek philosophy is another form of human subjectivity that can think and understand natural phenomena outside of itself. This is told in Ancient Greek literature in the story of Odyssey, by the poet Homeros, which means how humans are so brave to explore a world full of challenges and new experiences.²⁸

In addition to literature, Ancient Greeks were also able to develop architectural techniques characterized by a balance of law, strength, and beauty. The existence of reservoirs, dams, roads, houses, and warfare techniques is

²⁵ F. Budi Hardiman, *Pemikiran-Pemikiran yang Membentuk Dunia Modern :Dari Machiavelli sampai Nietzsche* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2011), p. 3.

²⁶ Kevin O'Donnell, *Postmodernism*, (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2009), p.12.

²⁷ F. Budi Hardiman, *Pemikiran-Pemikiran*, p. 3-4.

²⁸ Simon Petrus L, Tjahjadi, *Petualangan Intelektual: Konfrontasi dengan Para Filosof dari Zaman Yunani hingga Zaman Modern* (Jogyakarta: Kanisius, 2004), p. 176.

concrete evidence of the progress of the development of the architectural styles humans developed. Humans continue their position as subjects even in the art of organization. Issuing legal products, senate, army, and city planning proves that humans in Ancient Greece placed themselves at the axis of the cosmos. A view commonly referred to as classical Humanism.²⁹ This spirit was then revived through the core of renaissance (revival) of the Western world.

Related to progress as the third characteristic of modernity, it is interesting to photograph the development of human knowledge. Various new and innovative findings galvanizing the global world, especially from 1890 to 1900, marked the leap in learning. For example, modern men discovered genetic theory, Freud's theory, radioactivity, Einstein's relativity, and Quantum Physics. In the technology field, there were massive innovations, such as the discovery of diesel engines, electric engines, and gasoline as an energy source, and the invention of cars, airplanes, telephones, and others. These discoveries marked the birth of an era that was later referred to as modern. In other words, modernity in this context is the massive changes humans make, also referred to as the industrial era.³⁰ In addition to the meaning of modernity described above, modernity is also defined as economic rationalization, progressive administration, and the polarization of social strata. There is a differentiation between facts and values, secular and spiritual, ethical and theoretical, and scientific and non-scientific.³¹ At this point, modern society has mapped various aspects of human life. This means that the elements in life are no longer homogeneous. But there has been heterogeneity in multiple layers of human life. Humans can no longer be seen as universal humans but humans as individuals whose relationship between one human and another will be measured by the polarization and differentiation above. The logical consequence is that in modern times, some groupings and categorizations can change the nature of humans as social beings.

The above meanings can certainly place theology further away from the modern world, especially if it is connected to the three characteristics of modernity, subjectivity, criticism, and progress. If humans are seen as the subject of all lines of earthly life, then theology will experience a phase of confusion and indecision. Because, with humans as subjects, God essentially begins to negate his role in human life. In other words, God is removed from the arena of human life.

At specific points, humans even become arrogant with their abilities until they no longer need religion or God. Because everything starts with humans and then ends with humans too. Man becomes the epicenter of his life. Herein lies the problem when man becomes the subject of this life. Humans then thank

²⁹ Simon Petrus L, Tjahjadi, *Petualangan Intelektual*, p. 176

³⁰ Akhyar Yusuf Lubis., *Posmodernisme: Teori dan Metode* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2014), p.6-7.

³¹ Akhyar Yusuf Lubis., *Posmodernisme*, p. 7.

themselves, no longer to their God. This happens because humans only see objects or environments that are empirically material. All invisible things (immaterial) will indeed not be glimpsed by humans, let alone something transcendent, hidden, and certainly will not be seen by modern humans.³² Even at certain times, God becomes an obstacle to human progress itself. Therefore, God must be killed so humans become free to advance their lives.

The second point of modernity is criticism. Modern man's spirit of criticism has placed him as the authority of truth. The ability of ratio possessed by humans gives unlimited freedom to criticize everything that is considered out of human reason. The barometer used in formulating truth is the extent to which the incident or event is relevant to the standard of reason (makes sense). The premises built by modern humans are scientific. When this criticism is directed at theology, which is metaphysically based, then there is turbulence between theology and modernity. In theology, there are times when only some things must pass through the formulas of reason. Life after death, or heaven and hell, cannot be empirically proven. In other words, critique through sense will be hampered in the face of these metaphysical issues. In the end, criticism will be deadlocked, especially when it comes to talking about the invisible God, the transcendent One.

Then the third point is progress. Progress, an implication of the integration between subjectivity and criticism, will also experience turbulence when connected to theology. Theology believes that the process and order of the natural solar system are inseparable from the role of God as the owner of nature. However, in the context of modernity, the progress and achievements of humans are based on the greatness and advancement of science developed by humans. In other words, progress has nothing to do with the role of the Transcendent (God). Here again, there is a clash between theology and modernity. Then the third point is progress. Progress, an implication of the integration between subjectivity and criticism, will also experience turbulence when connected to theology. Theologian believes that the process and order of the natural solar system are inseparable from the role of God as the owner of nature. However, in the context of modernity, the progress and achievements of humans are based on the greatness and advancement of science developed by humans. In other words, progress has nothing to do with the role of the Transcendent (God); here again, there is a clash between theology and modernity.

Islam and Environmental Theology: Theory and Practice

Environmental theology in Islam can be traced back to the Koran and the prophet Muhammad PBUH. Both sources of Islamic teachings have taught Muslims how to make the surrounding environment an important part of human

³² Kamaruddin Hidayat and Muhammad Wahyuni Nafis, *Agama Masa Depan, Perspektif Filsafat Perennial* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995), p. 45.

life. According to Nurman Said,³³ a Muslim scholar, one of the most frequently quoted verses related to the importance of protecting the environment is from Koran Al-A'raf verse 56: "Do not cause damage to the earth after it has been well-ordered. Pray to Him with fear and hope. Verily, the mercy of Allah is very near to those who do good."

Ibn Kathir explains the above verse that what is meant by doing earth damage is destroying the environment.³⁴ Nurman Said also explained that the meaning of *laa tupsiduu fil ardhi* is doing not damage the environment in general, covering the land, sea, and air. These three spaces are the significant elements of the universe as retrieved from the verse. This point is a concern for environmental theology because it can indirectly endanger the continuity and sustainability of nature. Another verse that might be considered is QS al-Baqarah/12 as follows: "Remember, indeed, they are the ones who do damage, but they do not realize."

According to Muhsin Mahfudz, he affirmed that two verses above at least emphasize that this earth must be maintained and protected. Human unawareness of the importance of protecting the environment is one of the triggers for the emergence of damage on Earth. This is where the importance of building a new paradigm in environmental theology. A theological paradigm that not only delivered doctrines related to the importance of having ecological awareness but can mobilize humans to maintain environmental cleanliness actively for the sustainability of nature.³⁵

In other words, environmental theology is a concrete movement generated from the collective awareness of humans to jointly protect the environment. This theology should not only be understood in a normative framework, but the main thing is to generate concrete actions from every human being. This is why the human being is crucial actors in environmental theology.

It is relevant when Koran mentions humans are caliphs on earth who are God's representatives. One of the functions of the role of God's representative is to preserve and sustain nature. This is emphasized in QS. al-Baqarah verse 30 as follows: "Remember when your Lord said to the angels, "I want to make a caliph on the earth. They said, "Do you want to make people who destroy and shed blood there while we praise you and sanctify your name?" The Lord said, "Indeed, I know I will make a caliph on the earth. God then said, verily, I know what you do not know.

In addition to explaining the scriptural messages above, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH is also the best example of implementing environmental theology. One of the prophetic messages of Prophet Muhammad PBUH that is

³³ Interview with Dr. Nurman Said, Makassar Muslim Scholar, February 15, 2023

³⁴ Abu al-Fida Ismail ibnu Umar Ibnu Kathir, *Jami' Al-Masanid wal Sunan* (Beirut: Darul Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2012), p. 121.

³⁵ Interview with Dr. Muhsin Mahfudz, Muslim scholar, January 11, 2023.

widely written in public spaces: Purity is a part of faith.³⁶ Religion is founded on cleanliness.³⁷

The above message teaches Muslims that one of the characteristics of believers is to maintain cleanliness. Faith in this context does not only concern normative legal issues but also concerns the social reality of society, including protecting the surrounding environment. It is relevant to the notion of Labeeb Bsoul et al. when he stated that Prophet Muhammad was the first prophet who introduced the importance of maintaining resources and digging benefits from them without excessive.³⁸ Prophet Muhammad seriously emphasized preserving natural resources and protecting the natural environment. This argument is backed up by of prophet's saying as follow: No Muslim plants a tree or sows a seed, and then a bird, a human, or an animal eats from it, but it is a charity for him.³⁹

It is as if the environment or nature and humans need each other. Humans should not view the natural environment as a static object, but nature is also the subject of the order of this nature. Referring to one of the results of the author's interview with Dr. Abdullah, one of Makassar's Muslim intellectuals, when he explained the meaning of environmental theology. He said "keeping the environment clean and sustainable is the same as keeping the life of this universe alive. Likewise, damaging the environment by throwing garbage in any place, or cutting down trees illegally, can also be connected to damaging the life of the universe. This means that the cosmos will also be damaged if the universe's life is damaged."⁴⁰

The explanation above emphasizes the importance of protecting the environment in Islam. This point becomes essential in human life. Prof. Muhammad Ghalib said that reality consists of two types. The first reality is God, who is the creator, the Almighty. His reality does not depend on others.

In contrast, the second reality is nature, whose existence depends on the first reality. Nature is everything other than God as the first reality. The relationship between the two, according to Muhammad Ghalib, is conceptual. This nature gives birth to two ways: revelation and reasoning information. Humans can know this universe by trusting information from the Holy Qur'an. While second, humans can understand and comprehend nature through reason or intellect.⁴¹ This last point can be realized by in-depth observation of natural

³⁶ Abu Isa Muhammad bin Isa at-Tirmizi, *al-Jami' al-Sunan li Imam at-Tirmizi Radiyallahu Anhu* (Riyadh: Maktabah Maarif, n.y), p. 1122

³⁷ Imam Muslim bin Al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* (Daar as-Salam: Arab Saudi, 2000), p. 756.

³⁸ Labeeb Bsoul et. al., "Islam's Perspective on Environment Sustainability: A Conceptual Analysis" *Social Sciences*, 11(228). 2002, p. 1-11.

³⁹ Abu al-Fida Ismail Ibnu Umar Ibnu Kathir, *Jami' Al-Masanid wal Sunan* (Beirut: Darul Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2012), p. 124.

⁴⁰ Interview with Dr. Abdullah, Muslim Scholar, January 17, 2023

⁴¹ Interview with Prof Muhammad Ghalib, Muslim Scholar, February 20, 2023

regularities. Related to this, it is interesting to note the following interview of Muhsin Mahfudz below: "Islam pays great attention to observation. In fact, this command became the first revelation revealed by God to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. The command to read and read is God's important message to humans to make observations of natural phenomena. The command should not be understood textually but must be interpreted contextually. This is what is meant by the verses of *kauniyah* (nature)."⁴²

Referring to the *kauniyah* (natural) verses above, the researcher views the environment as an essential part of these raw verses. Muslims must understand how important it is to protect the environment as an elaboration of the command to read from God. However, according to Muhsin Mahfudz, most Muslims focus on normative nature readings, not digging deeper into natural phenomena. According to him, in-depth observation of nature is mainly done by non-Muslims. According to him, this condition is one of the causes of the decline of Muslims in science and technology. Compared to Western countries, Islamic countries still need to be developed in science development.

Muhsin Mahfudz's view above aligns with Mujiyono Abdillah's opinion that only people of reason can maintain and preserve the environment.⁴³ He refers to QS al-Jatsiyah/45:13, which says: "And Allah has made natural resources and the environment an environmental force for human life. This is only understood by those who have sufficient reasoning power."

In the context of purity, according to Muhsin Mahfudz, people who consistently protect the natural environment can be called a form of ecological purity. According to him, this righteousness can be manifested in various actions, such as not reducing the scales, not being wasteful, not destroying plants and the environment, and not committing security disturbances. These behaviors can indirectly lead to environmental pollution that leads to ecological damage.⁴⁴

Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, a professor of philosophy, said that spiritually, nature is the place where God is immanent. In this context, God is not transcendent but takes place in nature.⁴⁵ This opinion is in line with Jacobus' view that the term environmental theology includes a spiritual ethical perspective. That humans ethically must protect the environment and nature. At the same time, humans are obliged to preserve character due to spiritual considerations.⁴⁶

⁴² Interview with Dr. Muhsin Mahfudz, Muslim Scholar, January 6, 2023.

⁴³ Mujiyono Abdillah, *Agama Ramah Lingkungan: Perspektif al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001), p. 211.

⁴⁴ Interview with Dr. Muhsin Mahfudz, Muslim Scholar, February 7, 2023.

⁴⁵ Interview with Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, Professor in Philosophy, February 15, 2023

⁴⁶ Robert J. Jacobus, "Understanding Environmental Theology: A Summary for Environmental Educator," *The Journal of Environmental Education*. Vol 35 (2004), p. 35-42.

Related to spirituality, this nature is described as a representation of God. In the Sufism tradition, as explained by Andi Nurbaety,⁴⁷ The creation process of nature originates from the "Nur Muhammad" (light of Muhammad) which is an emanation from God. This Nur Muhammad became God's first creation from which all beings were created. Nur Muhammad radiates in all creatures that God has created. Nur Muhammad is then entirely housed in the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, who is then referred to as *Insan Kamil* (complete human being). Concerning environmental theology, the position of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH as an entire human being, he became the best example in ecological conservation.⁴⁸

According to Ibrahim, a Makassar scholar, he says that in the Islamic philosophical tradition, nature and God are one being, inseparable from one another. This is referred to as *wihdatul wujud* (unity of being). The unity of form presupposes that the conditions of God and nature are inseparable. This means that if someone damages character, then in principle, he has also "damaged" God because, in nature, there are elements of God in it. According to Ibrahim, destroying the environment is part of a social sin that generally affects society.

Ibrahim's opinion is in line with Syamsul Arif Ghalib's statement that the environmental crisis faced by the global world today is inseparable from the existence of Semitic religions that make nature a place to benefit. He said: "Semitic religions, if not understood comprehensively, will give birth to a subjective understanding of the view that humans can benefit from nature. This point is often misinterpreted by religious people that humans have the freedom to explore nature without thinking about the impact on the environment."⁴⁹

According to Syamsul Arif Ghalib, a young Muslim intellectual, humans must have a new paradigm regarding nature management. One should not only see nature as an object but as a subject in the same position as humans. In fact, according to him, Semitic religions should actually learn from local religions whose attention to nature is so great. He cited the example of the local faith of Kajang in Bulukumba, which pays high attention to the preservation of nature. According to him, the local religion of Kajang is known to be very anti-environmental destruction. They take advantage of nature not excessively but following their needs. For example, taking firewood for the kitchen and materials for making houses, they take advantage according to their needs.⁵⁰

So, it can be said that environmental theology is an essential issue in Islamic teachings. Unfortunately, as expressed by Muhammad Natsir, as revealed in the following interview transcript: "This issue has not been a serious study of classical theologians ranging from Muktazilah, Asy'ariyah to Maturidiah

⁴⁷ Interview with Dr. Andi Nurbaety, Muslim Woman scholar, February 13, 2023.

⁴⁸ Interview with Muhammad Saleh Tajuddin, Professor in Philosophy, January 10, 2023

⁴⁹ Interview with Dr. Ibrahim, Muslim Scholar, January 15, 2023.

⁵⁰ Interview with Syamsul Arif Ghalib, young Muslim Scholar, March 1, 2023

theology. This is certainly understandable because environmental theology at that time was not really needed. Today, due to modernization wrapped in materialism, theologians should make this environmental issue an important part of theology. People who destroy the environment or nature can be classified as "infidels" because destroying the environment is a major sin."⁵¹

Prof. Muhammad Natsir's explanation above illustrates how the themes discussed in classical theology still focus on human relations with God, not touching the social reality of humanity. In other words, classical theology is still busy with celestial issues and then ignores problems that connect the reality of society. Prof. Muhammad Natsir's anxiety is also essentially the concern of contemporary theological figures. Call Sayyed Hossein Nasr,⁵² Ziauddin Sardar,⁵³ Hassan Hanafi,⁵⁴ dan Muhammad Arkoun.⁵⁵ These Muslim intellectuals are worried about the environmental crisis that the global world encountered in recent years. They argue that one of the setbacks of classical Islamic theology is that the themes discussed have not touched the fundamental aspects of society. They believe Islam does not exist in a social, cultural, and societal vacuum. In fact, according to them, Islam teaches humans to criticize social problems, including the issue of environmental crisis.

The Relevance between Environmental Theology and Islamic Law According to Makassar Muslim Scholars

Environmental theology is undeniably closely related to Islamic law. The environmental crisis that is sweeping the world today is caused by a worldview derived from an understanding of nature. In the context of Islamic theology, humans are caliphs on earth who must preserve nature and make the concept of *rahmatan li alamin*, so that nature and all its contents are preserved and protected from damage.

According to Abdur Rauf Amin, the relationship between environmental theology and Fiqh cannot be denied. They cannot be separated from one another. Both are oriented toward preserving and protecting the environment. If theology focuses on philosophical explanations of the importance of protecting the environment, then Fiqh deals with the legal aspects of environmental destruction. Fiqh pays excellent attention to the importance of protecting and preserving the

⁵¹ Interview with Prof Muh Natsir, Head of Ulama Council in South Sulawesi, January 7, 2023

⁵² Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Man, and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (London: Mandala Unwin Paperbacks, 1968), p. 3-4

⁵³ Ziauddin Sardar (ed.), *Rescuing All Our Futures: The Future of Future Studies* (West Fort: Praeger, 1999), p. 7

⁵⁴ Hassan Hanafi, *Islamologi 3, Dari Teosentrisme ke Antroposentrisme* (Jogyakarta: LKiS, 2004), p. xxi.

⁵⁵ Mohammed Arkoun, *Nalar Islami dan Nalar Modern: Berbagai Tantangan dan Jalan Baru*, in Johan Hendrik Mouleman (ed.) (Jakarta: INIS, 1994), p. 122.

environment. He relates it to the term *maqasid sharia* (the primary purpose of sharia) as in the following interview transcript: “The essence of religion cannot be separated from *maqasid sharia*. It has five critical objectives: religion, life, lineage, intellect, and property. Environmental Fiqh is an important element in *maqasid sharia*, especially in the context of preserving human life and property. All five values are closely related to the environment”.⁵⁶

According to Abdur Rauf Amin, the five elements above that are incorporated in *maqasid sharia* must be protected and maintained by humans. Protecting the environment, which in Arabic is known as *al-bii'ah*, is one of the goals of human religion. This goal (*dharuri*) must be implemented by every Muslim. The environment referred to by *al-bi'ah*, according to Abdur Rauf explains that the environment referred to here is essential in human life, such as water, soil, and air.

According to Abdur Rauf Amin, destroying the environmental order, such as water, land, and air is haram. In other words, Muslims who commit acts such as cutting down trees illegally, throwing garbage in any place, and polluting the air can be categorized as significant sins. He equated it to corruption behavior, which does not only have implications for individuals or perpetrators but has a systemic impact on other damage. Similarly, environmental destruction has not only damaged the five basic principles of *maqasid sharia*, but has also created massive damage.

It can be further explained that the concept of *maqashid al-sharia* in Islamic law is essentially for the benefit of man. A maintained environment will have an impact on human survival on earth. On the contrary, a damaged environment will have an impact on the future of human life.⁵⁷ Therefore, Islam provides a firm concept that humans must take care and preserve the environment.

Abdul Wahid Haddade also conveyed the same opinion, who said that *fiqhi* gives great attention to environmental preservation. One critical term in *fiqhi* closely related to environmental destruction is *ta'assuf fi isti'mal al-haq* (arbitrary use of rights). Excessive use of rights is forbidden because it harms oneself and others. This point, according to him, is closely related to environmental destruction. The following is an interview with Abdul Wahid Haddade “Nature and everything in it is indeed the right of humans to manage it and even own it. In other words, owning land and cultivating it for human benefit is the right of every human being and is allowed by Islamic law. However, if this right is

⁵⁶ Interview with Dr. Abdur Rauf Amin, Muslim Scholar, March 13, 2023.

⁵⁷ Muhammad Ramadhan, “Maqasid Syari’ah dan Lingkungan Hidup (Bahtsul Masa’il Sebagai Perlawanan Kaum Santri Terhadap Eksploitasi Pertambangan Emas di Silo Jember),” *Analitica Islamica* 21, No. 2 (2019). Suryani, “Penegasan Hifd al-’Alam Sebagai Bagian dari Maqāshid Al-Shari’ah,” *Jurnal Al-Tahrir* 17, No. 2 (2017), p. 353-370.

exercised excessively, it will have a negative impact on the surrounding environment, so the law becomes haram.”⁵⁸

The above opinion is in line with Nasrun Haroen's explanation, which says that exercising rights is allowed in Islamic law on the condition that it is not excessive. He gave an example, that building a house on one's own land is permitted on the need that it does not block the light and air entering the neighbor's house.⁵⁹

According to Prof. Qadir Gassing, the discussion of *sadd Zari'ah* should not be ignored in fulfilling the rights of Muslims. *Sadd Zari'ah* is an act that is permissible in principle then becomes forbidden because the mask can give birth to *haram* actions. For example, cutting down trees is acceptable, but it can cause flooding, especially if done excessively, so cutting down trees is forbidden.⁶⁰

The above description illustrates how strong the relationship is between environmental theology and *fiqh*. The direction and orientation lead to the environment's maintenance and preservation. *Fiqh* has strengthened and detailed ecological management's technicalities that environmental theology has not regulated. The study also concluded that in Islamic theology as well as Islamic law, the environment must be preserved and preserved both theoretically and practically.

Conclusion

The author can conclude several things based on the findings and discussion above. First, environmental theology is a theology that not only discusses human relations with God but also discusses human relations with social, cultural, environmental, and societal realities. Environmental theology focuses on the extent of human concern for nature and the environment. Second, the foundation of environmental theology can be traced from the two primary sources of Islam, namely the Qur'an, and Hadith. The Qur'an gives great attention to environmental protection and preservation. Likewise, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH, in his various traditions also reinforced the importance of protecting and maintaining the environment. Third, environmental theology is closely related to ecological *fiqh* (Islamic law), which focuses on the practical explanation of how to keep the environment. If environmental theology is oriented towards philosophical foundations in environmental conservation, then Islamic law requires the importance of protecting the environment as a benefit for humans and

⁵⁸ Interview with Abdul Wahid Haddade, Muslim Scholar, March 14, 2023

⁵⁹ Nasrun Harun, *Fiqh Muamalah* (Jakarta: Gaya Media Pratama, 2000, p. 9-10.

⁶⁰ Interview with Prof Qadir Gassing, Muslim scholar, March 21, 2023. Ia juga menulis buku yang berjudul *Fiqh Lingkungan: “Telaah Kritis tentang Penerapan Hukum Taklifi dalam Pengelolaan Lingkungan Hidup” Pidato Pengukuhan Guru Besar*. Februari 2005, p. 89.

nature. Thus, environmental sustainability will be maintained as affirmed in Islamic theology and Islamic law.

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