

THE ENVIRONMENT - A CRISIS OF VALUES AN ISLAMIC RESPONSE

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CRISIS MANAGEMENT

This is crisis management on a scale never before experienced in history. This requires a dispassionate analysis if it is ever possible to be dispassionate about a matter such as this and I am also led to the belief that up to the present time we have had problems in identifying the root causes of this mother of all crises. To say that this is an ethical issue where human greed figures prominently is only to skim the surface of the problem and has there been any time in history where greed and the lust for power did not figure prominently in the affairs of men? Matters have to be very serious indeed if secular institutions like the United Nations convene conferences involving all the major religious traditions as we have seen in New York this past summer. And the UNEP considers this matter sufficiently urgent to collaborate with Muslims in setting up this most needed of all forums.

Two statements can be made about this matter that could not have been made about any previous event in human history and which we can all agree on without much debate. They are –

- (a) Every single living human being contributes in some way to the environmental chaos we are now experiencing.
- (b) Every single living human being can do something to alleviate the problem.

In trying to find adequate solutions to what seems insoluble two other statements could be made, but they need some elaboration and discussion. They are –

- (a) The present globalized model of endless growth that created the problem in the first place cannot be expected to produce solutions for its resolution.
- (b) Societies run in accordance with the Islamic spirit would not have experienced anywhere near the degree of environmental degradation we see today.

I would next like to pose a question, which I feel can only be answered in terms of our responses to the previous two statements. It is -

How far can the teachings and practices of the Islam be incorporated, if at all, into an institutional framework devised by another that has not just a different but, a diametrically opposite outlook?

Although much thinking is being done, special working groups, conferences and fora are being organized, reports are being produced and special projects are being set up, I would compare all this activity to people bailing water out of a boat with a hole in it. But, they have yet to discover the secret of plugging the hole. As this bailing gets more frantic there is nothing these people seem to be able to do to stop the hole getting bigger. Nobody, with one or two notable exceptions, spoke about this problem in the early part of the last century. One hundred years later it has grown into a prime issue of such cataclysmic proportions that some analysts are forecasting the end of life on this planet as we know it if this state of affairs is allowed to carry on. UNEP's own report GEO 2000 is frightening enough and this organization is not alarmist by any stretch of the imagination. All the major environmental agencies and NGOs like the UNEP, WWF, Friends of the Earth, Green Peace, IUCN, etc., came into existence in the past fifty years. Twenty to thirty years ago it was unknown for universities to offer degrees in environmental sciences and ecology in crisis management terms. Twenty to thirty years ago there were hardly any books available on this subject. Seyyed Hossein Nasr was the first in the face of this crisis to articulate the spiritual dimensions of nature and the lectures he delivered at the invitation of the University of Chicago was published in book form under the title *Man and Nature* in 1968. *Islam and Ecology*, which I had the privilege of editing at the invitation of WWF was published in 1992.

IN THE WAKE OF PROGRESS

The scientist and historian Henry Adams propounded a theory, which was first published in 1896, which suggested that the acceleration of technological change was forcing the acceleration of history.ⁱ He did not use the language of the environment which is fashionable today and it will suffice to say that Adams constructed a mathematical model that showed a relationship between the rate of consumption and utilisation of energy and what is described as technological progress. The result was an exponential curve. He observed that the acceleration of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was rapid and startling and added, "the world did not double or treble its movement between 1800 and 1900, but measured by any standard known to science the so-called progression of society was fully a thousand times greater in 1900 than in 1800; ..."ⁱⁱ. Adams said in 1905 "... at the accelerated rate of progression since 1600 it will not need another century to turn thought upside down. Law in that case would disappear ... and give place to force. Morality would become police. Explosives would reach cosmic violence. Disintegration would overcome integration."ⁱⁱⁱ If a scientist of the calibre of Adams was worrying about the rate of change of the hundred years between 1800 and 1900 then what could one say about the following hundred years? Gerard Piel, another scientist reviewing the work of Adams in 1983 came to the conclusion that we are at the fork in the road and we have to change direction if we are going to leave a liveable planet for

our children. The founder of The Club of Rome, Aurelio Peccei said in 1992 that there has been a large scale overshoot in the way "...the human population and economy extract resources from the earth and emit pollution and wastes to the environment. Many of these rates of extraction and emission have grown to be unsupportable. The environment cannot sustain them. Human society has overshoot its limits, for the same reason that other overshoots occur. Changes are too fast. Signals are late, incomplete distorted, ignored or denied. Momentum is great, responses are slow"^{iv} There is no longer any doubt that exponential growth is the driving force causing the global economy to breach the physical limits of the earth.^v

I am forced to conclude in the face of this analysis that in spite of all the frenetic activity in recent times we are still functioning in the realm of the superficial. Agenda 21, the Earth Charter, the Kyoto Agreement on the control of Green House Gases, the Multilateral Environmental Agreements, Green Trade Policies, the Convention on Biodiversity and even the Nairobi Declaration appear to me as though we are tinkering with technicalities. This is more a note of alarm than of criticism. I am not invalidating these initiatives as we need to be doing something, but we also need at the same time, to begin to question the models and institutions that run the modern world if we are to get anywhere. There is an unquestioned assumption that what is driving Modernity can somehow be modified and cause it to change course without dealing with its deep underlying fault lines.

The promotion of sustainability as a device is a case in point. Apart from the fact that up to the present time no one has come up with a satisfactory definition of this concept how, I would ask, can sustainability be promoted into world order where exponential growth is the driving force. The most recent manifestation of this today is the World Trade Organization. Its reason for coming into being is unashamedly about expansion and profits. Environmental sustainability and sustaining profits are two opposing concepts. But governments pursue these two opposing policy ideas side by side exposing deep schizoid tendencies. In this sense sustainability is like using sticking plaster on a compound fracture. It will just not hold together.

There is another sense in which sustainability, if it can be made to work, is right because that is the way people used to live before they were told to progress and develop. The whole issue is one of limits. "Until quite recently the human race - both rebels and conformists, the ignorant and the enlightened, whether in small self-governing communities or vast empires, barbarian tribes or points of high civilization - functioned unconsciously within natural, unwritten boundaries. It had an intuitive disposition to live within the Fitra, though this was only achieved by conscious recognition of the existence of a superior force, the divine. This was an existential reality, neither idyllic nor utopian. We are clearly no longer functioning within these limits". Islam, like the other faith traditions, sets limits to human activity and does this in a very special way. This analysis is about finding out what these limits are and trying if possible to bridge the gaps of perception and understanding and move into a zone where active and meaningful

partnerships can emerge to deal with the intractable problems that confront humanity today.

Muslims cannot escape this conundrum by blaming the naughty West yet again. We are now part of the global order and willingly aspire to the consumer ethic like everyone else and use the same economic indicators like everyone else. And in order to do this we have left much of our spiritual indicators behind. What is the quality of our *ehsan*? What is the intensity of our *himmah*? Where is our fear of Allah?

THE QUESTION OF ETHICS

Responsible world leaders having woken up to the problem are now looking for solutions from the religious traditions. It may look like an act of desperation, but it is a welcome act nevertheless. The very first gathering of religious leaders to look at these issues was organised by WWF at the instigation of Prince Philip of England, in Assisi in 1986. It was a historic event. A very important contribution was made at this gathering by Dr. Omar Abdullah Nasseef, who is now the Deputy President of the *Majlis as Shurah* (Consultative Assembly) of Saudi Arabia. His presentation of the Islamic environmental ethic is now part of the Assisi Declaration and is frequently quoted by academics and activists worldwide.

Does the new world order operate from an ethical base? What are the ethical foundations of modernity? If pushed people with secular inclinations will tell you that they subscribe to the notion of “enlightened self interest”. Enlightened by what and how far self interest figures in their calculations are left to the individual’s own self interest. It could be said that until 29 June 2000 there was no overarching ethical model that the new world order could measure its relationship with the environment. On this day the Earth Charter was officially launched by the Earth Council at The Hague in Holland finally giving the secular world a code of environmental behaviour. It is still early days to judge its success but one can only hope that it will have the desired effect.

The human community has always progressed and developed although today, these terms have taken on an almost exclusive economic meaning. The word “modernity” perhaps fills the gap best. This is what everyone wants to be, modern, and we know the benefits that it has brought us and the levels to which it has raised our civilisation to the extent that it is now global. But, everything has a cost and there is a flip side to this, which is the degradation we have subjected the environment to arrive at this point. But, the environment is not the only casualty.

Although the environmental problems began increasingly to be visible and to be felt in the past fifty years or so, the seeds were sown much earlier. It is posited that modernity grew out of the predatory tendencies of the human species, which now had the means of unlocking the secrets of nature and sophisticated tools for extracting its wealth. The word ‘modern’, according to Zygmunt Bauman, began to adopt a new meaning in the

seventeenth century. It meant amongst other things an irreverence towards tradition, a readiness to innovate and a recasting of the old as antiquated, obsolete and something that needed to be replaced. 'Modernity' is best described, says Bauman, as an age essentially of human accomplishment marked by constant change and progress. It has been a period where reason has been deployed to the task of making the world a better place to serve human need, where nature has been deemed meaningless, except in the sense that it can give meaning to the uses humans put it.^{vi}

Ernst Gellner observes that education in modern society is standardized and minutely stratified. Unlike classical education it is functionally geared to economic work force needs.^{vii} Serge Latouche observes that the driving force of modernity is its obsession with success; its aspiration to create a grand society is illusory and is totalitarian in outlook in that it sees all other societies as irrational. He describes modernity as the rape of traditional ancestral values and sees a titanic struggle between it and tradition. The technological society it espouses has dehumanizing tendencies.^{viii}

Modernity with its indissoluble link to the state and the market leaves no individual free from the influence of the market.^{ix} The market today is not of the local community any longer where participants have a commonality of purpose and interests. The modern economy, which is now global in extent devalues and destroys a whole range of human activities, human networks, solidarity, cooperation and reciprocity.^x What emerges from this is a selfish form of consumer individualism, which is destroying communal cohesion and solidarity. This individualism is illusory as it denies true choice, individuals having been 'functionalized' and transformed into 'cogs and machines'.^{xi} In the view of George Simmel, today's individuals have an awesome task of patching together meaningful lives and making choices that neglect qualitative differences between objects of their choice. In an interesting reflection he says that intellect and money are simultaneously inevitable products and indispensable instruments of modern life. Both refer to the quantitative aspects of experienced phenomena and devalue their qualitative characteristics.^{xii} The global village is now a homogenised global culture defined largely in economic terms. It has been achieved by the progressive dilution and destruction of the old traditional cultures and the marginalization of the great religions by what has come to be known as the secular scientific order.

The position maintained in this paper is that humankind until the intellectual revolution in Europe was confined to living within the rules of creation (nature). The natural order imposed its own limits and the seeds of the ecological crisis that breached these limits were sown during the period that followed the Renaissance. This was from the sixteenth century onwards, when what we now know as Modernity began to evolve. There were two fundamental causes that altered the course of civilisation that has now brought us to this point. One of these is the shift in humankind's perception of itself in relation to the natural order. This is encoded in what has now come to be known as the secular scientific worldview, which emerged in this period. Having resided in nature's bosom for aeons man suddenly becomes its predator. The second cause has to do with wealth -

more precisely money and how we now create it with gay abandon. John Kenneth Galbraith said of this, “The process by which we create money is so simple that the mind is repelled”.^{xiii} Fredric Benham a writer of standard economic textbooks observed, “It seems like a gigantic confidence trick”.^{xiv} Conveniently the predator has now discovered a magical way of creating endless credit with which to devastate the earth. This makes much of our progress illusory and the basis of modernity highly questionable.

The traditional world view, which included that of the west, was challenged by what we have come to know as the ‘enlightenment’ having its origins in 16th century Europe. These events are usually seen as a time in which science began its ascendancy over religion and Richard Tarnas^{xv} observes that this movement achieved its maturity in the nineteenth century finally resulting in a radical shift of psychological alliance from the divine to humankind. Descartes (the French philosopher, mathematician) finally breached the flood gates of the old order by splitting mind from body and proclaiming a dualistic world view in his well known statement “I think, therefore I am” (*cogito ergo sum*). The fruit of the dualism between rational subject and the material world was science, including the scientific capacity for rendering intelligible certain aspects of the material world and for making man (in Descartes’s own words) “Master and possessor of Nature”.

This view is on a collision course with how Islam teaches the Muslim to view the world. There is only one “Master and Possessor of nature” and that is the One Who created it, Allah. This is unequivocally expressed in the very first line of the *Qur’an*, “Praise be to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds (Qur’an 1:1)^{xvi} and the last verse in the *Qur’an*, “Say: ‘I seek refuge with the Lord of mankind, the King of mankind, the God of mankind’” (Qur’an 144:1-3) and repeatedly in between. However, this Islamic mode of expression is now severely attenuated having been swept aside by the forces of history, like the other older traditions, into a domain of rituals. As what we now understand by modernity advanced, as the secular ethic progressively seeped into the Muslim psyche and as industrial development, economic indicators and consumerism became the governing parameters of society, there has been a corresponding erosion of the Muslim perception of the holistic and a withering of its understanding of the sacred nexus between the human community and the rest of the natural order: “The creation of the heavens and the earth is far greater than the creation of mankind. But most of mankind do not know it” (Qur’an 40:56).

After Descartes, Isaac Newton’s “world view led to the well known mechanistic conception of the universe and totally away from the holistic and organic interpretation of things. The result was after the seventeenth century science and religion became totally divorced”.^{xvii} “Corruption has appeared in both land and sea because of what people’s own hands have brought about so that they may taste something of what they have done, so that hopefully they will turn back” (Qur’an 30:40). In other words learn from your mistakes.

It would be impossible to live in today's world without money, but one increasingly comes across interesting appraisals of it like the following for example: "...in spite of all its fervid activity, money remains a naked symbol with no intrinsic value of its own and no direct linkage to anything specific".^{xviii} Money has come to be recognised as mere tokens and "there is something quite magical about the way money is created. No other commodity works quite the same way. The money supply grows through use; it expands through debt. The more we lend, the more we have. The more debt there is, the more there is."^{xix} These tokens of "value" that we create from nothing and use everyday grow exponentially ad infinitum. But we know that the natural world, which is subject to drastic resource depletion, has limits and is finite. This equation is lopsided and the question is for how long can we continue to create this infinite amount of token finance to exploit the real and tangible resources of a finite world. Looked at from this perspective, money, as the modern world has contrived it, assumes the characteristics of a virus that eats into the fabric of the planet. The consequences of this become visible as global environmental degradation.

This magical system underwent a metamorphosis in 1971 when President Nixon of the United States unilaterally abandoned the gold standard. This is not the place to go into the background of this event, suffice it to say that, "by abandoning the gold standard....he also moved the world into a new standard: the interest standard."^{xx} It is generally known that Islam prohibits usury or the taking of interest and the term used in the *Qur'an* for this is *riba*^{xxi}. This term has wide connotations and simply put, it means one cannot have something out of nothing. Thus *riba* is also seen as prohibiting the free creation of credit. The *Qur'an* denounces these practices vehemently and we can see why from the foregoing discussion: "Those who practise *riba* will not rise from the grave except as someone driven mad by *shaytan's* (satan's) touch" (Qur'an 2:274) and, "You who have *iman* (faith)! Have *taqwa* (awe) of Allah and forgo any remaining *riba* if you are *muminun* (believers). If you do not, know that it means war from Allah and his Messenger" (Qur'an 2:277,278).

No other proclamation in the *Qur'an* matches this degree of trenchancy.

AN ISLAMIC RESPONSE

The following is a crystallization^{xxii} of what we consider to be the essentials which will bring into focus the dimensions of change that are needed today from an Islamic perspective. However we begin with a disadvantage because the principles we are discussing have been plucked out of the Islamic tapestry so assiduously woven over the past fourteen centuries. They work best as part of the whole, but how it fits together in today's context and how it can be improved, applied and made sense of are matters for open discussion.

The planetary system, the earth and its ecosystems all work within their own limits and tolerances. Islamic teaching likewise sets limits to human behaviour as a control against

excess and it could be said that the limits to the human condition are set within four principles. They are the Unity principle (*Tawhid*); the Creation Principle (*Fitra*); the Balance Principle (*Mizan*); and the Responsibility Principle (*Khalifa*).

The Unity Principle

Tawhid is the foundation of Islamic monotheism and its essence is contained in the declaration (*Shahada*) which every Muslim makes and is a constant reminder of faith. It is “There is no God but God” (*la ilaha illal lah*) and is the foundational statement of the Unity of the Creator from which everything else flows.^{xxiii} “Say ‘He is Allah, Absolute oneness, Allah the Everlasting Sustainer of all’ ” (*Qur’an 112: 1, 2*). It is the testimony to the unity of all creation and to the fabric of the natural order of which humankind is an intrinsic part: “What is in the heavens and the earth belong to Allah. Allah encompasses everything” (*Qur’an 4:125*).

This is the bedrock of the holistic approach in Islam as this affirms the connectedness of everything in the natural order.

The Creation Principle

The *Fitra* principle describes the primordial nature of creation: “Allah’s natural pattern on which He made mankind” (*Qur’an 30:29*). Mankind was created within the natural pattern of nature and being of it, its role is defined by this patterning itself.^{xxiv} *Fitra* is the pure state, a state of intrinsic goodness and points to the possibility that everything in creation has a potential for goodness and the conscious expression of this rests with humankind. Muslims learn from the *Qur’an* that God created the universe and every single atom and molecule it contains and that the laws of creation include the elements of order, balance and proportion: “He created everything and determined it most exactly” (*Qur’an 25:2*)

“It is He Who appointed the sun to give radiance and the moon to give light, assigning it in phases...*Allah* did not create these things except with truth. We make the signs clear for people who know (*Qur’an 10:5*).

The Balance Principle

In one of its more popular passages the *Qur’an* describes creation thus –

The All-Merciful taught the *Qur’an*
He created man and taught him clear expression.
The sun and moon both run with precision.
The stars and the trees all bow down in prostration.
He erected heaven and established the balance ...
Qur’an 55:1-5

Allah has singled out humankind and taught it clear expression – the capacity to reason. All creation has an order and a purpose and is in a state of dynamic balance. If the sun,

the moon, the stars did not bow themselves, that is serve the purpose of their design, it would be impossible for life to function on earth. This is another way of saying that the natural order works because it is in submission to the Creator. It is Muslim in the original, primordial sense.

The Responsibility Principle

This principle establishes the tripartite relationship between the Creator, humankind and creation. God created everything for humankind and appointed it the vice-regent (*Khalif*) on this earth: "it is He who appointed you *Khalifs* on this earth" (Qur'an 6:167).

This role was one of trusteeship (*amanah*) which imposed a moral responsibility, "We offered the Trust to the heavens, the earth and the mountains but they refused to take it on and shrank from it. But man took it on." (Qur'an 33:72).

This assumption of responsibility made humankind accountable for their actions, "Will the reward for doing good be anything but good?" (Qur'an 55:59).

The *Qur'an* also asks us to be just to our natural surroundings, "We did not create the heavens and earth and everything between them, except with truth" (Qur'an 15:85).

"Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right and forbid wrong. They are the ones who have success" (Qur'an 3:104).

The *Qur'an* again uses an environmental theme in exhorting humankind to be moderate, "it is He who produces gardens, both cultivated and wild, and palm trees and crops of diverse kinds and olives and pomegranates both similar and dissimilar. Eat of their fruits when they bear fruit and pay their dues on the day of their harvest, and do not be profligate. He does not love the profligate (Qur'an 6:142).

We can deduce in outline from these four principles that creation which is both complex and finite is yet, exact. It emerged from one source and was designed to function as a whole. Humankind like the rest of the natural world was, as part of the natural patterning of creation, in a state of goodness with potential for good action. It is inextricably part of this pattern, but is the only element of it with choice, that can choose to act against the divine Will using the very gift of reasoning bestowed upon it by the Creator. Submission to the divine will, the natural law that holds in check the instincts of the predator, is the way to uphold our responsibilities as the Creator's *Khalif*. Humans are the guardians of the natural order.

Legislative Principles

- (a) Allah is the sole owner of the earth and everything in it. People hold land on usufruct - that is for its utility value only. There is a restricted right to public property.
- (b) Abuse of rights is prohibited and penalised.

- (c) There are rights to the benefits derived from natural resources held in common.
- (d) Scarce resource utilization is controlled.
- (e) The common welfare is protected.
- (f) Benefits are protected and detriments are either reduced or eliminated.

Institutions

- (a) People who reclaim or revive land (*ihya'al mawat*) have a right to its ownership.
- (b) Land grants (*iqta'*) may be made by the state for reclamation and development.
- (c) Land may be leased (*ijara*) for its usufruct by the state for its reclamation and development.
- (d) Special reserves (*hima*) may be established by the state for use as conservation zones.
- (e) The state may establish inviolable zones (*al-haram*) where use is prohibited or restricted. Every settlement has a right to create such zones managed by the people and where use is severely restricted. Additionally, it is permitted to establish these zones adjacent to sources of water and other utilities like roads and places of public resort.
- (f) Makkah and Madinah are known as the Two Inviolable Sanctuaries (*al-haramain*) where trees cannot be cut down and animals are protected from harm within their boundaries. They serve as examples of best practice.
- (g) Charitable endowments (*awqaf*) may be established with specific conservation objectives.

Enforcement

The primary duty of the Islamic state is to promote the good and forbid wrong doing. As part of these functions, it has the mandate to protect land and natural resources from abuse and misuse. From its earliest years the Islamic state established an agency known as the *hisba* whose specific task was to protect the people through promoting the establishment of good and forbidding wrong doing. This agency was headed by a learned jurist (*muhtasib*) who functioned like the chief inspector of weights and measures and chief public health officer rolled into one. He was also responsible among other similar duties for the proper functioning of the *hima* and *al harim* zones and acted as what one may describe as an environmental inspectorate.

The development and application of these principles and institutions have seen a decline over the past two centuries as another world view based on the exploitation of natural resources for profit gradually overtook this model. We are experiencing the consequences of this now. However, there are clear indications as to how this Islamic heritage has been and could again be put to good use in the modern context.

The *Shariah* evolved holistically and new situations were dealt with through the processes we have discussed above and there is nothing to stop this from continuing. However there are important impediments to its proper application today and they are –

- (a) The *Shariah* is no longer supreme even in Islamic states because of the dominance of the global system now in place. The influence of international trade and finance is a case in point.
- (b) The *Hisbah* which was once the 'environmental enforcement agency' is now virtually nonexistent.
- (c) Increasingly civil administration is separating itself from the body of the people who are coming to be known as "the religious authorities" i.e. a clergy, which is not recognised in Islam^{xxv}. The concept of *din* is wearing thin and as a consequence the holistic approach suffers.
- (d) Following the western model Muslim states increasingly function in watertight compartments. As a mirror of what is happening in the west, Muslim economists and environmentalists are two separate species with opposing perspectives.
- (e) The nation state model, which all Muslim countries have adopted, has economic development as its highest priority. Coping with environmental change is much lower down the scale.

As Muslim populations grew and expanded territorially their requirements in government became increasingly complex and the *Shariah* accordingly became more sophisticated. To the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* were added two other elements: the consensus (*ijma*) of scholar jurists and the process of reasoning by analogy (*qiyas*). Islamic law (*fiqh*) evolved out of this process and there are two other traditional instruments which were incorporated into this system and which could usefully serve the purpose of formulating environmental law in the Muslim world today. The first of these is interpretation in context (*ijtihad*) and the second is custom and practice (*'urf wa adat*).

The *Shariah* expanded and evolved within this framework to set defining standards for Muslim behaviour within the divine decrees of the *Qur'an* including inter alia family law, civil law, commercial law and environmental law. The *Shariah* also evolved within the guidelines set by three principles agreed upon by scholar jurists over the centuries. They are –

- (a) The interest of the community takes precedence over the interests of the individual.
- (b) Relieving hardship takes precedence over promoting benefit.
- (c) A bigger loss cannot be prescribed to alleviate a smaller loss and a bigger benefit takes precedence over a smaller one. Conversely a smaller harm can be prescribed to avoid a bigger harm and a smaller benefit can be dispensed with in preference to a bigger one.

Creation or nature is referred to as the signs (*ayat*) of Allah and this is also the name given to the verses of the *Qur'an*. *Ayat* means signs, symbols or proofs of the divine. As the *Qur'an* is proof of Allah so likewise is His creation. The *Qur'an* also speaks of signs within the self and as Nasr^{xxvi} explains, when "...Muslim sages referred to the cosmic or

ontological *Qur'an* they saw upon the face of every creature letters and words from the cosmic *Qur'an*. They remained fully aware of the fact that the *Qur'an* refers to phenomena of nature and events within the soul of man as *ayat*. For them forms of nature were literally *ayat Allah*". As the *Qur'an* says, "there are certainly signs in the earth for people with certainty; and in yourselves. Do you not then see?" (Qur'an 51:20,21).

The universe we inhabit is a sign of God's creation as is the environment of our innermost selves. They both emanate from the One Source and are bonded by only one purpose, which is to serve the divine will. This bonding of the cosmic to the subatomic is the deep ecology of Islam but it is not a relationship of equals as we can see in the hierarchy of the food chain dominated by man. Whilst the primary relationship is that between the Creator and the rest of His creation, the Creator Himself determined a subsidiary one, that between man and the rest of His creation which the *Qur'an* defines as follows: "It is He who created everything on the earth for you..."(Qur'an 2:28), and

"We did not create heaven and earth and everything between them as a game..."(Qur'an 1:16) and

"We did not create heaven and earth and everything between them to no purpose (Qur'an 38:26)", and

"...He wanted to test you regarding what has come to you ..." (Qur'an 5:48).

The *Qur'anic* view holds that everything on the earth was created for humankind. It was God's gift (*n'ihma*) to us, but a gift with conditions nevertheless and it is decidedly not something that is intended for the amusement of the human race. The earth then is a testing ground of the human species. The tests are a measure of our acts of worship (*ihsan*) in its broadest sense. That is living in a way that is pleasing to Allah, striving in everything we do to maintain the harmony of our inner and outer environments.

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ⁱ Calder & Amirsadeghi (eds); Future of a Troubled World; Heineman, London, 1983; see Gerard Piel, The Acceleration of History.

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid

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- ^{iv} Meadows & Others; *Beyond the Limits*; Earthscan, London 1992; see *Overshoot*.
- ^v *Ibid*; See *The Driving Force: Exponential Growth*.
- ^{vi} Joel Krieger (ed.); *The Oxford Companion to the Politics of the World*; Oxford Univ. Press; 1993; see *Modernity* by Zygmunt Bauman.
- ^{vii} As note 28; Ernst Gellner quoted in; See also Ernst Gellner; *Nations & Nationalism*; Oxford university Press ,1986.
- ^{viii} Serge Latouche; *In the Wake of the Affluent Society*; Paris 1991; Zed Books, London, 1993.
- ^{ix} As note 29; see *Market* by Gerald Berthoud.
- ^x As note 29; See *Poverty* by Majid Rahnema.
- ^{xi} As note 25.
- ^{xii} *Ibid*.
- ^{xiii} Anthony Sampson; *The Money Lenders*; Coronet Books, 1988; London (first published 1981); Galbrath is quoted in p.29.
- ^{xiv} Frederic Benham; *Economics*; Pitman, London, sixth edition, 1960; p.426
- ^{xv} Tarnas R. (1996) *The Passion of the Western Mind* (pp.275-281); Pimlico, London.
- ^{xvi} The translation of the *Qur'ān* used is that by Bewley A and A (1999) *The Noble Qur'ān*. Bookwork: Norwich, England.
- ^{xvii} Nasr S.H.(1990) *Man and Nature, the Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man* (p.20) Unwin Hyman, London.
- ^{xviii} Kurtzman J. (1993) *The Death of Money* (p.77). Little, Brown & Co, Boston USA.
- ^{xix} Kurtzman J. (1993) *The Death of Money* (p.85). Little, Brown & Co. Boston USA.
- ^{xx} Kurtzman J. (1993) *The Death of Money* (p.94). Little, Brown & Co. Boston USA.
- ^{xxi} For an appraisal on interest see Diwaney T .E. El (1997) *The Problem With Interest*, Ta Ha, London.
- ^{xxii} These ideas have been developed by us over the past decade and discussed at various international fora.
- ^{xxiii} The second half of this declaration is “Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” (*Muhammadur Rasulullahi*).
- ^{xxiv} For a discussion on *Fitra* see Yasien Mohammed (1996) *Fitra*. Ta-Ha, London.
- ^{xxv} This is the case in the Sunni tradition of Islam which accounts for about 85% of the world’s Muslim population. The Shia tradition has an established clergy.
- ^{xxvi} Nasr S.H. (1993) *The Need for a Sacred Science* (pp.130,131). Curzon Press, Surrey England.