empirical discoveries of natural sciences—from biology and genetics to astronomical and earth sciences. These tendencies continue to shape Muslim response to environmental change in contemporary realities.

For environmental humanities, religion connects the unseen and the moral to the phenomenal, just as they are connected in the original European romantic concept of "nature." Relevant to contemporary environmental studies, religion offers ways to link an understanding of unknown and indeterminate environmental effects to an everyday notion of the future, whether living with incremental change or a long-predicted predicted catastrophe. As overlapping disciplines structure such correspondences in Islamic humanities (through Qur'an, law, Sufism, and so forth), they also extend them into the unseen and unpredictable futures of responsibility and consequence. To recognize these sciences and expressions as a language of the ethical and the unknown opens Muslim environmentalism to systematic apprehension that is grounded in more than just textual tradition. Moral and material symbolism influenced by Sufism, scientific inquiry, and planetary realities themselves render multivalent commitments to the natural world that reflect Qur'anic relationships. In his lecture on a humanistic understanding of environment, "Waiting Gaia," Bruno Latour wrote similarly, "What if we [shift] from a symbolic and metaphoric definition of human action to a literal one? After all, this is just what is meant by the anthropocene concept: everything that was symbolic is now to be taken literally."[61] The next chapter turns to living communities and commitments constituted through ritual practice and activism as self-conscious Muslim environmentalisms, enacting the connections that bond creatures together as they are propelled toward uncertain and consequential futures.

SIX

Muslim Environmentalism as Religious Practice

Accounts of the Unseen

WHEN ENVIRONMENTALISM IS integral to religious piety, it draws on tradition differently than when religion is enrolled secondarily for environmental projects. This is no more or less religiously or environmentally authentic than is instrumental programming, and, as examples throughout this book have shown, such modes do readily overlap. However, when Muslim commitments of environmentalism are primarily for the sake of religious goals and not the reverse, teachings that are not part of a standard interfaith menu, such as apocalypticism or the exemplary model of the Prophet Muhammad, emerge as central. They may express unseen dimensions (such as the afterlife itself), for which Anglophone environmental humanities may not have a cognate vocabulary. Finally, these practices constitute communities as movements that can otherwise remain socially illegible to standard social analysis of globally mainstream environmentalism.

Part of the problem of erasure relates to the understanding of Sufism. Pious patterns, named or unnamed, are at the core of Muslim environmentalisms I studied in fieldwork. This very characteristic, however, renders them relatively unseen in academic analysis due to persistent orientalist structures in approaching Islam. In order to conceptualize and describe these qualities and their manifestations in the past and the present, the term *Sufism* is used here as in the perspective of the academic study of religion. In Islamic studies, *Sufism* refers not just to the esoteric philosophy and

elite "path" to apprehending divine unity that carries the formal Arabic designation *tasawwuf* but also to the more general, and far more widespread, notions of doctrine, devotional practice, and social and political structure shared by the communities that form around such authority, hidden and manifest. Over the past decade or two, in Islamic studies and religious studies, many structures have come to be analyzed through the academic framework of Sufism besides theosophy. For example, this engages local and transregional saints and social histories of named lineages or Sufi orders. It also includes traditions, such as veneration of the Prophet Muhammad, that are not explicitly labeled Sufi in context but that are nevertheless integral to such systems.

The Euro-American genealogy of the study of Sufism, until not so very long ago, was marked by orientalist tendencies that formerly would have set apart Sufism, as a perennial or transcendental philosophy, from Islam, the religious lifeways of Muslims. This is despite the fact that Sufism, as referred to academically today, and its structures were a dominant strain of Sunni Islam for a millennium, certainly up to the reformist movements of the colonial era. As understood academically, the separation of Sufism from what Sunni Muslims do in everyday religious practice is now discredited in foundational academic presentations of the past decade or more, which emphasize continuities of Sufism with normative traditions such as Qur'anic study and practice.[1]

A leading Muslim environmental activist, prominent scholar of both European and Islamic humanities, and expert in medieval Muslim sources on philosophy, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, broke ground half a century ago with a foundational theory for environmental humanities. For this, as in his prolific scholarship overall, he drew on an esoteric and elite intellectual tradition that was already quite legible within Eurocentric frameworks. Nasr's model of perennial truths aligned with academic humanities in its self-conscious identification with European and American romantic imagination. Its orientalist mode of understanding of Sufism also has the tendency to detach a universalized aspect of Islam, spirituality, from a Muslim-specific identity.

Nasr's approach does not easily accommodate Muslim ritual practices or readings of the Qur'an. This does not make Nasr's writings on environmentalism (or Islam) any less valid, and certainly in no way diminishes their significance—acknowledged or not—to English-language environmental

philosophy and ethics of the past fifty years. Throughout this chapter, starting first with Nasr and moving to other field-based examples that also connect with Sufism, layerings of Muslim environmentalism draw on esotericism in philosophy as well as devotional piety for powerful teaching and potential mobilization. Nevertheless, these also remain overlooked and "unseen," at times even to one another, across modern academic perspectives on Muslim religious tradition and still within the Eurocentric legacy of environmental humanities as a whole.

Shaped by fieldwork data that draw on a decade of work on Muslim environmentalism in Southeast Asia, examples in this chapter present devotional expression in the form of globally widespread Islamic rituals like *salawat nabi* and *dhikr*. This was what I saw observed, expressed, performed, and theorized repeatedly by religiously Muslim environmental activists. It constituted religious Muslim communities of environmental commitment in modes like those I documented in previous work on mainstream networks of Qur'anic education and practice. Those familiar with the study of Islam and Sufism in the past as well as the postcolonial period will recognize that such practices do not necessarily conform to named tariqahs (Sufi orders, *tariqat* or *turuq*). They also represent trends of normative piety that are ever more popular in Muslim Indonesia in the twenty-first century. In postcolonial societies like Indonesia, pesantren-based authority and popular media are modes of transmission of these structures (for example, through networks of Nadlatul Ulama). The cosmologically framed treatments that are typical of Islam *and* the environment, as in Seyyed Hossein Nasr's formulation, also do not incorporate these common practices, ubiquitous though they may be and as much as they connect philosophical—and environmental—interpretation to activism and communities of piety.

Whether discussing the writings of Nasr or field-based cases in Indonesian Islam, differing environmentalisms have aligned with regimes of authority—for example, Euro-American nature philosophy in one case and Muslim ritual traditions in another—to reproduce particularized and even privileged notions of environment. Regimes of power over what is "the environment," including that which could erase struggles for environmental equity and justice, control what its terms are globally. This may render voiceless a subaltern *who* of the environment in colonizers' terms, possibly compounded all the more by historical realities such as European subjugation across insular Southeast Asia, to extend an idea originally

suggested by Timothy Mitchell's study of colonial Egypt.[2] This environmental agent, possessing neither mimetic nor political agency, may be viewed as the relational *who* of the biosphere itself, or it may be colonized or otherwise marginalized persons (to follow more closely Gayatri Spivak's use of the subaltern, a concept limited to human beings as persons) as they are affected by colonial and environmental conditions such as exploitation and erasure.

Underlying postcolonial critique, Islamic religious systems express these environmental *whos*, such as according to the Qur'an itself in its calls to justice. Even the nonsentient phenomenal world, seen and unseen, is a "creature" (makhluq) whose experience is structured in relation to controlling and uncontrollable powers in the Qur'an. In the text, apocalyptic scenarios confer on the marginalized, and even the nonhuman, a voice, as landscapes themselves transform according to moral truths. Activism directed toward or directed by this piety keeps proximate the awareness of environmental consequence. A healthy biosphere is a precondition to a human existence that is dependent on divine command in Muslim environmentalisms, whether they are inflected as legal or spiritual; and, as in the Qur'an, the nonspeaking subject, the environment, serves as a continual reminder of the responsibilities and limits of human capacity in relation to God the Creator.

This fundamental rendering of Muslim environmental commitments does not rest on a principle of nature or any experience of the sacred, nor even environmentalism defined in relation to an idealized ethical pragmatism like sustainability or conservation. It is, in the worlds of interlocutors I heard over years of fieldwork, merely the practice of Islam following the best model of the Prophet Muhammad (sunnat Nabi Muhammad), striving with divine "sunnat Allah." In accord with the Qur'an, from religious cosmogony to eschatology, and filtering through everyday moral conduct, the environment may be cast as "Muslim" in terms of a natural and original state (Ar. *fitrah*) and includes humans within it as among creation's active participants. To study this from a secular perspective as in the history of religions or environmental humanities hones an analytic approach of the unseen and illustrates ways to extend the environmentally symbolic across ethical dimensions. Now, in the book's final chapter, documentation from fieldwork research renders real people and their stories into the picture, with community practices that embody environmentalist theory

and activism in the service of religious goals, rather than the reverse. A final reflection back on environmental humanities is then to ask, what structures of power would prevent these voices from otherwise being seen and heard?

Islam *and* the Environment: Sufism

Many authors who write on Islam *and* the environment do concentrate on the Sufi tradition, but through an exclusively textual mode and without considering any social or ethnographic dimensions, as is characteristic of a certain European academic style with respect to Islam.[3] Seyyed Hossein Nasr's writings are emblematic of two signature aspects of such an approach: first, he emphasizes Sufi doctrine that is cosmological,[4] his area of scholarly expertise, employing a language of Islamic science, spirituality, and "nature"; second, Nasr draws on a tradition of experiential and symbolic contemplation of creation as Sufi expression (such as Persian-language verse like that of Rumi), much like the romantics. These tendencies in representing Muslim environmentalisms reflect aspects of both the tradition of European study of Sufism and American nature thinking, especially in the New England tradition.

Emphasis in other work that intentionally follows or complements Seyyed Hossein Nasr's approach to "nature" and "spirituality" also fit in well with the heritage of Anglophone nature writing in environmental humanities.[5] Some other prominent authors in Islamic studies besides Nasr, such as William Chittick, have tried to adapt the difficult doctrine of Ibn Al-`Arabi (d. ca. 1240) to take the form of a kind of nature theory of *wujudiyyah*, and similarly casting Islamic cosmological doctrine as the basis of an Islamic notion of environment and even environmentalism.[6] These primary sources from Islamic humanities usually develop the kind of microcosmic-to-macrocosmic correspondences that typify the later Neoplatonic tradition, and, as has been detailed in the previous chapter, these have historically tended to come with a reputation for both monism and magic. As environmental humanities, however, this scholarship resonates with cosmological tendencies in European approaches to nature, which persist in the academic field of religion and ecology today.

The translated poetry by thirteenth-century mystic Jalaluddin Rumi remains popularly recast as environmental among this cadre of academics and also nonacademics.[7] Rumi, claimed recently to be the "most-read poet in America," is frequently invoked for Islam *and* the environment, and this under the banner of Sufism. The Anglophone literature of Muslim environmentalism reflects orientalist-textualist tendencies in this respect when it sidelines historical, political, and ritual dimensions of Islam. Environmentalist references to Rumi also characteristically downplay the many dynamic, violent, and often disruptively confrontational images in Rumi's poetry. These are dominant tropes that draw both on the Qur'an and everyday material transformations, such as through occupational (and alchemical) concerns like cooking and baking, metal-working and swordcraft.[8]

Field materials presented in this chapter, in contrast, reflect the living impact of centuries of practical and devotional piety, incorporating that which the field of religious studies now typifies as Sufism in the form of patterns of devotional and esoteric piety that constitute community life. A way to grasp such tradition might be to acknowledge the prominent influence of widespread traditions in study and practice of Al-Ghazali's *Ihya' `Ulum al-Din*, the forty-volume masterpiece that casts exoteric Muslim religious life (and, in the last volume, death), with respect to religious realities that are not incompatible with esoteric truths (although these are not expressed in this work). A striking feature of such patterns in Southeast Asia is that they are not labeled as Sufism and in many cases represent normative Islam. This register of devotional piety is also emphasized in popular revival traditions, even now long after the period of reformist criticism of Sufism during the time of the period of English, Dutch, French, Portuguese, Spanish, and American direct colonial rule over Muslims across the region, from Burma to Vietnam to the Philippines and Indonesia.

Such communities of practice are rarely connected to named orders today. In Indonesia some Sufi orders (Ind. *tarekat*) lasted through the suppression of Dutch colonial rule and the related reforms in Indonesia and elsewhere in the region, as documented by scholars.[9] However, they are not widespread, nor could they be said to be socially influential networks. New charismatic movements (Ind. *aliran*) are just as popular underground in many locations and at times are viewed to be similarly heterodox, as once were more marginalized Sufi orientations as well, particularly on Java. The

communities such as are documented here formed through widespread practices, however, are more based in the pesantren tradition of teachers and schools which are the mainstay of Islamic education. These normative practices are also on the rise as popular expression in the public sphere. In an environmental register as here, these tend to be closely connected to local environmental communities, represented by agricultural food cooperatives, for example, that have been in existence well before and also after the year 1965.

During my fieldwork in Indonesia, I encountered only one self-conscious attempt at recasting named Sufi traditions in order to develop a new environmental community program. This took a form, labeled by its own promoters *eco-Sufism,* that was atypical, relying heavily on Indonesian translations of English-language academic works from American scholars of religious studies like William Chittick (an expert on Ibn Al-`Arabi) and Franklin Lewis (biographer of Rumi), instead of continuities like those transmitted through the pesantren tradition or even the tariqahs of Southeast Asia. (Of note, Seyyed Hosein Nasr, disfavored in the linguistically and culturally linked context of Malaysia due to universalist-perennialist commitments, was never mentioned.) Like programs described in chapter 2 with respect to ecotourism, this development occurred through nontraditional institutional modes even as it engaged them. It adopted modes of piety like those that were otherwise presented as traditional in this chapter, and the plan for new business activities was an expansion of a center that was already in operation. I did carry out intermittent fieldwork with this group over several years, but as far as I am aware the program stayed in the proposal stage. It was also featured in a dissertation by Suwito in 2011, later published under the title *Eko-Sufism.*[10]

When I was in the field on Java, the organizers' energy was devoted to developing this program of eco-Sufism, which would follow a model of corporate "training" that could take place at a retreat destination for ecotourism.[11] As explained by one of the prospective leaders in a university lecture and video presentation in my classroom in Jogjakarta,[12] the idea for this was a kind of workshopped self-accounting resembled the model of a teacher from Baghdad known as Al-Muhasibi (d. 857), whose nickname means "the accounter"; for him, relentless self-scrutiny of faults was the first step on the spiritual path.[13] It is likely that for the program's

promoters this resonated more with the dominant cultural trope of *tawbah*, or "repentance," a theme in popular religious music and film and even social-political spectacle. The calculative dakwah for charity and prosperity, rather than the actual writing of Al-Muhasibi (of whom they had not yet heard), was likely the most direct religious influence. The imagined structure also closely resembled a kind of management-directed assessment of "personal goals" expected of a corporate exercise in professional development for employees. Notable to the discussion here, however, it was a practice—not doctrine, not a cosmology—that was sought from Sufi tradition to revitalize Islam for the sake of the environment. In addition, leaders were keen to reach out to those with power and influence, recognizing the reality of social inequality as a key structure to leverage in realizing these enterprising environmental goals.

Sufi ways of experiential knowledge, new and old, named and unnamed, relate inner and outer realities. Both the cosmology of Ibn Al-`Arabi as well as modern American spiritual ("not religious") attitudes such as those of Seyyed Hossein Nasr express this experiential knowledge in Anglophone writings on Muslim environmentalism. In much formal Sufi doctrine, perceptive and ethical ascent through the levels of reality, from material to subtle, is typically cast as a perfection of the self for the sake of achieving experiential awareness of the unity of divine reality. A common metaphor for the process is the gradual replacement of aspects of the ethical self (*nafs*) with those resembling the Prophet Muhammad, coming ever nearer to realizing what is divine perfection through this model. Widespread transformative practices that alter the alchemy of the heart like dhikr may achieve this goal under the guidance of a shaykh. Orientalist scholars have made much of the potential for doctrinal ideas such as "perfect man" (*al-insan al-kamil*), "divine breath" (nafs, not to be confused with the lower nafs of base desire), and so on as potential material for Islam *and* the environment. However, I found in fieldwork that communities of environmentalism seeking such transformations turned to applied and grounded practices of piety, rather than to "spiritual" doctrine absorbed by individuals with reference to elite traditions. Nor, for that matter, were they aligned with Javanese or another local-cultural identity, Arabic-Persian prestige, or the American historical ideology of nation-building and mastery over ever receding human and environmental frontiers. They blended naturally into the religious landscapes of Muslim Indonesia in a global setting.

Muslim Environmentalism as Cosmology and Spirituality: Seyyed Hossein Nasr

Indonesian materials reveal communities of Muslim environmental commitments that do not correspond to models and interventions of global mainstream environmentalist analysis and activism. Thus, they tend not to register in English-language treatments of Islam *and* the environment. This is largely *because* they conform to the most fundamental modes of Islamic religious practice, continuous with the past, and not because they diverge, and even as they redirect affect, devotion, and intention to explicitly environmentalist intents. These structures tend to blend in naturally with global Islamic patterns that also happen to have long been poorly recognized, or even ignored, in European academic analysis. The data nevertheless here represent a process of environmentalist social formation based in community practices of just the type that the environmental humanities seeks to theorize, such as by acknowledging marginalized networks and intellectual trends that would imagine interspecies relations of consequence. Obstacles to addressing both orientalism and colonialism in perceptions of Islam continue to render Muslim environmentalism of the type presented in this chapter largely invisible in Anglophone humanities overall.

Islamic registers have been expressed comfortably within extant mainstream discourses in environmentalism for the last five decades, however, in the seminal writings of Seyyed Hosein Nasr. Nasr was the first self-identified Muslim environmentalist in American humanistic academic circles in the 1960s and 1970s, highly respected as a scholar in Islamic studies. He delivered his influential Rockefeller Lectures at the University of Chicago Divinity School in 1966, about a year before the short and often-credited article by Lynn White Jr. initially appeared in print, and with similar arguments. Nasr's adoption of the problem/solution environmental paradigm presaged what would become a dominant approach to environment as crisis for the coming half-century. By the same token, it also demonstrates how properties of Muslim environmentalism emphasized here like community practice, the unseen, and apocalypticism would be overlooked by even so eminent an expert.

Nasr blended notions of sublime nature, familiar from European romantic intellectual traditions, with the New England tradition of Emerson,

Thoreau, and Harvard University (with all of which he identified), and in harmony with Unitarian Universalist strains within its divinity school. As with the romantic leanings of orientalists (such as would also be represented at Harvard by the renowned scholar of Sufism and specialist on Rumi, Annemarie Schimmel, professor at Harvard from 1967 to 1992), Nasr identified an essentialized idea of "traditional" and "holistic" Islam textually, and at times as a categorical contrast to a construct he calls the "West." Nasr's affinity with perennial or transcendental philosophy in the late 1960s put him in the phenomenological circle of Mircea Eliade, Carl Jung, and Huston Smith with respect to their own approaches to non-Christianities in religious studies.[14] Nasr's theosophy, centered around medieval Persian and Arabic texts, also represents a typical orientalist approach to Sufism in the history of the academic study of religion, as with its lack of focus on social or political systems; he tends to present the context for his intellectual history in terms of discrete biographies of great men (e.g., Suhrawardi, Ibn Sina, and Ibn Al-`Arabi).

Nasr's lectures at the University of Chicago, published as *Man and Nature* in 1968,[15] were received just at the moment that the U.S. environmental movement was beginning. In the U.S., the Cuyahoga River caught fire in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1969, the same year as California's oil spill in Santa Barbara; President Richard Nixon established the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970. Along with this, space exploration had burst into American consciousness as the next "frontier." The photograph taken from a moon expedition in 1968 called Earthrise, which looks back on "home" from out in space, became an iconic environmentalist image of the interconnectedness and fragility of the planet.[16] Critiques of limits of technology and colonizing enterprise were also in American popular imagination in the latter 1960s. For example, the film about humanity's limits in the fragility of space and human-evolutionary implications of a nuclear age, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, was released in the same year as Nasr's lectures (1968), and the long-syndicated television series exploring what it means to be human in the context of otherness out on the "final frontier" of space, *Star Trek*, had begun airing in 1966. This was also the time that the intolerable racism and violence of systemic white supremacy had reached a limit in U.S. cities (the Watts uprising occurred in California in 1965); the Native American activist movement (Alcatraz, Wounded Knee) was inspiring national and international mobilization of indigenous groups. On U.S. university campuses, it

was the same time as critiques of the imperialism of "the West," while the middle class protested compulsory military service in the Vietnam conflict in Southeast Asia (students were fatally shot on the campus of Kent State in Ohio in 1970). Religious studies was also beginning as a field. "Non-Western religions" (which tended not to include Islam) were in themselves seen as a "solution" to the reenchantment of the anomie of modernity,[17] as Eliade himself had written in his inaugural essay for the new journal out of the University of Chicago Divinity School, *History of Religions,* in 1961 lauding the field as a "New Humanism."[18] This was the context of Nasr's Rockefeller Lectures, later published as *Man and Nature.*

Figure 6.1 NASA image AS8-14-2383 taken by William Anders on December 24, 1968, on the Apollo 8 mission, the first trip humans made to the far side of the Moon. Photograph by NASA in the public domain.

A product of its time, *Man and Nature*, the seminal scholarly work in Muslim environmentalism, presents a universally humanistic rather than Islamically specific argument. The book is subtitled *The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*. The theme of "modern man" being in "crisis" reverberates through the decades of Nasr's later environmental writing as well.[19] Nasr's lectures cast the environment (that is, "nature") in terms of problems that should be solved through moral awareness. It combined the European ideology of nature's sublime with teachings like those of the eleventh-century Ikhwan al-Safa' ("Brethren of Purity") and draws widely across the fields of the liberal arts. Along with construction, Nasr renders critique in universalist, not tradition-specific, language, much as in the Unitarian tradition of Emerson (the son of an ordained Unitarian minister) and his friend Thoreau. *Man and Nature* criticizes "the West," as Lynn White Jr.'s article did for medieval Latin Christianity (which he also identified with the Hebrew Bible), offers a critique of "modern" technology, as does White (discussing the impact of the introduction of the plow in Europe, for example), and lays out fundamental ideas that represent romanticized notions of perennial "spirituality" (similar to White's concluding universalization of the possibilities of Franciscan piety).[20]

While drawing on classical Muslim medieval sources, Nasr's approach also closely conforms to an intellectual genealogy of European nature philosophy, including notions like the sacred and sublime expressed in fully romanticized Anglophone registers. Nasr's written comments on the lectures, published decades later, open by situating his perspective with respect to the American nature writing tradition of Emerson and Thoreau (literally in "place," referencing Nasr's own fondness for strolling around the area of Walden Pond, Nasr himself having attended MIT and Harvard).[21] The main points of *Man and Nature*, and Nasr's writings on environment overall, resonate strongly with the transcendentalist themes of Emerson's writing, as in his essay "Nature," as well as of Thoreau in *Walden*. In "Nature," Emerson praises the natural world experienced in solitude as being the experiential "ministry" of Universal Being, claiming the metaphysics of all matter (the environment) essentially to be both spiritual and moral. Thoreau's ethics advanced erasure of human relationships as an aspect of environmentalism, for example, that to leave society in "solitude" is an aspect of the authentic experience of nature. This may partially

explain the omission of core Muslim humanistic material on community from Nasr's own metaphysical Muslim environmentalism, which is remarkable considering his foundational writings elsewhere on the Muslim ethics of companionship ("spiritual chivalry" or *futuwwa*).[22] Nasr also evidences a style of Euro-American romantic critique to a much greater degree than any postcolonial critique, whether Islamic, nationally Iranian (his place of origin), or otherwise.

In an article appearing decades after the Rockefeller Lectures in the volume edited by Richard Foltz, Frederick M. Denny, Azizan Baharuddin, *Islam and Ecology* (2003), Nasr acknowledges that the "theology of nature" (his expression), which he implicitly proposed, in his first lectures in the 1960s, to be a new invention of the twentieth century, whether in a Muslim, Christian, or Jewish idiom.[23] Nasr's writing had cast "nature" as the idea of the environment, inherently crisis free and without any problems short of a deficiency in the human capacity to apprehend it or revere it. Defining the environment in terms of nature's crisis was typical of white American environmentalism in the 1960s, and was still largely separated from American environmental justice movements that named and challenged environmental racism as such. In contrast to social justice activism, Nasr depicts environmentalism, Muslim and non-Muslim, primarily in terms of the causes and effects on humans' degraded spiritual state. Nasr's humanistic contribution is to locate this universalism of "spirituality" in the heritage of Muslim-majority systems. He theorizes perennial holism as the essence of "Islamic science," which, he claims, had been truncated and alienated from its very own truths under conditions of modernity.

For example, writing in the opening to *Man and Nature*, Nasr states "The Problem" in the form of a classical romantic-modernist critique of anomie: "Today, almost everyone living in the urbanized centres of the Western world feels intuitively a lack of something in life. This is due directly to the creation of an artificial environment from which nature has been excluded to the greatest possible extent. Even the religious man in such circumstances has lost the sense of the spiritual significance in nature."[24] For Nasr, a nature-concept serves as a potent critique of modernity, alienation, and environmental exploitation. However, unlike other American voices, such as Muir's own writings on wilderness for example, Nasr does not view nature as the opposite of society or as "primitive," but rather sees its

valuation to be the pinnacle of civilization's most sophisticated, learned, and elite expression, as on the part of medieval Muslims.

Underlying Nasr's view of the environment and the related moral critique of an empty scientism is unrelenting criticism of technology, but with little evidence of a critique of capitalism as such. Nasr bypasses a standard narrative that lauds Islamic technological discovery, allowing him to cast the entire category technology in a negative light. For example, in his article in the collection, *Islam and Ecology*, Nasr's first argument is to charge technology to be the reason why teachings that address the environmental crisis are "prevent[ed] . . . from being propagated and implemented in society in which the voice of religion is still very strong and where all ethics . . . have a religious basis" (that is, the U.S.). He continues by offering his first point as follows:[25] "1. The present environmental crisis is directly related to the use of modern technology and the various applications of modern science. . . . There is no pause in the development of ever newer forms of technology, a pause that might allow Islamic societies to create some form of equilibrium with the technology that is borrowed, to 'humanize' certain aspects of it to the degree possible, and to minimize its negative environmental impact."[26] Neither Nasr nor White could foresee critiques like those of Timothy Morton or Donna Haraway that theorize technology and ontologies of the virtual vis-à-vis deconstructed ideas of nature and the natural. In Nasr's view, the mechanized stands in unquestioned binary opposition to the humanistic and the spiritual, in much the same way that Nasr also promotes another nonhybrid binary distinction, East and West.

In over a half-century of writing on the topic, Nasr's environmentalist critique also focuses disparagingly on a particular kind of scientific attitude. Bad science is scientism, defined by Nasr in the new preface to *Man and Nature* (1989) to be a type of monolithic ideology: "One of the chief causes for this lack of acceptance of the spiritual dimension of the ecological crisis is the survival of scientism which continues to present modern science not as a particular way of knowing nature, but as a complete totalitarian philosophy which reduces all reality to the physical domain and does not wish under any condition to accept the possibility of the existence of non-scientistic world-views."[27] Nasr is not opposed to all "science" of course, merely projections of the "Faustian science" (a label of Geothe's that he occasionally uses). Furthermore, he objects, not unlike Al-Ghazali, to the proposition that the limited regimes of science alone could claim to

grasp, much less express, an ultimate truth. Staying clear of Marxism, Nasr repeatedly attempts to prove this point by citing the harm that has allegedly been caused by the materialistic pursuit of the degraded modernist ideology of science and technology, which is presumably divorced from an environmental, spiritual, or any other kind of valid ethics.

This position establishes Islam *and* the environment on the grounds that the environment represents a "crisis [of Modern Man]," manifest as "Problems" (like alienation from "nature") that must be solved "spiritually" by way of a moral transformation. At this point, in more than one work, Nasr characteristically diverts the proposed solution to the problem toward historical understanding of Islam before returning to a universalized solution. Nasr's answer to the environmental problem is Islamic metaphysics, what his school calls traditional or spiritual knowledge (sometimes identified with good holistic science). A scholar of Nasr's work on environmentalism, Tarik Quadir, explains that Nasr seeks to introduce *ma'rifah* (knowledge of the unseen or Ultimate Reality, a classic Sufi expression) into environmental understanding.[28]

In his article appearing in the volume edited by Foltz and Denny, *Islam and Ecology*, Nasr explains what this means for the environment in the following words, emphasizing how Islamic science as a solution also underpins the "spirituality" of Muslim, if not all, environmentalism: "Over the centuries Islam produced a major scientific tradition which dealt with the world of nature and at the same time functioned within an Islamic universe of discourses. This scientific tradition has much to offer in the process of formulating a contemporary language expressing Islamic views of the relation of human beings and the natural environment."[29] In his many essays on the subject, Nasr does not treat actual fields of Islamic science in detail, whether alchemy or chemistry, life sciences like biology or botany, earth sciences or physics like astronomy or optics, or any other field including traditional "religious sciences" (*'ulum al-din*) like jurisprudence and Qur'an exegesis. In his discussion, Nasr cites Islamic art as the productive counterpart to Islamic science and its expressions, including literature and the writings of the Sufis.

Typically, literature in the field Islam *and* the environment looks either to Qur'an ("ecological verses") or to Sufi philosophy (cosmology), but, unlike religious Muslims, rarely both at the same time. This conforms to an old European split within textual-orientalist Islamic studies, and religious

studies more widely. As a learned scholar of Islam, Nasr has been the director of a major project in publishing a complete text of the Qur'an with verse-by-verse commentary, *The Study Qur'an* (2015).[30] Significantly, Nasr's *Study Qur'an* does not include, much less feature, environmental perspectives in its commentary. As part of the genre of global "modernist" exegesis, from Muhammad `Abduh and Sayyid Qutb in Egypt, Mawdudi in Pakistan, to Hamka in Indonesia, it certainly might have have done so, since these works historically have tended to be fairly wide-ranging in topics and approach overall. Nasr's work on environment, conversely, tends not to cite the Qur'an, preferring references that draw from medieval Muslim literature and philosophy. It could even be said that Nasr's environmentalist presentation distorts Qur'anic tradition from the perspective of Muslim piety by virtue of not revealing, nor even acknowledging, the eschatological dimensions of Islamic moral philosophy.

Also absent from the discourse is the fact that Nasr himself has long been a leading environmental activist; he is well-known to have inspired a famous group of "green Muslim" activists in the Washington, DC, area. To bring Islam into focus in environmental humanities, it is important to put real people (like Nasr) into the picture (like Nasr's) of Muslim environmentalisms.[31] In my fieldwork, talking to leaders in Asia, patterns conventionally called Sufism, chiefly conveyed though ritual, eschatology, and ethics, determined the expression of Muslim environmentalism in religious settings, not Emersonian transcendentalism or elite, esoteric philosophy universalized to match scale with an everyman's individualized subjectivity. I found just Islam inflected through global Muslim piety, and thus subject to the usual distortions called academic orientalism. To render this material legible now in environmental humanities, the approach must directly engage Muslim traditions and not through another lens, such as that which William James once theorized at Harvard University as an expression of diverse "varieites," nor as a modern human resource to be managed through technologies derived from another religion like "mindfulness." The close identification between lived Islamic tradition and community practice may be what, I suspect, has rendered Muslim environmentalisms marginal to the standard English-language presentation of Islam *and* the environment. This is despite achievements, such as Nasr's original, groundbreaking insights into the role of the Islamic humanities in speaking to American environmentalists' expressions of crisis with the intent of solutions for all.

Rahmah and Environmental Devotions

My field-based study found explicit Muslim environmentalism to emphasize understanding of this life in terms of changes in the world to come. This occurred through pietistic and Qur'anically soteriological inflections of tradition cast in terms of environmental practice and preaching. My qualitative research showed these aspects of tradition correlated the ultimate mercy of Allah with the mercy of an individual person for the environment. There is ample evidence from fieldwork data, obtained through site visits, observation of religious observances, and interviews with religious scholars and activists, to show that "compassion to creation," for example, is a core teaching of Southeast Asian Muslim environmentalism.

Looking across the regional context in a general perspective, in many Southern Asian systems of environmental ethics, from Gandhi's *satyagraha* to "engaged Buddhism" like the expressed environmentalism of Thai leader Sulak Sivaraksa, love, mercy, and compassion and a principled stand for social justice are explicitly emphasized and interconnected.[32] The patterns also resonate soundly with the Sufi expression of global Islam, especially in modes of piety in the prophetic mode. The challenge of colonialism and related Muslim reform movements in response did not decenter Sufi-inflected modes of devotional piety, although it did effectively strip them of a Sufi label in public discourse across much of Southeast Asia. The fieldwork data show that Muslim environmentalists in Indonesia turned to such traditional modes of pious expression in environmentalist theory and practice. For example, with salawat nabi, loving veneration of the Prophet Muhammad was intentionally transferred to creation at large with age-old correspondences between sunnat Muhammad and sunnat Allah.

Working from fieldwork data, a central theme of Muslim environmentalist thought and practice is "mercy for creation," key also in devotional traditions such as those relating to the Prophet Muhammad (he is known as a "mercy for worlds," for example, *rahmata lil-`alamin*). As a historian of religions working on Islam in Southeast Asia, I am aware that an entire tradition of veneration of the Prophet Muhammad has gone relatively overlooked in the fields of Islamic studies and religious studies until the last decade.[33] Collections of premodern manuscripts in Southeast Asia are full of materials that are dedications to the Prophet Muhammad but were

nevertheless not included in colonial catalogs such as of texts in collections in regional court centers across the archipelago. This despite the fact that recited texts like the "Barzanji" and others in the cycle praising the Prophet Muhammad called *mawlid al-nabi* comprise a large percentage of these archives going back to the premodern era.[34] This is also a genre of expression that is purposively environmentalized, as I will show. It exemplifies a fundamental mode of piety that is Qur'anic and based in hadith (and related *sirah* or biography of the Prophet), but is also still largely overlooked in ethnographic studies of Islam in Muslim Indonesia and elsewhere in Asia.

Knowing, for example, the significance of venerating the Prophet Muhammad in Muslim religious lifeworlds highlights themes of hadith that are widespread in modes of devotional piety, which leads directly to environmentalist attitudes and practices like those I found expressed in Indonesia. For example, there is a story, related in multiple firsthand accounts of hadith, that a date palm tree wept for the Prophet Muhammad when he relocated the place from which he stood to preach, the same spot at which the tree was close to him. This is one of many accounts of the loving and nurturing relationship the Prophet Muhammad had with creatures such as animals (birds, deer, camels), and vice versa. Here is one version of this report, coming from the *Sahih* collection of Bukhari: "Narrated by Ibn `Umar: The Prophet (please and blessings be upon him) used to deliver his sermons while standing beside (or leaning on) a trunk of a date palm tree. When he had the pulpit made [at the mosque in Madinah], he used it [the pulpit] instead [of the date palm tree]. The trunk [of the tree] started weeping [grieving out of love for the prophet] and the Prophet approached it, rubbing his hand over it [to soothe it and stop its crying]."

Various accounts report the tree's sobbing and shaking, describing it as being like an abandoned child crying out for a parent. Embellishments to the story include details about the loving care that the Prophet showed in his comforting embrace of the distraught tree. Some narrations continue the story, recounting that the tree was given the choice to remain on earth or to take root in the garden in heaven where pious ancestors would eat from its fruit. (It chooses the next world in these accounts.) In other versions, out of compassion for the tree, the Prophet ordered it to be transferred to a new site so that it could still hear him preach. The story is usually told as an illustration of exemplary love for the Prophet Muhammad; if a tree loved the Prophet so much, how much more should Muslims? It also

shows the Prophet's compassion for other creatures, especially animals, highlighted in other hadith such as a well-known report in which he instructs companions to return baby birds to the nest from which they were taken, out of compassion for the mother bird.

This story of the crying tree also vividly expresses the Qur'anic idea that even the nonsentient world is populated with creatures. A tree, too, has feelings. Not only is all creation "Muslim" in its natural state, but humans participate relationally with these other creatures, whether or not their status is recognized. Naturally the best model for maintaining such relations, as with all social conduct, would be the sunnah of the Prophet himself. This, the sources show, instructs believers to empathy. The theme of such nurturing care has been a key emphasis in Islamic piety and theosophy dating back to Ibn Sina's great systematic work on the intellectual foundations of transformational sciences of healing, *Kitab al-Shifa.'* This is the same *summa* of Avicenna that was so influential on European scholasticism. It was also partially summarized in Arabic as the widely circulated and popular *Kitab al-Najat,* or "Book of Salvation," known throughout the Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority worlds.

This also indicates ideals of contemporary Muslim environmentalist ethics being actively practiced and preached, which I documented during fieldwork in Indonesia. I have not seen themes of compassion and mercy otherwise emphasized in contemporary English-languages messages of Islam *and* the environment, whether as a key word, Qur'an, or hadith citation, a project of a development agency, or other academic writing. In addition, although "creation care" is a Christian catchphrase for some contemporary environmentalist teachings, I have not witnessed it translated into Muslim idioms from a non-Islamic source, nor would I expect it to be in a setting like rural Java. Moreover, as core teaching, like a hadith of the Prophet, "compassion to God's creation," was expressed widely in Indonesia both as Islamic tradition and self-conscious Muslim environmentalism.

The central message I most often heard Muslim environmentalist leaders in Indonesia convey as "care for creation" was a version of a report of a saying of the Prophet Muhammad, a phrase that translates from Malay-Indonesian to English as follows: "Love [a better translation of the expression in Malay than "have mercy for"] what is on earth and you will be loved in heaven." During the course of my fieldwork over many years, whether in Arabic, Malay, or English, words for *love, mercy, compassion, intercession,* and

healing were all used heavily in the context of religious environment ism.[35] The cluster of terms is often glossed as *ampun* (merciful "forgi ness") in Bahasa Indonesia. Extremely common also is *ramah* ("friendly which does sound cognate to the English expression *environmentally frien* but which is also the Indonesian-Malay term that renders powerful pic ideas of closeness and friendship, as in Sufi social theory and ideals tl relate to Muslim religious veneration of the Prophet Muhammad.

The accepted or "sound" Arabic hadith from which the authoritati citation on which this Muslim environmentalist idea would draw suppo according to its frequent citation in fieldwork, has two canonical versio in Arabic-language sources. Both are found in Al-Tirmidhi's collecti *Sunan,* and one is a shortened variant of the other. Each of these wide circulated narrations uses the Arabic and Qur'anic verbal noun *rahm* ("mercy"), expressing the same semantic root for two of the most comm names of God (Al-Rahman, Al-Rahim), as in the invocation, "In the name God, the Benificent, the Merciful":

- (Narrated on the authority of 'Abdullah Ibn Amr:) The Messenger of Allah peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Those who are merciful will be show mercy by the Most Merciful (Al-Rahman). Be merciful to those on the eart [*man fi'l-ard*] and the One in the heavens will have mercy [*yarhamkum* (verba form of *rahmah*)] upon you;" and,
- The Prophet said, "Be merciful to the people of the earth [*ahl al-ard*] and the One in the heavens will have mercy upon you."

Such fundamental ideas were also propagated widely in systematic works by Sufis. For example, scholar Alan Godlas has noted that the idea of *al-shafaqah `ala khalq Allah* (compassion for God's creation) is a major point made by an early and influential Sufi systematizer of the tenth century, Al-Kalabadhi, with his definitive statement, "The foundation of faith is compassion for God's creation."[36]

Love and compassion for creation, connected to the power and protection of God, His ultimate accounting, and the ethics of hablun min Allah and hablun min al-nas are all typical of Muslim environmentalism as I heard it taught and preached in Indonesia in activist and nonactivist contexts. Islamic ideas of creatures, resources, and ethics, expressed as ideals of beauty and knowledge as well as justice, comprise a working concept of the

environment that constitutes community according to these very relations of care. Messages about "love" are not unknown in environmental humanities and appear at least as frequently in the Anglo-American canon as Rachel Carson's preferred moral imperative *life* (as in her writings on the sea, and of course in *Silent Spring* scientific knowledge conquers life's opposite, *death*, another key term in the text). For example, Aldo Leopold defines the *land ethic* as love of community extended of land, and references to love of, by, and for creatures (like pigeons, wolves, and a fallen old oak tree) recur throughout *A Sand County Almanac*.[37] This Islamic teaching would remain illegible, however, in environmental humanities without viewing it, as here, in terms of the ways in which practitioners express commitments through religious practices and transformations of the "heart" (*qalb*). In the cases I studied in Muslim Indonesia, environmentalism was in fact an intermediary goal for an ascent toward such religious ends, rather than the reverse.

A Change of Heart and Environmental Reformations of Religious Practice

In Southeast Asian religious ritual, largely new environmentalist intents have been overlaid on the long-standing religious thought and practice of Muslim communities. Recall that Indonesianist Clifford Geertz viewed ritual as the site in which the work of religion occurs, uniting lived and ethical realities ("worldview" and "ethos") through affectively experiential ("meaningful") symbols.[38] Based on this firsthand fieldwork and more than twenty years working in the region overall, I have found, like Geertz, that ritual is a key dimension through which many Indonesian Islamic teachers and preachers develop revitalized approaches and attitudes, including environmentalism, through community-based activity.

There has been discussion of ritual previously in this book, already highlighting themes that anchor community in and to the environment. Islamic rituals always resonate with present-day theory in environmental humanities insofar as they are place based. For instance, Hajj, prayers for rain, and other community observances that were derived from documented practices of the Prophet Muhammad are essentially tied to landscapes in terms of their unique location of Mecca (Hajj) or in terms of situated environmental conditions (salat al-istisqa'). The Hajj itinerary is actually a

multiday orchestrated movement through place, with requirements to be physically present at certain places at certain times. Enactments during Hajj to drink from a shared water source (Zamzam), to strive for water as Hajar did for her child (at Safa and Marwa), to sleep out of doors at another location (Muzdalifah), to make communal "standing" (*wuquf*) outside at yet another place called the "plain of knowing" (ʿArafat, said to be in commemoration of the Prophet Ibrahim's story and in anticipation of the ultimate vulnerability of standing on Judgment Day) are all recognizably "environmental" with respect to popular understandings like outdoors experience and contemplation in a natural setting. They could even be understood by pilgrims in that framework as overlaid on sacred history and also fulfilling stipulated legal requirements.

The portable nature of other modes of worship in Islam requires an effortful making of environmental orientation and place. For example, in the case of salat prayer and prostrations directed at Mecca, which can be performed anywhere ("the earth is a mosque"), the act literally takes direction (*qibla*) from the fixed geographical orientation toward the Kaʿbah in Mecca. A place-based perspective on ritual as environmental, echoing the theory of Jonathan Z. Smith on ritual "taking place," also underscores the significance of intention (*niyyah*) in a field of community-oriented meaning.[39] The presentation to follow is based on research observations made in the same regional places as the location of Geertz's Javanese ethnography, some just a few dozen kilometers' distance away; and data throughout this chapter are primarily drawn from West and Central Java over a period of about five to ten years.[40]

In the cases to be discussed, "the environment" has become a recognizable and purposive agent in ritual practice, perhaps as the primary beneficiary, despite the fact that traditional forms of practice are not significantly altered in these enactments. While the outward form of the observance has not changed, to designate a prayer as explicitly environmental is nevertheless new in these cases, just as the English-language expression *the environment* (even in contrast to a concept of nature, for example) is distinctively modern. That perspective also turns around the emphasis of the discussion in the earlier chapters of this book: now, rather than Islam being in service of environmentalist outcomes, the environment is seen as a way to attain religious goals instead. This includes collective action and responsibility as much as matters of individual discipline and self-realization.

Many adaptations for environmental teaching and practice that I observed drew on what could be labeled academically as Sufi systems (dhikr and so forth), and many also were global adaptations of acts of piety in devotional modes that are especially prominent in Southern Asia, such as the practice of venerating the Prophet Muhammad in salawat nabi. In an identifiably Sufi register, and as a form of experiential knowledge and cultivated practice, the focus on return to a proximity with the Creator in an idealized landscape (i.e., *al-jannah* or heaven) cast environmental intent into centuries-old tradition, sometimes in a strikingly seamless way. Even though such contemporary Muslim environmentalist approaches take a conception of the environment from global messages, their explicit focus nevertheless has remained on the self within "creation," and especially those relationships that are directed toward the Creator.

These practices could all be called prayers, but they are of differing types. For example, they are not the same as prayers for rain (salat al-istisqa'), which are already focused on an environmental circumstance like drought. There are many types of prayers performed by Muslims in Islamic Indonesia, and globally, beside the acts of canonical worship known as salat. For example, *du'a'* is the word for acts that fall within the category of supplicatory or petitionary prayer, whether performed in Arabic or another language spoken by Muslims. Dhikr is a disciplined practice of repeated or repetitive piety, communal or individual, that may be associated with esoteric expression or with regimes of self-cultivation of Sufi orders; dhikr may also be an act of devotion such as rehearsing divine praise uttering the names of God after daily worship. Salawat are prayers of peace and blessings devoted to the Prophet Muhammad, a long-standing tradition with Islamic support that became increasingly popular in the Islamic revival since the 1990s. (This has been fairly surprising to some observers, given historical controversy around the practice.) In all cases of environmental prayer to be described, formerly generalized practice has now been employed to generate specific environmental sentiments and for explicitly environmentalist purposes.

The first example is eco-salawat, as developed by a highly respected *kiai* originally from Jogjakarta, now in West Java. It is an example of a rededication of prayer for environmentalist intent. K. H. Thonthawi Jauhari Mushaddad of Pondok Pesantren "Al-Wasilah" is renowned for his Islamic religious knowledge as well as his environmental activism. Along with developing an

multiday orchestrated movement through place, with requirements to be physically present at certain places at certain times. Enactments during Hajj to drink from a shared water source (Zamzam), to strive for water as Hajar did for her child (at Safa and Marwa), to sleep out of doors at another location (Muzdalifah), to make communal "standing" (*wuquf*) outside at yet another place called the "plain of knowing" (ʿArafat, said to be in commemoration of the Prophet Ibrahim's story and in anticipation of the ultimate vulnerability of standing on Judgment Day) are all recognizably "environmental" with respect to popular understandings like outdoors experience and contemplation in a natural setting. They could even be understood by pilgrims in that framework as overlaid on sacred history and also fulfilling stipulated legal requirements.

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Islamic law of the environment through key fatwas under the authority of the national organization Nahdlatul Ulama, K. H. Thontawi has also introduced new forms of environmental religious devotion that preserve traditional forms, which he considers an aspect of his Islamic outreach (dakwah).

K. H. Thontawi developed a new style of environmental religious devotion, eco-salawat, that preserves and blends in with traditional forms. In the eco-salawat, as he presented it to me for recording in both 2010 and 2011,[41] the first verse is from standard Arabic salawat nabi, as recited worldwide by Muslims for centuries in accord with a Qur'anic injunction. It calls for prayers, peace, and blessings on the Prophet Muhammad, his family, and his companions. The second part, in the national language of Bahasa Indonesia, is for the environment. It translates, "With blessing (we) care for the natural world, a healthy environment [*lingkungan*], the earth sustained." A new intent has been created (environmental care), here both spoken and explicit, while the traditional structure and authority of salawat tradition remain the same.

An example of a similar kind of religious practice, an eco-dhikr, comes from an Islamic school designated as an environmental school, an eco-pesantren across the island of Java. This school, Pesan Trend Ilmu Giri, in the area of Imo Giri, is located on the southern side of the city of Jogjakarta, and it is a new center. Its leader is quite different from K. H. Thontawi in that he does not have formal training in religion (he started his career in the publishing and broadcasting industries in Jakarta). However, here new forms of environmental religious observance developed along similar lines, another instance of the conservation of a traditional devotional ritual form with repurposed intent. It is also the site of the planned eco-Sufi program discussed previously in this chapter.

Here purpose is internalized and left to individual choice in prayer, theory, and practice that is cognate with Sufi tradition as well as local central Javanese practice. I have seen two such eco-dhikrs in Pesan Trend Ilmu Giri. The dhikr observance I attended in 2011 had an opening dedication of the salawat for the sake of the environment as well as to the Prophet Muhammad. In 2014 I returned to film another enactment.[42] Like the previous one, it corresponded with a calendrical observance traditional to Java in which various forms of Muslim chant occur on certain nights of certain months. The ritual in Ramadan 2014 was a Selasa Pon, in which the first

chapter of the Qur'an, Al-Fatihah, is recited forty-one times. The Fatihah is the surah recited with each cycle of salat (which means it is recited seventeen times a day, adding up to all five daily prayers).

The dhikr was convened at Ilmu Giri after the *tarwih* prayers of Ramadan, which itself mixes prostrations with ritual audition of Qur'an, and also after a supererogatory nighttime salat called *witr* that followed after. The dhikr was led by H. M. Nasruddin Ch. The introspective and participatory nature of the dhikr lends itself to an intent of environmental well-being at this eco-pesantren, whose stated mission is sustainability and environmental care. Nevertheless, there was no explicit mention of the environment made during the entire ritual, which is exceedingly conservative of its traditional form.

However, as documented in a video recording,[43] H. M. Nasruddin Ch. himself identified the ritual as an eco-dhikr on the night of its observance in terms of a teaching that was both religious and explicitly ecological in its striving for general well-being. First, he framed the practice in terms of a regime of self-cultivation with classic Sufi concepts and terminology (e.g., calling it *mujahadah*). In the next statement, however, he identifies the quality to be developed khalifah or stewardship. The ritual, which he calls eco-dhikr, is interiorized (*batin*). H. M. Nasruddin implies that power of this affective alignment of internal order and cosmological order lead to environmental protection with words that translate, "After this, it is not possible to destroy the environment" because the ritual has "humanized humanity, naturalized nature, and divinized the Divine." In practice, such environmental intent is individualized and internalized, a normative feature of the ritual itself, which expresses a public, and even a globalized form of pious practice.

In both of the cases of Muslim environmental devotions, the environment has been introduced as a third agent with respect to the relation of the supplicant to the petitioned, perhaps as the primary beneficiary of prayer practice. However, rededicated intent is also overlayed, implicitly or explicitly, on traditional prayer practices that are not formally changed. This conservativism, along with fluidity of the introduction of the intentional dedication, environment, makes for a powerful basis, especially when compared to alternative modes of branding by way of an ideological statement or slogan. Viewed on levels of individual and collective community commitment, the eschatological and soteriological tradition of Islamic and Qur'anic piety, especially in Sufi tradition, characterizes this activity.

Sufi modes of piety also generated new environmental expressions. Preachers in Indonesia, including K. H. Thonthawi, used a Qur'anically coded sentiment of anticipated punishment and reward, for example, to foster environmental commitment. In this Qur'anic ecotheology, Islamic activists such as K. H. Thonthawi tended to fill in a modern environmental frame with this affective Qur'anic paradigm, invoking the present moment at which one realizes that the created world is changing, that it is already too late to alter choices in the past, which will now result in a certain fate. Religious scholar-activists develop such ontological and relational extensions beyond the phenomenal world, in the tradition of Al-Ghazali's fortieth and final book of the *Ihya' `Ulum al-Din*, which cultivates religious sentiment in the present around the anticipated inevitable moment of death and/or resurrection at Judgment.

When Muslim environmentalists turn to such an eschatological paradigm to embrace care in this world, it is generally expressed according to one of two poles of feeling types. These correspond to Qur'anic "promise and warning," respectively. For example, in the lyrics of a *nashid* (religious song), composed by the highly respected kiai K. H. Affandi at his ecological pesantren in West Java and recorded at this site (Pondok Pesantren Al-Ittifaq), the words emphasize a present intervention in the form of cautionary and projected sentiment:

We will all regret
Suffer and weep
If/when this beautiful world
Becomes degraded and polluted
Come, let's all together
Care for and protect our world

Stop the destruction
And corruption of the earth
Humans will be buried
Their torment ever greater[44]

Such anticipation of future regret is typical of Muslim religious emotion as it is cultivated in Indonesia for the sake of the environment as well as the world to come.

Back across the island in Central Java, and in another example of environmental teaching that draws on the same pious tradition, a widespread notion of "repentance," popular in the past and the present, is deployed as an environmental ethic.[45] Iskandar Waworuntu, a convert to Islam, has lived his life in his native Indonesia, having grown up in a leading family of the tourist restaurant industry in Bali. He came to know about and to accept Islam after long study of English-language material. He was particularly drawn to Sufism, the devotional and mystical dimensions of Islam. His community, called Bumi Langit, is dedicated to permaculture practice and education and also serves as a restaurant and retreat center near Jogjakarta, Indonesia. The farmland was purchased relatively recently in the area of Imo Giri, where the tombs of ancient kings of Java are located, and the site is not that far from the unrelated Pesan Trend Ilmu Giri (the site of the Selasa Pon eco-dhikr), land that was also acquired not so long ago.

For environmental religious teaching, Mr. Waworuntu selects from established tradition a common practice that can be reworked with environmental understanding. In this case, these are expressions of "purification" and the related idea of repentance (*tawbah*), a kind of "change of heart" that is a first step of the Sufi path as well as a widespread popular trope in the Indonesian Muslim culture of piety. These themes have also been at the center of public messages of religious political culture since the fall of President Suharto and the New Order regime in Indonesia in the late 1990s. They are also commonly expressed in religious entertainment like televised dramatic serials (*Sinetron*).

Although I had come several times to meet with him, I interviewed Mr. Waworuntu formally one evening during Ramadan 2014, right between *maghrib* and *isha'* prayers as he was on his way to lead the Sunni communal prayer called *tarwih* at a local mosque. As recorded, part of what he discussed was a ritual formula to purify consumption, religiously and environmentally. He recast a widespread Islamic practice of "asking for forgiveness" as a performance of sustainability as well as the idea of religious purity. Purification is one of the necessary conditions of exoteric ritual law and practice, and esoterically it is a central tenet and practice of Sufism (Ibn Al-`Arabi authored an esoteric treatise entirely on "purity"/taharah, for example). Of course it relates to ideas of pollution in both the symbolic systems of Muslim and humanistic environmentalisms. According to Mr. Waworuntu, uttering *astaghfirullah*, asking forgiveness from Allah, may

purify, both spiritually and structurally, global production and local consumption. In everyday Muslim practice, the *istighfar* (asking for forgiveness) is one of the most common pious formulas, repeated in worship contexts along with praise of God as in a dhikr. For example, after salat, worshippers will commonly remain in place to utter a fixed number of repetitions of the phrase *astaghfirullah* (along with *alhamdulillah* and *subhanallah*, the latter two being in praise of God). It is also frequently heard in daily speech among Muslims worldwide. When used casually, it is customarily uttered when mentioning something of which there may be a religious attitude of disapproval.

Muslim theory and practice of religious repentance date back to the earliest period of Islam; they have also been particularly significant across the religious and political landscape of Indonesia since beginning in the era called *reformasi* in the last decade of the twentieth century. In fact, a significant share of contemporary religious music in Muslim Indonesia, as popular today as it was in the historical past, takes up this same idea of asking for God's forgiveness (istighfar). For example, performances of a poem, "Al-I`tiraf," a composition attributed to the famous poet Abu Nuwas (d. 814), are commonplace and also repopularized by big-name religious recording artists like Alwi Haddad, Jeffri Bukhori, and Opick. Other musicalized performances of contrition feature public weeping, such as by Muhammad Arifin Ilham. In the past decade, many such performances also deliver a message of social reform and social justice. This has been the case, for example, with Emha Einun Naguib (Kiai Kanjeng), a Javanese musician and poet and national star who is known for social critique that reworks Arabic devotional and Javanese classical standards and their instrumentation.

There are many types of religious purification in Islam (including zakat of almsgiving, ritual ablution, and so forth). Mr. Waworuntu advocates using the widespread pious formula *astaghfirullah* as a kind of powerful performative utterance as well as an invocation of dedicated commitment. Like pronouncing the expression *bismillah* ("In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful") in certain contexts (such as declaring meat to be *halal*/permissible for consumption according to Indonesian Shafiite conventions), here the formula *astaghfirullah* makes consumption licit in both a moral and an ecological sense. It also conveys a sophisticated environmentalist teaching.

In a videotaped interview, Mr. Waworuntu describes this as an act of protection and as a prayer for "detachment": in his words, this means a

separation from the "processes" and "products of industry." He also casts the short, everyday prayer formula as a petition for deliverance from "oppression." In this interview and elsewhere, Mr. Waworuntu has not voiced any explicit challenge or call to resistance to this oppression. Instead, Islamic ideals and intention build sustainable community that represents an alternative to what his group considers to be destructive spiritual and environmental structures. In this way, and echoing the manner in which performances of repentance and contrition are both personal and collective in Muslim Indonesian public culture, the environmental act of praying for forgiveness, highly individualized as the sincere experience of religious and moral purification according to the language of the goals of Sufi practice, affects a personalized social ethics of change within the context of a residential, intentional community.

Religious commitment in a universalized Qur'anic frame is expressed as Muslim environmentalisms not only out of hope to avoid disaster. As these examples indicate, it arises from accepting responsibility in the most profound way possible in this world for the sake of reward in the life to come. This framework, embedded naturally within a millennium of Islamic piety and practice, enhances theoretical perspectives of present secular environmental humanities largely through its expectations of community constitution. The system disseminates interiorized messages in Islam while engaging eschatological and even apocalyptic modes in a context of communal practice. Like other examples typifying Muslim environmentalisms that I encountered during fieldwork, such theory and practice for the sake of the future engages affectively in both horizontal and vertical dimensions, both hablun min Allah and hablun min al-nas.

Communities of Environmental Outreach: Dakwah

Examples from field study in Indonesia show how Muslim religious outreach is not just an extension of environmentalist messages, but may comprise religious action in itself as a form of dakwah. Messages of Muslim environmentalism are propagated publicly as Islamic environmental doctrine, constituting communities through this outreach. The expectation of institutionalized dakwah as a part of mainstream Muslim environmentalism in Indonesia, here called eco-dakwah, is pervasive across Indonesian

works like those discussed previously in terms of both law and science.[46] The theme also echoes strongly in material that circulates globally, such as the writing of Yusuf Qaradawi. Some of the most sophisticated Islamic eco-dakwah in Indonesia brings together eschatology, science, and community activism and speaks directly to critical theoretical and practical issues in environmental humanities, such as how to apprehend future planetary horizons of environment, and even unthinkable ones, within the ethical present.

Each of the texts treating Islam as religion, legal norms, and environmental science that have been introduced previously emphasize the imperative to dakwah, Islamic environmental outreach and teaching. They also stress dakwah specifically as a part of the theory and practice of Islamic environmental justice. For example, Ali Yafie lists environmental dakwah as part of *fardlu kifayah* and *haddul kifayah*, terms here meaning religious duty and proscription that are incumbent upon a community as a group. Yafie's book also stresses the need to build programs in religious environmental education or dakwah.[47] The 1997 volume *Islam and the Environment*, published by the Indonesian Ministry of the Environment, devotes its entire final chapter to the topic, "Making Efficient Use of *Dakwah* in Protecting the Environment." Typical of mainstream Indonesian academic dakwah theory of the 1990s in Indonesian popular and institutional settings, *Islam and the Environment* promotes *dakwah bil hal*, or doing "dakwah in action" (as opposed to mere *dakwah bil lisan*, in words alone). The level of sophistication of this treatment is consistent with that of dakwah theory as it is taught at the postsecondary level in Indonesian Islamic universities' faculties of dakwah, and it cites substantial academic research to support its findings.[48]

The discussion in this particular source addresses the increased necessity for environmental dakwah to engage "modernization" (*modernisasi*), highlighting the need for there to be Islamic (and environmental) messages targeted especially at youth in order to compete with secular (and presumably nonenvironmentalist) messages. There are four pages dedicated to characteristics of Islam that provide such "motivation," which the authors claim otherwise to be lacking in environmental teaching. The book offers a list of principles of environmental ethics for preachers (*da'is*) on the final page, which are to promote *egoisme* or *individualisme* (meant to be positive qualities here, as in the sense of an ability to connect with others or an

environmentalist group as a responsible, self-determining individual); *humanisme*; *sentienisme* (meaning the capacity for sympathy or empathy with others); *vitalisme* (caring about life itself); and, *altruisme*.[49]

Drawing on authority in another mode, an original eco-dakwah of the respected kiai K. H. Thonthawi Jauhari Mushaddad of Pondok Pesantren "Al-Wasilah" (who presented the eco-salawat already discussed) illustrates the connection of personal and collective commitments in this world and the next. Scholarly traditions of Qur'an, hadith, law, and education, the command for all of which this leader from West Java has national recognition, inform his teaching; he is renowned for his Islamic religious knowledge, in hadith especially, as well as his applied environmental activism. He initiated a reforestation campaign in West Java, collecting saplings in the front room of his own home and transporting them to sites on the back of his motorbike, where he would mobilize villagers in a *campagne* to plant trees. Over the course of interviews that spanned more than two years, K. H. Thonthawi explained his dakwah of Muslim environmentalism in a videotaped segment as an environmentalist preaching that he frames for the sake of Islam (as *agama*, religion) and explicitly with respect to care and connection to community.[50]

Each time that I went to Garut, West Java, to meet with K. H. Thonthawi, he began explaining his preaching by pointing out that the people with whom he worked in the villages already understood the significance and seriousness of environmental issues. They are the ones affected already and they are "ready for anything," like planting trees for reforestation, he said. According to Thonthawi's thoughtful development critique, it was just the planners who still could not, or would not, understand what was happening. His teaching also contains elements that clearly advance religious commitments beyond secular environmental messages. Allah rewards sincere environmental care more than other religious action, he emphasized, because it is giving mercy, which God rewards with His mercy in turn. To explain this, K. H. Thonthawi would begin with the provocative statement that caring for the environment is more important than religion, "if the whole purpose of religion is really to improve people [*memperbaikkan orang*]." The entry point for this process to begin, he said, must be the fundamental recognition that ecology itself is a moral problem.

After establishing these points, his teaching emphasized positive divine and ecological reward for environmental action, and the significance of

this over and above the added negative risks of irresponsibility. For example, K. H. Thonthawi quoted the following hadith about reward: "if one plants a tree or sows seeds, if then a bird or a person or an animal later eats from them, this is an action with the rewarded status of a charitable gift" (the report is found in the collections of Bukhari and Muslim). He compared the divine reward for planting trees to the considerable reward for establishing a mosque through pious endowment, and pointed out that the reward is greater for the act of reforestation. (And he added wryly as an aside that the mosques are all empty nowadays anyway.)

He explained that when he preaches Muslim environmentalism in this way across the countryside, the primary challenge is how to convey to villagers a *dorongan agama* ("religious impetus") to environmental action. Just to know that there is such a reward (for planting trees, for example), and that such and such is exactly what it is said to be (and, implied, even if this were to be pronounced with the religious authority of a scholar such as himself), may still not be enough to get people to do anything about the environment. K. H. Thonthawi here is suggesting more than that nonreligious solutions fall short, or are not enough; with this, *religion* itself as conventionally understood is not enough to respond to the moral magnitude of environmental problems or even for religious success in terms of ultimate accounting. Experientially, he said, people actually need to *feel* something to become motivated. And his point went beyond this: this feeling itself is in turn rewarded by God (following the hadith on God rewarding mercy). This feeling is also the empathy that motivates environmental action in the first place.

To explain all this in more detail, he retold a story found in hadith, in which a "sex worker" (the expression he used was in English; in the original accounts related in Bukhari's collection the subject is just "a man") brings water to a thirsty dog. According to the report, the Prophet Muhammad said that all her sins would be forgiven for this act of loving-kindness. The reward for the woman in the hadith was not just on account of her action, K. H. Thonthawi said that he would preach in his dakwah, but that God rewarded her on account of her *rasa kasih-saying kepada makhluq*, her "feeling of care and concern [*kasih-sayang*] for creatures [makhluq]." (I have documented other national preachers using this hadith as environmental dakwah as well.)[51] The most important aspect for obtaining divine reward, and the most rewarded aspect of caring for the environment, was a sentiment

that K. H. Thonthawi called *saling menyayangi* ("caring for one another"). The Malay root word for "caring" in this expression, *sayang*, has connotations of tenderness; it can mean "to feel sorry for (to pity)," and it is also an intimate term of endearment, as in parenting a child or in romantic love.

An example K. H. Thonthawi provided for this environmental sentiment was that he makes the effort to show up at all the weddings in the community. And, he added, he always dances. He is famous, he indicated with apparent satisfaction, for being the kiai who always "gets up and dances at all the weddings." The first thing I had ever heard about him, when talking to leaders at a large eco-pesantren complex in South Jakarta (Darul Najah), was that he was known among the people for never removing his West Javanese traditional headwear (*bendok*), to the extent that he was widely known by a popular nickname, Kiai Bendok. I heard that he would not take it off, not even when invited to wear a formal *peci* (Indonesian black cap, also called *songkok*). K. H. Thonthawi brought this same point up about headwear to me directly in our conversations as an example of commitment in solidarity with community, a sympathetic feeling of *saling menyayangi*. He then cast this same feeling and community connection in light of environmental activism. Furthermore, he concluded, environmentally obtained mercy achieved through such means was actually the "closest door to heaven" (*pintu terdekat masuk surga*).

At this point K. H. Thonthawi would continue to describe his environmental dakwah by going on to clarify that, in preaching, he would stress that merely by repeating everyday rewarded religious actions by rote, like prayer, is not enough to guarantee entry to heaven. Muslim environmentalism, representing to him a more sincere search for reward in the life to come, represents an even deeper commitment and meritorious action. The ultimate goal, as in the Qur'an, is to return to the original garden, the landscape of Adam in heaven as in the Qur'an, as K. H. Thonthawi explained in the videorecorded interview. For this, good deeds (such as prayer, salat) can only get the pious so far, he said. These could only grant assurance that one will be a "candidate" (Ind. *calon*) for heaven in the afterlife. The final determination (*keputusan*) is Allah's alone, and comes through His mercy (*rahmat*). And the way to obtain this "mercy" is through showing loving-kindness to his creatures, precisely through Muslim environmentalism.

K. H. Thonthawi implicitly adopts a pietistic mode of religious and environmental dakwah that resonates with Sufi teachings about who will be

among a special group of the rewarded who may also "attain" a special place in the hereafter (e.g., Q. 56:10–11). He explained, if you love and care for God's creation, if you care for the environment sincerely, you may get this "*ampun* Allah" or "forgiveness of Allah." This expression is cognate to the Arabic istighfar and related to "mercy" in the sense of a merciful reception ("forgiveness") on Judgment Day. And with this, K. H. states, you may enter heaven by His will. On the basis of this reasoning, K. H. Thonthawi called Muslim environmentalism the "ticket to paradise" (*tiket surga*). "No one can ever buy it," he cautioned, but it may be granted by God on the basis of His mercy, upon His judging the mercy one has shown to other "creatures" (i.e., the environment).

If this is a kind of "hope" that leads to environmental care, it is also a heartfelt calculus of cause and effect that is predicated on the ultimate end of this world. In this eco-dakwah, as developed by a leading religious scholar in Indonesia, environmental action determines the extension of this world into the now unknown state of the experience of the recreated order. This would include the ultimate goal of return to the original environment (the garden) in the transformed world to come. K. H. Thonthawi has here reversed the view, from asking, "what can religion do for an environmentalist cause?" to "what does environmental care do for religious reality?" Community engagement is integral to the expression and manifestation of these ideals, most of all when this expresses the capacity for an individual's salvation through service. It is not only the case that community is "imagined" in the course of piety, to invoke the old phrase from Indonesianist Benedict Anderson, but that cultivation of connection to community is the intentional focus of, and is also intrinsically formed by, pious practices of Muslim environmentalism (including, in K. H. Thonthawi's case, dancing at weddings, planting trees, issuing fatwas, repeating prophetic ecodevotions, political advocacy, and community mobilization).

When the explanation of dakwah concludes, and K. H. Thonthawi starts to express his plan for environmental action, he focuses neither on ritual practice nor on the environmental fatwas he has helped to formulate, nor any more fine points of ecotheology. He prefers to discuss and critique development programs. (K. H. Thonthawi's start in environmental engagement began with an interfaith seminar hosted by the WWF on Bali.) When viewed from the perspective of his own teaching, this is a Muslim environmentalism that is no less "religious" to K. H. Thonthawi than Arabic

invocation and supplication. He himself wrote a booklet on local development practices, emphasizing community engagement.[52] He based this program in part on his own grassroots work organizing and implementing reforestation campaigns in West Java in order to prevent landslides; a similar initiative was carried out at Pondok Pesanten al-Ittifaq, where even the mosque's pillars are hewn tree trunks following the design of K. H. Affandi (K. H. Thonthawi's former teacher). K. H. Thonthawi asked me if I would take his self-published booklet to Jakarta—that maybe someone there would be interested in it. He seemed dismayed the development agencies had ignored previous proposals, since he knew from firsthand experience what would work in the community, he said. He would typically end our conversations along the same lines they had begun: stating that the people understand the problems and what is needed to be done, but it is the only the environmental and development planners, like government agencies and NGOs, who do not, or will not, reach out and intervene to make a difference.

K. H. Thonthawi's environmental dakwah is predicated on an ethics of consequence for human conduct as religious enactment. For this, environmentalism (as mercy to other creatures) may be the determining criterion in order to attain the habitation of the garden (*al-jannah*). A constitution of community comes directly through the affective change of "heart," as the site of such realizations. To recognize and act upon these connections in a tangible way, implementing programs with real impact on the environment and human lives, is most profoundly K. H. Thonthawi's environmental dakwah, as a matter of *dunia* (the world) that corresponds to the truth of *din* (religion).

Orientalism/Occidentalism, Erasure, and Authenticity in Environmental Humanities

Over the course its chapters, this book's discussion has emphasized unseen dimensions of Muslim environmentalisms, such as nonhuman ontologies in this world as well as the world to come. This chapter shows that the strains of Sufi piety that underlie these expressions have been neglected in the inherited orientalist tradition of European humanities with respect to Islam and as it has subsequently been propagated in American and other

Anglophone contexts as well. K. H. Thonthawi's popular dakwah, for example, relates directly to these religious dimensions as environmental activism, community building, and national and international development initiatives. The question for environmental humanities becomes how to see or recognize Muslim environmentalisms in movements and activities like those that are self-consciously evident on the part of Muslims, and yet, as the case of Seyyed Hossein Nasr suggests, apparently still liable to be overlooked in environmental humanities.

In important respects, Muslim environmentalisms could be just like other global efforts to address disparity with respect to struggle for acknowledgment and attention, as within mainstream environmentalist or academic discourse when it takes the approach of environmental justice to advocate on behalf of the marginalized. In addition, by virtue of its Islamic character and content, Muslim environmentalisms also convey an identity-specific aspect of what is socially and politically sidelined in the globally dominant Euro-American mainstream, as within the new field of environmental humanities. In one sense, this is because religious environmental teachings engage communities that are themselves "unseen"—nonhuman beings, generations to come, and the dead of the past and the future (among all of whom there is to be a face-to-face reckoning at the end-times according to the Qur'an). In another sense, a misrecognition extends from out of the colonial history of global Muslim-majority societies. This would be the impact of European and American imperialism that has dominated practically everywhere across "the Muslim world," Asia to Africa. Naturally, ongoing postcolonial effects render many of the structures of Muslim communities distorted under a neo-orientalist gaze. For example, this legacy continues to manufacture discourses of authenticity around boundaries of the orientalist/occidentalist imaginaries, "East" and "West." As Kecia Ali has discussed elsewhere, it would even align Muslim discourses of environmentalism along these constructed distinctions, and this is even evident in the case of Nasr too, although as a different configuration.

One result of bias propagated along these lines can be not just the erasure of religious teachings but in fact the awareness of entire living communities and practices of Muslim environmentalism. This comes at a time when theorists across humanistic fields are asking, within the late capitalist or postcapitalist landscape, what *are* relational, ethical, and environmental formations (and thus what *is* the environment apart from a colonial

construction like "wilderness")? Their secular responses often coalesce around imagining human and interspecies communities that are largely resonant with Muslim environmentalisms presented here, and that the intellectual contours of Islam may even shift significantly. For example, Anna Tsing writes on mushrooms (imagining "capitalist destruction and collaborative survival within multispecies landscapes, the prerequisite for continuing life on earth"). Meanwhile, Donna Haraway publishes on "kin" like ants and acacia plants (in order to "stay with the trouble" of the "tentacular practices" of what she calls the Chthulucene); this happens by "comaking" being and "learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as moral critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, meanings."[53]

Muslim environmentalisms propose modes of community connection as creatures through emergent ethical, ontological, and social-structural environmental realities. They do so with respect to consequential relations cognate to now prevailing working definitions of "the environment," compatible with other humanistic discussions such as environmental "precarity," as well as scientific expressions like disaster.[54] In an ecofeminist register, problematic ideologies like "saving Muslim women" and the extension of Western bourgeois feminism to global others would need to become secondary in order to learn from Muslims how Islam professes key ideas like the coexistence of creatures.[55] Material in this chapter, emphasizing ritual, is not unlike what gender theorist Judith Butler has come to theorize as community formation through a "performative theory of assembly," performance itself constituting community (although with a differing notion of what are "rights" and the "public sphere" with respect to precarity).[56] Of course, notions of ecological community have long been the referent of philosophical environmental ethics, especially in a Marxian mode of political ecology, in works too numerous to mention.

To recognize Muslim communities as constituted in and through such structures outside the nation-state model that still dominates sociologically the study of Islam *and* politics (also known academically as political Islam) is another next step, not just to learn *about* Islam but also for learning *from* Muslim environmentalisms. This resonates with critique like that made by Carrie Rosefsky Wickham in her landmark study of the Muslim "parallel sector," as well as later work on the Muslim politics of the "everyday" like

that of Asef Bayat. Wickham's point is not just that Muslim communities are alternatively constituted to "civil society"; she also shows how such groups have been overlooked in social-scientific analyses of the Middle East overall.[57]

Environmental communities constituted for the sake of Islam, such as K. H. Thonthawi's preaching and activism, are generally not rendered visible in mainstream social sciences or approaches in environmental studies largely because they in fact correspond so closely to the very same patterns that have often relegated "Islam" itself into the marginalized discourse of fields including religious studies and global development. The latter is a form of criticism that K. H. Thonthawi himself made strongly as a component of his teaching on environmentalism. Dakwah like his represents the committed convergence of aspects of Muslim environmentalism: justice in this world and the next, environmental teachings on creatures and resources, ethical and scientific knowledge, as well as encounter with the reality of an unknown future on scales of the individual and also the community.[58] These readily connect to environmental justice as a system of consequential relations.

Despite the centrality in Qur'anic teachings on disparity (with frequent mention of "the orphan," "the destitute," and "the marginalized"), questions of prosperity and potential are still not highlighted as categories in the current academic or popular study of Islam. These tend to be restricted by old European questions and projections to areas like gender and conflict. Even in the case of cutting-edge North American academic activism, identity politics more than economic justice still dominates treatments of "progressive Islam."[59] Alongside this, there has been a relative decline in developmentalist rhetoric within global Islamic messages themselves in recent decades, a departure from the influence of socialism associated with political voices in the Arab world and elsewhere in the mid-twentieth century.

The erasure of entire registers of Islamic social activity and activism is an issue that has long been acknowledged in the academic and social-scientific study of Islamic philanthopy, including disaster relief, as discussed by Jonathan Benthall and Jérôme Bellion-Jourdan in their ground-breaking book *The Charitable Crescent*. Benthall and Bellion-Jourdan claim that ideational factors caused a distortion in the academic study of global Muslim aid, whether considered transnationally or locally.

Muslim philanthropy tends to be overlooked (in studies of the Arab-Islamic world) because it has been occluded by politically directed frames such as civil society. Furthermore, the authors explain that "religion-based associations," such as mosque and zakat communities and small-scale Islamic charities, "would appear on the whole to satisfy the criterion of cultural embeddedness more than do NGOs constructed after Western models." But, because such networks tend to be "informal, vernacular or grass-roots practices, such as tribal traditions of conflict resolution," they often go unrecognized in the theory and practice of development studies.[60]

The capacity for academic approaches to grasp global Muslim phenomena related to community building, from pious endowment to environmentalism, has been impaired over the past two decades because of additional ideational factors. In popular discussion of Islam in Muslim-minority societies such as the United States, starting in the George W. Bush era and before, both an implied and sometimes official "war" of ideology and its companion, a presumed threat of violence, overshadowed long-standing questions of social and economic capacity in Muslim lifeworlds of Asia and elsewhere. (An exception to this was the Arab Spring uprising in Egypt in 2010, yet only occasionally was this portrayed in English-language media as a movement of economic justice, and rarer still as a result of environmental impacts like food insecurity.) The overuse of ideology to explain issues of inequality and environmental justice in Muslim social experience, even as religious issues, has been supported by the relative lack of theorization of religion and development and Islam and development in the fields of development studies and the academic study of religion.

Finally, orientations to environmental justice movements grounded in Islamic religious practice have tended to be overlooked in academic studies of contemporary Islam, both social-scientific and humanistic, because the call for economic justice has diminished in Muslim popular rhetorics. This could certainly be said to be the case now when compared to previous decades such as in the heyday of nationalist socialism, Arab and otherwise, and related Third World and nonaligned movements in the mid-twentieth century, represented well by the Afro-Asian Conference of 1955 in Bandung, Indonesia. New theory of postcapitalism in environmental humanities promises better to acknowledge the dynamics of Muslim environmentalism, particularly aspects of community formation. Recent work seeks to theorize community in new formations in environmental humanities, as in

work by scholars in the anthropological tradition who are also known for feminist theory. However, tendencies that would overlook Qur'an, Sufism, ritual (and, for that matter, the Islamic character of world areas like eastern Asia) must be overcome first to afford a space for Muslim environmentalisms. To address such erasures, European humanities should now decisively move beyond essentializing orientalist and occidentalist tendencies in the study of modern Muslim social change.

Despite the fact that such binaries have long been viewed to be outdated in postcolonial theory (as in works by Arjun Appadurai, Homi Bhabha, Partha Chatterji, and others on South Asia), a reified duality of East/West nevertheless still shapes much globally popular and even academic presentations of Islam. Almost a millennium ago, and long before the era of European colonialism, Ibn Sina and the Persian philosopher Shihab Al-Din Suhrawardi used categories of "occidental" (exile) of and "oriental" (illumination) to express cosmological paradigms of knowledge. Seyyed Hossein Nasr draws on figures like these in advancement of his modern ecosophy. However, Nasr's own humanistic reification of East and West reflects enduring colonial structures of knowledge at least as much as the imaginaries of a distant medieval past.[61]

Bias about authenticity runs throughout Nasr's explicit critique of the West as well as his portrayal of Islam. Nasr's occidentalism also seems to share more with an American counterculturalism of the 1960s than with the sources of the contemporaneous "Islamic alternative" (a term commonly used in the literature that captures aspects of ideologies like Sayyid Qutb's). Nasr's critique of the West does take on something of the tenor of anticolonial writings, chiefly in its rejection of selected aspects of "science," deemed to be "Western" insofar as they are "modern" or "technological." In his article of 2003 in the volume *Islam and Ecology*, for example, Nasr makes a point about the contrast of East and West at the start of his "outline of solutions" to what he describes to be the problem of "the environmental crisis, which threatens human life itself, [and] is of the utmost urgency precisely because of the rapidity with which the natural environment is being destroyed." He goes on to make reference to "the Muslim mind," "the Islamic world," and "authentic Islam," as follows:[62]

> Where the Islamic world differs from the West is that the Western scientistic worldview—which its reduction of both human beings and nature to a set of

> complicated molecular structures bereft of any sacred significance, except in a sentimental sense—has a less tenuous hold upon the Muslim mind than it has in the West, which has had several centuries of confrontation with the materialistic and qualitative view of nature. The first step in the Islamic world must be to criticize this stifling scientistic view of reality and to demonstrate why it is opposed to the authentic Islamic and more generally religious point of view as such.[63]

Unlike Sayyid Qutb,[64] however, and instead resembling more the essentializing neo-orientalism of Samuel Huntington and Bernard Lewis by way of naturalizing the colonial imaginary of East and West, Nasr does not include critique of colonialism or social justice as a significant aspect of his understanding of modernity at large.

In the decades following the 1970s, the academic trend in the study of "Muslim societies," such as in sociology and politics, has shifted away from a concern with "modernization" to a focus on Islamic doctrine, and then doctrine only of particular types. Global Islam and Muslims have been indexed with respect to labels like *fundamentalism, extremism, Islamism,* and even *terrorism* in popular and official channels, while academics debated the range of applications of terms like *Wahhabi* and *Salafi,* as if historicizing schemes, functioning as ideological labels, could offer implicit explanations. Whether or not it advances a political agenda, this practice has continuities with long-standing orientalist projects of faceless classification in knowledge about Islam, famously directed toward the management or control of a perceived or real threat of violence that, consistent with this view, Muslim actors were expected to perpetrate. For example, writing as far back as 2003, scholars noted that considerations of Muslim aid tended to focus on how organizations provide social services as a conveyance for doctrine, rather than the actual or tangible forms of permanent, structural, social, or environmental change such programs might effect.[65] Environmental humanities here has an opportunity to take on leadership and to foreground approaches to the study of Islam in global Muslim realities and concerns, ones shared by citizens of the entire planet.

* * *

To view Muslim environmentalisms in terms of community encompasses previous discussions about relational creatures and resources, norms and

principles for human limits and possibilities, and tradition-bound transformations through committed practice and action. The sense of community is not one that is strategically contrived for political mobilization but embedded in practice that flows easily between the overtly "environmental" and the religious practice of the everyday. Such communities of Muslim environmentalism are difficult to recognize due to developmentalist structures and other academic and disciplinary conventions present in both the study of both Islam and environment. These barriers to the religiously and environmentally unseen affect cutting-edge postcolonial theory in the environmental humanities, even as these fields have much to gain from granting belonging to global Muslim perspectives. For example, the approach of a leading voice of contemporary Muslim environmentalism of the past fifty years, Nasr, still corresponds closely to the Euro-American imaginary that would downplay Muslim experience rooted in religious community with respect to the environment. Nasr's own discourse on authenticity, hardly a move of Islamic self-exclusion, nevertheless indicates the need for a nuanced reconsideration of hybridity about "East and West" in fields like religion and ecology—if not Islamic studies.

In classical Islamic religious theory based on the Qur'an, the heart is the site of relational process, representing a spiritual principle for environmentalism as well as a scientific/alchemical and political one. Modern Muslim reformist thought, at times vociferously non-Sufi, still connects moral conduct to society and social justice with transformational multivalence. Ritual repetition that is more or less Sufi in character in religious environmentalist modes amplifies established patterns of worship and their Islamic authority; while preserving such historical continuities, environmentalist intents reorient collective action toward real-world challenges of injustice, though still always in reference to consequences in a world to come in such cases. Islam is not only deployed in the service of environmentalist objectives but also the reverse, as with Muslim environmentalisms that view the relations constituted by the environment to be the primary "aims of religion," ethically, politically, and expressively.

Instances documented in this chapter illustrate Muslim environmentalisms as moral commitments, much as that which is sought by way of the ethical aspirations of secular systems of environmentalism, including the present academic disciplines of environmental humanities. The reason these religious perspectives have not been more visible outside Muslim frameworks

is not a problem with Islam's self-presentation, nor can it any longer be explained away by the allegedly obscure nature of the information—which after all represents foundational and Qur'an-based expression for what is projected to be a quarter of all the planet's humans in the not so distant future. Nor can it be marginalized because concrete evidence comes from Asia; this is where the vast majority of the world's Muslims reside, east of the Indus River to the Pacific. Rather, the relative invisibility of Muslim environmentalism in environmental humanities is the result of limitations that have a long history in European imaginaries of an Islamic other and, as the case of Nasr shows, enduring presuppositions about what counts as environment. The contribution of Muslim environmentalisms to environmental studies, if nothing else, is to encourage a reassessment in the fields of the humanities.

The particularization of humanities as environmental opens the question, how else are "the humanities" also qualified—such as through Eurocentrism? Unlike eastern Asian thought, "discovered" by Europeans through colonial contact (and marking a major shift in religious studies with respect to the "East," as with F. Max Müller and others), or systems colonized elsewhere by Europeans (Pacific, Americas, MENA, sub-Saharan Africa), however, Muslim medieval writings are the direct precursor to much European philosophical and scientific tradition. Such a reclamation can make a fragmented intellectual identity whole in order to relate the full story, if not tell a "new story," representing a process of recovery from the blackout in mainstream tellings of what came before Europe's Enlightenment and what were the factors of its Renaissance. Alongside environmental history, Anglophone ethics could likewise advance beyond extensionist bestowal of standing and personhood about what is the matter at hand, and even attenuate paternalistic tendencies of the inherited language of "rights" itself as a primary mode to address environmental systems inside and outside legal frameworks. For environmental humanities, it can restore the broken ethical language that grasps at piecemeal metaphors from science (neither Lovelock's Gaia nor Crutzen and Stormer's Anthropocene were intended as ethical theory when they first appeared in print). It can also make conscious the implicit Victorian moral sentiment on which Anglophone expressions fall back, and the complementary bureaucratic and technical environmental agendas of problem-solving that prevail in environmental studies today. The postmodern jumble resulting from Latour's

parliamentary bricolage of ecological "things" in a rudimentary phenomenology meets the sophisticated philosophical legacy of empiricism and experiential knowledge in applied Islamic tradition.[66] Islamic environmentalism, "planetary" inasmuch as Muslims inhabit every geographic region of the world, is at the core, not the periphery, of humanities—environmental or Islamic or even including all—and can contribute to these fields' intellectual and ethical repair through its constructions as much as critique.

SEVEN

From This World to the Next

HUMANISTIC ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES have been shaped by the notion that there is a crisis at hand, and, underlying that, there is moral problem (most generally, a lack of awareness or concern) at the root. Contemporary secular environmentalisms seek to address such fundamental ethical problems when they turn to Islam as a religion of the world to innovate environmentalist messages.[1] Academically, Muslim environmentalisms do shape a kind of ethical framework that environmental humanities, secular and religious, seek, implicitly and explicitly, but in rather different terms. They offer the sort of model environmental humanities may strive for in order to understand the connections of environmentalist commitments to theory and practice in areas like aesthetics, ontology, and everyday ethics. For this, Muslim perspectives provide not just a complement to existing models, like that of the Anthropocene, but also a critique.

Beginning with the environment as the conception that requires translation and explanation (rather than fitting Islam into any preset environmental framework), Islam as presented by *Muslim Environmentalisms* recenters the very idea of the environment and should reshape some prevailing understandings in environmental humanities along the way. For example, Muslim materials model how to apprehend the environment coherently as simultaneously a scientific and a moral field. Such a viewpoint also illuminates other core principles that are sought through humanistic study of the environment today in addition to this, including new ways