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Eco-theology Nuances in Tafsir al-Miṣbah: Alternative Solutions to Environmental Problems in Indonesia

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Abstract

Eco-theology Nuances in Tafsir al-Miṣbah: Alternative Solutions to Environmental Problems in Indonesia. Environmental issues are crucial because they affect everyone. The involvement of religion (theology) in environmental issues is certainly very influential in the religious community of Nusantara. This study aims to present eco-theological nuances in the interpretation (tafsir) of Nusantara. This article focuses on Tafsir al-Miṣbah by M. Quraish Shihab, which is considered more relevant to the modern context and can be used as a representative of the Nusantara interpretation. Using the literature study method with a descriptive analysis approach, this study concludes that according to M. Quraish Shihab,

environmental damage cannot be separated from the human spiritual crisis. The universe and all its contents are interrelated and influence each other, rely on, and return to Allah Swt. Human disobedience causes the universe imbalances. The characteristics of nifâq, kufr, Halim, and hubb al-dunyâ resulted in a dull sensitivity to the environment and gave birth to a blind ambition without regard for preserving nature. On the other hand, environmental preservation goes hand in hand with monotheism because monotheism is the basic pillar of earth management. Tauhid will raise awareness so as not to act arbitrarily to nature. On the other hand, environmental preservation goes hand in hand with monotheism because monotheism is a fundamental pillar of managing the earth. Tawhid will raise awareness so as not to act arbitrarily against nature. When related to the Indonesian context, M. Quraish Shihab provides tolerance if environmental damage occurs due to earth management activities, as long as the person concerned always asks for forgiveness and Allah's mercy.

Keywords: Eco-theology; Tafsir al-Misbah; M. Quraish Shihab

Abstrak

Dewasa ini, lingkungan menjadi isu yang krusial karena berdampak bagi semua orang. Keterlibatan agama (teologi) dalam isu lingkungan tentunya sangat berpengaruh dengan masyarakat Nusantara yang religius. Penelitian ini bertujuan menampilkan nuansa ekoteologi dalam tafsir Nusantara. Untuk memfokuskan penelitian, artikel ini hanya membatası pada Tafsir al-Mişbah karya M. Quraish Shihab yang dianggap lebih relevan dengan konteks saat ini dan dapat dijadikan salah satu representatif dari tafsir Nusantara yang populer di kalangan masyarakat Indonesia. Menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan pendekatan analisis deskriptif, penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa menurut M. Quraish Shihab, kerusakan lingkungan tidak dapat dipisahkan dari krisis spiritual manusia. Alam raya dan segala isinya saling berkaitan dan saling mempengaruhi satu sama lain serta bertumpu dan kembali kepada Allah Swt. Kedurhakaan manusia mengakibatkan gangguan keseimbangan alam raya. Sifat nifâq, kufur, zhalim, dan hubb ad-dunyâ mengakibatkan tumpulnya kepekaan terhadap lingkungan dan melahirkan ambisi buta tanpa menghiraukan kelestarian alam. Sebaliknya, pelestarian lingkungan berjalan beriringan dengan ketauhidan karena tauhid merupakan tonggak dasar pengelolaan bumi. Tauhid akan menimbulkan kesadaran agar tidak berlaku sewenang-wenang terhadap alam. Jika dikaitkan dengan konteks ke-Indonesia-an, M. Quraish Shihab memberikan toleransi bahwa jika terkadang terjadi kerusakan lingkungan akibat adanya aktivitas pengelolaan bumi, selama yang bersangkutan senantiasa meminta ampun dan memohon rahmat Allah.

Kata kunci: Ekoteologi; Tafsir al-Mishbah; M. Quraish Shihab

Introduction

Environmental issues are crucial topics and will never run out for discussion along with the times, and are included in one of the five contemporary issues, apart from issues of globalization, democracy, human rights, and gender (Rodin 2017, 392). This issue is inseparable from the function of the natural environment and its components which are very important for human life in particular and other living things in general. All components of the natural environment, such as land, water, and air, are the pillars of life, thus their sustainability must be maintained. The United Nations (UN) initiated a world agenda for creating human prosperity as outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Among the 17 goals set out in the Sustainable Development Goals agenda, six of them relate to environmental development, namely: 1) clean water and sanitation, 2) sustainable cities and communities, 3) responsible consumption and production, 4) climate action, 5) life below water and 6) life on land (Tim Penyusun 2020a). The number of environmental issues raised in the global agenda for world development indicates that environmental problems have become global issues. Therefore, it must be solved and tackled jointly by the world community.

Environmental issues do not only occur in countries with extreme climates and low levels of natural resources. As a country rich in land and natural water resources, Indonesia has been facing endless environmental problems. As an archipelagic country that is rich in water, Indonesia only has 17.69% of the water that its inhabitants can utilize, which causes the availability of clean water to be uneven, coupled with a decrease in the water quality index in 2019 (Tim Penyusun 2020b, 8). Another environmental problem that Indonesia often faces is air pollution in urban areas. In recent years, there has been a decline in air quality in several big cities in Indonesia. This problem is partly due to the increasing need for transportation and energy, in line with the increase in population each year (Tim Penyusun 2020b, 26).

Environmental issues that are increasingly prevalent every year require solutions and cooperation from all levels of society. Science and technological development cannot be the only solution to environmental issues because the roots of the environmental crisis have moved to something more fundamental: the faith and values humans hold in utilizing science and technology (Wardani dan Mulyani 2013, 168–69). Religion was

initially seen narrowly as a teaching that only contained normative rituals without contributing to social life (Abidin dan Muhammad 2020, 1). The relationship between religion and science, which was not very harmonious in the early days of its growth in Indonesia, also made most Muslims see that religion and science were contradictory and could not be reconciled. However, the development of the times causes increasing problems.

Indonesian society is known as a religious community, as seen from the appreciation of religious values that can be witnessed daily, moreover, for Muslims have the principle to practice Al-Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad. Al-Qur'an is a book of guidance for humankind that regulates not only human relations with God and with fellow human beings but also human relations with nature (Wardani dan Mulyani 2013, 187). This principle implies an order to protect and preserve the environment as a form and proof of one's faith. Concerning the application of the teachings and values in Al-Qur'an, Muslims need interpretations to understand His verses. One of the most famous commentary books for Indonesian society is *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, written by a well-known scholar who has long been experienced in the field of Islam. *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* is written in Indonesian so that the Society of Nusantara can easily digest it. In addition, *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* uses social patterns (*al-adab al-ijtimâ'i*) that not only focus on teaching theology and jurisprudential teachings but also touch on many social issues so that they are relevant to the state of the Society and can be applied to respond to contemporary issues.

Along with the rise of environmental issues, eco-theology has become a trend in the academic world today. In simple terms, the author classifies previous research models that study eco-theology into three typologies. First, eco-theology studies from an Islamic perspective, whether sourced from the Al-Qur'an, hadith, or intellectual thought (Ridwanuddin 2017a) (Dahlan dan Asrul, t.t.) (Zulfikar dan Azkiya 2023) (Ridwanuddin 2017a) (Azisi dkk. 2023) (Rakhmat 2022a). Previous researchers agree that Islam regulates the relationship between humans and God and their relationship with humans and nature. The human hierarchy is higher than nature in form and power, but this does not justify humans exploiting nature. Man's position as caliph makes him responsible for prospering and managing wildlife. Second, eco-theology concepts from the perspective of other religions, such as Christianity and Hinduism (Ngabalin 2020) (Borrong dan Baru

2019) (Maggang 2019) (Keriapy 2023) (Gaduh dan Harsananda 2021) (L. P. Farhan dan Hadisaputra 2022). Every religion has teachings instructing humans to maintain a relationship with nature as fellow creatures of God. Third, the implementation of ecotheology concepts in life (Mahzumi, Suhermanto, dan Iffah 2019) (Hanik dan Khamidah 2022) (Prakosa, Pattiasina, dan Winanda 2023) (Sanjani 2023) (Wuwung, Berdame, dan Heydemans 2023). Eco-theology applications from various religious perspectives imply an appreciation of theological values applied to maintain human relationships with nature. In contrast to previous studies, this study discusses verses with Eco-theology nuances and their relationship to society directly through the intermediary of interpretation (*tafsir*). In this case, the book *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, as a contemporary book of interpretation is very relevant to the current socio-cultural conditions of Indonesian society.

This study starts with two hypotheses. First, there is a relationship between theology and the environment. Theology, which tends to be interpreted as theocentric ritual does not only focus on God while ignoring humans and nature. Diseases of faith, such as disbelief and hypocrisy, affect actions that damage the environment because indifference toward God leads to indifference toward His creation. On the other hand, monotheism, as the foundation of faith, can form character, leading to nature's maintenance and prosperity. Second, the religious understanding of an individual/group is a reflection of the socio-cultural context that surrounds them. In this case, discussing solutions to problems in Indonesia through Eco-theology should use *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, a product of religious understanding from Indonesia itself, as a point of view so that the solutions offered are relevant to the context. Departing from this argument, this article aims to explore (1) the Eco-theology nuances in *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*; and (2) M. Quraish Shihab's efforts to provide alternative solutions to environmental problems in Indonesia through theology in *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*.

Theoretical Studies

Eco-theology: A New Discourse on Environmental Conservation Solutions

Eco-theology is a term that comes from combining the words 'ecology' and 'theology' (Ridwanuddin 2017b, 46). Eco-theology is a form of constructive theology that

explains the relationship between religion and nature, particularly regarding the environment. Eco-theology is based on the awareness that the environmental crisis is not merely a secular problem but also an acute religious problem because it originates from a wrong religious understanding of life and the environment. Through Eco-theology, a reinterpretation of religious understandings in society is carried out, especially regarding humans' position, relations, and responsibilities concerning this earth (Quddus 2012, 317).

Eco-theology resulted from a reconstruction of classical theology that is considered inadequate with the time's development and modern challenges (February 2017, 68). Classical Islamic theology is considered to give too much attention to discussing humans and God. Meanwhile, the universe is considered one level below humans, giving rise to the legitimacy of the supremacy of human power over other creatures on earth (anthropocentrism) (Rakhmat 2022b, 1). One of these is proven in the concept of *taskhîr*, which has been interpreted literally as 'to subdue'. Limitation of meaning *taskhîr* in the literal meaning leads to a view that nature's position is lower than humans in the hierarchy of God's creation. This meaning leads to the misconception that nature may be exploited in any way because nature is a 'means' that is 'subjected to humans' (Wardani 2015, 5).

The urgency of solving environmental problems with this theological perspective stems from the relationship between environmental damage and the destruction of human spirituality. As quoted by Wardani, Al-Gore said that the root of the environmental crisis is a manifestation of the human spirituality crisis. This statement concludes that there is a correlation between human treatment of nature and the environment with spiritual views (Wardani dan Mulyani 2013, 168–69). The root of the environmental crisis no longer lies in technology but shifts to something fundamental: human faith and ethics that control technology (Mardhiah, Aulia, dan Narulita 2014, 86). Ethics is essential and fundamental to understanding crises and crimes that befell society today, so proper ethics are needed to return to the right path, namely the relationship between humans and nature. In terms of environmental preservation, environmental ethics based on a system of religious beliefs deserves to be considered because it contains a set of rules regarding environmental preservation (Gulzar dkk., 2021, hlm. 8–9; Aziz, 2014, hlm. 320).

Eco-theology becomes relevant in environmental studies because, in Islam, monotheism (theology) is the basic framework for the overall outlook and worldview, thinking and acting. For a Muslim, monotheism must penetrate all aspects of his life and become his way of life. In other words, monotheism is a source of personal and group (community) ethics, social, economic, and political ethics, including ethics in managing natural resources and the environment and developing science and technology. In this context, efforts to preserve and conserve the environment are a form of one's faith in Allah Swt. as the Creator of the universe. Conversely, destructive and exploitative actions that can damage the coastal environment are contrary to the values of monotheism (Mufid 2017, 111–13).

Al-Qur'an talks about nature in discourses that touch on theology awareness. Al-Qur'an places the environment as an essential element in the context of Qur'anic cosmology. The Qur'anic Eco-theology concept is needed as a foundation for how Muslims should treat nature (Wardani 2015, 6). The concept of Eco-theology in Al-Qur'an does not separate the relationship between the role of Allah Swt. as the universe's Creator, human duties as the *khalîfah fî al-are*a, and the role of nature and its contents as creatures of Allah Swt. (Tamam 2021, 153). The human right to exploit nature is limited because it is a mandate from Allah Swt. Thus, human power over nature is used as a means for humans to serve Allah Swt., not to exploit it arbitrarily to satisfy their greed (materialism) (Fata 2014, 145).

Al-Qur'an and Religiosity Trends in Indonesian Society

According to Emil Durkheim, religion is a source of norms for all societies. Its existence is necessary because it can change individual behavior (Maulidia 2019, 189) (Pals 2018, 164), both in the individual realm, such as maintaining beliefs, morals, and mental health, to marriage (Sunardin 2021, 10–17), and in the social realm, such as maintaining and strengthening solidarity and social obligations (Bauto 2014, 21). A religion whose role is carried out correctly can lead to prosperity, peace, stability, and security. This is due to the role of religion as an alternative solution to a problem that cannot be resolved due to limitations and uncertainties in society (Musa 2021, 201).

In Indonesia, instead of being seen as the source of the problem, religion is always involved in various sectors of life (Zulkarnain 2017, 40). Religion in Indonesian society is like a big and sturdy house that is inhabited from birth until death (Hidayat 2019, 3). This condition makes Indonesia known as a religious society because it relies on religious values for its various activities (Ghofur dan Subahri 2020, 285). One manifestation of the religiosity of Indonesian society is the many studies on the nuances of the living Qur'an that explore how society treats Al-Qur'an (A. Farhan 2017, 88). Al-Qur'an is positioned as a holy book and has been transformed into a means of treatment, self-protection, and seeking sustenance (Putra 2012, 249). The existence of the study of the living Qur'an cannot be separated from the religiosity of Indonesian society.

Indonesian society is Muslims who do not speak Arabic and live in the region with the largest Muslim population in the world. Indonesian society's history, social, and cultural lives become a unique local context for understanding the universal Al-Qur'an in Arabic. With the same Al-Qur'an and a different local context, the understanding and acceptance of the Al-Qur'an obtained may be different from the Arab community, who were the initial audience of the Al-Qur'an. The differences and diversity of local contexts in understanding the same Al-Qur'an create variety in the religious practices of Indonesian society (Rafiq 2014, 6–7). This form of reception and understanding is born in the form of aesthetic reception, such as Al-Qur'an calligraphy (Jannah 2017) and recitation of the holy verses of Al-Qur'an with certain types of songs; (Lukita 2023) functionalist receptions such as the use of verses from Al-Qur'an as treatment; (Afifah, Niam, dan Isnaini 2023) and exegetical reception in the form of understanding Al-Qur'an, whether conveyed orally or written in the form of works, such as *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* by M. Quraish Shihab.

Tafsir al-Miṣbah: Representation of Contemporary Interpretation of Nusantara

The writing of *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* began on June 18, 1999, when M. Quraish Shihab was Ambassador to Egypt, Djibouti, and Somalia and was completed in 2003 (Shihab 2002a, 1:310). *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* is a response to M. Quraish Shihab's anxiety regarding the

phenomenon of society, which only uses the Al-Qur'an as reading material. According to him, if it only functions like that, this phenomenon reduces the other purposes for which the Al-Qur'an was revealed. Likewise, we often find reading certain surahs in the Al-Qur'an, such as QS. Yasin, al-Waqi'ah, al-Mulk and others. Still, the reading is not accompanied by a correct understanding of its meaning. This is partly due to the difficulties experienced by the community because the language used in Al-Qur'an is Arabic, not Indonesian. Therefore, M. Quraish Shihab feels he has a moral responsibility as an intellectual to provide an understanding of Al-Qur'an to the general public in all circles (Abidin dan Aziz 2023, 254–55).

The aim of *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, which is targeted at the general public, is likely to influence the presentation of this interpretation. The presentation adapts to different levels of people's understanding of Al-Qur'an. The presentation is thick with social nuances or patterns (*ijtima'i*). The presentation method used is *the tahlîlî* (analytic) approach. This interpretive presentation method tries to reveal the content of Al-Qur'an from various angles arranged according to the sequence of verses, along with explanations regarding vocabulary, the general meaning of verses, correlations (*munasabah*), *asbab al-nuzul*, and so on, which are considered helpful for understanding Al-Qur'an (Baidan 2005, 57). *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* begins by analyzing the general theme of a surah and linking the surahs to be interpreted so that the harmony of all parts of Al-Qur'an can be seen (Mujahidin 2018, 96).

Tafsir al-Miṣbah has become part of Society's daily life, both academically as a scientific reference and practically as a reference for the general public, especially preachers. As reading material, the book of Tafsir al-Miṣbah is of interest to the public because it uses a straightforward Indonesian language that makes it easier for Society to digest the contents of Al-Qur'an. The strong influence of Tafsir al-Miṣbah is proven by making this interpretation book a program on one of the television channels in Indonesia (Has 2018, 78–79). Apart from that, the strong influence of the book Tafsir al-Miṣbah is proven by making this book a commentary as a program on one of the private television channels in Indonesia (Hs, Arsyad, dan Akmal 2020, 99–100). This work is also available on CD besides the printed version of 15 volumes (Gusmian 2013, 109). In fact, in its latest development, Tafsir al-Miṣbah has been digitized as a smartphone application (YouTube

2023). The transformation of *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* from time to time on various platforms shows its existence as part of the daily lives of Indonesian society.

Method

To achieve the objectives previously mentioned, this research uses library research and qualitative methods with a descriptive analysis approach. This research focuses on library data to be read and recorded, which is then processed using the steps in the literature review. The data type used is primary data regarding the Eco-theology nuances in interpreting M. Quraish Shihab obtained from *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* as a primary data source. The verses used to explore the nuances of Eco-theology are QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 12, 60, 204—205, and 284; QS. al-A'râf [7]: 96; QS. Hud [11]: 61 and 116-117; QS. Yusuf [12]: 56-57; QS. Ibrahim [13]: 34; QS. al-Nahl [16]: 14 and 17; QS. al-Jumu'ah [62]: 1 and QS. al-Rûm [30]: 9. Apart from that, this research also uses secondary data sources from other relevant literature for secondary data purposes in the form of Indonesian community activities, social activities and religious activities.

Result and Discussion

The Roots of Environmental Crisis According to Theology

a. Kufr: The Roots of Environmental Problems

Kufr is often limited in discussing theology and eschatological matters without connecting with other issues. Yuni Puspitaningrum only briefly defines kufr, namely the state of a person's disbelief in Allah (Puspitaningrum 2020, 36). The concept of an infidel as written by Ach. Zayyadi et al. are divided into five general categories: denial of God's existence, the Prophet, God's grace, abandoning religious demands but still believing and disbelief means letting go (Zayyadi dkk. 2022, 157–62). This division appears less comprehensive and not specific because it only focuses on the relationship between humans and God, causing a disconnection from other creatures. There are several

Qur'anic verses regarding the connection between *kufr* and the environment, one of which is implied in QS. al-Rûm [30]: 9.

"Do they not travel Through the earth, and see What was the End Of those before them? They were superior to them In strength: they tilled The soil and populated it In greater numbers than these Have done: there came to them Their messengers with Clear (Signs), (Which they rejected, to their Own destruction): it was not Allah who wronged them, but They wronged their own souls." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (حصه الله)) t.t., 1178)

In his interpretation, M. Quraish Shihab explained that this verse reminds us of the stories of earlier Societies who were physically strong, so they were successful in managing the earth physically. In this verse, it is stated that the development of their previous nation was more successful than Jahiliah society at that time, as evidenced by the material development in the form of skyscrapers and agriculture, which was more advanced than that of Jahiliah society. However, it is only natural that the development of the earth and the management of natural resources have the right direction and purpose. In this case, the success of the earlier Society in building the earth lost its direction and way of building it because they did not believe in Allah Swt. (Shihab 2012b, 11:166). From this verse, humans in today's era can learn that faith and disbelief determine the destruction or preservation of nature. The earlier Society's civilization was even considered more advanced for the society after that (Jahiliah), proving that environmental damage is not solely a matter of technology but rather due to human behavior, which has lost control over its abilities due to leaving religion. Although the human ability to build the earth is not directly related to religion, religion determines the direction and way of managing the earth in an environmentally friendly way.

Environmental damage is also related to injustice, as in QS. Ibrahim [13]: 34 where the word *kaffâr* paired with the word *zhalûm*. This pairing shows a relationship between tyrants and infidels as fellow causes of natural destruction.

"And He giveth you Of all that ye ask for But if ye count the favours Of Allah, never will ye Be able to number them. Verily, man is given up To injustice and ingratitude." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (ححمه الله) t.t., 702–3)

M. Quraish Shihab interprets the above verse as follows:

"A glass of water is enough to quench thirst, but if you take more than a glass, the rest that is not drunk and thrown away can make humans or animals who need it thirsty. Imagine how much leftover food from rich Society is wasted in the trash, even though so many Society are starving. Ask what percentage of developed countries' budgets are used to produce weapons, even though if this is used to help poor countries, then a lot of suffering and poverty can be overcome. That is still part of the meaning of zhalûm." (Shihab 2012c, 7:380).

From the interpretation above, it can be concluded that the environment and other creatures can also become objects of human tyranny. In this case, M. Quraish Shihab takes the parable of leftover food that is wasted and becomes food waste. The existence of food waste is no less dangerous than plastic waste because it is tantamount to wasting the resources needed to grow, produce, or package that food. On the other hand, the demand for food consumption increases as the human population increases. The habit of wasting food continuously will waste more natural resources. The decomposition of food waste can produce methane gas, resulting in a lack of oxygen levels and depletion of the ozone layer (Maulia 2022). Thus, M. Quraish Shihab's interpretation of disposing of leftover food waste as one of the meanings of *zhalûm* relevant to efforts to protect the environment.

The unjust acts described above can be categorized as *kufr* in blessing. *Kufr* also concerns the case of disobedience to the favors given by Allah Swt., either in the form of hiding or closing these blessings to others (Hafid dan Mukhlis 2020, 301). The effort to close these favors can be seen in the disposal of leftover food that is still beneficial for humans or creatures other than humans. Utilization and consumption of natural resources should ideally go hand in hand with environmental preservation actions, as explained in Al-Qur'an implicitly in QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 60. After the order to enjoy Allah's sustenance, there is a prohibition against doing damage in advance. Related to the context of eating and drinking described in the previous sentence, the prohibition on harming can be interpreted as not using water excessively or not in the right place so that environmental sustainability and cleanliness are maintained (Shihab 2012a, 1:252).

b. Hypocrisy and its Hubb al-Dunyâ

Al-Baqarah [2]:12

"Of a surety, they are the ones Who make mischief, But they realize (it) not."
(Abdullah Yusuf Ali (حمه الله) t.t., 9)

According to M. Quraish Shihab, destruction on earth is an activity that results in damage because previously good values or functions will disappear in their entirety or at least be reduced. Society who damage the environment feels that their activities can add value, so the quality and benefits are higher than the previous. They are hypocrites who think they have achieved what they wanted. This verse explains that they are a genuinely destructive Society. The destruction is often repeated because if it is only done once, they are not destroyers. Apart from that, they also destroy the family because it is transmitted through destructive behaviors.

Furthermore, destruction also occurs in society, resulting in other Societies being prevented from carrying out policies by spreading negative issues, spreading hatred, and causing divisions. Thus, the harmony around him was disturbed due to his actions. This verse also says, 'Do not cause damage to the earth, which means that it does not merely prohibit doing damage but indicates how widespread the impact of the bad is so that if left unchecked, it will spread to all corners of the earth. With the ban on destroying what is on earth, it does touch not only humans but also the entire environment. After being conveyed *nahi munkar*, (forbidding evil action), this verse continues its explanation by *amr ma'ruf* (commanding good action) with the meaning to believe. Therefore, it is natural to prioritize *nahi munkar* because eliminating evil is more critical than enhancing oneself with goodness (Shihab 2012a, 1:125–27).

A clean and healthy life is a form of maintaining health because if damage occurs, the joy of living by carrying out routines and worshiping properly will be comfortable. Therefore, cleanliness as a result of maintaining the environment is one proof of faith (Aulia 2021, 192). Not only does the Al-Qur'an speak about environmental preservation, but there are many hadiths stated implicitly that the issue of environmental preservation is an order for humans to take good care of their environment. Environmental elements that must be protected are flora, fauna, soil, water, and air. Many ways should be done to preserve the environment, some of them are caring for and protecting animals, planting trees and reforestation, and reviving dead land (Hasri 2017, 35).

"204. There is the type of man Whose speech About this world's life May dazzle thee, And he calls Allah to witness About what is in his heart; Yet is he the most contentious Of enemies. 205. When he turns his back, His aim everywhere Is to spread mischief Through the earth and destroy Crops and progeny But Allah loveth not mischief." (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 204-205) (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (حصه الله) t.t., 87)

According to M. Quraish Shihab, verse 204 of Surah al-Baqarah explains that a Society that wants the world will make the world's life as awe. In other words, there is nothing to think about in the afterlife, thus, there is no need to be careful with it. More specifically, verse 205 explains that if Society causes damage to leaves for another place, it will cause damage to the plants and livestock that are looked after by humans. This verse also has another interpretation: Society who cause damage often make negative rumors and lie and carry out activities that end in the destruction and destruction of society. Allah Swt. will punish them because Allah Swt. does not like destruction (Shihab 2012a, 1:540–41).

Many hadiths mention environmental preservation because it is a sign of order that must be maintained and preserved. The hadith orders farming, reforestation, and other things because the environment is also one of God's creations which must be maintained. However, it should be remembered that in practicing the hadith, we can not only understand it textually but contextually so that it will generate the soul and enthusiasm to practice it (Istianah 2015, 268).

Environmental Crisis Solution According to Theology

a. Tawhîd: The link between God, Man, and Nature

Tawhîd is an absorption word from Arabic formed from the origin of the word wahhada-yuwahhidu-tawhîdan, which means to force something. Terminologically, tawhîd is a scientific discipline that discusses the oneness of Allah Swt. based on authoritative arguments (Septina, Fadilah, dan Ikat 2022, 7–8). Tawhîd is then divided into two: tawhîd ulûhiyyah and tawhîd rubûbiyyah (Afrizal 2018, 58). The belief that Allah Swt. is the Almighty Essence over all things is the meaning of tawhid rubûbiyyah. Its scope includes everything that shows the omnipotence of Allah Swt., including as Creator,

regulator, and ruler, including in it the All-Death and All-Life, as well as the provider of benefits for all His creatures. *Tawhîd ulûhiyyah* is the belief that only Allah Swt. deserves to be worshipped, also known as *tawhîd 'ubûdiyah* or monotheism of worship because its existence is a consequence of belief in Allah (*tawhîd rubûbiyyah*) (Zain 2017, 78–83).

Monotheism concerning the omnipotence of Allah is stated in QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 284 as follows:

"To Allah belongeth all That is in the heavens And on earth. Whether Ye show what is in your minds Or conceal it, Allah Calleth you to account for it. He forgiveth whom He pleaseth, And punisheth whom He pleaseth. For Allah hath power Over all things." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (حصه الله)) t.t., 131)

According to M. Quraish Shihab, the word placement *lillâhi* at the beginning of the verse above contains the meaning of specialization, that only God has the power over the ownership, creation, and management of the universe. If there is another party named the manager, then it is temporary, with His permission (Shihab 2012a, 1:742). According to the authors, this verse is not just an example of *tawhîd rubûbiyyah* in Al-Qur'an, but there is a connection with the environment. Allah's absolute ownership of the universe should be aware that the environment humans live in and manage today is a gift from Allah SWT. Environmental management should be based on instructions from Allah Swt. as the true ruler of the universe. This awareness will affect human attitudes toward protecting the environment and avoiding all activities that lead to environmental damage.

Eco-theology nuances are also found in verses of Al-Qur'an that contain *tawhîd ulûhiyyah*, such as QS. al-Jumu'ah [62]: 1

"Whatever is In the heavens and On earth, doth declare The Praises and Glory Of Allah,-the Sovereign, The Holy One, the Exalted In Might, the Wise." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (رحمه الله) t.t., 1744)

M. Quraish Shihab when interpreting QS. Al-Jumu'ah [62]: 1 says that all creatures created by Allah Swt., both those in the heavens and those on earth, glorify Him (Shihab 2002b, 14:43). *Tasbîh* is part of *tawhîd ulûhiyyah*, so it can be understood that all creatures of Allah Swt. worship Him, although with different actualization. The word *almalik* in that verse means that God is the Emperor who dominates and controls the universe (Shihab 2002b, 14:43). This meaning implies that the holder of control over the

universe is Allah Swt. Subordinating nature for humans does not automatically make humans free to exploit it without limits. However, this submission aims to make humans use nature as best as possible. This is as interpreted by M. Quraish Shihab in QS. Al-Naḥl [16]: 14:

"... Allah subjected it to you so that you take advantage of it and so that you earnestly seek sustenance, some of His gifts and so that you are constantly grateful, that is, to use these gifts according to the purpose of their creation for the benefit of you and the generations after you and also for other creatures besides you..."

From the interpretation quote above, it can be seen that M. Quraish Shihab explained that human actions towards nature are related to the concept of gratitude. Grateful servants are those who use the gifts that God has given following the purpose of their creation for the benefit of themselves and their descendants as humans, without ignoring the rights of other creatures. M. Quraish Shihab, in the interpretation above, does not only link human management of nature with the goal of creation but also emphasizes that humans use nature for the benefit of other living things. This assertion relates to another interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab in QS. al-Naḥl [16]: 17 about the relationship between humans and other living things.

The word *anbatakum* reminds us of Adam's creation from the soil and hints at the human need for food that grows on earth. With food, humans experience the physical growth and development of their souls (Shihab 2002b, 14:352).

At the end of the interpretation of QS. al-Naḥl [16]: 17, M. Quraish Shihab quotes Sayyid Qutb's opinion as follows:

"...that humans are similar to plants in the elements of their occurrence, from these basic elements he eats and grows and develops so that humans are plants from this earth's plant species. Allah bestows upon man life as bestows on plants a similar life. Both are products of the earth and are "breastfed" by the same mother. Thus, faith creates in the believer's soul his true outlook on life. Its relationship with the earth and. All living things are images with scientific rigor and freshness of feelings because it originates from the essence that lives in the soul..." (Shihab 2002b, 14:353–54).

Based on this interpretation, it is clear that M. Quraish Shihab sees harmony between nature and humans as God's fellow creatures. In line with the interpretation of

QS. al-Naḥl [16]: 14 previously stated that one of the purposes of subduing the universe is to meet human physical and spiritual needs, as reinforced by the interpretation of QS. al-Naḥl [16]: 17. The need for the existence of other creatures for the survival of themselves and their descendants in the future should make humans the pioneers of environmentally friendly life. Destruction of the environment, apart from threatening the sustainability of human life, also violates the nature that the environment and humans have equality in terms of the elements of its occurrence because humans grow and develop from the results of consuming what is in the universe. This indirectly also strengthens what was conveyed by Wardani and Mulyani that the value of nature lies in its status as His creation, so it is not justified if there are actions that ignore environmental sustainability on the pretext that nature is worthless because it is subordinated to humans (Wardani dan Mulyani 2013, 176–77).

According to M. Quraish Shihab, as he quoted from Thâbathabâ'i, the universe and everything in it are related and influence one another, which rests on and returns to Allah Swt. If one part does not function properly or deviates from the way it should be, the other parts will be negatively affected and disrupted the other parts. This provision also applies to human relationships with other creatures in the universe. Human storage for the accuracy of Allah Swt. will disrupt the order of Society's lives. It even affects the balance of the universe, such as "the reluctance of the sky to send down rain or the earth to grow plants," floods, earthquakes, and other natural disasters (Shihab 2012d, 4:218–19) (Shihab 2012d, 4:238), as stated in QS. al-A'râf [7]: 96 as follows:

"If the Society of the towns Had but believed and feared Allah, We should indeed Have opened out to them (All Kinds of) blessings From heaven and earth; But they rejected (the truth). And We brought them To book for their misdeeds." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (حصه) t.t., 429–30)

In interpreting this verse, according to M. Quraish Shihab, humans need faith and piety to balance the universe and everything in it. Faith functions to gather human potential to carry out activities according to His will. Faith in Allah Swt. frees humans from slavery to lust so that they can fulfill their mandate as caliphs on earth. In addition to faith, humans also need piety as a custodian, as well as directing humans not to take arbitrary, careless actions and exceed the limits of valuable activities (Shihab 2012d,

4:218). Interestingly, in the interpretation of this verse, M. Quraish Shihab does not consider harmful activity towards nature to be limited to carelessness and arbitrariness but also includes activities that are initially beneficial but are carried out excessively and beyond limits. We can see this from mining activities that are too large and deep in scale to cause damage to the earth's surface, water pollution, and even earthquakes. Although on the one hand, mining is the wheel that drives today's all-technological modern life (Ross 2022).

However, M. Quraish Shihab does not want to be trapped in a utopia. In the interpretation of QS. Ḥûd [11]: 61 in *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, he explained that the damage caused by environmental management activities can still be tolerated as long as the purpose is good and the person concerned always asks for forgiveness and hopes for His mercy, remembering that humans are not free from mistakes (Shihab 2012d, 4:667–68).

b. Trust to Maintain the Environment and Avoid Violations of Environmental Damage

(QS. Yûsuf [12]: 56-57)

"56. Thus did we give Established power to Joseph In the land, to take possession Therein as, when, or where He pleased. We bestow Of Our mercy on whom We please, and We suffer not, To be lost, the reward Of those who do good. 57. But verily the reward Of the Hereafter Is the best, for those Who believe, and are constant In righteousness." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (حصه الله عليه 1.t., 646–47)

According to M. Quraish Shihab, the two verses above explain how the Prophet Yûsuf implemented policies in agriculture, logistics, and the state treasury. This is a sign that it has become an absolute requirement for every person who has the power to hold the mandate and have knowledge. However, these two verses generally tell that the person who did *bestowal* or kindness to Society and the environment in the life of the world will receive a reward and mercy from Allah Swt., especially those who have faith and piety (Shihab 2012e, 6:129–30).

c. Build Characteristics of Mushlih to Create an Environmentally Friendly Person

The environmental crisis is closely related to human values and ethics (Mardhiah, Aulia, dan Narulita 2014, 86). These values then form the characteristics of human beings.

One of the ways Al-Qur'an talks about human characteristics that are environmentally friendly is through characteristics *mushliḥ* which there is QS. Ḥûd [11]: 116-117.

"116. If only there had been Of the generations before you. Men of righteousness Who prohibited men From mischief in the earth (But there were none) Except a few among them Whom We saved (from harm)? But the wrong-does pursued The enjoyment of the good things Of life which were given them, And persisted in sin. 117 Nor would thy Lord be The One to destroy The towns unjustlyl While their Society are Rightcous." (Abdullah Yusuf Ali (عدا الله عنا الله الله عنا الله عنا

The term *mushliḥ* in the verse above is closely related to the activity of destroying the earth. This is pointed out as the location of the word is still in the same group of verses as the sentence *fasâd fî al-ardhi*. According to M. Quraish Shihab, *fasâd fî al-ardhi* means destruction on earth, activities that cause something valuable and useful to lose some or all of its value. The word *mushliḥûn* is the plural form of the word *mushliḥ*, meaning someone who finds something that is missing or of less value and then engages in activities to repair it. Humans are required to at least be *shâliḥ*, namely maintaining the values of something so that its condition remains as it is so that it continues to function correctly. Al-Sya'râwî, as quoted by M. Quraish Shihab in his commentary, stated that Allah Swt. would not destroy countries whose inhabitants make improvements (Shihab 2012f, 5:781–82). This can be understood in the context of Eco-theology as a solution to environmental issues. Allah Swt. commands His servants to improve the earth and become *mushliḥ* so that He does not punish them for their bad deeds.

M. Quraish Shihab, Tafsir al-Mishbah, and Environmental Problems in Indonesia

Indonesia is famous for the diversity of its community life and natural wealth. The life of Indonesian society cannot be separated from religion, which has become one of the identities of Indonesian society itself. For Indonesian society, religion is a 'big, strong house' (Hidayat 2019, 3), their activities cannot be separated from divine values in their daily lives (Ghofur dan Subahri 2020, 285). Apart from the uniqueness of its Society, Indonesia is also known for its wealth of natural resources which is estimated at 200

thousand trillion rupiahs (Kementerian Keuangan Republik Indonesia 2022). Based on BP Statistical Review 2021 data, Indonesia's coal resources have reached 148.7 billion tons, and it has coal reserves of 39.56 billion trillion (Umah 2022). These two types of wealth should go hand in hand with each other. It is not only natural wealth that is utilized, but the uniqueness of Indonesian society's activities in culture and religion should also be considered, especially in solutions to concrete problems such as environmental exploitation activities.

Environmental exploitation activities, such as mining, certainly hurt the environment. In the context of Indonesian society, which is known as a religious society, religious understanding significantly affects natural resource management activities. One of the religious education regarding environmental management activities was carried out by M. Quraish Shihab through *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*. His work has had a strong influence on Indonesian society, both academics and the general public (Has 2018, 78–79). Writing *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* in Indonesian certainly makes it easier for Society to read and understand it (Budiana dan Gandara 2021, 90). Apart from that, *al-adabîy al-ijtimâ'i* (literary and social) style that colors the interpretation in *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* is relevant for socializing the understanding and application of the interpretation of Al-Qur'an in Indonesian society (Arifin 2020, 29).

M. Quraish Shihab did not outright prohibit mining. Regarding environmental management activities, he understands that there were violations or errors during their implementation. This is as the author explained in the previous discussion. In the interpretation of QS. Hūd [11]: 61, M. Quraish Shihab provides tolerance that if sometimes environmental damage occurs due to earth management activities, as long as the person concerned always asks for forgiveness and asks for Allah Swt's mercy. This interpretation seems relevant and represents the geographical conditions of Indonesia and its religious society. Mining is an activity that cannot be separated from the daily lives of some Indonesian society, considering that Indonesia has abundant natural resource potential, and mining is one way to exploit this potential. The damage caused by these activities can be reduced by educating Indonesian religious Society and basing their lives on divine values.

The solution to solving environmental problems by involving religion and the teachings of its holy books is innovative. However, on the other hand, it should also apply interpretation contextual to the place and time the problem occurred. A series of previous studies only explained Eco-theology in general by relying on an understanding of texts and often ignoring reality. Texts used as a source of understanding sometimes come from interpretive works written in a different time and context of life than now. These works accurately understand their time but are not necessarily appropriate today. These interpretations are the interpreter's reflection on his limited local context (Pink 2023, 11) (Federspiel 1994, 18). The universality of Al-Qur'an cannot be narrowed down to the interpretation of specific figures.

Tafsir al-Miṣbah written by M. Quraish Shihab as an Indonesian is the right work to reference in understanding the Al-Qur'an in an Indonesian context. This interpretation reflects M. Quraish Shihab's observations and experiences regarding the reality of Indonesian society with all its activities. His knowledge and observations as an Indonesian exegete expert make the interpretations he presents in Tafsir al-Miṣbah relevant to the context of Indonesian society. Apart from being locally relevant, this interpretive work written at the beginning of the 21st century is still relevant to current conditions which are pretty close since this interpretive work was first launched to the broader public. Thus, to resolve environmental problems through Eco-theology, using Tafsir al-Miṣbah as a source of understanding is the right step because apart from adhering to AlQur'an and its interpretation, it also takes into account the context of current reality. This aims to ensure that environmental literacy based on divine values can be applied well, without any clash between text and reality, potentially giving rise to the imposition of text on reality or vice versa.

However, this research is only limited explicitly to environmental problems. Other problems in Indonesia that should be discussed in this research could become new ground for future researchers to enrich the rich content of *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, likewise with other Indonesian interpretive works that were not used in this research. Other pieces of Indonesian tafsir that existed before *Tafsir al-Miṣbah* must be addressed. Reflections on the problems of that time, which became the basis for the emergence of interpretations from each of these interpretive works, help see the dynamics of solutions to environmental issues in Indonesia from time to time. The investigation into these

dynamics is carried out to help formulate environmental management efforts that are appropriate and relevant to current conditions.

Conclusions

Based on an investigation of the verses of Al-Qur'an with Eco-theology nuances in *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, this research concludes that the root of environmental problems lies in *kufr* and *nifaq*. Disbelief is the root of all environmental damage. Derivatives of *kufr*, such as *nifaq* and *hubb al-dunyâ*, result in a dull sensitivity to the surrounding environment. Based on this, the solutions that can be offered are imbuing the values of monotheism and trust and forming a devout personality. Earth management goes hand in hand with monotheism. Awareness of the oneness of Allah swt. makes humans aware that the absolute owner of the universe is Allah Swt. In contrast, humans and the universe are fellow creatures of His creation, so humans must not destroy nature.

Eco-theology can solve the environmental crisis, considering that Indonesian society is religious and makes divine values the standard of daily life. To resolve environmental problems in Indonesia through Eco-theology, making *Tafsir al-Miṣbah*, which is a product of the interpretation of the Indonesian society themselves, a source of understanding is the right step because apart from sticking to the text of the Al-Qur'an and its interpretation, it also still considering the context of current reality. This aims to ensure that environmental literacy based on divine values can be applied well, without any clash between text and reality, potentially giving rise to the imposition of text on reality or vice versa. M. Quraish Shihab tolerated that if environmental damage sometimes occurs due to earth management activities, the person concerned always asks for forgiveness and Allah Swt's mercy.

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