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## Environmental Destruction and Islamic Religion

In the contemporary world that we live in today, one of the most debated and most serious topics at stake is environmental destruction. Environmentalists have speculated various reasons as the cause of this phenomenon with religious anthropocentrism being one of the most controversial ones. Some environmentalists claim that Abrahamic religions place men as the center of the universe while putting the other creatures as subordinate to him. They further add that such placement creates a separation between the men and nature, and it empowers men to appreciate the nature only for its materialistic benefits. While more evidence would be needed to identify Abrahamic religions as a cause of the environmental crisis, it's evident that they're anthropocentric.

The close reading of the Quran, the holy texts of Muslims, demonstrates that Islam is an anthropocentric tradition due to two reasons. Islam establishes the mankind as superior to other beings, and it encourages humans to save the environment because of its materialistic value for them. Firstly, Islam declares humans as the most important and the most blessed creatures on the earth for whom all other beings have been created. For instance, when describing the powers of Allah, the Quran states, "He who made the earth a habitat for you, and the sky a structure, and sends water down from the sky, and brings out fruits thereby, as a sustenance for you."

Accordingly, the God has created the land, the sky, water and fruits all as means of support, nourishment, and survival for humans. Moreover, Allah depicts the story of human creation as he says that "When I have formed him, and breathed into him of my spirit, fall down prostrating before him. So the angels prostrated themselves, all together". The fact that God's spirit has only been breathed into humans signifies that among all of the creatures they're the most eminent and the closest in rank to the god. Furthermore, the kneeling of the angles before human as a sign of submission emphasizes the sovereignty of humans because even the closest creature to the god, angles, are subordinate to humans.

Later, the Quran describes the relationship between the livestock and mankind as it indicates, "And the livestock — He created them for you. In them are warmth and benefits for you, and of them, the you eat. And they carry your loads to territory you could not have reached without great hardship. Essentially, farm animals have no intrinsic value, and they've been generated to provide humans with labor, food, and comfort. Also, it's fair that animals suffer to provide convenience for humans by importing their loads since humans are superior to animals. Similarly, the Quran explains the relationship between humans and plants by saying that the god "produces for you grains with it, and olives, and date-palms, and grapes, and all kinds of

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fruits". Again, it's observed that the Quran examines all creatures from the point of view of humans. For example, there are no verses analyzing the inborn worth of plants and how they contribute to the sustenance of the atmosphere. Interestingly, there aren't any verses demonstrating how they relate to insects, birds, or other animals either, but their uses for humans have been mentioned several times throughout the text.

Finally, Islam is an anthropocentric tradition as it looks nature only from the human's perspective.

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