

Eco-Theology and the Future of Earth

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Abstract-The concept of eco-theology is a form of constructive theology formula that examines the interrelation between religion and nature, especially in dealing with the problems of the environment. Environmental problems caused by human hands, such as : landslides, floods, drought, pollution and etc are evidence that our environment is really in critical condition. Therefore, as human who directly interacts with environment has moral responsibility to preserve and maintain environmental quality. Human is center and the base of the entire environmental damage. And it happened because the patterns of human behavior itself is not sensitive to the environment, therefore, to solve environmental problems not only make regulation and sanctions but also develop the mental character leads to morality as the foundation to look at nature as an integral part of the human. Religion is the answer to open its followers' awareness to the importance of protecting the environment, through the mechanism of religious texts reading (exegesis). Eco-theology is containing universal principles in maintaining and caring the earth. In Eco-theology there are spiritual dimension, faith, worldview, ethics, morality and religion, their combination is hoped able to drive a more understanding to human beings about how he should locate the position in the universe related to his interaction with environment and other creatures, by this future of earth will be better.

Keywords : Eco-Theology, Environment, Nature and Human

I. INTRODUCTION

Various natural disasters that occur such as floods, landslides, droughts and so on are small examples of environmental problems. This issue of environmental damage has become a big issue in this century and to the attention of almost all the nations of the world, because speaking environment means speaking the future of life on earth.

If the last tree has been cut down, the last fish has been caught, the last river has dried up, people just realized that money cannot be eaten (Indian tribe)

Above statement illustrates how human consciousness is far to the preservation of nature. Even damage and natural disasters happened because human's action is not friendly with nature and environment and it is evident that available a disharmony relationship between human and his environment. While in the Quran Allah says :

Damage has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]. (QS.ar-Rum[30]:41)

According to above verse explains clearly that human is the source of destruction from natural ecosystems in the world that leads to the instability of the chain life cycle and ultimately has a negative impact on the man himself. In *Tafsir Al-Misbah*, Quraish Shihab explained that the damage is the result from human actions from sins and offenses committed resulting balance disorders on the land and sea. Otherwise imbalance that leads to torture in human, the more destruction of the environment the more terrible effects on human. (M.Quraish Shihab, 2003, Vol II: 78)

Furthermore, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Professor of Islamic studies from Iran outlines that our earth is being bled by the injuries suffered as a result of human activities that are not friendly to the environment. Secular outlook makes our planet increasingly critical and almost reach the point of destruction. Therefore, the role from religion is a final and crucial. Religious values need to be built to take care of the natural balance from the already chaotic situation (Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 1996: 29)

Emil Salim, former Environment Minister of Indonesia also added that as a result from the industrial revolution for about 200 years, countries in the world building by damaging the earth. Because the used energy to build is oil and coal and both produce greenhouse gases (GHG) with density rising concentration from 280 parts per million (ppm) to 380 ppm, the density from greenhouse gases is a blanket wraps around the earth, the thicker the blanket more the temperature of the earth's heat.

As a result of high concentration of GHG brings impact on climate change and rises sea levels that threaten the sinking of small islands in the world. Real visible example is the State of Nepal and the Maldives. Maldives is threatened to be sunk if there is no commitment of the States in the world to reduce the emissions released and Nepal suffered from melting snowball mount Everest if not controlled the release of greenhouse gases globally. (Emil Salim, 1986) this is one of nature's anger in human as a result of his action was not friendly and tend to be exploitative.

Man who directly interacts with nature is having a big hand and the most responsible for the existence of environmental sustainability in the earth, our environment is very critical condition. Therefore, as a man who directly interacts with nature, should have high moral responsibility to preserve and maintain stability and environmental quality.

The emergence of the Stocholm declaration in Sweden which was initiated by the United Nations and followed by 133 countries was a concern of the world to increasing acute environmental problems, this conference was the starting point of the birth Kyoto Protocol which agreed on emission regulation to preserve nature. Conference organized in 1972 and later on referred to as the Stockholm Declaration.

After stocholm declaration the great religions of the world began to be directed to be able to help sustain awareness of its follower to the environment through the mechanism of the reading of religious texts (exegesis) are pro-environment. Because religion and spiritual considered could strengthen public awareness about the environment.

According to Fritjof Capra (1996), physicist and natural sciences from Vienna Austria, global crises facing the world is the result of people's thinking and greed of nature, as well as not used the transcendental value in man to be a moral reference in life. (Teologia, 2011)

Man is center and the base of the entire environmental damage. And it happened because the patterns of human behavior itself is not sensitive to the environment, therefore, to solve environmental problems not only make regulation and sanctions but also develop the mental character that leads to morality as the foundation to look at nature as an integral part of the human.

Therefore, it is not an overstatement if Sony Keraf said "The environmental issue is a matter of moral and human behavior" According to him the environment is not merely technical issues but moral issue, as well global ecological crisis that we are experiencing today. So, it's necessary need to ethics and morality to overcome the environmental problem. (A. Sonny Keraf, 2010)

Speaking moral means to speak up religion, because religion is one of source the emergence of moral ethics for human in his interaction with his fellow, animals, plants and even with God. Departing from these assumptions, arise the willingness to formulate the concept of Eco-Theology as part of public awareness tools to maintain and preserve the environment.

Religion is the answer to open its followers' awareness to the importance of protecting the environment, through the mechanism of religious texts reading (exegesis). Because religion is assumed can strengthen public awareness by religious teaching approach.

II. DISCUSSION

II.1. Theology

In Islamic literatures theology commonly known by various terms such as science of *ushuluddin*, science of monotheism and science of *kalam*. Called science of *ushuluddin* because science is discussed about the basic teachings of Islam. Therefore, theology in terms of science of *ushuluddin* discusses the basic belief system of Islam which is based on the revelation of God. Theology is also commonly known as the science of monotheism, because the science discusses the belief that God is almighty one. Because the oneness of God is one of the most important properties in the belief system of Islam as a religion of monotheism. Theology is also often referred to as the science of *kalam*.

Because science is about the Word of God which is written in the holy book the Qur'an as *kalamullah* (Mujiyono, 2001)

Theology in this study is interpreted more on values or religious teaching (Islam) related to the existence of God. Therefore, the meaning of theology in this context is: how to "bring" God in every aspect of human activity, including in the utilization of natural resources and environmental management. Or the concept of thinking and acting that is associated with "the unseen" that creates and organizes the human and nature (environment). So God, Man and Nature is a unified relationship which is not only functional but also spiritual. Thus theology can be interpreted as a concept of thought and action of human associated with the environment, by integrating the physical aspects (nature) including human and non-physical and non-empirical, that is God

II.2. Environment

In a common understanding, the environment is defined as all the activities of society and around natural circumstances that influence the growth and development of living creatures "(Barker, 2003) Another understanding is everything that is around human that influences the development of human life, either directly or indirectly. while in the biological sciences, the environment means all the external things that affect the lives of individuals, organizations, or specific populations (Miller, 1982) Environment is consisting of natural objects (Flora, fauna, soil, and water) and all of them produce like crop production, energy supply, soil conservation, and others. The environment refers to all the elements and all the physical and biological interactions that make up an ecosystem. Ecosystem itself is the order of environmental elements which constitute a comprehensive unified and interact each other to shape balance, stability, and productivity of the environment.

Another term that is often used in the discussion of the environment is ecology. The word ecology is derived from the Greek word *oikos*, which means home, or residence, and *logos* meaning science. Ecology is defined as the study of the structure and function of nature

Emil Salim (1986) stated that in general, the environment is defined as all objects, conditions, circumstances and influences available in the space occupied and affect life, including human life.

From the above definition can be concluded that the environment is every component in the human ecosystem that includes the biological natural environment, non-biological environment, built environment and social. Referring to this definition, then the environment in this discussion here is the environment associated with the biological natural environment and non-biological natural environment.

A series of problems related to the environment is growing increasingly. Environmental problems caused by human hands, such as : the destruction of the ozone layer, global warming, the ice melting at the poles, the scarcity of species, deforestation, tropical forest fires, scarcity of non renewable natural resources, coastal erosion and river, landslides, floods, pollution of lakes, rivers, sea, air pollution, drought, famine, water and agricultural land poisoned by the use of insecticides, pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers industry and etc. So it is very critical condition of our environment. Therefore, as human who directly interacts with environment has moral responsibility to preserve and maintain stability and of environmental quality.

II.3. Eco-Theology

According Mujiyono (2001) eco-theology (environmental theology) is an integral part of contemporary Islamic theology. Contemporary Islamic theology is a creative theology product of the theological dynamics. Islamic theological dynamics is processed by the reconstruction effort classical Islamic theology which is inspired by spirit modernity to meet the needs of contemporary Muslims. Ontology contemporary Islamic theology is different from the classical and modern ontology Islamic theology. Classical and modern ontology Islamic theology tends to contain doctrinal ideology. While the contemporary ontology Islamic theology tends to contain an ideological revolution. Ideological revolution in contemporary Islamic theology outlined in the various disciplines in accordance with the purpose. Theology is therefore referred to as a specialist theology, such as: liberation theology, political theology, populist theology, feminist theology, soil theology and environmental theology.

The concept of environmental theology (eco-theology) is a form of constructive theology formula that examines the interrelation between religion and nature, especially in dealing with the problems of the environment. In general, this theology departs from a premise that it was there because of the relationship between the religious world view of human and environmental degradation. It reveals the interaction of ecological values and religion (Teologia, 2011)

Eco-theology containing universal principles in maintaining and caring the earth. In Eco-theology there are spiritual dimension, faith, worldview, ethics, morality and religion, their combination is hoped able to drive a more understanding to human beings about how he should locate the position in the universe related to his interaction with environment and other creatures.

So, Eco-theology is one of the means to maintain the sustainability of human civilization in the earth as well as a medicine to cure the ecological crisis caused by human as main actors from the world's ecosystems. (Teologia, 2011)

II.4. Human and caliph *fil ardz*

In the Islamic conception human has been selected as caliph *fil ardz* as embodied in QS.al-Baqarah [2]: 30 therefore man has the authority to utilize the resources that have been provided, but people should not commit arbitrary utilization and excessive. That's why in Islam the human position not only as the caliph who are active, but also mandated as '*abdullah*' (read: the servants of God) who is passive. It is intended that human responsibility towards nature should be done By maintaining and preserving nature as signs the great of God.

caliph *fil ardz* meaning is not in the sense of the ruler (dominion over) in the earth because of this meaning is likely to put human more superior compared to nature or environment. in the terminology Mohammad Ammara caliph *fil ardz* not be interpreted as a deification of man and incarnation of god who made man as master of the universe rather than a representative of God in the universe. In this understanding concept, probably eco-theology finds its function as an effort to conserve the environment.

III. CONCLUSION

The concept of eco-theology is one of the efforts to maintain the sustainability of human civilization and earth. Eco-theology is Strategy to build environmental theology friendly, as caliph *fil ardz* human is obligated to preserve the sustainability of earth from environmental damage that leads to damage the ecosystem of earth. New understanding on caliph *fil ardz* concept and awareness of protecting the environment, human is expected to understand his role in interacting with nature and more wisely manage the nature in the earth. By this future of the earth will be better. *Wassalam*

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