
MORAL REASONING IN M.T. MISHBAH YAZDI'S THOUGHT: A CAUSAL- TRANSCENDENTAL APPROACH TO FOSTERING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

Environmental problems continue to increase and reach serious levels and are unlikely to be reversed. This condition requires the participation of the entire community to collaborate in resolving the environmental crisis. Some scientists see that one of the obstacles to the green movement's efforts is the failure of religious communities, including Muslims, to see environmental issues as important moral issues. This research offers Mishbah Yazdi's thoughts regarding moral reasoning to overcome this problem. Mishbah Yazdi's thinking includes understanding that the moral concept is something objective and can be grasped through human reasoning regarding the causal relationship between actions and the perfection of human existence. This view allows Muslims to see the importance of environmental issues as moral issues that are as important as other moral issues in religion. This ultimately has the potential to create a larger Islamic green moral movement that is needed to face the environmental crisis.

Keywords: *Environmental Crisis, Mishbah Yazdi, Moral Objectivity, Moral Causality, Moral Reasoning.*

Abstrak

Masalah lingkungan terus meningkat dan mencapai tingkat yang serius dan tidak mungkin dibalik. Kondisi ini menuntut partisipasi seluruh masyarakat untuk bertindak kolektif menyelesaikan krisis lingkungan. Beberapa ilmuwan melihat salah satu penghalang dari upaya gerakan hijau adalah kegagalan masyarakat beragama, termasuk muslim, dalam melihat isu lingkungan sebagai isu moral yang penting. Penelitian ini menawarkan pemikiran Mishbah Yazdi mengenai penalaran moral untuk mengatasi masalah itu. Pemikiran Mishbah Yazdi meliputi pemahaman bahwa konsep moral adalah sesuatu yang objektif dan dapat ditangkap melalui nalar manusia atas hubungan kausalitas antara tindakan dengan penyempurnaan wujud manusia. Pandangan tersebut memungkinkan muslim untuk melihat pentingnya isu lingkungan sebagai isu moral yang sama penting dengan isu moral lain dalam agama. Hal ini akhirnya berpotensi untuk menciptakan gerakan moral hijau islami yang lebih besar yang dibutuhkan dalam menghadapi krisis lingkungan.

Keywords: *Objektivitas Moral, Kausalitas Moral, Krisis Lingkungan, Mishbah Yazdi, Penalaran Moral.*

Introduction

Environmental problems continue to increase from year to year. Scientists even conclude that the earth's ability to support human needs continues to erode and will eventually run out (Boubaker and Omri 2022). Accumulating consumption waste and decreasing green spaces will worsen this condition. Some even predict that in a few decades, the earth will no longer be worth leaving (Cafaro 2022). At that time, it was too late for humans to regret and make efforts to overcome the environmental crisis.

The presence of technology such as social media to virtual reality also diverts attention from environmental problems. They become a refuge for humans from an environment that is no longer comfortable and healthy (Park et al. 2020). The peak of this problem

is very apparent from the emergence of virtual escapism views among the elite which at a minimum level is interpreted as spending time in front of a screen or at the most extreme level dreaming of eternal life by uploading consciousness into the digital world (Yiğitoğlu 2022).

Activists have worked hard to alert the majority of the public. They have designed various strategies to build green awareness and foster environmentally friendly behavior. This effort is known as individual intervention because it targets behavioral changes at the personal level (Grilli and Curtis 2021). People, for example, are encouraged to reduce plastic waste and use public transportation for everyday use. Digital campaigns through green behavior socialization are a small example of various activist efforts to target changes at the personal level.

Activists also intervene structurally by pushing for policy changes at all levels of government, from local to national, to provide generous incentives for environmentally friendly actions and harsh penalties for environmentally damaging ones. If personal interventions create habits, structural interventions create the acceleration needed to catch up (Grilli and Curtis 2021). Active campaigns to push for pro-environmental public policies are also conducted on social media to optimize structural interventions.

The results of the study show that both strategies have been relatively successful (Van Valkengoed et al. 2022). Environmental issues can spread and become the main topic in some time. This results in concrete programs or actions by the community. However, activists report various obstacles presented by religious understanding (Taylor 2016). On the one hand, religion rejects the green paradigm because it is seen as negating the absolute power of God. Nature works on its own without intervention from God. Natural disasters and environmental crises seem to have autonomy that goes beyond the role of God.

On the other hand, religion has built a dense narrative within itself. Theological and legal-formal narratives with historical points

from the period of the Prophet Muhammad to the time of the four great imams of the school of thought make da'wah trapped in old issues that are no longer relevant (Hammer 2016). As a result, most Muslim communities fail to recognize important issues and concern the general interests of all humans.

The most critical side that is rarely touched on regarding Muslim apathy towards environmental issues is the dominant model of moral reasoning. Muslims tend to believe in conventional ethics that blindly accept all good and bad values as what God commands (Abdullah 2020). An action is good or bad because God wills it so. This conventionalist model is a development of the mistaken theological belief in the absolute power of God and is supported by Sunni scholars such as Al-Ghazali (Abdullah 2020).

The most dangerous implication of the moral reasoning model is the limitation on the use of reason and reading of actual problems of humanity. This is very clear when reason is considered invalid and lower than the ability of God as the creator of reason (Abdullah 2020). Contemporary humanitarian problems are also often ignored because they do not appear in interpretations that tend to be based on the classical Muslim-Arab context.

This study responds to this condition by offering the moral system of M.T. Mishbah Yazdi. The Iranian philosopher has an idea about Islamic moral realism that can integrate with the Muslim worldview. This idea can be the answer to reconstructing Muslim awareness of the environmental crisis and encouraging active Muslim participation in overcoming the crisis.

The research approach used is qualitative. This approach refers to the use of narrative data in the process of revealing social phenomena to the thoughts of a figure (Bell 2003). The research method used is a literature study which means a study that explores various relevant literature and organizes and filters coherent meanings (Papaioannou et al. 2010). The main research source is based on the works of

Mishbah Yazdi and the secondary research source comes from writings that discuss his thoughts on morals.

Moral Concept

Moral Concept as a Philosophical Concept

Mishbah Yazdi is in line with the experts in Islamic philosophy. They have an important categorization of concepts in explaining the nature of moral concepts. First, there is an essential concept, namely all concepts that arise from questions about the 'what' of something. Second, there is a philosophical concept that arises from a comparison or abstraction of the interaction of various objects in reality.

Starting from there, all moral concepts can be classified into philosophical concepts. Moral concepts such as good, bad, should, and should not, are constructed by the human mind based on reasoning about the consequences or goals contained in a behavior. This concept can be used to designate an act of charity in reality as good and should or to designate the behavior of stealing as bad (Yazdi 2013).

Understanding the concept of morality as a philosophical concept is very important. Because it explains how the process of human knowledge is in achieving those concepts. That the concept of morality is not completely disconnected from reality. The existence of the concept is indeed in the mind, but human actions in reality are the basis of reasoning and can also be characterized by moral concepts.

At this point, it can be seen that the objectivity of moral concepts and values is important to be built in the context of Islamic green morality. The objectivity of moral concepts and values bridges the interaction between Muslim reason and the objective reality outside that continues to change beyond tradition. Muslims who recognize moral objectivity will think not only textually, but also contextually

thanks to the recognition of the presence of morals outside the abstract human mental realm.

Relational/Correlative Necessity

According to Mishbah Yazdi, the moral concept can then be viewed as a descriptive expression because it states a relational necessity between cause and effect or in a moral context, between purpose and action (Yazdi 2013). The meaning of relational necessity can be found in everyday sentences such as 'You must throw garbage in its place so that the environment is clean' or 'Turn off the lights at night to save electricity'.

In both sentences, there is an assumption about the necessary cause-effect relationship. The first example assumes the necessity between the cause 'throwing out the trash' and 'healthy environment' as the effect. The second example shows the belief about the certainty of the cause 'turning off the lights will produce the effect of 'saving electricity'.

As the relation between cause and effect in the statement question, the descriptive function of moral concepts explains one aspect of the nature of moral concepts. Moral concepts work as symbols or expressions of a 'real relation existing between human intentional actions and real moral goals' (Yazdi 2013a). Moral concepts describe the ideal reality that is desired which can be achieved by certain moral actions (Yazdi 1999b).

The relational necessity of morality is the moral side that is widely captured by those who approach morality without religious texts or beliefs. They start from the belief that morality is like a natural fact that can be revealed by rational observation and abstraction. This is the reason why secularists are much more sensitive and enthusiastic about green campaigns.

The problem is that it must be realized that the idea of moral relational necessity does not negate God's power. This idea does not state that God has no role in constructing the relationship between

actions and moral values. Moral relational necessity is something created by God that is waiting to be revealed by human reason.

Conventional Rational Moral Normativity

A major moral philosophical issue that Mishbah Yazdi responds to is moral normativity. It is as if the presence of the concept of 'must' confirms the normative function of morals. That is, 'must' express a person's subjective view in a command or prohibition statement such as in the sentence 'You must recycle!' or 'Don't just throw away used cooking oil!' (Yazdi 2013a). In both examples of these sentences, it is understood that they only describe a certain desire of the speaker which is arbitrary.

Moral sentences are considered normative sentences because they are considered to only express individual determinations that are not related to reality. This is acceptable on the condition that there is no rational consideration and connection between morals and reality. However, the fact is that (Yazdi 1999b) moral sentences are not entirely arbitrary or merely emotional expressions of individuals (Yazdi 2013a). Again, there is a relative necessity assumed by the speaker who does not explicitly state the purpose or consequences of a particular moral action.

Requiring recycling in the above example has an assumption formed by real experience that recycling can reduce waste which then reduces the burden on the environment. In short, morals are not constructed by humans from baseless subjectivity (Yazdi 2013a; Yazdi 1999b). The sentence 'must' be a descriptive sentence that indirectly states the moral consequences.

The idea that morality is conventional and rational indicates that morality can be accessed through human reason. This reason is bestowed by God upon humans so that humans can utilize it as best they can. This means that Muslims who ignore the rational side of morality are servants of God who are not grateful for His gifts.

In the context of Islamic green activism, this idea also emphasizes the importance of Muslims sharpening their reason. The ability to think logically, and systematically and understand cause and effect in nature are important skills that Muslims must have. These skills will enlighten the eyes of Muslims so that they can see how critical the environmental problems that are currently happening are.

Moral values

Moral Values: Relative or Absolute?

The issue of moral relativism has attracted the attention of Mishbah Yazdi. He believes that moral values have absolute and constant properties, not relative. Three types of moral relativism are most prominently reviewed by Mishbah Yazdi. They are descriptive relativism, meta-ethical relativism, and normative relativism.

Mishbah Yazdi's criticism of descriptive relativism is that they fail to distinguish between factual beliefs and moral beliefs (Yazdi 2013a). It is possible for people in one culture to act differently but have the same goals or moral values as those in another culture. It is unusual for Eskimos to kill their parents in other cultures. However, what they do also has a purpose as a form of love and respect or for the eternal happiness of their parents. At this point, the universal moral values behind their actions are revealed (Maolani 2023).

Meta-ethical relativism is also proposed by opponents of moral absolutes. According to them, there is no stable rational method that can produce a moral judgment. Moral judgments can even contradict each other on two things that have opposite moral values (Yazdi 2013a). They mean to say that the way of stating goodness in one moral view or the view of a group of people can be different from each other, but each justifies the truth of their respective moral values.

Responding to meta-ethical and normative relativism, Mishbah Yazdi stated that the assessment of universal moral absolutes often

uses a particular argument. He reminded us that the opposite condition can also occur by stating a particular proposition that refutes the universal proposition of moral relativity (Yazdi 2013a). The fact is that what is done only explains part of the contextual moral values rather than denying moral absolutes. He then challenged that a complete induction be carried out on all moral values before it can be ascertained that they are relative (Maolani 2023).

In the context of meta-ethical relativism, Mishbah Yazdi specifically reminds us that descriptive moral differences cannot be used as justification for meta-ethical relativism. This is because descriptive differences do not imply the truth of all different moral values, nor do they explain that moral values are uprooted from reality (Yazdi 2013a). This is like what happens in physics, where the existence of various theories does not mean that all of them are necessarily true.

Moral relativism also relies on the proposition that every moral statement comes from human subjectivity. Meanwhile, that subjectivity will change along with the social dynamics surrounding the subject (human) (Yazdi 2013a). Mishbah Yazdi easily shows that moral subjectivity is not entirely individual, but rather is the result of human reason's assessment of things that can cause them to reach perfection as the law of reality for their species (Yazdi 2013a).

These moral absolute states that morality is something that can be easily recognized because it does not change. In the context of nature or the environment, the absoluteness of the good value of preserving nature is something that has existed for generations. In almost all cultures, such views exist and color the morals of that cultural group. The same thing exists in Islam.

Various statements and examples of actions were given by the Prophet Muhammad regarding environmentally friendly behavior. For example, he scolded his companions who ate excessively until their stomachs became the graves of livestock. He also used to turn off the fire at night to save energy. Thus, it shows that there are

environmentally friendly Islamic values, which have existed since the beginning, but failed to be recognized by Muslims themselves.

Moral Absoluteness and Moral Relativity in Conditions

Mishbah Yazdi's general and final response to the debate on moral relativism and absolutism can be summarized in the following quote:

...all moral values are absolute and follow the instinct of individual consent. At the same time, we recognize that some moral laws are relative and bound by certain conditions (Yazdi 2013a).

A good explanation was then given by Mishbah Yazdi through the analogy of the boiling point of water. In real conditions, water will boil at a temperature of one hundred degrees Celsius. This is absolute. However, when there is a condition where the water is not pure or the air pressure is more or less than one atmosphere, the boiling point of the water will change. From here it can be concluded that the 'deviant' or relative conditions do not change the absoluteness of the law because it changes it with additional conditions (Yazdi 2013a).

We can develop an analogy in moral issues. Take, for example, 'honesty is good' is absolute. The fact that there are conditions where honesty causes people to fight to kill each other does not change the absoluteness of the goodness of being honest. Because there is an additional condition that makes the moral subject in the new condition not just 'honest'.

In addition to being related to the relative conditions of moral values, Mishbah Yazdi also explains the nature of the moral subject. 'Honest' does not have a referent but rather an utterance that comes out of a human mouth. As for 'honest', it is a concept used to assess when an utterance is by its external reality. Mishbah Yazdi uses the term 'perceptual predicate' (*intizā'i*) to refer to the character of the

predicate attached to a human action when it is referred to as a moral concept (e.g. 'honest', 'fair', 'helpful', and so on).

The problem then is that 'good' cannot be essentially predicated on a moral subject (or 'honest' in this example), without a middle term. The middle term is an abstract condition that is sometimes not explicitly recognized without prior rational analysis (Yazdi 2013a). The concept of 'honest', for example, requires a middle term in the form of 'honesty for the benefit of many people's or honesty that increases self-esteem.

The last explanation confirms the fact that moral values are absolute. This can be understood if someone finds conditions that bind the absolute conditions of certain moral values. The attachment of moral values to these conditions is also what sometimes makes them have different values in certain conditions. However, this does not indicate relativism in morals but rather the absoluteness of morals that applies even in conditions that are different from the general conditions.

Moral values are also absolute because they explain reality as it is, not merely human subjectivity that can change (Yazdi 1999b). The absoluteness of morality as an explanation for reality in question here is that moral subjects become the causes that cause humans to move towards a state of perfection that Mishbah Yazdi calls approaching Allah (*taqārub*) (Yazdi 2013a).

An analysis of the entire moral views of Mishbah Yazdi yields a discovery of a form of moral reasoning that is causalistic and transcendental. This reasoning is based on a realistic ontology and acknowledges the existence of objective laws of cause and effect in external reality.

Reality is existence, form, externality, and all words that refer to the same meaning. Reality encompasses everything, and only nothing is outside reality. Reality is tiered, from the reality that is necessarily Existent and All-Rich, namely God, whose presence does

not require any other cause. Reality then chains to humans and all existence as possible Being, and thanks to God they become actual. This ontological chain of cause and effect is something objective both in terms of everything that exists and the law of cause and effect that works because of His will (Maolani 2023).

Morals, like reality, are a philosophical concept (Yazdi 1999b). This means that morals are produced by reason in the process of examining the relationship between various existences. The relationship that gives rise to morals is the causal relationship. This relationship can be detailed as follows: namely good moral values when they cause human perfection or closeness to God and bad moral values when they cause the opposite.

The concept of morality means that it is produced by human reason with an objective study of causality. However, the final result achieved is not merely pleasure but the perfection of being, the perfection of which is impossible except by approaching or leading to the most perfect being, namely Allah Swt. This is what makes Mishbah Yazdi's moral reasoning not only causal but also transcendental.

This causality is the same as the causality of the natural sciences believed by both empiricists and the West. The objection to moral causality as something relative can be immediately refuted if moral reasoning also identifies the conditions for morality. Just as water boils at a temperature of 100 degrees Celsius *on condition* that it is at a certain atmospheric pressure, morality also has conditions that make something have different values but do not necessarily make the value relative (Yazdi 2013a).

Mishbah Yazdi's moral reasoning is an alternative form of reasoning that is greatly needed by Muslims today. Moral reasoning that is both causalistic and transcendental will help Muslims see contemporary moral problems more precisely without abandoning the basic principle of religion, namely tauhid, which is at the heart of their religious beliefs.

Causality and Morality

The positions of both seem to differ quite significantly in terms of the relationship between causality and morals. In general, Mishbah Yazdi explores the relationship between the law of causality and morals. Chalmers himself only discusses the view of utilitarianism as one of the moral schools that is very focused on consequences or the results of actions. Chalmers does not explore further the implications of causality on moral norms or values meta-ethically but only describes morals normatively.

Chalmers could have gone further, had he continued the argument about the equivalence between virtual reality and non-virtual reality. He has mentioned that virtual reality also has laws of cause and effect, both those that apply in virtual reality as a whole and those that interact with non-virtual reality (Chalmers 2023).

As for Mishbah Yazdi, he goes into the issue of causality and morals in a very deep area. He sees human reasoning on moral values as reasoning on objective causes and effects. Furthermore, Mishbah Yazdi states that prescriptions do not apply to moral statements because moral statements are descriptions that are sometimes summarized or formed into more persuasive or instructive sentences so that they have the power to encourage more effective behavior.

The fact of decline of Muslim thinking has been widely analyzed by various scholars (Kuru 2019; Chaney 2016). However, not many have been able to provide criticism that precisely reveals the factors in the Muslim mind that hinder them from thinking rationally. Mishbah Yazdi indirectly reveals the hidden factors that eventually pave the way for the development of new solutions to the problem of the worldview and scientific thinking methods of Muslims.

Moral statements are descriptive statements because they explain various good actions and ought actions (or the opposite of both) that are related to causality. That all good actions will bring humans or cause humans to perfection. Likewise, bad actions will distance or prevent humans from perfection. Both of these things

are based on good actions as causes and self-improvement as effects where the cause and effect are objective facts.

What Mishbah Yazdi justified was a response to the dominant thought in Ghazalian Islamic morality. Al-Ghazali rejected causality and argued that God who wills all consequences is necessary or disappears. Cause and effect in objective reality is seen as a deviation from faith because it embeds nature or creatures as containing causes and effects that are independent of God (Abdullah 2020). Other scholars added that Al-Ghazali's concerns arose because he understood that God was like a watchmaker who no longer had power after creating. Thus, degrading the vast and unlimited power of God.

Al-Ghazali himself indeed denied the metaphysical structure of Islam, especially Aristotelian, along with its various implications in morals (Abdullah 2020). In his works, Al-Ghazali also explained various philosophical errors that caused them to be judged as heretics or infidels. *Al-Munqidh* is perhaps a study conducted by Al-Ghazali in which he refuted the validity of rational-demonstrative philosophical epistemology and justified irfan and moral guides (*shaykh*) as in the tradition of Sufism (Abdullah 2020).

This is different from Mishbah Yazdi who does not negate causality as something objective in reality. Of course, it can be further understood that Al-Ghazali does not support the concept of Divine justice and justifies the view that Mishbah Yazdi calls conventionalism. The determination in question is not made by humans, but by God (Yazdi 2013a). This means that something is good or bad because God has determined them so and not because they are inherently good or bad.

Interestingly, Al-Ghazali has the view that axiology or ethics is far more important than epistemology or science. More specifically, he believes that the value of science must be seen based on the usefulness of that science in guiding humans to moral behavior that can help achieve eternal happiness (Abdullah 2020).

Al-Ghazali's position is related to Mishbah Yazdi's view that moral law is a description of the reality of cause and effect that leads to the perfection of the human soul. The difference is that Ayatollah explicitly states this while Al-Ghazali justifies knowledge, especially religious knowledge, as the greatest knowledge because it can be the cause of humans achieving perfection in heaven later.

Ontology, Worldview, and Islamic Scientific Method

Amin Abdullah assessed that Al Ghazali's views on ethics and science have an impact to this day on the thinking power of Muslims. Amin Abdullah views the people as having difficulty in building cosmopolitan ethics that appreciate the unity of all individuals under the umbrella of humanity. This is mainly because rationalism has not developed much. Many people abandon their reason in seeking moral laws in reality because they are quickly satisfied and surrender to God's moral conventions which are considered complete and thorough (Abdullah 2020). Such people will have difficulty in dealing with ethical problems that are so dynamic and so far from the context and characteristics of the social problems faced compared to those in the past.

The impact of the dulling of reason is increasingly understandable when Al-Ghazali's philosophical views are not just a theory (Abdullah 2020). The philosophical views he created become a worldview, or a hegemonic system of thought that shapes the religious and daily attitudes of Muslims, especially Sunnis or Ash'ariyah. Such a worldview has great potential to hinder the capacity of Muslims to conduct scientific analysis in the fields of science where causality is a basic principle.

Mishbah Yazdi's ethical view seems to have a completely different impetus or impact. He emphasizes moral concepts as philosophical concepts that have objective reality, are absolute, and can be explored or constructed using human reason (Yazdi 2013a). This view clearly makes those who agree to be critically constructive able to build

ethical norms that are appropriate according to the reality of the times and the moral cases faced without the need for blind imitation.

When considering that virtual reality is a world 'without barriers' that allows for broad interaction of all people from various ethnicities, tribes, religions, then Mishbah Yazdi's rational moral view becomes more relevant. Muslims with a constructive moral way of thinking will be much better able to communicate with a diverse and dynamic society than Muslims who are rigid and only passive when they encounter various moral values.

Moral Reasoning and Virtual Reality

One very crucial point of difference is in moral reasoning. This seems to happen because Mishbah Yazdi and Chalmers do not have the same attitude in the realm of metaethics. Mishbah Yazdi clearly digs deeper into how humans can know good and bad values beyond the norms built by humans.

Borrowing Abid Jabiri's term, what Mishbah Yazdi did was an attempt to explore active reason and formed reason (Shobirin and Yusup 2023). Active reason is the potential or capacity of humans to reason themselves, while formed reason is the paradigm or framework that guides the reasoning process. Active reason is natural, while formed reason is man-made (Al-Jabiri 2003).

Mishbah Yazdi shows that humans have an innate capacity to know the value of good and bad as a cause that results in the perfection or destruction of the human self. The same capacity is used by humans in observing the causes and effects in the material world. This makes the moral position merely equivalent from an epistemological perspective when compared to the natural or exact sciences.

The problem is, Mishbah Yazdi realized that correct moral reasoning cannot occur due to a mistaken ontology and worldview. Most Muslims understand that cause and effect is a false law that if

accepted would negate God's power. This rejection then developed into a conventionalistic moral view, that what is good or bad is because God has determined it so. Here humans cannot know for themselves what is good and bad except through sacred texts, or in the Ghazalian context, can be replaced by the role of a sheikh who guides the path of purification of a student's soul and provides guidance on true moral values.

The reader may guess that Mishbah Yazdi's differences with the proponents of conventionalist religious moral ethics stem from one of the religious schools they follow. However, rather than entering into a purely theological debate and leading to a dialectical model in kalam, Mishbah Yazdi manages to draw this discussion into philosophy and provide argumentative evidence.

This power is not only useful in overcoming the errors of the ontological and moral views of most Muslims through penetration into the realm of theology, but it is also useful in building dialogue with other thoughts that do not have faith in religion. Mishbah Yazdi's thoughts are enlightenment for most Muslims as well as a provision for them to interact constructively with Western philosophical thoughts that are said to be more advanced and critical. This study shows that Mishbah Yazdi outperforms Chalmers in terms of discourse and philosophical arguments both in ontology and morals.

Furthermore, Mishbah Yazdi can criticize the dominant formed reason that hegemonizes the Muslim way of thinking. He does not discuss why the formed reason that is occasionalistic, and conventionalistic morals can harden and tend to take root today (Killoren and Sparks 2024; Koca 2023). However, he managed to outline a sharp criticism of moral theories that are common in the West and Islam. From this side, it can be said that Mishbah Yazdi succeeded in answering the challenges or concerns raised by both Abid Jabiri and Amin Abdullah.

The presence of virtual reality will certainly be responded to with stuttering by those who hold conventionalistic moral views.

Mishbah Yazdi can present a descriptive-causalistic moral view that helps Muslims construct new moral values in virtual reality. Of course, this is accompanied by guidance from the holy text of the Qur'an. The difference is that they are not *awkward* in searching for certain moral values that in the context of the revelation of the holy book may not have been explicitly responded to. Instead, humans can immediately explore universal moral values through the verses that are spread out and can be accessed by everyone.

Virtual reality is not a completely new reality and does not have the features of non-virtual reality. Likewise, virtual reality is not a completely separate reality, or independent of virtual reality. Thus, Mishbah Yazdi does not need to face obstacles in absorbing moral values into virtual reality as offered by some researchers (Montefiore and Podosky 2024). Epistemologically, humans can construct moral values without having to be trapped rigidly in moral values outside virtual reality.

Moral Reasoning and Ecological Problems

The idea of causal moral reasoning built by Mishbah Yazdi is the key to answering the concerns of many scholars or thinkers over the general apathy of Muslim society towards environmental issues (Romdloni and Djazilan 2019; Rosyid 2022). Muslims were previously considered to be ignorant and even involved in environmental destruction. The haphazard construction of houses of worship on green open spaces, torturous animal husbandry practices, and waste from religious studies are some of these ironic facts (Rosyid 2022).

This does not mean ignoring the fact that many Muslims also understand the importance of water catchment areas, raising animals fairly, and mitigating waste. However, the first facts are more dominant than the second. Various green movements with Islamic platforms have emerged. However, their numbers are still very small and have not been able to make a significant change in overcoming the environmental crisis (Imamah 2017).

The cause of Muslim apathy is clearly due to the persistence of the occasionalist view in ontology and morals (Sabri 2022; Bargeron 2007). This view sees that damage to the earth is God's will. Real human actions that damage the environment are not correlated with natural disasters. Rather, it is God's will that determines whether a natural disaster will occur or not. This occasionalist view is very dangerous because it makes Muslims not see natural facts as God's warning signs that must be responded to by their actions as well.

They are difficult to be inspired by environmental campaigns because for them morality is not something scientific and is produced by induction of real cause and effect in external reality. For them, morality is what is explicitly stated in the scriptures. The warning already exists, but the tendency to follow the interpretation of classical scholars who do not have the scalpel of natural science causes the warning to be more associated with ritual or vertical piety. Likewise, social or horizontal piety is only reasoned as a form of piety to fellow human beings. Whereas horizontal piety must also apply to fellow living creatures such as animals and plants.

In many cases, Muslims fail to respond appropriately to environmental problems. In addition to destroying the environment, they instead face the disasters caused by vertical rituals. Flash floods that occur due to throwing garbage in rivers cannot be overcome simply by increasing sunnah worship and remembering God. The river remains shallow due to piles of garbage and the water continues to overflow into residential areas. The correct solution is to improve the depth of the river and stop throwing garbage there. However, as an analysis of the dominant reasoning of Muslims, it will be difficult to realize an accurate solution. They only believe that the disaster is a convention of God that is beyond the power or reach of humans.

Mishbah Yazdi's causal moral reasoning can break the deadlock of the environmental rescue agenda among Muslim green activists. They must move from simply stating the dangers of the natural conditions in crisis or simply preaching the goodness of

environmentally friendly actions (Mardhiah et al. 2014; Adawiah et al. 2022). They must shift to education or habituation of a causal way of thinking that automatically and comprehensively helps Muslims see the complexity of environmental problems as the estuary of bad human actions towards the environment. The causality of actions and natural disasters does not mean eliminating God's power. But rather to complete our knowledge of His power which indeed regulates nature as it is. Nature as it is is bound by conscious human actions that will be accounted for both in this world and in the hereafter.

This analysis recognizes that the problem of green education often has minimal impact in both scale and time frame. The reason is of course because the target of green education is limited to specific types of behavior or specific disasters. If Muslims were equipped with causal moral reasoning, they would be able to realize the evil of various environmentally damaging actions and the threat of disaster as a result of those actions.

Virtual reality can be used as a tool to grow or hone causal reasoning. Through the simulation of a natural environment, humans can be given the freedom to perform various actions related to nature (Scurati et al. 2021; Lee et al. 2022). Virtual reality then simulates the chain of effects that produce the consequences of human actions through dramatic yet actual visualizations as they are. This will create a causal scheme in the human mind which ultimately grows and forms the causal moral reasoning needed.

Mishbah Yazdi's casuistic-transcendental moral reasoning is also important in answering virtual reality escapism (Subudhi et al. 2020). Dreamers of eternal life in a simulated world must realize that virtual reality is a derivative reality that depends on non-virtual reality. The destruction of nature and all its contents, like the sunnah of Allah, is impossible for them to avoid because the destruction will then destroy the computer machine that simulates virtual reality. Returning to religion is the ultimate conclusion of moral reasoning

that has reached the awareness that the final result or goal of everything is the Most Perfect, namely God.

Conclusion

The moral system of Mishbah Yazdi is based on several main ideas. First, good morals as concepts and as values are something objective. Morals are not merely subjective human expressions that depend on individual likes and dislikes. Second, something that is morally good is something that has a cause-and-effect relationship between an action and the perfection of the individual. The moral value of an action can be evaluated based on these criteria.

This moral system is very effective in answering the problem of minimal environmental awareness in the Muslim soul. They can recognize the act of caring for the environment as a good act because it creates the availability of a living environment that supports human life. As a result, humans can grow, worship, and perfect themselves in the presence of a comfortable and healthy environment.

Another important aspect of the Mishbah Yazdi moral system is that it equips individuals to build rational moral dialogue with all groups. Based on this research, it is recommended that muslim communities incorporate Mishbah Yazdi's moral reasoning to enhance their capacity to deal with societal modern issues. Muslims can work together with adherents of other religions and even atheists to construct new moral values and concepts that meet contemporary social needs.

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