



In Proper Balance

Eco-friendly Mining in Islamic Countries

By:

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انتشارات آوای قلم

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تقدیم به

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به فردایی بهتر

می اندیشند.

مقدمه ناشر

سپاس بیکران پروردگار را که به انسان قدرت اندیشیدن بخشید، قدرتی که در مقایسه با سایر موجودات باعث شده است که انسان هرگز به امکانات محدود خود اکتفا نکند. مکاتب الهی، انسان را موجودی کمال طلب و پویا می‌دانند که جهت‌گیری او به سوی خالقش می‌باشد. از جمله راه‌های تقرب به خداوند علم است، علمی که زیبایی عقل است. علمی که در دریای بیکران آن هر ذره نشانی از آفریدگار است و هر چه علم انسان افزون گردد، تقریبش بیشتر می‌شود. از این روست که به علم‌اندوزی و دانش‌آموزی توجهی بی‌نظیر مبذول گردیده است. اما علم‌آموزی به ابزاری نیاز دارد که مهم‌ترین آن کتاب است و انتشار نتیجه مطالعات پژوهشگران و اندیشمندان پاسخگوی این نیاز خواهد بود.

جهت تحقق این امر و گام برداشتن در جهت ارتقای پایه‌های علم و دانش و رشد و شکوفایی استعدادها انتشار کتاب را یکی از اهداف خود قرار داده و انتظار داریم با حمایت‌های معنوی هموطنان گرامی بتوانیم گام‌های مؤثر و ارزشمندی را برداریم. گرچه تلاش خواهد شد در حد دانش و تجربه اندکمان کارهایی بدون اشکال تقدیم حضورتان گردد، ولی اذعان داریم که راهنمایی‌های شما عزیزان می‌تواند ما را در ارتقای کیفی کتاب راهگشا باشد لذا همیشه منتظر پیشنهادات و راهنمایی‌های شما خواهیم بود.

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مدیر مسئول انتشارات آوای قلم

Foreword

For many people, the term sustainability and sustainability concepts, such as those of the United Nations, are not included in their daily thinking, decision-making and actions. They are concepts from a different ‘world’. They do not concern most people, especially when the most ruling political elites and economic elites do not adhere to them where they are concerned. The point of sustainable actions remains unclear. Questions such as “What is the meaning of it?” and “Why should I do something when the ‘most decision makers do not?’” are raised. Consequently, the idea of sustainability evolves into an illusion; it loses its meaningful character. For the ‘man of the street’, who is not familiar with the United Nations, who uses firewood to survive and who does not comprehend abstract concepts, sustainability has to be rooted differently to be fully grasped.

Thinking, decision-making and actions occur within a cultural context. In the process, the creation of the future, today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow are vital. Humans reconstruct their future constantly. The ‘world to be’ is a product of our prospective thinking, our decision-making and of our own actions.

Nowadays, we are aware of the fact that environmental and ecological issues are not natural problems but cultural, human-made issues and consequences of our lifestyles. Their solutions require culturally influenced answers that are connected to religious practices as well. The practice of a religion excludes every human’s responsibility for the preservation of the ‘creation’, if the thought of sustainability on a daily basis is not applied. Consequently, sustainable actions as a responsible handling of the creation is a matter concerning anyone who feels committed to or affiliated with any religion.

Visions, strategies and actions are aspects that should be considered by the leadership of institutions such as governmental departments, public authorities or companies in order to close the gap between the status quo and a desired target-state in the future. Consequently, projects, undertakings and visions can certainly be “conceptualized through religion”. Particularly, since a concept of sustainability without any rooting in a religion may provoke a fate that is purely based on a technocratic concept without any belonging.

Islam excels the concept of religion. It creates a life style that its followers are supposed to obey to on a daily basis. As a practiced religion, it provides followers of Islam with guidance in their decision-making, thinking and actions, and particularly their shaping of the future. Reading the Holy Quran, you will come across precise instructions for sustainable actions with regard to humankind and nature, the creation.

Indeed, Quran even includes acting sustainably as a responsibility to be upheld by every follower. Reading the Quran inspires you to pause for a moment and to reflect: “Are we on the right track? Are we building the future that we desire as our tomorrow? Can we continue with our ‘business as usual’? Or do we have to change our behaviour, our rules in dealing with each other and with nature? Can there be an Islamic influenced affluence model? Can there be a possibility for upholding sustainable thinking, decision-making and acting without any constraints relating to a globally capital driven world?”

Followers recognize God as sustainable. He is everlasting and ageless. He cannot be depleted by mankind. As Quran explains, Allah is omnipresent. He gives humans the active task to care for His creation. Nature as part of God’s creation transcends the aspect of a resource. Nature should not be used to legitimize powerful exploiters. According to the Quran, nature contains a worth that needs to be sustained. The Quran unmistakably elaborates how Muslims should preserve the creation - and how not to. Using resources responsibly and minimizing possible damage is, so to speak, a principle that can be derived from the Quran.

In his dissertation *Sustainable Strategic Management of Sangam Iron Ore Mines in Iran*”, Ravanbakhsh Amiri explained the first interconnections between the SD Concept and Islam in relation to mining. Since the topic was very exceptional, we decided to write a separate book, namely this one, and discuss this subject in greater depth.

We have named the book *In Proper Balance*, based on Surah Al-Hijr, Verse 19 and other parts of the Quran. According to our perceptions, the Quran forms a harmonious and futuristic setting. The focus is set on consensus and fair social interactions, rather than competition. The externalization of costs adversely affecting third parties, which is typical for capitalism, which creates ‘winners’ and ‘losers’, is precisely not anchored in the Quran. The common good is more important than personal interest. It is about creating a reasonable ‘win-win situation’ for everyone involved. As defined by the Quran, a ‘good’ Muslim is a responsible environmental preservationist and environmental protector. Even though the term sustainability may be

unknown to them, they act sustainably.

Ravanbakhsh Amiri's background, as well as mine, lies in mining and mineral industries. The supply of raw materials for humanity is impossible without mining. Its products are the foundation of prosperity and social community. If mining "pits" did not exist, we also would not have cities, mosques, churches, technologies, jewellery or global trading. Nevertheless, we would also have fewer conflicts, vain waste, environmental destruction or some dangers for human lives.

Particularly in times of a steadily increasing demand for resources in light of a growing global population, we have to ask ourselves: "How much is the fair share for everybody?" Or, in other words: "How can we shape mining, without jeopardizing the future of future generations?" The Quran gives directions "in proper balance". As a follower, you do not have to tread the path, but you would have to personally live with the consequences of deciding 'am I rather a good Muslim or not?' These concepts cannot be grasped scientifically.

Many individuals like trained clerics, preachers, followers, scientists, non-professionals as well as politicians, economic leaders, clans and families from all over the world interpret the Quran and other religious scriptures. We too have interpreted the Quran. In case our interpretations are incomplete, we sincerely apologise. We are not religious scholars, or theologians. Ravanbakhsh Amiri, as a manager in the field of mining, aims for the best in relation to the preserving the creation and his country's future. Furthermore, he is aware of the practical challenges. As a scientist with more than 20 years of experience and an ever-growing interest in sustainability in mining, I will always help him with word and deed, if needed. Because I believe having a better world should be the goal of everyone regardless of religion, gender, position, or academic rank.

Jürgen Kretschmann

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We thank the Ava-e-Ghلام Publication that gave us the opportunity to publish our book and put our ideas up for discussion. We hope that many other publications regarding this important topic will be published in the future.

Last but not least, we thank you, our readers. Thank you for holding our book in your hands. Thank you for your interest. We hope we will fulfil your expectations.

Jürgen Kretschmann

Ravanbakhsh Amiri