Islamic Environmentalism

Activism in the United States and
Great Britain

Rosemary Hancock

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Islamic Environmentalism examines Muslim involvement in environmentalism in the United States and Great Britain. The book focuses upon Muslim activists and Islamic organizations that approach environmentalism as a religious duty: offering environmental readings of Islamic scriptures and integrating religious ritual and practice with environmental action.

Honing in on the insights of social movement theory, Hancock predominantly examines the activism and experience of Muslims involved in environmentalism and bases her research on interviews with activists in the United States and Great Britain. Indeed, the reader is first provided with an insightful analysis of the ways in which Muslim activists interpret and present environmentalism – diagnosing causes of environmental crises, proposing solutions, and motivating other Muslims into activism. This is followed by a discussion of the importance of affective ties, emotion, and group culture in motivating and sustaining Muslim involvement in environmental activism.

A timely volume which draws attention to the synthesis of political activism and religious practice amongst Muslim environmentalists, this book will be of interest to undergraduates, postgraduates, and postdoctoral researchers interested in fields such as Islamic Studies, Sociology of Religion, Social Movement Theory, and Environmental Studies.

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Contents

Preface

In 2001, at the age of 15, I participated in my first-ever protest march. On a Saturday in early spring, a small group of school friends and I joined 10,000 protesters to march down Queen Street in Auckland, New Zealand. The march was against GMO (genetically modified organisms) and demonstrated the upsurge of public opposition to genetic engineering (GE) in New Zealand following a commission of inquiry into the safety of GE, publicity over a number of GE-related scandals, and the extension of a government moratorium on the release of GMOs. I had only a shallow understanding of the GMO debate. What I knew was that going to a protest seemed cool; it reminded me of the 1960s counter-culture and the anti-Vietnam War protests, an era I romanticised.

Marching down Queen Street, I was fascinated by the people surrounding me in the march, from the serious middle-aged professionals, to the university students with dreadlocks, to the people in a walking drum-circle, and their friends and hangers-on dancing around them with abandon.

All these people seemed to my naïve eyes unconcerned with social expectations, passionate and utterly sincere in their convictions. There was a rally at the end of the march, but I was more interested in watching the students play guitars and hackey-sac than in listening to the speeches. I signed a few petitions and decided right then that I was an environmentalist.

I never did fully understand the GMO debate. For the next 15 years I continued to sporadically attend protest marches. I never joined an environmental group. I would go to the meetings once, maybe twice, and then never return. The same happened with the socialist groups and the pro-refugee groups in Australia in my twenties. I consoled myself that my heart was in the right place. I had the right *beliefs*; I was just somehow lacking the motivation to *act* upon them.

This book is about the people who succeed where I have failed. Those passionate and sincere people I admired when I was 15 years old. The people who *do* find the motivation to act.

Acknowledgements

1 Introduction

Assuredly the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater (matter) than the creation of men: Yet most men understand not.

(Qur'ān, 40.57)[1]

Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He will make them taste the consequences of some of their own actions so that they may turn back.

(Qur'ān, 30:41)

Environmental activists are well-known for their savvy use of media and publicity. Chaining themselves to trees, blockading railway lines, boarding oil rigs and ships, hanging banners from landmarks – environmental direct action is no stranger to newspaper headlines and news bulletins. In November 2005, *The Guardian UK* published another story detailing an environmental protest. Activists wearing snorkels and flippers in the centre of London's Brick Lane demonstrated for awareness of the effects of climate change. This protest was small and tame compared to the daring and dangerous actions performed by groups like Greenpeace. What made it newsworthy were the activists themselves: all were Muslims and members of an explicitly Islamic environmental group. Under the snorkels, two of the activists were women wearing *hijāb* – the Islamic headscarf. Brick Lane is in an area of London with a large concentration of South Asian migrants – it is famous for Bangladeshi and Indian restaurants. The protest aimed to draw attention to the effect rising sea levels will have on low-lying Bangladesh.

Coverage of the protest by *The Guardian* was significant – we are accustomed to seeing Islamic activists in the media, but invariably, those activists are religious extremists or members of violent terror groups. A Muslim environmentalist seems, in this light, to be a contradiction in terms: common stereotypes would have us believe environmentalists are politically and socially progressive, in contrast to the assumption that Muslims are conservative (if not outright regressive). Assumptions such as these misrepresent Muslims (and I might add, environmentalists). Some Muslims do indeed choose to interpret their religion to support violent politically motivated acts. Yet others, like the environmentalists in Brick Lane, mobilise Islam in support of progressive causes.

Islam is not a 'singular and undifferentiated religion' (Mandaville 2001, xi) – there is significant regional and cultural variation, differences between sects and between the schools of jurisprudence within these sects. We use the words 'Islam' or 'Islamic' to describe a wide variety of symbols, narratives, and rituals that are in some way imbued with religious significance for Muslims. Yet, we cannot assume there is one cohesive religion or religious tradition from which these symbols, narratives, and rituals emerged. Similarly, Muslims themselves are not one homogenous community, and there is no fixed way to be 'Muslim'. In this book 'Muslim' refers to those who self-identify as such – it does not reflect adherence to any particular set of doctrinal beliefs, schools of law, or orthodox practices. In taking this route I emphasise 'Muslim subjectivity' over any pre-determined or essentialised 'Muslim identity' (Mandaville 2001, 2).

Environmentalism, too, is not one homogenous movement. Radical movements such as EarthFirst! or the Earth Liberation Front appear to have little in common with neighbourhood tree-planting groups. Where some environmentalists preach for radical social, political, and economic change, others may retreat to eco-communities. Still others may believe that using energy-efficient lightbulbs, bio-fuels, and recycling is enough to address environmental crises. If there is a core set of beliefs held in common across the environmental movement it is, arguably, that (i) there are significant environmental problems, (ii) that humankind has some responsibility for causing these problems and (iii) we have a responsibility to solve the problems. Subscribing to these basic claims is sufficient to call oneself an 'environmentalist'. Thus, environmentalists are found in conservative political parties and in industrial manufacturing companies, as well as in grassroots social movements or nature groups.

While we may not usually associate Islam with environmentalism, this book demonstrates how a small group of activists synthesise environmental belief with their Islamic faith. In the lives of these environmentalists, Islamic practice and environmental activism become inextricably intertwined. Indeed, Muslim environmentalists speak of a 'conversion' to environmentalism – once they see environmentalism within Islamic scripture and traditions, it is impossible to separate the two. A central claim of this book is that the distinction usually made between the 'political' and 'religious', although analytically useful, does not in fact represent the lived experience of Muslim environmentalists or religious people more generally. Muslim environmentalists do not 'co-opt' religion into their activism to serve environmental goals, as most social movement theory portrays. Rather, they incorporate religious ritual, symbolism, and narrative into their activism in such a way that *activism becomes religious practice*. The activists are simultaneously Muslims and environmentalists, and the relationship between their Islamic faith and environmental activism is symbiotic: environmental and religious goals are so well integrated that, in many cases, they are indistinguishable.

Environmentalism is, admittedly, a marginal concern in most Muslim communities. Muzammal Hussain, organiser of the Brick Lane protest, told *The Guardian* that environmentalism 'is a bit of an uphill struggle . . . there is a lot more receptivity [amongst Muslims] than before, but there is also a sense of frustration

that the mosques and imams could do a lot more and are not getting the message out more' (Hussain in Vidal 2005). Part of Hussain's frustration stems from his recognition that Islamic leaders *could* be hugely influential in encouraging environmentalism. 'When an imam does give a Friday sermon on the environment, it always goes down well' (Hussain in Vidal 2005).

It is this mobilising potential of religion that makes Islamic environmentalism an important area of study for students of social movements. Religious groups and institutions are powerful organising forces, yet their potential as a foundation for social movements and social change has received only partial recognition in the social sciences – mostly in the last two decades. Social movement theorists have not studied 'Islamic' environmental activism extensively, and studies of the global environmental movement outside social movement theory have also, by and large, neglected Muslim involvement. Further, within scholarly literature on global Islam, environmentalism is rarely addressed.

There are a handful of small-scale sociological studies of Islamic environmentalism examining: the incorporation of environmental readings of Islamic scripture into Turkish Islamists groups' theological and organisational frameworks (Erdur 1997); the environmental agendas of the radical Islamist groups Hizb'allah, Hizb ut-Tahrir, Hamas, the Muslim Brotherhood, Jamaat-e-Islami and al Qaeda (Karagiannis 2005); and gender-based analyses of Muslim women's environmental beliefs and activities in the United States (Vasi 2008) and Great Britain (DeHanas 2010). Albrecht's (2011) examination of Islamic environmentalism in the United States focuses on the development of a distinct 'Muslim American Environmental Ethic' and argues participation in environmentalism creates greater social and political inclusion for Muslim Americans. Gilliat-Ray and Bryant's (Gilliat-Ray and Bryant 2011) survey of Islamic environmentalism in Great Britain emphasises environmentalism is a marginal concern in the British Muslim community, and they highlight the struggle Islamic environmental groups face in recruiting and maintaining membership – conclusions borne out by this study.

Of the remaining literature on Islamic environmentalism, the vast majority is written by Muslims, with a Muslim audience in mind. Rather than academic studies, these books are usually highly practical and educational – written with the intention of educating Muslims on the potential of Islam to be environmental and focused on the analysis and interpretation of Islamic scriptures and traditions through an environmental lens. Some of these books, such as Abdul-Matin's *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches About Protecting the Planet*, have been very successful and well-received in Muslim communities. Seyyed Hossein Nasr, an American-Iranian philosopher, has spent his career writing on the relationship of humankind to nature invoking a distinctly 'Islamic' environmental worldview. I discuss the literature written by Muslims on environmentalism in greater depth in Chapter 3.

As environmentalism is still a marginal issue within most Muslim communities in the United States and Great Britain, much of the work undertaken by Muslim activists is educational: teaching Muslims about environmentalism in Islam and about how to be more environmentally responsible. Although Muslim

environmentalists sometimes draw on national identity to try and spark interest in environmentalism – the Brick Lane climate change protest targeted the (predominantly Muslim) Bangladeshi community deliberately – in general, most Islamic environmental groups draw on the Muslim identity and their religious tradition to motivate Muslims. As Muslim communities are diverse in terms of ethnicity, nationality, education – not to mention ideological or political commitments – the power of Islam to bind people together above their differences is of vital importance. In doing this, Muslim environmentalists construct what Bayat (2005, 901) calls an 'imagined solidarity', where solidarity is achieved 'not simply by actors' real understanding of their shared interests but also by their *imagining* commonality with others'.

Considering the small number of Muslim environmentalists and the struggles faced by Islamic environmental groups to sustain an active membership, it is interesting to examine and understand the processes by which Muslims are drawn into environmental activism. The activists in this study are mobilised through (i) affective ties to friends, romantic partners, and charismatic leaders and (ii) due to a strong sense of religious duty that stems from a very particular, environmental understanding of Islamic scripture and practice. Further, I contend the Islamic environmental organisations in this study demonstrate the importance of 'group culture' in sustaining activism, those organisations that successfully create a rich organisational culture – where activists emotionally invest in the group, are actively involved in the running and strategic planning of the organisations, and continually negotiate collective identity through ongoing participation – are the organisations that have been the most successful in attracting committed activists.

Methodology

A central question for this book was to examine the relationship between Islamic faith and practice and environmental activism for Muslim environmentalists. It is the importance of this question that led to my decision to study Islamic environmentalism as it occurred in the United States and Great Britain, and not in the more traditional Islamic world. For even the briefest examination will show the most prominent Muslim authors writing on the environment, and most of the explicitly 'Islamic' environmental groups, operate from the Muslim diaspora. Why are religiously motivated environmentalists more prominent in the diaspora than in the Islamic world? There are a number of possible answers: some would assert that in developing nations, environmentalism is not as central a concern as, say, the provision of basic necessities; others argue that the more restrictive political climate in these countries is a deterrent to most political activism. Neither of these claims entirely convince me – environmental movements are prominent in many developing countries (India, in particular, has a strong indigenous environmental movement), and it is not *environmentalism* that is difficult to locate in the Islamic world, but *religiously motivated* environmentalism; meanwhile, the events of the long Arab Spring clearly demonstrate the active climate of political organising in the Middle East. Instead, I contend that Muslims living in Muslim majority

countries assume their local customs and norms are inherently Islamic – they do not feel it necessary to actively question how their faith relates to daily activities. On the other hand, Muslims living in minority communities in the Diaspora are forced, day in and day out, to grapple with how the demands of their faith can be reconciled with the predominant (non-Islamic) social and cultural norms. Thus, they are far more likely to consider the religious implications of any involvement they may have in environmental (or any other kind of) activism.

The research underpinning this book was conducted between May 2012 and July 2013 and includes interviews conducted with Muslim environmentalists from six Islamic environmental organisations in the United States and Great Britain (as well as a few independent activists) and textual data from the organisations' websites, newsletters, and (in some cases) internal documents. I identified the organisations by searching online – in full awareness that this limited my sample to those groups with an online presence. But as Hanna (2013, 367) notes, 'contemporary movements almost invariably incorporate online tools into their tactical repertoires'. A problem with searching for environmental groups online is that there is no 'population list' – no way of knowing whether or not I have found all the relevant groups and activists and whether the sample I select is therefore representative of a broader group. I was informed in my methodology for this search by Earl (2013, 402), who argues,

> While it is impossible, even for companies as large and well-resourced as Google or Microsoft, to [catalogue] all Web-based material, it is possible to identify the set of sites that an average user could be at risk for finding online without having a direct URL . . . search engines such as Google can be used for repetitive and overlapping searches that, when concatenated, produce a population of reachable sites that can be used as a comprehensive sampling frame.

I relied on snowball sampling in my selection of interviewees, using the founders or leaders of each Islamic environmental group as gatekeepers to their members. Locating activists through organisations is, in itself, a limited sampling method. Many studies of social movements have been justly criticised for their over-emphasis on formal social movement organisations, to the detriment of activism occurring independently and outside the domain of organisations (Earl 2013, 393; Taylor 1998, 374). However, I wanted to find Muslims who were committed to environmental activism in an ongoing manner – not merely involved in a one-off project. Using organisations, then, was a way of controlling the sample. People who were associated with or members of formal organisations were likely to be committed to environmentalism in an ongoing fashion. I did not limit the study to *only* activists who were formal members of Islamic environmental organisations – in any case, the nature of all the organisations in this study is such that 'membership' is very fluid and informal. The organisations were, however, invaluable in identifying a population of activists from which to sample as well as supplying a stock of textual data.

Further, environmental activism is still a marginal activity amongst Muslims, and the membership of 'Islamic' environmental groups is very small. There is, quite simply, a very limited pool of activists to select from, and most activists either know one another or have heard of the other organisations. Finally, in this type of semi-structured interview study, the participants are selected deliberately – 'purposive sampling' – for their experience in social movement activism, rather than trying to select a random sample that is representative of a larger population (Blee and Taylor 2002, 100).

Using both the textual data and semi-structured qualitative interviews allowed me to gather data that was suitably rich and deep. Blee and Taylor (2002, 92–3) write that the semi-structured interview provides 'greater breadth and depth of information, the opportunity to discover the respondent's experience and interpretation of reality, and access to people's ideas, and memories in their own words'. Documentary evidence – often in the form of newspaper articles, but also internal organisational documents – is a common data source for social movement researchers (Hug and Wisler 1998), yet these sources are inherently biased: internal organisational documents are almost certainly 'produced by official leaders and those who are articulate, educated, and confident about the historic importance of their movement activities' (Blee and Taylor 2002, 93). Meanwhile, media sources are selective in their reporting of social movement activities: for example, newspapers will report violent events at a higher than average rate (Hug and Wisler 1998, 141). Interviewing, on the other hand, may give the social movement researcher access to a greater variety of activists 'whose activities and understandings would otherwise be lost or filtered through the voices of others' (Blee and Taylor 2002, 94). By using all three sources – interviews, textual data produced by Islamic environmental organisations, and some media sources – I was able to create a solid data set on which to base my analysis.

I discuss six Islamic environmental organisations in this book – two in the United States (Muslim Green Team in California, and Green Muslims DC (GMDC) in Washington, D.C.) and four in Great Britain (IFEES, Wisdom in Nature, Sheffield Islamic Network for the Environment, and Reading Islamic Trustees for the Environment), three of which were active at the time of the research, and three of which had recently taken 'sabbatical' from active organising. For information about each of the organisations, please refer to the Appendix.

Social movement theory

By studying the causes of social movements, and the ways in which they mobilise and operate, social movement theories are highly suitable for analysing and understanding Islamic environmental activism. Indeed, this book is grounded in, and speaks to, the social movement theory tradition. The Islamic environmental movement is a synthesis of a religious movement and a social movement, a Western movement and a non-Western movement – thus, it offers an interesting opportunity for theory building and testing. Throughout the book, I frequently refer to various social movement theorists and concepts and in particular make use of

framing theory, the study of emotions and collective identity in social movements, and new social movement theory in my analyses.

My use of multiple theories within the social movement studies framework is somewhat unusual: one generally finds sociologists select a single branch of the theory – for example, framing theory – and conduct their research firmly within the bounds of this one theoretical area. However, drawing upon a range of analytic lenses gives a depth and richness to the presentation of Islamic environmental activism. The purpose of this book is to give as detailed an explanation as possible of Muslims involved in environmentalism: their motivations for participation, their understanding of environmental crises and solutions, and the ways in which they utilise their Islamic faith in their activism. By using theories of framing, of emotion and identity, and of new social movements, I demonstrate that these theories can all contribute, together, to paint a holistic picture of any social movement.

Contemporary social movement theory developed in the 1960s and 1970s following the emergence of mass social movements protesting for civil rights, peace and nuclear disarmament, environmentalism, and gender equality. In the 50 years since then, social movement studies grew to become a distinct sub-discipline of sociology, complete with a collection of theories attempting to explain the emergence, mobilisation, and organisation of social movements. The body of literature can be roughly divided into two streams: the American and the European. The early American theories from the 1960s, 70s, and 80s were empirical and positivist, favouring organisational analysis. Theorists focused on resource mobilisation (RM; for example, McCarthy and Zald 1977; Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978), political opportunities (for example, Kurzman 1996; McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1998), or networks (for example, Diani 1990; Morris 1984; Snow, Zurcher, and Ekland-Olson 1980) as key indicators of movement emergence and success. By contrast, the European theorists adopted a historicist analysis rooted in Marxist and post-Marxist thought. These 'new' social movement theories (for example, Habermas 1981; Melucci 1989; Touraine 1985) were more interested in understanding the changes in society that prompted the emergence of social movements than in the nuts and bolts of mobilisation. The distinction between American and European theories is, I acknowledge, imperfect: theorists from Europe may undertake empirical studies using organisational analysis, while American scholars may undertake historicist analysis. Further, in recent decades, the apparent dichotomy between the two schools has, slowly, begun to close following the 'cultural turn' amongst American theorists, which has seen the rise of framing theory and the examinations of cultural factors and processes in social movements, such as emotion and collective identity.

It is these post-cultural turn theories that I utilise in this book, alongside the work of the European new social movement theorists. In the cultural-turn, theorists looked to socio-psychological factors to explain and analyse social movement activism in reaction to the overly rational and organisational focus of the previous decades. *Framing theory* was the first of these new analytic frameworks. Benford and Snow (2000, 614) write frames are 'action-oriented sets of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social

movement organisation'. Social movement actors draw from public discourse – media, politics, and other social movements – to develop collective action frames. Importantly, they also seek to influence that same discourse through their framing of issues (McClurg Mueller 1992, 15).

Framing theory quickly became a widely used, and often mis-used, analytic tool in social movement studies. Critiques of the theory bubbled up in social movement literature in the late 1990s and early 2000s. A recurring theme in these critiques is the apparent fixity of frames. A frame is an interpretive tool developed by movement activists to present the world in a particular way. The development of the frames is the framing process, and as activists are constantly interpreting and re-interpreting the world around them for themselves, other activists, and movement outsiders, the frames are constantly changing. Framing, then, is dynamic and unfixed (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). As I have already discussed, the early work of framing theorists (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988) emphasises framing *processes* rather than the frames themselves.

Further, Oliver and Johnston (2000, 38) critique both the theory itself for failing 'to address the relation between frames and the much older, more political concept of ideology', and the researchers who have employed framing theory for their 'tendency . . . to use "frame" uncritically as a synonym for ideology' (see also Westby 2002). Hart (1996, 95) criticises the focus upon individual beliefs at the expense of the 'collective cultural structures' that frames draw upon. He also emphasises that the uses and influences of pre-existing cultural traditions in and on movement framing are seldom systematically examined, although this is a concern that has more recently been addressed by theorists who have placed renewed focus upon culture in social movement research. Meanwhile, Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta (2001b, 6) point out that, despite the fact that much of the 'causal force' attributed to frames come from emotion, emotions are rarely discussed by framing theorists.

Indeed, analysis of the *emotions* of collective action is a fairly recent trend in social movement studies. Until the emergence of RM theory, social movement theorists cast protestors as 'irrational' or 'immature', highlighting the emotions of protest in support of these claims (Jasper 2011, 143). The desire of RM theorists to recast social movement actors and their actions as rational resulted in the deliberate exclusion of emotion from social movement research (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001b, 5). However, by not openly critiquing the association of emotion with irrationality, RM scholars tacitly endorse the 'erroneous dichotomy' between emotion and rationality (Nepstad and Smith 2001, 158). The recent inclusion of emotions in the literature on social movements seeks to rehabilitate the role of emotion in mobilisation. Emotions, Jasper (2007, 81) argues, are the animating force behind many social movement concepts: for example, 'collective identity . . . is an emotional solidarity as much as a cognitive boundary. Frames and rhetoric exert their influence through the emotions that cause audience members to pay attention because something matters to them'.

The study of emotions does pose a number of methodological problems. Firstly, getting reliable information from research participants on their emotions,

particularly if interviews occur some time after the occurrence of a relevant event, is difficult, and whatever data is gathered in respect of these emotions may not be reliable (Polletta and Amenta 2001, 313). Yet, these difficulties become even more acute when emotions are viewed only in pejorative terms, such as when they are regarded as unprofessional or a sign of weakness (Groves 2001). Secondly, emotions are difficult to define, and there is little in the way of standard conceptual definitions of what constitutes, for example, 'outrage' as opposed to 'resentment' or 'indignation' (Polletta and Amenta 2001, 312–13). Finally, many social movement theorists who presume emotions are irrational *also* assume it is impossible to rationally analyse or discuss emotions. Despite the entrenched unwillingness to engage with emotions in social movements, research in the field has proliferated in the last two decades (for example, Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001a; Goodwin and Jasper 2003; Jasper 1997; Jasper 1998)

In the same way that social movement theorists in the 1980s and 1990s sought to address the shortcomings of overly structural analyses through framing theory, theorists also began to examine the concept of *collective identity*. The emergence of identity-based movements, such as the gay or women's liberation movements, suggested that identity was an effective means to mobilise participation. Collective identity is defined by Polletta and Jasper (2001, 285) as:

> An individual's cognitive, moral, and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution. It is a perception of a shared status or relation, which may be imagined rather than experienced directly, and it is distinct from personal identities, although it may form part of a personal identity.

Collective identity, theorists argue, is intimately related to the construction of solidarity in social movements (Hunt and Benford 2004, 439). As Tarrow (1998, 119) writes, social 'movements require solidarity to act collectively and consistently; creating or accessing identities around their claims is one way of doing so'. The construction of collective identity is also closely related to framing processes. Frames can 'express, clarify, and confirm the collective identities at an organisational level' (Bostrom 2004, 81). Hunt, Benford, and Snow (1994, 186) go so far as to claim that collective identity is formed equally by movement participation and framing processes.

The 'process-based nature' of collective identity, as Johnston et. al. argue (1994, 16), is often neglected in social movement literature, which has a tendency to discuss collective identity as if it was 'frozen in time and space'. Gamson (1992, 60), for example, suggests that we can observe collective identity 'through the cultural icons and artefacts displayed by those who embrace it', arguing that identifiers such as T-shirts and haircuts form the cultural expression of collective identities. Yet, many social movement theorists argue that collective identity is far more complex – that it is formed through interactions with other movement participants and with people outside the movement (Hunt and Benford 2004; Hunt, Benford, and Snow 1994; Melucci 1995; Tarrow 1998). As Melucci (1996, 71

original emphasis) observes, 'collective identity as a process refers thus to a network of *active relationships* between actors who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions'.

An important aspect of these interactions is the creation of boundaries between those who share in a collective identity and those who do not. Boundaries 'mark the social territories of group relations by highlighting differences between activists and the web of others in the contested social world' (Taylor and Whittier 1992, 353). Boundary work even occurs *within* movements as activists create markers to distinguish their particular organisation or 'wing' of the movement from others (Hunt and Benford 2004, 443).

The social movement theory produced by European theorists, as I mentioned above, has taken a fundamentally different approach to that of the American school. The European theories are usually labelled *'new' social movement theory*; their primary concern has been to understand the shift from labour or class-based social movements to the so-called 'new social movements' that arise in 'post-industrial' societies, where traditional Marxism can no longer adequately explain either the structure of society or the processes of change. Touraine, one of the key proponents of new social movement theory, writes of new social movements:

> Rather than simply a conflict between capital and labour, the new conflict is between the structures of economic and political decision-making and those who are reduced to dependent participation. We could use other terms and say that the conflict is between those segments of society which are central and those which are marginal.
>
> (Touraine 1971, 9)

A central question in this discourse is whether new social movements herald a new paradigm in social and political structures and in social movements themselves. Arguably, these 'new' social movement theories are the most significant cultural approaches in social movement studies.

New social movements are conceived to be 'new' in three key ways: firstly, in terms of the actors and their objectives; secondly, in terms of their 'repertoires of contention' or modes of activism; and, finally, in terms of the society in which they function. To begin with the actors and objectives in new social movements, these, unlike the social movements of the early twentieth century, are not obviously class-based – not only are participants in new social movements drawn from across social classes, the political ends of new social movements are not obviously class objectives. Melucci (1989, 52–4) argues the social composition of new social movements derives from: (i) the 'new middle class', which he defines as those who work in advanced information technology, human service professions, and the public sector – all well-educated with (relative) economic stability; (ii) those with marginal employment, such as students, the retired, and the un- and under-employed; and (iii) sections of the traditional 'middle class', such as farmers and craftsmen. The objectives of each group or class are not to claim a larger stake in the distributive system. Rather, each seeks to take control of cultural

production, reclaiming it from creeping bureaucracy and corporate manipulation. Habermas (1981, 33 original emphasis) claims 'the new conflicts are not sparked by *problems of distribution*, but concern the *grammar of forms of life*'.

Secondly, new social movements are 'new' because they no longer solely, or even predominantly, engage in the contentious forms of direct action – such as strikes and demonstrations – that characterised the workers' movements. While those forms of action undoubtedly still occur, new social movements are characterised by pre-figurative politics – the way in which dominant cultural codes are challenged *within* the bounds of social movement organisations and the daily lives of new social movement actors. Melucci argues 'contemporary movements are prophets of the present . . . They announce the commencement of change; not, however, a change in the distant future but one that is already a presence'. Elsewhere, Melucci again writes of the prophetic function of new social movements: 'The message is that the possible is already real in the direct experience of those proclaiming it. The struggle for change is already incarnate in the life and in the structure of the group' (Melucci 1994, 125). This type of pre-figurative politics often translates into 'an open, fluid organisation [and] an inclusive and non-ideological participation' (Offe 1985) in movement groups and organisations. New social movement theory's conception of pre-figurative politics is addressed in greater detail in Chapter 7, where I discuss its implications for understanding the common 'repertoires of contention' and activist lifestyles in Islamic environmentalism.

Finally, new social movements occur in a new, 'post-industrial' or 'programmed' society (Touraine 1971). In this new type of society, 'all the domains of social life – education, consumption, information, etc. – are being more and more integrated into what used to be called production factors' (Touraine 1971, 5). This is what Habermas (1987) names the 'colonisation of the life-world', a process whereby every aspect of life and culture – what he calls 'symbolic reproduction' – has either come under the control of the state or has been commoditised by the market. New social movements challenge this life-word colonisation by seeking to push the market and the state out of the cultural sphere.

Critics of new social movement theory tend to focus upon the claim to 'newness' – arguing the so-called new social movements which arose in the 1960s and 1970s (i.e., the environmental movement or the feminist movement) are continuations of previous movements (for example, Calhoun 1995) or that new social movements are *still*, in some respects, concerned with production and redistribution. Replying to these criticisms, Melucci (1989, 42) argued debate over 'newness' is a false problem, as 'novelty is by definition a relative concept, which functions to emphasise some comparative differences between classes of phenomena (in this instance between the traditional forms of class conflict and the emergent forms of collective action)'. Further, Melucci (1989, 43 emphasis added) writes, in response to those who attempt to use historical continuities to question the 'newness' of new social movements, that they 'have failed to recognize that contemporary collective action consists of different *relationships and meanings*'. Touraine admits new social movements are still concerned with production and

redistribution, but maintains the realm of production has engulfed the cultural sphere:

> The new social conflicts, far from existing outside the production system, are at its very core. Indeed, they reach into new areas of social life, but only because information, education, and consumption are more closely bound than ever before to the realm of production. Under no circumstances are today's social struggles to be dissociated from economic and political power. If, very often, today's social movements attack the prevailing culture, it is less because they are avoiding economic problems than because they are only beginning.
>
> (Touraine 1971, 19)

As society has moved away from the industrial model, work has, to some extent, lost its collective nature at the same time as new roles and professions have proliferated. Further, ethnicity and gender solidarities both divide and transcend socio-economic classes, and the economy in the 'industrialised' world has moved towards a 'knowledge' or 'information' economy (Castells 1997). This is the 'new' world in which contemporary collective action occurs.

Chapter outlines

This book bridges two quite different areas of study – environmental activism and Islam. In Chapters 2 and 3, I situate the research in these two arenas by providing background context on both. This is necessary for two reasons: first, a reasonable level of knowledge of one or other subject may not be of much surprise, but reasonable knowledge of *both* Islam and the environmental movement is more unusual; second, Islamic environmentalism is part of, and influenced by, *both* the wider (mostly secular) environmental movement and the wider (mostly non-environmental) Islamic world. All the activists in this study are Muslim, but some also have experience in the secular environmental movement – experience that has influenced their own activism. In Chapter 2 I give a brief history of the environmental movement and discuss the way it has been conceived of the 'new social movement *par excellence*' (Touraine 1988) by many scholars of social movements. For clarity, I have distinguished between the historical development of the movement and the environmental philosophies that have developed alongside the movement. Although it is fairly unusual to find an activist who identifies as a 'Deep Ecologist' or 'ecofeminist'; nonetheless, these philosophies and the ideas they develop have been influential on environmentalists, including some of the Muslim environmentalists in this study. Finally, I discuss religious environmentalism; as very little study has been conducted on Islam and environmentalism, it is useful to know the main debates and findings of research into other religious environmental approaches. This study, in fact, confirms some of the findings of quantitative research into Christian environmentalism: for example, religious leaders have a positive effect on the uptake of environmentalism amongst their congregation.

Just as Muslim environmentalists are influenced by and part of (to varying degrees) a wider environmental movement, so too are they influenced by and part of their Muslim communities. Indeed, the Islamic faith is the central and, often, most important influence on the activists' development of an environmental consciousness. To help orient the reader, in Chapter 3 I give a brief overview of Islam – its history and main articles of faith. I then give an overview of the Muslim diaspora communities in the United States and Great Britain including their history and contemporary character. Finally, I address Islamic activism, looking specifically at the way social movement theorists have discussed and analysed it. A recurrent claim throughout this book is that social movement theorists by and large fail to adequately account for the 'religious' nature of Islamic activism – or any kind of religiously grounded activism.

As this book is primarily interested in Muslims who view environmentalism as a religious duty, it is important to spend some time investigating how the Islamic scriptures – the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* – can be read in an environmental way. In Chapter 4, I undertake an analysis of the scriptural foundations of Islamic environmentalism and provide an overview of Muslim engagement with environmentalism beyond that covered by my research. The activists in this study, and the Islamic environmental organisations, draw heavily on Islamic scriptures when talking and writing about the environment. There is also a small body of literature written by Muslims on environmental concerns; these works are mostly theological or philosophical in nature, although there are some, more practical guides written by Muslim environmentalists trying to encourage other Muslims to be more environmental. In the final part of the chapter, I give an overview of the growth of Islamic environmental groups and projects worldwide. This overview situates the activists in this study in their global context – Islamic environmentalism is *not* a widespread or mainstream movement, and Muslim environmentalists still operate on the edges of their communities. Yet, environmentalism *does* exist in Muslim communities around the world to varying degrees.

How we talk reveals a lot about ourselves, and how Muslim environmentalists talk about environmentalism reveals a lot about their attitudes towards the environment, their society, and the future. Framing theory is a useful analytic lens to make sense of the way Muslim environmentalists present the environmental crisis and their activism to the world. In Chapter 5, I utilise framing theory to analyse my interviews with Muslim environmentalists and textual sources from Islamic environmental organisations. Framing is an 'active, processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction' (Benford and Snow 2000, 614). The core processes involved in framing, as identified by Snow et al. (1986), are frame alignment, bridging, amplification, extension, and transformation. In this chapter, I identify how Muslim activists engage the above framing processes: for instance, the way in which activists amplify the Islamic injunction against financial interest to motivate participation in environmentalism, as they frequently attribute blame to unjust economic systems for causing environmental crisis. In addition, I use Snow and Benford's (1988) categorisation of diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing. *Diagnostic* framing involves

the identification of a problem, and the allocation of blame for that problem. *Prognostic* framing is the process in which activists propose their solutions for the problems they have identified. Finally, *motivational* framing is the way in which activists attempt to motivate participation in their movement. In addition, I identify what I term 'Islamic' framing – when Muslim activists utilise Islamic narratives and language to frame and interpret environmental issues.

I argue one of the most significant ways Muslims are mobilised into environmental activism, and motivated to continue with their participation is through friends, family, or romantic partners. One my central findings is the great importance of emotion and identity construction to the success of Islamic environmental groups. Chapter 6 examines first emotion, and then collective identity, and the key role they both play in constructing solidarity. Section one draws on social movement theory literature on emotions in social movements and demonstrates the importance of affective ties to fellow activists and leaders in motivating and sustaining activism. In this chapter, I use the work of Jasper (1997, 187) and in particular his distinction between 'reciprocal' and 'shared' emotions. Reciprocal emotions 'concern people's feelings towards one another. These are the close affective ties of friendship, love, and loyalty, but also their negative counterparts such as rivalry, jealousy, and resentment' (Jasper 1997, 187). Reciprocal emotions, Jasper writes, also include the organisational emotions that define relationships between leaders and members, most important among them the emotion known as trust. By contrast, shared emotions are 'consciously held by a group at the same time, but they do not have other group members as their objects. Collectively the group generates or elaborates anger towards outsiders, or outrage over government policies' (Jasper 1997, 187).

Section two examines the ongoing process of identity construction in Islamic environmentalism. Here, I argue the collective, interactive processes required for the construction of collective identities are, if not necessary for movement cohesion and success, at least a very good indication that a movement takes seriously its internal culture. Groups with rich internal cultures are more likely to retain activists than those without. Alberto Melucci's work on collective identity has been particularly influential for my analysis.

Throughout this book, I emphasise the way in which Islamic faith and environmental action are inextricably intertwined in the lives of Muslim environmentalists. In Chapter 7 I discuss the place of religion in social movement theory, arguing alongside an ever-growing chorus of theorists that religion and religious activists are well-deserving of attention by social movement scholars. To begin, I discuss the ways in which activism as a 'moral' practice and the moral claims of Islamic faith intersect. Following this, I use my data as empirical proof that religious people *can* be political activists for progressive causes and that religion *can* serve as a tool for emancipation. In the third section of the chapter, I address how social movement theory privileges contentious action and conflict and how this impacts the reception of the (often) non-contentious action by religious movements such as Islamic environmentalism. Here, I apply the work of Melucci (1989; 1996) on 'pre-figurative politics', Fitzgerald (2009) on 'co-operative activism', and Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones (2012) on 'lifestyle activism' to my data. I argue

moderate forms of action undertaken in Islamic environmentalism, although less visible than contentious and conflictual activism, are no less legitimate as forms of social movement activism. Finally, I finish the chapter by presenting the case that Muslim environmentalists synthesise their religious faith and practice with their environmental activism and argue Islam and environmentalism support and enrich one another in this process.

Note

1   All quotations from the *Qur'ān* are taken from M.A.S. Abdel Haleem's 2010 (revised) translation.

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2   The environmental movement

History, activism, and philosophy

Muslim environmentalists live and act in two worlds that, usually, are not thought to overlap: the world of their local Muslim communities, and the world of the environmental movement. Although unique in some ways, Islamic environmentalism is nonetheless part of the broader environmental movement and, as I demonstrate in later chapters, is influenced by the wider movement. Many Muslim environmentalists were involved in a secular environmental organisation prior to becoming active with an Islamic environmental group or continue to work alongside secular environmental groups. In the first part of this chapter, I provide a brief history of the environmental movement in the United States and Great Britain, along with an overview of the environmental movement today. In this section, I also discuss in detail the many studies of environmental activism undertaken by social movement theorists and the key themes to emerge from this body of literature. I then describe the most common philosophical positions held by environmentalists – shallow ecology, Deep Ecology, and ecofeminism. These philosophies underpin much environmental activism, and we see later in the book the ways in which Islamic environmentalism – despite its religious foundation – still reflects and is related to these philosophies. Finally, I address the involvement of religious groups in the environmental movement including a review of statistical studies of religious belief and their impact on environmental attitudes. As little study has been done on specifically Islamic environmentalism, having a basic understanding of how other religions have participated in environmentalism and of the ways in which all forms of religious belief may (or may not) impact environmental attitudes is very useful.

The environmental movement: a brief history

The environmental movement today – if it is even possible to speak of a single, unified movement – appears heterogeneous and full of contradiction. What relation do community tree-planting or rubbish-collecting initiatives have to the activists chaining themselves to trees and railway lines? How does a 'Green' political party, involved in the process of formal institutional politics, operate in the same movement as a radical group such as the Earth Liberation Front, so-called 'eco-terrorists'? Environmentalism evolved in three distinct stages: from

nineteenth-century preservationism seeking to protect areas of wilderness and natural beauty; to an interwar concern with urbanisation and conservation; and, finally, into the post-1950s mass environmental movement.

Preservationist groups took up the environmental cause in both the United States and Great Britain in the nineteenth century. The dominant discourse in this early period of environmentalism was characterized by a preoccupation with preservation of wilderness areas and wildlife (Johnson and Frickel 2011, 307). Environmentalism in this early period was fairly elitist, particularly in Great Britain, where upper-class land owners were worried about how the extension of the national railway system and roadways allowed increasing numbers of the working classes access to areas of natural beauty:

> Wordsworth's opposition in 1844 to the proposed Kendal-Windemere railway, for instance, was based on his view that access to natural beauty such as Lakeland's should be only for those cultivated people with an "eye to perceive and the heart to enjoy" (p. 92 of *The Guide*), not artisans, labourers and shopkeepers with "common minds."
>
> (Pepper 1996, 218)

Not only concerned with keeping lower-classes away from wilderness areas, the landed gentry also wished to see their fox-hunting grounds protected from encroaching industry and mass tourism (Pepper 1996, 223). Their concerns were not so much the preservation of the environment for its own sake, but the preservation of their particular uses of the environment as a symbol of upper-class status. Some early environmental groups focused on the protection of endangered species – like the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds in Great Britain, founded in 1889, or the protection of wilderness areas – like the Sierra Club, founded in 1892. However, the most pressing environmental concern of the period was air pollution caused by coal-burning industries in the newly industrialised cities.

World War One saw attentions shifted to more pressing security concerns, but preservationist interests were revived in the interwar years – although this time with an expanded social base that included the middle class. Where nineteenth-century environmentalists resisted development and advocated for wilderness preserves, the interwar environmentalists were neither 'anti-modernist' nor inherently opposed to development. In fact, 'planned development, as exemplified by the national electricity grid, arterial roads and National Parks was in keeping with the spirit of the time' (Pepper 1996, 223). The environmentalists' primary concern in this period was *unplanned* development – growing urbanisation and sprawling suburbs, which were seen as a blight on the landscape. Well-planned cities and suburbs with modern infrastructure, balanced by extensive National Parks for the enjoyment of nature, was the conservationist ideal.

Environmentalism was transformed in the 1960s following a significant shift in publicly available information regarding environmental degradation and crises and an accompanying shift in public values relating to the role of government and industry in maintaining (or destroying) a healthy environment. This new wave

of environmentalism 'emphasized the negative impacts of pollution on ecosystems and human health and encouraged radical direct action and a quality of life approach to environmental politics' (Johnson and Frickel 2011, 307). Inspired and influenced by other social movements of the period, such as the civil rights movement and anti-Vietnam War movement, environmental organisations flourished.

An important driving force behind the shift in environmental attitudes in the 1960s was a number of influential, popular articles, and books that brought environmental concern into the public spotlight. Foremost among these is Rachel Carson's 1963 *Silent Spring*, where she documents the devastating impact of insecticides and herbicides in industrial agriculture for both human health and the health of agricultural ecosystems. Garret Hardin's 1968 article 'The Tragedy of the Commons', published in the influential journal *Science,* and Paul Erlich's *The Population Bomb*, also published in 1968, both discussed the impact of human population growth on the planet's ecology and suggested the exponential growth in human population was a major environmental problem. These books and articles, and many more like them, enjoyed wide readership and were discussed in popular news media, bringing environmentalism into the consciousness of mainstream American and British society.

In particular, Carson's exhaustively researched exposé of the systematic overuse of synthetic pesticides and herbicides in American industrial agriculture and the subsequent land and water pollution, loss of species, and impact upon human health had a profound impact on public awareness of human impact on the environment. Carson's thesis that humankind is at war with nature (Carson 1963, 6–7) was supported in the ensuing years by a barrage of scientific studies documenting ozone depletion, species extinction, desertification, deforestation, water and air pollution, and extreme weather patterns: all, it would appear, caused by human civilization. The influence of arguments like Carson's is still felt in the environmental movement today: all the activists in this book attribute blame for environmental crises, in one way or another, to *human* causes.

Riding the wave of popular support for environmental causes, and widespread anxiety over environmental crises, new environmental organisations sprang to life during the 1960s. The World Wildlife Fund began in 1961 to promote the protection and conservation of wildlife internationally; Greenpeace, founded under the name Don't Make a Wave Committee in 1967, was initially dedicated to protest against nuclear testing; Friends of the Earth appeared in 1969 to advocate for environmental policy change at the governmental level. The first Earth Day occurred on April 22nd, 1970, and Earth Day events continued throughout the spring of 1970. Teach-ins, protests, and celebrations occurred throughout the United States, with millions of Americans participating. Signalling the immense popular support for environmentalism, Earth Day was by far the largest public mobilisation of the 1960s and 1970s, 'bigger than any civil rights march or antiwar demonstration or woman's liberation protest' (Rome 2010, 194). And Earth Day continued, growing to become a global environmental event that celebrated its 40th birthday in 2010.

The environmental movement of the 1960s and 1970s was inseparable from the wider counter-culture of the period (Belasco 2007). Many environmental

organisations founded in this period drew on the grassroots political culture of the era – in particular, a desire for non-hierarchical organisational structure. In terms of outward political goals, environmental organisations also displayed sympathies with the anti-Vietnam War movement, and many activists were deeply disturbed that the same companies controlling significant sectors of the American agricultural trade were also producing the chemical weapons used by the U.S. Army to fight the Vietnamese (Lappé 1972). The tendency to see environmental issues as inextricable from other social and political issues resulted in the formation of distinct environmental philosophies (which I discuss in the following section), and remains prevalent in environmental circles today; in Chapter 5, I show how some Muslim activists frame the environmental crisis as caused by and inextricably linked to social, economic, and political systems.

Environmental activists and organisations of the 1960s and 1970s produced numerous leaflets, magazines, and publications that were passed amongst activists and sometimes made their way into wider public circulation. J. I. Rhodale's *Organic Farmer* magazine (started in 1942 but popularised during the 1960s) was one such publication, promoting a type of farming that was the antithesis of the industrial model decried by Carson. Rhodale pioneered the use of the term 'organic' to describe agriculture free from synthetic pesticides and herbicides and reliant on traditional composting and biodynamic processes to nourish the health of the soil and promote sustainability. His articles drew heavily upon the work of Sir Albert Howard, whose book *An Agricultural Testament* (1940) remains a key text in organic agriculture to this day.

The food industry was a common target for environmentalists and remains so to this day. Indeed, few other industries appear to have such a high impact on the environment and be so fundamental to our everyday lives. Food is a focus area for many Muslim environmentalists, who discuss moving away from conventional produce in favour of organic, hunting for their own meat instead of supporting industrial meat production, and are involved in permaculture or urban homesteading. The close ties of the ethical food movement and the environmental movement is best demonstrated in the work of American essayist, poet, farmer, and agrarian Wendell Berry. Berry (2002, 20) argues that food is a cultural product and the 'exploitative revolution' in food production has alienated our culture from its nurturing source. Echoing the counter-cultural rebellion against violence following the Vietnam War, Berry equates the industrialisation of the food supply chain to militarisation and names it 'corporate totalitarianism', the cost of which to land and society 'will be enormous' (Berry 2002, 12). It is inevitable that the earth will be instrumentalised in this system and this, ironically, leads to the destruction of our food sources (Berry 2002, 11). In attempting to create the most cost-effective method for mass producing food, industrialisation appears to be killing the very thing necessary for sustainable agriculture: the earth.

Further, the huge waste involved in the industrial food system of the United States and Europe when compared to famine and starvation in the Global South was a stark ethical concern for environmentalists. Frances Moore Lappé's 1972 *Diet for a Small Planet* exposed the massive energy waste involved in the

production of meat and became the handbook for a generation intent on reducing their reliance on meat and processed foods. Books such as *Diet for a Small Planet* and food columns in counter-culture magazines taught eating, that most necessary and personal act, was also a political act that 'ties us to the economic, political, and ecological order of our whole planet' (Lappé 1972, 8). Lappé calls for consumers to act consciously when they purchase food, both in terms of *what* they buy and *where* they buy it. Her cry for conscious consumerism is one that still resonates today with the ethical food movement:

> *What do we eat?* What we eat links us to every aspect of the economic order. Do we allow ourselves to be victimized by that structure, or do we choose a diet that the earth can sustain and that can best sustain our own bodies? [. . .] *Where do we shop?* Do we support the handful of supermarket chains that are tightening their grip over food?
>
> (Lappé 1972, 50 original emphasis)

Concern for animal welfare and vegetarianism became common amongst environmentalists as an ethical stance. Prominent ethicist Peter Singer made his name and cemented his popularity in the ethical food movement with the publication in 1976 of *Animal Liberation*. In this polemic, he forcefully argues for the inclusion of animals in our moral community, which necessitates foregoing using animals as food (Singer 1976). More recently, popular authors like Michael Pollan have made their names questioning the ethical, environmental, and health implications of a diet rich in animal products.

The 1960s and 1970s also saw governments beginning to take regulatory responsibility for the environment, passing environmentally progressive legislation under public pressure. Between 1963 and 1969, the United States Congress passed the Clean Air Act, Water Quality Act, Laboratory Animal Welfare Act (which in 1971 became the Animal Welfare Act), and the National Environmental Policy Act; Congress also created the National Wilderness Preservation System, signed treaties between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. that stopped above-ground testing of nuclear weapons, and prohibited the placement of nuclear weapons in orbit around Earth (Kovarik 1996). Indeed, the success of environmentalism in the United States during this period reflects a key difference between the movement there, and environmentalism in Great Britain. Environmentalists in the United States are – at least theoretically – able to have quite a lot of influence on the political process, as the United States has a fairly 'open' political system. Through lobbying Congress, and utilising the courts, environmentalists *did* exert significant pressure resulting in the environmental legislation mentioned above (Dryzek et al. 2003, 32–3).

On the other side of the Atlantic, environmentalists in Great Britain faced a far more closed political system with far fewer avenues into political process. The British political system neither encourages nor makes easy public involvement in political decisions, effectively limiting citizens to voting as the only input (Dryzek et al. 2003, 43–4). Like other civil society groups, environmentalists were

actively excluded from the state under the Thatcher government's aggressive pro-gram of market liberalism. However, in recent years, Green political parties have made small inroads into the British Parliament – enjoying formal political repre-sentation of a sort effectively closed-off to environmentalists in the United States.

Within social movement studies, the environmental movement was considered the 'new' social movement *par excellence* (Touraine 1988) – it had a progressive political orientation, large-scale membership from across a range of social classes, a promotional character, and sophisticated administrative apparatus (Yearly 2005, 11–12). Furthermore, environmental activists were initially 'value-oriented' – even if not all have remained so. Their primary goal was to change the values or mentality of society to be more environmentally aware (Eyerman and Jamison 1989, 103), with participants often required to embrace a new lifestyle in keep-ing with new environmental values. Social movement theorists saw in environ-mentalism the 'transformative social movement that would be to "post-industrial" society what the working-class movement promised to be for industrial society' (Rootes 2004, 608).

The rise of the environmentalism has been subject to vigorous debate amongst social movement theorists. Inglehart (1977) claimed environmentalism is a 'post-material' value; an indication of post-industrial societies' move away from the material needs of physiology and security. His theory of post-material value has been widely cited in attempts to explain the rise of environmentalism. Yet, the existence of environmentalism in developing countries such as India, where one would expect to see the material needs of physiology and security prioritised, problematise Inglehart's claim (see Brechin and Kempton 1994; Dunlap and York 2012). The existence of a 'global' environmental movement does not necessar-ily undermine Inglehart's theory. Citizens of developing countries can hold post-material values, just as citizens of advanced industrial countries continue to hold material values (Kidd and Lee 1997, 14). Further, environmentalism is actually an expression of *both* material and post-material values: it is a 'bivalent collectivity' (Fraser 1997).[1] For example, the preservation of endangered species or habitats reflects a post-material concern (Rootes 2004, 618), while the environmental jus-tice movement, concerned with the distribution of environmental burdens such as pollution (Beck 1995; Johnson and Frickel 2011; Schlosberg 2013), is concerned with decidedly material issues. Yet, even the environmental justice movement cannot be reduced to simply material concerns. Schlosberg (Schlosberg 2013, 38–40) argues cogently that the environmental justice movement moves beyond issues of maldistribution and lists three other areas of focus: (i) the redefinition of 'environment' to include the areas in which people are immersed everyday (i.e., urban areas) to prevent a myopic and elitist focus on wilderness; (ii) the factors behind environmental injustice, such as racism, and entrenched, growing economic disparities; and (iii) a pluralistic understanding of 'justice' that includes equity, participation, and recognition.

The environmental movement can also be considered the paradigmatic new social movement because its membership conforms to new social movement the-ory's articulation of participation in 'new' movements. Offe (1985, 831) identifies

the 'new' middle class, elements of the 'old' middle class, and people on the periphery of (or outside) the labour market as the key actors in 'new' social movements. Studies of the environmental movement show participants are drawn predominantly from the 'new' middle class – highly educated members of the service industries – as well as the 'old' middle class and those on the periphery (students or the retired) (Johnson and Frickel 2011, 309; Kuzmiak 1991, 268; Melucci 1989, 98; Rootes 2004, 617). Yet, although people of all social classes display environmental concern (Taylor 1989, in Kuzmiak 1991, 268), and the costs of environmental degradation are often borne disproportionately by lower socio-economic groups and ethnic communities (Schlosberg 2013), much of the sociological work on the environmental movement presents it as dominated by the middle class and as being 'as white as it is green' (Kuzmiak 1991, 274; see also Johnson and Frickel 2011, 309).

This presentation is, in part, due to the reliance of many sociologists on formal environmental organisations in their research. These organisations may indeed be dominated by the middle classes, but 'so too are more formal organisations in all political spheres' (Doyle 2000, 5). As a discipline, social movement studies is overly reliant upon organisations for data and theorising, resulting in what Melucci (1989, 44) calls the 'myopia of the visible'. Theorists focus their attention upon the 'measurable aspects of collective action (e.g., confrontation with the political system, and movements' effects on the policies of organisations)' (Melucci 1989, 44), and organisations are, usually, the most visible aspects of a movement. This results in reductionism of many kinds – including the reduction of environmentalism to a middle-class movement. The environmental movement is *not* a collection of organisations, however, but rather, a 'web of networks' (Diani 1990; Doyle 2000; Schlosberg 1999) that includes unaffiliated individuals. Indeed, that is why in this book I have included activists who are not aligned with any particular movement or organisation to more accurately represent the nature of Islamic environmentalism.

Since the early 2000s, social movement theorists have debated the extent to which the environmental movement has institutionalised. The movement has endured over many decades, and thus institutionalisation is to be expected – to an extent. Rootes (Rootes 2003, 1), for example, documents evidence of increased environmentalism in the political structures of the European Union. Yet, institutionalisation does not define the environmental movement as a whole. Where some environmental groups in Europe have moved from radical outliers to formal political actors, the opposite is the case in the United States. Schlosberg and Dryzek (2002) note, until the 1980s, the American environmental movement had significant influence on the state and successfully lobbied for the introduction of important environmental legislation.[2] Yet, by the end of the Reagan-era government, focus had shifted to economic and security concerns, and the formal political sphere was no longer welcoming to American environmentalism. This is a clear example of changing political opportunity structures – for the worse.

Irrespective of the institutionalisation of larger environmental groups, environmental protest and radical direct action not only continued, but 'became more

frequent and relatively more confrontational' (Rootes 2012, 24). Radical groups such as EarthFirst! advocate 'ecotage and civil disobedience, [and] many in the green movement [have] disengaged from conventional politics altogether' (Schlosberg and Dryzek 2002, 788). Scholsberg and Dryzek (2002, 796–8) argue that a 'dual strategy' – whereby environmentalism occurs both *inside* institutional politics (lobbying and green political parties) and *outside* the state (radical and grassroots activism) – is key to the future success of the environmental movement. On the other hand, Doyle's (2010) study of the Australian environmental movement cautions against acquiescing to the state – Australian environmental groups of the late 1990s and 2000s embraced the dominant neo-liberal ideology in an attempt to work alongside government and corporate institutions. This strategy ultimately weakened the position of the environmental movement within Australian society.

New social movement theorists have highlighted the 'intrinsic religious quality' (Diani 1993, 113) and 'spiritual urgency' (Melucci 1994, 122) found in many new social movements. Many theorists have seen this reflected in the environmental movement – with some, such as Hannigan (1993, 3–5) and Eder (1990), seeing a modern form of spirituality or contemporary belief system in the environmental movement. Environmental philosophies, which I discuss below, form the 'cosmology' that animates environmental belief:

> The environmentalist cosmology involved a reinterpretation of the natural world and of the relations between humanity and nature. It was the promulgation of a global ecological worldview, associated with the ecosystem perspective of systems ecology, in which all natural phenomena were seen as being interrelated. Holism, harmony between society and nature and respect for natural limits to economic growth were central ingredients of the environmentalist cosmology.

Not all elements of the environmental movement espouse or concern themselves with cosmology or spirituality. The movement is split between 'value-oriented' and 'success-oriented' environmentalists. Where 'value-oriented' activists seek to change the environmental values of society and often affirm an environmental cosmology, 'success-oriented' activists wish simply to stop environmentally destructive practices, placing little value on the spiritual and cosmological aspects of the movement (Eyerman and Jamison 1989, 103). This split between 'value-oriented' and 'success-oriented' activists is also discussed by the philosopher Arne Naess (2003) as 'deep' versus 'shallow' ecology.

Environmental philosophies

The diversity contained within the environmental movement has resulted in a number of different philosophical theories trying to explain humankind's role vis-à-vis the environment. Most of these philosophical positions can be sorted into either *ecocentric philosophies* or *anthropocentric philosophies*: ecocentric theories place humans as merely one part in the web of life, with human concerns

of no more importance than the concerns of any other life form; anthropocentric theories, by contrast, make human concerns central to their theories and of the most importance. Of course, theory and practice do not often align in reality, and the environmentalism actually practiced by environmental activists cannot be so easily categorised as either ecocentric or anthropocentric; most environmentalists occupy a middle-ground between these two poles, something reflected in Islamic environmentalism.

Of the ecocentric philosophies, *Deep Ecology* is the most well-known and (philosophically) well-developed. First articulated by the philosopher Arne Naess in the 1970s, Deep Ecology rejects the dualistic worldview that sees humankind as separate from nature, and rather 'suggests that humans are part of the "web of life" – not at the top of creation but equal with many other aspects of creation' (Devall, Dunlap, and Mertig 1992, 52). Deep Ecologists subscribe to an eight-point platform:

1. The well-being and flourishing of human and non-human life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: intrinsic value, inherent worth). These values are independent of the usefulness of the non-human world for human purposes.
2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.
3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.
4. The flourishing of human life and culture is compatible with a substantially smaller human population. The flourishing of non-human life *requires* a smaller human population.
5. Present human interference with the non-human world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.
6. Policies must therefore be changed. These policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.
7. The ideological change will be mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent value) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between bigness and greatness.
8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to try to implement the necessary changes.

(Naess 2003, 264 original emphasis)

Deep Ecology is also distinguished by an emphasis on 'self-realisation', not an individualistic realisation of personal identity, but one reminiscent of Buddhist or Hindu philosophies emphasising the inter-connectedness of all life:

The distinction between a large comprehensive Self and narrow egoistic self as conceived of in certain Eastern traditions of *atman*. This large comprehensive

Self (with a capital S) embraces all the life forms on the planet (and else-where?) together with their individual selves (jivas).

(Naess 2003, 271)

What this means in practice, says Devall, Dunlap, and Mertig (1992, 52), is that 'out of identification with forests, rivers, deserts, or mountains comes a kind of solidarity: "I am the rainforest" or "I am speaking for this mountain because it is a part of me"'.

Deep ecologists argue for radical social change, but due to their emphasis on self-realisation, ground this change on a transformation of individual consciousness (Pepper 1996, 21). Deep ecologists are an example of the way social movements (the environmental movement here) may have 'lifestyle' wings – sections of the movement which focus on the transformation of individual lifestyles as the primary means for social transformation (see Chapters 6 and 7 for a discussion of lifestyle movements and the work of Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012). For critics of Deep Ecology, this is the fundamental flaw in their philosophy. In relying on change at an individual level, Deep Ecology fails to address:

The problem posed by the huge power to block change possessed by state institutions and business corporations. A realistic politics of how to get to the decentralised bioregional society, is therefore lacking, along with any analysis of why capitalism specifically (as opposed to "industrialism" in general) befouls the environment.

(Pepper 1996, 29)

Further, Deep Ecology does not adequately address the ways in which race, poverty, and inequality of all kinds influence the experience of environmental harms (Pepper 1996, 29).

Ecofeminism is often classified as an ecocentric environmental philosophy because ecofeminists view nature as an organism and not as a machine. The movement arose in the mid-1970s, influenced by both the environmental and the feminist movement, but challenging both (Mellor 1997, 10). Ecofeminism draws a parallel between the exploitation and oppression of women by patriarchy, and the exploitation and oppression of the earth by 'man':

We are a woman-identified movement and we believe we have a special work to do in these imperilled times. We see the devastation of the earth and her beings by the corporate warriors, and the threat of nuclear annihilation by the military warriors, as feminist concerns. It is the same masculinist mentality which would deny us the right to our own bodies and our own sexuality, and which depends on multiple systems of dominance and state power to have its way.

(Mies and Shiva 1993, 14)

Ecofeminists fall into two streams: *cultural* (or *spiritual*) ecofeminists argue there is a 'natural affinity' between women and the natural world due to their

shared biological roles of nurture and reproduction (Mellor 1997, 76; Pepper 1996, 40). Yet ecofeminists who employ a socialist/materialist analysis criticise cultural ecofeminists for biological essentialism. Eckersley (1992 in Pepper 1996, 107–8) points out that not only does biological essentialism place men in a permanently inferior position vis-à-vis their relationship to nature (i.e., they are, in the Western worldview, not nurturers), it is also hard to prove that 'patriarchy is responsible for exploiting both women and nature . . . emancipating women may not, therefore, automatically emancipate nature, and vice versa'. *Social* ecofeminism, which is more prominent in Europe, draws on social constructionist and anarchist/Marxist perspectives to argue that 'the division of power, and particularly of labour, between men and women [holds] . . . the key to unsustainable patterns of development' (Mellor 1997, 17).

At the anthropocentric end of the environmental spectrum, *shallow ecology* – coined by Naess to oppose Deep Ecology – is the 'fight against pollution and resource depletion' (Devall 2001, 19).The central concern of shallow ecology is the health of the human population, and maintenance of existing lifestyles. The value of the environment is linked to its ability to support human life and enterprise. The environment itself, in shallow ecology, has no intrinsic value of its own. This approach to the environment, also dubbed 'technocentrism', is based on the mechanistic view of nature that emerged from the scientific revolution. As the religious cosmology based on the Great Chain of Being gave way to heliocentrism, the new scientific worldview fundamentally altered humankind's conception of nature: where nature was once considered an organism, Kepler used the mechanical metaphor of a clock, and Descartes reduced nature to atoms 'whose unthinking, machine-like behaviour was universally the same and explicable in terms of mathematical laws' (Pepper 1996, 141). Descartes's dualism, in establishing a separation of mind and matter, also created a separation between humankind and nature. With Bacon, the scientific worldview was complete; scientific knowledge, in Bacon's writings, equals power over nature (Pepper 1996, 143).

As I stated at the beginning of this section, most environmentalists operate somewhere between the two positions of total ecocentrism and total anthropocentrism. *Social ecology* acknowledges that environmental values come from a *human* source: either pragmatism – if we destroy our environment it will no longer support our continued survival; or from moral empathy – we feel distraught at the suffering of animals, for example (Pepper 1996, 35). Yet, social ecologists argue, the environment should still hold value, even if that value comes from a human source. Social ecology uses a Marxist/anarchist analysis, holding that political and economic power structures are the cause of environmental destruction:

> A planet hurtling toward escalating chaos and destruction is the logical result of a world capitalist system driven to accumulate unlimited wealth, resources, and power. In its hell-bent efforts to commodify and dominate every region of the globe, the corporate-growth machine recognizes few constraints on its *modus operandi*; the system is inherently and irrevocably anti-ecological, the mortal enemy of nature. There can be no egalitarian or democratic, much less *sustainable*, capitalism whatever the claims of liberal reformers in support of

a "green" market economy. In the guise of freedom, democracy, and progress, the world system engulfs virtually every realm of human (and nonhuman) life, destroying ecosystems while resisting even minimum levels of popular accountability.

(Boggs 2012, xviii original emphasis)

The 'guiding precept' of social ecology is that humankind must first remove class structures and hierarchies of power in society if ecological destruction is to be adequately addressed (Biehl 1991, in Mellor 1997, 249). As with the broader, secular, environmental movement, the activists in this study adopt or are influenced by a number of these environmental philosophies – from social ecology to shallow ecology – and I show the variety of attitudes towards environmentalism in Chapter 5.

Religion and environmentalism

At the December 1966 Washington meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Lynn White, Professor of History at UCLA, gave an address titled 'The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis'. The address was published in the journal *Science* in 1967 and has been the defining text on religion and ecology for the past 50 years. In his article, White argued science and technology, and their indifference to nature, grew out of the Christian worldview that (i) man is superior to nature, (ii) man should seek to understand nature and its processes to understand God (the origin of science), and (iii) that nature exists to serve man. He claimed that the ecological crisis is the creation of an *occidental* (not eastern) Christian worldview and civilisation.

White contrasts Christianity to ancient pagan animism and Asian religions, where nature is sacralised. He argues in Christian doctrine, 'Man shares, in great measure, God's transcendence of nature. . . [Christianity] not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends' (White 1967, 1205). He proceeds to explain the instrumentalist view of nature developed first under Latin Catholic and then subsequent Protestant theologies. Even though many people in the West no longer consider themselves, or their attitudes, to be Christian, White believes this is irrelevant. He states:

Our science and technology have grown out of Christian attitudes towards man's relation to nature which are almost universally held not only by Christians and neo-Christians but also by those who regard themselves as post-Christians . . . No new set of basic values has been accepted in our society to displace those of Christianity.

(White 1967, 1207)

The only way out of the ecological crisis, he argues, is to reject the anthropocentric, instrumental view of nature contained in Christian doctrine. Yet far from

dismissing all religions as irrelevant to solving the ecological crisis, he argues the only appropriate remedy will be founded in religion (White 1967, 1204). 'Human ecology' he states, 'is deeply conditioned by belief about our nature and destiny – that is, by religion' (White 1967, 1204).

White's view gained traction amongst both religious and secular environmentalists, particularly his claim that solving environmental crises *requires* religion. Any solution to environmental crisis requires a significant downgrade in the consumption habits and lifestyles of contemporary Western society, and these sacrifices cannot and will not be motivated by scientific arguments and secular ethics alone (Oelschlaeger 1994, 428). Emile Durkheim, who described science and the modern scientific worldview as a 'morality without ethics', also argued although the religious worldview had lost ground to the scientific worldview, religion remained a valid source of ethics, a way to give sense to collective action and orient behaviour (Durkheim in Ortiz and Durão 2003, 428). Thus, a voluntary reduction of lifestyle at the individual level, and global cooperation at the national level, requires the moral force and socially organising principles found in religion (Katz 1999, 247, 252, 253; Oelschlaeger 1994, 22).

With White's criticism of the Judeo-Christian tradition in mind, what role can religion play in contemporary environmental debates? As discussed above, religion has the potential to be a powerful social organising force and a source of ethics in the contemporary world. A number of writers have positioned religion as the most appropriate place from which to confront capitalism and the market economy, which, they argue, are the ultimate causes of environmental crisis. These writers argue, after Max Weber, that capitalism and the market economy are a 'religion' in and of themselves, with their own ethics and theology (Loy 2003; Ortiz and Durão 2003). Religion is called upon to re-assert its role as the undergirding moral force for society (Katz 1999). Despite the acknowledged flaws of religion, religious ethics creates relationships predicated on 'being with, on, to, through' etc. that remove the self-other dichotomy of secular ethics (Steffen 2007). This different mode of being is ideally suited to the creation of an 'ecological self' that understands humanity's reliance upon, and connection to, the environment.

Roger Gottlieb argues religion and the environmental movement should work together because, not only do they share similar values, religions also become revitalised and energised as they become ecologically oriented. Gottlieb calls for religious people to become political and ecological activists. He writes, 'it is clear to most religious environmentalists that pious words about "caring for God's creation" or "having compassion on all sentient beings" will not come to much unless there are dramatic changes in the way we produce and consume, grow food and get from place to place, build houses and use energy' (Gottlieb 2006, 7).

Further, the religious 'mechanisms of self-examination, public acknowledgement of moral error, and contrition' (Gottlieb 2006, 12) are of great value in the development of collective environmental awareness, both in terms of what humankind has done wrong ecologically and what humankind needs to do to rectify those mistakes. Christians in particular have responded to Lynn White's criticism of their religious practice and environmental attitudes through the development

of a Christian environmentalism. This has been done through three environmental models: (i) ecojustice, (ii) Christian stewardship, and (iii) creation spirituality (Lauren Kearns in Jenkins 2008, 18). The concept of stewardship is also widespread amongst the Muslim activists in this study, while a few participants also draw on religiously motivated ecojustice.

A strong Christian and Jewish environmental movement has become established in Europe, Great Britain, and the United States of America. Some religious thinkers show genuine concern that secular intellectuals and activists, and not religious leaders or thinkers, have led the way 'in articulating the dimensions of both our unprecedented situation and our urgent responsibility' (Davis 2009, 10). Indeed, the books of the Old Testament contain lessons for both Christians and Jews involved in environmental activism:

> Fertile soil is a gift and a trust from God; our relationship to the soil, demonstrated primarily in our practices of food production and consumption, is fundamental to every other aspect of human life; misuse of the gift of land, including maltreatment of those who work the soil, will ultimately undo every political structure, no matter how sophisticated, stable, and powerful it appears to be.
>
> (Davis 2009, 121)

The biblical understanding of nature is, in fact, very different to most viewpoints today. Nature in the Bible, in particular the Old Testament, is a tool of divine justice; nature may support mankind materially, but it is *equally* a 'barometer of society's contractual relationship with God' (Kay 1989, 215, 217).

Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si* (2015) is a clear sign that Christians are beginning to take environmental concern seriously. In the encyclical, the Pope argues that both science and religion must play their part in addressing environmental crises before putting forward a vision of 'an integral ecology' where all things are interrelated and interdependent. Solutions to environmental problems, thus, must address both natural and social causes. The encyclical received widespread media coverage and is regarded as a significant environmental text for the twenty-first century. What received far less attention was the response to the encyclical by Muslim leaders in August 2015. At a symposium in Istanbul, 60 Islamic scholars from 20 countries endorsed the Islamic Declaration on Climate Change, which focused on transitioning to 100% renewable energy and a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Like the Pope's encyclical, the Islamic Declaration links the spiritual to the environmental and political.

While theologians and religious activists have been grappling with White's thesis since the 1960s, researchers in the social sciences have sought to test White's claims using empirical quantitative methods. Studies performed throughout the 1990s and early 2000s utilised data gathered in the 1993 International Social Survey Program's Environment survey, although each study posed slightly different questions or imposed different parameters upon the data. Hayes and Marangudakis's 2000 and 2001 studies took the data from Great Britain, the United

States, Canada, and New Zealand. They analysed questions where participants were asked to rate their agreement with statements such as 'Almost everything we do in modern life harms the environment'; 'Nature would be in peace and harmony if we left it alone'; and 'Animals should have the same moral rights that humans have' (Hayes and Marangudakis 2000; Hayes and Marangudakis 2001). The surveys differentiated between Abrahamic faiths, Christian/non-Christian, the types of Christian faiths, and between deist and atheist beliefs. Hayes and Marangudakis assumed that Christians would hold 'pro-dominion' beliefs (that humankind have dominion over nature and can use nature as they see fit) and display little concern over environmental issues. Yet their study found, contrary to White's thesis, there is no statistically significant difference between Christian and non-Christian believers in their attitudes towards the environment (Hayes and Marangudakis 2000; Hayes and Marangudakis 2001). Further, religious identification of any kind displays a statistically significant effect where believers in any faith are more likely to hold an *anti*-dominion belief – that is, where humankind does *not* have the right to exploit nature (Hayes and Marangudakis 2001).

These results are consistent with Greeley's (1993) study on religion and attitudes to the environment in America and Weaver's (2002) study, both of which utilised data from the same 1993 survey. Weaver used data from the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, Russia, and Japan. She confirmed that there is little statistical difference between Christian and non-Christian believers in regards to environmental attitudes. Further, Weaver utilised information on political values and environmental and scientific knowledge to show pro-environmental attitudes are correlated with belief in the sacredness of nature, liberal values, some kinds of environmental knowledge, and scientific knowledge. Djupe and Hunt's (2009) article 'Beyond the Lynn White Thesis: Congregational Effects on Environmental Concern', based on a survey of 2,400 clergy and 1,600 congregation members from churches in the United States, found social sources (i.e., views of fellow church members) have a stronger impact on individual environmental attitudes than doctrine or religiosity. Supporting their argument that religious organisations act as a social nexus to convey political information, Djupe and Hunt also found the more clergy speak out on environmental issues, the more pro-environmental are their church members' views.

The impact of religiosity on environmental attitudes has also been studied in Australia. In a study of 2,048 participants, Black (1997) found while Christians are slightly less likely than non-Christians (both those of other faiths and those of no religious belief) to engage in 'environmentally protective behaviour' (recycling, conserving water, and purchase decisions based on environmental concern), Christians who regularly attend church are more likely than other Christians to be actively protective of their environment. This supports Djupe and Hunt's thesis that religious organisations can act as a social and political organising force for those actively involved. Black's study concluded from the data that variables *other than* religion (membership of environmental organisations, gender, degree of interest in politics, and educational attainment) were more important than religious variables in shaping environmentally related behaviour either positively or negatively.

These empirical studies all suggest that religious belief and practice has either no measurable impact upon environmental attitudes, or a positive affect (i.e., religious people are more likely to support environmentally protective behaviour). These findings problematise the influential work of Inglehart on post-material values. Inglehart's (1977, 222) study claims religious belief corresponds with conservative political beliefs *and* has a negative effect on the adoption of post-material values, such as environmentalism. Inglehart (1977, 222) accepts the premise of the secularisation thesis that religion is less and less relevant in post-industrial society and thus assumes there will be a corresponding drop in the relevance of religion to political behaviour. Studies such as Hayes and Marangudakis (2000, 2001), and Djupe and Hunt (2009) demonstrate religion may be relevant to the formation of positive environmental attitudes.

It would appear from the more recent quantitative surveys that, at least on the individual level, White's thesis cannot be proven. Indeed, a number of studies demonstrate the opposite to White – in some circumstances, religious (and particularly Christian) belief has a strong correlation with environmentally protective behaviours and attitudes. However, these surveys misrepresent the aim of White's paper. White was not discussing the behaviour and beliefs of individuals, but rather the values and structure of an entire society. At the meta-level, then, White's analysis of the impact of Christian belief on the development of occidental industrial society and its treatment of the environment is unshaken.

Notes

1 Fraser (1997) notes that all contemporary social movements are 'bivalent collectivities', as they *must* address both redistribution (material) and recognition (post-material) concerns.
2 For example, the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) of 1970, the *Coastal Zone Management Act* and *Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act* in 1972, and the *Endagered Species Act* in 1973.

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3 Islam

The context

Just as Muslim environmentalists are part of the wider environmental movement and influenced by its history, philosophy, and forms of activism, so too are the activists equally Muslims and equally (in many cases, more-so) integrated into their Muslim communities. This chapter contextualises the 'Islamic' in Islamic environmentalism: providing a brief overview of the origins of Islam and its basic tenets and information about the Muslim communities in the United States and Great Britain, and, finally, examining Islamic activism through the lens of social movement theory.

Islam – the context

Despite the amount of coverage given to Islam and Muslims in our media – usually coverage dedicated to terrorist attacks, militant groups, and war – surprisingly little information about the origin of Islam and its basic tenets is considered common knowledge. In this next section, I give a very brief account of Islam's origins, including detailing a few of the more obvious commonalities shared between Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. Telling the history of early Islam is beset with historiographical difficulty: very few documents survive that are (i) dated from the time of the earliest Muslim community and (ii) from Arab sources. Although sources can be located from this period – the late sixth and seventh centuries – many are from *outside* Arabia, and it is hard to know whether they truly reflect what was happening *inside* Arabia (Robinson 2010, 176). The Islamic tradition has its own narrative of the Prophet's life and the lives of his close companions, of immense religious significance to Muslims, yet these were compiled years – sometimes centuries – after the fact (Donner 2010, 629) and as *historical* sources, they are limited. The documentary evidence that does survive 'more or less complements, rather than undermines, the narrative derived from literary sources – grounds for accepting that narrative as at least a framework for inquiry' (Berkey 2003, 60). Historians have, therefore, been able to construct a cautious account of the emergence of Islam using Islamic and non-Islamic literary evidence and material sources.

The Islamic religion sprang to life in Mecca, a trading city in the Hejaz region of current-day Saudi Arabia, in the sixth century CE. Muhammad, the Prophet of

Islam, was a native of the city and a member of its Quraysh tribe. He was born in 570 and raised by his uncle following the deaths of both of his parents by the age of six. Like many great religious figures – indeed, similar to Moses and Jesus – little is known about Muhammad's childhood and adolescence. Robinson (2010, 183) notes that the early Muslim community were more interested in 'who he became rather than who he had been'. At the age of 25 he married Khadijah, a wealthy widow older than himself and an independent businesswoman in her own right who employed Muhammad in her business. After his marriage, Muhammad began to regularly retreat to a cave in a hillside near Mecca to meditate. One day, in this cave, he was visited by the angel Gabriel and told to spread the message of God's oneness and greatness to his people. According to Islamic tradition, the first revelation was from *Sūrah* 96 of the *Qur'ān* (96: 1–5):

> Read! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created –
> Created man out of a clot of congealed blood:
> Read! And the Lord is Most Bountiful,
> Who taught by the pen –
> Taught man that which he knew not

Following this revelation, Muhammad became a proselytiser – attempting to convert the pagan people of Mecca to monotheism. He continued to receive revelations from the angel Gabriel for the rest of his life: these he memorised and recited to his followers, and it is these revelations that are collected together in the *Qur'ān*, Islam's holy scripture. Yet, the road to forming a united and strong Muslim community was not easy. Muhammad and the small band of initial converts to Islam were persecuted in Mecca by the Quraysh: in addition to being a trading city, Mecca was an important site of pagan pilgrimage, and Muhammad's call to abandon paganism threated the fabric of Meccan society and identity. Finally, in 622 Muhammad emigrated from Mecca to Medina to escape the persecution. This trip – the *Hijrah* – is the moment marked by Muslims as the inception of Islam as a religion. Unlike in Mecca, in Medina Muhammad was honoured, and in a short time attracted many followers. As the number of Muslims grew, Muhammad became not only a religious leader, but the leader of a sizeable political community. In 632, some ten years after fleeing Mecca, Muhammad and the Muslims – now grown into a large community well regarded for their prowess in battle – returned peacefully to Mecca to resume their residence. Three months after his return to his home city, Muhammad died.

Following his death, Muhammad's trusted companion Abu-Bakr, the first person Muhammad converted to Islam outside his family, was appointed leader of the Muslim community – the Caliph. As Muhammad had been, Abu-Bakr was simultaneously a religious and political leader. Yet his appointment did not go unchallenged: a group of Muslims argued the leadership should fall to Ali, Muhammad's son-in-law and cousin. The disagreement split the Muslims into two groups – the sects we now call Sunni (those who followed Abu Bakr) and Shi'a (those who followed Ali). In the decades that followed Muslim armies conquered first Syria and

Palestine in 636, Mesopotamia – now known as Iraq – by 640, then Egypt in 642, Cyprus, Rhodes, and Crete by the 650s, and west across North Africa in the 660s and 670s (Robinson 2010, 196–7). By the turn of the tenth century, Islam was no longer a small, up-start religion buried in the Arabian desert, but the religion of a great empire stretching from India to Indonesia, from China to Turkey, and from Africa to Spain.

The revelations given to Muhammad taught a strict monotheism: God is one, God is all-powerful, God is the creator of the Universe. There are five core foundations, or 'pillars' of Islam. The first is the *shahādah*, which testifies to the foundational beliefs of Islam – the oneness of God, and Muhammad's role as the final prophet of God. The second is the commitment to perform prayer five times per day, called *ṣalat*. These prayers fall at first light, at noon, in the mid-afternoon, at sunset, and at nightfall. The third is the yearly fast of *Ramadhān*, held for a lunar month and requiring Muslims to consume neither food nor water between first light and sunset. The fourth is the required yearly donation of a portion of a believers's wealth to charity known as *Zakāt*. Finally, the fifth requires each Muslim, at least once in their lives, to undertake a pilgrimage to Mecca known as the *ḥajj*.

Islam has some notable continuities and similarities with both Judaism and Christianity – not surprising when we consider that Islamic sources position Muhammad as the final Prophet of God, inferring a temporal chain linking Muhammad to previous Prophets. In this view, Islam is the perfected faith; Muhammad preached the same message as that given to the Jews and Christians, and the differences between the religions are due to the corruption of the Jewish and Christian message over time. Berkeley (2003, 62) notes 'Islam emerged in a Near East which was saturated with the ideas, institutions, and values of other religious traditions' and points particularly to parallels between Judaism and Christianity. Historians and scholars of Islam debate the extent to which Muhammad himself would have come into contact with and been influenced by Christians (Robinson 2010). But certainly, Christianity was well-established in the Near East, and Christians would undoubtedly have resided in or visited Mecca. Muhammad would certainly have been likely to encounter them during the course of his work as a merchant traveling outside the Mecca. The *Qur'ān* speaks often of Jesus as a prophet of God, born of the Virgin Mary and makes reference to some of Jesus's miracles, like healing the blind. However, the *Qur'ān* also specifies that Jesus is *not* the son of God and refers to those who relate him to God as blasphemers. In general, the *Qur'ān* treats Christians well – calling them people of 'compassion and mercy' and affirming they will enter paradise (Smith 1999, 307).

The contact with Judaism is far more significant than that with Christians: Medina was populated by two Jewish tribes – both of which eventually clashed with Muhammad and the new Muslim community, resulting in the Jews' expulsion from Medina. These political conflicts are, perhaps, why Jews are treated more harshly in the *Qur'ān* than Christians. Yet, both Muslims and Jews trace their genealogy to Abraham: where Jews are the children of Abraham's son Isaac, the Muslim scriptures claim Abraham's slave-woman Hagar gave birth to a son

Ishmael from whom the Muslims are descended. Many of the revelations in the *Qur'ān* tell stories of the same prophets found in the Torah and Old Testament – Abraham, Moses, and David – all of whom are presented as Prophets of God alike to Muhammad. Mecca itself, say the Muslims, is the site of Abraham's first temple built to God – the *Ka'aba*.

Muslims in the United States and Great Britain

Muslim environmentalists in the United States and Great Britain operate for the most part within their own communities; their activism is mostly targeted at environmental consciousness raising and encouraging Muslims to adopt more environmentally responsible practices. As I stated in Chapter 1, there are multiple 'Islamic communities' in the United States and Great Britain, and one must be careful not think of Muslims as operating in a singular, united community. In this section, I aim to give a general overview of the history of Muslim migration to the United States and Great Britain and address some of the significant moments and issues that have shaped the Muslim communities in these countries. Of particular interest is the growing appreciation of distinctly 'American' or 'British' Muslim identities and the unique ways that Islam is practiced and understood in the West. The emergence of an Islamic environmentalism and grassroots environmental groups in Muslim communities is, I argue, one of the outcomes (and reflective of the process) of this 'Westernisation' of Islam.

Early Muslim migrants came to the United States in the late nineteenth century as part of the great mass migrations to the United States occurring around the turn of the century. Their numbers were small, and these migrants by-and-large integrated with wider American society. It was not until President Johnston's Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 that Muslim migration to the United States began in earnest (Smith 2012, 368). These new migrants were increasingly from Asia as well as the Middle East and came to the United States for education or professional experience. From the mid-twentieth century until today, Muslim migrants from South Asia and the Middle East are mostly well-educated, fluent in English, and work in highly skilled professions (Smith 2012, 371). Many, if not most, of these migrants came to the United States anticipating their stay would be temporary – they were to complete their education or gain valuable work experience and return to their countries of origin. However, as they married, had children, and settled, they increasingly invested in the creation of Muslim communities and Islamic infrastructure (Malinovich 2006, 102).

From 1965, a small but slowly growing stream of Muslim migrants to the United States were not highly educated professionals, but unskilled (sometimes illiterate) workers from Yemen, Palestine, and Lebanon and refugees from Africa and parts of the Middle East (Smith 2012, 368, 372). These migrants face the same struggles as any other low socio-economic status American – with the additional burden of being, at times, targets of Islamophobia and racism. In addition to these less wealthy migrants are the large community of African-American Muslims. African-Americans make up approximately one-third of the American

Muslim community, with the vast majority practicing Sunni Islam. For the large part, African-American Muslims and migrant origin Muslims have maintained separate communities – there have been, and continues to be, tension between the communities regarding the treatment of African-American Muslims as 'second-class' Muslims (Rouse and Hoskins 2004). Like non-Muslim African Americans, and the low-socio economic Muslim migrants, African-American Muslims all-too-often 'still have not been able to share fully in the American dream' (Smith 2012, 372). They share in the ongoing marginalisation and oppression of African Americans rooted in the historical experience of slavery and segregation.

The Muslim communities in Great Britain have quite different historical roots than those in the United States. Baxter (2006, 165) notes although small numbers of Yemeni and Bengali Muslims lived in Britian from the 1880s, it was not until 1951 that a 'notable Muslim presence' (5,000) is recorded. Muslim migrants from former British colonies came to the United Kingdom following World War Two to assist with post-war recovery and rebuilding. These migrants were predominantly from South Asia and were mostly unskilled or semi-skilled labourers working in manufacturing industries (Gilliat-Ray 2010, 124). As former British subjects, these Muslim migrants were initially granted British citizenship, making permanent settlement easier than in the United States until the early 1960s. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, successive immigration bills gradually tightened controls on migration until, by the late 1970s, Muslims from former British colonies were no longer entitled to automatic citizenship (Baxter 2006, 167). Family reunification laws, however, allowed existing citizens to continue to bring over family members from their country of origin. Essentially economic migrants, the downturn of the industrial economy from the 1970s onward had a significant impact upon Muslims living in Britain. Economic marginalization and disadvantage continue to effect large swaths of the Muslim community in Britain; the 2001 census recorded below-average outcomes in housing, employment, education, and health (see Ahmed 2012, 80–2) and nearly one-third of Muslims in Britain live in 'deprived neighbourhoods', particularly those living in London.

With the growth of the permanent Muslim community in the United States and Great Britain came the development of an 'American' and 'British' Islam. Central to this project was belief in the universality of Islam; the true tenets of the faith could be distinguished from the cultures of the traditional Islamic world and practiced faithfully in the West. Malinovich (2006), writing on American Islam, calls this attitude 'neo-fundamentalism' and situates it between global and local trends: the globalisation of Islam, the Islamic revival, and the increasingly important role of religion in American identity. GhaneaBassiri (2012, 174) argues Muslim migrants saw 'the West as a "terra incognita" upon which an idealized Islam could be realized, divorced from cultural practices and problems of the "old world"'. Meanwhile, the experience of migration, of living as a religious minority and the cultural environment in America and Great Britain all influence the practice and understanding of Islam: 'Muslims in the West are revising and recreating Islamic culture by hybridizing their own heritage with the dominant norms and value of their host society' (Cesari 2004, 83).

'American' or 'British' Islam – I must note – are not homogenous categories. There is immense diversity amongst Muslims in Great Britain and the United States, and factors such as ethnicity, place of birth (local or migrant), sectarian divisions, education levels, religious commitment, geographical location, and socio-economic status all affect the way in which Western cultures and practices are combined with Islamic faith and practice. For many Muslims, certain elements of Western societies make Islamic practice easy – religious freedoms, non-discrimination legislation, and a commitment to pluralism immediately spring to mind. Yet other aspects of Western societies, particularly sexual freedoms and rampant consumerism, appear antithetical to Islamic belief. Building Islamic schools, where Muslim children are educated outside the morally lax culture of public schools (Malinovich 2006), and community centers, where Muslim families pursue religious education after-hours and create faith-based networks, was an early sign in both America and Great Britain of attempts to strengthen Islamic identity and community. Yet, despite their existence, separate Muslims schools educate only a minority of Muslim children in the United States and Great Britain. In the United States, there is some evidence to show parents choose Catholic private schools for their academic rigour and equivalent emphasis on morality (Malinovich 2006). This picture suggests that Muslims, by and large, do not isolate themselves from mainstream American or British society, but rather involve themselves and participate *on their own terms*.

Political participation is often viewed as an important aspect of integrating minority communities into mainstream public life, and a number of studies have analysed the extent to which Muslim communities in the United States and Great Britain are active in the political sphere. Peace (2015, 4) notes that while 'church groups, religiously inspired charities or NGOs and initiatives for interfaith dialogue are [. . .] often perceived as being the very essence of civil society along with other institutions such as political parties and trade unions [. . .] some scholars have suggested Islam and civil society are mutually exclusive alternatives'. Muslim representative organisations were quick to be established in both the United States and Great Britain following the influx of migrants in the 1960s. In the United States, the Muslim Student's Association (MSA) formed in 1963 to organise and represent the large numbers of Muslim students. As those students graduated and settled into employment, the MSA in 1982 set up a second organisation, the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA), to better represent the needs of the growing Muslim community. These nation-wide representative organisations are supplemented by a huge variety of local Islamic community groups and organisations. In addition, advocacy organisations such as the Council for American Islamic Relations (CAIR) play an important role in American political life: in the 'so-called post-Civil Rights era' minority ethnic, religious, and racial groups all favour forming organisations to attempt to influence American 'policy, practice, and culture' (Love 2013, 37–8). Although being an 'Islamic' organisation supported by a wide grassroots base across the country, CAIR engages in advocacy on a range of national issues such as racial profiling and immigration reform that affect many Americans – not only Muslims. This is a conscious decision, voted on at the CAIR national meeting in 2008 (Love 2013, 45).

Like the United States, one of the earliest Islamic organisations to form in Great Britain was a students' organisation: the Federation of Student Islamic Societies, which formed in 1963 to unify Muslim students and their organisations in the United Kingdom (Malik 2013, 205). However, unlike the United States, where the various Muslim organisations do not work together or have a shared strategy – and no one organisation can claim to represent all American Muslims – Muslim activists and lobbyists in Great Britain have been more successful in achieving a unified approach. The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) is a national umbrella organisation and the peak representative body for British Muslims. Formed in 1997, the MCB engages directly with the British government to lobby for Muslim rights, and purports to be the 'voice' of British Muslims (Malik 2013, 205). Although a distinct form of 'Muslim' activism emerged in Great Britain in the 1980s and 1990s, this identity-based political involvement had its roots in earlier political activism of South Asian migrants on labour and racial issues (Peace 2015, 53). Local organisations and local activism flourishes in Great Britain – there are over 400 Islamic organisations, excluding mosques (Malik 2013, 203). As is apparent in the environmental activists in this study, Muslim activists are 'keen to use their religion within organisations in order to present a more positive image and representation of [. . .] Muslim communities' (Malik 2013, 221) – no doubt in response to the negative stereotypes of Muslims perpetuated in popular media in both the United States and Great Britain.

Indeed, Muslims in both the United States and in Great Britain have been subjected to Islamophobia and a sustained, anti-Muslim public discourse. In Great Britain, the contemporary form of this discourse often stems from fears that Britain's multicultural policies of the late twentieth century have failed to create a well-integrated, respectful community out of cultural diversity. Multiculturalism 'acknowledges and respects cultural or communal diversity not simply as a "fact of life" that has to be accommodated for good or bad, but asserts that such accommodation can be achieved [. . .] without undue disturbance of the health of society [. . .] or, more positively, that such accommodation may bring social benefit' (Wetherly et al. 2012, 1). For some critics of multiculturalism in Britain, British society could accommodate Islam – but the policies adopted in Britain that have allowed Muslims to form ghettoised communities with little investment or involvement in mainstream life have caused more harm than benefit (Cameron in Wetherly et al. 2012, 2). Other critics are less accommodating towards Islam, using Huntington's well-known clash of civilisations theory – that argues Islam is fundamentally incompatible with Western civilisation (Huntington 1993) – as evidence that multiculturalism can *never* succeed (Wetherly et al. 2012, 3).

Discontent with multiculturalism in Britain – which invariably translates into discontent with the Muslim community – first gained traction during the 1980s. Two events are significant in this history, the first being the Honeyford Affair – where a white British headmaster at a predominantly South-Asian school in Bradford (a city with a large population of Muslims) published opinion pieces opposing multicultural school policies, advocating for the national curriculum to focus on (white) British culture – giving a public platform to anti-Islamic sentiment

(Baxter 2006). The second event was the Rushdie Affair, which some years later again propelled British Muslims into the spotlight. This time, the organised protests and public book burning signaled decisively the increasing politicisation of the British Muslim community. Baxter argues Rushdie's book *The Satanic Verses* was 'the catalyst, not the cause, of the protests that went to the heart of the Muslim experience in Britain; the promise of equality, institutionalised through citizenship, had not been fulfilled' (Baxter 2006, 183). Whatever the cause, the protests sparked fears that the Muslim population in Britain, choosing to maintain an active religious identity and practice seemingly opposed to (at least some) British values instead of integrating, had become dangerous to the British way of life. Ramadan (2012, 29) contends the anxieties around crises of multiculturalism 'is revealing something of an identity crisis from within British Society'. The rapid growth of migrant groups in the twentieth century has fundamentally altered the appearance of British society and what it means to be British.

The London terrorist attacks of July 7, 2005, by the radical terrorist group Al-Qaeda confirmed, for some, that 'Islam' – usually in Islamophobic discourse seen as a monolithic entity – was indeed a threat to Great Britain. In the immediate aftermath, then-Prime Minister Tony Blair attempted to pass measures that would see sweeping powers to close mosques 'preaching hate', deport without appeal clerics deemed 'extremist', and 'extend the use of control orders to British nationals advocating terrorism' (Ahmed 2012, 85). Indeed, the mid-2000s saw a succession of violent events associated with Islam – New York 2001, London 2005, Glasgow in 2007, and the Danish cartoon affair of 2005 – that sparked what Meyer (2012, 185) terms a 'moral panic' about the 'danger' of Islam and Muslims to Great Britain. Popular tabloid journalism reveled in representations of Islam as an inherently dangerous religion. These reports used emotive language, essentialised and homogenizing stereotypes of Muslims and Islam, and reached wide audiences (Meyer 2012, 186).

For Muslims in the United States, the events of September 11, 2001, signaled a sudden and dramatic turn of fortune. Islamophobia in the United States, until 2001, had been more muted than in Great Britain. Misrepresentation and misunderstanding abounded, to be sure, yet Muslims were not generally viewed as threats to the American way of life and people. In the days immediately following the attacks of September 11, 2001 – orchestrated and carried out by Al-Qaeda – American Muslims were subjected to numerous retaliatory attacks: mosques were vandalised, veiled Muslim women were threatened or physically assaulted, and men who appeared Muslim (and in some cases, actually were not) were also subjected to physical violence. A climate of suspicion and fear of Islam and Muslims was quickly established, encouraged by inflammatory media reporting that presented Muslims as hateful towards Western ways of life. Like in Great Britain, much of this discourse presented Islam as monolithic, unchanging, and inherently antithetical to Western ways of life. The government itself participated in this demonization of Islam, desiring a fast and decisive response to the terrorist attacks they constructed a 'larger-than-life Muslim enemy as the most significant threat to US values and freedoms' to garner popular support for the War on Terror which

was to follow (Green 2015, 103). Domestically, the federal government quickly passed the Patriot Act – legislation giving sweeping powers of surveillance and detention to law enforcement agencies for people suspected of having links to terrorism. In the decades since, Muslim representative groups have repeatedly claimed Muslims are disproportionately and unfairly targeted under these laws – for no other reason than they are Muslim.

The oversimplified and misleading presentation of Islam by Western media has been well-discussed and debated in academic and popular discourse. Said's 1981 *Covering Islam: how the media and the experts determine how we see the rest of the world* is, still, one of better analyses of Western media portrayals of Islam and Muslims, and Said continued to write analyses and critiques of Western media into the early 2000s. The impact of media misrepresentation upon Muslim communities in the United States and Great Britain is keenly felt. The site *Muslimah Media Watch*, founded in 2007 by a Canadian Muslim woman, features articles by regular contributors who analyse and critique representations of Muslim women in media. The site's incisive and intelligent posts critique essentialised portrayals of Muslim women from both Western *and* Islamic media. *Muslimah Media Watch* is a form of activism, a protest against misrepresentation and its damaging effects (Echchaibi 2013). The effects of misrepresentation and Islamaphobia *are* indeed damaging to the Muslim communities – widespread state surveillance and profiling, mass detentions and deportations, and hate crimes against Muslims rose significantly in the 2000s (Green 2015). Muslims in the United States and Great Britain, all too often, feel they are a feared and unwelcome group – a feeling often confirmed by actual physical violence.

Islamic activism and social movement theory

There is a small, and burgeoning, social movement literature examining Islamic activism; Muslim activists are prolific and engaged in very real attempts, both historically and at present, to liberate Muslim societies from colonial rule, oppressive post-colonial regimes, Western imperialism, and foreign cultural influences. This literature predominantly focuses upon violent or fundamentalist Islamic movements based in the traditional Islamic world (the Middle East, North Africa, and the Persian region encompassing Iran, parts of central Asia, and Turkey). In the 2004 collection of essays, *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* – the first serious attempt to bring together social movement theorists writing on Islamic activism – an entire section is devoted to essays dealing with 'Violence and Contention'. Essays appear on the *Groupe Islamique Arme* (Armed Islamic Group) in Algeria, on violence in the Egyptian Islamic movement, violence in the Bahraini popular uprising between 1994 and 1998, and Hamas.

Hafez (2000, 2003, 2006) has made a career studying violent Islamic movements from Algeria, Egypt, and the Middle East. His focus is on the social, political, and economic milieu of Muslim extremists that, he argues, causes their turn to violence, rather than on how Islam and Islamic ideology relates to their activism. His intention is good – he does not wish to suggest that Islam itself is the one and

only factor causing violent extremism. However, Islamic ideology *does* have a part to play in this extremism, just as it has a part in shaping the environmental activism of the activists in this study. Snow and Marshall (1984, 140), working with RM theory and the Islamist 'revival', critique RM theory for ignoring the role of ideology in mobilisation, while acknowledging that 'religion can also mobilise people for collective action through its rituals and networks of clerical and lay associations'. They are some of the few authors who attempt to explain the role of Islamic ideology in Islamic activism and simultaneously emphasise the political, economic, and social factors structuring mobilisation.

The emphasis on violence in this social movement literature misrepresents Islamic activism. Wiktorowicz (2004a, 4–5) asserts that Islamic activism may be 'one of the most common examples of activism in the world', referring to the plethora of collective actors operating under the banner 'Islam', such as 'prayer groups, propagation movements, study circles, political parties, nongovernmental organisations, cultural societies, etc.'. Further, the use of violence as a 'repertoire of contention' is not unique to Islamic movements; German and Italian left-libertarian movements of the 1960s and 1970s used violent tactics (della Porta 1995), as have ethno-nationalist movements in Ireland and the Basque Country (Irvin 1999). Extreme and radical organisations and actors exist in all social movements and, although deserving of attention in social movement research, it is important not to reduce Islamic activism to violence and thus reinforce popular, essentialist stereotypes of Islam as an inherently violent religion.

The social movement literature on Islamic activism that does not emphasise violence tends to downplay the importance of Islam – as a religious belief and ideology – as a cause of social movement mobilisation and structuring factor in the lives of activists. Often, this occurs by focusing on the utilisation of Islamic resources to facilitate action, much like Morris (1984) reduces the importance of the black church to a repository of instrumental resources. Kurzman (1994) explains how Iranian revolutionaries turned the potential resources of the mosque network in Iran into an actual mobilisation resource in the lead-up to the Iranian revolution. Meanwhile, all the chapters in *Islamic Activism: A Social Movement Theory Approach* use political process and network models and, like Kurzman's accounts of the Iranian revolution, emphasise social, economic, and political factors in movement mobilisations rather than address the role of Islam itself in Islamic activism. These analyses conform to Hannigan's criticism of social movement theory: treating Islam simply as a resource used by activists to motivate and organise contention, without acknowledging the way that Islam functions as significantly *more* than a simple resource for the majority of Islamic activists. I develop this point in greater detail in Chapter 7.

What we need is a 'middle path' or 'third way' where the role of Islamic ideology and religious practice in Islamic activism is given its due, whilst taking into account the political, social, economic, and cultural factors that *also* contribute towards mobilisation in each unique instance. This is the path I attempt to chart in this study. In his analysis of Islamism in Turkey, Tuğal (2009) employs an approach which uses the tools of social movement theory from both the RM

and the new social movement tradition to emphasise how Islamic mobilisation transforms everyday life and that its rise *also* has socioeconomic, political, and institutional determinants. Mobilisation, so conceived, 'reconfigures state and society through a long walk, which concentrates on repetitive conversations, oral debates, readings (of newspapers, books, pamphlets), education, rituals, and routinized everyday practices, and which only infrequently leads to explosions' (Tuğal 2009, 430).

In this book I take a similar approach, focusing upon the use of religious culture and practice in Islamic mobilisation alongside social factors. In Chapter 5, I use framing theory to examine the conscious use of Islamic concepts, words, and life-views as mobilising tools and also the way in which secular environmental discourse is echoed by Islamic activists. Moreover, in Chapter 6, I chart the complex use of emotion and identity in mobilising Muslim activists and sustaining their activism and discuss the ways in which their pre-existing emotional attachments and identities formed through both religious and social groups feed back into their activism. In the study of Islamic environmental activism, social movement theory allows for a comparison of Islamic and secular environmental movements. In particular, commonality can be found in the process of mobilisation: the organisation of contention, the framing of ideas, ideological propagation, and organisational structures (Wiktorowicz 2004b, 34; Singerman 2004, 143).

As Islamic activism shares elements in common with all social movements, it is the underlying religious ideology and the identities predicated on religious faith that seem to differ significantly from secular social movements. Indeed, it could be argued that a religious movement is simply a social movement whose ideology contains and emphasises a transcendental or supernatural fundamental truth in its system of meaning (Hannigan 1991, 319).

Like new social movements whose goals concern, in the words of Habermas (1981, 33), the 'grammar of forms of life', Islamic movements concern themselves with transforming the patterns of behaviour and culture. Concern for morality, appropriate dress, gender roles, sexuality and marriage, as well as what constitutes legitimate religious practice, has been a central pillar of Islamic movements *alongside* political conflicts over governance and law (Singerman 2004, 150–1). Thus, for example, we see in the program of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt that religious reform and concern for declining public morality were both central issues, equal with the domination of Egypt by foreign powers and the poverty of the Egyptian people (Munson 2001, 489).

It is important to note that most Islamic movements have arisen in the particular context of the Middle Eastern political landscape and thus have a very particular geo-political nature. Middle Eastern politics was, at least until the beginning of the long Arab Spring in 2011, dominated by classic hereditary monarchies or by autocratic dictatorships that seemed inclined towards hereditary succession. The region was characterised by 'political exclusion and extremely limited practices of citizenship' (Singerman 2004, 144). Severe personal risk and 'formidable obstacles' marked activism, whether secular or religious, in Middle Eastern polities (Singerman 2004, 149). For example, the workers' movement in Egypt in the

decade prior to the Arab Spring, and particularly from 2008 onwards, was brutally suppressed. The Egyptian government hired thugs to beat protestors with stones, Central Security Forces attacked protests with tear gas and batons, and hundreds of activists were arrested and held for weeks without charge – many of whom alleged torture during their imprisonment (Beinin 2012, 335).

Yet, despite the threat of violence, imprisonment, or even death through involvement in Islamic movements, Islamist groups have flourished in the Middle East. In Egypt during the 1980s and 1990s, Islamist organisations and groups attracted large numbers of university graduates to their cause (Wickham 2004, 231). By utilising 'a particular ideologised form of Islam, transmitted through grassroots networks and reinforced through intensive small-group solidarity facilitated by prior family, friendship, and neighbourhood ties' (Wickham 2004, 247), Islamist groups were able to overcome the substantial obstacles to mobilisation. These groups may not themselves have overturned the political structure in Egypt in the 2011 revolution, although they certainly played a role. However, they did create an Islamist subculture, 'detached from the values and orientations of the country's state institutions and elites' (Wickham 2004, 247).

The rise of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt during the early to mid-twentieth century relied on the institutional legitimacy and security offered by the Mosques, much like Iran's revolutionary movement, detailed by Kurzman (1994, 1996). The role of mosques in the emergence and success of the Brotherhood mirrors, to a great extent, the use of the black church in the Civil Rights Movement discussed previously:

> The mosque was the primary venue in which explicit recruitment to the organization took place [. . .] mosques were the only forum in which the government would permit large congregations of people during much of this period. Mosques were also relatively safe from police raids or even obvious government intervention in the conduct of the services [. . .] they gave the society's preachers an aura of respectability and morality they might not have otherwise possessed if their rallies were simply held in the street or a branch office; they tied the organization to Islam, thus legitimizing the group's oppositional message.
>
> (Munson 2001, 502)

The mosque was 'critical' in the successful emergence of the Brotherhood in the early to mid-twentieth century, and mosques also play a symbolic role in much of the collective action in the Middle East and Islamic countries (Bayat 2005, 903, 904). Mosques and Islamic community centres also play an important facilitating role in some – although not all – of the environmental groups featured in this book.

Some social movement theorists raise valid concerns when they warn against applying social movement theory to social movements whose members are different (racially, culturally, religiously) from the secular Western movements that occur in liberal democracies (Bayat 2005; Beinin 2012; Kurzman 2004). It is certainly the case that social movement theory has built upon the study of social

movements occurring in political and cultural environments different to those in which the majority of Islamic social movements have occurred. In importing a dominant social science framework into new territory with little sensitivity for the importance of the empirical difference of the new territory, there is a danger of theoretical 'colonization' (Wiktorowicz 2002, 207). As Singerman (2004, 149) has convincingly argued, 'the universality that implicitly underpins many strands of social movement theory has obscured some of the more distinctive elements of Islamist movements'.

Many 'outside' analyses of Islamic movements have succumbed to generalisations about both Islam and Islamism, which are regarded as static and unique (Bayat 2005, 899). As I argued in Chapter 1, there is not one 'Islam' but rather many 'Islams', and from this one can deduce that Islamic movements will be heterogeneous, depending on which Islam is utilised to build which ideology. Further, even *within* movements and organisations, there will be differences. Asef Bayat (2005, 901) writes that Islamic movements are 'internally fluid, fragmented and differentiated'. He argues that consensus in Islamic movements comes, not from a homogeneity of ideology and interests, but rather from imagined solidarities and the convergence of partial interests (Bayat 2005, 902, 903). This is certainly evident in Islamic environmentalism; the activists in this book have diverging political and religious commitments and beliefs, and it is often the partial interests in environmentalism and imagined commonalities of religious belief that bind them together.

Islamic movements, like all social movements, use framing to create consensus and mobilise support for their causes and actions. Their frames are often constructed using religious language and concepts: *istishhād* (martyrdom), the *umma* (the worldwide Muslim community), the sovereignty of God, and the categorisation of actions, behaviours, and goods as *ḥalāl/ḥarām* (religiously permitted or forbidden). Further, religious resources such as the Mosque, religious events like communal *Ramadhān* meals, and *zakat* (the prescribed annual charity) committees are utilised by Islamic movements for mobilisation purposes (Bayat 2005, 903). Islamic environmentalism shares these religious framing processes and the symbolic use of religious ritual and institutions with other Islamic movements – albeit with a unique 'environmental' twist.

The potential influence of Islamic ideology amongst Muslims should not be underestimated: in the case of Islamist groups in Egypt, Islamic ideology was used to redefine the values of educated, lower middle class Egyptians. Wickham conducted research in three lower-middle-class neighbourhoods in Cairo and discovered that

> [t]he Islamists offered many young Egyptians a "solution" to the problems they faced in everyday life . . . Islamic outreach . . . enhanced the relative position of graduates within existing social and political hierarchies of power . . . Islamic outreach . . . reshaped popular political culture by altering graduates' relationship to the authoritarian state. Islamist ideology challenged the prevailing climate of fear and passivity by exhorting graduates to obey a higher

authority . . . In addition to helping graduates overcome fear, the da'wa (particularly in the version propagated by the Muslim Brotherhood) challenged the dominant trend of noninvolvement in public life . . . Islamic outreach also generated a widespread sense of optimism about the future.

(Wickham 2004, 243–5; see also Wickham 2013)

Many Islamic groups argue that 'Islam is the solution' to almost any social, political, or – as this research shows – environmental issue. This solution resonates deeply in the Muslim world and 'influences multiple social and political fields and encourages a collective identity' (Singerman 2004, 151). The problem in Islamic activism, and one that also appears in Islamic environmental activism, is that the Islamic principles and concepts are often vaguely defined, and the concrete way in which 'Islam is the solution' is rarely specified. I discuss this in relation to the use of Islamic symbols and narratives in Islamic environmentalism in Chapter 5.

Wiktorowicz (2004a, 2) defines 'Islamic activism' as 'the mobilization of contention to support Muslim causes'. Yet this definition is not sufficient for my purposes. Environmentalism is not clearly a 'Muslim' cause, although any number of Islamic environmentalists may argue that it is. Bayat (2005, 900) explains that the diverse organisations, actors, and activities that made up the Egyptian Islamist movement of the 1980s and 1990s could be understood as part of a social movement because of their 'salience at a particular historical juncture . . . sharing general religious language and codes, advocating Islam as a part of public life, and expressing some sort of desire for some sort of religio-political change'. As this book demonstrates, Islamic environmental organisations and activists share in the religious language and codes of Islamic religious movements, and in the language and codes of the wider, secular environmental movement; they also express the desire for varying degrees of social and political change.

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4 Muslims and environmentalism

The wider field

There are, no doubt, plenty of Muslims who have been active in the environmental movement over the last 50 years of its existence, and one would not be surprised to find small numbers of Muslims hold memberships in large environmental organisations. However, I am *not* interested in environmentalists who happen also to be Muslims. Rather, I want to examine Muslims who come to environmentalism inspired by Islam, Muslims who interpret Islamic scriptures and traditions through an environmental lens, Muslims who find their environmental activism a necessary part of their religious faith. Throughout this chapter, I examine how Islam can relate to environmentalism. In the first section, I analyse Islamic scriptures – the *Qur'ān,* the *Hadīth*, and jurisprudence – and discuss how they could be interpreted through an environmental lens.[1] Throughout this section, I make reference to various Muslims who have written about environmentalism and invoked Islamic scriptures to do so. In the second section, I analyse and compare the writings of three prominent Muslim scholars who are well-regarded for their work on environmentalism. The Muslim activists and groups in this book to a large extent echo the beliefs and framings of these scholars when they discuss environmentalism. Finally, I give an overview of the wider field of grassroots environmentalism amongst Muslims. I hope that a thorough examination of Islamic scriptures and traditions will demonstrate both the intended relationship between humanity and nature in Islamic sources and the extent of environmental concern found in the original scriptural texts. As the activists interviewed in the later chapters in this book frequently quote the *Qur'ān*, *aḥādīth*, and Islamic concepts such as *Khālifah* to explain their environmentalism or frame environmental crises, I intend this chapter to orient the reader and act as a point of reference in the later discussions.

Environmentalism in Islamic scriptures

The environment in the Qur'ān

The right of humans to exploit the earth's resources, which in a religious setting is known as 'dominion', is at the heart of environmental debates in both religious and secular environmentalism. In Christian scripture and in much Christian thought,

dominion is assumed. Yet, unlike the Hebrew Bible, the *Qur'ān* does not ascribe to humans' dominion over nature – which fundamentally alters environmental discourse in Islamic circles. In 17 separate verses (2:107; 3:189; 5:17; 5:18; 5:120; 7:158; 9:116; 24:42; 25:2; 39:44; 42:49; 43:85; 45:27; 48:14; 57:2; 57:5; 85:9) the *Qur'ān* states: 'Do you not know that control [*mulk*] of the heavens and the earth belongs to Him [*Allah*]?'[2] The word *mulk*, translated above as 'control', is a verbal noun – in other English translations, *mulk* is translated as 'dominion'. Coming from the root *M L K*, *mulk* has a basic meaning of ownership or possession. It is used 48 times in the *Qur'ān* and is used to refer to either an earthly kingdom or kingship, i.e., that of Solomon in 2:102, or to 'the heavens and the earth' (i.e., all of creation) as a whole. In every verse where it is 'the heavens and the earth' as a whole that is possessed, rather than a discrete earthly kingdom, it is always God who has *mulk*. Clearly, then, the *Qur'ān* does not assign ownership, possession, or dominion of the earth to humanity; only God has dominion over the earth.

What, then, is the relationship of humans to nature proscribed in the *Qur'ān*? The creation story, so central to understanding the relationship between humanity and nature in any religion, differs in the *Qur'ān* in a few significant ways from the familiar creation story told in the Hebrew Bible. Genesis contains two versions of the creation story, Genesis 1:1–2:3 and 2:4–24. The most important verse for environmentalists in this narrative is the prescription to 'subdue the earth and dominate its creatures' (Kay 1989, 214). This is found in the first version of the story – Genesis 1:26 reads: 'Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground"' (Gen. 1: 26, NIV) and Genesis 1:28 reiterates this message: 'God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground"'. Interestingly, in the second creation story from Genesis 2, no such instruction to 'rule' or 'subdue' the earth is given. God creates Adam and places him in the Garden of Eden 'to work it and take care of it' (Genesis 2:15, NIV).

The creation story in the *Qur'ān* has more in common with the story told in Genesis 2 than that in Genesis 1. Although there is no one sustained account of God creating the universe in the *Qur'ān*, a number of scattered verses come together to form a kind of 'creation story'. *Sūrah* 41:9–12 states that God 'created the earth in two Days . . . He placed solid mountains on it, blessed it, measured out its varied provisions for all who seek them – all in four days . . . and in two days He formed seven heavens and instilled into each its function'. and *Sūrah* 25:59 states: 'It is He who created the heavens and earth and what is between them in six days'. The *Qur'ān* gives three different accounts of the creation of humans: Adam from clay (15:26), from fluid at conception (25:54), and humankind from dust at creation (30:20). God's purpose in creating humans, stated in 2:30, was for succession or trusteeship of the earth [*Khilāfah*], and worship.

Instead of having dominion over or possession of the earth, the *Qur'ān* makes humanity a *Khālifah*, a representative or successor on the earth. Muslim writers on

the environment frequently quote Verse 2:30 when explaining the role of humanity in caring for creation (for example, Abu-Hola 2009; Abu-Sway 1998; Setia 2007). The verse reads, 'When your Lord told the angels: "I am putting a successor [*Khālifah*] on earth," they said "How can You put someone there who will cause damage and bloodshed, when we celebrate Your praise and proclaim Your holiness?"' The word *Khālifah* (steward) is perhaps the most important concept in Islamic environmentalism, and most Muslim writers on environmentalism discuss the concept of stewardship (*Khilāfah*) and the responsibilities this role entails. The role of *Khālifah* entails accountability to God, and some Muslim scholars even believe it to be a 'test' from God (Abu-Sway 1998, 3; Khalid 2002, 4). There is a tension in the contemporary Islamic environmental literature between the view that humanity is in some way privileged, unique, or superior to the rest of creation and the view that humans are simply a small part of creation and interdependent with it. Thus, M. Izzi Dien (2000, 47) writes: 'All human individuals are merely parts of the holistic system of life created by God', while on the other hand, a writer such as Masri (1992) believes that humankind has been divinely created with the role of *Khālifah* in mind. Many writers attempt to find a middle ground between superiority and complete interdependence: 'Because of its ability to reason and think, humanity has been made the trustee or steward [*Khālifah*] of God on earth . . . Stewardship [*Khilāfah*] does not imply superiority over other living beings . . . Stewardship [*Khilāfah*] requires that humans learn to live in harmony with rather than work against nature' (Rahim 1991, 65).

Muslim writers usually translate *Khālifah* as 'viceroy' or 'steward'. However, Abdel Haleem, Fakhry, and Asad (the translators preferred in this book) all translate this word as 'successor' or 'inheritor' in 2:30, 6:165, 10:14, 27:62, and 35:39. In his note on the word *Khālifah*, Adbel Haleem states, 'The term *Khālifah* is normally translated as 'vicegerent' or 'deputy'. While this is one meaning of the term, its basic meaning is 'successor' – the *Qur'ān* often talks about generations and individuals who are successors to each other – or a 'trustee' to whom a responsibility is temporarily given' (Abdel Haleem 2010, 7). *Khālifah* is also used in the *Qur'ān* to describe the succession of a chosen people after Noah (7:69, 10:73), and after Ad (7:74). The word contains no sense of ownership, possession, or control over the earth, but rather shows either the ongoing succession of mankind from generation to generation as ordained by God, or humankind's role as God's representative on earth. Thus, the concept of *Khilāfah/Khālifah* can be broken into both a spatial and a temporal meaning. Humankind is a representative of God on earth, and in some instances, particular prophets are representatives of God to their communities. This is the spatial meaning. Humankind can succeed one another on earth, and this is the temporal meaning of *Khālifah*. However, humankind cannot succeed God temporally, as this entails humans *becoming* God, where the *Qur'ān* clearly indicates humankind is merely a *representative* of God.

Although humans do not possess or control the earth, the *Qur'ān* does in a number of places state that animals, plants, the seas, and the earth have been 'subjected' or 'made available' to humankind for use. Verse 31:20 states: '[People], do you not see how God has made what is in the heavens and on the earth useful

to you [*sakhhara lakum*], and has lavished His blessings on you both outwardly and inwardly'. *Sakhhara lakum* is usually translated as 'to make available to you'. The root *S Kh R* appears also in 14:32, 16:12, 16:14, 31:20, and 45:13 as *taskhir*. This is the verbal noun of *sakhhara* and means that God makes things available for your benefit. Two Muslim writers, Mustafa Abu-Sway and Adi Setia, discuss 16:12 and 16:14 in their writing on the environment. For Abu-Sway (1998, 6), the earth and all it contains has been 'subjected' to humankind to support 'the human being to fulfill his/her basic role on earth, which is to worship God'. Setia (2007, 142) is cautious with interpreting these verses, stating, 'though nature serves the needs of mankind, it also in its own way serves a higher end, an end which it partakes of in communion with mankind' – this 'higher end' is the worship of God. There is certainly a tension here between the concept of subjection and simply being 'useful' – however, if we consider the concept of *Khilāfah* discussed above, the cautious approach of Setia seems more appropriate and in keeping with the idea of 'stewardship'.

Nature is often used as a sign of divine reward or punishment by God in the *Qur'ān*, much as in the Hebrew Bible. The words of biblical scholar Jeanne Kay are as applicable to the *Qur'ān* as they are to the Bible. She writes nature is a 'tool of divine justice: beneficent nature is a reward for religious observance, and a deteriorating environment is God's punishment for idolatry or immorality' (Kay 1989, 215). This occurs frequently throughout the *Qur'ān* and is expressed in the verse most commonly quoted in environmental literature written by Muslims:

> Corruption has flourished on land and sea as a result of people's actions and He will make them taste the consequences of some of their own actions so that they may turn back.
>
> (*Qur'ān* 30:41)

Muslim writers on the environment interpret this verse to mean human sin, or humans acting in a manner contrary to God's intention, has caused our environmental crisis (Abu-Hola 2009; Ball 2008; Dutton n.d.; Setia 2007). A solution, therefore, is to change the behaviour of humankind – to live a life in line with the vaguely defined 'Islamic principles' these writers espouse. These principles – which are best understood as regular Islamic worship, God-consciousness, and a traditional, conservative, morality – are meant to ensure the end of the environmental crisis, presumably because either God will stop punishing humankind with environmental destruction, or a person who practices Islamic worship, God-consciousness, and conservative morality will not engage in environmental destruction. Some Muslim environmentalists in this book take a similar approach and argue Islam has 'the blueprint' to solve environmental crisis.

The *Qur'ān* itself also clearly calls bounteous nature a reward for good actions and natural disaster or environmental degradation a punishment for bad actions – this is evident in verses 7:96, 11:52, 13:13, 17:68–69, and 18:42, and these verses are cited by Muslim writers (for example, Abu-Hola 2009) to show how God uses the environment to reward or punish humanity. There is a desire in the *Qur'ān*

to see humanity cultivate and create order in the land, and 'corruption' (*Fasād*) or disorder is often a sign of hypocrites, inviting the displeasure of God. Verse 2:11–12 reads, 'When it is said to them, 'Do not cause corruption in the land', they say, 'We are only putting things right', but really they are causing corruption, though they do not realise it'. In this verse, derivatives of the verb *afsada* – to cause disorder, do corruption from the root *F S D* (Kassis 1983, 441) are translated by Adbel Haleem and Asad as 'corruption' and by Fakhry as 'mischief'. The use of this word is repeated in 2:60, when God commands, 'Eat and drink the sustenance God has provided and do not cause corruption in the land', and again in 2:204–205, where God warns Muhammad about a person 'whose views on the life of this world may please you . . . yet he is the bitterest of opponents. When he leaves, he sets out to spread corruption in the land, destroying crops and livestock – God does not like corruption'. The 'corruption' so disliked by God is specified – the destruction of livestock and crops. In ten additional verses (7:56; 7:74; 7:85; 11:85; 12:73; 13:25; 26:152; 26:183; 29:36; 47:22), this derivative of *afsada* is used in relation to a disordering or corruption of the earth, and all these verses display the displeasure of God.

The second most common verse used in discussions by Muslim writing on the environment is 6:38: 'All the creatures that crawl on the earth and those that fly with their wings are communities like yourselves'. While some writers believe this verse shows humanity to be but a part of creation, with no inherent superiority, others believe this verse shows animals share with humans the basic function of worshipping God. Further, a number of verses (13:13, 14:14, 17:44, 24:41, 21:79, 55:6, and 59:24) are frequently utilised in Islamic writing on the environment, all of which show nature is in a constant state of worship or praise to God. Destroying the environment, or allowing species extinction, is thus viewed as an act that cuts off the continued praise or worship of God. This is, possibly, a way in the Islamic worldview in which nature is valued for its own sake, for its independent relationship to God, and not for its utility or relationship to humankind.

A second way in which nature is valued for its own sake in contemporary Muslim literature on the environment is in its role as a 'sign' from God. The *Qur'ān* states:

> It is He who made the sun a shining radiance and the moon a light . . . God did not create all these without a true purpose; He explains His signs to those who understand. In the succession of night and day, and in what God created in the heavens and earth, there truly are signs for those who are aware of Him.
>
> (*Qur'ān* 10:5–6)

Many Muslim writers argue that the destruction of the environment destroys the signs from God – 'If any species becomes extinct, it is considered a loss of a Sign that reflects the greatness of the Creator' (Abu-Sway 1998, 9). The word used for sign here and in numerous other verses detailing aspects of nature as a sign from God (for example, see 2:164; 3:189; 6:96–97; 7:56–57; 10:5–6) is *ayah* (pl. *ayat*). The word *ayah* is also the word used for a verse of the *Qur'ān*. This is highly

significant – as it imbues nature with divinity akin to that of the *Qur'ān*. Environ-mental activists have picked up on the significance of this linguistic similarity – the founder of GMDC, Sara Jawaid, in a YouTube video, compares walking in nature to 'walking through the verses of the *Qur'ān*' (Faith in Action 2012).

The concept of *Mizān*, understood as 'balance', is integral to an environmen-tal worldview in Muslim literature. The verse most often used by Muslim writ-ers discussing *Mizān* is 15:19: 'As for the earth, We have spread it out, set firm mountains on it, and made everything grow there in due balance'. The concept is used to explain the complex eco-systems and physical laws of the universe much discussed in secular environmental literature, but with an Islamic slant. Khalid (2005, 103–4, 338) talks about the 'dynamic balance' of the natural world, which he states is 'Muslim in an original, primordial sense' because it is in submission to God. The concept, although frequently referenced, is usually not discussed in depth but merely given as a self-evident fact and a reason to value the earth. Alternatively, it is stated that humankind must 'make the best use of reason and to maintain the balance and proportion God has built into his creation' (Rahim 1991). The word *Mizān* in Arabic has connotations of not just a physical balance, but also justice. Discussions of 'just' rulers in the Arab tradition, often referring back to figures such as Solomon, involve them weighing (as if with scales) the claims of two opposing sides to find a balanced, or just, solution. There is the potential here for Muslim writers to use the concept *Mizān* to discuss environ-mental justice, although, sadly, these discussions are scarce in the contemporary literature to date.

The environment in aḥādīth and Islamic jurisprudence

The several major volumes of the *aḥādīth* collections contain thousands of say-ings and stories attributed to Prophet Muhammad. These *aḥādīth* are, in the Islamic tradition of jurisprudence, given a status second only to the *Qur'ān* in guiding Muslims in action and the formulation of religious law. In contemporary Islamic discourse and the lives of Muslims across the globe, the *aḥādīth*, argua-bly, is treated almost equally with the *Qur'ān*, possibly due to its simpler language and more direct mode of instruction. Sayings from the *aḥādīth* collections are very common in environmental literature written by Muslims, although because of the sheer number of available sayings, there is far less crossover between Mus-lim writers in their choice of which to select.

Despite this, one or two sayings are touchstones in Islamic environmental lit-erature, particularly the saying of the Prophet, 'If it is the Day of Judgement and you have a small tree in your hand, plant it, so you will do a good deed' (Al-Abani 27: 479). More so than with *Qur'ān* verses, the majority of Muslim writers do not enter into deep analysis or interpretation of the *aḥādīth* they use. Rather, the say-ings are left to speak for themselves. Activists who make reference to this *ḥadīth* typically relate it to humanity's role as *Khālifa* and our responsibility to care for and cultivate the earth diligently. The motif of trees frequently appears in Islamic environmental literature, and a number of authors quote from *aḥādīth*, showing

the value of trees. For example, 'He who cuts a lote-tree [without justification], God will send him to Hellfire' (al-Tirmidhi, 5239 Abu-Sway 1998, 25) and 'No one single Muslim grow or plant [sic] a plant or shrub and a bird, a human, or an animal ate from it, surely he or she will have a good deed for that' (al-Bukhari, part 2, 817 Abu-Hola 2009, 201; Rahim 1991). These *aḥādīth* are interpreted in a shallow manner: to show the value Islam places upon trees. Abu-Sway writes: 'Where the life of one tree is appreciated, one can see what is the Islamic position towards destroying millions of trees as a result of humans directly acting upon nature (e.g. deforestation) or indirectly (e.g. acid rain)' (Abu-Sway 1998, 24).

Muslim authors use the Islamic juristic practice *Qiyās* – reasoning from analogy – to address contemporary problems like pollution. They interpret *aḥādīth* regarding cleanliness, and prohibitions against odours, and hygiene as being injunctions against land, sea, and air pollution. For example, a *ḥadīth* states: 'Beware of the two [acts that bring] curses: relieving oneself in the path of people or in the shade [i.e. where people rest]'. A second *ḥadīth* that forbids 'relieving oneself in sources of water' is also interpreted in a similar way: they are understood to forbid pollution of the land and water sources with toxic chemicals, run-off, and garbage. Meanwhile, those *aḥādīth* forbidding Muslims from eating garlic prior to entering a mosque or public space (al-Bukhari and Muslim, al-Lu'lu wal-Marjan, 331, 332, and 333 in Abu-Sway 1998, 28) are seen to be a prohibition against air pollution. These examples show clearly that, like environmentalism in many other religious traditions, Muslim environmentalists 'mine' the Islamic texts for anything that can be interpreted to support their argument.

Finally, Islamic environmental literature appeals to *aḥādīth* teaching the need to conserve water during ablution and not be wasteful as examples of Islam's attitude towards excessive resource consumption and waste. One such *ḥadīth* states: 'The Prophet performed ablution three [times] and said "Whoever increases [more than three] he does injustice and wrong"' (Abu-Dawud, al-Nasa'i, and Ibn Majah in Abu-Sway 1998, 28). Another *ḥadīth* that recurred often in Islamic environmental literature also regards water consumption. It reads, 'Oh Sa'ad do not overuse water! Just use whatever you need exactly. Sa'ad replied, Is there any misuse of water? The Prophet said: Yes, even if you are on the shore of a river' (Zad al-Ma'ad 1–48 in Abu-Hola 2009, 205). From this *ḥadīth*, Abu-Hola (2009, 205) draws the conclusion that 'Any use of the environmental resources which exceeds the reasonable limits is forbidden in Islam'.

The tradition of Islamic jurisprudence – using the *Qur'ān*, collections of *aḥādīth*, analogical reasoning (*Qiyās*) and the consensus of scholars to build religious law governing the lives of Muslims – has generally been overlooked by Muslim environmentalists. However, one or two Muslim writers have written about the potential of the land categorisations found in the jurisprudential tradition that may be of use in guiding Muslims how to treat the earth. Land is divided into two main categories – *'amir* (developed) and *mawat* (undeveloped). These two categories can then be split again; *'amir* land into settlements and agricultural land; *mawat* land into 'rough grazing' land and wilderness (Dutton n.d., 59). Further to these distinctions, settled communities often designate a *Ḥarīm*,

or protected zone. This is based on the *Ḥarīm* of Mecca, a large area of land accessible to all people in the community and in which no hunting is allowed and no trees may be cut down (Khalid 2002, 4). The concept of *Ḥima* is a similar protected area, usually of wilderness, which is protected permanently to preserve a special function, i.e., as communal grazing land (Dutton, n.d., 59). The concept of *'amir* is talked about by the writer Abu-Sway in a manner very similar to the biblical injunction to 'inhabit and subdue' the earth. He writes of *'amir* that it is not limited to simple inhabitation. Rather, it means 'spreading and settling all over the earth, inhabiting every livable [sic] quarters, building . . . etc.' (Abu-Sway 1998, 33).

However, it is the concepts of *Ḥima* and *Ḥarīm* that are most commonly discussed in contemporary Islamic environmental literature. Fazlun Khalid argues that 'special reserves (*Ḥima*) may be established by the state for use as conservation zones . . . The state may establish inviolable zones (*Ḥarīm*) where use is prohibited or restricted', while Setia calls upon the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation[3] to follow the example of 'Umar – the second Islamic Caliph – and 'revive the traditional Islamic environmental conservation institutions of *Ḥima* (reserves) and *Ḥarīm* (inviolable zones)' (Setia 2007, 133). That the original purpose of these institutions was to preserve the environment *for the benefit of human use* is either ignored or deemed irrelevant by Setia. As Richard Foltz points out in his discussion of these concepts, as they are designed to preserve resources for human use and need, 'in order for the institution of *Ḥima* to be revived in Muslim regions today in a form that would actually serve to protect wildlife for the sake of biodiversity and ecosystem balance, the traditional rationale for its existence would have to be reinterpreted in light of contemporary scientific understanding' (Foltz 2006, 41).

Muslims engage with environmentalism

Muslim intellectuals on Islamic environmentalism

There are few voices in contemporary Islamic discourse who actively engage with the ethical concerns of environmental crisis and how this might relate to Islam and Islamic practice. Those of note are the philosopher Seyyed Hossein Nasr, who is perhaps the first Muslim to attempt a spiritual, Islamic reading of environmentalism; Fazlun Khalid, founder of a prominent Islamic environmental organisation who has written on Islam and the environment for almost 20 years; and the Muslim intellectual M. Izzi Dien, who has also written on the environment since the 1990s. In addition to these three, a handful of smaller contributors, who may specialise in another field, add their voice to the discourse in articles or short books.

In 1966, Seyyed Hossein Nasr was invited to deliver the Rockefeller Lectures at the University of Chicago, where he discussed the relationship between man, religious faith, and the environmental crisis. From these lectures came the publication of his book *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*, and over the ensuing decades, Nasr has remained engaged in the discourse on Islam and the

environment. Nasr's position on the relationship between, broadly, religion and the environment, first presented in the 1966 Rockefeller Lectures, has remained largely unchanged since that time. He believes the environmental crisis is a reflection of man's spiritual crisis and estrangement from God. In his 1996 book *Religion and the Order of Nature*, he writes 'The crisis of the natural environment is an external reminder of the crisis within the souls of men and women who, having forsaken Heaven in the name of the Earth, are now in danger of destroying the Earth as well' (Nasr 1996, 6).

In keeping with many religious commentators on the environmental crisis, Nasr traces the desacralisation of nature to the split between theology and philosophy in the late middle ages. The birth of a new type of knowledge, independent from the foundation of a religious cosmology and metaphysics, fundamentally altered humanity's view of the world. Nasr argues that this new type of knowledge, science (although a legitimate type of knowledge in some respects), has overstepped its bounds and become both illegitimate and dangerous in its refusal to integrate with a metaphysical, i.e., religious, system of knowledge. Because of this, and the dominance of scientific knowledge in contemporary society, the sacred and spiritual value of nature is no longer acknowledged or recognised (Nasr 1976, 14).

Nasr contends that nature must become re-sacralised in humanity's eyes and that this can be achieved by giving legitimacy and priority to a metaphysical knowledge of nature. To achieve this, both humanity, and our worldview need to be reborn (Nasr 1996, 6). Nasr argues for a revitalisation of 'traditional' sciences grounded in the religious tradition and believes there is a need:

> to bring out the interconnectedness between man and nature in the light of the Divine, an interconnection not based on sentimentality or even ethical concern . . . but one founded upon a knowledge whose forgetting has brought human beings to the edge of the precipice of annihilation of both the natural order and themselves . . . what religions must provide at this late moment is not only an ethics expanded to include the nonhuman, but also with the aid of their inner teachings, a sacred science.
>
> (Nasr 1996, 223)

Although much of Nasr's writing on the environment focuses on the role of religion broadly, he does detail what he believes to be the most important aspects of the Islamic tradition of relevance to environmental discourse. In particular, he focuses on the concept of *Mizān* (balance). This concept, Nasr believes, demonstrates how traditional Islamic science shares the 'same universe of meaning' with religion. He quotes from Surah 55, 7–9 in the *Qur'ān*, 'He has raised up the sky. He has set the balance so that you may not exceed in the balance: weigh with justice and do not fall short in the balance'.

I explained the concept of *Mizān* in the previous section; it is extensively discussed by Muslim commentators and is predominantly thought to refer either to the balancing or measuring of human deeds in the afterlife (and is thus a vital concept for Islamic ethics) or to the ability to establish balance in all aspects of

life, this sense of *Mizān* is applied to the *Qur'ān* itself (Nasr 1996, 128). Nasr compares these two interpretations with those Islamic scientists who, over the centuries, have used the concept to explain the precise balance found variously in physics and the application of natural laws; cosmology and alchemy; and biology and eco-systems. He demonstrates these Islamic scientists shared with theologians a 'common unity of discourse' and their theories were 'wed to the religious universe' (Nasr 1996, 129).

Mizān is a principle popular with Islamic writers attempting to construct an 'Islamic' environmental theology or ethics. Khalid includes the concept in his list of four key principles developed for workshops on Islam and Conservation. He writes of *Mizān*:

> The natural world, which we are a part of, is held together because it is in *mizān*, a state of dynamic balance. This is another way of saying that the natural order works because it is in submission to the Creator. It is Muslim in the original, primordial sense.
>
> (Khalid 2005, 103–4)

Khalid also uses *Mizān* as a term for the reason and intellect that humans were given by God. He argues part of our purpose on earth is to use this intellect, behave justly, and recognise the order around us (Khalid 1998). Meanwhile, Akhtaruddin Ahmad, in a book written to educate Muslims about the environmental crisis, discusses the 'well-measured balance' of earth, the cosmos, and all that exists within it as proof of humanity's interdependence with creation. Referring to verse 50:7–9 quoted above, Ahmad argues humans may not violate this balance in their role as 'representative and trustee of his Lord' (Ahmad 1997, 162–3). *Mizān* seems to be popular with Islamic writers on the environment as it is seen as 'proof' the *Qur'ān* foreshadowed, or can be applied to, contemporary environmental science and physics.

Contemporary Muslims attempting to develop an Islamic environmental theology or ethics also utilise the role of humanity as *Khālifah* on earth. Although, as was detailed in the first section of this chapter, the primary use of *Khālifah* in the *Qur'ān* is to designate the concept of 'succession', Muslim environmentalists interpret the term as guardian or trustee. Thus, Khalid calls *Khālifah* the 'responsibility principle' and states, 'this principle establishes our role as the guardians of the natural world' (Khalid 2005, 103–4). This guardianship is thought to be a 'duty' towards the earth incumbent upon all people (Naseef 1998; Hobson 1998; Khalid 1998). However, the interpretation of *Khālifah* as a type of guardianship or trusteeship is only one of many possible interpretations. As has already been discussed, 'succession' is a more common understanding. Although the concept of succession, or inheritance, does contain hints of trusteeship as the earth must be passed on from generation to generation, trusteeship is certainly not an explicit or necessary meaning. In fact, the word *Khālifah* is pregnant with many meanings and can be used in many ways, such as 'representative'. Understanding *Khālifah* as a kind of 'trusteeship' is useful for the Islamic environmental discourse, but it must be acknowledged that this is only one of many possible meanings.

The final major Islamic concept frequently employed by Muslim environmentalists is *Ṭawḥīd* – oneness or divine unity. Nasr (1976, 94) calls *Ṭawḥīd* the 'principle of unity' that binds all modes of knowing and being together. Man and nature are inseparably linked, as are the two types of revelation: the 'cosmic revelation', which is the recorded *Qur'ān*, and the '*Qur'ān* of nature' (Nasr 1976, 94). Abdul-Matin (2010, 20) explains *Ṭawḥīd* in a more accessible way, 'We come from Allah, and so does the universe and everything in it. Everything emanates from the same source . . . the Oneness of Allah and His creation'. This concept, then, links humankind to the earth through their shared divine nature (see also Khalid 2005; Naseef 1998).

Muslim writers repeatedly refer to the dominance of a secular/scientific worldview as a major cause of the environmental crisis (Ahmad 1997; Haq 2001; Khalid 1998; Khalid 2005; Negus 1992). However, few go as far as Nasr in claiming the environmental crisis is a reflection of a human spiritual crisis. Rather, they argue it is the failure of modern science and the popular worldview to view nature as a sacred creation that allows for exploitation and destruction. There is a common thread that, were all people to live in line with the teachings of the *Qur'ān*, the crisis would never have occurred, and would also be easily fixed:

> Islamic doctrine, as contained in the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic sayings, encompasses a range of principles which, if they were obeyed, would prevent environmental problems arising in the first place. In the present situation, where these problems already exist as a potent danger, the application of these same principles could, if not dispel the dangers, at least alleviate them.
>
> (Hobson 1998)

Islamic environmental groups and projects

Although Muslim intellectuals have been writing on environmental issues since the late 1960s, it has taken far longer for a grassroots environmental movement to form amongst Muslims. Despite growing awareness of environmentalism and a bourgeoning number of Islamic environmental groups and campaigns, environmentalism is still a fairly marginal concern in Muslim communities in the United States and Great Britain. This book examines Islamic groups dedicated to environmentalism. Yet, the environmental work done in Muslim communities is not exclusively done by specifically environmental groups. Some of the largest campaigns have come out of Islamic organisations with a much broader focus. For example, MADE (Muslim Action for Development and the Environment) is a British organisation focused on both global social justice and environmental issues. Their *Green Up My Community* campaign, run in collaboration with the Federation of Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMSYO) began with greening five mosques in London, including putting a community roof-top garden on the Maryam Centre of the East London Mosque. MADE encourage recycling, the reduction of waste – including rubbish, water, and energy – and the use of sustainable materials in redevelopments. The campaign is ambitious and aims to

have 30 mosques signed up to their program by the end of 2016 (MADE 2016). MADE's website states, 'the planet is being destroyed by irresponsible and selfish living and it's the world's poorest who are first to feel the effects of the changing climate . . . our response is rooted in the Islamic traditions of social action, justice and environmental stewardship. It's about being smart, ethical and green in the way we live' (MADE 2015). Alongside their *Green Up My Community* campaign, MADE also run a campaign advocating for renewable energy, alongside an award scheme to encourage Mosques and Islamic community centres to become eco-friendly.

ISNA is the largest Islamic representative organisation in North America, and their main programs are centred on 'interfaith collaboration and civic engagement'. In addition to their large conferences, matrimonial events and youth camps, ISNA has also launched environmental campaigns and even has a 'Green Masjid Task Force'. 'Greening Ramadan', one of their projects, is an online pledge for Mosques and Islamic community centres, in which they pledge to promote environmental behaviour (such as reducing waste and recycling) at the mosque and to their congregations during *Ramadhān*. ISNA themselves pledge to plant a tree for each mosque or community centre that signs up to the campaign (ISNA 2013). Some mosques choose to go further than simply encouraging recycling and reducing waste: the San Diego Mosque began fundraising in March 2016 for solar panels to cover their roof with the intention of the mosque running entirely on solar power (Bayasi 2016)

Mosques are also the focal point of the Canadian *Green Khutbah* campaign, organised by the popular Islamic environmental blog *Khaleafa.com*. The *khutbah* is the sermon given in the mosque on Fridays, and *Khaleafa.com* encourage Imams to preach on practical ways their congregants can incorporate environmentalism into their daily lives, 'the focus of the campaign is threefold: 1) To raise awareness about the current state of the environment today. 2) To highlight the contributions Islam can bring towards the environmental movement. 3) To provide proactive tools that the Muslim community can adopt into their daily lives' (Khaleafa 2016). The campaign was launched in 2012 and changes focus each year. In 2015, *Khaleafa.com* set the focus as 'Water – A Sacred Trust' to educate Muslims on water conservation. *Khaleafa.com* is an excellent example of the way the internet is utilised by Muslims as a gathering point and organising tool for environmentalism. *Khaleafa.com* is not an organisation or community group – it is one man, Muaz Nasir, who curates a blog with many contributors all writing on the theme of Islamic environmentalism. The website has launched a number of online environmental projects in addition to the Green Khutbah campaign, including a 'Green Eid Gift Guide' and 'The Alhamdulillah Series', a photo essay series 'launched as a reminder of many blessings found in the natural environment' (Khaleafa 2016).

Indeed, the internet is widely used by Muslim environmentalists, and there are now numerous websites either dedicated to, or dealing extensively with, Islamic environmentalism. *The Eco Muslim* is a website founded and maintained by a woman on an 'eco jihad, a greener effort to make our community on Earth that

tiny bit purer to live in' (Iqbal 2014). The website features posts on gardening, DIY 'eco projects', recycling, and sustainable living and includes summaries or videos of talks given by the EcoMuslim at various Muslim events in London. Another popular Islamic website with an environmental focus, *Green Prophet,* covers environmentalism and sustainability in the Middle East – articles cover technology and environmental science, environmental policy, health, sustainable businesses and developments, and culture and religion (Green Prophet 2016). Interestingly, where *EcoMuslim* integrates discussions of environmentalism with religious reflections and motivations, *Green Prophet* largely presents environ-mentalism as something separate from religion. This is not to say the authors themselves don't find an important connection between the two, but that a con-nection is missing from the pages of the website.

Environmentalism in many Muslim majority countries is influenced or domi-nated by international environmental organisations and is largely secular in nature. However, Iran is a fascinating counter-example, a country which not only has remarkably extensive environmental programs (including population control), but also has an official environmental policy that explicitly claims Islam as its foun-dation (Foltz 2005). No international environmental organisation has a presence in Iran, yet the country has over 149 registered and unregistered environmental organisations (Foltz 2005, 18). And yet, despite the government's official envi-ronmental policy noting the connection with Islamic faith, 'most Iranians fail to see environmental problems as a religious issue' (Foltz 2005, 25). Foltz also notes that Iran's environmental issues appear to be getting worse, not better (2005, 27), although the extent to which this is caused by political necessities in the Iranian context, rather than ineffectiveness of environmental policies, is unclear. Cer-tainly, Iran is unique in having an 'entirely home-grown' environmental move-ment independent from Western models (Foltz 2005, 27).

In the many Muslim-majority countries where environmentalism is a largely secular affair, the fact that activists do not explicate the link between Islam and environmentalism does not necessarily mean these groups are *not* Islamic. For many people, simply having a Muslim involved in environmentalism is suffi-cient to call that activism Islamic environmentalism. Yet, for the purposes of this book, I want to examine activists and groups that *do* make the specific connection between their religion and their environmental activism. This seems to appear with more frequency outside Muslim majority countries. I can only speculate as to why: perhaps Muslims living in a Muslim majority country do not have to con-sciously question whether the practices they engage in are Islamic. The culture that surrounds them is Islamic, therefore they do not think through the connec-tions between Islamic belief and their 'non-religious' day-to-day lives. For Mus-lims living as a minority in countries such as the United States and Great Britain, they do not have this luxury. Consistent and faithful practice of their religion requires a constant critical assessment of all their daily activities: is this Islamic? The connections between environmental activism and Islamic belief, thus, *have* to be thought through and made explicit.

Notes

1 To undertake the analysis of scriptural references towards the environment and related matters presented in this chapter, I utilised three English translations of the *Qur'ān*: those by Mohammad Asad, Majid Fakhry, and M.A.S. Abdel Haleem. Beginning with Abdel Haleem's translation, as each verse of relevance was identified, it was cross-checked with the other two translations to ascertain the degree of difference between translations and whether this difference could affect the interpretation of the verse. Following this, key Arabic words from these verses were identified whose interpretation would have a fundamental impact on the meaning of the verse as related to environmental concerns. These words were then semantically analysed, including checking all other uses of the word by the *Qur'ān* and contexts in which the word was used. Finally, a selection of the most important and frequently cited verses was analysed, in their entirety, in Arabic.

2 In all quotations, I have chosen to use M.A.S. Abdel Haleem's translation, unless there is a need to show difference between the translations. Abdel Haleem's translation is the newest – first printed in 2005 and rereleased with corrections in 2010. Further, Abdel Haleem is a highly respected Islamic scholar who has taught Arabic at Cambridge University and London University. He was a Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. His international standing as a scholar of Arabic and Islamic Studies and the overwhelmingly positive reception to his translation of the *Qur'ān* is the primary reason for using his translation as the primary version in this thesis.

3 An international representative organisation of 57 Muslim nations.

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5   Framing in Islamic environmental organisations

When activists engage with the world – through speeches, posters, websites, and social media – they present their cause in a very specific, often well-considered way. After all, people become activists because they are passionate about changing the social or political world in some way: they see a problem or an injustice, and they want to fix it. But to actually make change, activists must motivate other people to join their cause, gain public sympathy, and convince politicians and policy makers that their demands are just. Activists must, therefore, ensure their 'message' is convincing; they need to 'sell' their perspective to the world. Examining how Muslim environmentalists present the environmental crisis and their activism to the world can tell us a lot about the way they themselves understand environmentalism: we can see what they think the cause of environmental crises really is, what they think good solutions are, and the various methods they use to attract others to the environmental cause.

Scholars of social movements call this way of presenting a cause to the world 'framing', and in this chapter I analyse my data – face-to-face interviews and textual material produced by Muslim environmentalists – through the lens of framing theory. Where the interviews demonstrate how the activists frame environmental crises and their involvement in activism *for themselves*,[1] their newsletters, websites, and Facebook pages demonstrate how the activists frame environmentalism *for others*. I am indebted to Snow and Benford (1988) for their identification of three core framing tasks – *diagnostic*, *prognostic*, and *motivational*. These three tasks form the first three sections of this chapter. Where diagnostic framing requires activists to identify an injustice or problem that requires change and attribute blame for that problem, prognostic framing suggests courses of action to affect that change, and motivational framing – as the name suggests – attempts to motivate potential activists (and keep current activists motivated). The final section of the chapter examines the use of Islamic symbols and narratives in the framing processes of Muslim environmentalists.

Framing theory emerged during the 'cultural turn' in social movement theory when theorists reacted against the highly rational accounts of social movements given in RM theory. Influenced, in part, by new social movement theory, attention shifted from 'organisations, resources, structural preconditions, networks, and rational choice' to 'softer' mental and subjective factors (Johnston and Klandermans

1995, 3). With the 'cultural turn', the apparent dichotomy posed by the cultural focus of new social movement theory and the rational positivism of the RM tradition begins to disappear. Scholars of movement 'culture' believe, as do I, that *both* cultural and structural focuses have analytical value, and a comprehensive theory of social movements requires analysis of these two factors.

Framing theory is an attempt to do just this type of theoretical synthesis. In studying the ways in which activists present the world – both to themselves and to others – framing theory utilises both cultural and structural analysis. The questions I ask to discover how Islamic environmentalism is situated in its cultural field are: what kinds of cultural symbols and practices are adopted by activists in their frames? How are varied ideologies and symbols synthesised and framed by activists? What new kinds of culture emerge from framing processes? To understand what framing theory can reveal about movement structure, I ask: what types of frames are common across all movement organisations, and across all movements? What processes do activists engage when framing? How successful are different types of frames and framing processes for mobilisation? In answering these questions, the relationship between cultural and structural factors in social movements begins to unfold.

It quickly became apparent when researching Islamic environmentalism that religion – Islam – is a rich reservoir of symbolic resources for Muslim activists. This finding confirms the arguments made by other social movement theorists who have examined religion. In the early 1980s, Morris (1984) and McAdam (1982) argued that religion was an essential symbolic resource during the American Civil Rights Movement. This argument was matched by other, subsequent studies on the role of religion in social movements: for example, Kurzman (1994) wrote on the importance of the mosque during the Iranian Revolution. While the place of religion in social movement research will be discussed in much greater detail in Chapter 7, in this chapter, I simply show that the extensive use of Islamic symbols and narratives by Muslim environmentalists confirms that religion is an important aspect of culture used in framing processes. The activists also engage in a number of the framing processes identified by Snow et. al. (1986), in particular, frame transformation, frame extension, and belief amplification. Gamson's 'injustice frames' (1992) – a kind of diagnostic framing that emphasises the injustice of a policy, institution, structure, or society and identifies the victims of this injustice – is also evident in Islamic environmentalism, although activists usually only partially construct these frames.

What went wrong? Diagnosing environmental crises

When looking at environmental crises – whether industrial pollution, rising sea levels, or plastic in the oceans – we can look to find the cause in two possible places. One option is to look 'outside' – to political systems, economic structures, and cultural forces. The second option is to look 'inside' – within ourselves – to greed, wastefulness, apathy, and their ilk. The approach an environmentalist takes will reveal a lot about how they understand political structures and the individual's place within those structures. Additionally, *religious* environmentalists may place another layer of meaning over their diagnoses: the 'outside' world may be corrupt,

immoral, and evil, or humans may, 'inside', be themselves corrupted, divorced from God, and led astray. 'Diagnosing' like this is a framing process – common in all social movements – where activists first identify a problem in society that requires change, then attribute blame for that problem (Snow and Benford 1988).

Muslim environmentalists do not agree on one primary cause of environmental problems. Like all social movements, the activists are not a single homogenous and cohesive group – in fact, they largely operate in fragmented groups with little overarching contact. Thus, we find some activists diagnosing the root cause of environmental crises as being entirely systemic: caused by political and economic structures 'outside' ourselves. On the other hand, some Muslim activists diagnose environmental crises as caused entirely by human's interior failings. We are greedy consumers oblivious to (or uncaring of) the consequences of our lifestyles on the planet. Yet others find fault in some combination of both 'outside' and 'inside' factors. Activists making a diagnosis of 'systemic' failure tend to be more politicised with a history of involvement in other grassroots political and social movements. Activists who primarily diagnose individual failure as the cause of environmental crisis tend to be less critical of contemporary political and economic structures and largely accepting of the status quo.

Wisdom in Nature (WiN), a small organisation based in Great Britian, is the most consistent in articulating a 'whole system' critique of environmental crisis. The group started in 2004 when their founder, Muzammal, used an Islamic environmental e-list he was running to recruit Muslims for a new London-based environmental group. Muzammal had long been involved in activism: he had been a member of IFEES, the first (and perhaps most prominent) Islamic environmental organisation in Great Britain, and he had been active in radical grassroots politics in Brighton – particularly in anti-Iraq War activism during 2003. WiN (who were named LINE – London Islamic Network for the Environment – when they first started) met monthly in London to have open discussions about environmental issues and attracted a diverse range of attendees, not all Muslim. Through these meetings and ongoing facilitated discussions, the group developed their platform, their 'framing' of environmental crisis.

From the information on the WiN website and in interviews with Muzammal and Elizabeth, an Edinburgh-based WiN member, WiN's framing of environmentalism emerged. Not only do they insist that the cause of environmental crises is systemic, WiN also refuses to separate environmental crises from other political, social, and economic crises. The group takes a 'whole-system' approach to their diagnostic framing: a heading on their website describing the history of the organisation and what they do reads 'Interconnectedness: Transcending the Single Issue Trap' (Wisdom in Nature 2013b). WiN were so intent on framing their activism as focused on 'interconnectedness' rather than the 'single issue' of environmentalism that they changed their name from the specifically-environmental London Islamic Network for the Environment to the more ambiguous Wisdom in Nature.

WiN are perhaps the most coherent and consistent in their whole-system approach, but they are not the only Muslim environmentalists who frame environmental crises in this way. Khalid (2013) is an independent activist based in the

Bay Area of California. An environmental engineer, he transcends the technical focus of his training to be highly politically aware. Most of his political engagement and activism focus on domestic poverty and inequality – not environmentalism. Yet, he is still involved in environmental activism and frames environmental crises as a problem with the capitalist mode of production and how it has shaped Western societies: 'I think that the dominant industrial system is the root of the problem. That manifests in industrialised agriculture, in the way we organise our living, in our transportation, and stuff like that. I see that as the cause, but I don't see it going back despite not owning a cell phone'. Khalid matches his politicised worldview with a concomitant commitment to altering his own life, living against the tide of capitalist consumerism in small ways: he doesn't own a cell phone, tries to cycle rather than drive, is a vegetarian, and eschewed plane travel for years. During the time I spent with Khalid in Oakland, he took me to a vegan restaurant, showed me the bike paths becoming popular in the area, and took me to see the community garden built on an abandoned freeway off-ramp next to his mosque. I'll discuss 'lifestyle' activism – the ways in which activists try to live out the changes they are fighting for in the here and now – in Chapter 7. But it is worth noting at this point that Khalid combines an 'outside' or systemic diagnosis with a focus on 'inside' or individual changes.

Khalid's clear diagnosis of industrialised capitalist society as the root cause of environmental problems is also shared by Fazlun, founder of the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Science (IFEES) in the United Kingdom. IFEES is perhaps the best-known Islamic environmental organisation in Great Britain – Fazlun is a well-respected and relatively high-profile environmentalist, and the organisation has run a number of successful international and local environmental campaigns. In the IFEES newsletter *EcoIslam* Fazlun (2010, 3) writes: 'Our problem is systemic. At the root of this debacle is a competing nation state model locked into a capitalist economic paradigm which encourages a consumer culture which in turn sets no limits on growth'. *EcoIslam* – published online and clearly targeted at Western, English-speaking Muslims – encourages Muslims to critically re-consider the political and economic systems in which they live. The newsletter has articles written by prominent Muslim environmentalists covering a huge diversity of subjects: for example, deforestation in Indonesia, sustainable food production, Islamic scriptures, and the activities of IFEES.

WiN, Fazlun, and Khalid all engage in the process Snow et al. (1986, 473) call 'frame transformation':

> The programs, causes, and values that some SMOs promote, however, may not resonate with, and on occasion may even appear antithetical to, conventional lifestyles or rituals and extant interpretive frames. When such is the case, new values may have to be planted and nurtured, old meanings or understandings jettisoned, and erroneous beliefs or "misframings" reframed (Goffman 1974, 308) in order to garner support and secure participants.

As the activists are well aware, Muslims in the United States and Great Britain usually do not view the capitalist industrial system, in and of itself, as problematic.

As one activist pointed out, many Muslims buy whole-heartedly into an individualistic, consumer lifestyle where success is measured by the car you drive and the size of your house (Ameena 2013). Activists like Khalid, Fazlun, and Muzammal who *do* believe the world system itself causes environmental crises are required to 'reframe' or transform the way Muslims see industrial capitalism and the effects it has on society if they are to garner further support.

Khalid, Fazlun, and Muzammal all employ the linguistic codes of radical left politics – either consciously or unconsciously – and indeed, all three have long been involved in, or exposed to, various grassroots activist campaigns. Khalid is involved in activism around poverty, and both Fazlun and Muzammal have been environmentalists for years, coming into contact with and working alongside a diverse range of other activists along the way. When choosing how to present environmental crisis, activists will draw on the pre-existing cultural forms they have been exposed to (Hart 1996) – and in doing so situate themselves in their surrounding cultural landscape. Khalid's emphasis on the 'industrial system' and Fazlun's use of the phrase 'capitalist economic paradigm' are examples of the influence of left-wing organising. This shouldn't be surprising; it is quite common for environmental activists to participate in other movements, and as I mentioned in Chapter 2, environmentalists in the 1960s were frequently associated with more than one activist cause.

Secular environmental movements, the anti-globalisation movement, many indigenous rights movements, and some Islamic political movements (see, for example, Karagiannis 2005; Kuru 2005; Lubeck 2000; Snow and Marshall 1984) utilise a 'world system' critique that examines the way global political, economic, and socio-cultural factors produce and reproduce inequality, oppression, and exploitation (of humans and the environment). This type of critique emphasises that 'the imperialist expansion of capital to the periphery exerts a continuing influence on both its internal and external social formations, distorting the direction of development process' (Snow and Marshall 1984, 132). Activists argue the contemporary 'world system' has clear winners and losers – and the losers are entire societies (bar an elite few) in the Global South, marginalised groups in the Global North (such as indigenous groups), and the environment.

WiN, Khalid, and Fazlun are unusual: the majority of Muslim environmentalists do not make this kind of sweeping 'whole system' diagnosis of environmental crises. However, even the less politically radical activists often muse about the role a corrupt financial system and accompanying corporate privilege play in creating and perpetuating environmental crises. Ameena (2013), a middle-aged, very active, community-oriented Muslim and environmentalist, frames her critique in emotive terms: 'So it's just so tragic, and it's all connected. We got Monsanto, we've got the whole . . . inequalities and wages, I mean everything is connected. It is this worldwide system of corporate dominance that is destroying the world for a profit, and we're all suffering'. Ameena here links the power of global corporations like Monsanto to increasing economic inequality and argues this is connected to environmental crisis – these corporations are 'destroying the world for a profit'. It is interesting to note the similarities in framing between Muslim and secular environmentalists. Muslim environmentalists join radical secular

environmentalists from groups like EarthFirst! in framing capitalist economics as a cause of environmental destruction. Radical environmentalists often criticise capitalism as being a kind of 'market religion' and do not hesitate to lay blame for environmental crises at its door (Loy 2003; Ortiz and Durão 2003). In the *Earth First! Journal*, activist Eamon Farelly (2014, 13) writes: 'My frustration is ultimately with . . . the self-delusion that is necessary for the entire death machine that is industrial capitalism to function'. The language is more emotive than that used by Muslim environmentalists, but Farrelly's target is remarkably similar.

There is a clear religious justification for Muslims to diagnose the financial system as a cause of injustice and environmental destruction: Islam forbids financial interest (*riba*), giving a 'double' justification in advocating for financial reform, as it will benefit the environment *and* be in keeping with Islamic doctrine. Activists call the financial system 'fictitious' (Elizabeth 2013), 'unreal' (Fazlun and Dawud 2012), a 'cancer' (Fazlun and Dawud 2012, 2013), and 'ridiculous' (Elizabeth 2013). Dawud (Fazlun and Dawud 2013) links the very notion of environmentalism to an opposition to the current financial system: 'The fact is, money is created out of nothing. You agree with that. You cannot have an infinite amount of nothing being created which can expend itself on the finite resources of the planet. End of story. That's environmentalism'. Muslim activists here are undertaking 'belief amplification' (Snow et al. 1986, 469). Muslims *already* believe that a financial system employing interest is forbidden by God; however, this pre-existing belief has not lead to mobilisation or galvanised wide-spread support for environmentalism amongst Muslims. In repeatedly emphasising their pre-existing belief in the immorality of the financial system, Muslim environmentalists hope to inspire other Muslims to take action. The relationship between this framing process and the activists' religious beliefs is important. Movement activists invariably have strong, pre-existing commitments to cultural values *outside* the movement, and their commitment to these values is often greater than their commitment to the movement itself (Hart 1996, 96). Those values, then, must be able to be expressed within their activism (or at the very least, not contradicted by the movement's objectives). Blaming capitalist economic structures for environmental crises is a way in which some Muslim activists can express their *religious* commitment to a society free from interest (*Riba*) through their *environmental* activism.

At the least radical end of the diagnostic spectrum, activists identify consumerism and the high level of waste associated with a consumerist lifestyle as the cause of environmental crises. This is almost entirely an 'inside' diagnosis: the cause of environmental crisis is individual behaviour, our own internal failure. Muslim Green Team (MGT) is a Bay Area-based environmental group that was on 'sabbatical' during my fieldwork. Founder Bhawana was a board member of her local chapter of the Muslim American Society (MAS), and MGT began life under the auspices of MAS to raise awareness of environmental issues in Bay Area Muslim communities. MGT's environmental framing almost exclusively focused on individual behaviour, believing the Muslim community is wasteful and oblivious to how this wastefulness contributes towards environmental problems. MGTs events, large Eco Fairs held at the Santa Clara mosque, asked Muslims to consider

such things as how often they drove, if they recycled or not, if they wasted water, and if they used plastic shopping bags. GMDC, another local environmental group based in Washington, D.C., was developing their *Ramadhān* campaign during the time I spent with them. GMDC was also concerned about waste; in this case, the food wastage that occurs every year during *Ramadhān* as Muslims prepare large *iftār* meals each evening, with a cultural taboo against serving left-overs to guests another night.

Labelling consumerism and wastefullness as the *prime* causes of environmental crises occurs more amongst United States-based activists than Great Britain-based activists. The framing of environmental crises by American activists, therefore, largely remains at the individual level, and they tend not to extend blame to the system level. This could be a reflection of the individualistic nature of culture in the United States.[2] Activists have, probably unknowingly, drawn upon the pre-existing 'cultural environment' (Hart 1996, 98) of neo-liberal individualism. Khalid (2013), the most politically aware of the United States activists, identifies this tendency amongst his fellow Muslim activists:

> Nobody is talking about political engagement on environmental issues that I've ever heard of. So it's all very neo-liberal in that sense, in that it is focused on the individual changing the way they live, so they are a product of the space they're in. And I don't think many of them have [. . .] not many of them have the language to understand that's even a neo-liberal thing. So they don't realise the paradigm they're caught up in.

Activists are typically targeting Muslims when they present 'wasteful' consumers as a cause of environmental crisis. Ameena (2013) wonders if Muslims are so absorbed by consumerism because they are migrants who have come for a 'better life', which they equate with consumer goods, 'The whole concept of buying less, they came here to buy more! What?! We came here to get stuff! That's what the world is telling them'. Unlike some of the environmental groups in Great Britain which run environmental campaigns and projects that target a wide community, the American activists typically only focus their projects on and recruit from the Muslim community. Their presentation of environmental crisis, therefore, is specifically meant to appeal to Muslims. In drawing attention to the environmental consequences of individual behaviour, Muslim activists engage in a milder, 'domain-specific' (Snow et al. 1986, 474) form of frame transformation. Rather than reframing the entire world system as something negative, they instead only reframe consumer behaviour.

In presenting environmental crisis as an *individual* concern requiring *individual* behavioural change, these Muslim environmentalists engage in an activism that aligns with theories of Lifestyle Movements (Haenfler et al. 2012), which generally emphasise behavioural reform and lived action, rather than reform at a political or institutional level.[3] Erik (2013), an independent activist from the Bay Area in California heavily involved in permaculture, goes so far as to call consumerism 'one of the diseases of the human condition'. Although *only* using this kind of

diagnostic framing is an indication of an acceptance of the political-economic sta-
tus quo, almost all activists did articulate some version of 'inside' diagnosis – with
more politicised activists coupling it with other 'outside' diagnoses. For example,
Fazlun links consumerism to the current political system and the close ties large
corporations have to governments. He highlights how politicians are invested in
maintaining the (consumerist) status quo:

> If any party ventures to say – look, we are depleting the earth's resources by
> the way we live, therefore we need to cut down on consumption, and talk the
> language of what is now, the new term is "de-growth", talk the language of
> simple life and localisation – not a chance in hell those parties will get into
> power. No chance. So they have to sell the good life.
>
> (Fazlun and Dawud 2012)

Similarly, Shabaaz (2013), an activist associated with IFEES, recognises 'as
soon as you get into consumerism, you get into politics. Because you can't divorce
those two'. Islamist political movements also paint consumerism and 'Western
lifestyles' to be the root cause of moral laxity in their own societies (Snow and
Byrd 2007, 124–5). Some movements in the Islamic revival present 'Westerniza-
tion and its consumerism, pop culture, and moral laxity. . . [as] the underlying
challenge' (Snow and Marshall 1984, 135). The activists in this study share with
these Islamists a critique of consumerist lifestyles, although their reasons for the
critique and their end-goal differ considerably.

Diagnosing the cause of environmental crisis as the failure of individual
behaviour places Muslim environmentalists in a difficult position: they are try-
ing to recruit Muslims to their environmental cause, and being too critical of
their behaviour may end up alienating potential allies. Thus, activists may choose
to excuse the poor environmental behaviour of their Muslim peers as resulting
from ignorance. The majority of Muslims, they explain, are unaware of their
'obligations' towards the environment. Shabaaz (2013) mentioned attitudes to
water conservation amongst Muslims: 'I come across many many Muslims who
have never heard of that, don't understand it, and – to use Wudu as an example –
think that you need to make it with running water so they have the tap on, and
they're just taking bits from it all the time but it's actually running'. The implicit
assumption (occasionally explicitly stated) is that if Muslims are educated or
made aware of their religious obligations towards the environment (as under-
stood by the activists), they would behave in an environmentally responsible
manner. Many activists who take this approach see their primary role as one of
educators. Eyerman and Jamison's (1991) work on cognitive praxis argues that
social movements are, first and foremost, producers of knowledge, and one of
their major tasks is the diffusion of that knowledge through education. It is not
surprising, then, to see that nearly every organisation featured in this book runs
(or used to run) workshops and/or gives lectures on environmentalism targeted
to Muslims.

Not all the activists buy into the 'ignorance' excuse for poor environmental behaviour in Muslim communities. Ameena (2013) claims Muslims are wasteful and environmentally irresponsible because environmentalism is low on their list of priorities. 'I don't think the Muslim community is convinced that environmentalism is as important as praying, fasting, and wearing a headscarf. Until that time, it's just a lot of effort. And it's a lot of bad habits. People have a lot of bad habits'. Nabeel (2013), the founder of SHINE, a local environmental group in Sheffield in Great Britain, shares a similar view:

> Unfortunately, as with many other things, the environmental side always takes a bit of a low priority and I think really with the current climate, and I say current but it's been going on for five or six years now. You know, Muslims are getting a really hard time, they're getting to the point where there is a great deal of injustice that is going on.

Where Ameena's framing presents a largely negative view of the Muslim community – they have 'bad habits' and are lazy, 'it's just a lot of effort' – Nabeel is more charitable. He shifts the blame to wider 'injustice', which he specifies later in the interview as the demonisation of Muslims as terrorists and the related racial conflict in Great Britain.

Only a few activists successfully articulate the kind of injustice frame identified by Gamson and colleagues. Ameena is one of them. She explicitly claims the costs of the environmental crisis are carried disproportionately by those living in poverty, both internationally and within the United States:

> What is so tragic about this whole thing is that it is those countries that have least contributed to climate change that are paying the biggest price. And a lot of those countries are Muslim countries. Which is another reason why Muslims should pay attention . . . So a lot of Muslim countries, a lot of African countries, a lot of third world countries that don't benefit from a lot of the reasons that they're going through this. And even here locally, I mean just drive to Richmond. You know, where is Chevron? Heart of Richmond. Who is paying the price for our cars and our gas? People who probably don't even have cars.
>
> (Ameena 2013)

WiN also employ injustice frames, arguing that 'the capitalist economic system is a key component responsible for ecological injustice. . . [which results in] more destabilisation of human societies and the wider natural world' (Wisdom in Nature 2013a). However, such clear articulation of an injustice frame is rare. Most of the time, the activists in this study only partially reference an injustice frame. Many are able to make a link between issues related to poverty – whether in the Muslim community, the wider local community, or globally – and the lack of environmentally responsible behaviour. However, few go so far as to say that the burdens of environmental crises are unevenly and unjustly distributed. An

example of this is Bhawana (2013), the founder of the Muslim Green Team, who spoke of the difficulty in getting people to buy organically produced food:

> If you're poor, if you live in an area where they don't have grocery stores, and there are. So if you go to Oakland for example, all they have is these corner drug stores where they have no fresh produce at all. And all the kids have access to, and the adults, are chips and junk and fast food. And organic local food is expensive.

Bhawana identifies the way poverty prevents some people from engaging in environmental behaviour (buying organic food) but does not claim, like Ameena does, that those in poverty *also* suffer more from environmental burdens like pollution. Talking specifically about the Muslim community and how poverty and race affect the uptake of environmentalism, Khalid (2013) says:

> There are a lot of racial and social dynamics that fall on top of that, so when they show up at the mosque with Styrofoam stuff and probably most of the mosques in America have Styrofoam because they go to the store in their neighbourhood and I have a hard time putting forth a critique of that. This is happening from a totally different place, it's not a privileged white person who lives in the suburbs who has the resources and the access. There I can start putting forth a critique. It gets complicated dealing with environmental issues in the Muslim communities. Particularly here because we have this big mix of groups. Part of it is education, part of it is just a money issue. People just can't afford the same things – be nice to the environment, but that's a class issue right?

Khalid here begins a process of frame extension (Snow et al. 1986, 472) – poverty and inequality may not initially appear relevant concerns for environmentalism; however, they *are* relevant concerns for those who suffer from poverty and inequality.

Reshaping and reframing environmentalism to demonstrate how the movement has ignored or failed disadvantaged communities, highlighting the unequal spread of environmental damage, and responding to the needs of those diverse communities has been a critical project of environmental justice and one that is particularly relevant for some Muslim activists. The mainstream environmental movement, as mentioned in Chapter 2, has frequently been criticised for being 'as white as it is green' (Taylor 1989, in Kuzmiak 1991, 274), and mainstream environmental organisations are accused by environmental justice activists of 'ignorance, ambivalence, and complicity with the environmental exploitation of communities of colour within the United States and abroad' (Pezzullo and Sandler 2007, 4). Khalid (2013), who focuses much of his activism on poverty and environmental justice, echoes their critiques of mainstream environmentalism:

> I have strong critiques of the environmental movement ignoring issues around poverty. The Sierra Club was notorious for busting on the city of Oakland for

not having their low-income housing be eco enough and green enough. It was like, go to Walnut Creek and complain to people who live in the suburbs. Don't come and bust on low income housing, you know? And they weren't doing that, so it's like your choice of picking the vulnerable, easy, low hang-ing fruit is also undermining other goals we need to think about. So that is one critique I have. I see environmental justice as wrapped into racial and social justice often, and that is how I try to approach it, not as its own separate thing.

Poverty is a particularly relevant concern for Khalid, who lives in a low socio-economic area and attends a racially mixed mosque serving a largely low-income congregation. Khalid's focus on poverty and his claim that poor environmental attitudes are 'a class issue' challenge new social movement theory's claim that social movements are no longer concerned with class (for example, Habermas 1981, 33; Offe 1985, 835). In Chapter 2, I discussed the debate amongst social movement theorists over whether environmentalism reflects 'post-material' val-ues and concerns or still incorporates material conflicts. In addressing issues relating to poverty, the activists in this study demonstrate that activism in environ-mental movements isn't necessarily centred on post-material values. Where new social movement theorists such as Melucci (1989) and Habermas (1981) argue that action is directed toward symbolic, cultural goals, the continued existence of movements that focus on material issues such as poverty, or the incorporation of material issues into movements such as the environmental movement, problema-tises this assumption (Bartholomew and Mayer 1992). The environmental justice movement as a whole, in focusing on decidedly *material* concerns such as pollu-tion and linking it to systemic racism, is an excellent example of Fraser's (1997) 'bivalent collectivities' in that the movement is concerned with both redistribution (of environmental burdens) and recognition (of oppressed racial groups).

Omar (2013), a young member of GMDC who has a degree in environmental engineering and work experience in large, environmental policy and lobbying organisations, looks at the low uptake of environmentalism in Muslim-majority countries and states:

> In some of the poorer countries – not that it's holistically poor – but Egypt, Syria, Morocco, these countries that are not the Arabian Gulf basically, it's a question of priorities. They can't eat, nonetheless, you know, worry about where their trash is going. It's not something they can afford to worry about. And as far as energy goes, renewables are too, I'll acknowledge that they're too inefficient to power a country of you know, 90 million people where 40% live on less than $4 a day. I mean they need, they need efficient things like fossil fuels and natural gas. And I acknowledge that.

All the activists in this study speak from positions of relative financial and educational privilege and are unwilling to place blame for environmental crises upon those who are most disadvantaged by poverty and racial injustice. Being an environmentalist, in the eyes of these activists, is a wealthy person's privilege.

How can we fix it? Finding solutions

It is not enough for activists merely to *diagnose* what is wrong with the current world: they must also convince their audience that they already know what the *solution* to the problem is. The process of answering the Lenin-esque question of 'what is to be done?' (Snow and Byrd 2007, 127) is called prognostic framing. Muslim environmentalists offer a number of different solutions, including total system transformation, the construction of self-sustaining communities, the rein-vigoration of a religiously informed and structured society, and the promotion of environmentally sustainable behaviour like recycling. A constant theme running throughout Islamic environmentalism is that education is the key to transforming both individual behaviour and society. Most Islamic environmental organisations offer at least some kind of educational or training programs, and some, such as WiN, have come to focus their activism almost entirely on education and training. The educational focus of Islamic environmentalism aligns with Eyerman et al.'s (1990) claim that a central interest of environmentalism is the spread of its 'knowl-edge interests'.

   In the section above, we saw how common it is for Muslim activists to blame individual behaviour – consumerism, wastefulness, and ignorance (or laziness) – for environmental crisis. Leading from this diagnostic framing, the vast majority of Muslim environmentalists focus their prognostic framing, their solutions to environmental crisis, on what an individual can do to effect change. Bhawana (2013) of MGT encourages Muslims in her community to 'take shorter showers [. . .] drive less or combine errands'. But it is Omar (2013) who best articulates the view that we only need to change small things on an individual level to solve environmental crisis:

> If people were to do a little bit of reading about things they do in everyday life, their habits. And just tweak them a little bit. It doesn't take large scale changes in your way of life to become environmentally conscious. You can start with just one small thing. I mean, next time your light burns out just go and get a light bulb that is energy efficient.

   The activists don't only *frame* their solutions in these individual, behaviour-reforming terms: many of the organisations also base their community actions on changing individual behaviour. Both MGT and GMDC attempted to set up recycling in their local mosque and community centre; GMDC also promotes a low-waste *Ramadhān*, and SHINE run local litter pickups.

   The emphasis on individual behaviour is not surprising from Muslims – Islam and other monotheistic religions emphasise a personal relationship with God and are structured around the individual duties a believer has towards God. Khalid (2013), in critiquing the environmentalism he has encountered in the Muslim com-munity, acknowledges this: 'The interesting thing is that religion can lend itself very quickly to an individual focus, like the thought that you need to fix your-self'. This type of religious activism falls into the 'world-affirming' categorisation

given by Wallis (1984, 4), where a religious movement embraces the world in which it exists, 'affirming its normatively approved goals and values'. Certainly, the lack of interest in system change by many Muslim environmentalists is consistent with research into other faith-based social movement groups. For example, a study of Christian community development groups demonstrated their frames 'do not fundamentally challenge the prevailing economic and political systems' and are a kind of 'cooperative collective action' that aim to work *within* the system (Fitzgerald 2009, 181).

In fact, social movement theorists have long noted that environmentalism, like many 'new' social movements, is remarkably individualistic. Environmentalism has never fitted traditional models of political conflict because of 'the intersection between private and public experiences that involvement in environmental politics has generated . . . the growth of environmentalism as a political phenomenon has gone along with a parallel development of environmentalism as a peculiar lifestyle' (Della Porta and Diani 1999, 26). Environmentalism is a movement that lends itself particularly well to an emphasis on personal transformation and lifestyle awareness, and activists who undertake this kind of lifestyle activism emphasise 'living "lightly on the planet" by recycling and conserving energy and water' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 5). Melucci (1989, 97 original emphasis) points out that environmental action in a sense *requires* an individual focus *in service to systemic intervention* as 'ecological problems not only affect individuals in so far as they belong to a group, a class or a nation; they also affect *individuals as such* . . . Thus change is not separable from individual action; direct and personal investment becomes a necessary condition and resource for systemic intervention'. Melucci, rather than seeing an emphasis on individual behaviour coming at the expense of systemic change, argues it is a necessary strategy by which the environmental movement creates change.

Yet, it is not clear if Muslim environmentalists do locate systemic change alongside their quest for personal transformation. Roger Gottlieb argues that 'pious words' from religious people will not solve environmentalism, and religious people need to become politically active to truly address environmental problems (Gottlieb 2006, 7). Khalid (2013) is aware that much environmental work done in the Muslim community is lacking in this regard:

> [The local Imam] is very big on the metal drinking containers as opposed to disposable water bottles; he's very focused on that. I think those things are good, but I think that may need to be wrapped up into a larger conversation, and that larger conversation is not happening at all, and that's a big concern I have.

Individual action must be in service of systemic intervention if it is to be effective, and calling for systemic change or intervention is not common amongst Muslim environmentalists.

A few activists *do* recognise that more is required than individual behavioural change to combat environmental crisis. Most commonly, activists advocate for

government intervention through policy and legislation or industry self-regulation. Ameena (2013) says action 'needs to be done at a governmental level, it has to be done at a grassroots level, and like minds need to come together' Erik (2013) echoes her sentiments, arguing '[change] needs to happen on a policy level of government'. Yet in calling for the involvement of government, neither of these activists suggests that the state *itself* needs to change. Omar, who had no exposure to environmentalism until he studied energy policy during post-graduate studies and interned with highly institutionalised environmental policy and lobbying organisations, proposes a conservative approach to encouraging lifestyle change that, although calls for more than simply individual action, is integrated with the current social model:

> Maybe a solution is just to, you know, the bringing in of different heads of different employment places, or different heads of universities, because when you can build like a community, when you have the infrastructure in your workplace or in your university, that's already there, then it becomes a way of life without you even knowing about it. Because you're going to it already. So maybe that's a solution, maybe getting the heads of organisations or work-places, and universities.
>
> (Omar 2013)

Just as the activists who have a background with grassroots activism and secular environmentalism reflect that influence in their framing, so Omar's framing reflects the institutionalised environmentalism that he has participated in.

Khalid, who appears to call for quite far-reaching actions to address environmental crises, believes that adequately addressing environmental crises will face strong resistance:

> I'm getting away from where the crisis is to where the solution is, it is absolutely a fight. There is no two ways about it, and that's my politics. It's all political, and politics means that somebody has power and someone has less. There is a pie, and it's not going to be growing to have more for people who have less. It's going to be taking away from people who have more. And so that means it's going to be a fight, and don't expect it to be otherwise, and don't expect there not to be resistance on that.
>
> (Khalid 2013)

By using an image of a pie to be redistributed, Khalid demonstrates that environmentalism calls for the redistribution of resources – be it clean water, clean air, waste materials, or political power – that link the environmental movement to earlier social movements which called for the redistribution of material resources. However, Khalid is clear that discussing the redistribution of resources is a way of demonstrating the inequality of the current system and that it is the system itself that needs to change:

> I don't think that calling for the redistribution of the pie means that one focuses on change *within* the current socio/polical/economic system. I do

think that the outcomes of any positive alternative form of communal life must deliver a more equitable distribution of resources; however, I also don't believe that such a change will happen in anything similar to the current dominant paradigm . . . perhaps, one might say, that focusing on resource distribution provides a material or after-the-fact proof of why our current models are so broken.

(Khalid 2015)

In his interview, Khalid diagnosed the cause of environmental crisis as the industrial capitalist system, but he does not follow up with a clear prognostic frame that elaborates on the type of system change needed. This is not unusual; the prognostic frames of most activists and organisations in this book do not map easily onto their diagnostic frames. Offe (1985, 831) suggests that this is common for *all* 'new' social movements, as they 'typically lack a coherent set of ideological principles and interpretations of the world from which an image of a desirable arrangement of society could be derived'. Khalid (2015) himself notes, 'Change is tricky. I have ideas about what sort of . . . change is needed in my own immediate life/existence, but to put that out for all others feels to me . . . well, arrogant I suppose'.

IFEES draw heavily upon traditional Islamic institutions in their prognostic framing. In various articles in their newsletter *EcoIslam*, they write on such issues as water management laws in *Shariah* and how they could be used in contemporary societies to preserve water resources; land management principles such as *Ḥimah* and *Ḥarīm*; and even discuss the enforcement of environmental laws through an agency called a *Ḥisbah*. IFEES founder Fazlun and his administrator Dawud spent a significant amount of time discussing economics. They propose a 'return' to what they define as 'traditional' economics. Fazlun states: 'if people move back to a traditional way of economics then the planet is sustainable. And there is a fifty year time span in which, if we really wake up to the possibilities we can in fact go back' (Fazlun and Dawud 2012). At first, Fazlun and Dawud did not define what a traditional economics might look like in practice. Later, they talked at length about removing interest and the 'fictional' creation of money from the economic system. Dawud related the following story:

I once talked intellectually to someone at a fair, as a Muslim, about gold and silver that I carry in my bag if people want that instead of junk paper. I convinced them that the business model of this paper is similar to cancer. I said, can't you see the similarities to cancer. The unreasonable response I got time and time again was, I see it, but what do you put in its place? I thought, that's a very strange question. Because if this was a medical scenario and the tumour was cancerous, would you be asking me, if I take it away, what you put in its place? Its negation and its absence is the healing.

(Fazlun and Dawud 2013)

Here, Dawud demonstrates the difficulty activists face when trying to perform frame transformation – the monetary system is so ingrained in their societies that,

without the backup of Islam's injunction against interest, they cannot mobilise (non-Muslim) people against it. Again, Dawud's focus is on the removal of the current economic system, with only a vague articulation of what the new economic system would look like and how it would function.

Where IFEES articulation of an 'Islamic' economic system lacks detail, WiN offers a far more comprehensive account of how the contemporary economic model could be replaced by one inspired by Islamic principles:

> Whilst encouraging business and entrepreneurship, [Islamic values] necessitate that consequent projects are also in the interest of the wider community . . . Islam also provides a reference point for what these interests actually are, and included within them are the interests of living beings, both human and non-human, as well as the interest of life in generations to come.
>
> (Muzammal 2007, 28)

Muzammal goes on to specify how an Islamic banking system operates without interest, and how 'the unit of transaction that takes the form of money would have real value . . . any medium could be used and would be left to the people who would be free to engage in transactions using whatever medium they choose' (Muzammal 2007, 29). Finally, he links this different form of economics to an improvement in the environment and a reduction in our reliance on fossil fuels. It is important to note that Muzammal, although basing this system on Islamic sources, does not insist that Islam itself is necessary to make these changes. He writes: 'Whether such a radical reformation comes under the label of an Islamic, green or a sustainable economics is perhaps of lesser importance than the fact that it appears to be a serious contender in a basket of solutions to tackle climate change' (Muzammal 2007, 30). Unlike Dawud and Fazlun, Muzammal does not frame an Islamic economic system as a return or 'going back', but rather as model that has current relevance and is adaptable to modern modes of life.

A few activists do seem, in a variety of ways, to propose solutions that require radical change. Fazlun and Dawud of IFEES, and independent US activist Maryam promote the establishment of self-sustaining religious eco-communities, drawing very close to inward looking exclusionary religious groups who withdraw from a society they perceive as corrupt rather than attempting to engage with the society (Wallis 1984). However, where inward-looking religious groups do not propose their goals be applicable for all of society (Diani 1993, 112), the Muslim environmentalists *do* believe that small eco-communities may be the solution to environmental crisis for all of society. An early goal of IFEES, never realised, was the establishment of a residential eco-community. Although their community was proposed to be for members of IFEES, Fazlun and Dawud (2013) both agree that society needs to move towards a model of small, self-sufficient communities:

> We are into looking at issues related to negative growth or de-growth, or localisation and self-help, and transition, alternative currencies [. . .] anything that could produce the impact on the environment . . . the best possible

expression is to live self-sufficiently as a community with other people. That's how we're meant to be.

Importantly, the move to small communities is accompanied by a change not just in physical lifestyle, but also in worldview. Maryam (2013), the founder of a small Muslim urban homestead and education centre, says, 'A huge part was urban homesteading, how do we stay sustainable off the land, how do we keep our children connected with that process. Not only understand the source of their food but to be connected with the signs of God in a very deep way'. Life on Maryam's homestead is a withdrawal from both the lifestyle of the US consumer and from a consumerist worldview itself.

Maryam and IFEES frame their solutions to environmental crisis as a rejection of Western lifestyle norms and a return to a more rural, self-sufficient life. Their prognostic framing would be regarded as 'world rejecting' in Wallis's categorisation of religious movements:

> [World rejecting movements view] the prevailing social order as having departed substantially from God's prescriptions and plan. Mankind has lost touch with God and spiritual things, and, in the pursuit of purely material interests, has succeeded in creating a polluted environment; a vice-ridden society in which individuals treat each other purely as means rather than as ends; a world filled with conflict, greed, insincerity and despair. The world-rejecting movement condemns urban industrial society and its values, particularly that of individual success as measured by wealth or consumption patterns. It rejects the materialism of the advanced industrial world, calling for a return to a more rural way of life, and a reorientation of secular life to God.
>
> (Wallis 1984, 10)

Although Maryam, Fazlun, and Dawud argue strongly to reject consumerist lifestyles, form self-sustaining communities, and return to a spiritually infused worldview, neither of their urban homesteads are exclusionary in practice. Imam Dawood (2013), a religious scholar (he was a university chaplain when I interviewed him in 2013, and he now works at Zaytuna College), discusses Islamic eco-communities in much the same way as Maryam:

> When they're gardening, or when they're reading, there is this relationship. They also have this relationship with the outdoors being a part of the routine of what they're doing. So I see the environment, I see Islam. That's really I think something that I'm hopeful becomes really grounded, as a community.

For both Maryam and Imam Dawood, the development of a spiritual worldview and connection to God is just as important in combatting environmental crises as changing social structures and individual behaviours. They both appear, either consciously or unconsciously, to reflect Nasr's (1976) analysis of contemporary society discussed in Chapter 4, where environmental crisis is reflective of a

graver spiritual crisis. Many of the activists have both religious *and* environmental objectives, demonstrating how their pre-existing commitment to their religion and religious practice has been drawn into and become part of their environmental activism.

The most radical prognostic framing is articulated by WiN. On their website, they clearly articulate the need to change the current political and economic system and have identified four 'Core Strands' of focus – Earth & Community, Deep Democracy, Whole Economics, and Climate Justice. All four strands are presented in a language of 'moving away from' unjust and problematic systems and behaviours and 'moving towards' justice and responsibility. Thus, the Earth & Community strand is presented as a 'power shift – *away from* large power-hungry corporations and *towards* community; *Away from* consumerism *towards* sharing and simplicity; *Away from* corporate power and privilege *towards* corporate constraints, accountability, and grassroots cooperative-type movements' (Wisdom in Nature 2013a). In their focus on 'Deep Democracy', WiN (Wisdom in Nature 2013a) writes:

> Deep democracy is . . . about ensuring voices are heard in all contexts – families, workplaces, places of worship, and community organisations, nongovernmental organisations/charities. Thus, deep democracy includes a movement toward the equalisation of power in everyday interactions in the spaces people frequent regularly, that are often neglected as sites of disempowering social relations.

Although the presentation of power equalisation as a solution is here quite general, WiN go on to document their attempts to embrace this ethos as an organisation. New social movements often 'practice in the present the change they are struggling for: they redefine the meaning of social action for the whole society' (Melucci 1985, 801). Beckford (1989, 145) calls this the *prophetic* function of new social movements, and certainly WiN focuses more upon *acting* the changes they wish to see in the world rather than providing a comprehensive written blueprint: '[An] example of our emphasis on process is the attention given to *facilitation*, a practice that helps to draw out voices and ensure that they are heard' (Wisdom in Nature 2013b). Muzammal (2013), WiN's founder, speaks of his ongoing interest and emphasis on the importance of skilful facilitation and group process: 'I was just really interested, I felt that a lot of the power imbalances that we refer to, either consciously or unconsciously, that are at the heart of a lot of the problems out there, also manifest in groups. And it's how we can sort of, on a micro scale, mirror the world we want'. WiN is a clear example of how 'the struggle for change is already incarnate in the life and in the structure of the group' (Melucci 1994, 125) in 'new' social movements.

Eyerman and Jamison (1991, 161) argue 'the forms of consciousness that are articulated in social movements provide something crucial in the constitution of modern societies: public spaces for thinking new thoughts, activating new actors, generating new ideas, in short, constructing new intellectual "projects" '.

It is therefore unsurprising that almost all the environmental groups in this study engage in environmental education and training to some extent. If the 'production and circulation of information' and the 'creation of symbols and cultural models' are at the heart of 'new' social movements (della Porta and Diani 1999, 44), then workshops, lectures, and discussion-based gatherings are highly effective ways for movement organisations to do these things. This educational focus also fits with the belief held by many of the activists that their Muslim communities *would* be environmentally responsible if they were aware of their duties towards the environment, and that therefore, it is the responsibility of these activists to try and teach as many Muslims as possible what those duties are.

Motivating activism

Presenting a diagnosis of environmental crisis and offering up potential solutions is not enough to attract new participants to the environmental movement or keep current activists committed to the cause. Environmental groups and activists must also *motivate* potential and current participants. The motivational framing of Muslim environmentalists generally falls into the invocation of a religious 'duty' towards the environment, which is intimately tied to Muslim identity and faith. This 'duty' of environmentalism is used to explain the activists' own motivation to participate in environmentalism, and also to appeal to other Muslims in their community. The activists engage Islamic symbols and resources to legitimate and ground their environmental message, deliberately framing their action in a way that will resonate with their Muslim audience. It is vital for movements to correctly isolate their audience, as this will determine 'what kinds of other frames will resonate, what kinds of "evidence" need to be marshalled to support movement claims, and how audiences' cultural symbols and narratives can be used in advancing movement claims' (Hunt et al. 1994, 200). The activists in this study are very successful in utilising Islamic symbols and traditions to motivate environmentally responsible behaviour. It is important here to distinguish that most motivational framing in this study is aimed at changing the *behaviour* of Muslims, rather than trying to motivate *participation* in the environmental movement.

Nabeel (2013) ran SHINE – the Sheffield Islamic Network for the Environment – for nearly four years, during which time the group organised many successful litter pickups around Sheffield and engaged in other environmental events, like river walks and clean-up days in the local area. Like other activists, Nabeel believes environmentalism is a religious duty incumbent upon Muslims: 'It's a duty on you to be careful because the Qur'an says this and that'. Summreen (2013), who ran a small local environmental group from her mosque in Reading in Great Britain and is employed as an environmental officer with her local council, similarly frames environmentalism as a religious duty, 'You think you're carrying out your god-given duties by being environmentalist. You're caring for God's earth and you're caring about all of his creation and [. . .] there is this thing about good deeds, and environmentalism is part of the good deeds'. Religious duty has successfully motivated both Nabeel and Summreen to become environmentalists, and

they recognise this kind of framing may appeal to other Muslims. Nabeel (2013) would talk with local residents when SHINE did their litter pickups, saying, 'We could say, we feel it is a duty on us to do this [. . .] it's nice that it clears your area but we feel it's just part of what we do [. . .] you know it encourages and really incentivises people'.

However, not all activists agree that Muslims are motivated to be environmentalists by a sense of religious duty. Although Zainab (2013), an activist in GMDC, sees environmentalism as a duty, she notices another kind of motivation at work in her GMDC peers:

> So for me it's a little bit more like a, well, I don't know. It's sort of like something that kind of has to be done. I think with the people around me there is like, there is this love of nature, there is this deep connection with the environment around them, the natural environment around them and for me it's a lot more like, we're destroying our world and that's really wrong.

As social movement theorists have shown (see, for example Hart 1996; Tarrow 1998), religion is a rich repository of cultural traditions and symbols that are highly effective at motivating action. The activists in this study are very aware of this and use Islamic traditions and symbols to promote environmentalism amongst Muslims in their community. Elizabeth (2013), one of the core representatives of WiN based in Edinburgh, argues using Islamic codes may be the *only* way to reach some Muslims, 'For some people, that's the only way they'll listen to anything to be honest – is if it comes from the Qur'an and Sunnah. Otherwise it's not relevant to them, apparently'. Ameena (2013) in the United States finds a similar problem: 'For some Muslims, they're not going to get involved unless it's in a mosque. They just aren't'. Activists must frame environmental crises in a way that resonates with their target audience – other Muslims. The legitimation that religion can give a social movement, demonstrated in the work of Morris (1984) and McAdam (1982) in particular, but confirmed by numerous subsequent studies, is well recognised by Muslim activists, and not just those in the environmental movement. Bayat (2005), Munson (2001), Naguib (2006), and Wickham (2004), to name but a few, all discuss how Islamic symbols and resources are used in service of Islamist religious and political movements:

> Islamist leaders in the Middle East frame their movements in mainly religious terms utilising Islamic codes and concepts as well as resources, such as concepts of *shahāda* (martyrdom), the sovereignty of God, *ḥalāl/ḥarām* (religiously forbidden or allowed), or the use of mosques, ceremonies, or *zakat* committees for mobilization purposes.
>
> (Bayat 2005, 903)

Activists from MGT staged their eco-fair in the local Santa Clara mosque and encouraged Imams from across the Bay Area, California, to give sermons on

Islam's environmental message. This not only legitimates the environmental message, but also makes it 'easier' to involve Muslims:

> I guess what was effective, if I think about it now, was instead of trying to get Muslims to go the environment; it was like bringing the environment to Muslims. So doing things in the Mosque, we tried to have the Friday sermons, so around Earth Day we tried to encourage all the local mosques to do a sermon about Islam and the environment. That's another thing that we've been doing and that's been good.
>
> (Bhawana 2013)

Yet, in the complex culture of immigrant communities, using Islamic symbols and codes can at times be a double-edged sword. Bhawana (2013) highlighted the complexity of legitimating the environmental cause to Muslims at the eco-fair:

> I think that having Muslim organisations makes them think that this is legitimate, it's OK to care about the environment as a Muslim. And then having non-Muslim organisations makes them feel like, oh this is a legitimate event. This is for real, it's not just some – you know people still sort of see, in certain areas, expertise as needing to come from outside the Muslim community.

On the one hand, some Muslims are concerned that participating in environmentalism may not be *ḥalāl*, or 'Islamic', which I discuss in greater detail in the following section on Islamic framing. On the other hand, if *only* Muslims are involved, certainly in the case of the 'young' Muslim migrant community in Santa Clara, environmentalism as a cause appears to lack professionalism.

Although religion may not be the *only* way to motivate Muslims into environmental action, it is certainly the most effective way of doing so. For IFEES, Islamic traditions and symbols are vital in their workshops for quite pragmatic reasons. Their workshops are run in Muslim-majority third-world countries, such as Mozambique, Zanzibar, and Indonesia, and founder Fazlun believes teaching an environmental reading of Islamic scriptures is the best way to motivate Muslims to act quickly.

> All this time I was . . . trying to find an Islamic methodology to get people quickly interested in this [environmentalism]. There was no time. There was no time to delve into deep theology . . . I was able to focus on relevant parts of the *Qur'ān*, which could, if properly presented, motivate people into doing something on the ground.
>
> (Fazlun and Dawud 2013)

In realising the highly effective nature of religious motivation, Fazlun uses it to great effect. One of IFEES's great successes is stopping fishermen dynamiting endangered fishing grounds in Zanzibar following a presentation of an

environmental reading of Islamic scripture. Fazlun says of this, 'they got the message of the *khālifa*[4] and they said we can disobey man-made laws, but we can't disobey God's laws. So they stopped dynamiting. What they [secular environmentalists and the government] couldn't do in five years, we did in twenty-four hours. They stopped' Fazlun and Dawud 2013). It is important here to note Bayat's (2005, 903) caution,

> This is not to say that leaders fake religiosity or democratic tendencies, although some might indeed use moral issues for political purposes. Rather, the point is to emphasise their conscious use of religious or democratic symbols and resources for the cause of mobilisation.

Fazlun may be very consciously using religious symbols and resources for the cause of environmentalism, but this is not to say that he is somehow faking religiosity. It is quite possible that he can be a committed Muslim and knowingly employ his faith in a pragmatic fashion. In the following section on 'Islamic' framing, I discuss the ways in which *all* the activists in this study employ Islamic symbols and narrative to frame environmental crises, solutions, and motivate environmentally responsible behaviour.

Islamic framing

What I call 'Islamic' framing – using Islamic symbols and traditions to discuss environmentalism and frame the problem and its solutions within a religious worldview – runs throughout the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames employed by Muslim environmentalists. Tarrow (1998, 112) discusses how religion is a rich source of both emotion and symbolism for social movement framing. In the webpages, newsletters, and articles produced by the organisations studied in this book, the words 'Islam', 'Islamic', and 'Muslim' were the most frequently used key words. Tarrow (1998, 122) notes that 'cultural symbols are not automatically available as mobilizing symbols but require concrete agents to turn them into frames of contention'. In the case of Islamic environmentalism, the combination of Islamic traditions, language codes, and narratives with environmental action frames aims at motivating Muslims to participate in the environmental movement. In some cases, the use of Islamic symbols in environmental frames may be unexpected, unusual, or even controversial amongst Muslims.

Certain Islamic symbols and narratives are used consistently by all the activists and organisations. Unsurprisingly, the use of verses from the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* is common. As the use of the *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth* in Islamic environmentalism was explained in detail in Chapter 4, I will give only a brief example here, to relate their usage to framing processes. On their website, WiN interprets contemporary social problems through the *Qur'ān* – 'The *Qur'ān* succinctly draws attention to one of the trappings of the world: "*And you love wealth with boundless love!*" *(Qur'ān: 89:20)*' (Wisdom in Nature 2013a original emphasis). The verse reinforces the anti-consumerist framing utilised by WiN, showing that the problem is

recognised, not just by secular activists, but by God. Thus, reducing consumerism will not only solve environmental problems, but will simultaneously bring the world closer in line with an ideal Islamic society. Here again is an example of the alignment of environmental *and* religious goals.

The use of Islamic narratives is not always so specific or direct. Ideas about an 'ideal' Islamic society – one which, perhaps, does not exist now but *could* exist should Muslims follow an 'authentic' practice of Islam – are held up in contrast to the current unjust and unsatisfactory society: 'Islam, in a sense, is a whole system in which the economic, social, ecological, and spiritual are integrated, which is the antithesis of contemporary society' (Wisdom in Nature 2013a). One of the difficulties Muslim environmentalists face when trying to apply the Islamic scriptures is that 'in the *Qur'ān* there's no separate section, if you like, on the environment. And within the *fiqh*, the *shariah*, there is also no separate bit on the environment. Because, the whole thing about the environment, it runs like a thread through all the other sections' (Shabaaz 2013). As I discussed in Chapter 4, *Ḥadīth* and verses from the *Qur'ān* need to be interpreted, and the activists often narrate these verses *without* offering clear interpretations. When discussing how he viewed the relationship between Islam and environmentalism, Erik (2013) said:

> I mean I was always brought up – in Islam if you will – I was always taught that, if there was an army marching into war, you're not allowed to cut down trees. For example. And so why can't you cut down a tree? I mean that's something that armies do. They go and chop down the trees of the place that they're invading. But it's actually not permissible to do. And when the Prophet was marching into Mecca with his army of ten thousand, they came across a dog and her puppies, and he put somebody there in order to guard the puppies so they don't get trampled by the army. So somebody had to actually stand there, in front of the mother and the puppies, and divert the army from walking over them. You know what I mean? And so it's these things that, you know, that way that the Prophet was with the environment, with other life, with the earth, even rocks. It's just, it's the way that I was taught the tradition is supposed to be.

Naguib (2006) has demonstrated how the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was deliberately vague in the way they used Islamic terms and narratives and was thus able to appeal to a wide range of ideological positions which, ultimately, led to significant increases in popularity. The vagueness allowed potential supporters of the Brotherhood the scope to interpret the message in a way that fitted with their personal values and beliefs. Bayat (2005, 901) documents similar tendencies in other Islamist movements, noting that they are 'internally fluid, fragmented and differentiated . . . what [then] binds these fragments together? . . . after all, unity of purpose and action is the hallmark, indeed defining feature, of a social movement'. Bayat argues, after Benedict Anderson (1987), what binds Islamist groups together is an 'imagined solidarity': the activists *imagine* that they share a common purpose with one another. On the other hand, Diani (1997, 136–7)

has documented the difficulties faced by Italian ecologists in forming solidarity amongst activists who held different, publicly known, political beliefs and commitments. Muslim environmentalists demonstrate a wide range of political and religious values, and certainly, they do not all share the same interpretation of Islamic scriptures nor how they relate to environmentalism. By not always specifying exactly what they mean when discussing Islamic scripture, teachings, and concepts, Muslim environmentalists are able to appeal to a diverse range of potential participants and supporters.

In utilising Islamic symbols and narratives in their framing activities, Muslim environmentalists are not able to simply insert these symbols, unmodified, into pre-existing environmental frames. As Tarrow (1998, 122) says, 'Cultural symbols are not automatically available as mobilizing symbols but require . . . agents to turn them into frames of contention'. The framing process requires Muslim environmentalists to *interpret* Islamic symbols in an environmental way. This can be done in an immediate, personal fashion: for example, at their monthly meetings, WiN 'would read parts of the *Qur'ān* and then talk about them related to environmental issues in our lives. So the personal things we're trying to achieve' (Elizabeth 2013). WiN is not necessarily doing the interpretation on behalf of their participants, but rather encouraging them to produce their own knowledge regarding Islam's relation to environmentalism.

Benford and Snow (2000, 614) write that framing 'denotes an active processual phenomenon that implies agency and contention at the level of reality construction'. WiN's monthly meetings are a clear example of the active way in which Muslim activists construct environmental frames, and the activists' attempt to make their reading of the *Qur'ān* relevant to their personal environmental concerns shows the individual agency granted to WiN's activists in selecting and constructing frames. In other settings, movement leaders interpret Islamic narratives in an environmental way and present this to their communities. In 2008, GMDC created an Islamic guide for 'No Impact Week', which presents the goals of 'No Impact Week' – a secular project – through an Islamic lens. In their 'Day Five' discussion of utilities, specifically water and electricity, GMDC writes:

> God asks Muslims to pay attention to the signs around us as proof of God's bounty and mercy and as a way to become closer to Him. Once we start contemplating the natural signs all around us, we can begin to recognise the symbiotic relationship that exists between man and nature. *And when Moses asked for water for his people, We said: "Strike with your staff the rock." And there gushed forth from it twelve springs, and everyone knew his drinking place (2:60).* The advice that Moses' community is given in that verse is the very ethical notion of eco-spiritual trusteeship that we also need to heed today: *"So eat and drink of God's sustenance, and do no evil or mischief on Earth."*
>
> (Green Muslims DC 2008 original emphasis)

GMDC engages in frame transformation by interpreting this narrative from the *Qur'ān* in an environmental manner which may not be initially apparent to

Muslims not involved in environmentalism. Crucially, they have linked this interpretation to the symbol of *Khālifa* – humankind as steward of the earth – which Muslim environmentalists utilise frequently throughout Islamic framing and which was discussed at length in Chapter 3.

Yet, in using Islamic concepts such as *Khālifa*, Muslim environmentalists face competing non-environmental interpretations that may be more widespread in the Muslim community. Framing theorists such as Chong and Druckman (2007, 112) discuss the competition between frames often in terms of competing interpretation of a *problem* – for example, the opposing readings of the use of Styrofoam as cost-effective and efficient, or as environmentally destructive and wasteful. Ameena (2013) discusses exactly this issue occuring at her local mosque during *Ramadhān:*

> I'm on an email list with many of the Bay Area leaders and so I had this discussion before *Ramadhān*. I have it before *every Ramadhān*, you know, let's be conscientious, *Ramadhān* is a time of conservation, all of these things. When it comes down to it, there is always this excuse: well we're not the ones who bought the Styrofoam. The Styrofoam is so much cheaper, we can't afford this. And so what happened with this Masjid, it's my home Masjid really, it was opened last year. I said, this cannot happen in my Masjid. I walk in on the first day and they were using Styrofoam boxes, because the lady in charge there is this wonderful older woman who is very organised and she wanted to have the meals pre-packaged. So she has one value, and I have another value, and our values are clashing because, to me, if you use Styrofoam just forget everything.

However, Muslim environmentalists also face competition in the interpretation of the Islamic symbols they utilise in their frames. Elizabeth (2013) here discusses the way in which the concept of *Khālifa* – so central to an Islamic environmental ethic – is used in a completely different way by a woman committed to an Islamist, political worldview,

> I remember one woman in the mosque, I said I was going to these environment meetings, I was going to Greenpeace at the time. She said, what's that got to do with you? She was of the feeling we need to establish Muslim rule, and then after that get on and do other things. But the most important this was to have a Muslim ruler. No that doesn't work for me. She is like, *Khālifa*, that is part of Islam, so we need to get a Caliph . . . It's scary. It's very easy for new Muslims to think that, oh gosh, that's what we need to go for. Get Muslim rule, don't vote, or only vote for a Muslim, this kind of thing. After that we can start working out all the problems. It's just nuts really.

Chong and Druckman's (2007, 112) conclusion that 'when citizens receive different views of an issue, they choose the alternative that is consistent with their values and principles' applies well in this case: Elizabeth has chosen a reading of *Khālifa* that suits her environmental values, whereas the woman at her mosque is

more committed to a political vision of Islam and interprets *Khālifa* accordingly. This is consistent with Hart's (1996, 96) claim that activists usually hold pre-existing commitments to values *outside* the movement that they are influenced by and will be loyal to.

The 'Islamic' framing used by Muslim environmentalists is not only an attempt to appeal to Muslims and motivate participation in their groups or environmentally responsible behaviour. The activists are also trying to legitimate environmentalism as a 'permissible' activity in the Islamic worldview. The comment made to Elizabeth – 'what's that got to do with you' – demonstrates the negative attitude environmentalists sometimes encounter in the Muslim community. The concept of *Bid'ah* (innovation) looms large in many Muslim circles. To many Muslims, it is a religious duty not to engage in any religious actions that were not practiced at the time of the Prophet Muhammad and his early companions. An innovation on these early practices, *Bid'ah*, is forbidden. Interpreting Islamic sources through an environmental lens, and incorporating environmental themes into Islamic practices (for example, the 'Green' *Ramadhān* campaigns) could be attacked by conservative Muslims as innovations. Activists addressed *Bid'ah* directly in their interviews, with Hana (2013) stating, 'Islam does have elements that encourage us to be environmentally conscious. It is part and parcel of our faith, in the *Qur'ān*, in the *Ḥadīth*, it's not something that is being interpreted now or something new. It's always been there'. Similarly, Khalid (2013) argues:

> So I don't see the framework as anything new, necessarily, I think there are new ways within the context, of course. Let's say it's new in that, the fact it's being brought into somewhere it wasn't before, it's new to that place. That's not to say it's not also found in that place. It's just been left and not touched, or not touched by everybody.

Furthermore, Bhawana (2013) says, 'And it wasn't that everyone was becoming green and the Muslim community needed to jump on the bandwagon, it was like – this is within our religion and we're not even following it. And as you know really well, it's sort of central to the faith'. All three activists here stress that environmentalism is contained *within* Islam and emphasise that it is not *new* – all language that aims to counteract any claim that they are 'innovating' on the original form of Islam.

Sometimes, the use of Islamic symbols and narratives is as simple as the employment of commonly understood 'Islamic language' in the form of greetings and invocations. In the GMDC pamphlet for 'No Impact Week', quoted earlier, the reader is addressed on the first page: 'Assalaamu'alaykum – May Peace be upon you. Thank you for committing to a week of lowering your carbon footprint by participating in No Impact Week!' (Green Muslims DC 2008, 2). The final page of the pamphlet takes the form of a supplication:

> May this week have proven good for your environment, your body, and most importantly your Imān & Islām . . . May your development of an

eco-consciousness contribute to your development of a God-consciousness. May your good deeds be accepted by God. May this have brought you closer to Him. Ameen!

(Green Muslims DC 2008, 10)

The use of the greeting 'Assalaamu'alaykum' and the concepts of *Imān* (faith) and *Islām* (submission to God) in the pamphlet utilise the every-day language codes of Islamic practice. Employing these words builds rapport with Muslim readers by adopting a conversational tone and utilising familiar language.

Conclusion

At the beginning of this chapter, I posed a number of questions: what kinds of cultural symbols and practices are adopted by movements in their frames? How are varied ideologies and symbols synthesised and framed by social movements? What new kinds of culture emerge from framing processes? What types of frames are common across all movement organisations, and across all movements? What purposes do the frames fulfil? How successful are different types of frames and framing processes? It is now clear that the Muslim environmental activists in this study have adopted both Islamic symbols and practices and, for those with experience and exposure to secular environmentalism and left-wing grassroots activism, the language and practices of *those* cultures, too. The combination of these different cultural toolkits results in frames that are neither fully derived from Islamic sources nor from secular activists' sources. Although the activists all draw from the same religious sources, the interpretation of environmental crises and the calls to action stemming from these diagnostic frames are remarkably varied in nature. The activists demonstrate use of some of the framing processes identified by Snow et al. (1986), in particular 'frame transformation'. This is not surprising – they must transform *both* the traditional interpretations of Islamic scriptures into environmental readings, and they must also transform Muslims' unquestioning acceptance of the industrial capitalist system and consumerist life-styles. The activists show themselves to be skilled at harnessing the symbolic and motivational power of Islam to make environmentalism appealing to Muslims.

Notes

1 Interviews are also, in and of themselves, a unique interpersonal interaction and undoubtedly, although the activists articulate their own beliefs (due to the questions asked), they present these beliefs *for* the interviewer.
2 Research on 'individualism' tends to list both the US and the UK as individualistic societies. However, the US is usually cited as the country in which 'individualism obtained the status of a system that secures, guards, and encourages free competition and capitalism (Lukes 1971), and any attempt to subordinate individuals to the primacy of society as a whole is perceived as an inevitable route to totalitarianism (Dumont 1986)' (Allik and Realo 2004, 30–1).
3 In Chapter 7, I address more thoroughly the differences between activism focused on individual behaviour and activism that targets institutional and systemic change.

4 *Khālifa* in Islamic environmental discourse refers to humankind's role as steward of the earth. See Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of this concept in Islamic environmental thought.

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6 Emotion and identity in Islamic environmentalism

On November 29th, 2015, some 785,000 people in cities across the world took to the streets to protest government inaction on climate change. In photographs of the marches, protesters sing together, chant slogans, and laugh. Leaders shout into megaphones; speakers implore world leaders to take action (350.org 2015). By all appearances, it was a climate change march much like any other in the years preceding. Yet, for decades, social movement theory was unable to fully describe a rally such as this. How to account for the camaraderie of the marchers singing and chanting together? Their laughter and joy in the company of friends, some who joined them from their environmental groups, others whom they may have met just that day in the march? What to say about the passion of the speakers? The way they pivot from despair at the current state of the climate, to outrage over political inaction, to hope at the potential of the people to force change? In a word, what of the *emotions* of protest?

In the preceding chapter, I examined the way Muslim environmentalists present the environmental crisis, and their activism, to the world. The theory of 'framing' – the first theory to emerge in the cultural turn of social movement studies – began important work by seeking to understand the efforts activists make to appeal to potential participants. Yet in the early 2000s, framing theory was criticised by a new wave of social movement scholars who argued the theory failed to adequately account for the central role emotion played in the success (or failure) of framing attempts. They argue the research on framing processes stress cognition at the expense of emotion (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001, 6), and that in the conscious interpretation of the social world at the heart of framing processes, activists use emotions such as outrage, anger, guilt, hope, and love to attract participants, motivate action, and maintain commitment to the movement.

Developing in parallel and closely related to the new focus on emotion came an emphasis on the importance of collective identity in social movements. Like scholars of emotion, theorists who study collective identity seek to determine how social movements maintain commitment, solidarity, and motivation amongst their members over time. In this book, I am influenced in particular by the work of new social movement theorist Alberto Melucci and his interactionist, process-based approach to collective identity. For scholars like Melucci, collective identity is not

a 'given' in social movements, and rather is the result (and sometimes a goal) of a successful movement.

In the pages below, I analyse the emotions and collective identity formation in Islamic environmentalism. I hope through this account to deepen the account of Islamic environmental activists and organisations already presented through a framing analysis – fleshing out in greater detail the internal dynamics of movement culture and the lives and experiences of the activists involved.

Emotion

When RM theorists began revising accounts of social movements in the 1970s and early 1980s, they consciously tried to recast the actors involved as rational. The preceding school of thought, the collective behaviour model, had social movements the product of 'crowd behaviour' – actors were *irrational* and swept up into protest under the influence of the powerful emotions of the crowd. This account was seen by RM theorists to be pejorative and could be used to dismiss social movements and protestors. In their attempt to rehabilitate social movements, RM theorists deliberately left emotions out of their analyses, focusing instead upon rational choice and the way social movement actors made calculated and well-planned decisions to make use of available resources to achieve their goals. Yet, in leaving emotions entirely out of their analyses, RM theories maintain the assumption inherent in collective behaviour – that emotion and rationality are opposed to one another, and one cannot act rationally if one is also affected or driven by emotion.

Following the cultural turn of social movement theory in the late 1990s, scholars sought to counter the assumption above: they argued emotion and rationality were two separate things, and an actor could be both acting rationally *and* experiencing emotion:

> There are positive emotions and negative ones, admirable and despicable ones, public and hidden ones. Without them, there might be no social action at all. To categorise them as rational or irrational (much less to dismiss them all as interferences with rationality) is deeply wrongheaded. We can categorise protestors' actions, usually *post hoc*, as strategically effective or mistaken, but rarely as irrational or rational.
>
> (Jasper 1998, 398)

Emotions, in this account, are essential for social movement mobilisation. As Jasper states above, 'without them [emotions], there might be no social action at all'.

As I discussed in Chapter 1, there are some methodological difficulties associated with studying emotion in social movements. Evidence of emotion can rarely be found in textual data, such as newspaper articles (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001, 5); participants who recount their activism in interviews conducted after the event may forget, or amend, their emotional reactions (Polletta and Amenta 2001,

313); and many social movement actors view emotions in pejorative terms and may not wish to share their emotions with researchers (Groves 2001). Finally, there are no standard conceptual definitions of the various emotions demonstrated in activism (Polletta and Amenta 2001, 312, 313), although some scholars, such as Jasper (1998), have attempted to construct a typology.

In the following analysis, I take into account Barker's (2001, 176) conceptual clarification regarding how we write about emotion. He writes there are, 'no such "things" as emotions. In grammatical terms, we should talk about them not as *nouns* but as *adjectives* or *adverbs,* denoting qualities of action, speech, and thought'. This clarification makes sense when talking about the ways in which activists demonstrate their own emotions – through speech and action – and helps us to understand the aim behind harnessing emotion in, for example, framing processes. Outrage is not a 'thing' that can be inculcated in potential activists but rather is a quality of thought, a way of responding to a given situation, and activists must find ways to make potential participants in the movement respond with the desired quality (outrage) in their action and thought.

I begin with an analysis of reciprocal emotion in Islamic environmental activism, including the positive affective ties to leaders and to fellow activists, and the negative emotions of jealousy and resentment. I then analyse shared emotions, including the pride felt by Muslim environmentalists in their identities and the anger and outrage directed outwards to unjust situations. I argue that the most significant emotions in Islamic environmentalism are the positive affective ties between movement participants and between the activists and movement leaders. These ties are not only often the initial impetus to mobilisation, but are also responsible for the continued, sustained participation of activists in the environmental movement.

Reciprocal emotions

Maryam and her husband Youssef, both young, devout Muslims and committed environmentalists, established a small urban eco-homestead in which they could raise their children connected to natural world. The homestead has cows, chickens, goats, and sheep and an extensive vegetable garden, and Maryam runs an Islamic pre-school from the house. The children spend their days helping in the garden, with the animals, in the large, homely kitchen, and doing creative tasks. Some teaching on Islamic stories and traditions, along with basic reading, writing, and arithmetic are integrated into these practical activities. Maryam and Youssef's original plan for their homestead was to have a group of young Muslim families come and live on the property – possibly in yurts, with the house as their communal space. They wanted to create a close-knit community, reminiscent village life, where everyone lives close to nature and looks out for one-another. Maryam and Youssef drastically changed their lives to establish the homestead: for most of their lives they had been settled on the other side of the United States, close to their families, with jobs and a beloved Mosque community. One day, their Imam, a much loved and highly influential figure in their lives, announced he was

moving inter-state. It didn't take long for Maryam and Youssef to uproot their lives, and those of their children, and follow him across the country to establish their urban homestead.

Maryam speaks of the strong ties she and her husband felt for their Imam, a well-known environmentalist and community leader,

> We completely devoted ourselves to the mosque that he was a part of. I mean he is just incredible . . . we had never seen people like this, we had never seen teachers like this who really model what they talk about. And everything from stewardship of the earth to character, to humility, like all of that was on the same platter. It wasn't these disjointed pieces . . . just seeing that there are people in the world who really live what they, they practice what they preach and they walk the talk. And they're beautiful human beings.
>
> (Maryam 2013)

That Maryam and her family were willing to leave their jobs and extended family behind and move across the country to follow their Imam when he moved speaks to the strength of their emotional ties to him. She says, 'it was a very tight knit, small community. We would come together weekly and have these spiritual gatherings. And then [the Imam] left and completely wiped us all dry' (Maryam 2013).

Social movement theorists claim one of the most important ways activists receive positive feedback about participation in movement activities is through the positive aspects of affective ties (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001, 9).[1] Muslims involved in environmentalism clearly demonstrate this claim: in a number of cases, the strongest affective ties were between the activists and charismatic leaders – Maryam, her family, and their Imam; and the activists involved in IFEES and their relationship to its founder, Fazlun. Weber writes that a charismatic leader inspires his or her followers to obey due to their 'exemplary qualities' which are not commonly displayed by others (Weber 1947, 328). The relationship between a charismatic leader and his or her followers is personal: 'based on the validity and practice of personal qualities' (Weber 1947, 363). The leaders of Islamic environmental organisations become, in the eyes of the activists, paternal figures deserving of immense respect, love, and loyalty. Shabaaz (2013) speaks of Fazlun, leader and founder of IFEES, in the following terms: 'he's a father figure to a lot of us, because we've grown up with him'. Shabaaz also speaks of the charismatic power Fazlun has with the activists: 'if you know Fazlun, you'll know that he can charm you, you'll end up going back and doing something. That's what I did, I kept going backwards and forwards and doing various things for him' (Shabaaz 2013).

Weber's account of charismatic leadership argues that it is the followers who impute charisma to their leaders. However, Melucci (1996, 336) critiques the Weberian approach to charismatic leadership as reducing the followers from individual actors to 'the masses'. Leadership, Melucci argues, is relational. Although

Maryam and her family are attracted to the characteristics of their Imam, it is primarily the personal relationship they have with him that ties them together, and, like IFEES activists, they attribute to him father-like qualities, 'I was in my third trimester, and he [the Imam] also introduced the concept of a home birth and, so he was just really, like he's our father. He's brought so much to our lives at so many levels' (Maryam 2013).

That Maryam and her community were 'wiped . . . dry' when their Imam left hints at the negative flip-side to the strong emotional bonds to charismatic leaders – how do movements, or organisations, survive when their leaders move on? Many organisations *are* reliant upon the personality and energy of one person for their continued survival – they are small, local organisations, and even if they maintain a large mailing list and reserve of volunteers for short-term projects or protest events, they are 'essentially the work of driven, committed individuals who keep the group alive through enormous subsidies of time and often money' (Jasper 1997, 216).

SHINE and Reading Islamic Trustees for the Environment (RITE) in Great Britain and the MGT in the United States are all examples of organisations founded by one or two individuals which survive and are effective only as long as those individuals channel extensive time into the operation of the organisation. Bhawana (2013) ran a project through MGT, making 10,000 cloth bags to distribute to their local Muslim community to encourage avoiding plastic shopping bags, organised and executed by only her husband and herself: 'The cloth bag project was just sort of me and my husband in our garage [. . .] We had this huge truck unload all the bags into our garage'. All three groups are currently in a state of 'sabbatical' caused by the burn-out or shifting priorities of their founders. The emotionally charged environment of activism can often lead to burn-out; activists are compelled by feelings of guilt to work long hours and may allow activism to encroach upon their personal lives (Rodgers 2010). When the leaders of MGT and SHINE could no longer dedicate their time and energy to the organisations, neither group could viably operate without them.

The activists at IFEES are well aware that they, too, could face a similar conundrum when Fazlun eventually retires. Currently in his 70s, Fazlun draws an old-age pension in Great Britain and works almost full-time for IFEES. Dawud (Fazlun and Dawud 2013) states, 'If IFEES is to be an Inc. organisation, it's got to do that. If it's just a thing that is around Fazlun's . . . life story, then it will finish when Fazlun does. That's the dilemma I've got anyway'. Affective ties to leaders are positive when they reinforce group loyalty and encourage continued participation out of respect and love for the leader. However, organisations or groups that fail to adequately prepare for the departure of a leader can face the disintegration of group loyalty and commitment if participants do not have any other strong ties or reasons to keep them active in the movement.

For other activists, and in other organisations, the affective ties may not be to charismatic leaders but rather to the group itself as friends and peers (Jasper 1998). Omar (2013) actively sought out a group of Muslims who are alike to

him, basing his decision to join GMDC largely upon finding people he could be friends with:

> I actively actually sought out an organisation here in DC that was doing environmental stuff . . . Honestly, this is, when I had come back to DC and, you know I grew up here, I grew up in Springfield which is a couple of miles from here. But I had gone out to Seattle and had lost touch with a lot of people that I was, you know, that I got to know in DC. So I was trying to reintegrate into the community here. So I was furiously seeking out people that were doing the same things I was. That's how I came upon it.

Camrey, a recent convert to both Islam and environmentalism and a friend of Omar's, was drawn into involvement with GMDC because of her friendship with Omar. 'I'm part of a halaqa, that is a little Islamic group that we get together and talk about things. And Omar, who was at the group yesterday, I think you met him. He invited me [to attend a GMDC meeting], so I went one day. I was so excited' (Camrey 2013). Social movement theorists have long proposed that networks – usually of friends and family – are vital for mobilising potential activists (see, Clark 2004; Diani 2002; Diani 1990; Singerman 2004). Yet as Goodwin et al. (2001, 8) correctly pointed out, showing that friendship networks mobilise potential movement participants is only half the job. Network theories do not adequately explain *how* these networks are able to mobilise people into activism. It is the emotional ties of friendship, the affection, trust, and respect one feels towards a friend that impels you to join them at their organisation's meeting or protest, in the way that Camrey accompanied Omar to GMDC following his invitation.

Romantic ties can also be important in maintaining group participation and loyalty. Zainab (2013) became involved with GMDC because she married one of the board members and is 'really good friends' with the other board members. Similarly, Muzammal's wife is one of the three core members of WiN, while Erik's wife shares his love of and interest in gardening and permaculture. All of these relationships are examples of romantic love strengthening an activist's commitment to the movement. The successful mobilisation of Omar, Camrey, and Zainab confirms Goodwin et al.'s (2001, 9) observation that 'strong feelings for the group make participation pleasurable in itself, independently of the movement's ultimate goals and outcomes'. However, romantic ties, much like ties to charismatic leaders, can also have negative consequences when activists shift their loyalties from the group to an individual. A successful romantic relationship between activists can result in those activists withdrawing from movement participation, as their energy and emotional attention is turned inwards on one another rather than towards the group and the group's goals (Jasper 1997, 208). Similarly, a successful romantic relationship between an activist and a non-activist will also see a transfer of emotional commitment away from the organisation/movement to the outside. Bhawana (2013) lamented that one of the core members of her team lost the motivation to invest time in activism once he got married. 'We started the

task-force, and [the leader] . . . he lead it, then he got married and he got busy and . . . it's hard to find dedicated volunteers. So that kind of fizzled'.

A reciprocal emotion such as love may have a positive on impact on mobilisation and participation, or it may have a negative effect. However, other reciprocal emotions are simply negative. Rivalry, jealousy, and resentment (Jasper 1997, 187) between members of an organisation or a movement can upset movement culture and cause activists to drop out or group cohesion to fail. These negative emotions were rarely displayed amongst the participants in this study, but this is not an indication that participants in Islamic environmental organisations do not feel negative emotions. Undoubtedly, there is a taboo against voicing such negative feelings towards another person in the setting of a research interview (Zackariasson 2009, 42). Displays of negative emotions may harm the public appearance of an organisation or the reputation of the individual activist.

In one or two cases, negative emotions were evident. Dawud, the administrator of IFEES, says of an ex-member: 'There are some people I think that have their own agendas and are not pioneers in trying to overcome the difficulties we have. [Ex-IFEES member], you know, who went off on his own' (Fazlun and Dawud 2013). Dawud appears to have some resentment towards an ex-IFEES activist for leaving IFEES to found his own organisation. This phenomenon is all too common in activist circles – activists tend to 'move among and through organisations only as necessary, joining, founding, and leaving them' (Jasper 1997, 340). Dawud also critiques other Islamic organisations involved in environmental activism showing some degree of jealousy for their large memberships and followings,

> [Names two Islamic organisations] . . . some people have agendas of publicity and PR, who are going through the, you know, getting large amounts of people involved . . . for us the work is the most important thing but we haven't got the right vehicle. Some people are developing vehicles without doing anything. So I think such organisations are more on the take than on the give. But people want environmental policies, they've probably stolen it from us without . . . but we don't care.
>
> (Fazlun and Dawud 2013)

Inter-group jealousy and resentment – for 'stealing' environmental policies without giving credit, for example – may create group cohesion against an outside 'enemy'. Yet it certainly does not create *movement* cohesion or encourage inter-group collaboration. And when the resentment and jealousy occur between members of the same group, the negative emotional energy could prevent the formation of positive affective ties.

Shared emotions

GMDC, of all the organisations in this book, were the most consistently active – organising regular meetings in the homes of activists, where they brought food

to share, prayed together, and talked at length about their experiences of trying to increase environmental awareness in their Muslim communities, bonding over shared frustrations and joys in their activism. These activities not only increase reciprocal ties of friendship between the group members, they also cultivate what Jasper calls *shared* emotions. These emotions do not have other members of the organisation/movement as their object, but rather are emotions generated collectively. Jasper (1997, 187) writes that these emotions are directed to objects outside the movement – outrage towards government policy, for example. Goodwin et al. (2001, 18) explicates how the positive emotions experienced by activists involved in a culturally 'rich' movement – one with 'rituals, songs, folktales, heroes, denunciation of enemies, and so on' encourage 'pride and affective attachment to the group'. Pride is, perhaps, an example of a shared emotion that is directed *inward*, not *outward*. Pride in one's identity as an activist who lives according to their moral convictions (or pride in an identity that is often maligned in 'mainstream' society – be that a religious identity, sexual/gender identity, or racial identity) is an emotion shared by activists. To maintain a positive movement culture, organisations and leaders must ensure that activists 'feel good' about their involvement in the group. Although this can come from reciprocal emotions, these positive feelings can also come from collectively reinforcing pride in each individual's identity and their involvement in activism.

Of the outwardly directed shared emotions, many *appear* to be negative. An emotion such as outrage may *feel* negative, but actually plays a vital role in motivating potential participants to see environmental problems through the same lens as their peers and in demonstrating the severity and urgency of the issue. Yet outrage can easily slip into despair or hopelessness, emotions that do not motivate action. Ameena (2013a) became visibly upset discussing causes of the environmental crisis:

> If the rest of the world becomes like the US, we're doomed. We're doomed! We're already doomed, I would say. I mean my son would say. . . [begins to cry] I mean this is the crisis. We're in a crisis, the world is dying, and we're sitting here like, recycling doesn't even come close to [. . .] I mean people are running their air-conditioning [. . .] it's a vicious cycle. We have the Republican A-holes, you know.

At other times, she uses emotive language, calling it 'tragic' that those who bear the brunt of the burden of environmental crises do not benefit from the system causing the problems. She also clearly calls upon group loyalty, arguing 'a lot of those countries [effected by climate change] are Muslim countries. Which is another reason why Muslims should pay attention'. We are, say social movement theorists, far more likely to respond to calls from movement leaders if they are framed in such a way as to call upon our loyalty to a pre-existing group membership (Nepstad and Smith 2001, 163). Even if it is not *me* who is the victim of the injustice, it is members of my own (religious) group who are victimised.

Creating shared emotions, even when they are 'negative' emotions like outrage, is an important part of motivating and sustaining activist participation and group loyalty. Activists must transform non-specific anxiety or fear into 'moral outrage' directed at a 'concrete policy or decision maker' (Goodwin, Jasper, and Polletta 2001, 16). Ameena, in the quote above, neatly shifts her emotional distress and pessimism onto the Republican Party, effectively blaming them for the impending environmental 'doom'. Muslim environmentalists frequently make reference to children and future generations, in an attempt to instil both fear and guilt in potential participants regarding what type of world they will leave behind:

> But if we've screwed the planet by the time they take over, thank you Mom. Now what do we, how do we solve this one? I mean my son was actually asking me yesterday, do you think I should have children. I mean what kind of a world are they going to be facing? And that attitude of handing them our mess.
>
> (Ameena 2013a)

Shabaaz (2013), discussing how he became more and more environmentally minded as time passed, spoke of how thinking about his children motivated him to act: 'I thought, what about my children? And this is where you get into that – what am I going to leave for them?' IFEES uses this type of emotional appeal to fundraise money for their projects, with Fazlun saying: 'Unlike any other organisation, we can quite simply say that the money you give us will benefit your children' (Fazlun and Dawud 2013). Jasper calls the combination of opposing emotions 'moral batteries'; in the examples just discussed, the negative emotion of fear and anxiety about the present is combined with hope for future change. The effect of the 'moral battery' is to motivate action through 'the excruciating contrast between the way things are now and the way things might be' (Jasper 2011, 291).

Organisations that harness emotion effectively create a strong, rich movement culture that appears attractive to potential participants and sustains motivation amongst existing members. The creation of movement culture is also intimately related to the construction of collective identity, which I address in the section below. Of all the organisations discussed in this book, GMDC and WiN are the two organisations that most effectively work on creating and sustaining 'group culture'. As mentioned, GMDC fosters ties of friendship along with romantic ties, encouraging activists to bring friends and family to meetings. Holding the meetings in the homes of the activists and leaders fosters personal connection, and members bring food to share at the meetings. Informal aspects of the meeting – people sitting around on couches and on the floor, sharing food, discussing their own lives and personal activities – are complemented by more formal group rituals and discussions. The group all pray together when they meet, and they split into working groups to workshop separate projects following a whole-group discussion about upcoming activities. WiN, with their carefully facilitated discussions and

emphasis on process, cultivate respect and inclusion amongst their (admittedly small) members. For example, in the monthly WiN Skype meetings, Muzammal and his wife sit in separate rooms so that the third core representative, Elizabeth, does not feel alienated or left out. The effort at inclusion works; Elizabeth (2013) reflects that at the end of WiN meetings – whether face-to-face or via Skype – she usually feels 'invigorated'. In both WiN and GMDC, activism stops being simply instrumental – the means to achieving environmental goals – and has intrinsic worth. Participation in these groups is enjoyable in-and-of itself, irrespective of whether or not the group achieves their goals.

Collective identity

As humans operating within, often, multiple communities (social, professional, neighbourhood, religious, etc.), we may 'identify' ourselves in multiple ways. Elizabeth (2013), one of the core representatives of WiN based in Edinburgh, lists many parts of her life – most unrelated to environmentalism – that give her a sense of who she is,

> I'm 32, I'm a stay-at-home mother, and we're hoping to home school . . . I just started hairdressing, I write for *Sisters* magazine – a Muslim women's magazine – but not very often because I've got other priorities. And that book in his hand is my first book, I'm a children's writer now. And lately I've sent loads of MP3s to Radio Ramadan, so hopefully get more into that, because I did drama for my degree, which is where I met my husband. Yeah I want to use more drama, I like working with children and adults with drama.

By contrast, Summreen (2013) – the founder of the now-inactive local environmental group RITE – identifies herself much more closely with environmentalism. She has a degree in environmental science and is employed by her local council as an environmental officer. If identity is formed through our actions and the ongoing interactions we have with those around us, then because Summreen is surrounded by environmentalists and works in an environmental field, her interactions are predominantly structured around environmentalism. Thus, the 'environmentalist' aspect of her identity is constantly being reinforced. By contrast, Elizabeth interacts with a much more varied selection of people and performs many actions that are unrelated to environmentalism. Her identity as an environmentalist, then, is much less entrenched than Summreen's.

It is important to distinguish, however, between *personal* identity and *collective* identity. Personal identity is 'a sense of who one is, a sense of self, combines attributes (I'm a good person, or tough, or smart), activities and interests (I'm a welder, jogger, or Grateful Dead fan), and identification with collectivities (I'm American, I'm Italian-American, a Southerner, or a member of the V.F.W.)' (Jasper 1997, 85–6). Collective identity, on the other hand, is far more difficult to define – the concept is 'slippery' (Fominaya 2010, 394), and has arguably been 'overextended' in social movement research (Jasper 1997, 84). Most often, collective

identity is seen as something constructed through interaction and always in a state of flux. It exists *between* the actors within a social movement and is the thing that gives social movements and the groups within them cohesiveness and solidarity. Collective identity in Melucci's theory is never static – as it is a process, identity is constantly being constructed and re-constructed through action. Melucci posits that collective identity is necessary for successful collective action:

> Collective identity enables social actors to act as unified and delimited subjects and to retain control over their own action; conversely, however, they can act as collective bodies because they have completed, to some extent, the constructive process of collective identity.

> (Fominaya 2010, 394)

Hunt and Benford (2004, 437), echoing the premise of new social movement theory, argue that in post-industrial society, 'collective identity has replaced class consciousness as the factor that accounts for mobilization and individual attachments to new social movements'. If collective identity can account for mobilisation, as these theorists maintain, then the historically low uptake of environmental activism in Muslim communities in the United States and Great Britain could perhaps be explained with reference to the difficulty in characterising the 'Muslim' identity and creating unity or a sense of shared purpose amongst the diverse Muslim communities of these two countries.

I gave a short history of Muslims in the United States and Great Britain in Chapter 3; to summarise briefly, the Muslim population in both Great Britain and the United States is extremely diverse – there are a multitude of ethnic groups and migrant communities, as well as considerable diversity in the degree of religious commitment and orthodoxy.[2] The nature of these communities varies greatly from one to another both within Great Britain and the United States, and between them. In Great Britain, Muslim communities are well-established, and Muslim migrants traditionally came to Great Britain to fill blue-collar positions, recruited in the post-World War Two reconstruction boom from ex-colonies (Baxter 2006, 165). Due to the colonial legacy, Muslim communities in Great Britain were historically dominated by migrants from the Indian sub-continent. However, in recent decades, migrants from Africa and the Arab world are slowly altering the demographic makeup (Baxter 2006, 166–7). In the United States, Muslim migrants faced comparatively more restrictive immigration policies that saw predominantly educated migrants fluent in English immigrating for educational and business opportunities (Haddad 1991). These migrants are largely middle class, one-quarter have a bachelor's degree or higher, and a similar number live in households earning $75,000 per year or above (Read 2008, 40). However, African-American Muslims – who make up approximately one-third of the Muslim population – are often socio-economically disadvantaged and share in the historical experiences of oppression faced by African-Americans.

Muslim environmentalists often feel challenged trying to mobilise participation in environmentalism from such heterogenous Muslim communities. Indeed, the

formation of a collective identity in a highly variegated population is more challenging than in a homogenous one. Sometimes, the challenge activists face stems from language barriers: 'I worked in the Mosque for a bit and people complained of just trying to engage with the community at all . . . the people who are in control in these organisations, their English isn't that brilliant' (Elizabeth 2013). At other times, the challenge is the variety of ideologies and religious beliefs within the Muslim communities: 'You're dealing with a lot of different communities and you need to sell a big idea to people who have very different ideological perspectives' (Khalid 2013); or the challenge can be trying to work amongst groups with a low socio-economic status:

> The worst areas were predominantly Muslim. So the places with, you know, with litter, with problems within the community, with gang warfare, would be – and you know deprivation and things like that has an impact, at the same time, it was just a little bit too coincidental that it was always a big community of Muslims.
>
> (Nabeel 2013)

Nabeel did not initially want his organisation, SHINE, to concentrate their litter pickups in Muslim areas. However, the Muslim areas in Sheffield happened, as the quote above states, to be some of the worst in terms of litter and other social problems. An important aspect of the interactionist account of identity is that 'collective actors define themselves in a social context' (Johnston, Larana, and Gusfield 1994, 18). Muslim environmentalists operate in highly varied social contexts, and this variation could account for their utilisation of quite different forms of action; the differences found between Muslim communities necessitate a different focus for activism. Khalid, a member of an ethnically diverse, low socio-economic Muslim community in Oakland, is focused upon environmental justice and its relation to poverty. In contrast, Bhawana – who lives only an hour away in Santa Clara, in a more affluent community that is predominantly South Asian – is focused on personal responsibility, education, and the promotion of environmentally responsible behaviour. The different social contexts of Khalid and Bhawana require quite different solutions.

Despite the huge variety of social positions, ethnic groups, and religious ideologies encompassed by the Muslim identity, utilising a shared religious identity *is* an extremely effective way to mobilise potential participants. Nepstad and Smith (2001, 166), writing about Christian engagement in the United States Central America Peace Movement, note that Christians were 'particularly subjectively engageable' in the movement because their traditions 'emphasise peace, justice, and political engagement as essential expressions of religious commitment . . . their common collective identity as people of faith took greater precedence over their identity as Americans'. Because they felt their religion called them to protest the injustice perpetrated in Central America by the United States, and the peace organisations highlighted the Catholic faith of those targeted in Central America, they felt no qualms in protesting against policies of the United States' government.

In this case, the 'moral shock' (Jasper 1997) of the gross violence occurring to other Christians in Central America was enough to spur action regardless of differences between the two Christian communities. Similarly, Ameena felt urged to act against environmental injustice when she recognised that many victims were Muslims like herself:

> What is so tragic about this whole thing is that it is those countries that have least contributed to climate change that are paying the biggest price. And a lot of those countries are Muslim countries. Which is another reason why Muslims should pay attention.
>
> (Ameena 2013a)

In the case of environmentalism, it is not always clear how to harness morality. Environmental injustice can be abstract or far removed from the lived experiences of activists' own lives. Imam Dawood speaks of the difficulty relating environmental issues to changing personal behaviours:

> Are you familiar with mountain top mining? It's literally blowing the top off, 200 tonnes of mountain top, to get at 3 tonnes of coal. So what happens is, where does that go? It blows up, and then it falls down to the watershed. And it destroys the watershed. Then everyone pays the price down stream. So now you have a rise in carcinogens, a rise in cancer related to it, a rise in asthma, so all these things. You understand that, but how does that relate, when I'm in Hanover, whether I flip the light on or off when I'm in my house?
>
> (Imam Dawood 2013)

Here, the environmental wrong-doing and the harm it causes may be easy to understand intellectually, but relating that wrong-doing to positive action for change is difficult. Khalid, meanwhile, reflects on the fact that environmental injustices occurring overseas, although obviously unjust, are difficult to relate to his own life:

> I'm not interested in working on climate change in Tuvalo because I'm not living in Tuvalo and what their reality is and what their interests are, they're going to have to decide for themselves. I'm interested in being an ally towards them. I'm interested in working with communities *here* that are affected by the same things. And that's why I feel like I have agency to work, I have more of a, as much as anyone has a right, more of a right to use my voice rather than somewhere else.
>
> (Khalid 2013)

Having a 'right' to use your voice is an important consideration of activism that relies upon collective identity. Khalid feels he is able to be active within his own community because he is a part of it; he subscribes to their collective identity, and their fate is his fate.

Identifying as 'Muslim' in both the United States and Great Britain can come with negative consequences, due to terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists in 2001 and 2007, respectively, and the subsequent vilification of Muslims in the media (Abbas 2001; Saeed 2007; Said 2008). The activists in this study are very aware of this, and some express hope that their activism will contribute towards the rehabilitation of Muslim identity. Summreen (2013) said, 'I think it's [environmentalism] quite a good topic to bring Muslims and non-Muslims, to build understanding between them. Because Islamaphobia in this country . . . it's really bad here, but I think it's really a good thing to bring people together'. Ameena (2013a) similarly hoped that Muslims involvement in environmentalism will counter Islamophobia:

> We need Muslims at the table to counter Islamaphobia, they're [environmental organisations] always looking for Muslims . . . all they know about the *Qur'ān* is terrorism. They don't know anything else. So it really does kill two birds with one stone. It's just very very powerful, so absolutely, we need to get as many Muslims at the table as possible.

The rehabilitation of a maligned collective identity is a core task for many social movements. Gay rights activism is 'identity-affirming' (Johnston, Larana, and Gusfield 1994, 23), in that it emphasises pride in a gay identity in the face of social discrimination. In this task, activists take the shame associated with the maligned identity and transform it into pride: 'repeated expressions of gay pride are supposed to have unmade gay shame' (Gould 2001, 139). The activism in this study is focused on environmental goals *not* upon identity affirming goals, at least on the surface. However, although Muslim activists do not usually express explicit pride in their identity, they are explicit about their desire to counter the dominant narrative about Muslim identity existing in United States and British society though their involvement in environmental activism.

Some activists interviewed did feel 'shame' about the Muslim identity, but this is not related to its poor mainstream image. Rather, the activists occasionally display embarrassment that their Muslim communities are not as environmentally aware as the activists think they should be. Islamic environmental activists in the United States and Great Britain face the challenge of communities that, by-and-large, are either unaware of environmentalism or give it a low priority. Bhawana (2013), the founder of MGT, discussed the problems she faced starting recycling programs at her local mosque:

> It is the biggest mosque in California, and maybe one of the biggest in the country. And they don't even have a recycling program. And we're like, this is really embarrassing. We're in the Silicon Valley, Bay Area, and we don't even have a recycling program. And we spoke with the facility manager, and he said, well we did. But then people just put their trash and then we have to sort it out. So he says what we need to do is educate the community about it. So it became a little more complicated. It couldn't just be, start a recycling program.

California is well-known in the United States as an environmentally aware state, so her statement that 'we're in the Silicon Valley, Bay Area' shows her disbelief and annoyance that their community is *not* environmentally aware. In fact, the need to 'educate the community' about recycling seems to be as much about aligning the Muslim community with the wider community consciousness, as it is about encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour. The Muslim environmentalists in this study view themselves as trailblazers in their communities, people with advanced knowledge that they wish to share with the uninformed general community.

Melucci (1989, 34) claims collective identity is 'an interactive and shared definition produced by several interacting individuals'. It is, then, *process-based* – constantly being formed and re-formed in the interactions between movement actors. It is in those interactions that we see the relationship of emotions to the (ongoing) formation of collective identity. Those positive reciprocal emotions – love and friendship – nurture positive relationships and interactions between movement members and thus lead to a sense of solidarity and contribute towards collective identity. Cultivating shared emotions like outrage or hope are another way of making interactions within a social movement positive and similarly should lead to solidarity and collective identity. Jasper makes the interesting claim that any sense of coherence or unity in a movement is fictitious – the diverse individuals and groups that make up any movement all have their own, slightly different, goals and interests. This is much like the communities built upon 'imagined solidarity' (Bayat 2005) I discussed in Chapter 5. However, collective identity, despite its fictitious nature, is still 'a powerful emotional motivation, a necessary fiction' (Jasper 1997, 90). There is certainly little unity in the goals and interests of the Islamic environmental organisations in this study, even those within common geographical regions. As was mentioned earlier in this chapter, the focus of an activist in Oakland differs substantially from an organisation in Santa Clara, despite both being in the Bay Area, California, because of the different constitutions of those two areas and the personal priorities of the activists themselves. WiN in Great Britain, which collaborates with non-Islamic, left-wing political groups, has a remarkably different focus and organisational identity to IFEES, which operates exclusively with and for Muslims.

Despite these differences, organisations with strong collective identity (GMDC, IFEES, and WiN) are the most successful in recruiting and retaining participants. In fact, looking into the *failings* of a few of the organisations in this study to successfully engage in the interactions that produce collective identity demonstrates the great importance of identity work for successful collective action. MGT in the Bay Area, California, and SHINE in Sheffield are two organisations that, at the time of this project, were no longer active due to the difficulty of maintaining the active involvement of a sufficient number of activists. Bhawana (2013), discussing the failure of MGT to coalesce into an ongoing self-sustaining organisation, said:

> I think we figured if we started a project and made it look very professional, people would come to it. And so there wasn't a whole lot of . . . it was basically me. And then when I would do these individual projects, I would recruit

some people to help me out with the project. But we didn't have like, a board, we didn't have a structure, we didn't have a core group of people who we recruited to the Muslim Green Team and said, now you are this core, we're going to do this stuff. I had hoped that when the project got going people would see that and would come and we would build that core team. What wound up happening was that people would come volunteer for a particular project and then they would leave. So, you know for the eco-fair for example, there were maybe 10 to 15 people who helped put together the fair, because there was a lot of things that needed to get done. But then afterwards it sort of dissipated.

Melucci writes that collective identity is crystalised 'into forms of organisation, systems of rules, and leadership relationships the closer the action draws toward the more institutionalised forms of social behaviour' (Melucci 1996, 67). The lack of structure in MGT, and lack of investment in creating a purpose for the organisation beyond discrete projects, suggests an environment and culture not conducive to the construction of a collective identity and sense of meaning or place in a wider movement. Elaborating on the process of identity formation, Melucci (1989, 35) proposes three interwoven dimensions:

First, formulating cognitive frameworks concerning the goals, means and environment of action; second, activating relationships among the actors, who communicate, negotiate, and make decisions; and third, making emotional investments, which enable individuals to recognise themselves in each other.

Without an organisational structure or committed leadership, it is likely that MGT did not invest enough into elaborating the 'goals, means and environment of action' for themselves. Further, the participants in MGT did not meet regularly throughout the year, coming together only for specific projects. This lack of sustained contact did not encourage the activists to make emotional investments with one another or with the organisation.

Unlike MGT, SHINE experienced a few years of success as an organisation, mobilising near-monthly litter pickups throughout the Sheffield urban area, liaising with the local council, and running successful showcase picnics during 'Sheffield Environment Week' over a number of years. However, like MGT, SHINE eventually lost the ability to retain volunteers. Founder Nabeel (2013) talked of their difficulty, leading to the decision to place SHINE on a 'sabbatical':

The support we got in SHINE, the volunteers, really just started to wither away to the point where last year there was myself and Debbie, who is one of the other volunteers, who has been there right from the start. We'd be sat in meeting rooms forming committees, because we were very organised, taking minutes and that. And we were thinking, we can't even make quorum on a committee meeting let alone anything else.

SHINE, it appears, had the organisational structure to facilitate the communication and relationships necessary to form collective identity. However, like MGT, SHINE lacked a clear, self-articulated vision of a collective 'we'. Nabeel spoke of four or five core members who undertook the lion's share of organisation during their years of activity, while the large number of participants in their litter pickups were volunteers who would come to one or two litter pickups and, having no investment in the organisation, would drop off: 'That was great, and after each event, there would be like 20 volunteers. So they'd come to the next event which was fantastic. Unfortunately, after that, at the next event, they'd all start to wither away' (Nabeel 2013).

New social movement organisations are *not only* a means to an end, and an organisation 'cannot be assessed only in terms of its instrumental rationality. The organisation has a self-reflexive character, and its form expresses the meaning (or goals) of the action itself'(Melucci 1989, 74). The focus of both SHINE and MGT is on the end-goal of their projects, and neither group invested enough time or effort in encouraging their activists to elaborate upon their identities or form meaningful relationships with one another through structured and facilitated regular group contact. The groups are what Hannigan (1993) refers to as 'goal-oriented' rather than 'value-oriented'; the groups measure their success in terms of whether or not they achieve pre-determined external environmental goals.

Further, members of SHINE and MGT do not appear to have formed particularly strong affective ties with one another. As discussed in the previous section, emotion in the form of affective ties with co-actors in an organisation is vital in maintaining the ongoing participation of members. Hunt and Benford (2004, 446) posit that collective identity is both intimately tied to commitment and reliant on emotion: 'The dialectic constituting process between commitment, solidarity, and collective identity – a reciprocal shaping and being shaped by – is largely a matter of emotion work'. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that neither Bhawana nor Nabeel displayed emotional/affective ties to actors in their organisations. Melucci (1996, 71, original emphasis) places emotion as the third of the three dimensions in the construction of collective identity:

> A certain degree of *emotional investment* is required in the definition of collective identity, which enables individuals to feel themselves part of a common unity . . . Passions and feelings, love and hate, faith and fear are all part of a body acting collectively, particularly in those areas of social life that are less institutionalised, such as the social movements.

MGT and SHINE did not encourage investment in the organisation by their volunteers in only recruiting for specific events or projects and not involving those volunteers in the actual running of the organisation. This also ensured that the volunteers did not form meaningful relationships with each other based upon collective action. Neither organisation was able to elicit any emotional investment by their members and volunteers, nor encourage their volunteers to identify with the group. Ultimately, this affected their ability to retain members.

What is missing in the interviews of both Nabeel and Bhawana is mention of self-reflection undertaken by the organisation. Neither organisation appears to have drawn their members into self-reflective discussions about the future of the organisations. Hunt and Benford (2004, 445) argue that collective identities are 'talked into existence' through 'narratives, framing processes, emotion work, and interactions with antagonists among others'. Melucci (1989, 74) agrees, arguing that the internal functioning of the organisation expresses the goals and actions of the movement. The organisation is 'the laboratory in which actors test their capacity to challenge the dominant cultural codes' and is necessarily 'self-reflexive' in character. In viewing their organisations as simply a means to an end – i.e., as vehicles to achieve the end goals of environmentalism – Bhawana and Nabeel have neglected to invest in collective identity construction, which Melucci (1989, 73) argues is an 'essential part of the action, and not simply an accessory or "expressive" dimension'.

Of all the organisations in this study, WiN most clearly demonstrates investment in the construction of collective identity and commitment to the internal functioning of the group. As has been mentioned in the above sections, WiN places heavy emphasis on effective facilitation and the development of a 'group mind' in their meetings which, coupled with their commitment to a non-hierarchical structure, has resulted in the activists working effectively and developing a sense of a collective 'we'. Founder Muzammal (2013) speaks below of their non-hierarchical structure and the processes they deliberately engage to balance power dynamics in the group:

> The attempt to try not to be hierarchical was alien to I think some Muslims, and maybe to a lot of other people, but I wanted to stick with that and that therefore meant that if things weren't getting done we have to come together and talk about it. And this transparency and openness, as opposed to I guess, where a lot of things are unconscious in groups. What we try to do is bring things to the surface so we actually process our own stuff. I think that kind of inner work in a group wasn't for everyone. I think some people just thought, well we're an environmental group and this is what we need to do and this makes sense. Other people, we also used consensus decision making for key decisions as well. So I think this was, I mean when people entered into this space they were quite fascinated how a group mind developed and how decisions were made by something that's bigger than anyone, and it was quite a magical process when we got into that space, where power wasn't concentrated anywhere in the group. So that was really credit to the way we had developed our facilitation and the maturity in that.

Involvement in WiN was inherently rewarding for some members – as Muzammal reflects above, seeing 'how a group mind developed' was a 'magical process'. Yet as he states above, WiN's process-driven organisational model was not suitable for many participants and required a high level of commitment. Indeed, Melucci (1994, 123) warns that the deeply self-reflexive practice undertaken in

groups such as WiN may cause the group to draw in upon itself and become isolated, much like inward-looking religious movements. WiN became consciously more selective about who they allowed into the organisation:

> The people who came didn't have a lot of experience. In fact most of them didn't have experience with local group actions. So that showed after a while . . . that's around the time, I think, when with WiN it became clearer that if people were to enter into the group, how much are we willing to put in? Should it be at this stage that we are more open to people who have some experience and therefore they know what needs to happen.
>
> (Muzammal 2013)

Conclusion

Understanding the role of emotions and collective identity in creating group cohesion and culture not only helps explain how social movements motivate and maintain participation, it also helps to paint a rich picture of what involvement in a social movement such as Islamic environmentalism is like. The most significant finding in the analysis of emotion in Islamic environmental activism is the importance of affective ties – either horizontally to peers, or vertically to leaders – in motivating and sustaining participation in environmental activism. The strength of the affective ties in the organisations in this study also demonstrates the, at times, negative aspect of affective ties. While the ties to father-like authority figures are extremely strong and motivating, when these leaders leave, organisations such as IFEES and communities like Maryam's face significant challenges to continue. Activists in this study also use shared emotions identified by Jasper (1998, 2011), like 'moral outrage' and 'moral batteries' of fear and anxiety combined with hope, to motivate environmental action. I argue that the successful use of emotion by activists through creating positive affective ties of friendship, respect, and inclusion results in a strong organisational or movement culture. Similarly, the construction of collective identities is an integral function of social movement organisations, is closely related to emotion, and is essential to successful mobilisation. I have demonstrated that, despite the difficulties faced by highly variegated communities, and the unique personal biographies activists bring to their organisations, those groups (GMDC, IFEES, and WiN) that effectively engage in the activities and interactions that nurture the formation of collective identity in their activism are the most successful in mobilising and retaining activists.

Notes

1   Djupe and Hunt's 2009 qualitative study, discussed in Chapter 2, also demonstrated that religious leaders who preach environmentalism increase positive environmental attitudes in their congregants.
2   The Muslim American population is the most ethnically diverse Muslim population in the world, representing migrants from more than 80 countries (Read 2008, 40).

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7 Activism, moral practice, and religion

Throughout this book, I've been careful to maintain that there is neither one 'Islam' nor one 'environmentalism'. There is no one way to be a Muslim, and no one way to be an environmentalist. In this chapter, I further develop this idea. I want to problematise the analytic distinction between the 'political' and the 'religious'. Many theorists of social movements have postulated there is some kind of paradox between religion and social transformation, between the religious life and the political life. Influenced by Marx and early social theorists, many social movement scholars assume that religion is interested in the maintenance of the status quo and thus inherently opposed to social change and revolutionary political activism. Yet, as Hannigan (1991, 318) has argued, although religious belief and political activism can be seen as two different responses to social and economic discontent, having a religious faith and practice does not preclude one from engaging in political or social activism. I would like to go one step further than Hannigan and argue that dividing action into 'political' and 'religious' establishes an artificial division in the lives and practices of Muslim environmentalists that they themselves do not acknowledge. I contend that not only do Muslim environmentalists demonstrate a commitment to social and political transformation and religious faith simultaneously, but further, that their environmentalism is, to them, an act of faith – their activism *is* their religious practice in many ways.

I begin the chapter by examining the theoretical disputes on the place of religion in social movement studies, arguing that religiously-grounded activism is a more complex and nuanced phenomena than most existing theory allows. I then discuss the ways in which political activism and social movements themselves have religious characteristics and develop moral norms. Using the work of Jasper (1997) on the moral nature of protest, I demonstrate that activism is a moral activity and activists are the 'moral representatives' of their culture. I then examine the difference between *contentious* and *cooperative* activism and how the privileging of contentious activism leads us to ignore some kinds of practice, common amongst Muslim environmentalists, that are nonetheless legitimate forms of political action. I demonstrate that, much like the secular environmental movement, Islamic environmentalism contains both types of action and in fact many activists engage in *both* contentious and cooperative activism. I conclude the chapter by demonstrating the ways in which religious practice and political action are synthesised by Muslim environmentalists.

Religious movements and social movement studies

For much of its history, social movement theory has largely excluded religiously grounded activism or movements. Influenced by the Marxian claim that religion is a tool of oppression used by the ruling classes to legitimate their dominance (Beckford 1989, 22), and by the secularisation thesis, social movement theorists have by and large excluded religion from their analyses (Hannigan 1991). Those social movement scholars who did engage with religious movements tended to focus on 'world-rejecting' (Wallis 1984) and millenarian religions – characterising religious people and movements as 'nostalgic' and arguing they have no interest in affecting change but rather are simply waiting for Judgement Day (Touraine 1971, 97–9). While movements like this undoubtedly exist, activists such as Muslim environmentalists demonstrate not *all* (or, arguably, most) religious activism is of this character. Where some Muslim activists are very concerned with affecting positive social change in the here-and-now, others manage to be concerned with *both* changing the here-and-now and with their 'judgement' after death.

Narrating stories of Judgement Day is common amongst some Muslim environmentalists, yet the emphasis of these stories is not on the immanence of Judgement Day and consequent irrelevance of earthly matters, as Touraine would have it. Rather, Islamic theology emphasises that all people will be judged according to their actions on this earth and Muslim environmentalists insist this judgement will include the way we, individually and collectively, have treated the earth. Zainab (2013) worries Muslims are accumulating 'bad deeds' from their poor treatment of the environment that will affect them come Judgement Day. 'I think that a lot of people have no idea how much of an obligation we have. And how much their actions can, um, really be possibly accumulating bad deeds for themselves, in a larger – what do you call it? Cosmological sense'. Khalid (2013) neither looks back to an idealised past, nor to a utopian future. He instead emphasises the necessity of personal action right now:

> I think that the dominant industrial system is the root of the problem. That manifests in industrialised agriculture, in the way we organise our living, in our transportation, and stuff like that. I see that as the cause, but I don't see it going back despite not owning a cell phone. I don't see it going back to pre-industrial [. . .] I don't see going back to some idealised version is an answer. But, interesting, I have a pretty pessimistic view of the future. But I also have a sense that, that's not my responsibility. My responsibility is to act on the things that are in front of me.

Being firmly grounded in the here-and-now, and committed to political action, Khalid directly contradicts those social movement theorists who believe religious adherents will not seek political and social transformation in the wider world.

Another critique social theorists offer of religious adherents and groups is that they will not engage with society and will instead 'retreat to private spaces' (Offe 1985, 827). Some Islamic environmental groups do occasionally seem close to

advocating a retreat from society, rather than engaging with it. Fazlun and Dawud of IFEES both discussed extensively their vision of starting Islamic eco-communities and wondered whether or not those communities would be open to non-Muslims. Indulging in apocalyptic visions of the future, Dawud mused on the ethics of excluding non-Muslims from their exclusive (reclusive?) communities and wondered whether violence would be needed to guard the eco-community from those left outside (Fazlun and Dawud 2013). Although Dawud was merely speculating on an imagined future, his line of thought shows a submerged desire to create an exclusive community strikingly similar to those reclusive millenarian religions that fascinated mid-century social theorists (Gerlach and Hine 1970; Korver 1976; Loftand 1979).

One of the major criticisms of the secularisation thesis, and part of the reason it has been discredited, is that proponents looked only to institutional religion and religious organisations for evidence of religious belief and practice. In doing so, theorists reduced religion 'to its most visible expressions in the form of institutionalised beliefs and practices' (Beckford 2003, 27). This resulted in the *appearance* of declining religious involvement and significance, while ignoring the great up-swell in new forms of religious and spiritual practice evident in new religions, religious revival groups, secular forms of spirituality, and 'believing without belonging' (Davie 1990). This critique of the secularisation thesis is paralleled in social movement theory by critiques that take issue with the organisational focus predominant in the field (Melucci 1989). The activists in this study have varying levels of commitment to orthodox Islamic practice, with some heavily involved in the 'institutionalised' practice of Islam at mainstream Mosques and others with a more private and/or less orthodox approach to Islam. For example, when explaining his religious practice, Muzammal (2013) states, 'I consider myself to follow a contemplative anarchist strand of Islam'. In addition, not all the activists are affiliated with an environmental organisation. Many of the environmentalists from the Bay Area in California who appear in this book are independent activists, and both Summreen and Nabeel in Great Britain are also currently independent following the wind-down of their organisations. Just as attending a mosque cannot be regarded as necessary to be a Muslim, so belonging to an environmental organisation is not necessary to be an environmental activist. In both cases, an organisational and institutional focus reduces the diversity of both religious practice and activism.

Some religious narratives do, in fact, easily lend themselves to a political and revolutionary reading. For example, in recent decades, intellectuals on the left have returned to the revolutionary messages and figures of early Christianity. Slavoj Žižek, Alain Badiou, and Giorgio Agamben have all written on St Paul as a subversive, revolutionary figure who leads an underground Christian movement. This is not just historical reflection; Milbank, Žižek, and Davis (2010) take from St Paul (and a subversive reading of Christian theology) a way in which contemporary capitalist systems can be resisted. Meanwhile, Badiou (1997, 2) sees in St Paul a 'new militant figure [. . .] called upon to succeed the one installed by Lenin and the Bolsheviks at the beginning of the century'. However, even these

theorists engage with religion only when it serves their political purpose – when its narratives can be made to dovetail with leftist radical discourse and action. Badiou (1997, 1) declares, 'for me, truth be told, Paul is not an apostle or a saint. I care nothing for the Good News he declares, or the cult dedicated to him'.

Such subversive and radical readings of theology may be possible, but the actual practice and beliefs of religious activists may not subscribe to the leftist politics advocated by such writers. Islamic environmentalism demonstrates the, at times uncomfortable, overlap of religious and secular political and moral frameworks. Tensions can arise when a religious organisation or group joins with groups from different religious beliefs (or no religious beliefs) in a coalition based on a shared purpose, whether theological, ecumenical, or pragmatic (Zald 1982, 328). Khalid acknowledges that many Muslim activists struggle to operate in the wider secular environmental movement because they are forced to work alongside groups who espouse values contradictory to their own:

> If you're going to work with issues around environmental stuff, next thing that is coming through your door is issues around homosexuality. Muslims are not going to want to talk about that. So that's, it's kind of funny but it's a real issue that they have. It's been the same with political organizing for Muslims. How do we work together in coalitions? Like around the Iraq war, it really came out. Because there were LGBT groups that were very interested in stopping the Iraq war. And yet Muslims were like, wow, if they're going to show up to our cause around Palestine, how are we going to deal with this? Because we're not going to vote no on Prop 8 or something like that. It became a real sticky issue for a lot of communities. In some ways, akin to the environmental, in some spaces it brought out good.

Khalid himself falls here into the common trap of speaking as though all Muslims adhere to one moral viewpoint (in this case, that homosexuality is wrong), even though he himself is aware this is not the case – and goes on to discuss an Islamic religious leader who dismisses that homosexuality will prevent one from being a 'good' Muslim. There are in fact plenty of examples of 'unlikely' alliances between religious and secular groups, such as some conservative Christians and Native American Indians on such wide-ranging issues as abortion, gender, and prisoner rights, where a commitment to conservative theology does not guarantee a commitment to conservative politics (Smith 2008).

As Khalid states above, the confrontation of a progressive secular and a conservative religious morality can in some instances bring about change – when someone with a conservative, religiously grounded moral framework engages with a progressive social movement on a common cause like environmentalism, the exposure to different political viewpoints and moral frameworks may cause the religious activist to confront and reflect upon their views. If one is passionate about progressive social change, like Khalid is, that is a good thing. Of course, involvement in a progressive social movement may also prove a formative *political* as well as moral experience. Muzammal (2013) acknowledges that his move

to Brighton and involvement in political groups there had a profound effect upon his political practice:

> It was around 2002–2003 at the height of the anti-war movement and I sort of got involved with activities around that in Brighton, and because that was such a focal point for activists, many people from different strands of activism – whether Palestine, trade justice, environmentalism – kind of, they coalesced around the war, around this anti-war movement. Also it was a really raw sort of thing, people brought a lot of experience and it was being tested on the ground. I ended up in this space, this very radical place. There was also quite a lot of anarchists as well, and so I really got to see more of them, not from the stereotype but from where they are coming from and having conversations and being challenged and vice versa [. . .] And I began to get experience with local group activism, discussed a lot about how people were doing things, I got fascinated by how decisions were being made or not being made.

Although Muzammal was greatly influenced by his involvement in activism in Brighton, we must be careful not to ascribe too much to this influence. Muzammal *already* had progressive/leftist values and interests – or he wouldn't have become involved, and continued his participation, in these movements in the first place.

Certainly, not all Muslims will respond in the same way as Muzammal to such social movements, nor will they be so readily mobilised. Khalid notes that having Muslims involved in environmentalism sometimes necessitates a religious – and potentially conservative – approach, 'having Muslim [environmentalists] speak to them [Muslims] in a spiritual way, and having different people speak in different ways I think is important [to encourage Muslims to be environmentally active]. Not everyone is so down with progressive approaches to things, you know' (Khalid 2013). Sometimes, religious organisations and activists will feel threatened by the commitments and actions of a coalition partner, which will 'filter back and commit the denomination to activities it might not have desired, which in turn creates internal conflict' (Zald 1982, 328). For some Muslim environmentalists, the answer to this may be to isolate themselves from secular environmental and activist groups. And indeed, a few of the groups in this book work almost exclusively *within* their Muslim community.

Just like earlier social theorists were incorrect to assume religion necessarily leads to an acceptance of the status quo, is always regressive, or will always legitimate oppression, so too religion is not necessarily, or even often, emancipatory and progressive. As I've shown, Muslim environmentalists are all religious in their own ways and are frequently motivated into environmental activism *because of* that religious faith. Some, such as Muzammal and Khalid, also show commitment to progressive political ideals: gender equality, non-discrimination, eco-justice. Others are not as comfortable with progressive politics as they are with environmentalism: they advocate for recycling but may be uncomfortable working in coalition with LGBTIQ organisations; they hold workshops on environmentalism in Islam, but will restrict their activism to exclusively Muslim circles;

they commit to personal sacrifices for the environment, but think radical action is counter-productive. In short, religion '*can* help to keep everything in its place. But it can *also* turn the world upside-down' (Smith 1996, 1). We cannot box religion into being *either* emancipatory *or* repressive. Further, religious people themselves, like the very religions they follow, can be simultaneously progressive on one issue and conservative on another.

The moral nature of activism

Despite the desire of social movement scholars to wall religion out of social movement studies, social movements share some key characteristics in common with religions. Jasper (1997) deals in some length with the religious aspects of social movements and in fact argues that social movements may *replace* religions for the many people who no longer identify with any particular religion, 'protest is like religious ritual: it embodies our moral judgements, so that we can express allegiance to moral visions through our actions. For those who no longer hold to traditional religious practices, protest is one of the few ways to express moral viewpoints' (Jasper 1997, 14). Watching marchers in a climate change rally, like the one I described at the beginning of Chapter 6, one can sense the 'spiritual urgency' Melucci attributes to the environmental movement (Melucci 1994, 122) and see, on the very placards raised in the air, the moral convictions of the activists. Environmental and social justice movements who critique over-consumption and materialism and highlight the injustices caused by global consumer markets through 'fair trade' schemes and consumer boycotts:

> Constitute a remoralisation of everyday life and activity. The participants in such projects abandon the "strategic rationality" more usual for the consumer role, which focuses the individual only upon the best means for realising their own selfish desires, and question the ethics of consumption as it is normally practiced.
>
> (Crossley 2003, 298)

Crossley (2003) argues activists who promote responsible consumerism (or a withdrawal from consumerism altogether) challenge the 'colonisation of the life-world' by a 'remoralisation of the system' – by refusing to ignore 'the other' in the chain of production, activists see purchasing an item as entering into a moral relationship with every person who has been involved in the production of that item. The simple act of purchase is transformed from a mere transaction into a complex chain of moral relationships, and from desire satisfaction into the realisation of moral values.

Although involvement in activism provides non-religious activists with a coherent moral framework and opportunities for practicing a secular morality, Muslim environmentalists would typically be thought to already be engaged in a 'traditional religious' practice, and political action would therefore be unnecessary. Yet this line of thinking takes us, once again, to a dichotomy between

religious and political practice. Rather than expressing their moral views solely through religious practice, Muslim environmentalists synthesise their religious and activist practice to *more fully* express their moral values in their daily life.

Many of the activists in this book are compelled into action in an attempt to ensure synchronicity between their moral values, personal lives, and public/political lives. Khalid (2013) sees living according to one's values as a *religious* necessity, not one compelled by political values: 'there is this question of what are your personal ethics and how do you choose to live. That is very religiously informed, and trying not to separate the personal and professional, and to live by the ethics I think are right. This is like eating and where to live, stuff like that'. For non-religious activists, the impetus for such synchronicity between public and private ethics is driven by their involvement in a social movement. Wanting to align one's daily life with moral values is a defining characteristic of what are called 'lifestyle' movements (LMs), 'LMs encourage participants to continually integrate movement goals into multiple aspects of daily life . . . participants in LMs see their involvement as a quest for personal "integrity" and "authenticity", adhering to some version of the premise that a human being is a sum total of her/his daily choices' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 8–9). Khalid is highly critical of people whose personal ethics and professional or public ethics do not align – those who will publicly advocate for or support environmentalism, but do not live up to environmental ideals in their personal lives. He gave the example of an environmental professional, 'I house sat for him, and under his sink was a disaster. I was like, you're an environmental [professional], what's going on here? It's almost like the two [professional and private life] are totally isolated'.

Muslim environmentalists and, indeed, secular activists in any social movement, are often driven into activism by a compulsion to share their moral vision – much like religious evangelism. Erik (2013) is driven to speak out against environmental injustice and wrong-doing:

> When I'm serious about something, when I've found a passion for this, I can't stop but to try and tell other people about it. You know it's something that I believe in; it's something that I see as a scary reality of the future of the human civilisation . . . And I'm vocal about it, I want to make a change, I want to see the change in the world.

Ameena frequently refers to 'converting' people to environmentalism, and there certainly is a similarity in trying to 'convert' people to believe in a particular, moral vision of the world in which destruction of the environment is wrong, and so change their daily actions, and trying to 'convert' people to a particular religious belief and practice.

The 'conversion' analogy is appropriate for another reason: an activist who chooses to promote their cause and live their life in accordance with the moral values of their social movement, much like a religious adherent, thinks that in believing and following the moral values of their social movement, they become better

people. Ameena (2013) supports the implementation of environmental laws, such as banning the use of plastic bags or Styrofoam. However, she understands that even if you force people to behave in an environmentally conscious way through public policy, you have not actually made those people environmentalists. She says, 'if California would just ban Styrofoam, there we go. But part of me is like, OK so we won't do it [use Styrofoam] because we can't, but we haven't learned anything. And we haven't been converted. We're not a better person'. It is not enough to simply force people to adhere to proper environmental conduct like avoiding Styrofoam: you must also change their worldview or moral code so they think avoiding Styrofoam is the right thing to do.

Much like religious evangelists, social movement actors are often treated with suspicion (or simply ignored) by the people they try to 'convert'. Muslim environmentalists frequently come up against apathy and disinterest in their communities. Speaking about an environmental talk scheduled at a mosque, Zainab (2013) shows the type of reception environmentalists can face:

> They gave this whole presentation and this particular mosque offers a free meal every night in *Ramadhān*. So you had people who were just making a beeline for the food and they were not caring about anything else. So literally they [the environmentalists presenting] were even being drowned out and you couldn't even hear them sometimes.

Ameena (2013) has a 'reputation' for being obsessed with recycling and environmentalism in her community, which has impacted on some of her relationships:

> My daughter is getting mad at me, people think you are the garbage man . . . I found my first recycling centre, and it was 30 years ago, and I would save up all my newspapers and everything and take it there. I remember my in-laws being like, why are you doing this? I don't think they even gave us money at that point. They just thought I was bizonkers.

Despite the negative or disinterested reception these activists receive from their own communities, and even their families, they continue to try and encourage environmentalism – remaining committed in the face of often poor results.

It is, in part, the moral nature of activism that encourages activsts to continue their work when so often they do not achieve their collective goals, 'success means *personal*, moral integrity, *often regardless of collective impact* . . . failure is a *personal*, moral failure to live up to individual and movement values' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 9, 10 original emphasis). Even if they fail to set up a recycling scheme at their mosque, or if the recycling bins they do manage to install are ignored by mosque attendees, the activists are still satisfied by their own personal development towards being more environmentally responsible in their daily lives and doing their best to spread an environmental message. Meanwhile, those who fail to be environmentally responsible are not just failing the

planet: it is a personal, moral failing. Khalid (2013) is bewildered by the personal ethics of some Muslims:

> You know, we have a lot of Muslims that work in [immoral industries], and one of my . . . friends . . . works at [a bio-technology company] he was high up in [the company]. And at that time I didn't have the politics I do now and I didn't understand. Later . . . I'm like, what was that guy doing? Like he was steeped in this world . . . and the group doing the worst things anyone could do. And he's my family friend, and he's a good guy you know? And that's the thing. A lot of Muslims have their careers in biotech, a lot of them have their careers in the pharmaceutical industry, and it's like, investment banking. How do you do that? . . . There is a major disconnect, between personal ethics and professional.

As a person of moral character, Khalid is unable to separate his daily life – work, consumption habits, travel arrangements, etc. – from his moral values. He is compelled to act in a morally coherent way and finds it difficult to see other Muslims acting in ways that morally incoherent.

Of course, Islam itself is also a motivating factor in continuing activism in the face of few results. As I discussed in Chapter 5, many Muslim environmentalists have a strong sense of religious duty when it comes to activism. Nabeel (2013) speaks of how he believes Islam motivates him to a life of activism:

> The message in Islam is if you're sat down comfortable, something is wrong. If you're sitting at home happy and comfortable, your meal being served, then start to worry, because you've gotta go out there. You've got to help people, you should be doing something that is testing you. That means you've been given a blessing and you're misusing what you've been given, whether it's wealth, or time, or whatever.

Muslim environmentalists *already* strive to live a moral life because of their religious commitment. Activism is, for them, a natural outward expression of this compulsion to live morally.

One stumbling block for Islamic environmentalism, when viewed as a moral practice undertaken by moral agents, is that the very commitment of activists to act morally in the world can at times lead them away from environmentalism. For example, Nabeel is highly attuned to injustice and driven to fight against it wherever he finds it. Unfortunately for his environmental organisation, SHINE, he found more injustice occurring based on religious and ethnic discrimination:

> Unfortunately, as with many things, the environmental side always takes a bit of a low priority and I think really with the current climate, and I say current but it's been going on for five or six years now. You know, Muslims are getting a really hard time, they're getting to the point where there is a great deal

of injustice going on. You try to get involved and say look – some of the sto-ries I've heard, I think, I've got to do something. You can't just sit there. So I'm trying to get involved doing community groups. So I'm doing a lot more of that [than environmental activism]. Just because there are people being affected in fairly profound ways and it's a little bit unfair. The litter pick, as important as I feel it is, you know it's a bit of a lower priority because there is someone locked up somewhere for something they haven't done and have to try and help them.

(Nabeel 2013)

Nabeel's moral compulsion to act justly draws him away from environmental activism and the work of his organisation SHINE into social justice activism, where the injustices appear to him more severe and pressing.

At the beginning of this section, I referenced how Jasper believes that activ-ists are the 'moral representatives' of their culture. Muslim environmentalists are indeed moral representatives – they are examples of how to live authentically in keeping with one's moral and religious beliefs. Many people may agree intellectu-ally with environmental arguments but are not committed or motivated enough to make the necessary sacrifices to engage in activism. Environmentalists like those in this book live out the life they envision for all society. This is what Melucci (1994, 125) calls the prophetic function of new social movements: 'the message is that the possible is already real in the direct experience of those proclaiming it. The struggle for change is already incarnate in the life and in the structure of the group'. Muslim environmentalists have a moral vision drawn from *both* their Islamic belief and the ethics of the environmental movement. Not only do they strive to live according to this moral vision in their own lives, they also try to 'convert' others to this moral vision – and their commitment to that moral vision keeps them motivated in the face of wider apathy and disinterest from their Mus-lim communities.

Cooperative and contentious action

The long-standing bias against religion and religious activism in social movement literature would lead one to believe that religious activists and movements are less revolutionary and radical – that religion encourages actors to work within exist-ing systems rather than fight against them. Further, contentious action – defined either as action directed at the state (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) or directed against existing social and political systems (Fitzgerald 2009, 183), and involv-ing either a non-institutional actor or non-conventional 'transgressive' action (McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001) – is privileged in social movement discourse. This is most likely because the kinds of social movements which formed the basis of early social theory were intent upon gaining state power and revolutionising political and social systems (Melucci 2000). Scholars of social movements tend to valorise contentious action, considering it necessary to the formation of a social movement. Yet the way contentious action is the 'anchoring concept' for social

movement studies blinds theorists to the vast amount of social movement activity that is not directed at either state or institutional targets (Snow 2004).

There is another form of action undertaken by social movements, which could be labelled 'cooperative'. Cooperative action may, or may not, have the state as the focus of action. Significantly, cooperative action works *with* existing social and political structures to try and effect change without destroying the existing system (Fitzgerald 2009, 183). Within the environmental movement, action that fits within the shallow ecology sustainability model favoured by much government policy is a good example of cooperative action. The attempt of activists in both MGT and GMDC to implement recycling in their local mosques is an example of this kind of activism. Another way to think of cooperative action is as a kind of 'life politics'. New social movement theory argues most conflict occurring in contemporary social movements are about the structure and control of the cultural world, not the political world. Action occurring in the cultural arena often occurs through activists living in ways that oppose dominant cultural and political norms – what Giddens (1991) calls 'life politics'. This could be, for example, how Maryam choses to educate her children (and those who attend her eco-school) using a fundamentally different educational model to the mainstream, one focused on the integration of experiences in nature with learning, and one opposed to using standard testing models. This type of action is 'cooperative' as well, as it is does not directly confront the state.

Groups engaged in cooperative action should not be de-valued because they are not politically radical, nor can it be assumed their activism does not seek genuine change. 'Life politics' has been a feature of social movements for well over 40 years – the student movements of the 1960s were formed by groups of youths who 'wanted to be together, to talk about themselves and to enjoy new relationships' (Melucci 2000, 94) – a kind of politics very different to the militant leftist activism that preceded it. From the 1980s onward, some social movements transformed into dispersed and fragmented networks submerged in everyday life. The networks would emerge in response to specific issues and like the youth groups of the 1960s, they 'acted as laboratories in which new cultural models, forms of relationships and alternative viewpoints [were] tried out and put into practice' (Melucci 2000, 94). The environmental activists associated with MGT in the Bay Area California form a loose network just like that described by Melucci. Attempts by MGT founder Bhawana to organise activists into a formal organisation with regular meetings and events failed. Although the failure of MGT can be attributed to various organisational factors, it is also the case that the activists in the Bay Area will emerge to assist with well-defined environmental projects, then return to their daily lives and other commitments.

Defining social movements by contentious or conflictual action is problematic for the environmental movement as a whole. Touraine (2002, 89) specifies that 'a conflict presupposes a clear definition of opponents or competing actors and of the resources they are fighting for or negotiating to take control of'. Although one can clearly identify environmentalists as one actor in environmental conflict, the opposing actor is far more diffuse – is it the entire capitalist-industrial system, or

individual corporations, or states, or populations with unsustainable lifestyles? Further, Touraine's emphasis on conflict appears to privilege a more contentious form of activism, although he does make an analytic distinction between the transformation of the state and social conflict. Social movements do not need to transform the state in order to be considered social conflict (Touraine 1985, 775). Rather, movements 'represent conflicting efforts to control cultural patterns' (Touraine 1985, 776). In locating the action of social movements in the cultural field, Touraine draws closer to Melucci's portrayal of social movement activism and, like Melucci, Touraine (1985, 772) also believes social movement actors 'often live their own actions first of all as a rupture with predominant cultural values or institutional rules'. I shall detail shortly how this relates to Islamic environmental activism; here, suffice it to say Islamic environmentalism is deviant in relations to the norms of *both* Muslim communities and Western society.

If cooperative-style action (i.e., action working with, or not against, the state) and life politics is more common in post-industrial societies (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 15), then we would expect to see this kind of activism prevalent in both the secular and Islamic environmental movements. As is perhaps already evident, Islamic environmental organisations do, by-and-large, engage in cooperative forms of activism. Both MGT and GMDC frame the environmental crisis as an issue of personal responsibility (not systemic failure), and their actions match this framing: they encourage recycling, reducing consumption, and developing environmental awareness within the Muslim community, and they have a very limited emphasis on policy reform, let alone systemic change. At their Eco-Fair in Santa Clara, MGT set up a pledge table for attendees to sign a commitment to change their behaviour. The pledges included such things as taking shorter showers, combining errands when driving, and using cloth bags instead of plastic (Bhawana 2013).

Ameena is more willing to work alongside the government to achieve change and shows interest in the potential of policy reform. 'My daughter is a public health major, so she's really convinced me that changing public policy is much more impactful than the education side' (Ameena 2013). Focusing efforts on reforming personal behaviour, or perhaps advocating for policy reform, are the typical actions undertaken by Muslim environmentalists – the majority of activists are not radical, either in the politics they espouse or the activism they undertake. Khalid (2013) attributes this lack of political radicalism amongst Muslims in the United States to fear – of not being able to align their religious commitment with their political life:

> I think that radicalism hasn't entered into Muslim language, partially because immigrants are afraid . . . so what you find is a lot of Muslims who do step out [and become politically radical] also step out of the Deen [religion], and they tend to have a very progressive attitude towards their religious understandings that isn't necessarily informed, but it's the only way they can make sense of their social world and the ways they move through it.

Khalid here presents an apparent conflict between 'orthodox Islam' and a 'progressive politics', although he himself has developed a well-informed progressive political outlook and practice while maintaining his belief and practice of Islam. The predominance of life politics in Islamic environmentalism, particularly amongst activists in the Bay Area in California, also aligns with the idea of an LM:

> As compared to collective public action, LMs involve integrating movement values into relatively private individual action, focusing on the mundane aspects of daily living: consumption habits, leisure activities, eating and cooking, modes of dress, money management, transportation/travel, and water and energy consumption.
>
> (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 6)

Participants in LMs link changing their individual lifestyles to effecting social change, and '*tend* to target cultural codes and individual practices' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 7). Ameena paid for the printing of a few hundred flyers to be distributed at local mosques during *Ramadhān*. The flyers were titled 'Towards a Green Ramadan' and on one side listed suggestions for mosque administrators and volunteers, and on the other side a list of suggestions for mosque attendees, such as:

- Attend my local masjid or carpool if traveling to a distant masjid
- Conserve water and paper towels when making wudu.
- Use only paper or biodegradable utensils, or even better bring my own regular utensils from home to avoid any waste.

> (Ameena 2013b)

The words 'working towards a sustainable environmental and a conscious lifestyle' run along the bottom of the flyer. IFEES newsletter *EcoIslam* frequently features articles promoting similar lifestyle changes such as 'An Islamic Guide to Simple Living' (IFEES 2006) and 'Seven Tips to Good Eating' (IFEES 2007), which feature alongside articles advocating for wider, system-level change.

While movements like environmentalism advocate lifestyle changes as part of their broader strategy (like IFEES), participants in LMs 'seek social change *primarily* via individual lifestyle change' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 6). Muslim environmentalists fall in a spectrum of commitment to contentious politics and lifestyle activism: where some, such as Ameena, Maryam, and Erik are primarily engaged with individual lifestyle change (for themselves, and advocating for others to also change), other activists such as Muzammal, Summreen, and Khalid see lifestyle change as only *part* of their environmental activism. There is no absolute divide between an LM participant and an activist engaged in contentious politics, 'rather, LM participants may be occasional/temporary activists, and CP [contentious politics] activists may incorporate lifestyle actions into their repertoires' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 13).

The secular environmental movement is also not entirely radical and contentious in nature – it too incorporates a large amount of cooperative, institutionalised activism, and activism that best fits a 'lifestyle movement' as opposed to a contentious politics approach. The last decade has seen a proliferation of environmental lifestyle groups in Great Britain like Transition Towns or Carbon Rationing Action Groups, where members are encouraged to moderate their personal behaviour and that of their household, and who position themselves as 'apolitical' (North 2011, 1588). These environmental lifestyle groups express dissatisfaction with the industrial-capitalist system, which they criticise as environmentally destructive, and attempt through lived example to demonstrate a way of life that is less destructive (North 2011, 1588). These groups are neither radical nor revolutionary; yet they do attempt to create change *indirectly* through the use of 'prefigurative politics' (Breines 1989) – what Melucci (1994, 125) would call the 'Prophetic' function of a social movement, where activists demonstrate the type of change they wish to see in the wider world in their own lives and practices.

Of course, some sections of the secular environmental movement are radical and the history of environmentalism is replete with examples of contentious direct action: Greenpeace is rightly renowned for co-opting media coverage to their advantage for non-violent direct actions – organising publicity stunts around media schedules, announcing them to media organisations in advance, and utilising small numbers of highly trained activists (Doyle 2003, 119). Of all the groups in this book, WiN is the only one to have tried this kind of action – the Brick Lane scuba diving protest. Collective action repertoires such as protest marches are also common forms of environmental protest, as are sit-ins (often involving activists literally living in endangered trees or threatened environmental zones). Both WiN and IFEES also had activists who participated in mass environmental protests in Great Britain, notably the marches occurring around the Copenhagen Climate Change summit (IFEES 2010).

The largely moderate nature of most environmental activism, and the institutionalisation of many aspects of environmentalism (such as the bureaucratisation of organisations such as Greenpeace and the formation of Green political parties) could be read as creeping colonisation of the social movement life-world by bureaucracy and juridical norms (Habermas 1981). In order to get state funding and be effective at political lobbying, some environmental organisations conform to models of organisation that can be held accountable to state review processes (Blaug 2002, 112), whilst to achieve electoral success – even to be allowed to participate in elections – Green political parties must conform to the rules and regulations of institutional politics. Although the institutionalisation of some parts of the environmental movement is a natural outcome of its endurance over time (Rootes 2004), the claim that environmental action is now 'overwhelmingly moderate' ignores the continued tradition of radical, direct action by environmental activists (Rootes 2004, 620).

For example, the Climate Camps in Great Britain in 2006–2009 and in the Australian Hunter Valley in 2008–2010 attracted not only thousands of participants, but also mainstream media coverage, and are an excellent example of direct action and prefigurative action combined. The camps were 'a mixture of information

exchange, education, training, practical example, prefigurative utopia and pro-
test', and they served to 'facilitate direct action' (Rootes 2012, 25). In Australia,
participants in the 2008 Climate Camp walked onto train tracks and chained them-
selves to freight trains carrying coal, resulting in the arrest of 37 people (Connor
2012, 236). Alongside the institutionalisation of large environmental NGOs and
green political organisations, environmental protest and radical, direct action not
only continued but indeed 'became more frequent and relatively more confron-
tational' in small, usually local organisations (Rootes 2012, 24). The continued
radical activism of organisations like Greenpeace, Sea Shepherd, and Rising Tide
(Australia) *does* directly challenge governments and corporations engaged in
environmentally destructive practices. However, these actions are usually per-
formed by small numbers of highly trained activists, with the intent of publicising
environmental wrong-doing (North 2011, 1591–92). Although often successful
in generating media coverage, it is very difficult to quantify how effective these
actions are at mobilising potential activists, or effecting concrete change.

Even though Muslim environmentalists largely engage in moderate action, they
may still challenge the norms of their societies or their Muslim communities. The
challenge to a dominant system does not occur on a protest march, but on a sym-
bolic level. Social movements,

> provide the rest of society, by their very existence, with a different way of
> interpreting individual and collective experiences . . . through what they do,
> or rather in the way they do it, they announce new alternatives . . . Short-term
> and reversible commitment, multiple and accountable leadership, temporary
> and ad hoc structures, are the bases for collective identity but also for sym-
> bolic confrontation with the system.
>
> (Melucci 2000, 95)

WiN is an organisation that exemplifies Melucci's (2000, 95) description of
new social movements as having 'short-term and reversible commitment, multi-
ple and accountable leadership, temporary and ad hoc structures'. With an active
focus on process, working to acknowledge and limit hierarchies within the organi-
sation, and operating on a model of consensus decision making, the activists dem-
onstrate a commitment to restructuring dominant modes of being in contemporary
society. Further, they take a strong rhetorical stand against capitalist economics
and unequal power structures in politics and society; they also strongly advocate
for the need to radically reformulate society. However, somewhat like a 'life-
style movement' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012), rather than call for outright
political revolution they call for a revolution in personal behaviour and lifestyles.
WiN actively promotes a 'moving away from' those aspects of contemporary life
in Great Britain they take to be most problematic, and a 'moving towards' more
holistic, equal, and respectful modes of being:

> Our intention, thus, is to facilitate a movement **away from** states, processes,
> and paradigms that contribute to imbalances in the social and wider ecology,

and move **towards** ones that are nurturing, wholesome, in alignment with our natural order (***fitrah***), and that help restore ecological balance (***mizan***).

(Wisdom in Nature 2013, original emphasis)

WiN's stance aligns with much of the secular environmental movement: environmentalists are generally regarded to be opposed not only to 'the way industrial societies go about achieving the goal of wealth creation: they are opposed to its central and dominant economic and material values . . . the goal of environmentalists is to realise a society in which alternative values and institutions can take root' (Cotgrove and Duff 1981, 99). For all the Islamic environmental organisations in this thesis, those alternative values and institutions are derived from Islamic traditions and scripture.

One of the problems with a life politics, or lifestyle activism, is that it is hard to quantify the effectiveness or reach of such action. It is not clear how successful or effective the activism of Muslim environmentalists has been in effecting wider social change, and in some cases, Islamic environmental groups are not even able to realise their plans for action. IFEES founder Fazlun and his administrator Dawud discussed how they though environmental change should occur in British society: 'there has to be a gradual transition from this [the status quo] to something quite different. Which is a radically different way of organising society . . . The solution is small communities. We need to think about how we transcend from this, what the transition is' (Fazlun and Dawud 2013). IFEES may aspire to form self-sufficient eco-communities but the reality is that they have not successfully done so. Even if they did, the impact upon the surrounding society is questionable: Maryam's eco-school *is* the seed of a functioning eco-community, yet it operates alongside the existing schools in the Bay Area as an alternative choice and they have no clear vision or plan how to spread the change that they create inside the village to the broader society. Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones (2012) acknowledge that there is 'no easy way to know the degree to which people engage in LMs *instead of, in addition to,* or *in the context of* manifestly political movements'. Meanwhile, the more politically-conscious activists demonstrate concern that the individualism of most Islamic environmental activism only feeds back into the existing social-political hegemony of neo-liberal individualism, rather than challenging it:

It's [Islamic environmentalism] all very neo-liberal in that sense, in that it is focused on the individual changing the way they live . . . So that's their mentality. And the interesting thing is that religion can lend itself very quickly to an individual focus, like the thought that you need to fix yourself.

(Khalid 2013)

Islamic environmentalism is not alone in adopting a 'neo-liberal' approach to environmental action: Doyle (2010) has shown the Australian environmental movement embraced neo-liberal ideology in the late 1990s in an attempt to operate on the same playing-field as state and corporate institutions. This move ultimately weakened the position of the Australian environmental movement as an agent for radical social change. Yet, interestingly, the adoption of neo-liberal

ideology by 'mainstream' sectors of the environmental movement resulted in the re-invigoration of younger, more radical networks (Doyle 2010, 166).

Muslim environmentalists like Maryam, or those in groups like IFEES espouse quite utopian visions of a future radically different from the world we currently occupy. Yet, they engage in moderate forms of action that effect mostly individual change, *not* the radical systemic change necessary to realise their vision of the future. Some of the activists are aware of this disjunct between vision and action:

> I think that's one of the biggest things among Muslims doing environmental work, there is a lot of talk, but there is not a lot of movement in it, it's almost like looking for the technical fix as opposed to saying this is going to require people to make hard choices and how are we going to support each other in making difficult choices in our lives. How are we going to support each other in riding bikes more or something like that? To how are we going to engage politically. Nobody is talking about political engagement on environmental issues that I've ever heard of.
>
> (Khalid 2013)

Islamic environmental activism could be considered either as a practice that is deviant or culturally experimental vis-à-vis Muslim communities, or as deviant or culturally experimental vis-à-vis the wider American or British society. The struggle faced by activists like Muzammal and Summreen in Great Britain to find other Muslims involved in (or even merely interested in) environmentalism, which led them to establish their own environmental groups, indicates that environmentalism was (and largely still is) a marginal activity in Muslim communities.

In some cases, Muslim environmentalists face hostility from other Muslims who do not understand the purpose of environmentalism or see it as being non-Islamic. When Elizabeth (2013) spoke to a fellow female attendee at her mosque about environmentalism, she was asked, 'what does that have to do with you?' Summreen found that discussing environmentalism with Muslims in her community, especially the ethics and environmental consequences of meat consumption could provoke some people: 'those concepts, when you say something like that, with anyone, they feel like you're personally attacking them. Even when I tell them that I'm vegetarian, to a Muslim, they react really strangely. Like I'm telling them not to eat meat. Oh are you sure that's allowed?' (Summreen 2013). The environmentally responsible lifestyle that the participants in this study advocate is certainly not in keeping with the lifestyle that many Muslims in the US and UK wish to achieve – as many Muslims are immigrants, material possessions and visible accumulation are prized as a symbol of success (Maryam 2013). Maryam (2013) struggled with Muslims who were not supportive of her eco-school – the kind of education she wanted to offer students there was seen as too radically different, with its integration of environmentalism and Islamic education:

> In terms of the need for environmentalism without it entering education in a very, like we are entering it in a very major way. And it has a lot of spiritual depth that is new to Muslims. So it is a very different take, and anytime

anything is different human beings don't respond well to it. There is a chang-
ing of habit of thinking, of viewing, of perceiving.

This is, of course, true of most mainstream Western societies – *all* environmen-
talists, in eschewing consumerism, demonstrate an alternative lifestyle. Not only
is environmentalism an alternative form of behaviour, but the very structures and
processes of environmental activism are unfamiliar and unusual in many Muslim
communities. In WiN, the use of a non-hierarchical organisational structure was
confronting to some Muslims who were accustomed to hierarchical organisations
in the Muslim community (Muzammal 2013).

Religious practice as collective action

Unlike the social movement theorists who either exclude religion entirely from
their theoretical frameworks, or treat it simply as another 'resource' to be mobi-
lised in service of a political cause, I argue religious and political practice are in
fact inseparable in the lives of religious activists. So intertwined are the two that
it makes little sense to speak of 'religion' being utilised or co-opted to the service
of politics, or vice versa. For Muslim environmentalists with a strong religious
practice and identity, and commitment to environmental politics, their religious
and political practices fold into one another. When talking about the relationship
between her Islamic faith and environmental activism Summreen (2013) slips
between talking of Islam 'strengthening' her environmentalism and environmen-
tal activism being the fulfilment of a religious duty:

> I've been an environmentalist since I was a teenager, then I came to Islam
> in my 20s. I suppose it just strengthens, the two – both of them, environ-
> mentalism is strengthened by Islam. I think it's our duty to be doing it, and
> our responsibility . . . you think you are carrying out your God-given duties
> by being environmentalist. You're caring for God's earth and you're caring
> about all of his creation . . . environmentalism is part of [your] good deeds.

Participation in collective action for Muslim environmentalists is a way to live
out and publicly articulate their moral and religious convictions, reinforcing and
developing their religious and political practices simultaneously. Commitment to
an Islamic faith and practice translates into a commitment and passion for the
environment, and the activists *do* bring the symbolic and structural resources of
Islam into their environmental activism – *but not for cynical or purely political
reasons*.

The fusion of Islamic faith with political activism is evident in other, non-
environmental social and political movements. Islamist activists in Turkey 'see
developing their lifestyle (praying, fasting, behaving modestly, and being frugal)
not only as developing a politics of identity disengaged from the state and from
properly political realities, but as a struggle against imperialism' (Tuğal 2009,
452). Turkish Islamists engage in a highly *political* form of life politics: the
Turkish state recognises the power Islam has amongst the Turkish people and

so attempts to control all aspects of public religion. Islamists in Turkey who are opposed to the state must, therefore, find a mode of expression and mobilisation *not* traditionally political. A public practice of a particular kind of Islamic lifestyle becomes, in this context, a political act. But significantly, in becoming political the Islamic lifestyle does not cease to be religious. In this case – and many others like it – we cannot clearly divide life into 'political' and 'religious'.

Muslim environmentalists in America and Great Britain do not face the same restrictions on their political activism or religious expression as Turkish Islamists. Yet due to widespread Islamophobia and the misrepresentation of Muslims in mainstream media, many feel uncomfortable openly criticising their governments in Islamic terms for fear of being labelled extremist or anti-Western. Environmentalism becomes a safe method through which to make these critiques:

> It's [environmentalism] also very non-political for them [Muslims], so that's safe right? What's interesting is that they have so many reasons to be anti-US government, and they are for the most part . . . this [environmentalism] is like a safe space where they can get down on it [the US government].
>
> (Khalid 2013)

Not only does environmental *activism* provide a safe framework through which to critique their governments, environmental *lifestyles* also develop a mode of being fundamentally opposed to many of the social and political realities in the United States and Great Britain. This different mode of being, which eschews overconsumption and encourages frugality and sustainability, is both more environmental *and* more aligned with their Islamic beliefs.

New social movement theorists, and lifestyle activists, conceive collective action as occurring not just in visible contentious political acts, but through prophetic changes in lifestyle undertaken by activists that will, eventually, lead to wider change (Melucci 1994, 125). Imam Dawood (2013) made a seemingly small, but symbolically radical change when he chose to feed his family only meat he himself had hunted, rather than support the industrial agriculture industry which, he believes, is both inhumane and environmentally destructive. Although Imam Dawood rejects industrially farmed meat for environmental and ethical reasons, he *also* sees hunting as time spent in reflection and appreciation of God's gift of creation:

> For me the ultimate goal, one of, is to have a sense of gratitude in all this. That I'll have gratitude for the soil that produces the grass that the animal grazes upon that I will eat. To have gratitude for that tree that is taking CO_2 and letting off O_2. Then spirituality comes in everything that I'm looking at, that I'm understanding and have spiritual relationship to that thing.
>
> (Dawood 2013)

The act of hunting has, then, both political *and* religious significance and this applies to wide variety of actions undertaken by Muslim environmentalists, for whom 'self-actualisation and social transformation overlap' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012, 15).

The 'double meaning' of action can be found in other social movements and with different religions. The Occupy Movement incorporated both religious activists and religious practice into their occupation in New York. In fact, religion played a visible and vital role during the early days of the New York occupation. Schneider (2012, 403), reflecting on his experience during Occupy New York, writes: 'In the harrowing early days of the occupation, facing constant police intimidation, prayer walks and meditation circles were commonplace for those who wanted or needed them'. These rather 'ad-hoc' religious services became formalised quickly, with Jews and Christians holding organised religious services in Liberty Square and Zuccoti Park. In fact, it was a Jewish religious ritual that broke the police constraints upon setting up tents – Occupy Judaism raised a tent in Liberty Square for Sukkot:

> When the police came to take it down, a crowd gathered around and explained what it was. The cops, spooked by the thought of disturbing a religious observance, backed down, and the Sukkah stood. "Tonight we're all Jews," cried a voice in the people's mic as it began to rain. "Build yourself a sukkah!" The park became a tent city, and so it would remain.
>
> (Schneider 2012, 404)

In this instance, in marking Sukkot, the Jewish activists within the Occupy Movement were not only performing a religious ceremony but were also engaging in direct action – simply by choosing to remain within the Occupy camp to do so. For the non-Jewish activists who then built their own tents, they recognised the symbolic authority of religious practice and incorporated it into their action, even if only for pragmatic purposes.

There is a long tradition in Christianity of 'bearing witness' which has frequently drawn Christians into political movements. There was a strong Christian movement against US involvement in Central America during the 1990s, and it was the activists commitment to social justice – which they understood as a necessary component of Christian faith – that inspired their feelings of moral outrage and motivated them to participate (Nepstad and Smith 2001, 173). It was *as Christians* that the activists engaged with Central American politics, believing 'that there was a theological basis for action in solidarity with the poor and oppressed' (Nepstad and Smith 2001, 166). As the US-based churches supported Central American refugees to come to the US and sent church members to Central America to facilitate refugee processes and bear witness to the unfolding events, the connection of church members to the Central American people and political situation 'were infused with considerable significance due to the saliency of the Christian identity' (Nepstad and Smith 2001, 163). The Liberation Theology movement, which also operates on a theologically justified foundation of support and action for the poor and oppressed, seeks both a transformation of the institutional church (religious goals) and a transformation of the Latin American (or any oppressive regime's) political sphere (Smith 1991).

Theorists worry that the use of religious symbols or discourses in political activism is a co-optation of religion (Beckford 1989, 9), or 'diminishes religion' (Gottlieb 2006, 8). This concern is grounded in a separation of religion from politics, as though 'religion' is a discrete and easily definable object that is distinct from 'politics' which presumably is also discrete and easily definable. It also assumes any 'co-option' occurs in one direction, and continues to privilege the 'political' over the 'religious'. But what of those religious activists who do not see the performance of their religious practice in a political setting as 'co-opting' religion, but rather simply as practicing religion? Or, of those religious activists who may try to co-opt collective action to the service of their religion?

Many of the activists in this study made the point that they do not see any separation between 'being an environmentalist' and 'being a Muslim' – for them, they are one and the same thing:

> It would be impossible for me to separate them [being Muslim and being an environmentalist], because they're not discrete, so it's hard for me to say . . . I think one has always fed the other, I've never felt they're in conflict. And so it's always been an easy process, one's always been mixed with the other. As a child, starting an environmental club in middle school, getting recycling bins and putting them into all the classrooms, there was no language of religion around that, but when I came home my parents were supportive of that because they saw it as consistent with their religious belief too. So why it may not have been, you're Muslim you need to do this, that's not how it came about. Later that became a thing, you're also Muslim and you need to be doing this. It became a reinforcing mechanism, not necessarily something to push back . . . So I don't see the two as any way separate, but I don't necessarily see one as a driver in some sense.
>
> (Khalid 2013)

It is evident from the above that 'religion' cannot be distinguished from Khalid's political and social life. Islamic resources and practices may be utilised in the context of environmental activism – but we cannot claim that this utilisation is not *also* a genuine expression of religious belief. Khalid is not alone: environmental activism and Islamic practice are mutually reinforcing for many Muslim environmentalists.

There are also a number of Muslim environmentalists who hope that through their involvement in environmentalism, they might achieve religious goals: attracting new people to Islam, encouraging non-practicing Muslims to become more religious, or countering the negative stereotype of Muslims. Dawud spoke of the importance of Muslim activists in secular environmental organisations, because those activists could bring people to Islam, 'if the Muslim [in a secular environmental group] is empowered to say how the Qur'an is totally environmental, before environmentalism even became a subject, then maybe people will come to Islam through environmentalism, even though those people don't call themselves Muslims' (Fazlun and Dawud 2012). Yet Dawud is also concerned

that those same Muslims who are active in secular environmental groups may be turning away from their Islamic practice in favour of environmentalism:

> I would say that some Muslims could be in danger of going to environmentalism outside of Islam as another direction, another Qibla, something that gives them meaning. Environmentalism gives them meaning and is a new religion for many people. Environmentalism is their belief structure. So we are calling them and saying, look, you don't have to sacrifice Islam to become environmental. You as a Muslim are intrinsically environmentalist, by definition.
>
> (Fazlun and Dawud 2012)

This is reflective of the fear felt by some Muslims in wider Islamic communities that environmentalism is somehow 'not Islamic' and is a distraction from religious practice. It is not surprising that Dawud expresses this fear – IFEES and its activists are the most conservative in terms of religious practice and social values of all the participants in this study.

I have already discussed in Chapter 6 how many Muslims feel that the image of Islam needs to be rehabilitated in the United States and United Kingdom and that their involvement in environmentalism may help this cause, but it is worth noting here that this is another way in which environmental activism is co-opted to the service of religion. At the conclusion of her interview, Summreen (2013) specifically wanted to mention the potential environmental activism had to better integrate the Muslim community with broader UK society:

> I think it's quite a good way to kind of, kind of, Islam and the environment, I think it's quite a good topic to bring Muslims and non-Muslims, to build understanding between them. Because Islamaphobia in this country . . . it's really bad here, but I think it's [environmentalism] really a good thing to bring people together.

Improving the public image of Muslims in US and UK society may not be, in itself, part of religious practice or belief. But if successful, the Muslim environmentalists will find that public displays of their Islamic faith are more accepted, and this will then aid them to practice their faith, ultimately serving religious ends.

Conclusion

Muslim environmentalists do more than confirm Hannigan's assertion that religious practice does not necessarily preclude involvement with political activism. Islamic environmental activism, for the Muslim environmentalists in this study, is the *fusion* of religious practice and environmental activism. Islam is used as a tool for mobilisation – using the physical space of the mosque to organise, the language and codes of Islamic traditions to frame environmentalism, and Islamic religious rituals as environmental action – but this is not, I contend, a cynical attempt to co-opt religion to legitimate an environmental cause, nor is Islam simply one among

many resources drawn upon by Muslim environmentalists. Being Muslim and practicing Islam is inextricably linked with being an environmentalist, and environmentalism itself is drawn into the Islamic religious framework.

The activists in this study engage predominantly in an activism of 'life politics' (Giddens 1991) whereby they try to model the social transformations they wish to see in their own lives. This is close to new social movement theory's assertion that social conflict occurs in the cultural sphere and, to gain control of the cultural sphere, activists act/live out the desired changes, often through deviant or non-normative lifestyles. However, in Islamic environmentalism, there exists a strong undercurrent of *personal transformation* – whereby Muslim environmentalists seek to enrich their own religious practice and faith through environmental lifestyles and activism – and patchy acceptance of the progressive ideals ascribed to most new social movements such as non-differentiated power relationships and fluid organisational commitment.

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8 Conclusion

On a hot June afternoon in 2013, I walked up to the door of Maryam's urban homestead. It was a large bungalow house, with shoes neatly lined up on the front porch on a quiet and sparse suburban street. Inside, the large living area and kitchen were homely, with rugs thrown down on the floor and a big comfortable couch. Maryam and her two children were cooking a chutney, and the girls ran in and out of the room throughout our long discussion. Later, they took me out to the large back garden that had been transformed from a suburban lawn to a busy urban homestead. A small barn housed goats and a cow, chickens pecked in the dirt, a good third of the space was fenced off for a flourishing vegetable garden. The children were proud of their efforts – they were obviously intimately involved in the gardening and care of the animals and showed me how to feed the goats. It was an entirely different experience to my first meeting with Khalid just a day earlier at an urban café in downtown Oakland. We had sat for hours at a high bench, drinking coffee and eating bagels, chatting about Khalid's environmental and social justice activism and his life in Oakland. We finished up around midday, and Khalid drove me deeper into Oakland to a vegan soul food restaurant for lunch. The servings were huge and the leftovers fed me for almost two days. That day was different yet again from my meeting with Hana, earlier still in my stay in California. We met in the carpark of the Santa Clara Mosque and walked through its long wide corridors to the concrete-brick canteen at the far end. Unlike with Maryam and Khalid, we didn't linger over our discussion. Families crowded onto long tables and children ran around the canteen yelling. Noise bounced off the walls, and within two hours, Hana was driving me to the train station to go back to San Francisco, so she could return to the mosque to catch the afternoon prayer.

These three snapshots – the urban homestead, the inner city restaurants, and the busy suburban mosque – are indicative of the heterogeneity of Islamic environmentalism. Despite Maryam, Khalid, and Hana all living in the Bay Area, their lives, their practice of Islam, and their involvement with environmentalism are all quite distinct. The middle-class immigrant culture in Santa Clara is very different to the mixed-ethnicity, comparatively disadvantaged community across San Francisco Bay in Oakland. The difference results in two quite distinct forms of environmental activism: in Oakland, Khalid is absorbed in poverty causes, social

justice, and environmental justice, whereas in Santa Clara, Hana talked about the importance of individual lifestyle change and her difficulty at getting recycling implemented at the Mosque. Similar differences in both religious and environmental practice are also evident in Great Britain: IFEES draws members from across the country, is religiously orthodox, and exclusively Muslim; by contrast, WiN draws activists mostly from London and its surrounds, expresses a more progressive form of Islam (Muzammal describes his practice as being a 'contemplative anarchist' form of Islam), and they attract people from non-Muslim backgrounds. Just as 'Islam' cannot be conceived as a unified and homogenous entity, and the global environmental 'movement' is also neither unified or homogenous, so too Islamic environmentalism reflects the diversity of both Islam and environmentalism.

The constant across Islamic environmentalism, and the product of its heterogeneity, is a heavy reliance on the unifying power of Islam to construct an 'imagined community' (Anderson 1987) or 'imagined solidarity' (Bayat 2005). Imagined community and solidarity operate much like the collective identity conceived by Melucci, which is defined as being constantly negotiated through ongoing interaction and inherently relational. In collective identity and imagined communities, 'people feel a bond with others not because they share the same interests, but because they need that bond in order to make sense of what they are doing' (Melucci 1996, 74). Islamic symbols and narratives, like environmental interpretations of the concept *Khilafah*, are integral to the formation of collective identity amongst Muslim environmentalists, which is predicated on adherence to Islamic practice, a sense of religious duty towards the environment, and a moral calling to activism. The community is 'imagined' – Muslim environmentalists are geographically dispersed and, as discussed, highly heterogenous in terms of their religious orthodoxy and political beliefs. They are bound together less through *actual* commonality than through *imagined* commonality.

In newsletters, at meetings, and on their websites, Muslim environmentalists frequently employ Islamic language and concepts and, in doing so, activists build solidarity with other Muslims for whom that language is familiar and comfortable. Many of the concepts and narratives are left largely unexplained or underexplained – in terms of their meaning in an environmental context – and in doing so the activists leave room for Muslims both inside and outside the movement to interpret these concepts and narratives for themselves. Leaving the interpretation open also helps create 'imagined solidarity' as Muslims with commitments to varied political ideologies and religious orthodoxies can feel part of the same community of environmentalists. The mostly vaguely formulated prognostic framing is an excellent example of this: where activists were willing to call for the implementation of an 'Islamic' financial model, only WiN explicitly detailed how such a model could work. The use of Islamist codes and concepts by Muslim environmentalists 'offer a broad message [. . . but] they are not enough to discuss details and clarify ambiguities. The result is that the diverse participants tend to converge on the generalities, but are left to *imagine* the specifics, to envision commonalities' (Bayat 2005, 904).

The reliance on Islamic narratives and concepts is only one example of the way Muslim environmentalists bring their pre-existing values and commitments into their activism (Hart 1996). Activists with experience in grassroots and secular environmental activism bring those influences into their organisations and actions. Thus, Muzammal and his organisation WiN demonstrate many features consistent with more radical environmental organisations: a flat hierarchical structure and an emphasis on equality between members, consensus decision making processes, and strong horizontal affective ties between members. Muzammal had extensive experience in Brighton's radical anti-Iraq war movement prior to founding WiN, and both his wife and Elizabeth – the two other core members – came to WiN with prior experience in grassroots activism. Even though WiN references Islamic scripture and traditions in their framing of environmentalism, the group is more integrated within a broad field of leftist grassroots activism that with their Muslim peers. GMDC activists also brought their experience of secular environmentalism into their group, but unlike WiN, they were influenced by more institutionalised forms of secular environmentalism: Omar, for instance, interned at environmental policy NGOs. Much like larger institutional organisations like Greenpeace, GMDC have a board of directors, a degree of formal hierarchy, and rely upon the horizontal affective ties between activists to sustain and motivate participation. GMDC are not as well integrated into a wider, secular activist network like WiN are, but they are better integrated into their local community.

IFEES is the most overtly 'Islamic' organisation: their activists generally have had little experience in secular activism, and they have far more in common with Islamic movements and organisations than with secular environmental groups. They have a hierarchical organisational structure much like Islamic religious organisations (Beinin 2012; Munson 2001; Sutton and Vertigans 2006), and the affective ties binding activists to the organisation are vertical – Fazlun is a paternal figure who commands the activists' respect and loyalty. Maryam's personal commitment and loyalty to her Imam and his progressive, ecologically minded Islamic ministry is similar to the relationship between IFEES activists Fazlun. Maryam and her family were so devoted to they moved their family across the country to remain a member of his community. Maryam and IFEES members share a fairly orthodox form of Islamic practice, and their vertical affective ties to charismatic leaders demonstrates the importance of religious leaders in motivating their congregations to act environmentally (Djupe and Hunt 2009).

Many Muslim environmentalists share with *both* the secular environmental movement and Islamic movements a harsh critique of contemporary global capitalism. This could be influenced and motivated by, on the one hand, a liberationist political worldview that emphasises the injustice and inequality caused by the existing political-economic system (for example, Muzammal and Khalid) or, on the other hand, a religious conviction that global capitalism promotes immorality and estrangement from God (for example, Fazlun and Nabeel). These two rationales are not mutually exclusive. Undoubtedly, both Muzammal and Khalid would agree certain aspects of the culture perpetuated by global capitalism are immoral; we cannot say with any certainty whether their objections originated in *political*

or *religious* convictions (and most likely, neither of them would wish to disentangle the two). However, despite most Muslim environmentalists articulating quite clear critiques of capitalism, most do not follow up with solutions, nor do they employ radical 'repertoires of contention' (Tilly 1986).

Environmentalists can roughly be divided into two types: (i) those who are goal or success oriented, who wish to stop environmentally destructive activities and have little interest in alternative values; and (ii) those who are value oriented, who seek to change the environmental values of society and will look to embody those values in their own lives and organisations (Eyerman and Jamison 1989, 103). Many Muslim environmentalists fit into *both* of these categories: for example, although IFEES is the most goal or success oriented organisation of all those examined – with a heavy focus on its international projects – they *also* wish to change the environmental values of Muslims, and run workshops in Mosques and with Islamic groups (like all the organisations examined) to spread those values. Where GMDC certainly undertake discrete environmental projects to stop environmentally destructive behaviour within their Muslim community, they also have developed a rich internal culture that promotes a love and respect for nature and makes activism rewarding in-and-of itself. In fact, the success of GMDC's projects seems to have little impact on the activists' motivation for continued involvement. Some of the groups are easier to classify. SHINE, with their regular litter pickups, is clearly success oriented, whilst WiN is undoubtedly 'value' oriented.

The success of WiN and GMDC in sustaining participation in their groups is largely due, I contend, to their rich internal culture and the strong affective ties between their members. Activists from these organisations expressed commitment to, and solidarity with, their organisation and fellow activists; activists from each organisation also expressed similar values framed in similar language. Their organisations are marked by regular meetings and facilitated group discussions or activities. It is not coincidence these groups have remained active and attract loyal participants (even if they have fairly small numbers) in comparison with the other groups examined. SHINTE, RITE, and MGT lacked strong ties between members, did not have have regular meetings or activities, and thus lacked a strong internal group culture. The development of movement culture through the use of religious symbols and rituals, the encouragement of affective ties and shared emotions between activists, and the articulation and negotiation of collective identity results in organisations and social movements that attract and retain activists. Those movements or organisations that do not development movement culture risk failing to thrive.

The 'repertoires of contention' used by Muslim environmentalists are overwhelming moderate in nature: Ameena shows an interest in 'cooperative action' or working with government because daughter has convinced her that policy change is, potentially, an effective tool for environmental change; Islamic environmentalism, much like secular environmentalism, has a 'lifestyle wing' (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012), and almost all the activists make changes to their individual lifestyle – Khalid went so far as to give up flying for three years; the members

of WiN put great effort into the facilitation of group discussions and meetings to acknowledge the power dynamics within the group and overcome them; in doing so, they are 'prefiguring' the kind of society they wish to live in. However, some activists are concerned this kind of moderate 'life politics' will not create real environmental change. Ameena is passionate about stopping the use of Styrofoam in her Muslim community but questions whether policy change – banning Styrofoam through legislation – will make people 'better' environmentalists. Although legislation can force people to act in environmentally responsible ways it cannot, she thinks, 'convert' people to environmentalism. Meanwhile Khalid, whilst acknowledging the good work done through simple changes like promoting reusable drinking bottles, argues these kinds of actions will never challenge the hegemonic systems that cause environmental crisis. Political discourse and contentious action is needed *in addition* to this kind of lifestyle activism to achieve real, transformative change. Melucci himself, despite writing extensively on the importance of 'pre-figurative' politics, also questions whether these forms of action are enough, alone, to effect real and lasting change:

> If the basis of contemporary conflicts has shifted toward the production of meaning. . .[then] collective action concerns everyday life, personal relationships, different conceptions of space and time. Thus, the actors are always in danger of dispersing and fragmenting into networks of individual needs that dissolve rapidly into sects, emotional support circles or therapy groups.
>
> (Melucci 2000, 95–6)

As Khalid astutely notes, the individualisation of action is a product of the neo-liberal system, the very system causing environmental crisis in the first place.

The 'myopia of the visible' prevalent in much social movement theory has privileged contentious action and obscured the contributions made to social movements by organisations, networks, and individual activists who engage with moderate (i.e., non-contentious) forms of action. It also ignores the important 'pre-figurative' work done in life politics. Yet, as Khalid argues, we cannot rely exclusively on the moderate forms of action found in Islamic environmentalism to transform social and political systems. Rather, we must understand the importance of pre-figurative politics and moderate action in the context of a broad social movement in which both contentious action and life politics complement each other.

Evaluating Islamic environmentalism

When talking about 'success' in Islamic environmentalism, the evaluative criteria one chooses to use produce quite different results. If we are primarily concerned with measurable outcomes from social movement activism, then the 'most successful' of the Islamic organisations is IFEES. Despite articulating concern for autonomy, IFEES seeks funding from government bodies, corporations, and charity foundations – including traveling to the Gulf to try and gain financial support.

The result is IFEES are the best resourced, and they have supported Fazlun traveling internationally to Muslim-majority countries to teach environmentalism and establish environmental projects. As they proudly proclaim, Fazlun's education efforts contributed toward the cessation of unsustainable fishing practices in Mozambique, and IFEES established tree-planting programs in deforested areas of Indonesia.

By contrast WiN are substantially less well-resourced – by choice. To maintain their autonomy, they refuse funding from all government and corporate sources and, as a result, are limited in the projects the can afford to run. Their focus has moved more and more into training workshops to develop activist skills, such as facilitation techniques, rather than on overtly 'environmental' projects. Although they have participated in direct action, it is a small part of their repertoire. We cannot easily quantify their 'success' through measurable outcomes, like we can with IFEES, but unlike IFEES WiN are well-integrated into a broader field of grassroots activist groups including anti-war groups, anti-globalisation groups, and other (secular) environmental groups. Further, as they focus on developing the skills needed for effective activism, one can argue they are successful in that they contribute to the enrichment of a wider activist culture in a way unmatched by any other group in this book. They are also the only group to successfully attract non-Muslim participants and to operate outside the confines of the Muslim community.

GMDC have fewer measurable outcomes than IFEES and are not embedded in a broad field of grassroots activism like WiN. Yet, GMDC had the highest number of active members and appeared to be more active than the other organisations – meeting more frequently and planning more events. GMDC members had strong affective ties of friendship and love for one another and this helped to bring new people into the organisation. The events they planned had mixed success in the eyes of their members: where all the activists were happy with the publicity associated with the yearly *Leftar* and the event attracted good numbers, the efforts of some of the group to institute recycling programs in local mosques met with limited success or interest from the local community. GMDC are also fairly well-integrated into a field of progressive Islamic groups. For example, a member of their board was invited to travel to California to contribute to an event on Islamic environmentalism at Zaytuna College. However, their links to secular environmental groups and other grassroots activist groups were not strong.

All three of IFEES, WiN, and GMDC were successful at maintaining a committed core of members, ensuring the three organisations continue to operate in a fairly self-sustaining manner. The other groups – SHINE, RITE, and MGT – were not able to maintain the bare minimum of participation required to keep an organisation running. This was even the case when the organisations had successful, measurable outcomes: MGT ran a busy *EcoFair* three years in a row, and SHINE's litter pickups were well-received by the local community and attracted large numbers of volunteers. These groups failed to thrive as organisations primarily, I contend, due to a lack of investment in the creation of group culture. The effective mobilisation of collective identity and reciprocal emotions

in the creation of an internal activist culture results in organisations that attract and retain members. Where groups fail to develop a rich group culture, they also seemingly fail to attract and retain members.

The symbiotic relationship between Islamic faith and environmental activism

The Islamic faith of Muslim environmentalists motivates, reinforces, and is in turn bolstered by their involvement in environmental activism. Indeed, the distinction between 'Islamic' and 'environmental' practice and action is not one that can be made easily, and this calls into question whether we can clearly demarcate the 'religious' from the 'political'. Muslim environmentalists lean heavily on an 'Islamic' framing of the environmental crisis, using Islamic symbols, traditions, and narratives to discuss environmentalism and present its problems and solutions within a religious worldview. On a pragmatic level, Islamic framing is an effective way to motivate other Muslims into environmental activism (or, at the very least, into more environmentally responsible behaviour). Yet the activists do not employ these Islamic symbols and narratives cynically, in the hyper-rational and strategic manner proposed by RM theory. Although the activists recognise the mobilising potential of Islamic framing within the Muslim community, they are *also* committed to their Islamic practice and genuinely belief in the interpretation of Islam and the environment they present. The activists have an affective and normative commitment to Islam and its teachings, and an Islamic practice.

The processes of 'frame transformation' and 'belief amplification' (Snow et al. 1986) are widely used by Muslim environmentalists and are incredibly useful to activists when trying to align their religious and political beliefs. For example, activists frequently refer to Islamic injunctions against interest (*riba*) when they present the capitalist economic system as a cause of environmental crisis. Muslims have a pre-existing religious belief that the financial use of interest is immoral, and Muslim environmentalists amplify this belief by linking it to a corrupt financial system that causes environmental harm. Similarly, the activists transform 'domain-specific' framings (Snow et al. 1986) common in Muslim communities. For example, *Khālifah* is often 'framed' in political terms – as the ideal political and religious leader for a global Muslim community – and the activists in this study must 'transform' this framing into one that instead emphasises humankind's role as steward on the earth.

The environmental and religious goals of Muslim activists are not separate or distinct from one another: Maryam and Imam Dawood, two independent activists, see the development of a spiritual worldview and connection to God through nature-based activities as an integral part of their environmental practices, whilst WiN's website demonstrates the way 'wasting' resources is not only immoral in Islamic teachings, but is also environmentally destructive. The activists very effectively integrate the religious and political into one action, gainsaying those social movement theorists who see no role for religion in social change. Imam Dawood hunts for his family's meat instead of purchasing industrially produced

meat and in doing so avoids the industrial agricultural system which he views as 'immoral' and unsustainable *and* develops his connection to the earth and gratitude to God through hunting. Nabeel banned television in his home as he did not want his children exposed to the consumer lifestyle it presented and at the same time prevented his children from being influenced by social norms presented on television that he found immoral. By changing their lifestyles in these ways, the activists become more environmental *and* think they are living in a more 'authentic' Islamic way. This is, very clearly, an example of 'lifestyle activism' where personal transformation is linked to (if not more important than) social change (Haenfler, Johnson, and Jones 2012).

Muslim activists do more than just use Islamic symbols and narratives to frame the environmental crisis; they also integrate Islamic ritual into their activism, creating their own 'religious protest repertoires' (Martin 2015, 128–30). Ritual is an important part of social movement culture, and for Islamic environmentalists, it can be as simple as praying together at meetings, as in the case of GMDC, or doing group readings of the *Qur'ān* to talk about how they can understand it environmentally. Fasting in the month of *Ramadhān* is one of the five pillars of Islam – the five religious practices incumbent upon every Muslim. For environmentalists, *Ramadhān* is a popular time to raise awareness of environmental issues. The evening meal, *iftār* is usually a social occasion eaten in company or at the mosque. The activists use this meal to promote the use of environmentally sustainable food packaging and recycling at their local mosques or to encourage Muslims not to be excessive in food preparation and not to waste leftovers. GMDC's yearly *Leftar* – where attendees can only bring food prepared from leftovers – is an excellent example of the way an important religious event is transformed into an opportunity for environmental action.

The utilisation of Islamic ritual, symbol, and narratives in Islamic environmentalism is not an indication of religion being 'co-opted' to the services of political action. For the activists themselves, creating a closer connection to God through hunting, or praying, or reading *Qur'ān* is done for religious purposes as much as it is a part of their environmental activism. Subjectively, they do not split their lives into 'religious' and 'political' – the two are intertwined and symbiotic. Islamic faith is central to the lived experience and worldview of Muslim environmentalists to the extent that it is simply wrong to claim their religious goals are superseded by environmental action *even when they employ religious symbols, rituals, and narratives* in that action, as some social movement theory would suggest. In fact, in a few instances it appears the environmental activism is used to serve *religious* goals – as in the case of Dawud, who hopes Muslims in environmental organisations will bring people to Islam – inverting the assumption of social movement theory that political goals are always primary in social movement activism.

Environmental activism is important to the religious lives of Muslim activists because it is a way in which they are able to 'live out' their religious and moral values in daily life. The activists all affirm an 'environmental' interpretation of Islamic scriptures that highlights humankind's role as steward on the earth, God's abhorrence of wasters, and our interconnectedness to both the earth and God.

Because of this, they are committed to environmental activism – or at the very least environmentally responsible lifestyles – as a religious duty. Many activists refer to Judgement Day and believe that their actions towards the environment will be weighed by God alongside all their actions. Islam, then, compels them into environmental activism: because they believe they will be judged by God for their behaviour towards the environment, because they think *others* will be judged by God for their behaviour towards the environment and need to be made aware of this, and because they think engaging in the social world around them to make positive change is demanded by their faith. Alongside the affective ties already mentioned, the Islamic compulsion to action is the most important way Muslim environmentalists are motivated to engage in action and remain involved in environmentalism.

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Appendix

Islamic environmental organisations

Green Muslims D.C.

Green Muslims DC (GMDC) is based in Washington DC, and began when a small group of Muslims hosted a zero-waste *iftār* during the month of *Ramadhān*. Their goal was 'to raise awareness of global environmental issues' (Green[1] Muslims 2012) within the Muslim community. GMDC has a director, and 4 board members. There is no 'membership' for participants, and interested people simply attend meetings and GMDC events. GMDC have run zero-waste *iftār* each *Ramadhān*, hold workshops and discussions on environmental issues, and run local clean-up days from time to time. On their website, they host the "Green Scripture Project" where Muslims submit versus from the *Qur'ān*, or traditions from the collections of *ḥadīth*, that are directly related to the environment.

Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences

IFEES is an international charity registered in Great Britain that operates from a small office in Burton-upon-Trent. It has an annual operating budget of approximately 15,000 GBP excluding in-kind contributions (such as the time given by the trustees and long-term volunteers). They employ one part-time staff member in addition to IFEES founder Fazlun who works full time for the organisation, without pay living off his retirement pension. IFEES has spawned numerous local chapters in Great Britain since 2005. These operate from Edinburgh, South Wales, Leicester, Manchester, London, and Birmingham. IFEES also had direct involvement with the establishment of Islamic environmental groups in Washington and Toronto – they have no formal organisational links to these groups; however, they provide regular support in the form of education materials and advice.

Muslim Green Team

MGT is based in Santa Clara, California, and began as a project run by the Bay Area chapter of the Muslim American Society (MAS). The MGT was started to raise awareness of the environment and environmental issues in the local Muslim community by MAS board member Bhawana. MGT has no formal structure, but rather is run by Bhawana who recruits volunteers for each of the projects

undertaken by MGT. They have successfully run two "eco-fairs" in Santa Clara, California, and produced 10,000 cloth bags for the Muslim community to encourage Muslims to forgo the use of plastic bags.

Reading Islamic Trust for the Environment

RITE were a small local Islamic group founded in 2009 to coincide with Earth Day. The group was started by Summreen and two friends. They worked with Muslim community groups and mosques in the Reading area of England to raise awareness of environmentalism and encourage environmentally responsible behaviour. RITE was active for two-three years, and did not grow beyond the three original founding members.

Sheffield Islamic Network for the Environment

ShINE were a small local Islamic group organizing regular litter-picks in the Sheffield area of England. The group was started by Nabeel and run by a small team of volunteers for approximately four years. The group is currently 'on sabbatical' (Nabeel[2] 2013), as the number of volunteers willing to take on an organisational role dropped and Nabeel was unable to continue running the group.

Wisdom in Nature

Wisdom in Nature (WiN) is based in Great Britain and began in 2003 as the London Islamic Network for the Environment. WiN was founded with the goal of bringing together environmentally conscious Muslims. They changed their name in 2007 to reflect that the organisation no longer saw itself as solely focused upon the environment, but rather, were interested in 'interconnectedness' – in the way that social, political, economic *and* environmental issues were all related to and inseparable from one another. The structure of WiN has evolved over the years and they currently operate with a non-hierarchical structure and three core members, called 'Representatives'. Additional participants attend their workshops, discussions, and/or projects on a casual basis and there is no official membership system. WiN is the only organisation in this study to regularly attract non-Muslim participants. Over the years, WiN has run monthly discussion forums; participated in collective action (Climate Change marches, Occupy events, etc.); run training workshops on Islam and Ecology, and facilitation techniques; and organised direct actions such as a publicity stunt in Brick Lane where participants dressed up in snorkels and flippers to highlight the consequences of global warming.

Independent activists

In addition to these organisations, individual Muslim environmentalists were interviewed who were active outside any formal environmental organisation. These activists all lived in the Bay Area, California – with the exception of Imam Dawood

who was the Islamic Chaplain at Dartmouth College at the time of interview, but who subsequently moved to the Bay Area after the interview to take up a position at Zaytuna College.

Notes

1   http://www.greenmuslims.org/about/
2   Interview with Rosemary Hancock
    Interviewee: Nabeel
    Date: 17th July 2013.

Index