

A Sacred Covenant: Islamic Environmentalism in Ibrahim Al-Koni's *The Bleeding of the Stone*

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Abstract

In *The Bleeding of the Stone*, published in 1990, Ibrahim Al-Koni situates Asouf, a Bedouin, in the Libyan Sahara. The novel has been praised for its magic realist elements. In this paper, I argue for applying an Islamic ecocritical framework on the novel. Asouf, relies on his local rituals to care and hunt animals respectfully. In addition, the novel renders itself to postcolonial environmentalism in which two characters, John Parker and Cain, represent the colonial enterprise for their insatiable hunt for resources that ultimately vandalizes the land and its inhabitants. In an attempt to situate the novel within ecocritical paradigms, the analysis of the novel through Islamic eco-theology highlights an underrepresented examination of postcolonial environmentalism. Al-Koni remains to be at the forefront of the Arabic novels and environmental concerns. The Sahara is an extension of Asouf's identity. To protect it and its animals, he is a prime example of combating colonial presence that seeks to diminish indigenous ways of life.

Keywords: Eco-theology, Islamic environmentalism, Human-Animal connection, postcolonial ecocriticism, the Sahara.