

# An Egyptian Ethicist: Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh Drāz (1894-1958) and His Qur’ān-Based Moral Theory

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## Abstract

The sources shaping a moral theory range from “reason” to “societal command” to “religious texts.” The prominence and relationship between these sources is contingent upon the ethicists’ approaches and inquiries. Although Kant’s proposition of “pure reason” as a source of moral obligation marks a significant turning point in the field of ethics, scholars like Søren Aabye Kierkegaard argue for a divine command law of ethics, where religious texts become an inevitable source complementing individual ethical choices. This essay explores the intersection of religious texts and reasoning—the fusion between heteronomy and autonomy as sources of morality. It analyzes Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh Drāz’s “Moral Obligation” as a categorical imperative within moral theories and his incorporation of Western scholars such as Immanuel Kant and Henri Bergson into his work, among others. The discussion features a significant episode of Muslim intellectual engagement with Western scholarship and its impact on understanding morality in the Qur’ān. The study shows that Drāz’s *La Morale du Koran* adapts certain Western ethical theories and reinterprets specific Qur’anic passages, creating a new synthesis: an integration of knowledge.

**Keywords:** Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh Drāz, Egypt, Occidentalism, Qur’ān, Moral Obligation, Immanuel Kant, Religious Hermeneutics, Heteronomy, Dianomy, Autonomy, Integration of Knowledge

## Introduction\*

This article sheds light on the life and work of Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh Drāz (1894-1958), a twentieth-century Egyptian ethicist and graduate of the Collège de France and Sorbonne University. It focuses on his influential work, *La Morale du Koran*. Specifically, the essay discusses Drāz’s exploration of “Moral Obligation” in the theoretical section of his book *La Morale du Koran* in the light of recent studies and comparative

ethics models. It discusses the author's worldview and underscores the significance of his contributions to Muslim ethics, providing a summary of the primary chapters in the theoretical section. The article draws comparisons between Drāz's concept of "moral obligation" and Western philosophers and ethicists, including Immanuel Kant (d. 1804), Frédéric Rauh (d. 1907), and Drāz's research mentor, Henri Bergson (d. 1941). The article argues that Drāz proposes dianomy—a duality of divine and individual reasoning as sources of morality, influenced by Western scholars' moral philosophy, with a claim that the Qur'an supports their findings. Simultaneously, Drāz underscores the necessity of a transcendental source of morality. His intellectual work exemplifies the intersection between traditional Islamic studies and Western scholarship. Drāz's *La Morale du Koran*, widely cited in Islamic ethics, is a "fusion of horizons," i.e., an adaptation of Western ethical theories and a reinterpretation of specific Qur'anic passages and Islamic literature, resulting in a sophisticated synthesis.

## Drāz's Intellectual Life

On November 8, 1894, Drāz was born into a religious family renowned as "the house of scholars" in Mahalat Dyadī.<sup>1</sup> Following the local tradition among educated elites, he mastered Arabic literacy skills, memorized the entire Qur'an, and grasped various recitation styles (qirā'āt) by the age of 10.<sup>2</sup> In 1912, Drāz graduated from the al-Azhar Institute in Alexandria, where his father, 'Abd Allāh (d. 1932), served as the principal. Subsequently, he earned a degree in Religious Studies from al-Azhar University in 1916.<sup>3</sup> Between 1916 and 1919, Drāz attended night language schools to learn French and actively participated in political movements under the leadership of the Egyptian revolutionary statesman Sa'd Zaghlūl (d. 1927).<sup>4</sup>

Following his graduation from al-Azhar University, Drāz commenced his career as an instructor in various educational institutions. Initially, he served as a teacher at the al-Azhar Institute in Alexandria. Between 1928 and 1936, Drāz continued his teaching role at al-Azhar University until he was dispatched by both al-Azhar and King Fuad I (r. 1922-1936)

to pursue a doctoral degree at Sorbonne University in France. In 1939, rather than immediately enrolling in a graduate program, Drāz opted to join the College de France and Sorbonne University as an undergraduate student. He studied logic, sociology, psychology, ethics, and philosophy during this period.<sup>5</sup>

Upon his return to Egypt in 1948, Drāz, a year later, was elected as a member of the senior scholar's Council of al-Azhar (*Hay'at Kibār al-'Ulamā'*). Additionally, he assumed the role of a lecturer at Fuad I University (present-day Cairo University), where he served as a professor of philosophy and Qur'anic studies in the Department of Arabic Language within the College of Sciences (*Dār al-'Ulūm*). After the Egyptian revolution on July 23, 1952, Drāz was nominated to be the Grand Imām of al-Azhar, the highest position in Egypt's largest Islamic institution. However, he declined the position.<sup>6</sup>

Drāz's epistemological religious background and educational training equipped him to utilize both textual and rational evidence in his scholarly pursuits. Influenced by the 20th-century revolutionary thinker Muḥammad 'Abduh (d. 1905) and his notable student Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935), Drāz, though not a direct student of 'Abduh, embraced a reformist and revivalist approach, advocating for the re-interpretation of religious texts (*ijtihād*).<sup>7</sup> He wrote extensively on comparative religions, Islamic ethics, and Qur'anic studies in both Arabic and French, producing four books and numerous articles including:

- 1 ***Initiation Au Koran: Exposé Historique, Analytique Et Comparatif (Introduction to the Qur'ān: Historical, Analytical, and Comparative Presentation)***: An introduction to the Qur'ān, outlining its structure and principles. Initially written in French, this work served as one of Drāz's two theses defended on December 15, 1947, at the University of Paris. It was later translated into Arabic and summarized, and eventually translated into English.
- 2 ***La Morale du Koran (The Morality of the Qur'ān)***: Drāz's masterpiece on morality in the Qur'ān and his second thesis, defended at Sorbonne University in 1947. A detailed analysis of this monograph will be provided below.

- 3 ***Al-Dīn: Buḥūth mumahidah li-dirāsat tārīkh al-adyān (The Religion: Introductory Studies to the History of Religions)***: This textbook was compiled after three years of teaching “History of Religions” at Cairo University. It discusses the concept of religion, its origin, function, and impact on human lives. The four studies include: “Defining Religion,” “The Relationship between Religion, Culture, and Ethics,” “Religiosity and its Instinctive Origin,” and “The Origin of Divine Theology.”
- 4 ***Al-Naba’ al-‘azīm: Nazārāt jadidah fī al-Qur’ān al-Karīm (The Great News: New Perspectives on the Noble Qur’ān)***: Here, Drāz explores the Qur’anic sciences. The first part addresses the definition of the Qur’ān, its titles, and the imitability of alternation (*tahrīf*). The second part discusses the sources of the Qur’ān and its divine nature.

Drāz’s articles cover diverse themes and topics, ranging from ethics, worship, and Islamic law to theology. The titles include: “The Origin of Islam,” “Usury in Islamic Law,” “The Principles of International Law in Islam,” “Islamic Perspective on Fighting,” “Acts of Worship: Prayer, Almsgiving, Fasting, and Pilgrimage,” “Between Idealism and Realism,” “Responsibility in Islam,” “Al-Azhar: The Old and New University,” and “Thoughts on the Principles of Philosophy and Ethics.”

In addition to his written contributions, Drāz delivered numerous public speeches, primarily focusing on Qur’anic exegesis and ethics. These speeches were broadcast on Egyptian national TV and radio programs. It is worth noting that Drāz’s chapter titled “The Origin of Islam” was included by Keith W. Morgan for publication in his volume *Islam: The Straight Path as Interpreted by Muslims*.<sup>8</sup>

Drāz engaged with international intellectual and political occurrences through his scholarly endeavors. For example, in response to the publication of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Drāz wrote a paper titled “Le Droit International Public Et L’Islam,” wherein he conducted a comparative analysis between the Declaration of Human Rights articles and Qur’anic principles. Drāz observed that the United Nations was established to protect the rights of “the strong.”<sup>9</sup> The remainder of the article presented Qur’ān-based human rights principles.

This essay gained a widespread readership and received reviews from both academics and politicians. In a letter to Drāz, M. Albert Gibran, the United Nations commissioner in Libya in 1951, expressed, “I found in your essay a point of departure towards a new practical step, which is establishing an organization akin to a permanent international court whose decisions are inspired by the principles that you deduced from the revealed scripture.”<sup>10</sup>

In his final intellectual contribution, titled “Mawqif al-Islam min al-Adyān al-Ukhrā wa ‘Alāqatuh bihā” (the Islamic Position towards Other Religions and Their Relationship), Drāz defines Islam as a monotheistic message of peace emphasizing the interconnectedness of the Muhammadan, Mosaic, and Christian faiths. According to Drāz, this interconnectedness unfolds in two stages:

- 1 The Elementary Stage: Muslims are urged to respect and believe in all scriptures and apostles equally without distinctions. The Qur’ān teaches that every scripture confirms the books revealed before (Q. 5:46-48).
- 2 The Secondary Stage: The later scripture complements and modifies the previous ones. Jesus, for instance, confirmed the Torah and legalized certain dietary rules forbidden for the Israelites (Q. 3:50). Similarly, Muḥammad legalized and prohibited certain rules from previous scriptures for Muslims (Q. 7:157). Drāz asserts that these changes were not indicative of the incompleteness or imprudence of the previous scriptures but were necessitated by the changing contexts in which they were to be applied.

Drāz uses the metaphor of three physicians examining a child in three stages (Moses, Jesus, and Muḥammad) to discuss the relationship between Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Each physician, corresponding to a stage, prescribed nutrition suitable for the child’s development. In the initial stage, the first physician limited the baby’s nutrition to milk. In the subsequent stage, the second physician introduced some solid food alongside milk, and in the final stage, the third physician permitted the child to consume complete and healthy meals. While their prescriptions differed, all physicians agreed on the fundamental

principle that all meals should be clean and healthy regardless of the child's stage.<sup>11</sup>

Drāz wrote *La Morale du Koran* during challenging times, a period that likely influenced his worldview. Accompanied by his wife and ten children, he embarked on his studies in France, facing the complexities of family life alongside academic endeavors. World War II added an extra layer of difficulty as his family became divided between two cities. The younger children resided with their mother in Seine et Oise, which Drāz considered safer and quieter than Paris. Meanwhile, Drāz and the elder children stayed in the capital, close to the libraries of Sorbonne and Collège de France and in close proximity to his mentors. In a meeting with Drāz's eldest son, I inquired about why his father decided to divide the family. He explained that his father adhered to the English saying, "Do not put all your eggs in one basket."<sup>12</sup> Despite the wartime challenges, the Egyptian embassy in France presented Drāz with an opportunity to return to Egypt via Switzerland and Turkey. However, he persevered and completed his studies, disregarding the potential dangers. Unfortunately, the consequences of the war still reached Drāz. On July 8, 1944, his residence in Seine et Oise suffered partial damage by Allied bombing, resulting in injuries to his wife.<sup>13</sup>

Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī (d. 2022), a highly influential Muslim thinker, wrote a brief biography of his teacher, Drāz, wherein he highlights the distinct nature of his approach and provides an overview of his intellectual contributions. Al-Qaraḍāwī describes Drāz as one of the encyclopedic scholars capable of integrating religious sciences with contemporary culture. He writes,

*Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh Drāz stood out as one of the encyclopedic scholars, skilled at harmonizing religious sciences with contemporary culture. He is proficient in French and Arabic and holds degrees from both al-Azhar and Sorbonne, (ibn al-Azhar wa ibn al-Sorbonne). His studies at the Sorbonne did not compromise his deep-rooted Azharī background. Drāz is among the few who maintained the tradition of wearing al-Azhar attire even upon returning from studying abroad.<sup>14</sup>*

The description “ibn al-Azhar wa ibn al-Sorbonne” shows Drāz’s unique status as an individual who acquired knowledge in two distinct academic settings yet integrated both benefits. Al-Qaraḍāwī’s statements imply that, unlike some scholars who studied in the West and experienced noticeable changes in their personality, lifestyle, or scholarship, Drāz remained consistent.

Al-Qaraḍāwī concludes his brief biography of Drāz by recounting his personal visits to Drāz’s home in Heliopolis, Cairo, expressing his intention to study with him in private sessions frequently.<sup>15</sup> Although Drāz agreed to this arrangement, they never had another meeting, as Drāz passed away suddenly after presenting a paper at the International Conference on Religion in Lahore, Pakistan. Drāz died on January 1958 and was buried in Egypt.<sup>16</sup>

## La Morale du Koran

*La Morale du Koran* represents Drāz’s meticulous effort to engage Western scholarship and modern theories on morality in dialogue with the interpretation of Islamic literature, particularly the Qur’ān. This monograph holds significance as one of the most influential works on Muslim ethics in the twentieth century. Originally written in French, it has been translated into Arabic and then English.<sup>17</sup> To broaden its accessibility, Basma ‘Abd al-Ghaffār edited the monograph, removing Drāz’s comparative model and presenting a condensed version of his sophisticated hermeneutics.<sup>18</sup>

The translated work gained popularity upon its introduction to an Arab readership, receiving widespread acknowledgment in contemporary Arabic scholarship on Muslim ethics. It continues to be frequently cited in scholarly discussions and intellectual gatherings. For instance, during the “Al-Azhar International Conference on Renovation of Islamic Thought” held on January 27-28, 2020, in a public intellectual debate between the Grand Imām of al-Azhar, Aḥmad al-Ṭayib, and the President of Cairo University, Muḥammad ‘Uthmān al-Khusht, the latter recommended Drāz’s work on morality as an exemplary contribution to the renewal of Islamic religious discourse.



*La Morale du Koran* is divided into two main parts: theoretical and practical. The practical section explores individual, familial, societal, communal, and religious aspects of morality. Drāz, in this section, reorganizes and indexes Qurʾanic verses related to virtue ethics, adopting a holistic approach that considers the text in its entirety rather than analyzing it chapter by chapter. This approach stands in contrast to earlier works by Muslim scholars like Abū Hāmid al-Ghazzālī's *Jawāhir al-Qurʾān* (The Jewelry of the Qurʾān), Abū Bakr al-Jaṣṣāṣ al-Ḥanafī's *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān* (The Rules of the Qurʾān), and Abū Bakr ibn al-ʿArabī al-Mālikī's *Aḥkām al-Qurʾān* (The Rules of the Qurʾān).

While al-Ghazzālī categorizes the Qurʾanic passages into verses (763 verses) that discuss knowledge (*maʿrifah*) and others (741 verses) that discuss behavior (*sulūk*), which he termed the jewelry of the Qurʾān, Drāz focuses his research on morality. Unlike previous works that approached ethics from legal, theoretical, or theological perspectives, Drāz emphasizes morality as the core of his investigation. In contrast to earlier works where clear connections between discussed verses are challenging to discern, Drāz organizes Qurʾanic verses thematically to highlight their relationships. The overarching themes of this indexing center on moral and ethical behavior, along with the rules and regulations of Islamic law.

The theoretical part of *La Morale du Koran* is organized into five chapters, each considered by Drāz as an essential component of his moral theory. These chapters are: "Obligation" (the focus of this essay), "Responsibility," "Sanction," "Intention and Inclinations," and "Effort." Drāz employs these chapter titles as a typology for comparing his Qurʾān-based moral theory to other theories of morality, as demonstrated below.

In the first chapter, titled "Obligation," Drāz emphasizes that obligation is the central principle of any moral theory. Obligation constitutes responsibility, and without it, humans lose the concept of justice. He states, "For, without obligation, there is no responsibility, and without responsibility, there can be no return to justice."<sup>19</sup> According to Drāz, moral action arises from the individual's commitment to oneself and society, a necessity that everyone should observe.<sup>20</sup> He highlights that throughout the text, the Qurʾān refers to the concept of moral necessity using multiple terms such as imperative (*amr*), prescription (*kitābah*),

and duty (*farīdah*). However, Drāz notes that each term should be interpreted within its context, as these terms do not exclusively refer to moral obligation.

In the second chapter, titled “Responsibility,” Drāz asserts that responsibility is integral to moral obligation. He discusses the characteristics and prerequisites of responsibility from religious, ethical, and social perspectives.<sup>21</sup> According to Drāz, responsibility involves committing oneself to an authority, which could be the self, another individual, or a higher authority. The motivation for responsibility can proceed from the inner or outer self—be it personal religious commitment or societal constraints. Drāz interprets the Qur’anic verse, “Believers, do not betray God and the Messenger, or knowingly betray [other people’s] trust in you” (Q. 8:27), as a foundational text for understanding human responsibility.<sup>22</sup> Using this verse, he argues that every responsibility could be considered moral responsibility when approved of by people. Similarly, outer responsibilities become internal commitments if accepted by individuals. For instance, when a person decides to donate to an organization, the act becomes a personal commitment. Drāz stresses that withholding pledged money for donation is considered unethical according to the Qur’anic principle, “Honor your pledges: you will be questioned about your pledges” (Q. 17:34). Drāz emphasizes that moral responsibility should be an intentional and individual duty with the requirements known to the person before making a commitment. Actions lacking clear motivation are, in Drāz’s view, acts without responsibility.<sup>23</sup>

In the third chapter, titled “Sanction,” Drāz explores the consequences of moral responsibility, highlighting the notions of reward and punishment. He categorizes the outcomes of an individual’s actions into three dimensions: ethical, legal, and divine. The ethical consequences, as defined by Drāz, include the positive or negative emotions that individuals experience following their actions. In instances of wrongdoing, a sense of “remorse and penance” typically develops.<sup>24</sup> Drāz asserts that engaging in ritual practices can enhance ethical behavior. For instance, prayer guards against evil and indecencies (Q. 29:45), charity purifies the soul (Q. 9:103), and fasting serves as a means to attain piety (Q. 2:183).<sup>25</sup>

The legal sanctions, according to Drāz, pertain to the penal laws in Islam, designed to punish immoral behaviors during one's lifetime.<sup>26</sup>

Divine compensations, as described in the Qur'ān, manifest through providence or damnation, parallel to the Bible. Drāz illustrates this concept by referencing biblical commandments, covenants, and the accompanying rewards or punishments associated with divine decrees. For instance, in the Book of Leviticus, the passage "Reward for Obedience" states, "If you follow my decrees and are careful to obey my commands, I will send you rain in its season, and the ground will yield its crops and the trees their fruit..." (Leviticus 26:3-5).<sup>27</sup> Drāz contends that the Qur'ān underscores both worldly and hereafter rewards, aligning with the analogous concept of Divine reward found in the Bible.<sup>28</sup>

In the fourth chapter, titled "Intention and Inclinations," Drāz defines intention as the movement of an individual's will to carry out a specific behavior. He classifies the relationship between action and intention into four cases:

- 1 Action without intention: This constitutes an invalid moral act.
- 2 Incomplete action with incomplete intention: This is considered incomplete, whether leaning towards goodness or badness.
- 3 Good action and good intentions: This signifies complete morality.
- 4 Good intention without action: This stands in contrast to the first case.

Nevertheless, the intention is a prerequisite for the validity of any action; it holds the same value as the action itself.<sup>29</sup> In the fifth chapter, titled "Effort," Drāz explores the correlation between actions and motivation. He contends that an intended action accompanied by effort differs from a mundane action, which is an act of self-determination. Moral theory focuses on the effort driven by "reason," such as the exertion expected of an individual to repel evil actions, marking the initial step toward ethical conduct. The second phase involves creative effort, wherein individuals must choose their actions thoughtfully. This innovative effort encompasses three types: "good choice," "better choice," and "the best choice." Drāz emphasizes that while the first level agrees with the

Qurʾān, the other two are optional, though individuals are encouraged to pursue them. Furthermore, he draws a distinction between two types of effort: non-physical effort, which involves the decision to avoid evil, and physical effort, which requires tangible endeavors to engage in positive actions.<sup>30</sup>

Drāz uses the titles of the theoretical section's chapters to outline the comparative model. When a concept aligns with a contemporary, medievalist, or ancient philosopher, Drāz provides a thorough discussion of it. While he does not directly compare his entire theory to another comprehensive one, he selectively draws upon various works deemed relevant to the overarching argument. Drāz adopts a comparative method reminiscent of the typology scheme found in David Little and Sumner Twiss's book, *Comparative Religious Ethics: A New Method*. Like Little and Twiss, Drāz acknowledges the significant distinction and intricate relationship between religion and morality.<sup>31</sup>

*La Morale du Koran* poses questions about how the Qurʾān portrays ethical life, and provides an overview of theoretical and practical ethical theories outlined in certain Qurʾānic passages. Despite Drāz's intention to expound on morality in the Qurʾān without reference to Greek philosophy and interdisciplinary sciences, he relies on Islamic secondary sources and ancient as well as modern philosophical works, as I demonstrate below.

## Moral Obligation<sup>32</sup>

The source of morality revolves around the ethicist's approach and the area of interest. Nevertheless, three prominent approaches can be identified as addressing "moral obligation": divine, social, or rational sources. Kant's theory, considered a crucial turn in ethics, introduces the concept of "autonomy" to the philosophy of ethics. His discussion of "pure reason" necessitates the rejection of all forms of moral realism, advocating for the self-legislating moral subject. According to Kant, a philosophical framework grounded in experience is referred to as empirical; when its principles are abstract and precede experience, then it is pure reasoning.<sup>33</sup> In critiquing Kant's theory, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich

Hegel (d. 1831) presents a distinct source of moral obligation, namely the social command account, which views duty as stemming from constraints imposed by others, echoing David Hume's empiricism.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (d. 1855) proposes a resolution by returning to the divine command theory that Kant had previously rejected, asserting it as the rightful foundation. As argued by Robert Stern, we encounter a dialectical circle of positions. Despite the merits and drawbacks inherent in each of the theories proposed by Kant, Hegel, and Kierkegaard, these theories continue to be focal points in ethical discussions among scholars.<sup>35</sup>

Scholars continue to debate the source of moral obligation. Like Kierkegaard, C. Stephen Evans, in his book *God and Moral Obligation*, advocates for the traditional perspective that grounds morality in God, asserting that a divine command theory is more plausible than alternative philosophical views. Evans contends that moral obligation is rooted in divine commands, and God communicates these commands to humans through conscience.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, in his article "Could Morality Have a Source," Chris Heathwood argues against the existence of a source for morality or moral facts. He challenges moral realists who posit ungrounded moral truths and suggests that some argue for God as the source of morality. Heathwood notes that these theories, including God as the source, represent a form of conservatism. His concern is not epistemological but metaphysical. He does not deny the existence of sources but questions the validity of inferring the source of morality and argues that not all moral truths need a source.<sup>37</sup>

In his discussion of the sources of moral obligation, Drāz introduces the Qur'ān as a divine text that complements what philosophers have achieved through intuition and observation. Drāz contends that an understanding of moral obligation emerges from the characteristics and general principles embedded in the Qur'anic text. According to him, the divine law of the Qur'ān is founded on three key principles.

The first principle, pertaining to rules in the Qur'ān, is "the possibility of the action." Applicability serves as a prerequisite for both Qur'anic rules and moral obligations. Drāz emphasizes that no moral obligation exists if the required action is unattainable. Numerous passages in the

Qur'ān address this issue, such as “God does not charge a soul except [according to] what He has given it” (Q. 65:7) and “No person is charged with more than their capacity” (Q. 2:233). From these passages, Drāz suggests that the inability to carry out a command renders it void until circumstances change.

The second Qur'anic principle is the applicability of the command. This rule emphasizes that any ethical or religious obligation in the Qur'ān should be reasonable and applicable. Drāz asserts that if a command is unattainable, it should not be considered obligatory. He provides examples where the Qur'ān aims not to overburden its followers with rules, citing passages such as “God intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship” (Q. 2:185), “He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty” (Q. 22:78), and “And God wants to lighten for you [your difficulties], and humankind was created weak” (Q. 4:28). Drāz further provides instances from the Qur'ān where the rule of religious obligation is altered, postponed, or annulled. For instance, in the religious dietary law, if a person cannot find anything lawful to eat except for carrion, blood, or the flesh of swine, which are generally prohibited, all forbidden types of food are permitted (Q. 5:3). In specific situations, the rule might be adjusted, such as reducing the number of four-unit prayers by half during a journey (Q. 4:101), or postponed, as seen when sick individuals are exempted from fasting during Ramadan (Q. 2:184). Additionally, the rule might be substituted with another action, as is the case when water is unavailable for ritual ablution, and dust can be used symbolically as a replacement for water (Q. 5:6). Drāz argues that these examples of divine commands highlight the core principle of applicability in divine legislation.

The third principle is gradualism—the Qur'anic strategy of progressively implementing divine commands. Drāz highlights a notable example of this approach in the Qur'ān: the prohibition of alcoholic fermented drinks. The discussion on intoxicants is covered in four verses, with the final one imposing a complete ban on their consumption. The preceding three phases were designed to prepare the Muslim community to accept the ultimate prohibition.<sup>38</sup> Drāz contends that this gradualism principle also applies to the moral codes outlined in the Qur'ān. He

bases his argument on the overarching observation that the Qur'anic revelation unfolded over twenty-three years, occurring in two distinct periods—Mecca and Medina, as referenced in the Qur'ān (Q. 17:104). Therefore, he asserts that time and context are crucial considerations when applying any Qur'anic command or rule.

Furthermore, Drāz discusses the characteristics of the locus of obligation—the human being. According to Drāz, humans are relational subjects, meaning that the human self is defined through multiple relations to others, including biographical, natural, personal, familial, social, humanitarian, and transcendental connections. The development of these aspects of the self as a cohesive unit is essential for moral sensibility. Therefore, all these facets of the self should be harmonized and cultivated to construct the “perfect human.” Drāz emphasizes, “Humans should develop all values of the self together without any exception.”<sup>39</sup> He highlights that these multiple relations find expression in the Qur'anic concept of moral obligation, including obligations towards the divine and obligations towards the self, the family, and guests.

An important aspect of Drāz's theory is the assertion that humans are not inherently sinful. According to Drāz, the Qur'ān does not portray human beings as intrinsically evil, nor does it depict them as creatures whose behavior cannot be rectified. On the contrary, the Qur'ān presents humans as inherently perfect beings, stating, “We have certainly created humankind in the best of stature” (Q. 95:4). However, those who fail to engage in virtuous deeds deviate from this original state of perfection and are characterized as thoughtless and mentally unstable: “Indeed, humankind was created anxious, when evil touches him, impatient, and when good touches him, withholding [of it], except the observers of prayer” (Q. 70:19-22). As virtuous deeds uplift humans, misconduct leads them to “the lowest of the low” (Q. 95:5). The Qur'ān suggests that failure is an attribute of those individuals whose “hearts with which they do not understand, they have eyes with which they do not see, and they have ears with which they do not hear. Those are like livestock; rather, they are more astray. It is they who are heedless” (Q. 7:179). In this context, humans possess the freedom to choose their behavior. However, education enhances intellectual faculties and refines human choices, while

ignorance degrades them: “He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who instills it [with corruption]” (Q. 91:9-10).

While Drāz supports human free will and reasoning in selecting moral behavior, he raises doubts about people’s ability to differentiate between right and wrong without divine guidance. He discusses particular inquiries that have been the focus for early schools of theology (*kalām*) regarding human reason, such as whether individuals can rely solely on their reason to discern right from wrong. In the absence or rejection of religious texts, can individuals trust their reason to define goodness and evil, and does their understanding align with scriptural definitions? Drāz highlights that this remains an ongoing theological debate within Muslim traditions. For instance, defenders of reason, such as the Mu‘tazilah,<sup>40</sup> and the Shī‘ah,<sup>41</sup> argue that humans bear the responsibility for using their reason to define goodness and evil. On the contrary, the Ash‘ariyyah<sup>42</sup> deny the ability to ascertain moral obligations without revelation, while the Maturīdiyyah<sup>43</sup> adopt a middle position between the Mu‘tazilah and the Ash‘ariyyah. They posit that reason can only recognize essential moral obligations. Drāz contends that the proponents of reason in Islam are inaccurate because there is a natural continuous growth in our intellectual capacities, typically influenced by the level of education. He contends that our reason can only provide a general definition of goodness and evil for essential obligations due to the possibility of illusions, disagreements, and errors in our choices.

Whether the Qur’ān provides comprehensive definitions of goodness and evil, Drāz argues that it offers general guidance for acquiring moral values, yet human reason complements the scripture through interpretation. For instance, “Indeed, God orders justice and good conduct and giving to relatives and forbids immorality and bad conduct and oppression. He admonishes you that perhaps you will be reminded” (Q. 16:90), “Not equal are the evil and the good, although the abundance of evil might impress you” (Q. 5:100), “O children of Adam, We have bestowed upon you clothing to conceal your private parts and as adornment. But the clothing of righteousness - that is best” (Q. 7:26), “Whoever has been given wisdom has certainly been given much good” (Q. 2:269), and



“Indeed, God does not order immorality” (Q. 7:28). The definitions of the moral concepts in these passages rely on human faculties.

Drāz asserts that the moral obligation presented in the Qurʾān is comprehensive and timeless, and meant to be applicable to every individual irrespective of time or circumstance. Unlike objective binding legal rules, moral law encourages ethical behavior but does not coerce individuals into upholding it. It is an ideal obligation that imposes itself upon human consciousness. Drāz supports this argument by citing a few passages that illustrate that the Qurʾān allows people to decline its commands regarding faith and morality: “...but those who turn away - We have not sent you over them as a guardian” (Q. 4:60), “There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong” (Q. 2:256), and “Then, [O Muhammad], would you compel the people so that they become believers?” (Q. 10:99).<sup>44</sup>

It is important that Drāz intentionally conflates religious obligation with moral obligation. In his examination of the characteristics of the Qurʾanic principles of obligation above, he utilizes examples of religious obligations that may not necessarily align with moral ones. Instances such as reducing the number of prayer units while traveling, postponing the fasting days due to sickness, or consuming carrion out of necessity reflect divine laws rather than moral ones. While these passages do not explicitly address morality, they generally depict the nature of obligation in the Qurʾanic text, which is also applicable to morality.

Furthermore, some of the examples presented by Drāz may appear out of context, but their underlying meaning remains valid. Drāz transcends the contexts of certain Qurʾanic passages so that he could provide a moral theory that is universally applicable to individuals regardless of time or circumstances. For example, Drāz supports the concept of freedom of religion by referencing specific passages from the Qurʾān, such as Q. 4:60, Q. 2:256, and Q. 10:99, which emphasize the permission for individuals to decline the Qurʾanic commands related to faith and morality. While these examples may be contextual or allegorical, Drāz uses them to highlight a broader principle of moral obligation that transcend specific situations to provide a timeless and comprehensive ethical framework.

## Drāz and Modern Philosophers

Drāz compares his theory primarily to those of Kant, Rauh, and Bergson. Of these philosophers, Drāz emphasizes Kant, considering his work the most crucial influence. Throughout his work, Drāz extensively engages with Kant's theories and incorporates many of Kant's philosophical concepts into his own. Drāz argues that the Qur'anic moral theory agrees with Kant's propositions as outlined in the *Critique of Practical Reason*.<sup>45</sup> According to Drāz, the Qur'ān shares the same viewpoint as Kant, asserting that humans possess the ability to discern between goodness and evil and are inherently endowed with moral insight.<sup>46</sup> Like Kant, Drāz posits that humans simultaneously act as rulers and subjects. He perceives moral obligation as autonomy and freedom of choice without the intervention of any higher authority. Drāz contends that autonomy distinguishes humans from animals because God honored human beings and elevated them above many other creatures by bestowing them with reason.<sup>47</sup>

However, Drāz diverges from Kant by asserting that human reason alone cannot recognize human obligations, as this recognition is a task that unfolds through acquired knowledge over time.<sup>48</sup> To address this limitation in Kant's theory, Drāz observes that an additional source beyond the rational is necessary. One should turn to divine authority instead of relying solely on pure reason. It is important to note that this is not a separation of sources; both divine authority and human autonomy should be viewed as one source, as the origins of morality stem from autonomous preferences and consciousness. This is because divine command complements pure instinctual reason.<sup>49</sup> In Drāz's perspective, adherents of a divine message benefit from two interconnected sources of knowledge—divine and reason—each complementing the other.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, Drāz disagrees with Kant's definition of obligation, which neglects any empirical characteristics. Kant reduces moral obligation as an abstract notion suitable to all wills, divine or human. Kant's definition, captured as "toute action dont la maxime peut sans absurdité être universalisée"<sup>51</sup> (any action whose maxim can be universalized without any absurdity), overlooks the ethical deontology of Jeremy Bentham

(d. 1832). Bentham's ethical theory suggests that actions "are morally right if they tend to promote happiness or pleasure and morally wrong if they tend to promote unhappiness or pain."<sup>52</sup>

Additionally, Drāz argues that Kant confuses two distinct phases of rationalization: the moment when reason contemplates universalized maxims and the moment when this moral law is to be applied. In other words, Kant mixes up "obligation" with the "intention" of morals and morality.<sup>53</sup> Moreover, Drāz identifies another weakness in Kant's theory concerning the universalized obligation. He argues that variation exists in the degrees of obligation, as obligations vary in significance when dealing with different relationships, such as parents, managers, spouses, or children. Therefore, the obligation is not universally applicable but relatively universal, and Drāz suggests that relativism is implied within universalism. While Drāz acknowledges the need for a general supreme ethical type, he criticizes Kant's moral theory for lacking consistency when comparing the details of moral obligation. Some obligations appear more significant than others, and Kant's theory seems inconsistent with other moral obligations. Drāz provides an example of this inconsistency by highlighting potential conflicts between values such as "justice" and "mercy." In the case of a conflict, if the principle of "justice" as a moral obligation impedes the concept of "mercy," the latter, being another moral obligation, requires more tolerance and forgiveness than the former. Drāz asserts that, although Kant may have drawn from Christian ethical principles, Christian morality, which commands the love of enemies, is better than Kantianism as it promotes a more comprehensive, universalized moral duty.<sup>54</sup>

Moreover, Drāz's moral theory engages with that of Bergson,<sup>55</sup> outlined in *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*. Bergson observes that moral obligation emerges from society and the impetus of love rather than pure reason. He states,

*The duality itself merges into a unity, for "social pressure" and "impetus of love" are but two complementary aspects of life, normally intent on preserving, generally, the social form which was characteristic of the human species from the beginning, but, exceptionally, capable of transfiguring it.*<sup>56</sup>

Bergson contends that not all ethicists fully grasp this dual origin of society, but they do perceive aspects of it. While society holds more significance than the individual due to our relational nature, defined by our relations to others, these others collectively constitute society. However, according to Bergson, morality is a “throwing out of gear of the relations between the social and the individual self.”<sup>57</sup>

The role of religion, according to Bergson’s proposition, is not as significant as the role of society. Bergson asserts that religion fulfills a social role, even when it serves as the motivation behind social commands. He states,

*Whether religion be interpreted in one way or another, whether it be social in essence or by accident, one thing is certain, that it has always played a social role. [...] it varies with time and place, but in societies such as our own, the first effect of religion is to sustain and reinforce the claims of society.*<sup>58</sup>

Bergson highlights the association of morality with religion, emphasizing that the latter serves as the motivating force behind ethical behavior.<sup>59</sup> However, Bergson diverges from viewing the essence of moral obligation as a product of reason or the categorical imperative proposed by Kant. Instead, he envisions obligation as “weighing on the will like a habit, each obligation dragging behind it the accumulated mass of the others, and utilizing thus for the pressure it is exerting the weight of the whole.”<sup>60</sup> According to Bergson, these categorical imperatives are shaped by society rather than reason. He argues that since the existence of society, it imposes constraints on its members, and these constraints constitute obligations. However, Bergson underscores that society is not self-explanatory but is formed by a comprehensive set of innate tendencies inherent in individuals.<sup>61</sup>

According to Drāz, Bergson claims that the morality of the commoners emerges from social forces, while the ethics of the elite stem from the impetus of love that influences the individual’s behavior. Instead of being subjected to social forces, elite individuals attract society toward ideal behavior. In essence, a person is either forced by

natural needs or drawn by the impetus of love without being able to compare, evaluate, and choose moral behavior.<sup>62</sup> Drāz disagrees with Bergson's argument, contending that if moral obligation originates from biological needs, it ceases to be true morality, let alone that love contradicts obligation. He highlights the Qur'ān's stance against two adversaries of morality: following personal desires without rationalization and blindly imitating others. To support his argument, Drāz quotes relevant passages from the Qur'ān, such as, "Do not follow [your own] desire, as it will lead you astray" (Q. 38:26), "So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just" (Q. 4:135), and "Indeed, we found our fathers upon a religion, and we are in their footsteps [rightly] guided" (Q. 43:22).<sup>63</sup>

Additionally, Drāz challenges Rauh's<sup>64</sup> proposition on morality, which is rooted in Hume's theory. According to Rauh, "the moral value" doesn't exist within our individual nature; rather, it is an invention beyond human capacity, Superman, conceived as a higher ideal type. Drāz contends that while Rauh acknowledges the concept of moral obligation, he argues that individuals establish principles and rules based on experience. To refute Rauh's theory, Drāz asserts that the definition of the moral code lies in the "ideal higher type," and it is implausible for the code to emerge from experience. Therefore, stating that experience is the source of morality becomes self-contradictory.<sup>65</sup> Drāz observes that both Kant's and Rauh's theories, representing rationalism and empiricism, emphasize different facets of reality. Idealism, realism, rationalism, and empiricism do not inherently contradict each other; each theory focuses on a distinct aspect of human knowledge.

According to Drāz, the Qur'ān agrees with both approaches in their fundamental essence. He grounds his argument on the Qur'anic statement, "Be conscious of God as much as you can" (Q. 64:16). The verse does not advocate unrestrained actions based on momentary inspiration, nor does it prescribe a fixed rule like Kant's. Instead, Drāz argues for an attentiveness to divine authority while relying on the experiential aspect of life. Thus, the two ends of the thread meet, the pursuit of the ideal higher type and the acknowledgment of human autonomy. It is submission to the law alongside individual autonomous choices. In other

words, Drāz observes that individuals decide when and how to apply the moral law.<sup>66</sup>

Drāz identifies two practical antinomies within philosophers' concept of moral obligation. The first antinomy is that of "unity and diversity." According to Drāz, if morality is regarded as a science, its moral law should be universal and necessary to regulate human behavior, not particular and contingent. However, given the diversity and changeability of human life, we are left with two propositions. The first proposal posits that the science of morality provides an unchanging and universal model of ethical behavior, while the second model allows for variations and modifications in moral law. Hence, one approach entails viewing humanity as a single type adhering to a uniform set of rules and ethics, which, according to Drāz, exists only in the imagination of the moralist. Alternatively, one may consider humanity diverse and irreducible to singular actions, leading to the conclusion that there is no single rule or law of science. This is the first challenge of universal moral theory.

The second antinomy is "authority and liberty." The term obligation presupposes the existence of two wills: the legislator, who commands and upholds authority, and the subject, who acts and defends the freedom to act. On the one hand, if the authority of the legislator imposes rules on the subject, the subject passively submits to them and applies them blindly, turning moral law into natural law. On the other hand, if the subject is granted complete freedom, then "obligation" transforms into "advice," which individuals may choose to accept or reject based on their judgment.<sup>67</sup>

In his argument about diversity and difference in society, Drāz provides an example of a chess game. Each piece should follow a certain rule for its movement (the rule represents the rule of the legislator); while following the rule willingly (autonomous choice), the player should be creative in playing. Social networks require specific behavior in a certain way, but individuals have the freedom to choose their actions within these boundaries. Drāz points out that no philosophy can provide us with such harmony between the lawgiver and the individual except by way of religious ethics.<sup>68</sup>

Additionally, Drāz asserts that morality is intrinsic to human nature. Everyone can differentiate between goodness and evil, right and wrong. However, this instinctive moral code is incomplete not because of different customs, traditions, and societal impacts on people, but because the application of ethics faces another greater challenge. If our cognition depends primarily on instinct as a source for ethical behavior, it sometimes fails to present, for all circumstances, a general theory or rule that everyone accepts. After reaching a certain level of ethical conduct, people disagree on what counts as ethical, and it is left to speculation. Therefore, divine intervention is necessary to complete the instinct of pure knowledge and help minimize the disagreements among people; in other words, to guide people to a general theory of ethical behavior.

Although Drāz differentiates between the Qurʾān and philosophy in terms of their sources and methodology, he argues that they are not different in their objectives.<sup>69</sup> He contends that both philosophy and religion<sup>70</sup> aim to solve the problems of the world and provide a wise way and moral code to live an ethical life. Such positive knowledge that we receive from scholars is nonbinding, but it addresses the pure reason people are already born with. This knowledge is supposed to address our consciousness and present an exemplar for us. This is because it establishes a law of morality that convinces people to uphold it without forcing them. This is different from the law of nature that forces people to accept certain rules, even if they are not convinced by them. Therefore, moral obligation depends primarily upon the “value” that we obtain from “an exemplar.” And “reason” and “revelation” are two alternatives and are considered the main source of “moral obligation.”<sup>71</sup>

Drāz does not consider the moral theory of the Qurʾān to be religious in the sense that there is a divine authority dictating morality, for which compensation is only in the hereafter. Instead, authority is entrusted to two forces: the moral conscience and the social force. These two authorities require everyone to prevent evil and oppression in society. It is also not religious in the sense that its motivation is fear and hope (i.e., fear of God’s damnation and hope for God’s mercy). It is not a higher authority that decrees for people what to do without any rationalization.

The religious element represented by the lawgiver could be understood as the aspect that guarantees the successful application of the law, as an organizing force for human life, or as an explication of the unknown matters that pure reason cannot know by itself.

Drāz notes that the religious and moral aspects do not overlap, nor do they define one another. Divine command does not become a moral obligation except with our consent because “the first obligation is to believe that there is an obligation.”<sup>72</sup> In other words, one must receive from inside the order to obey a higher commander. The religious element and moral element are a response to two higher authorities; one focusing on “the being,” and the other focusing on destiny/fate. The former represents the complete being, the truth, and right in its essence, which is knowledge and love, whereas the latter represents the complete action, which is morality.<sup>73</sup> Pure reason and society complement morality in the Qur’ān because many moral obligations are left to be determined by humanity based on given circumstances and human capability. The human conscience is always an active part of the determination process of moral obligation.<sup>74</sup>

The tension between autonomy and heteronomy is a challenge facing any work on ethics that utilizes dual sources. In her book *Creative Conformity: The Feminist Politics of U.S. Catholic and Iranian Shi‘ite Women*, Elizabeth M. Bucar provides compelling interpretations of female Shi‘ite Muslims’ understandings of religion. She observes that Iranian women demonstrated creative conformity between what they were asked to do by religious authorities and their interpretation of these commands in religious texts. Bucar introduces the concept of “dianomy” to understand a moral theory with dual sources. She states: “I propose the neologism ‘dianomy,’ meaning dual sources of the moral law, to account for a moral agency that relies neither exclusively on the self nor exclusively on religious traditions as a source of moral authority.”<sup>75</sup> Perhaps Drāz’s proposal implies a form of “dianomy” between the sources of morality, representing a “creative conformity” between empiricism and rationalism, between heteronomy and autonomy. This concept helps in gaining a deeper understanding of his Qur’ān-based moral theory that harmonizes empiricism, rationalism, and religion.



## Conclusion

In his work, Drāz makes important assertions that neither abstract concepts nor empirical knowledge alone are sufficient to guide free, autonomous ethical choices. He suggests that morality has been inherent in human character since creation, enabling individuals to intuitively discern good from evil and appreciate aesthetics from ugliness. However, he argues that moral theory is incomplete without divine intervention, emphasizing the need for revelation to enhance intuitive knowledge. Drāz underscores the importance of both practical and theoretical knowledge, asserting that an exclusive reliance on either side results in an incomplete theory of morality.

Drāz recognizes the significance of philosophy in tackling human issues. He acknowledges that the Qur'ān is not a philosophical work in the sense of yielding identical outcomes or adhering to the philosophical methodologies of epistemology. It lacks a philosophical method structured around a logical scheme involving definition, classification, evidence, criticism, and solutions. However, the Qur'ān serves as a source addressing fundamental questions related to existence, its origin, and its culmination. It addresses ethical behavior and the pathways to happiness. This acknowledgment does not negate the Qur'ān's religious nature; rather, it highlights that philosophy and religion aim to answer the fundamental questions that occupy human minds.

Drāz's theory does not primarily depend on the Qur'ān as the exclusive source; instead, it is an amalgamation of philosophy, social sciences, and religious texts. His proposal emerges as a synthesis of his exploration of empiricism and rationalism. While Drāz critiques Kant's reliance on "pure reason" as the sole source of morality and finds Rauh's theory of social forces and empirical experiences lacking, he observes that reason, social command, and religious texts collectively form the essential components of a comprehensive moral theory. Drawing from Kant's ethical theory and supplementing it with insights from Rauh's empirical studies, he further introduces a divine source to enrich the ethical foundation.

Drāz successfully incorporated various philosophical, rational, and empirical concepts, rendering his theory an outcome of interdisciplinary

efforts. He seamlessly integrates these moral theories into his approach, drawing not only from the exegeses of the Qur'ān and jurists of Islamic law but also from the works of theologians and philosophers whose ideas he critiques. Aaron Stalnaker states that borrowing from external sources is particularly useful for comparative studies, facilitating the comparison process and fostering similarities between distant cultures. He suggests that successful borrowing occurs when motivated by the challenges inherent in formative practices, prompting the need for explanation and justification.<sup>76</sup> Engaging in comparative ethics enhances the likelihood of borrowing from diverse cultural networks, aiding in the gradual reduction of cultural differences or, at the very least, making them more comprehensible.

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## Endnotes

- \* I would like to thank my colleagues in the Philosophy and Theology Department in Valparaiso University, Aaron Dean Stalnaker, Umar Ryad, and Younus Y. Mirza and the *AJIS* editors and anonymous reviewers for their comments on this essay.
- 1 A small city in the district of Dusūq, in the Governorate of Kafr al-Shaykh, a place that was famous for religious education.
  - 2 Memorizing the Qurʾān remains an integral component of the al-Azhar educational system to this day. In the past, students typically attended local schools in their villages, known as *kuttāb*, where they focused on learning Arabic and memorizing the Qurʾān. Drāz, however, had a different experience. His father chose to send him to a private tutor who played a crucial role in facilitating his early memorization of the Qurʾān compared to his peers.
  - 3 Despite the existence of Azhari institutes, the foundational stage of education retained similarities to the pre-modern system, as illustrated by Richard Bulliet. Cf. Richard W. Bulliet, “The Age Structure of Medieval Islamic Education.” In *Studia Islamica*, 1983: 105–117.
  - 4 This occurred amid the Egyptian Revolution of 1919, a nationwide revolt against the British mandate in Egypt and Sudan; Cf. Aḥmad Muṣṭafā Faḍliyyah, *Al-ʿAllāmah Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz*, (Cairo: Maktabat al-īmān, 2010), pp. 37-45.
  - 5 In 1936, Muḥammad Muṣṭafā al-Marāghī (d. 1945), the Grand Imām of al-Azhar, organized a delegation known as the Fuʿad I delegation, sending several scholars to study in Europe. Among them were ʿAbd al-ʿAziz al-Marāghī and Maḥmūd Ḥubullāh, who were tasked with studying History and Philosophy in France. Drāz, along with ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Tāj, Muḥammad Muḥammadayn al-Faḥhām, ʿAfīfī ʿAbd al-Fattāh, and ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm Maḥmūd, were sent to France to pursue studies in comparative religion. Muḥammad Kāmil al-Fiḳī, *Al-Azhar wa atharuh fī al-naḥḍah al-adabīyah al-ḥadīthah*, (Cairo: Al-Maṭbaʿah al-minbarīyah bi-al-azhar al-sharīf, 1956), vol. 2, p. 80.
  - 6 In a meeting with Drāz’s eldest son, Muḥsin, I inquired about why his father refused to assume the Grand Imām’s position. Muḥsin explained that his father declined the role out of concern that he might not be able to preserve al-Azhar’s institutional religious freedom. Drāz feared potential intervention by the Cabinet of Egypt in al-Azhar’s affairs, prompting his decision. This information was obtained through a personal interview in Cairo in June 2022. Cf. Faḍliyyah, *Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz*, pp. 17-18.
  - 7 Faḍliyyah, *Al-ʿAllāmah*, pp. 89-91.
  - 8 Kenneth W. Morgan, *Islam, the Straight Path: Islam Interpreted by Muslims*, (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1958), pp. 3-41.
  - 9 ʿAbd al-ʿAzīm al-Maṭʿanī, “Fikr al-ʿamāliqah: Mabādʾ al-qānūn al-dawli wa-al-Islām.” In *Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz: drāsāt wa buḥūth bi qalam talāmīzatih wa muʿāshirih*, (Cairo: Dār al-qalam li-al-nashr wa-al-tawzīʿ, 2007), p. 31.

- 10 Al-Maṭʿanī, *Fikr al-ʿamāliqah*, p. 33.
- 11 I retrieved a copy of this paper from Drāz’s son, Muḥsin, in Cairo in June 2022.
- 12 This information was obtained by interviewing Drāz’s eldest son, Muḥsin, in Cairo in June 2022.
- 13 Faḍliyyah, *Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz*, p. 15-16.
- 14 Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, “Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz, al-ʿalim al-ʿallāmah, al-baḥr al-fahāmah,” in *Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz: Dirāsāt wa buḥūth bi Qalam talāmizatihi wa muʿāshirih* (Cairo: Dār al-qalam liʾl-nashr waʾl-tawzīʿ, 2007), 21.
- 15 Al-Qaraḍāwī, “Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz,” p. 24.
- 16 Faḍliyyah, *Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz*, p. 18.
- 17 M. A. Drāz, *The Moral World of the Qurʾan by M. A. Draz*, translated by Danielle Robinson and Rebecca Masterton, (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008).
- 18 Basma I. Abdelgafar, *Morality in the Qurʾan: The Greater Good of Humanity*, (Malaysia: Islamic Book Trust, 2018).
- 19 Drāz, *The Moral World of the Qurʾān*, p. 13.
- 20 Muḥammad ʿAbd Allāh Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq fī al-Qurʾān: Dirāsah muqāranah lil-akhlāq al-naẓariyya fī al-Qurʾān: mulḥaq bihā taṣnīf lil-āyāt al-mukhtāra allatī tukawin al-dastūr al-kāmil lil-akhlāq al-ʿamalīya*, edited by Al-Sayyid Muḥammad Badawī, translated by ʿAbd al-Ṣabūr Shāhīn, (Beirut: Muʿassasat al-risāla, 1974), p. 22.
- 21 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 136-137.
- 22 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 141-142. All the translations of the Qurʾanic verses are sourced from <https://quran.com>.
- 23 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 163-171.
- 24 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 245-250
- 25 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 258-259
- 26 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 261.
- 27 Other examples that Drāz cited from the Hebrew Bible in this category are: (Deuteronomy, 5: 25; 7:12-16; 11:13; 12:5-6; 15:9), (Genesis, 3:3; 4:11-12; 9:1; 22:16-17; 27:28-29; 35:11-12), and (Exodus, 23: 25-27, 15; 13); from the Gospels, (John, 19 and 21), (Mark, 10, 21), (Luke, 12:29-34), (1 Timothy 6:17-19), and (1 John 2: 15-25) See Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 277-282.
- 28 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, 282; Cf., (Q. 4:11, 12, 24, and 66), Drāz categorizes all the verses in the Qurʾān that mention rewards or punishments and organizes them into a chart. Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 401-402.
- 29 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 424-470.
- 30 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 585-587.

- 31 Little and Twiss argue, "It is hard to see how one can trace relationships between two concepts, particularly concepts as complex as religion and morality." David Little and Sumner B. Twiss, *Comparative Religious Ethics*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 6.
- 32 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 19-134.
- 33 Kant states, "Philosophy based on experience is said to be empirical; but if its doctrines are abstract and prior, it is said to be pure. Pure and merely formal philosophy is then called logic, but logic becomes metaphysics when it is focused on definite metal objects. This is the origin of the idea that there are two kinds of metaphysics, the metaphysic of nature and the metaphysic of morals. Physics, for example, is both empirical and theoretical, and so is ethics; but the empirical part of ethics should be called *practical anthropology*, while its theory is properly called *morals*." Immanuel Kant, and R. Bernard Blakney, *An Immanuel Kant Reader*, ed. 1<sup>st</sup>, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 166.
- 34 David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*, (Chicago: Open Court Pub.), 1946.
- 35 Stern states: "For Kierkegaard, however, because Hegel's solution to the problem of moral obligation was intended to avoid any Kantian tension between duty and inclination, this meant that the social command account could not treat morality as asking too much of us as individuals; it thus threatened to render our moral lives... by reducing the moral demand." Robert Stern, *Understanding Moral Obligation: Kant, Hegel, Kierkegaard*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 1-3.
- 36 C. Stephen Evans, *God and moral obligation*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 25.
- 37 Chris Heathwood, "Could Morality Have a Source?" In *Journal of Ethics & Social Philosophy* 6, no. 2 (n.d.) pp. 2-3.
- 38 The Qur'anic verses that discuss wine are: (Q. 2: 219; 4: 43; 16:67; and 5: 90-91)
- 39 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 27.
- 40 Mu'tazilah are a theological school that can be traced back to its founder Wāṣil ibn Aṭā' (699-749). They are defenders of reason in Islam and, in the 8<sup>th</sup> century, were the first to use the Hellenistic philosophy to drive their dogmatic points. They give preference to reason over revelation. Editors of *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "Mu'tazilah."
- 41 The Shī'ah were a political group that supported the fourth Caliph of Muhammad, 'Alī ibn Abī Talib, and later they supported 'Alī's descendants. This group developed a religious and theological movement different from Sunni Islam and has important sects to which the term Shī'ism is applied. Newman, "Shī'i," in *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
- 42 Ash'ariyyah is a theological school that supports the use of reason and speculative theology to defend the faith. It was founded by Abū al-Hassan al-Ash'arī in the



- 10<sup>th</sup> century. Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia, "Ash'ariyyah," Encyclopedia Britannica, (October 21, 2009), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Ashariyyah>, accessed on 3/16/2023.
- 43 Maturidiyyah is a school of theology founded in the 10<sup>th</sup> century by Abū Mansur al-Maturīdī (d.944). They are very similar to the Ash'ariyah, but they rely on the Qur'ān without reasoning or free interpretation; Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopedia, "Māturīdiyyah," (Encyclopedia Britannica, April 3, 2020), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Maturidiyyah>, accessed on 3/16/2023.
- 44 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 22-26.
- 45 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 26.
- 46 The Qur'ān states, "And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it; And inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness" (Q. 91:7-8); "Rather, human, against himself, will be a witness" (Q. 75:14); "Have We not made for him two eyes? And a tongue and two lips? And have shown him the two ways?" (Q. 90: 8-10); Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 27.
- 47 The Qur'ān states, "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam and carried them on land and sea and provided for them of the good things and preferred them over much of what We have created, with [definite] preference" (Q. 17:70).
- 48 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 33
- 49 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 117.
- 50 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 36.
- 51 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 98.
- 52 J. P. Plamenatz and Duignan Brian, "Jeremy Bentham." Encyclopedia Britannica, February 11, 2023. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jeremy-Bentham> accessed on 3/16/2023.
- 53 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 111.
- 54 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 115.
- 55 Bergson argues that there are two types of Morality: closed, whose religion is static, and open, whose religion is dynamic. Leonard Lawlor and Valentine Moulard-Leonard, "Henri Bergson," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, edited by Edward N. Zalta, September 21, 2021, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2022/entries/bergson>, accessed on 3/16/2023.
- 56 Henri Bergson, *The Two Sources of Morality and Religion*, translated by Brereton R. Ashley, Audra C., & W. Horsfall Carter, (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1935), p. 87.
- 57 Bergson, *The two sources of morality and religion*, p. 9.
- 58 Bergson, *The two sources of morality and religion*, p. 5.

- 59 Bergson, *The two sources of morality and religion*, p. 89.
- 60 Bergson, *The two sources of morality and religion*, p. 16-17.
- 61 Bergson, *The two sources of morality and religion*, p. 91.
- 62 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 23-24.
- 63 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 25.
- 64 Rauh wrote *L'Expérience Morale* (1890) and *Essai sur le fondement Métaphysique de la morale* (1903).
- 65 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 118-123.
- 66 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 127.
- 67 Drāz, *La morale du Koran*, pp. 68-69; Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 98-98.
- 68 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 131-34.
- 69 In his work "The Incoherence of the Incoherence," Ibn Rushd argues that all prophets are genius philosophers and, conversely, philosophers are the heirs of the prophets. This assertion is grounded in his broader argument that philosophy and religion are not contradictory but, in fact, complementary to each other. Ibn Rushd, *Averroes' Tahafut Al-Tahafut (The Incoherence of the Incoherence)*, translated by Simon Van Den Bergh, (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 359.
- 70 He refers to religion in the general sense; he does not mean Islam alone, as indicated in his footnote on page 14. Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 14.
- 71 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, pp. 14-15.
- 72 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 678.
- 73 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 679.
- 74 Drāz, *Dustūr al-akhlāq*, p. 679.
- 75 Elizabeth Bucar, *Creative Conformity: The Feminist Politics of U.S. Catholic and Iranian Shi'i Women*, (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011), p. 1.
- 76 Aaron Stalnaker, *Overcoming our evil: human nature and spiritual exercises in Xunzi and Augustine* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2006), pp. 296-297.