

- Introduction to *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, by renowned scholar of Islamic Studies Dr. Muhammad Abdel Haleem (SOAS University)
  - “The late Professor Muhammad Abd Allah Draz was born in Egypt in 1894. He came from a family of distinguished scholars in religious studies, and studied in Cairo at al-Azhar, the most ancient and respected of Islamic Universities. Draz graduated in 1916, and went on to teach Qur'anic studies at al-Azhar for some eight years, commenting on some of the great Islamic scholarly texts, such as the Muwii.fii.qii.t of al-Shatib'i (d. 790/1388), one of the classics of Islamic jurisprudence. He was then sent on a scholarship to prepare for a doctorate at the Sorbonne. In Paris, he studied philosophy, the history of religions, psychology and ethics, before embarking on the preparation and writing of two dissertations, *Initiation au Koran* (published as part of the London Qur'an Series as *Introduction to the Qur'an* in 2000) and this work, the major and monumental *La morale du Koran*. Both were examined in December 1947, and resulted in Draz being awarded a doctorate with the highest distinction. On his return to Egypt, Draz taught at al-Azhar and Cairo Universities, producing many distinguished studies in Arabic. He died at a conference in Pakistan in January 1959. In preparing this book, Draz employed both his great knowledge of the Qur'an and Islamic sources, and his training in Western scholarship gained at the Sorbonne. *The Moral World of the Qur'an* deals comprehensively with the most fundamental and significant ethical issues in Qur'anic scholarship, rooting its investigation firmly in the Qur'anic text itself, and, as Draz himself says in his introduction, provided what was at the time the first attempt in European scholarship to extract the Qur'an's general ethical principles and formulate its practical rules with the aim of presenting them as a unified ethical system. Prior to the publication of *La morale du Koran*, studies of Qur'anic ethics in European scholarship were restricted in scope, and often presented a distorted picture. Draz's application of rigorous academic investigation and reasoned treatment, in combination with his knowledge of traditional Islamic and modern Western scholarship resulted in a refreshing and stimulating approach, both in terms of the issues it raises, its seriousness in engaging with its subject matter, and its thorough investigation of the moral world of the Qur'an. This, then, is a book of vital significance to anyone wishing to engage with modern Islamic ethics.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Muhammad Abdel Haleem, “Introduction,” in *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, by Muhammad ‘Abd Allāh Draz (London; New York; I.B. Tauris, 2008). Pages vii-viii.