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The Moral Value System in The Qur'an: An Analysis of Draz's Contribution

Kur'an'da Ahlaki Deęerler Sistemi: Draz'ın Katkısına Dair Bir Analiz

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The Moral Value System in the Qur'an: An Analysis of Draz's Contribution

Abstract

This article aims to analyze the contribution of Mohammed Abdallah Draz in the development of the theory of the value system in the Holy Qur'an. It seeks to answer how Draz developed his theory of the value system in the Qur'an. The paper relies on an analysis of Draz's book "The Moral World of the Qur'an" focusing on his critique of the treatment of Qur'anic ethics in Islamic heritage and modern Western thought. It also examines his perspective on theoretical and practical ethics in the Qur'an. Consequently, he presents his viewpoint on the necessity of a holistic approach to ethics through the moral theory found in the Qur'an, encompassing both theoretical and practical aspects. In addition, studying ethics through the Qur'an represents a fundamental approach to understanding ethical theories in Islam and addressing the challenges that impede Muslims from embodying these ethics. Moreover, Draz's study represents the first "objective exegesis" of the Holy Qur'an undertaken by Muslims in the modern era, signifying a significant advancement in the study of ethics in Islam, despite its integration with modern ethical philosophical approaches.

Keywords: Ethics, Values, Qur'an, Holistic Approach, Draz.

Kur'an'da Ahlaki Değerler Sistemi: Draz'ın Katkısına Dair Bir Analiz

Öz

Bu makale, Kur'an-ı Kerim'deki değerler sistemi teorisinin gelişiminde Muhammed Abdallah Draz'ın katkısını incelemeyi amaçlamakla birlikte Draz'ın Kur'an'daki değerler sistemi teorisini nasıl geliştirdiğini cevaplamaya çalışmaktadır. Makale, Draz'ın Modern Batı düşüncesi ve İslam geleneğindeki Kur'an ahlakı yorumunun eleştirisine odaklanan "The Moral World of the Qur'an" adlı kitabının analizine dayanmaktadır. Ayrıca onun Kur'an'daki teorik ve pratik ahlaka bakış açısını da incelemektedir. Dolayısıyla Draz hem teorik hem de pratik yönleri bulunan Kur'an'daki ahlak teorisi üzerinden ahlaka bütüncül bir yaklaşımın gerekliliğinden bahseder. Bununla birlikte ahlakı Kur'an üzerinden irdelemek İslam'daki ahlak teorilerini anlamak ve Müslümanların bu ahlakı benimsemelerini engelleyen zorlukları ele almak için temel bir yaklaşımı temsil eder. Ayrıca Draz'ın çalışması, ahlak felsefesinde modern yaklaşımlarla entegre olmasına rağmen modern çağda Müslümanlar tarafından girilen İslam geleneği içindeki ahlak çalışmalarında önemli bir ilerlemeye işaret etmekte olan ilk "nesnel Kur'an tefsiri" niteliğini taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ahlak, Değerler, Kur'an, Bütüncül Yaklaşım, Draz.

Introduction

Mohammad Abdallah Draz, a scholar who received Islamic (Al-Azhar) and Western (Sorbonne) education, is renowned as “the son of Al-Azhar and the son of The Sorbonne.”¹ He was one of the encyclopedic scholars who blended the sciences of Shari’a and the culture of his time. Draz had an excellent command of French and Arabic sciences, having been raised by both Al-Azhar and Sorbonne. If you want to refer to his association with Al-Azhar, he was a devoted son, and his education there was solid. If you wish to refer to his association with Sorbonne, he was one of its distinguished graduates, and his affiliation with it was a source of pride.²

Thanks to his profound understanding of Islamic and Western cultures, Draz developed a distinctive and analytical perspective that was intellectually accessible but not simplistic.³ His education in both knowledge systems granted him significant insights into both civilizations’ ethical heritage, enabling him to adopt a multifaceted perspective, expand his horizons, conduct in-depth analyses, accurately cite evidence, and present compelling arguments.

Draz’s “The Mural World of The Qur’ān” is an important piece of his scholarly writings. This groundbreaking work was presented as his Ph.D. dissertation in the 1950s and offered his unique perspective on the value system of the Qur’ān. It was the first attempt in modern Islamic thought to critically and analytically approach the issue of ethics and construct an Islamic ethical theory from the Qur’ān.⁴ Draz’s work was inspired by a new awareness that recognizes the existence of an independent ethical system based on Divine Reve-

1 Muḥammad al-Mukhtār al-Shinqīṭī, *Faylasūf al-Qur’ān al-Karīm: Muḥammad ‘Abd Allāh Darāz ḥayātuhu wa-āthāruhu* (al-Qāhirah: Dār al-Mashriq, 2017), 29; Muḥammad al-Mukhtār al-Shinqīṭī, *Khayrat al-‘uqūl al-Muslimah fī al-qarn al-‘ishrīn* (Bayrūt: al-Shabakah al-‘Arabīyah lil-Abḥāth wa-al-Nashr, 2016), 25.

2 Yūsuf al-Qaraḍāwī, *fī Wadā’ al-A’lām* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-mu’āṣir, 2003), 34.

3 al-Shinqīṭī, *Faylasūf al-Qur’ān al-Karīm*, 25.

4 M.A. Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur’an*, Translated by Danielle Robinson and Rebecca Masterton (London: I.B.Tauris & Co Ltd, 2008), 5.

lation.⁵ Muhammad Abdel Haleem, in his forward to the English translation of the book, highlights Draz's outstanding scholarship and his profound knowledge of the Qur'an and Islamic scholarship, as well as his familiarity with French and English literature on ethics.⁶

As al-Sayyid asserts, Draz's book introduced a crucial concept, that religion, especially Islam, encompasses a comprehensive ethical system covering thought, action, and behavior. It emphasized that ethical systems cannot be separated into those based on reason and those based on religion, as all ethical behavior must have a foundation in religion.⁷

Malkawi, too, asserts that what distinguishes Draz's book is his search for the foundations of ethics in the Qur'an. He was searching for aspects of "originality" in the way the Holy Qur'an presents a moral value system.⁸

Preparing for his work, Draz engaged both his extensive knowledge of the Qur'an and Islamic sources, and his training in Western scholarship acquired at the Sorbonne. Therefore, the reader of "The Moral World of the Qur'an" will find that he systematically addresses the most fundamental and substantive ethical issues in Qur'anic scholarship. It is, as the translators of the book noted, "a formidable intellectual masterpiece, a work of classical Islamic scholarship in a modernist form".⁹

According to al-Khatib, Draz's exploration of moral philosophy within the Qur'an stands out due to his engagement with contemporary philosophical inquiries, particularly influenced by Kant's philosophy. Through his seminal work, "The Moral World of the Qur'an", Draz undertook the pioneering task of formulating a comprehensive understanding of Qur'anic ethics through the lens of moral philosophy. His intention seemed to be twofold: to establish that Islam

5 Ridwan al-Sayyid, "The System of Values and Ethics in Islam," *Al Tafahom*, 06 (2011), 12.

6 Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, 7.

7 al-Sayyid, *The System of Values and Ethics in Islam*, 12.

8 Fathī Malkāwī, "Manhaj Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Darāz fī al-ta'ṣīl al-Islāmī li-'Ilm al-akhlāq", *Islāmīyat al-Ma'rifa*, 14/53, (Summer 2008), 9.

9 Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, iv. From the translator's note.

encompasses a comprehensive moral system and to highlight the intimate relationship between religion and morality. This endeavor held particular significance within the context of positivist social philosophy prevailing in France. Hence, Draz consciously opted to delve into the Qur'ānic text for this purpose.¹⁰ Al-Samman echoed a similar viewpoint, contending that the core objective of the book is to underscore the broad nature of ethics originating from the Qur'ān, encompassing both theoretical and practical dimensions. According to al-Samman, the moral sense is an inherent and innate manifestation, ingrained within the human soul from its very inception. However, he also recognizes that this inherent moral law alone is inadequate, as external influences such as the environment, personal interests, and desires can corrupt it. Consequently, the advent of revelation became necessary to rectify and restore the distorted elements, offering a comprehensive framework for the moral law.¹¹

For Badawi, none of the philosophers, whether from Western or Eastern traditions, have undertaken a comprehensive effort to completely extract the moral law from the Holy Qur'ān. The term "moral law", as understood by moral philosophers, refers to the overarching theoretical foundations and principles that establish a framework for achieving unity and harmony among specific moral aspects. Thus, it is truly fortunate that Draz took on the remarkable task of addressing this important endeavor.¹²

Based on previous reviews of the literature, it becomes evident that Draz expressed dissatisfaction with existing approaches to the value system of the Qur'ān prevalent during his time. Consequently, he endeavored to present a comprehensive theory of Qur'ānic ethics, employing a strategy based on two interrelated processes. The

10 Mu'taz Al-khatib, "Introduction to the Study of the History of Ethical Thought in Egypt in the Context of Reform and Renaissance Projects", *Tabayyun*. 2/26, (2018), 102.

11 Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh al-Sammān, "Dustūr al-akhlāq fī al-Qur'ān" in Aḥmad Muṣṭafā Faḍīla, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Darāz Dirāsāt wa-buḥūth (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 2007), 127.

12 al-Sayyid Muḥammad Badawī, "al-Ilzām al-khuluqī 'inda al-Duktūr Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Darāz", in Aḥmad Muṣṭafā Faḍīla, Muḥammad 'Abd Allāh Darāz Dirāsāt wa-buḥūth (Kuwait: Dār al-Qalam, 2007), 106-107.

first process involved a critical evaluation of the available literature, encompassing diverse aspects such as the Islamic ethical heritage (including Philosophy, Jurisprudence, Kalām, and Tasawwuf) and the Western heritage (including the theoretical formulations of Greek heritage and a critique of modern Western ethical theories). The second process focused on constructing a general ethical framework, rooted in the Qur'ān, which harmonized both theoretical and practical dimensions of ethics. Draz believed that this approach would enable Muslims to find all their ethical needs fulfilled within the Qur'ān, whether from a theoretical or practical standpoint. Furthermore, he asserted that the Holy Qur'ān provides a timeless and universal formulation capable of regulating ethical behavior for humankind as a whole, irrespective of temporal and existential changes.¹³

This paper aims to explore Draz's significant contributions to elucidating the value system in the Qur'ān. To achieve this, the paper focuses on two key aspects: Draz's critical evaluation of existing approaches to the value system in the Qur'ān and his construction of the theory of Qur'ānic ethics.

1. Draz's Critique of Available Approaches to the Qur'ānic Value System

Before formulating his theory of the value system in the Qur'ān, Draz adopted a critical approach to the state of the question before his work. He made a thorough critical evaluation of Western and Islamic heritage on ethics. He attempted to discover the problems and shortcomings of traditional approaches to ethics in both traditions. Draz, stated, to our knowledge, no one has up to now undertaken to expound the ethical law of the Qur'ān as a whole; nor have its principles and rules been presented as a coherent structure, independently of its links with related disciplines. That is what we intend to achieve, as far as we can.¹⁴ The following section is his critical evaluation of both traditions; Western and Islamic cultural traditions, regarding the ethics in the Qur'ān.

¹³ Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, 2-3.

¹⁴ Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, 3.

1.1. The Selective and Fragmented Western Studies of the Qur'ānic Ethics

Draz was of the view that Western studies on the Qur'ānic ethics are essentially fragmented and selective. They are reductive in their essence, about the contribution of the Qur'ān in the construction of ethical theory. According to Draz:

A cursory glance at the treatises on general ethics written by Western scholars is enough to observe that they leave a great void in this field, due to their absolute silence on Qur'ānic ethics. In effect, these treatises tell us at considerable length about moral principles such as they have been viewed in Greek paganism, and then in the Jewish and Christian religions, but once these three periods have been covered, they suddenly transport us, with a brisk leap, to modern times in Europe, leaving aside everything that touches upon moral law in Islam.¹⁵

This silence from Western scholars regarding the contribution of the Qur'ān in the domain of ethics led to big and deep void in the study of ethics; theoretically and practically. He sees that, although "The Qur'ānic contribution in these matters is of inestimable value." Therefore, he asked very important question about this non-understandable silence, saying: "The history of ethical doctrines can only gain in scope, depth and harmony, and moral problems will only benefit in resolving their difficulties, whether they be new or perennial. Is it not an immense loss that such a doctrine should be omitted in this way and passed over in silence?"¹⁶

Accordingly, he realized that it is necessary to approach the topic anew, addressing it with a methodology that would go beyond the failures of selective Western approaches, as well as avoid their mistakes, rectify them, and fill this void in Western scientific literature. Thus, we may be able to present the true face of Qur'ānic ethics to Western scholars and reach competent acculturation in this matter. Moreover, from a theoretical aspect, Draz noticed a huge void in the

15 Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, 1.

16 Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, 2.

general literature on ethics, whereby he found a huge leap from Greco Paganism to Jewish and Christian religions and then to modern European ages while ignoring anything that relates to Qur'anic ethics.¹⁷

Regarding the general studies on Islam in the 19th century, there have been Orientalist attempts to extract Ethical principles from the Qur'an. However, these attempts were limited in scope whereby "all their efforts were limited to collecting a number, small or big, of verses from the Qur'an related to worship or behavior, and translate them".¹⁸ In this regard, Draz cites examples of these collections of selected texts from the Qur'an. For example, the orientalist Garcin de Tassy being the first, in his book *The Qur'an: Principles and Obligations*¹⁹ followed by another Orientalist, Le Fevre, who published *Mohammed: Ethical, Civil and Religious Laws*²⁰ and then Barthelemy Saint-Hilaire in his book *Mohammad and the Qur'an*, published in 1865.²¹ Moreover, in terms of content, the literature is far from an accurate presentation of Qur'anic ethics theory. These faults in the content are due to "either inaccurate translations or poor summaries, or both. This is clear in the Orientalist Jules La Beaume's book: Analysing the verses of the Qur'an,²² despite his works being the least inaccurate of analytical works in the field."²³

1.2. The Partiality of Approaches to the Qur'anic Ethics among Muslim Scholars

In the Islamic context, Draz evaluated previous studies on the subject in the Islamic context, arriving at three critical observations; namely, the perspective of the approaches to Ethics in Islamic thought,

17 Abdurrahman Hililli, "Dustur Al-Akhlaq Fi Al-Qur'an .. Bi Munasabt Murur Nisf Qarn 'ala Rahil Draz" (Access 28 May, 2008).

18 Draz, *The Moral World of the Qur'an*, 2.

19 Garcin de Tassy, *doctrines et devoirs de la religion Musulmane; Tires Textuellement do Coran* (Paris: La Librairie Orientale, 1826).

20 M. Lefevre, *Les lois morales, religieuses et civiles de Mahomet extraites du Koran* (Paris: victor Legou Libraire, 1850).

21 Barthelemy Saint-Hilaire, *Mahomet et le Koran* (Paris: Didier et c's libuar es-editeurs, 1865).

22 Jules La Beaume, *Le Koran Analyse d'Après la Traduction de M. Kasimirski* (Paris: Maisonneuve libraires — editeurs, 1878).

23 Abdurrahman Hililli, "al-Ta'sil Al-Qur'ani Li Al-M'arifah: Qadhiyat al-Akhlaq Namauthujan", (Access 5 July, 2008).

the theoretical framework of these approaches, and the applied Ethics and how they were addressed. Draz believes that Islamic literature “has only known two types of Ethical teachings”.²⁴ The first type is practical advice aimed at rectifying ethical behavior, whereby the advice serves to convince of the higher values of virtue and morality. The second type is a description of the nature of the self (*al-nafs*) and its capabilities, followed by defining virtue and categorizing it, usually according to the Platonic or Aristotelian models, one usually follows the other in the writings of the same author²⁵. Therefore, Islamic writings on ethics have been polarized by two schools; one being partial and limited to advice with no theoretical aspect, while the other is completely immersed in the Greek Philosophical perspective, namely the Aristotelian and Platonic schools.²⁶

Furthermore, Draz sees that the philosophical efforts of al-Fārābī, Avicenna, and others, adopted the Greek perspective, allowing it to have hegemony over their work, as well as pursuing achievements through it - with additions that are incoherent at a deep level - with partial add-ons to its original Greek philosophical structure. Hence, Qur’ānic ethics became marginal in their works and were certainly not the focus. Accordingly, the books of ethics were “simply the product of mankind, in which authors exercised great efforts, noting down the outcomes of their reflections and philosophical studies. But the comprehensive Qur’ānic text wasn’t present in these writings, or barely present as a second level source.”²⁷

1.2.1. The Scattered Ethical Approaches

In addition to the previous criticisms, Draz was of the view that the approaches to ethics were scattered and not integrated into one theory that addresses the theoretical and practical aspects of Ethics.

Draz acknowledges that Muslim Jurists examined the criterion of Good and Evil. In addition, several legal scholars discussed the conditions of responsibility. Moreover, some ethicists discussed the

24 Draz, *Moral world of the Qur’an*, 2.

25 Draz, *Moral world of the Qur’an*, 2-3

26 al-Khatib, Introduction to the Study of the History of Ethical Thought, 87.

27 Draz, *Moral world of the Qur’an*, 3.

beneficial outcome or purpose of human efforts and the imperative of good intention. However, these efforts remained scattered in books that were not solely written to address the question of ethics but were rather predominated by other opinions in law, jurisprudence, and language.

Furthermore, these writings were based on personal opinion or the opinion of certain schools of thought and did not refer to Qur'ānic verses except as supporting evidence from a theoretical and practical aspect. That is to say: "Muslim scholars exerted great efforts on this topic from a very early stage" whereby we see the theologians, the jurists, the ethicists, and the Sufis – each approaching a certain aspect of ethics. The problem with these ideas on Ethics is that they "remained scattered in various schools that touch upon ethics – either closely or remotely."²⁸ This means that those studies and ideas were not specifically studies of Ethics in the particular sense, even though they contained references to ethics. These studies and ideas indirectly touched upon research into ethics in personal or ideological studies, or to support a certain idea or school of thought, and thus weren't concerned with devising a comprehensive and complementary ethical theory that is essentially Qur'ānic. This kept the approach to ethics in our old Islamic thought a partial approach that lacked unity in the subject and reference.

1.2.2. The Absence of a Topic and Theoretical Unity

Draz believes that from a practical aspect, we can find Islamic efforts to construct an Islamic Ethical theory that combines the theoretical with the practical. However, these efforts do not go beyond collecting some components and so the theory was incomplete and did not fulfill its potential, and was not built upon. Furthermore, he gives examples of these efforts exerted by pioneers in different areas of Islamic knowledge.

He sees that al-Ghazālī, for example, attempted to analyze the essence of the Qur'ān in his book; *Jawāhir al-Qur'ān*, outlining that these essentials belong to two main components, one being knowl-

²⁸ Draz, *Moral world of the Qur'an*, 3.

edge and the other behavior. Draz sees al-Ghazālī's work of great value, especially, the clear foundation al-Ghazālī used in his work when collecting verses related to the practical element of Ethics. However, this categorization was not built upon and was only done according to the order of chapters (*sūras*) with no sequencing of ideas. Accordingly, the unity of each *sūra* was absent, and there was no rational unity connecting the chosen chapters nor a methodological categorization required for teaching. On the other hand, the scholars of Tafsīr, such as Qādī al-Jassās and Qādī Abū Bakr Ibn al-'Arabī and the Indian scholar Mulla Ahmad and others – their writing on Ethics lacked cohesion. The “Qur'ānic texts that have ethical implications immersed in an ambiguous way within texts related to other topics like Jurisprudence, Kalām, the universe... and in some cases the Qur'ānic text is only remotely connected to the topic.”²⁹

As a result, Draz makes a firm critical judgment that “all authors, including al-Ghazālī, collected Qur'ānic verses in their way and according to the order of *sūras* – making their selections simply a collection of miscellaneous material that is not connected by any similarity or closeness and with no apparent sequencing of ideas..” Thus there is a problem of collecting miscellaneous material, and a problem of lack of logical sequencing and construction of ideas. Draz, critically, concluded that “the way in which they have all, including al-Ghazālī, grouped the passages according to the order of the suras, makes their extracts appear as collections of subjects that are unrelated and without structure.”³⁰ It is the problem of collecting scattered materials and the absence of sequence and logical construction of ideas. This is what made the process of theoretical ethical construction difficult.

Before going to Draz's effort to construct his theory of the Qur'ānic value system, it is clear that his criticism of both the Western approach focused on its biased and selective methodology. Moreover, his criticisms of the Islamic approach focused on being partial and scattered, and lacking unity in subject and theory. Accordingly, he moved on to “extract ethical law from the Qur'ān in its entirety”, in which no one presented “its principles” or “foundations/rules” in

29 Draz, *Moral world of the Qur'an*, 3.

30 Draz, *Moral world of the Qur'an*, 3.

the form of a logically coherent and cohesive complete theoretical construct, independent of other near or distant fields of knowledge.³¹

2. Draz's Qur'ānic Value System Theory and its Foundations

If establishing the Qur'ānic value system, Draz confirms that he seeks to discover and extract the "moral law" in its two branches. "Theory and Practice", through his study of "the Qur'ānic text".³² This requires studying the Qur'ān and extracting the integrated moral structure in theory and practice. Draz begins by emphasizing that the moral element or the element of goodness, in the Qur'ān is complementary to the aspects of knowledge and belief. Where he affirms, "the human soul is not nourished by theoretical facts alone. In addition to man's need for knowledge and belief, he urgently needs the practical rule capable of directing his activity at every moment of his life, whether in his actions with himself or in his relations with others or with his Creator".³³ It is not enough for a person to be a true believer to believe deeply in the revealed truths, but rather he must worship God and do good. That is why, in terms of the importance of the practical aspect in the Qur'ān, it is repeatedly mentioned explicitly, as an indispensable condition for prosperity and happiness in the hereafter.³⁴

Qur'ān, as a book of guidance, is comprehensive for both sides, and in both matters it has what makes us draw from it the "moral law" or the moral theory that governs the theoretical and practical aspects. That's because the Qur'ān came to guide man by presenting a unifying vision of the world that shows the path of truth to man, as well as presenting a practical approach to how to achieve that vision in reality to chart the path of goodness for man. According to Draz, the Qur'ānic value system is "a synthesis of structures, as it not only meets all legal, moral, social, and religious demands". However, we find this value system, "the spirit of reconciling the various tenden-

31 Draz, *Moral world of the Qur'an*, 3.

32 Mohammed Abdullah Draz, *Dustur Al-Akhlaq fi Al-Qur'an* (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Risalah, 1998), 8.

33 Mohammed Abdullah Draz, *Madkhal Ila Al-Qur'an Al-Kareem* (Cairo: Mu'assasat Iqra', 2014), 83.

34 Draz, *Madkhal Ila Al-Qur'an*, 83-84.

cies deeply penetrated into it; it is liberating and systematic, rational and mystical, soft and hard, realistic and idealistic, conservative and progressive, all at once”.³⁵

By analyzing Draz’s book, “*The Moral world of the Qur’ān*”, we can distinguish the effort he made in defining the features of Qur’ānic practical ethics, and their theoretical foundations. The Qur’ānic ethical theory, accordingly, is a composition of compositions as it does not only meet all the legal, social, ethical, and religious requirements, but we find in it, and at a deep level, reconciliation between all that seems to be conflicting.³⁶ Moreover, as mentioned above, Draz initially distinguishes between two branches of what he calls the “moral law” in the Qur’ān, or what can be called the science of ethics, namely, theoretical ethics and practical ethics.

2.1. Applied Ethics

Draz believes that practical ethics respond to the principle of “our need to see virtue greater than our need to define it”, as it “answers us to “what should I do?” That is the most general and urgent question, it is the daily nutrition of the human soul. In the Qur’ān, according to Draz, we find “the theoretical basis and the general principles of morality,” as well as “the great and wonderful effects of applied ethics that this Qur’ān presented to us”.³⁷

2.1.1. Characteristics of Practical Ethics in the Qur’ān

Draz believed that the Qur’ān in this practical aspect has three advantages; extension, integration and completion.

a. Extension (Endorsement and Dominance)

The Qur’ān was distinguished by its wide extension, in which it contained the essence of the moral law as a whole, after it remained scattered in the heritage of the predecessors. The Qur’ān, in terms of its preservation of what preceded it and its continuation with it, is distinguished by that broad extension. Thus, the Qur’ān contained

³⁵ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 686.

³⁶ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 686.

³⁷ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 687; Hililli, *Dustur Al-Akhlaq*, 16

the essence of the whole moral law, which remained scattered in the teachings of the saints and the wise, among the founders and reformers, some of whom were separated from one another in time and place, and perhaps some of them did not leave any trace that preserves his teachings. Perhaps, this aspect is the most prominent feature of the Qur'ān, although it is not its most valuable feature.³⁸

b. Integration (Diversity in Unity)

The Qur'ān is also distinguished by its distinctive way of presenting different lessons from the past, so that it formulates their diversity in a unity that does not accept any clash, and drives them according to their differences in a framework of complete agreement. Moreover, the Qur'ān removed the manifestations of excess and negligence from the previous laws, established them on balance, directed them in one direction, and spread its monotheistic spirit in them. This is because the Qur'ān began by removing from the previous laws everything that was apparently excessive or negligent, and after achieving a balance in them, pushing them all in one direction. Then he breathed into them from one spirit, so that it became right to be attributed to him, in particular, the sum of these morals.³⁹

c. Completion

According to Draz, the Qur'ānic ethics elevated that sacred building (the value system) and completed its construction. He said:

“What is more astonishing than that and the greatest originality of its creative side? In fact, it is not enough to describe the morals of the Qur'ān to say that it preserved and supported the heritage of its predecessors and that it reconciled the different opinions that separated their morals. Rather, we should add: that the Qur'ānic morals have raised that sacred structure, and embellished it, by adding to it chapters of complete novelty, of splendid progress, sealed forever the moral work.”⁴⁰

38 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 8; Salah Ismail, *Kayfa Nata'amal Ma'a Al-Qur'an Wa Al-Sunnah* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1987).

39 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 9.

40 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 9; Draz, *Madkhal Ila Al-Qur'an*, 99-100.

2.1.2. Components of the Practical Value System

Regarding the components of the value system in its practical aspect, Draz devotes his last five chapters of his book to addressing the system of practical ethics, namely: individual ethics, family ethics, social ethics, state ethics, and religious ethics. Then he added an annex, which contains the most fundamental Islamic virtues extracted from the texts from the Qur'ān.⁴¹

According to Draz, those components are very important, because they show us “how our activity in all fields of life finds its way in them”.⁴² He contented himself with listing the Qur'ānic texts indicating those components in a systematic order, and divided them into sub-headings, according to the aforementioned five areas,⁴³ so that the features of these morals can be clarified through the Qur'ān, to show the centrality of the Qur'ān in establishing them. Methodologically speaking, Draz, by relying on the Qur'ān alone, wanted to demonstrate that the Qur'ān is central and not marginal or for justification only. Thus, he criticized those who preceded him, who dealt with morals before looking into the Qur'ān, and then they resorted to the Qur'ān as an appended margin or justifying text.

2.2. The Qur'ānic Theoretical Ethics

On the theoretical side, Draz tried to construct the moral theoretical structure in the Qur'ān. Following this, he elaborated each issue in the terminology in which it was formulated by modern moralists and took the Qur'ān as a starting point to answer each issue, by referring directly to the text. He indicated that he encountered difficulty because the texts related to ethical theory are not as numerous and clear as those of practical rulings.⁴⁴ Draz divided theoretical ethics into five chapters: obligation, responsibility, retribution, intention and motives, and effort. It represents the foundations of the Qur'ānic ethical theory. However, Draz used his Islamic background and his modern education to integrate the modern science of ethics by using

41 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 686-778.

42 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 688.

43 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 688.

44 Hililli, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 16.

its terms, while he used the Qur'ānic indications for the content of those chapters.

Using the modern terms through which he studied the Qur'ānic text, Draz searched for the attributes of duty, the nature of the authority that emits obligation or assignment, the degree and conditions of human responsibility, the nature of the effort required for moral action, and the supreme principle that must motivate the will to work. Accordingly, he extracted formulas that answer his fundamental question: How does the Qur'ān depict the elements of moral life?⁴⁵

In response to this question, and by using modern Western Ethical research terminology, Draz believed that the theoretical aspect of Qur'ānic ethics is built upon the following criteria:

a. Obligation

The first of the theoretical foundations of morality is “obligation/compulsion”. Draz says:

Any ethical doctrine worthy of this name is based - in the end - on the idea of obligation. It is the basic rule, the reference, and the very basic element around which the entire ethical system revolves. The loss of this element leads to the crushing of the very essence of practical wisdom, and the annihilation of its essence. If there is no obligation, then there will be no responsibility, and if there is no responsibility, justice cannot be restored, and then chaos will spread, order will be corrupted, and savagery will prevail, not only in the field of reality but also in the field of law.⁴⁶

As he stated many times, Draz contracted his theory about the value system from the Qur'ān. Therefore he referred to it to find out the foundations of those criteria of theoretical ethics. Accordingly, if we search in the Qur'ān, we will find it a book of obligation and responsibility, because of the many commands and prohibitions it contains .

⁴⁵ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 16.

⁴⁶ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 21.

In the verses of the Qur'ān we find; "Indeed, We have sent down to you the Book, [O Muhammad], in truth. So worship Allah, [being] sincere to Him in religion" (The Qur'ān 39:2), "Indeed, I am Allah. There is no deity except Me, so worship Me and establish prayer for My remembrance" (The Qur'ān 20:14), "O mankind, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, that you may become righteous" (The Qur'ān 2: 21), "O you who have believed, do not consume one another's wealth unjustly but only [in lawful] business by mutual consent. And do not kill yourselves [or one another]. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful" (The Qur'ān 4: 29), and many other verses in the Qur'ān.

This indicates to us that the moral structure in the Qur'ān is based on the idea of duty, "For in the view of these morals, neither pleasure, nor benefit, nor happiness, nor perfection, all of these are not capable in and of themselves to establish this principle (unification), and all of that must be submissive." The authority of duty has the holiest and most realistic sense of the word and the highest degree".⁴⁷ The Qur'ānic duty cannot become an obligation to us except with our consent, so the duty that the Qur'ān calls for is not a compelling duty. God is a soul except for what He has given it (The Qur'ān 65: 7), and it also evokes praiseworthy goals that benefit the individual and the group.⁴⁸

b. Accountability

The second basis on which ethics is founded is the element of accountability/responsibility. This element is closely related to the element of obligation, while the other element that comes after it is the penalty. Draz is of the view that accountability "is linked to the idea of obligation, with two results, one of which in turn entails, supports, and sustains the other, namely: the idea of responsibility, and the idea of penalty. If it disappears, they immediately go in its wake. Compulsion without responsibility means to say that there is an obligation without an obligated individual, and it is no less

⁴⁷ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 681.

⁴⁸ Mohammed al-Nasiri, "Usus Al-Nadhariyah Al-Akhlaqiyyah Wa Ma'ayiruha Min Mandhur Al-Qur'an Al-Kareem", *Majallat al-Ihya'*. 33, (2010), 92-109.

impossible than that to assume an obligatory and responsible being, without these qualities finding their translation and realization in an appropriate reward, the meaning of which is stripping words from their meanings".⁴⁹ This is because human responsibility "which, if it does not presuppose the idea of strict obligation, at least: the idea equivalent to a higher ideal, was agreed upon in advance, so that a person sees that he is responsible for it before himself".⁵⁰

Responsibility, which is one of the foundations of Qur'ānic theoretical ethics, says Draz, is an important foundation without which ethics cannot be established. Accordingly, Draz tried to define the concept of responsibility, with its general and specific significance, as well as examine its conditions from the moral, religious, and social aspects. For him, the Qur'ān mentions these three elements combined in its moral system in many verses, such as; "O you who have believed, do not betray Allah and the Messenger or betray your trusts while you know [the consequence]" (The Qur'ān 8: 27). Draz examined also the relationship of responsibility to possibility and necessity.⁵¹

As much as a person is able and free, he is responsible. Thus, the necessary and sufficient conditions for our responsibility before Allah and before ourselves are: that the work be personal, voluntary, then performed freely without coercion, with full awareness, and with knowledge of the law. Therefore, the Qur'ānic principle of responsibility is that it is personal not inherited nor collective responsibility in the true sense of the word, because one of the conditions for religious and moral responsibility is its personal nature, as it is not inherited.⁵²

The other condition of moral responsibility is that it should be law-based responsibility. The Qur'ān teaches us that no one will be held accountable for any deeds without having known in advance of its rulings. Moreover, this information about the moral law comes from two different ways; internal and external. The rules of the moral law, in their universal form, are somehow inscribed in ourselves, and in order to grasp their significance, we have only to use our innate

49 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 136.

50 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 137.

51 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 137-141.

52 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 136.

powers and faculties: consult our reason, internalize our heart, or follow our benevolent instincts. Since the knowledge of this innate law is within the power of every human being, despite the difference between individuals, this knowledge is definitely sufficient to confirm our responsibility towards ourselves.⁵³

c. Retribution

The third basis of theoretical ethics is retribution. It is the complementary part of obligation and responsibility. The moral law begins by directing its invitation to our goodwill: it obliges us to respond to that invitation, and then, as soon as we answer with the word “yes” or “no” - we assume our “responsibility”, and finally, after this response, the law values our position by retribution.⁵⁴ Retribution is no less important than the two previous elements, and it has a great role in pushing a person toward adhering to good morals. As the moral law must have an engine that regulates moral relations and ensures the implementation of this law, so retribution is that engine; As it is the reaction of the law to the position of the people subject to it.⁵⁵ The moral law is one of the demands of the self, imposed by the social conscience, and it is a sacred law in itself. Therefore, it comes the triangular form of responsibility, and hence the retribution had three fields; Moral, legal, and divine retributions.⁵⁶

The Qur’ānic legislation in the moral retribution and the legal retribution, despite the difference in their nature, and the conflicting areas of their influence and their approaches, as one of them directly affects the human soul and targets the absolute, while the other reaches only the apparent senses, and sees only the social system in front of it. In spite of all this, the two types of retribution that we studied above have a common element, which is that they belong to the realm of reality and that they are practiced in this world.⁵⁷

53 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 163-164.

54 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 245.

55 Al-Nasiri, *Usus al-Nadhariyah*, 99.

56 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 245.

57 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 275-276.

That is why the Qur'ān adds divine retribution in its two dimensions; in this world and in the hereafter. Therefore, the retribution in the Qur'ānic moral theory targets the soul with all its powers and in all its depths, because it invites all people, in all classes, and from all degrees of intellect. It places the human before his responsibilities in realizing the difference between truth and falsehood, between justice and injustice, and between good and evil.⁵⁸

d. Intention and Motives

After discussing the terminology used by philosophers on the intention in ethics, and after analyzing the moral act, Draz arrives to the conclusion that any ordinary decision taken after sufficient contemplation, the will must have two views: one of which focuses on action, and the other on the end. These two aspects of the will are two different subjects of study in science of ethics.⁵⁹

The element of intention and motives is the essence of Qur'ānic ethics. It occupies all Qur'ānic moral pronouns. It is associated with the intent and human motivation to work. That is, in order to assume responsibility, the essential element of work must be present. The Qur'ān said: "Allah does not impose blame upon you for what is unintentional in your oaths, but He imposes blame upon you for what your hearts have earned. And Allah is Forgiving and Forbearing" (The Qur'ān 2: 225). Therefore, the intention is a necessary condition for morality, and accordingly, it is a condition for responsibility, but it is by no means a sufficient condition.⁶⁰

They are more preoccupied with studying intention in its general and objective sense in general." Therefore, in his opinion, there are two types of intention, which he called: "psychological intention" and "moral intention." But he believes that "psychological intention" is needed by the act in the first place, while "moral intention" is what determines Intentionality and motives of action, and for this reason he chose for them in his ethical theory the name "intention

58 al-Nasiri, *Usus al-nadhariyah*, 100.

59 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 422.

60 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 180; Halilli, 2008.

and motives”, because both elements are important in moral action according to the Qur’ānic ethical theory.⁶¹

The element of intention and motives is the essence of Qur’ānic ethics, and occupies all Qur’ānic moral pronouns. It is associated with the intent and human motivation to work. This is because in order to assume responsibility, the essential element must be present in the work.⁶² Hence, it is emphasized in several Qur’ānic verses; “And do not disgrace me on the Day they are [all] resurrected. The Day when there will not benefit [anyone] wealth or children. But only one who comes to Allah with a sound heart” (The Qur’ān 26: 87-89), “[It will be said], This is what you were promised - for every returner [to Allah] and keeper [of His covenant] Who feared the Most Merciful unseen and came with a heart returning [in repentance]” (The Qur’ān 50: 32-33).

That is why Draz affirms that “from an ethical point of view, we cannot include any action in the category of morality if it is not conscious and voluntary and the intention is attached to it at the same time”.⁶³ According to Draz, the absence of intention may fulfill the legal condition, but it does not fulfill the moral condition. In the law, the material fact matters more than intentions and motives. However, for the moral aspect, the act is not moral unless it stems from the inside, unless it stems from an intention and an internal motive, i.e., the presence of the feelings and the presence of the mind that determines the intent.

That is why the Qur’ān requires us the presence of our feelings and mind in what we say and do; “O you who have believed, do not approach prayer while you are intoxicated until you know what you are saying” (The Qur’ān 4: 43). The moral conscience also requires from us the satisfaction of the heart and the spontaneity of action. The Qur’ān said: “And what prevents their expenditures from being accepted from them but that they have disbelieved in Allah and in His Messenger and that they come not to prayer except while they

61 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 422-423.

62 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 180; Halilli, 2008.

63 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 429.

are lazy and that they do not spend except while they are unwilling" (The Qur'ān 9: 54).

There are many Qur'ānic verses in this regard, and perhaps the hadith contained in Bukhārī about the intention summarizes the essence of the idea, as it came from the Prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, saying: "Actions are but by intentions, and each person will have but what he intended."⁶⁴ It is the clearest and most comprehensible hadith. It tells us: Actions do not exist (morally) except with intentions.⁶⁵ Moreover, this is supported by another hadith that says: "There is a piece of flesh in the body if it is good the whole body is good, and if it is spoiled the whole body is spoiled, namely the heart."⁶⁶ However, it seems that Draz felt that the concept of "intention", in the context that the Qur'ān and hadith may be misunderstood. Therefore, he was of the view that the matter needs more analysis, to show that intention requires psychological feeling as it requires knowledge not ignorance.

According to Draz, the Prophet, may Allah's prayers and peace be upon him, did not mean by saying, "Actions are but by intentions," that actions have no value, and are found only by intentions. Rather, the Prophet also said: "Whoever does an action that is not in accordance with our command will be rejected".⁶⁷ Then Draz comments: "Is this not the best proof that good behavior is not limited to good intentions alone, nor to the accuracy of work alone, but rather to a combination of form and matter so that one cannot dispense with the other".⁶⁸

Rather, the complete saying about duty is in the well-known hadith: "Allah does not look at your appearances and your wealth, but looks at your hearts and your deeds".⁶⁹ If the action is without intention, it is morally invalid, and if the action is present with the intention and it is bad, then it is an immoral act. Moreover, if the action does

64 al-Bukhari, "Beda' Al-Vahiy" 1.

65 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 431.

66 al-Bukhari, "al-Iman". 37.

67 al-Bukhari, "al-Bouyu' ", 60.

68 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 431.

69 Muslim , "Al-Birr oua al-sila oua al-Adab", 2564.

not match the intention, it is a deviation, but if the intention is found without action, then the intention is always rewarded, but the closer it gets to the action, the richer its values is, so that worth only in full action. If the action and the intention coincide with their presence, the complete morality is with the preference of the intention.⁷⁰

e. Effort/Action

Draz's discussion of intention led him to move to another condition or element closely related to the moral structure in the Qur'ānic theory of ethics. This element is the element of "action", as an important element of "virtue". Action is the only means in the hands of a person to achieve his goals, and his only duty at the same time, is to use his material and moral powers.⁷¹ He sees that the human being, in its innate nature, is embodied with imperfection, and in the same time inspired by the quest for perfection. "It is not reasonable for a person to exercise an activity in order to gain virtue if the human soul has a perfect and complementary nature, or if this nature, despite its shortcomings, is unable to develop. The necessity of our effective intervention involves a double axiom; is that the moral being has been created imperfect and capable of perfection at the same time".⁷² This deficiency makes the moral act a potential seed with latent conditions, waiting for free voluntary human action, to transform it from the state of latency to the state of actual reality by fulfilling its conditions. If this is the case of a moral being, then this is what the Qur'ān seems to have indicated clearly.⁷³

The Holy Qur'ān refers to this matter in several verses, including: "Allah does not charge a soul except [with that within] its capacity" (The Qur'ān 2: 286); "We charge no soul except [within] its capacity" (The Qur'ān 7: 42); "Allah does not charge a soul except [according to] what He has given it" (The Qur'ān 65: 7). Moreover, the Qur'ān also teaches us that a person may be born void of all rational and sensory knowledge, but he has been provided with faculties that are able to provide him with what he desires of this knowledge. The Qur'ān

70 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 462.

71 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 585.

72 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 585.

73 Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 586.

says: "And Allah has extracted you from the wombs of your mothers not knowing a thing, and He made for you hearing and vision and intellect that perhaps you would be grateful" (The Qur'an 16: 78).

The Qur'an teaches us that Allah entrusted Human soul with the ideas of good and evil, which are the core of moral action and the moral attitude: "And [by] the soul and He who proportioned it, and inspired it [with discernment of] its wickedness and its righteousness, He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who instills it [with corruption]" (The Qur'an 91: 7-10). That is the sum of the means by which humanity acts, and able to visualize the ideal that it seeks and wants to attain, and that it is committed to achieving it on its own. From this stems the moral necessity for the human being to work and to bear his responsibility; "And say, "Do [as you will], for Allah will see your deeds, and [so, will] His Messenger and the believers. And you will be returned to the Knower of the unseen and the witnessed, and He will inform you of what you used to do" (The Qur'an 9: 105).

Draz follows these verses by saying that the effort here is physical, but it also requires another effort that is above the natural effort, required by reason, and must be directed to serve the ideal. Accordingly, Draz focused on this effort in his theory of the Qur'anic value system.⁷⁴ We conclude with these foundational elements of the ethical theory, as Draz tried to extract from the verses of the Qur'an, complete, fulfilling all the necessary elements in order for us to have an accurate idea of the way in which the meaning of morals should be conceived. Obligation, responsibility, intention, and effort are the main pillars of every ethical theory, aware of its objectives, which Draz studied in the Holy Qur'an, and they constitute the formative parts of the ethical theory.⁷⁵

Conclusion

In concluding this paper, it is clear that Draz, in his criticism of the Islamic and Western ethical approaches, did not stop at criticism. He

⁷⁴ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 587.

⁷⁵ Draz, *Dustur al-akhlaq*, 675.

presented his point of view on how to get out of the partial approaches to a comprehensive approach to ethics through the ethical theory that we find in the Qur'ān. Moreover, he insisted on the importance of combining both the theoretical side and the practical side.

The paper shows that by analyzing Draz's efforts, we can realize that the study of morals through the Qur'ān represents a basic entry point in understanding the value system or the ethical theory in Islam, and therefore understanding many of the problems that prevent Muslims from embodying those morals. In addition, Draz's study represents a pioneer "thematic exegesis" of the Qur'ān that Muslims made in modern times, which integrates all Qur'ānic verses related to one topic, and interprets them in the light of each other, taking into consideration the conceptual network that the Qur'ānic terms may form. Accordingly, it's an effort of overarching the partial approaches to the Qur'ān.

Draz's study also represents a paradigmatic transformation in the study of the moral values system in Islam, although he used the modern moral philosophy terminology and structure, which forced him to go through comparisons. Perhaps Draz was aspiring to do a work of this kind, I mean that his studies were purely Qur'ānic, but the conditions of university research required him to compare, as he indicated in the introduction to his study, which is originally presented as an academic thesis to obtain a doctorate in philosophy at the Sorbonne University.

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