



## **Christmas in the Koran: Luxenberg, Syriac, and the Near Eastern and Judeo-Christian Background of Islam**

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Centering on the pioneering work of Christoph Luxenberg, this anthology of scholarly yet accessible studies of the Koran makes a convincing case that Islam's holy book borrowed heavily from Christian texts in Syriac and other Near Eastern sources.

In this important compilation, Ibn Warraq focuses on the pioneering work in Syriac and Arabic linguistics of Christoph Luxenberg, a native speaker of Arabic who lives in the West and writes under a pseudonym. Luxenberg's careful studies of the Koran are significant for many reasons. First, he has clarified numerous obscurities in the Koran by treating the confusing passages as poor translations into Arabic of original Syriac texts. He demonstrates that when one translates the difficult Arabic words back into Syriac, the meaning becomes clear. Beyond textual clarity, Luxenberg's scholarship provides ample evidence that the Koran developed from a Judeo-Christian background, since Syriac (a dialect of Aramaic) was the main language of both Jews and Christians in the Middle East before the advent of Islam.

Ibn Warraq supplies English translations of key articles by Luxenberg that originally appeared in German and have never before been available to an English readership. This is followed by commentary by other scholars on Luxenberg's work. Also included are articles by earlier specialists who anticipated the later insights of Luxenberg, and more recent scholarship inspired by his methodology.

Erudite but accessible, this groundbreaking collection is must reading for anyone with an interest in the origins of the Koran and the early history of Islam.

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