

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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THE FOURTEENTH CONTENTIONS

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The ‘Contentions’ are little sparks, some luminous, others merely hot, which fly from the point where Islam’s sword is resharpened by its encounter with the anvil of modernity. They are not credal articles, or mystical aphorisms; they avoid dull linearity or affiliation to a system. Instead they test the power of speech to point out the paradoxes of our world, and to suggest the transcendence to which those paradoxes point. Like Traherne’s *Centuries of Meditation*, they are arranged in hundreds, each of which may very loosely centre on a theme.

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1. We are against Israel to the extent that she endangers Jewish safety.
2. Marxism is the ultimate subaltern discourse.
3. Real Islam is successful. If it is not successful, it is not real Islam.
4. The Monoculture has no principle save the absence of metaphysics. (Without the One, there is no Many.)

Diversity trope. Ikhtilaf. The Names.

5. Religion without *eros* is the anticipation of eternal death.
6. Those who are indifferent to their reputations may still be slothful, gluttonous.
7. She is the gift to him that precedes the Fall.
8. The alternative to pride is prayer.
9. The truly-taken *rukhsa* makes you grow a little; the falsely-taken *rukhsa* makes you shrink rapidly.
10. The Great Symmetry: Yad Vashem / Ghazzat Hashem.
11. Nishiren is the Ibn Taymiyya of Zen.
12. Crucifiction?
Juda-yi Ism exonerates Rome.
Ishmael exonerates the Jews.
Edom: Heaven cannot exonerate.
13. Your wealth is only yours once you have given it away.
14. Islamism's fire will leave only ashes.
15. Only the Monoculture's God is small enough to fit into the Yawning Gulf.
16. 'If we are not for ourselves, other Jews say to me, who will be for us? And I answer, but if we are for ourselves alone, what are we?' (Daniel Boyarin)
17. Yielding to a minor sin can be a major sin.

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18. His strength is worldly; hers is unworldly; thus in the world he thinks that he prevails.
19. Those that are angry with everyone will end up believing in nothing.
20. Legalism? Levinas is from the Talmud, not from Heidegger.
21. Ritual is nothing but thankfulness, or it is nothing.
22. Fantasy is death.
23. The Sunna: both/and. The Shi'a: either/or.
24. We have too many things, and too little gratitude.
25. Do not be proud if she fears you, for she may also fear a rat.
26. A good leader gives, and does not take.
27. No graven images – because to emulate God's creation is blasphemously to underestimate His power.
28. If Christendom had heeded the Gospels, it would now not exist.
29. If you think you do not deserve God's punishment, you may not deserve His tribulation.
30. The false Salafi rejects some idols. The Sufi rejects all idols.
31. It is gratitude that sees beauty.
32. The smarter the hotel, the less comfortable the Muslim.
33. Dignity comes from respecting tradition, not from respecting oneself.
34. Clerisy? Original Sin is to push Eve away.
35. Dar al-Islam? Rome is where you will be most proud to be a Muslim.
36. A good teacher always feels guilty.
37. A miss is as good as a smile.

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38. Do not rejoice at lessons you receive from sin; or at nourishment you find in a rubbish-heap.
39. The Southern Baptists: reject Darwin but love Spencer.
40. Formalism? Only Sufism fills out the forms.
41. Without the *rusum* you haven't got a prayer.
42. Atheism: I live, and I will die. Theism: I live, and I will live. *Tariqa*: I am dead, and I will live. *Haqiqa*: Allah is Alive, and does not die.
43. Islam, by veiling her, reveals her; Edom, by unveiling her, erases her face.
44. Her charm is the *jam-i 'isbret*.
45. Marx is dead; only the Living God of Ishmael will now uphold the poor.
46. Ask your grandparents of their grandparents, lest you become 'forgotten and forgetting.'
47. You will not open the Furqan before you open the Qur'an.
48. The Vedas were invaders; al-Qasim revived the Way.
49. It was Orientalism that told us that Islam means 'submission'. But Islam says that Islam means 'letting go'.
50. 'If the eyes had no tears, the soul would have no rainbow.' (Minquass proverb)
51. Woe betide the scholar who, at the end of his career, says 'I wrote this', and 'I said that', but did not heal a single soul.
52. The Gospels are like Bilal: however hard you torture them, they will only say: 'One! One!'
53. Either Abraham is an adulterer, or he is the father of us all.
54. Zionism has the smell of Islamism: it fears non-belonging, and takes its fear out on others.
55. Which Muslim state is not a bad parody of a Western model?

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56. The false Salafism: saw off the branches, and perhaps you will see the root.
57. The Yawning Gulf does not see al-Musawwir as the Artist.
58. Women! If children are not your highest priority, then do not have children at all.
59. The Monoculture: an easy way of making life difficult.
Zahir: a difficult way of making life easy.
Batin: *al-din yusr*.
60. How do I know who you say that you are?
61. 'Deus hoc vult.' (Pope Benedict XV, speaking of Zionism.)
62. The saint's servitude makes him greater than the heavens and the earth.
63. *Zahir* methods are only *halq*; but not everyone can bear *natif*.
64. The Monoculture is opaque to itself.
65. The suicide bomber is not afraid of death, because already, there is nothing left in him to die.
66. The Monoculture annihilates difference for fear that the Other might show it what it truly is.
67. Walk through the zoo within; check the locks; enjoy the sight of each brute; know that they are your self.
68. Clerisy? The opposite of eros is envy (Peter Sloterdijk).
69. Only revelation proves that other human subjectivities exist.
70. Civil society is the deodorant of *kufr*.
71. The False Salafi, rigid and unyielding, says we bow into the wind; but in fact, we *bow away from it*.
72. Serve none but a slave.
73. Luxury will persuade you that you are not a psychopath.

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74. With love He shows you that you are rotten. With love, you say: Yes! Yes!
75. Miss Fajr will help you to feel tired all day.
76. Those who sleep with Miss Fajr may catch a disease.
77. *Basira?* The best kohl you use is anti-money.
78. If you seek to keep up with the Monoculture, you will always be out of breath. If you seek to excel it, you will be at peace.
79. The Sufi is a realist; the false Salafi is a riyalist.
80. Do not juggle with babies.
81. That man who welcomes pursuit
Of Jan, who presses her suit,
'Neath tan and padded powersuit –
Shall scan a spirit hirsuit.
82. Maidens! If he obeys his ego, you should be a feminist.
83. Islam does not give you a full account of God, but it gives you the fullest account of God.
84. Through selflessness we join the world.
85. Edom has no notion of *wafat*.
86. Only make *wudu'* if it breaks your pride.
87. Each perception of beauty is a prayer upon the Prophet.
88. Govern the thoughts in your head, or else you'll walk around dead.
89. *Ikbtilat?* Beware of near misses.
90. You will only find yourself if you live for others.
91. Uncle Same twists us into different figures, but it is always the same twisting.
92. The Shari'a is appropriate to the society that deserves it.

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93. Edom's absurd theanthropism has desacralised the world.
94. The monoculture is as relaxing as its trousers.
95. Modernity: such a huge arena for so little activity.
96. Sacred dress undresses the spirit.
97. Before your veil avails prevail.
98. The Yawning Gulf should remember that the past is part of us.
98. Hijab is to force him to wear bifocals.
100. The Incarnation is God's alienation from humanity.