

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



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THE EIGHTEENTH 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. *Al-mukaffiru yukaththiru'l-kuffar.*
2. The endangering of Isaac is Abraham's test; Ishmael is Hagar's.
3. Where the Liber Asian champions life, the monoculture prefers luxurious survival.
4. Hakim Bey cannot see that indeterminacy and fracture have become values of the monoculture.
5. Do not be proud of what you have done; be proud of what you have been asked to do.
6. The invert, by accepting the Same's compliment, neglects the God-given complement.
7. The Liber Asian abrogates in the sense of healing and repair.
8. The Yawning Gulf's wealth goes on Othering the Self.
9. The False Salafism: the limited horizon gives the truest perspective.
10. To follow the Sunna is to conform body to spirit.
11. The Beatles did not know that all you need is love.
12. A *karama* settles the heart, but does not settle in the heart.
13. The Shaykhs teach you about theodicy by beating you up.
14. If you saw God, the shame of your sense of self would probably kill you.
15. Equality of rights is a legal abstraction; true equality consists in access to the Spirit, which is the opposite of abstraction.
16. You may sometimes have to pray fast; but always pray well.
17. Covenant? People? The true Musawi is *musaawi*.
18. Analysts, not annalists, know that entification entails tenet-tenants.
19. Do not speak of 'gender' until you understand the global culture which defines it.

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20. By allowing Ministries of Justice to exist, Islamism becomes an inadequate variant of the monoculture.
21. Passion is the monoculture's deadly opposite.
22. Religion is false when it gives you no hope.
23. If you fail to give yourself in total loving surrender to the Ground of Being, you are a friend to the rebel demons.
24. The believer is in conflict with the monoculture either by seeking to destroy it or by seeking its redemption. But he is always in conflict with it.
25. With its atonal presumption, the late Messiaenic is the harbinger of Antichrist.
26. Hypocrisy? Neither pray *subb* when subhuman; nor witter during *Witr*.
27. Honour the man who never worshipped idols; but honour no less the man who worshipped them and then cast them aside.
28. Only in Islam is Christ at peace in the bosom of Abraham.
29. The effective way to strengthen liberalism or fundamentalism is to bring them into conversation.
30. Her tear commands you to stand up for her, not to stand up to her.
31. Secular lovers always use contraception.
32. If the culture is sick, then your ease with it is a sign of sickness.
33. Your capacity to rebel against the monoculture is in proportion to your capacity to fall in love.
34. The devil's greatest enemy is the joy of the believer.
35. Family is *jamal*, work is *jalal*; in this her superiority is apparent.
36. Only when family is not equal to work will we worry if women are not equal to men.
37. Third World marriage: fiancés and fiancées are just finances and financees.

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38. Because the moderns cannot be, they have attitude rather than beatitude.
39. Inner peace comes from ignoring the verdicts of others; but this is only possible when one correctly trusts the verdict of God.
40. That their hatred would not be healed by your hatred does not absolve you from hating their hateful acts.
41. A good *qadi* knows his own sinfulness.
42. It is both dangerous and curious that the foolish should have such an excellent ability to survive.
43. If citizens of the Yawning Gulf are rude to waiters, it is from a residue of guilt.
44. A confession in the Catechism: 'The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude.' (Art. 1257)
45. Hand the secular Arab a glass of urine, and tell him that it is wine. He will not only pretend to enjoy it, he *will* enjoy it.
46. 'Religion can be deformed by only two people: a stupid Muslim or an intelligent priest'. (Albanian proverb)
47. The New Atheism is built on three pillars: human ego, priestly pederasty, and the Wahhabis of Mass Destruction.
48. 'Beauty? To me it is a word without sense, because I do not know where its meaning comes from nor where it leads.' (Picasso)
49. The West will take us seriously when we take our history seriously.
50. When you think you are Mars, consider the stars.
51. Do not wait until your body starts to fail before you wonder who you really are.
52. Al-Qaeda is the carbuncle on the face of Wahhabism.
53. Self-expression? Is your self worth expressing?
54. The modern world's certainty: tolerance is better than certainty.

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55. Do your duty and you will see your self.
56. Faith begins when the ego is crushed.
57. *La ilaha illa'Llah* means that less than no distance beneath the surface of things, there is Absolute Mercy.
58. The real death is the loss of love.
59. To say 'Aha' upon noticing the divine is for it to be Ahad.
60. Europe will be ecumenical if the ecu-men are defeated.
61. The Qadi is called to show that morality and law are indivisible.
62. Atheism is the official belief system of the Monoculture; and Christianity is its official religion.
63. Children are as underserved as they are undeserved.
64. *Bid'a* is the rejection of consensus.
65. The poor are pauperized by the immoral maize.
66. *Rukhsa* means latitude without lassitude.
67. You will not respect God's creation until you have understood women.
68. Follow *fitra*, flee *fatra*, and you will be fit, not fat.
69. *Futuwma* does not mean burnishing the ego for her sake; it means crushing the ego for her sake.
70. The 19th century: nationality. The 20th century: rationality. The 21st century: fashionability.
71. Many a warning about Hell increases the number of its inhabitants.
72. Catholicism knows the Christ of faith. Protestantism knows the Christ of Paul. Islam knows the Christ of history.
73. The Sira is the interpretation of the Sura.

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74. Without *wudu* there is only voodoo.
75. When He is so near, how can you have 'free will'?
76. Even if causality was real it would not allow the prediction of outcomes.
77. The atheist's *wird* is the suppression of despair.
78. Friedan: women are either strippers or outstrippers.
79. Immanence? If you love carnations, reject incarnations.
80. For the Arabs the UN is a broken plural.
81. Love is not madness; all else is madness.
82. Intolerance is not the only alternative to tolerance.
83. The world is the metaphor of the Real.
84. A response to a prayer is not the guarantee of an outcome.
85. The theocons: Blessed are the warmakers.
86. Each new device increases our dependency.
87. O Children of Israel! If you believe that no-one will befriend you, no-one will befriend you.
88. If a family is nuclear it may go ballistic.
89. We grasp Him with that which is most passive about us.
90. The Internet contains no depictions of intimacy.
91. True wealth lies in having few worries.
92. Rather the turban of the Turk than the frown of Darwin.
93. A horse can carry more scrolls than a donkey.
94. 'Modernism is dominant but dead'. (Jürgen Habermas)

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95. The path to happiness lies through the remembering of death.
96. The point of theology is to silence the ego.
97. The search for the Shaykh is the search for the Sunna.
98. Uncle Same preaches freedom, but can he preach freedom from greed?
99. The False Salafi migrant brings a bowser; the Sunni migrant brings a dowser.
100. A life lived in conflict against the ego is filled with blessings; a life lived in pursuit of its claims is a curse.