

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Quilliam Press

THE TWENTY-SECOND CONTENTIONS

Sh. Abdul Hakim Murad

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.

The Twenty-Second Contentions

1. Lose religion, lose the land.
2. How little of you is present!
3. Islam includes the Oak of Mamre, the icon of inclusion.
4. Virtue is both the expression of purity, and the path of return.
5. The most productive theology is the avoidance of sin.
6. Matter is made interesting by faith and tedious by materialism.
7. The fanatic places Islam where God ought to be.
8. Receive every rule of the Law as an opportunity for introspection.
9. To eat is to participate in agriculture: so scrutinise your earth!
10. Who will heal us from this therapeutic age?
11. Le Maghreb: the ruled follow the cheikh, the rulers follow the chic.
12. Loving God is more effective than yearning to be perfect.
13. Tradition: know thyself. Modernity: show thyself.
14. It is not the length but the depth of life that matters.
15. Ishmaelite nomadism: nobility with mobility.
16. 'Clean the mirror of your heart with contentment and humility.' (Shahidullah Faridi)
17. The Liber Asian: the 'Other' does not exist, because all are one in the Divine. Postmodernism: the 'Other' does not exist, because there is no relation at all.
18. A good teacher learns more from his classes than his students do.
19. Faith is the finding of the Names.

The Twenty-second Contentions

20. Faith is love-born, for creation herself is our muse.
21. Islam is simply to offer back to God the light which He has given you.
22. Your only real enemy is nafs, that unreal thing.
23. Being human means to distinguish centre from periphery.
24. Feminism is far from being the severest underestimation of woman.
25. See and breathe beauty, and thus bless the Man of Praise, through whose principle it became what you perceive.
26. Do not let the Doomsday Clock wind you up.
27. Your capacity for love shows that it is natural and right to live in the world.
28. It is difficult to be both good and complicated.
29. If men like boxing, women like unboxing.
30. If your willing self is servant to your body, how shall it be when the body is no more?
31. Materialism gives you more but makes you less.
32. Istiqamat or stigmata: which is the sweeter fruit?
33. What the heart gives, the heart receives.
34. If an airport had a real VIP lounge, whom would it contain?
35. Without sadness, how will you look inside yourself?
36. The virtue of religion is that it turns all problems into a single problem.
37. If Christ is God, he cannot be your brother.

The Twenty-second Contentions

38. 'Qur'anic exegesis became Sunni by becoming polyvalent.' (Walid Saleh)
39. The anger of the terrorist is rooted in his intuition that Islam has been taken away from him.
40. Believe not because you wish to know, but because you want to be.
41. 'Love is the great enemy of Christian morality'. (Max Ernst)
42. Urf is patrimony, a dignified world.
43. The "I" from man to iman: self-awareness to safe-awareness.
44. Be shaahid: you will be longing and find belonging.
45. Hagar: the matriarch of a négritude which triumphed.
46. Monasticism: the ultimate artificial contraceptive.
47. God does not love the voice of the lover of the sound of his own voice.
48. 'Loneliness is the grave of the living'. (Imam al-Ghazali)
49. What will be the habitat of those who deny climate change? Habitat A'maluhum.
50. Modern man: the ignorant soloist who kills the orchestra.
51. From the Above to the Around to the Within: this is the road of faith.
52. When you give yourself to God you give yourself to everybody.
53. Pasiphism can make of you a half-bull.
54. Which is woman's vulnerability: womanhood or manhood?
55. The greatest gift is the gift of seeing gifts.
56. The Shaykh relieves you by burdening you; modernity burdens you by relieving you.

57. If you seek happiness, do or make something good, which is to say, something beautiful.
58. How may Fitra favour the fecal over the fecund?
59. 'Life is a countdown.
60. Only those who have learned to obey have the right to command.
61. Always being defensive is offensive.
62. Juda-yi Ism: the consummatum est has not yet been proclaimed. Edom: it came extremely late. Ishmael: it came very early indeed.
63. You are weaving your resurrection body.
64. The False Salafism does not take us back, it takes us down.
65. When the Semitic El says Read, he means read Word as well as World.
66. The monoculture is a deepening illiteracy in reading the body.
67. The trendy gender blunder: rain can fall upwards.
68. Everything is always finished.
69. True freedom lies in knowing that the asbab are unreal, mist on the mirror of the heart.
70. It is called patriarchy because he has to pay. It is called matriarchy because she listeth as she may.
71. False Salafism is like modern art: a furious shift to the surface of the jalal.
72. Every block of which God raised the palace of the world is quarried from Mercy.
73. To exoterists be piratical: ya hu hu and the batal of Rum.
74. Church scandals remind us that "God is Love" does not mean that all love is godly.
75. If we are only matter, we don't matter.

The Twenty-second Contentions

76. There is no situation in which the knowledge of God's presence is not a protection for you.
77. A man cannot be too masculine; but he can be improperly masculine.
78. Ishmael and Hagar are the Grail's custodians; even the Crusaders failed to wrest it from their hands.
79. Inversion: the intensified fascination of the thing which is not in its place.
80. Making amens is not enough to make amends.
81. All experience is meaningful.
82. 'The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth.' (Shaykh Abdullah Ross)
83. The Hu turns witness into withness.
84. The Liber Asian is not chronological, it is qur'anological.
85. We are deterraforming Earth.
86. Find the hidden elites in the Ishmaelites.
87. If you are not gnostic you risk being agnostic.
88. The moon-ark unites monarch to menarche.
89. We no longer renounce the world, and so the world now renounces us.
90. Be humble, for God is contemplating Himself in the mirror of nonexistence.
91. God's signs are also His magnets.
92. Consider how greedy you are for the world; and then imagine how greedy you should be for the next.
93. You cannot deepen yourself without sacrifice.
94. Whom has God favoured most: man, to whom He has given woman, or woman, to whom He has given man?
95. The greater your ignorance, the more faults you will be able to find in others.

The Twenty-second Contentions

96. Islamism? The Sunna is a footprint, not a blueprint.
97. You have not been placed among the shadows in order to play with them.
98. The proliferation of genders tends to their abolition.
99. Beauty will take you from It to Thou.
100. Despite your falsity you must know the Real and manifest it.