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The Muslim Anarchist Hermeneutic

Tasneem Project

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2006

You alone are witness to everything
but I beg You, let this nonetheless
be my way to truth
such that, from now on in
in Julaybib's covenant
there will be no distinction between religion and government

Like our walk through the woods
in the screaming wind,
was that my hajj?

I have no idea how long I can hold onto this new fast
between rebirth
and yet another death

Muhammad was my suhoor,
let my false self be my own iftaar
and between them

may I always hunger and thirst for Your light

Ash-Shahid

None can bear witness as God does
not Prophets and their tribes
nor Angels with their tablets
and the witnessing gifted to me
is Taqwa
a consciousness gathering together my fragmented roles
wherefrom You might make my many minds just one
and direct Our life singularly
yet with both of us intact
and from the utmost horizons
of the Universe
and from within ourselves
the sciences
that send solitary probes whizzing through space
driven by the fusion of language, society and mind

Contents

Ar-Rahman	5
Ar-Rahim	5
Al-Malik	6
Al-Quddus	7
As-Salam	8
Al-Mumin	8
Al-Muhaymin	8
Al-Aziz	9
Al-Jabbar	9
Al-Mutakabbir	9
Al-Khaliq	10
Al-Bari'	10
Al-Musawwir	11
Al-Ghaffar	12
Al-Qahhar	13
Al-Wahhab	14
Ar-Razzaq	14
Al-Fattah	15
Al-'Alim	16
Al-Qabid	17
Al-Basit	17
Al-Khafid	18
Ar-Rafi'	19
Al-Mu'izz	19
Al-Mudhill	20
As-Sami	20
Al-Basir	21

Al-Hakam	23
Al-‘Adl	24
Al-Latif	26
Al-Khabir	26
Al-Hafiz	27
Al-Muqit	27
Al-Hasib	28
Al-Jalil	28
Al-Karim	29
Ar-Raqib	30
Al-Mujib	30
Al-Wasi’	31
Al-Hakim	32
Al-Wadud	32
Al-Majid	32
Al-Ba’ith	33
Ash-Shahid	34

to transform an illusion
made of ones and zeros
into a sacred house

Al-Ba’ith

So it’s a simple choice, then?

Either conform to revealed codes of piety
or be glued back together
at the end of time

only to be set alight, like some smashed-up deckchair
in the backyard...

I don’t have any other gods in mind
nor whims to whisk me away
from this ultimatum

this is a day no more confused than any other
nor am I under orders
from some Odin or grand illusion

If this is how it is and I can still be so stubborn?
There must be a reason
or a new way of meaning

Like the times I sometimes feel you
looking clean through me,
is that my sujud?

simply to remind us
of the all-encompassing, all-embracing
nature of Hu

Al-Hakîm

Shaykh Joel
he is an ayat
a source of Wisdom for this age

And I am
John the Baptist
a dog, a madman and a sage

Al-Wadūd

The people who deny God
falsely pose as the font of love
but God alone is the Loving One

The source of Love
The meaning of Love
The direction of Love

We belong to nothing but the Loving One
and everything else
is a false measure destined for impermanence's flames

Al-Majîd

If al-Majîd could awaken the womb
of an elderly woman
then surely it is only a small miracle

Ar-Rahman

Every problem
is the same problem
the world's problems are not many but one
there are no 'single issues'
only a single issue:

humanity's failure to fully connect with the spiritual
and build a liberty
devoted to investigating humanity

In a world fit for angels
each person
and the whole of humankind
are cherished
with the same compassion and justice

Ar-Rahim

I do not take upon myself the fate of the Other
Out of duty or
Legal obligation
Or to gain a sense of self-satisfaction

Because reasoned argument commends it
Or theocratic decree demands it

I live, and learn through experience

Nor do I give your suffering meaning
By sharing your pain
Implicating injustice in a grand plan
Blaming humanity's crimes on The Creator

I look on, and scream in silence

Nor do I imagine you to be
By your presence
A fragment of Merciful essence

And my acts a ritual of prostration before
Your purifying lamp

I am real, and worship in secret

My love
Is above laws, reason, duty, even being

Inimitable, transcendent

Wholly unneeded
Yet absolutely necessary

Al-Malik

Like monkeys in a cage fighting
to sit on the highest rock
men jostle
to extend their grasping fingers
deeper into our lives

But he who seeks to control others
he usurps the throne of the Sovereign
and is thus a heretic

of faith
and that is to embrace it
with humility
and find nothing there
but so far loving God with a pure heart
has provoked no human complaints

Al-Wāsi'

Jalal Darguzini
(may Allah be pleased with him)
sat in silence, naked
but for a few leaves covering his genitals,
sat beside the shrine of Zaynab
in Bab al-Saghir cemetery in Damascus
until Allah brought him together with
Jamal al-Din Savi
(may Allah be pleased with him)
and his forty dervishes
so that Jalal's inner light might illuminate that microsecond
like a nuclear strike
and in the fall out of earnest prayer
everyone's hair fell out
as Jamal muttered
mūtū qabla an tamūtū
(die before your death)
and graveyards henceforth became his home
...cultures can be like an ocean
with trade winds to carry us onwards
closer to the truth
but when the weight of expectation
threatens to sink the whole crew
remember those who gave up everything

Ar-Raqîb

It is very easy to lose yourself
in trying to be what you think you really want to be
or what you think others think you should be
what really matters
is consciousness of God

Even those who speak perfect truth
like Jesus, were misconstrued
so where does that leave a nobody like you?

Stick to what you know is right in your heart
disputes should be understood from every side

There are too many people to read the Qur'an in just 7 ways
All hadith are weak if read with a grey heart
And laws that feel like chains deserve to be smashed upon the min-
bar

Al-Mujîb

If you slit a religion's throat
the result is
one dead camel

Religicide is easy
but what does it prove?

If the only pillars
supporting your society are
power and greed
the result is

the end of that society
and what does that prove?
there is only one test

Therefore
be neither ruled by nor the ruler of others
and where misfortune demands you be such
then you have surely
stepped outside of the kingdom of God

Al-Quddus

God is zero
God is beyond all human conception
All we can know of Al-Quddus

comes from the angels
who bought news of Isa to Maryam
and al-Qur'an to Muhammad

All we can do is
open our minds
to knowledge and the law

God is closer to me than my jugular vein
God is with me wherever I go
Everywhere I look

there is an Eastern face
a melody, perfume
a rope lowered from heaven to rescue me

All I have to do is
open my heart
to the songs of love, joy and peace

As-Salam

‘And know that God invites man unto the abode of peace, and guides him that wills to be guided onto a straight way.’

Al-Qur’an 10:25

I wish I could remember
being chased into a secret den
full of laughing friends

Al-Mumin

The people who know live in the abode of peace
Emotionalism and discontent are extinguished
when a human is invited
into this abode

Even when faced with the gravest of injustice
the human who is enlightened
has a peaceful heart, but such tranquillity
never leads to passivity
but rather to wise action
that brings justice
and peace

Al-Muhaymin

The truth does not need defenders
Words are written on the sands of time
but the meaning of al-Qur’an is protected
for the people who know
for people who think
and for people who have faith

this is why humankind was created
and who would deny it?
Even the deaf know its music

Al-Karim

Oh Allah! What can I tell those
who have been tempted from the path
by their lust for power?

Oh Allah! What I can tell those who berate Your gifts
as an obstruction to life’s hopes and dreams
of wealth and a better world?

Shall I tell them how Al-Karim gave Ali ibn abi Talib
as a helper to Sulayman
and to Muhammad at Khaybar

and then pray
as they did
long ago

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, The Dispenser of Grace
Oh Allah! Let Your blessings come on Muhammad
And the family of Muhammad

Call on Ali,
(He) is able to bring about the extraordinary.
You will find him an effective supporter in all calamities.
(All) worries and sorrows will soon disappear .
O Ali! O Ali! O Ali!

May I ask them, what is more powerful than this du’a?
May I ask them, what adventure is there before its mystery?
May I ask them, what world could be better than one built with
Ali’s help?

Whilst less than a week ago
I was visited by a butcher
who, having seen my painting of an orphan calf,
Vowed over the blood of an orange
Never to eat animal flesh again

I am a brilliant painter
My works have left many people amazed

You will find me most days
In my attic
Staring at black walls
And painting
What I see

Al-Hasib

Even when acting in the best of conscience
the better reckoning
belongs to *Hu*
Allah gave Muhammad to Zaynab
as a reminder that
truth is not always what we customarily assume
Power
be it populist, personal or political
perverts the very name of human justice

Al-Jalil

What is twice perfect and perfection?
perfect is the song of al-Qur'an
perfect is whomsoever recites it in His name
perfection is tazkeeya

Al-Aziz

Sometimes
I feel like a man walking into a hurricane
in the battle to contain my desires
I still believe it is injustice that corrupts me
The world must change
Perhaps if I change, the world will too
This is my doubt

Al-Jabbar

The ancients
revelled in their knowledge
today their towers are but ruins for all to see
Do you think our cities are less destructible?
Do you think truth can be disregarded without any comeback?
This is the message of the Prophets
Instead of being arrogant
we should pray that truth triumphs
This is my heartfelt prayer

Al-Mutakabbir

I'm not there yet
Truth has to be known, certain, obvious
Truth has to be my lover
Pray, then, that love leads me to truth in this life
and pray for this beautiful planet
and its lost souls
The hour's getting late

Al-Khaliq

My pin-sized head
is too small to squeeze
God inside it
But thinking further
I surmised
God makes his own doors
the Universe is made perfect
my lover reminded me
and there is a always a way in
So late one night
I called upon my angel
and we did the creation dance
Until she was mine alone
a ladder from heaven
an escape called hope

Al-Bari'

The Qur'an
was not revealed to Muhammad
in a single day
the foundations of a house
have to be dug out
and constructed with thought and care
but when the house is half built
should I knock it down
and begin again?
Yes, the rebellious mob before Aaron
were smashed to smithereens
the people of Noah drowned under the deluge

Al-Hafiz

How many heed the enormity
of the crime of
worldly conformity?

Al-Muqit

I am a brilliant painter
My works
Have left solid women
Feeling giddy, naked and
In wet need of a warm man in bed

I have watched art critics weep
At their own ineptitude
And I am told of
How one faint soul dissolved into thin air
Leaving only his socketless eyes
Staring

One artist choked
During a recent exhibition of my work
And on returning home
Burned his brushes of badger hair
And deserted his easels and half-finished nudes
To work as a bank clerk

Al-Latif

The foolish lover subtly transforms
the surrounding darkness
into laughter

he does this by remembrance
and peaceful service
performed with love and humility

In almost every other endeavour
failure deters further effort
but on love's path, all fools flourish

Al-Khabir

How many believe
humankind will one day know everything
and live as flesh and blood forever?

They imagine, of course, that in the future perfect
our descendents will concur with the presumption that
existence ends with death

but human knowledge is not limitless
not all wisdom is founded on doubt
yet certainty borrowed from the crowd is hollow

True learning is a path with direction
even though its destination may only be
known to Al-Khabir

it seeks the origins of the heart of light
even if the journey leads
beyond death and reason

mockers and the whimsical
joined together in graves smaller than matchboxes
infested with scorpions

By day, Al-Bari' calls us to walk gently on the earth
and whenever the fool speaks
answer in peace

by night, to prostrate ourselves in aversion of hell
and be generous to the needy
and invoke no imagined deity
and refrain from killing and adultery
repenting and doing good
telling the truth

avoiding the bacchanalian mob
and remembering that living a lie
is like slow poison
to the soul

Al-Musawwir

A child is born
and although he looks like other homo sapiens
his neurology is in the minority

The doctors diagnose him as having
an autistic spectrum disorder, but I proclaim him
Shaykh Al-Islam Ma'rifa

the perfect friend
who asks, through me, that
the whole world be returned to him
and to all who know

every human soul
is the shape of beauty

Al-Ghaffar

Hindus have their sacred cows
the people of Thamud their she-camel
and the Muslims of Empire
they have as their reminder of the truth
Shaykh Al-Islam Ma'rifa
a human being with autism
a witness unto humankind
Repent your struggles for wealth, status and power
with soap, water and reflection
learn
how to open your heart
to God's love
learn
how to bring peace and strength
to the vulnerable
learn
how to return fire and humility
to the arrogant
rebuild
human meaning
founded on the imperishable tablet
resurrect
a dissident culture
the kind that gets you run out of town
Shaykh Al-Islam Ma'rifa
is your star witness
your symbol
a mind apart
a soul forgiven
a heart filled with joy

God, he says
no, she says
who he says
imagine, she says
who, he says
me, she says
ih-san, he says
yes, she says
alright, he says
well, she says
light, he says
physicsish, she says
thunder, he says
occasionally, she says
person, he says
greeks, she says
Jesus, he says
superstar, she says
white, he says
right, she says
Isa, he says
Prophet, she says
creeds, he says
words, she says
presence, he says
spooky, she says
clue, he says
sign, she says
moon, he says
feelings, she says
love, he says
nearly, she says
dove, he says
flying, she says
thrill, he says
instead, she says,
peace, he says
and, she says
wow, he says
wow, she says

Al-'Adl

One morning
the poet awakes
to God in his bedroom

Al-Qahhar

The cry of the soldier
running across the battlefield is
Allahu Akbar
Running with sword aloft
her thoughts silenced
as she steels herself against her foe
The whisper of the warrior
doing battle with his worldly desires is
Allahu Al-Qahhar
in the muddle of life
my brain is busy
but my heart is always sure of its destiny
Dear God
how can I subdue the impostor
who has usurped my life?
Tattoo Al-Qahhar
onto your tongue
to silence its empty repetitions
Burn Al-Qahhar
across your tightened knuckles
to prize open its niggardly grasp upon your ruh
Change your name to Abdul Al-Qahhar
if that's what it takes
to make good
Yes, I would whisper this name 1000 times or more
no less a prisoner than Yusuf
in Egypt
who ran from lust
into gaol
carrying only his God-given talents
I should submit to everything God decrees
to be rid of this thief

Al-Qahhar, for you I wear only white

Al-Wahhab

Moses was not a suicide bomber
for one simple reason
He could tell right from wrong
Pharaoh was arrogant
he threatening torture and execution
yet in the end, his army was drowned by God
Some believe al-Qur'an
bestows the gift of discernment,
but those who approach its guidance with hate-filled hearts
Shrink its eternal message
to the size of a book
full of man's meanest meanings
Rapists of revelation
I reject your twilit recital
with its contempt for the gift of life
and surrender my heart
seeking forgiveness for the gifts
I have just as rashly squandered

Ar-Razzaq

Ar-Razzaq provides sustenance
food and horses, ships
and stars to chart and guide adventurers
and knowledge of past cities and empires
and the reasons for their demise
but even now

I took the road to India
There really aint such place
I took a road to riches
It was a fast an ugly race
Hey! I took a road to forget her
On the peaceful sunlight hill

Can't wait here freezing my time with you no more!

I took the road to my dreams
She said it was always night
I took the road to sorrow
Till there was no one left in sight
I took the road to love
There was something I couldn't pin

Can't wait here living my time with you no more!

Al-Hakam

People who practice self-deception
judge others
but refrain from judging themselves
People who practice self-abasement
judge themselves
but refrain from judging others
People who practice *Satyagraha*
judge with mercy
and thus refrain from all intended harm

I took the road to rebel
Without a cause for doing wrong
I took a road to miracles
Sing a Jesus song
Sing-along
I took a road to obsession
The greatest show in town

Can't wait here killing my time with you no more!

I took a road to the tower
Women and children allowed
I took a road to maybe
The natives are proud
Talk loud
I took the road to the capital
The traffic it was steel

Can't wait here counting my time with you no more!

I took a road to reason
It was just before the affray
Round the road of passion
Babe I was burned away
Face was grey
I took a road to chance
We know fortune is unkind

Can't wait here chasing my time with you no more!

facing our own denigration
how many give their concerns meaning
through action?
What thought have you given to your possessions?
What thought have you given to your possessions?
What thought have you given to your possessions?
Who made them?
Did you buy more than you bargained for?
Was your purchase stained with the tears of injustice and poverty?
What are they made from? And How?
Did you trade your role as khalifah for destroyer?
How much did your cut-price offer cost the earth, today?
And why were they made?
In possessing them
What have you subsequently become?
Empires revel in their complexity
in order to deride
simple truths
Pray for a world where all need is satiated
the earth is cherished
and everything is done and made in God's name

Al-Fattah

And when you walk among the people to proclaim
there is no god but Allah
and that Muhammad is Allah's Messenger
and tell them
they should observe the prayer
pay the Zakat
fast during Ramadan
and make the Hajj if you they are able

and when you walk among the people telling them
to believe in Allah
His angels, His books, His messengers,
and the Last Day
and in the decreeing both of good and evil
and when call upon them
to worship Allah as though they see Him
for He sees them though they do not see Him
and when you walk among the people proclaiming
the signs of the last day
and warning them
like Shu'ayb
of what befell past civilizations
who ignored the truth
when you do any of these things
my sisters and brothers
first call upon Allah, saying
O our Sustainer!
Lay Thou open the truth between us and our people
for Thou art the best of all to lay open the truth!

Al-'Alim

What do I know for certain?
Only one who has achieved the state of *baqa*
knows anything for certain
and unable to discern
the purer ones from the pretenders
I must instead begin with the best I have
that cruelty comes from judgement without understand-
ing
that understanding comes from learning about humankind
that learning about humankind comes from

Al-Basir

(a lyric)
I took a road to find a code
But things kept changing gear, so I
Took a road to where nobody
Knows me here —
Got a problem?
I took a road, Oh Lord,
The wheels began to fray

Can't wait here wasting my time with you no more!

I took a road to heaven
The truth so hard to bear
I took a road to hell
No nothing there
Not that you care
I took a road to dieing
Tangled up in mind

Can't wait here wasting my time with you no more!

I took a road to obey you
Did you not know I was weak?
I took a road past charity
Please don't speak
Turn the other cheek
I took a road to the past
It was never worth betraying

Can't wait here biding my time with you no more!

Let that be my better name, then —
Julaybib Ayoub
and I beg You bestow Your honours as I dishonour myself

Al-Mudhill

The treaty of Hudaibiya
was a mercy to those deceptions
which haunt every pilgrim

But when all that remains are small doubts
and you've taken enough shit for one lifetime
do what must be done — crush them!

Do not accept appeals to worldly authority
or the possibility
that there may be some good in the old

Simply tie up the loose ends
face the truth as it is
and pray for a clean break

As for those doubts you still can't shake,
don't worry — they'll find a home somewhere
in the new you

As-Sami

I have been deaf to my own lies
the cure is sincere living
and *taqwa*

walking the path of *nafs lawwama*
and from remembrance of
the 99 names

Al-Qabid

One Maghrib, Jibreel was speaking to the Prophet
whilst Ali comforted him in his lap,
not departing until after the last *sujud* was done

And when he returned,
and he looked up to see Ali's anguish
at having missed *salah*, his perfection shattered,

Muhammad called upon The Constrictor
for the sun to return
and for the evening shadows to shorten...

a man or a woman
who is mad with love for their beloved
deserves to have time turned back

like Superman did for Lois Lane
even if it means
every law in the universe is broken

this world is but shadow built upon shadow
and we too can shorten them
with Allah's grace

by looking for signs of *Asma al-Husna* in everything
and asking for the impossible
even as we look solid night in the face

Al-Basit

Oh Allah, how do I soften
This impudent, world-hardened heart for *salah*?
By *sama'*, of course

A reminder of the covenant of Alast
 When Allah called me forth
 From Adam's Loins and Eve's womb
 And asked, 'Am I not your Lord?'
 Funny question to ask, really...
 Is a circle round?
 But that was a long time ago
 Since then, I have been reborn
 Into a triad of arrogant, amnesiac camps
 A brothel of book burners who raped me
 A family of soul suckers who crucified me
 A nation of truth deniers who sold me into slavery
 I'll buy a drum, then
 And beat out Your names alone
 Washed up pure, I'll sweat out that grey hate poison
 Ripping off my shirt and then
 Tearing open my thorax,
 Whatever it takes, Lord, to make me humble in spirit

Al-Khafid

It is easy to bring down
 kings and presidents, this is why they need
 statues, spin-doctors and body guards to protect them
 but is impossible to denigrate
 the pure in spirit
 they only wear pride for the comfort of others
 having replaced vanity with piety
 their only feeling is
 for the needs of others

Ar-Rafi'

'...they think well of him...'
 '...he gets things going when everyone else comes to a halt;
 he thinks up or approves the best ideas...'
 this is the order of the automated ape!
 those who lead or who are led are amongst the regressed
 selling second-hand, third-hand lives
 inspiration now brings with it an impetus to defame command
 the great are no longer exalted
 obedience, like celebrity, is a distraction!
 the exalted human is conscious of Allah
 experience educated by
 clear thinking, a warm heart and virtuous study
taqwa is its own submission:
 it is praising ar-Rafi' with every loving intention,
 every considered action, every act of breath

Al-Mu'izz

Am I among the waverers?
 Have I been poisoned by time
 in the company of scoffing *mushrikun*?
 Whose side am I on?
 Do I seek honours from God alone
 or does fame and fortune still beckon?
 When I stand upon the hill,
 the wide spaces fill me with *taqwa*
 and from my heart, Al-Mu'izz, I sing your praises
 but when the wooden door slams
 on this rabbit hutch, I struggle to find fortitude
 though like Ayoub, perhaps I do not deny You, but curse You for
 my sores