

MY LORD!
INCREASE ME IN KNOWLEDGE
(THE QUR'AN 20:114)

Aalim

THE SCHOLAR

SEEKING ADVANCEMENT OF
KNOWLEDGE THROUGH SPIRITUAL
AND INTELLECTUAL GROWTH

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Critical Thinking

By Ibrahim B. Syed, Ph. D., D.Sc.

"5% think, 10% think they think, 85% would rather die than think." — Anonymous

"Arguments, like men, are often pretenders." — Plato

Definition:

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action (A draft statement by Michael Scriven and Richard Paul for the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking.

(<http://lonestar.texas.net/~mseifert/crit2.html>)

Critical thinking is the ability to engage in reasoned discourse with intellectual standards such as clarity, accuracy, precision, and logic, and to use analytic skills with a fundamental value orientation that emphasizes intellectual humility, intellectual integrity, and fair-mindedness.

(<http://www.csus.edu/indiv/d/dowdenb/4/ct-def/def-of-ct.htm>)

Critical thinking is defined as reflective skepticism. Critical thinking is a way to approach problems and make decisions

Introduction

By using critical thinking one can enjoy benefits throughout one's long life. Experience dictates that critical thinking is essential to both effective learning and productive living.

Mankind is going through the information age where ideas are plentiful. However what is lacking is the ability to evaluate ideas in a constructive manner. People with reasoning skills across a variety of situations will find jobs waiting for them. It is paramount to make the students learn how to think critically so that they can become most marketable. Current jobs and future jobs will be displaced by new technologies. The vital requirement for future jobs will be the ability to think critically. Fluctuations in the job market means that tomorrow's workers in order to survive should learn new skills. One should decide which skills are worth learning. Such decisions require critical thinking. Critical thinking means "involving or exercising skilled judgment or observation." Thinking is critical when it

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evaluates the reasoning behind a decision. Evaluation means that critical thinkers examine the outcomes of thought processes for their positive and negative attributes. But for thinking to be critical, evaluation must be carried forth in a constructive manner (*Halpern, Diane F. Thought and knowledge in An introduction to critical thinking. Mahwah, N.J., L. Erlbaum Associates , 1996.*).

Thinking includes problem solving, decision-making, critical thinking, logical reasoning and creative thinking. Thinking involves the appropriate use of knowledge, and this ability is not developed spontaneously (hastily).. In America educators are emphasizing on enhancing critical thinking. Critical Thinking is an academic "buzz" word.

Learning to think critically

Critical thinking moves beyond self-centered views of the universe to a broader, more abstract realm. This means expanding thinking beyond the egocentric values and limited life experiences. In general, one's thinking is more likely to become critical when concrete learning experiences precede abstract thought (<http://www.ncsu.edu/learn/crit3.html>)

Critical thinking can improve one's academic performance by developing an understanding into the arguments and views of others. For a worker critical thinking skills can improve his/her performance in the workplace. In daily life critical thinking helps us to avoid making foolish decisions. Critical thinking citizens make good decisions on important social, political and economic issues. A critical thinking individual is capable of examining his/her assumptions, dogmas, and prejudices.

The purpose of critical thinking is, therefore, to achieve understanding, evaluate viewpoints, and solve problems. Critical thinking is the inquiry (the cognitive processes) we engage in when we seek to understand, evaluate, or resolve.

The terms critical thinking, reflective thinking, and inquiry were primarily used synonymously. The concept of reflective thinking has been often interpreted as problem solving. Reflective thinking includes only aspects of what is now called critical thinking. Critical thinking appears to be a subset of problem solving. (<http://citla.kysu.edu/Resources/Critical%20Thinking/History%20Short.htm>)

Benefits of Critical Thinking

Continuous change and evolution are facts of life. Worldwide political events occur unpredictably and with amazing speed. Economic indicators reflect increased instability in the marketplace. Technological advances continue unabated and scientific discoveries give us new understanding about our world and ourselves. We are living in an information age and the amount of information doubles every four or five years. How do we adapt in these uncomfortable times? How can we make decisions with so much volatility and how will our decisions affect our careers, our families, and ourselves?

We are tempted to find "quick-fix" solutions to life. We may want to make important decisions based on intuition or emotion rather than taking the time to gather the appropriate information or carefully weigh alternatives. The media, advertisers, and others respond with simple, direct messages that tell consumers what to do, what to think, and what to buy. The desire to have easy answers is understandable, but can also be dangerous. Excessive simplification of complex problems often leads to simple "solutions" that can make matters worse. Life's problems cannot be isolated and systematically solved through a series of action steps.

Albert Einstein once said "Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler." Given the complexities of our world, how do we determine when we are oversimplifying an issue? Which decisions deserve our careful consideration? To what degree do we heed the advice of others and to whom do we listen? How do we go about choosing a career, the best investments, or the right doctor? (*Why Critical Thinking?* Craig A. Hassel, **Assistant Professor and Extension Nutritionist Department of Food Science & Nutrition, the University of Minnesota. North Central Regional Extension Publication 433. Revised 1992**)

It has been said, "learning to think critically is one of the most important activities of adult life."

Our Concept of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking skills are vital to well-educated individuals and acquiring this ability should be one of the most important goals in one's life. A broad framework of intellectual rigor is called critical thinking. Critical thinking skills enable people to evaluate, compare, analyze, critique, and synthesize information. Those who possess critical thinking skills know that knowledge is not a collection of

facts, but rather an ongoing process of examining information, evaluating that information, and adding it to their understanding of the world. Critical thinkers also know to keep an open mind- and frequently end by changing their views based on new knowledge. (<http://www.people.vcu.edu/~cturner/critical.htm>)

"A broad-based education, inter-disciplinary study, and the ability to think beyond the textbook or class lecture is important for students. Being able to think and write clearly, critically, and cogently is a skill that will contribute to quality of life. Critical thinking is the art of taking charge of your own mind. If we can take charge of our own minds, we can take charge of our lives; we can improve them, bringing them under our self-command and direction. This requires that we learn self-discipline and the art of self-examination. This involves becoming interested in how our minds work, how we can monitor, fine tune, and modify their operations for the better. It involves getting into the habit of reflectively examining our impulsive and accustomed ways of thinking and acting in every dimension of our lives." (<http://www.people.vcu.edu/~cturner/critical.htm>)

Our actions are based on some motivations or reasons. But we rarely examine our motivations to see if they make sense. We rarely inspect our reasons critically to see if they are rationally justified. As consumers we sometimes buy things hastily and uncritically (undecidedly), without ever thinking whether we really need what we are tending to buy or whether we can find the money for it or whether it's good for our health or whether the price is competitive. As parents we often react to our children impulsively and uncritically. We do not determine whether our actions are consistent with how we want to act as parents or whether we are contributing to their self-esteem. We do not think whether we are discouraging them from thinking or from taking responsibility for their own behavior.

People vote impulsively and uncritically, without taking the time to familiarize with the relevant issues and positions, without thinking about the long-run implications of what is being proposed, without paying attention to how politicians manipulate the public by flattery or vague and empty promises. As friends bring out the worst in us they stimulate us to act in ways that we have been trying to change. As spouses we think only of our own desires and points of view, uncritically ignoring the needs and perspectives of our life-partners. As patients many times we allow ourselves to become passive and uncritical in our health care, not establishing good habits of eating and exercise, not questioning what our doctor says, not designing or following good plans for our own wellness. Too often as teachers, we permit ourselves to uncritically teach, as we have been taught, giving assignments that students can mindlessly do, unintentionally discouraging their initiative and independence, missing opportunities to cultivate their self-discipline and thoughtfulness. It is quite possible to live an unexamined life, to live in a more or less automated, uncritical way. It is possible to live, without developing, or acting upon, the skills and insights we are capable of. However, if we allow ourselves to become unreflective persons, or rather, to the extent that we do, we are likely to do injury to ourselves and others, and to miss many opportunities to make our own lives, and the lives of others, fuller, happier, and more productive.

On this view, critical thinking is an eminently practical goal and value. It is focused on an ancient Greek ideal of "living an examined life". It is based on the skills, the insights, and the values essential to that end. We must become active, daily, practitioners of critical thought. We must regularly model for our students what it is to reflectively examine, critically assess, and effectively improve the way we live.

(<http://www.criticalthinking.org/K12/k12class/Oconcept.html>)

The Qur'an repeatedly provokes and challenges the reader to think and contemplate the signs of Allah so that she/he can understand. Human destiny is not to be passive like the angels but to be creative for which she/he has been given the most sublime gift of all, **the mind**. And creative mind is a critical mind. The religious justification for understanding the reading of the Qur'an as initially an intellectual challenge is that mere unreflective and unexamined acceptance of that which is handed down to us is frowned upon by Islam. There is a dynamic relationship that exists in Islam between faith and reflective thought. And has not the Qur'an said, "(Here is), a Book which We have sent down unto thee, full of blessings, that they may meditate on its **Signs**, and that men of understanding may receive admonition." (Surah, Al-Sad, 38: 29). In fact, "verily in that are Signs for those who reflect (Surah, Al-Rum, 30: 21) is a constant theme throughout the Qur'an, which, among other things, underscores the point that meanings of the sign of Allah cannot be read just off the face of the signs but require thinking and reflection.

In Islam there is no such thing as knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Knowledge has no value and virtue in and by itself. Its virtue lies in bringing human kind closer to Allah. The view that knowledge is the path that leads to Allah highlights two things about Islam. Firstly that knowledge in Islam is important for a Muslim's spiritual growth and development. And, secondly, since knowledge is acquired through the active process of going beyond what one already knows, critical thinking is essential for a Muslim to grow intellectually and spiritually. It further suggests, that intellectual growth without spiritual development is aimless wandering, and spiritual development without the intellectual component is meaningless.

In the Western societies critical thinking is required to lead a successful life based on pragmatic and utilitarian grounds. Critical thinking in its secular mode is entirely a this-worldly-affair, undertaken purely to bring about changes in the world for the purpose of this life. In Islam, to engage in critical thought is a moral commitment and to be judged on it's moral worth independent of its success or failures in this world. Allah (SWT) requires us to act morally; the success or failure of such actions is entirely in His hands. (*Yedullah Kazmi, The Role of Critical Thinking in Islam, Hamdard Islamicus, Vol. 23 (1): 27-36, Jan-March 2000*).

Prophet Abraham (as) exercised critical thinking when he questioned the existence of the sun and moon as gods, reaching the conclusion that whatever sets and disappears cannot be all-powerful, that the Creator of all these created things was the One God. Bilquis, Queen of Sheba is another example of a human being's ability to come to the right conclusion through critical thinking.

The Quran emphasizes and demands that Muslims observe, think, ponder, reflect and question creation, including the wonders of the universe and what is within us to recognize God's existence.

Do they not ponder/reflect on the Quran? 4.82; 23.68 & 7.184
... the signs in detail for those who reflect. 10.24; 30.21; 39.42; 45.13; 51.49; 51.49
Do they not reflect in their own minds? 30.8 & 34.46
...and contemplate the wonders of creation. 3.191
... in order that you may consider. 2.219; 2.226; 6.50; 13.3

The Quran relates stories of the past generations to make us think critically of what they were doing wrong so that we do not

repeat the same mistakes. Islam discourages us to blindly follow any tradition just because that is how it was done in the past.

... so relate the story, perchance they may reflect. 7.176

Learning from the mistakes of others requires critical thinking as well as wisdom. The intellect is a gift from God, and He expects us to use it. *Allâh Ta'ala* demands of Muslims to raise their awareness and become conscious of what they believe and learn how to make the right choice.

Education involves questioning, researching, forming opinions, verifying ideas and thoughts and then reaching a sound conclusion. There is no such thing as a bad question. When a person who goes through this process submits, he will submit with full awareness, willingness and conviction. An educated and informed Muslim who has examined Islam and then chooses to follow it is better than someone who follows blindly.

Can the blind be held equal to the seeing? Will you not, then, take thought? (6.50)

The blind and the seeing are not equal... (35.19) & (40.58)

Critical thinking also demands that when there is enough evidence to support a point, we do not let our ego come in the way of accepting that conclusion. Being human, this poses a much greater effort as well as a willingness to submit despite what our lower self incites us to do.

... verily, it is not the eyes that have become blind – but blind have become the hearts that are in their breasts! (22.46)

Islamic history is full of examples of intellectual giants in every field of study; from science to astronomy, from medicine to psychology, from mathematics to the fine arts... all of them were open-minded critical thinkers. They questioned and probed until they found the answers that made them the most respected scholars of the past and present. We don't stop gloating about them, but are too scared to follow their example. Muslims seem to have lost their ability to respect the search of knowledge; they have created an Islamophobic attitude that research and questioning is akin to heresy. The end result is that Muslims today are suffering from their own ignorance. If we believe that Islam is for all times, we have to recognize that each new era will bring its own questions and dilemmas; and each new generation will examine everything anew... it has to, otherwise it stands to lose conviction. Not only that, but each individual, in his or her search for meaning of life will and should question the precepts of Islam, until he/she is convinced, only then will they achieve certainty of faith. Muslims have no right to put limits on any individual's path of personal growth and evolution.

We are too often passive receptors of information, and like a herd of sheep following blindly Muslims have given up the personal responsibility of seeking knowledge. We need to develop and effectively apply critical thinking skills to the complex problems that we face, and to the critical choices we will be forced to make as a result of the information explosion, other rapid technological changes and the political chaos that surrounds us. It is important to know how to ask good questions and to think critically in order to continue advancement. Every field stays alive only to the extent that fresh questions are generated and taken seriously. To live successfully, Muslims must be able to think critically in order to make sound decisions about personal, civic and world affairs. If we learn to think critically, only then will we be able to use good judgment as the guide by which we live our lives. 

The "Spiritual Powers" Of The Dead

By the Editor, AL-BALAAGH, PO Box 925, Lenasia 1820, South Africa

It is a firm and fanatical belief among a segment of the Muslim Community to ask for all their spiritual sustenance and temporal needs from holy men, or *Awliya-Allah*. These Muslims have become a group of beggars who cannot stand on their own feet (i.e. by their OWN righteous deeds or *A'MAAL*), but keep begging the saints at their *mazaars* (mausoleums) for everything, and beseech them for intercession with Allah Ta'Aala.

Almighty Allah disillusiones these people in pellucid, unambiguous words when He says that the DEAD ones (whether *Walees* or non-*Walees*) CANNOT hear if anybody speaks to them, nor can they reply:

*If you call on them, they will not hear your call;
And even if heard it, they could not answer you,
And on the Day of Resurrection, they would want
to have NOTHING to do with your SHIR-K
(having associated them with God) 35: 14*

And Again:

And you cannot make those to hear who are in their graves. 35:23

Allah points out to us our heinous MISCONCEPTION and unforgivable fancy in thinking that the *Awliya* hear our supplications and answer our prayers by interceding with Allah:

*And who is in greater error than
he who evokes beside Allah those that
- even till the Day of Resurrection - cannot answer him,
and they are heedless of their call. 46:5*

The Qur'an, ever a PRACTICAL guide, states a simple physical truth: that the DEAD people CANNOT hear or speak.

However, we are determined to prove that Allah Ta'Aala is wrong (*Na-oozubillah*), by insisting on going to the *mazaars* of this peer and that peer and wasting hours there asking the DEAD BONES lying inside the tomb to "help" us! And we pride ourselves on the fact that we have 'Aql, sense, intelligence, understanding! When Allah insists in the Qur'an that we must ask Him only, we, in effect, say: "Nothing doing! Our Peer Saheb will grant us whatever we want!" Therefore, according to the diseased "logic" of these hagiolaters (Peer-worshippers), their Peer Saheb is GREATER and MORE POWERFUL than Allah *Subhaanahoo Wa Ta'Aala (Astaghfirullah)*.

*And call not beside Allah on that
which can neither benefit you nor harm you." 10: 16*

Duck's Back

As water is off a duck's back, so are Qur'an's exhortations ineffectual to the Peeri-Mureedi gang. They couldn't care a tinker's damn when Allah tells them NOT to ask from a human being. Apparently they KNOW that they are right. If they are right, then, ipso facto, Allah Ta'Aala and the Rasool (S) MUST be wrong! (*Taubah*). What a pity these people read the Qur'an only for the purpose of accumulating barrelsful of *Sawaab*. They do not understand a word of what they read, and thus their ignorance and SHIR-K is perpetuated and their *Imaan* weakened. Their eyes will open only on the Day of Reckoning when Allah will ask them to produce their "helpers."

(And Allah shall say):

*And now indeed you have come (back) to us alone,
As We had created you at first:
and you have left behind you all (the favors)
We had bestowed upon you:*

*And We do not see with you those Intercessors (Helpers) of yours whom, you
supposed, had a share In Allah's Divinity with regard to yourselves!
Indeed all bonds between you are now cut off, and your
(pet) fancies have forsaken you. 6:95*

The question of the so-called *Waseelah* (intermediation) does not arise at all, because Allah's pronouncements regarding asking Him ALONE for help and NOT from any other human being, are CLEAR, UNEQUIVOCAL and UNAMBIGUOUS, as the verses quoted above indicate.

Unparalleled

*"Tell them (O Prophet): (Let alone others),
EVEN FOR MY OWN SELF I do not have the Power to
control any harm or benefit except what Allah pleases." 10: 49*

The Noble Prophet's (S) greatness as a human being is unmatched and unparalleled in history-and this fact will remain so till Doomsday. It is our *Imaan* (solid faith) that:

To cut a long story short, YOU are the great one after Allah!

Now: when the GREATEST among men HIMSELF cannot exercise the power of doing harm or good to anyone, then how can any LESSER mortal - no matter how profoundly pious or how awe-inspiring a Sufi (*Walee*) he may be - claim that he has the power to grant benefits of any sort to anybody?

The Prophetic vision of Rasoolullah (S) had shown him that some day the MISGUIDED ones in his *Ummah* will construct magnificent *mazaars* for their favorite "Peers". They will burn the Hindu-originated "Agarbattis" made from cow-dung, give annual *GHUSL* (washing-up) to the *mazaars* and drink that dirty water to gain "spiritual strength" (as is done at the Ajmer Mazaar of Khwaja Mu'eenuddeen Chisti (R), and then KISS, and make SAJDAH to the one lying in the tomb. They will also beseech and supplicate the DEAD "Peer" in the grave to give them this and give them that.

Rasoolullah (S) therefore commanded his followers to ask EVERYTHING from Allah, as the following Hadith from TIRMIZI SHAREEF clearly indicates-

"The Prophet (S) said that everyone must ask what he

*Needs from his Creator - so much so that (even ordinary items like) SALT,
and STRAP OF LEATHER for the shoe when it breaks, should also be
asked of Allah." (Tirmizi)*

It is a great pity and tragedy that Muslims, ignorant of the teachings of the Qur'an and the precepts of our Nabi (S), have "reconstructed" Islam to suit their own preconceived notions and putrid ideas inherited from their parents and Hindu ancestors. They have attributed miraculous powers (which is only a FIGMENT of their imagination) to their "Peer Sahebs" who, to all intents and purposes, seem to have OUSTED Allah Paak!

"The Sufi and Peer have usurped the position of God;

The two of them have caused the Almighty to become unemployed!"

Courtesy: AL-BALAAGH Vol. 25, No. 2,

MAY/JUNE 2000 p.4.☞

What Is The Islamic Dress?

By the Editor, AL-BALAAGH

Some people are under the happy illusion that the particular type of clothes they wear is "Islamic." They are at pains to stress that our Nabi (S) wore such clothes, and they are thus following the *Sunnah of Rasoolullah*. Some of them, in fact, go so far as to look down upon others who are not dressed in the *Sunnah* apparel.

Let it be known to the unwary, and to those gullible enough to swallow this type of BALONEY, that there is **NO** such thing as "Islamic" dress. Our *Nabi (S)* did NOT say at any time that we must wear exactly as he did. He placed **NO** emphasis whatsoever on the form of clothes we put on. What logic is there in insisting that all Muslims should wear that long maxi *kurta*? If an Eskimo Muslim in Alaska or a Muslim in Siberia wore that *Tableeghi kurta*, he would freeze to death.

Evil Heart

The type of raiment we wear has not even the remotest connection with our *Deen*. The Chinese and Japanese Muslims have their own mode of dressing. Afghans and Pakistanis have their national dress; so do Hungarian Muslims and Muslims from Timbuktu or Khorasan.

Outer covering, in some cases, provides a convenient façade for harbouring an evil heart. Sometimes a crook and a rascal of the first order hides behind the *pardah* of a beard and a white *kurta* or *jubbah*. Referring to such types, a *Wali* (saint) remarked:

Many a Khirqah (-wearer) will be a candidate for the Fire (Khirqah= so called 'religious' garb worn by the holy men)

We do not have to go to details, but it is a public secret that some bearded maxi-kurtaed or jubbah-wearing 5-times Namazi and 20-times Haaji capitalists OVERWORK their poor employees and UNDERPAY them heartlessly! We also know that they are ruthless landlords, squeezing and sucking the last drop of blood from their hapless tenants. (Please note that we do **NOT** say that "all" are like that. There is a great numerical difference between "all" and "some". These remarks will ignite only those on whom the shoe fits!)

Loving Allah's Creation

By wearing a certain type of garb, we do NOT become the blue-eyed darlings of the Almighty! If we wish to acquit ourselves creditably in His eyes, then we must NOT concentrate on the height of our trousers from the ankle, nor whether we should wear a maxi kurta or mini kurta, or whether our cheeks should be bearded or clean-shaven.

The Almighty finds all these considerations vapid and irrelevant. What He **DOES** want us to do (as the Qur'an indicates) is to have a kind heart, to assist the poor and needy; to feed the hungry and clothe the naked; to give *succour* to the widows and orphans who have no one to look after them. The Rasool (S) wants us to remove thorns from the path, so that others may not hurt themselves when walking on the spot; he wants us to conduct blind people safely across the street. THAT is *Ibaadat*. THAT is Islam!

The Prophet (S) wants us to love animals and children, as he himself did:

If you wish to love Allah, then love His creation is a famous saying of our Nabi (S). He did **NOT** say: "If you wish to love Allah, then put on the maxi kurta." Now, did he?

The illustrious Persian poet-philosopher, Shaikh Sa'di (RA), had expressed **PURE** Islam in the following couplet:

The religious way of life is NAUGHT except service to humanity; It is NOT with tasbeeh, musallah, and long kurta!

Libaas

NOWHERE in the Glorious Qur'an does Allah Almighty ask Muslims to wear a certain kind of dress. In other words, there is **NO** sartorial regimentation in Islam! The word "Libaas" (dress) is certainly used in the Qur'an, but it is used with *Taqwa*: WA LIBAASUT TAQWA, ZAALIKA KHAIR (7: 26) - the dress of PIETY is the best dress!

What is the use of wearing an "Islamic" dress (**IF** there were such a dress) when our heart inside is BLACK - "Bo blink, BINNE STINK" - as they say in Afrikaans, that is, shines on the outside, but STINKS INSIDE! A well-known Hadith of our Nabi (S) makes matters absolutely clear: "VERILY ALLAH DOES **NOT** LOOK AT YOUR PERSON/FACES (whether bearded or clean-shaven, veiled (with Ninja-purdah) or unveiled, what type of dress you wear, etc.) NOR (DOES ALLAH LOOK AT) HOW MUCH WEALTH YOU POSSESS, BUT HE CERTAINLY LOOKS AT YOUR HEARTS (how clean they are) AND AT YOUR DEEDS."

Tiangular And Quadrangular

It is a profound misconception, fond delusion, and utter misguidance to imagine that Allah will love us more if we wear triangular trousers, quadrangular kurtas, and conical (comical?) topis. And, nowadays, the Tableeghis insist that Muslims must wear a turban - not just a plain turban. BUT A TURBAN WITH A TAIL, because - as they keep repeating in their newsletters and other publications - your *Salaat* will **NOT** be accepted if your turban has not got a Tail!!

Thus it is clear to sane people that where religion is concerned, the "sting is in the tail" for the Teejays (T.J. = Tableegh Jama'at).

Allah (SWT) is NOT a fashion designer who prescribes a certain kind of dress, and then uses a tape to measure how many centimeters above or below is our trousers from the ankle. Did the Almighty God ever ask us in the Glorious Qur'an to conform to a Divine "Islamic" Dress Code?

This kind of Tableeghi and mullah - "Islam" has made Muslims and Islam the laughing - stock of the Muslim AND non-Muslim world!

The South African poet and mystic; Maulawi Mirza Joommal Al-Qadiree has said it very succinctly:

Many a Shaitaan will be seen wearing the turban (pugree); In appearance a Muslim, but (in reality a hypocrite) with The Hindu rosary ("tasbeeh") (in hand).

And again:

(One) cannot become godly by wearing (a certain type of) dress: O Joommal! (It is useless) if there is no real DESIRE/Quest for meeting God!

Courtesy: AL-BALAAGH Vol. 28,

No.1 FEB/MARCH 2003 p. 4

Miseries Of A *Tableeghi's* Wife

The name and address of the writer who is a Muslimah and wife of a *Tableeghi* is withheld at the author's request.

I was happily married woman. My husband, a medical doctor, was kind, loving, compassionate, and a model father to our two children. He was a perfectly NORMAL human being, with exemplary behavior, an extremely good Muslim, and I can proudly say that he was a credit to the human race until he was rudely snatched away from me and my children by the *Tableegh* Jamaat!

When this happened, he turned into a mere caricature of a human being. He discarded his normal, man's clothes, donning the *Tableeghi* calico maxi-kurta, which is really a female dress. He grew a bushy, Viking-type of ferocious, frightening beard, started carrying that eternal "Miswaak" stick in his front pocket where fountain pens are usually kept. He wears his calico trousers miles away from his ankle and thinks that *that* is the real Islam!

Before his transformation, he had bought beautiful furniture for me - a lovely dining room table and chairs, a color television, and a gorgeous bedroom suite. No sooner the demon of *Tableeghism* gripped and grabbed him, than he came home one day and ordered me to wear the Ninja purdah "with immediate effect." He stopped me from going out - even to buy the bare necessities for the kitchen - saying that I must remain confined to the four walls of the home, because that's what Islam teaches and that is how our Rasoolullah wants us women to be.

He sold all our furniture - yes, ALL, and this is no exaggeration! We had to sit on the floor and eat; we had to sleep on the hard floor. He said that that is how our Prophet slept. He did not sell the TV set; he actually SMASHED it to pieces, saying that the money gained from selling the TV would be Haraam!

Family Life

He seldom stayed at home. He lost all feelings for his children and for me. He travelled with the Jamaat all over South Africa and overseas, doing *Da'wah* work - staying away for months on end. When I broached the question of family life and our

conjugal relations with him, he became violently abusive, and so incensed that he slapped me and beat me up badly. He accused me of listening to the "non-sense" of the non-*Tableeghis*, who are enemies of Islam; he said that I was grossly "disobedient" and a "disgrace" to Islam!

He does not practice as a doctor anymore. He is giving every minute of his time to the Jamaat. I had to find work to support my two children. And for this effort of mine, I was beaten up badly AGAIN! He said that there is NO need for me to work, as we must have our faith and *tawakkul* on Allah, and Allah will provide us with food! That's what his "Hazrat" told him.

He does not want to divorce me: "You can rot in Hell for ever, you B----", were his words - the last swear word coming out from the "holy", "Paak" lips of a "lover of Rasoolullah"! My happy home, which was a haven of peace, love and tranquility, turned into a veritable hell when my husband came under the evil shadow of this pernicious cult of *Tableeghism*. I know of many other homes that are broken up and economically destroyed by the *Tableegh* Jamaat. The wives of the *Tableeghis* have been forced to seek their satisfaction elsewhere, seeing that their husbands are never at home! Parents have lost their sons to this Evil Creed; wives have lost their husbands to this Satanic Syndrome of *Tableeghism*!

I want my Muslim sisters all over the world to know that if they wish to ruin their lives, then they must marry that creature with a beard and long kurta, three-quarter trousers, who passes himself off as a "human" being!! Your marital life will be destroyed, your happiness will be destroyed, your Islam will be destroyed, and you will be TERRIBLY traumatized!

In compliance with your policy, I am furnishing you with my full name, address and telephone number, but PLEASE do not publish my name for obvious reasons. You may use my nom-de-plume.

JAZAAKALLAH

"HAD IT"
(Phoenix, Durban, South Africa)

Courtesy: AL-BALAAGH Vol. 25, No. 2
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Is Music Haraam?

Islamic Party of Britain, Great Britain, UK

Self-Righteous Apostles Who Declare Music As Haraam

Music is another of those activities, which has been declared by some narrow-minded, myopic, bigoted, spoilsport apostles of self-righteous Islam as Haraam in whatever form without qualification. Most Muslims have succumbed to such pressures, and modern Islam has thus been robbed of an important cultural expression.

Singing and music have always been an integral part of people's life expression, and taking this away from them means either to impoverish them culturally or to breed hypocrisy by forcing them to deny their musical inclinations publicly whilst at the same time satisfying them secretly with the material borrowed from other cultures. In other words, to deny a people their musical expression, is equivalent to denying them their own identity.

Own Musical Expression

Just as Islam has its own architecture and its own brand of expressive arts, Islam has its own musical expression. The important element in this is, as with many other Islamic activities, its purpose. Music in Islam ought to be uplifting and encourage the reflection of truth and the service of the Creator, and may not be corrupting and inciting base instincts. This applies to the contents of songs as much as to the musical accompaniment. As much as a chandelier from a dancing hall does not befit a Mosque as decoration, the hammering of modern pop music does little to enhance a song with a religious theme.

There is sufficient evidence that whilst the Prophet Muhammad (S) denounced corrupting music (Bukhari) or an excessive dedication to music or poetry (Bukhari/Muslim), **music as such was NOT prohibited**. While digging the ditch around Madeenah in preparation for battle, the Prophet (S) and his companions were singing songs (Bukhari/Muslim).

Wedding Functions

Instrumental music was explicitly permitted for wedding functions (Bukhari/Muslim). The Seerah contains a report of an occasion when the young Muhammad (S), before having been called to Prophethood, thought of joining the other youths of Makkah in their enjoyment, but was drawn to some musical tunes emanating from a wedding party, which attracted his attention.

Listening to the tunes, he eventually fell asleep and was thus saved from the corrupting influence of the youth of the town. If instrumental music was, in the wisdom of Allah, good enough to protect the young prophet (S) from going astray, it can hardly be from the devil!!

It is important to remember the Prophet's (S) admonition: "What about people who make rules which are not found in the Book of Allah? If one makes rules which are not in the Book of Allah, then it is void, even if he were to make a hundred rules." (Bukhari).

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