

MUSTACHE شَرَاب

شَرَّب = أَشْرَب
to give a drink to,
to make drink



MacToot

53

شَارِب – شَارِبَان – شَوَارِب (1) Mustache Drink

Embodiment is not merely a question of specific body parts; body *processes* are also an integral part of the field. This chapter looks at the process of drinking, while the following one focusses on nominal derivatives of drinking, including the mustache. The primordially important verb شَرِبَ – يَشْرَبُ *shariba*, to drink, is the source of a large body of vocabulary that has been a constant over the centuries. The verb and seven of its derivatives occur in thirty-nine places in the Qur'an. Of them, this Form I verb is the most commonly used. This is also true in modern usage, although three of the root's other derivatives figure in the *FDA* as well.

Let us consider the four (principal) verbal derivatives of this root. Form II شَرَّبَ is to give someone something to drink, or even to force someone to drink. Form III شَارَبَ signifies to drink with someone, and one must not use the preposition مع with this verb, as the sense of 'with' is built right in. Form V تَشْرَبُ adds intensity to the Form I verb: to soak up, absorb, be filled or imbued with. It may be literal or figurative; a towel can soak up a spilled liquid, and a person can soak up an atmosphere. Interestingly, Form IV أَشْرَبَ may be synonymous either with the causative Form II, to make someone drink, or the intensive sense of Form V, to be imbued with. In the story of the Israelites and the golden calf in 2:93 of the Qur'an, the Form IV verb is used in the passive voice with the causative meaning. وَأَشْرَبُوا فِي قُلُوبِهِمْ. العَجَلُ, *And they were made to imbibe (the love of) the calf (deep) into their hearts.* A fifth verb, technically considered to be from a separate quadrilateral root, ش - ر - أ - ب, is the Form IV إِشْرَأَبَ, *ishra'abba*. It means to stretch or crane the neck in order to see something, to raise the head conceitedly. The semantics of this verb, focusing as it does on a movement of the neck, suggest the possibility of an underlying connection to drinking. Form IV quadrilateral verbs are exceedingly rare in Arabic; the very pattern makes one want to crane one's neck for a good close look.



64

رَقَبَة – رِقَاب Neck Watchful Waiting

In its incarnation as الرقبة *ar-raqaba*, the neck is the limb that allows for careful tracking of the environs. Meticulous watching necessarily entails waiting, and derivatives of الرقبة often suggest both. As a consequence, much of this vocabulary has connections to the security and surveillance domains. The Form I verb يرقب – رقب *raqaba* means to wait, as well as to observe or supervise. It may also mean to watch out, be careful. From it comes الرقابة *ar-raqaba*, censorship. The noun الرقبة and six of its derivatives figure in the *FDA*. Of them all, censorship is the most common! Military terminology includes الرقيب *ar-raqiib*, a low-ranking officer whose original job description must have included keeping a close eye on things. The word رقيب is also Qur’anic. In that context, it is not a military designation, but rather a close observer, a keeper. The ر – ق – ب root also generates two place patterns on the same theme, مرقب *marqab* and مرقبة *marqaba*, lookout, watchtower.

Both Form I رقب and Form III راقب mean to watch or observe, but Form III suggests a personal object: to keep a watchful eye on someone. Introducing Allah as the object produces the collocation راقب الله فيه *raaqaba Allaaha fihi*, to do right by someone for fear of God. This moral injunction is a reminder that one’s selfish inclinations may have a negative impact on others. God—a synecdoche for God’s laws, here—should therefore be kept carefully in mind for guidance. Unlike the ‘Golden Rule,’ with its implicit expectations of reciprocity, this admonition urges one to be scrupulous, never losing sight of an ultimate reckoning.

Form V ترقب and Form VIII ارتقب are quite similar. Form V often suggests added attention or effort to the sense of a Form I verb, and it may thus be translated ‘to be on the lookout.’ Like Form VIII, it can also mean to expect, anticipate, eagerly await. It follows that the *maSaadir* of الترقب *at-taraqub* and الارتقاب *al-irtiqaab* are largely synonymous: anticipation, expectation.

This neck also has several nominal metaphoric uses. One is the issue of responsibility. Something worn around the neck or tied to it is impossible to ignore. Hence, في رقبته *fi raqabatihi*, common in written and spoken registers, means to be one’s responsibility. In classical usage, the word رقبة may be a legal reference to a person, and especially to a slave, and it is used in this way the Qur’an (for example, 58:3). The expression ‘a hundred head of cattle’ reduces cattle to their heads. Monetary value is all that is at stake. Similarly, calling people ‘necks’ is dehumanizing and degrading, identifying them as possessions, no more than assets. The term for setting a slave free was تحرير رقبة *taHriir raqaba* or عتق رقبة *’itq raqaba*, freeing a neck, perhaps a literal reference to removing the physical chain. But an enemy of the state could also be referred to as رقبة, with its plural رقاب *riqaab*. In medieval times, when the weapon of choice was the sword, a term for execution, which might well entail beheading, was ضرب الرقاب *Darb ar-riqaab*, literally striking the necks. Off with their heads!



آه من قبلك
أدنى مِعصمي
Aah, your hand!
It has bloodied my
wrist
الأظفار



عاصمة
capital

العصمة في يدها
She retained her
independence
(and right to
initiate
divorce)
at
marriage

عَصَم

WRIST



عصم
to hold back,
restrain;
to safeguard



العصوم
inviolable,
sacrosanct;
sinless
bond; العصمة
protection;
modesty; virtuousness
impeccability

عاصم
protector



عاصمي
distinguished
(on one's own
merits)
عاصمات
neckband
or collar



اعتصام
demonstration,
sit-in



اعتصم
to seek refuge;
to go on a religious
retreat; to picket,
demonstrate,
to cling to, adhere,
to maintain



عاصمات
strap, thong
عاصمات = عاصمات
to cling to;
to resist temptation



اعتصام
to maintain
silence

مِعْصَم – مَعَاصِم Wrist Restrain; Cling to

The wrist is one element in a constellation of vocabulary derived from the Form I verb *عصم – يعصم* 'aSa-*ma* whose principal meaning is to restrain or hold back. Built on an instrument pattern, *المعصم* *al-mi'*Sam shows its functional link to restraint. Another common noun in this semantic family is *عِصَام* 'iSaam, a thong or strap. The choice of *عِصْمَة* 'uSma for neckband or collar is also a visual link between *ع – ص – م* and cords tied around limbs. In “al-Atlal” (the ruins), Umm Kulthum sings: *أه من قِيدِكَ أَدْمَى مِعْصَمِي*, Aah, your bond! It has bloodied my wrist. The Form I verb, however, has another crucial meaning: to protect and safeguard. Qur'anically, it is used in 33:17 to ask a rhetorical question with more than a little menace: *مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَعْصِمُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ*: *Who is it that might protect you from God?*

From the combined senses of restraint and protection, the culturally loaded noun *العِصْمَة* *al-'iSma* draws its complex nuances. Meaning hindrance, preservation, or protection, this noun has a special affinity with marriage and is used in the collocation *عِصْمَة النِّكَاح* 'iSmat *an-nikaaH*, the bond of marriage. Combining the associations of marriage and restraint, *العِصْمَة* also came to mean chastity and purity. With its trademark Ottoman spelling, *عصمت*, Ismet, is a popular name, used both for men and women. Two other popular men's names typically transliterated without their long vowels or any indication of their initial consonant are *عِصَام*, Isam, thong or strap, and *عَاصِم*, Asim, protector or guardian. The popularity of these names says volumes about gender and social attitudes. Noteworthy adjectives are *عِصَامِي* 'iSaamiyy, distinguished, self-made (rather than having come to prominence through family or other connections, *عِظَامِي* 'iZaamiyy) and the relative pattern, *أَعْصَم* 'a'Sam, white-footed, and by extension, excellent, precious.

Men had—and have—considerable authority over women, and one way of describing a woman under a man's authority is with the phrase *عِصْمَتُهُ فِي* *fii 'iSmatihi*, (she is) in his custody, meaning she is married to him. A woman may, however, retain her independence at marriage by specifically asking that this question of custody be 'in her hand.' This would give her the prerogative to initiate a divorce, should she wish to do so. However, social disparagement of the request for *العِصْمَة فِي يَدِهَا* *al-'iSma fii yadihaa* continues to make it difficult for a woman to do so.

Two more verbs are derived from this root. Form VIII *اعْتَصَم* has the sense of to seek refuge, or to adhere to something (like silence, or calm). Along with the high frequency word *عَاصِمَة* 'aaSima, capital of a country, the only derivative of *ع – ص – م* that appears in the *FDA* is *الاعْتِصَام* *al-'i'tiSaam*. In addition to the sense of adhering to something, this *maSdar* has acquired religious and political dimensions. Religiously, it is a prayer retreat practiced during Ramadan, when men may go to a mosque for days or weeks at a stretch in an expression of deep spiritual devotion. In the modern political sphere, it is a sit-in or demonstration. In both cases, practitioners stick to a practice as if they were bound to it. Form X *اسْتَعْصَم* is sometimes synonymous with VIII, but more commonly it means to resist (a temptation). What is sought is *العِصْمَة*, the restraint of virtue, or the virtue of restraint! This verb is used in 12:32 of the Qur'an to describe Joseph, who resists the attempted seduction of his owner's wife: *وَلَقَدْ رَاوَدْتُهُ عَنْ نَفْسِهِ فَاسْتَعْصَمَ*, *and I tried to seduce him but he showed restraint.*

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

حَم
UTERUS,
WOMB

رَحِمَ
to have
mercy

تَرَاحَمَ
to show
each other
Kindness and
consideration

زَوَّوِ الْأَرْحَامَ
relatives on
the maternal
side

Mactoot

رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ
God rest his soul
المرحوم السيد
the late Mr...

رَحِمَ عَلَى = تَرَاحَمَ عَلَى
to ask God to have mercy on

رحمك من هذا العذاب ... قلبي من الأثواق ذاب
Mercy from this torment ... My heart has melted from desire
Ahmed Mikhaimar

رَحِمَ – أَرْحَامُ Womb Mercy

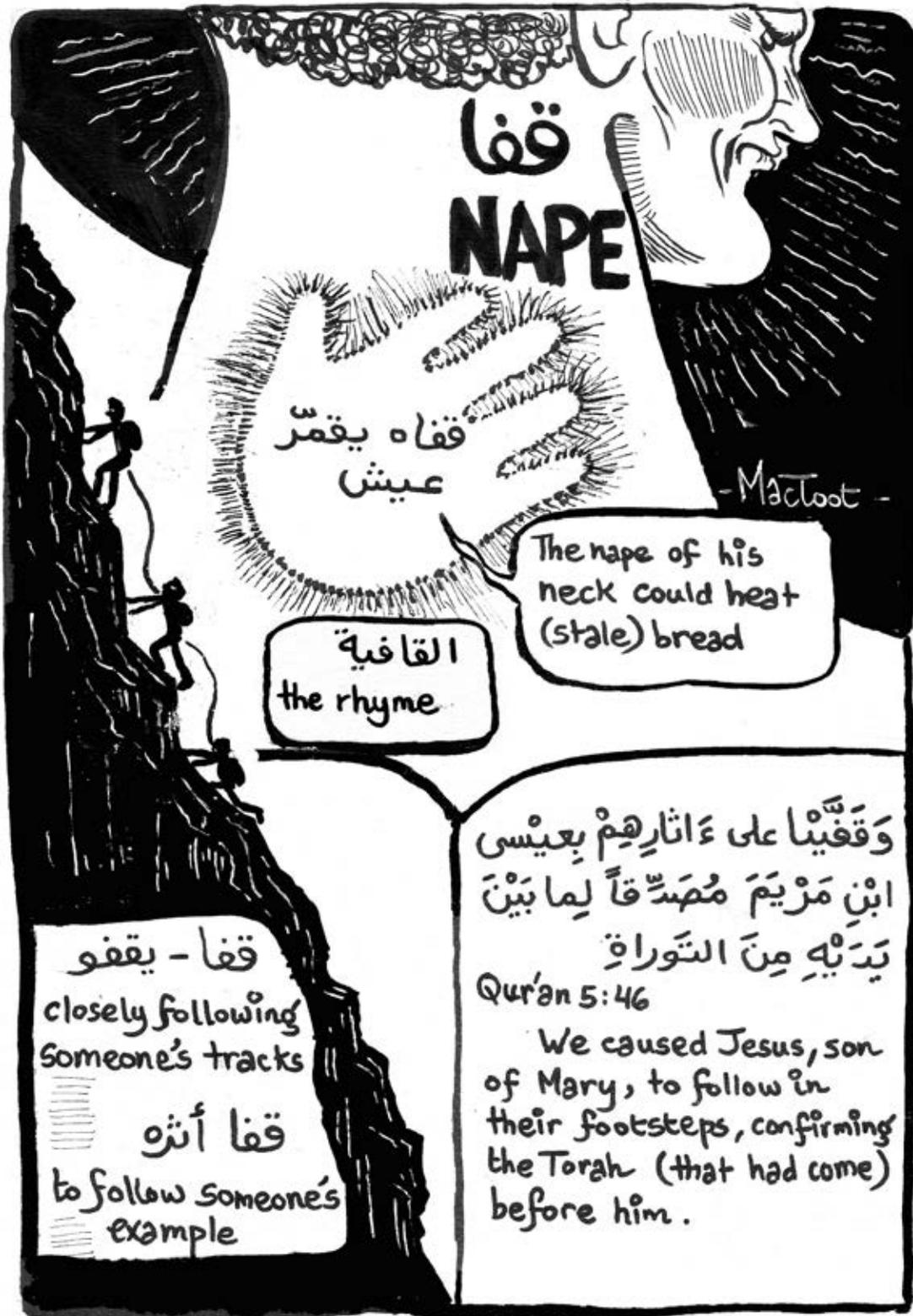
What more merciful place could there be in the body than the womb? The gentle miraculous powers of the mother are embodied in this word's many famous and prestigious derivatives. The abstraction mercy الرحمة *ar-raHma* and its much less common *maSdar miimi* alternative المرْحَمَة *al-marHama* are themselves derived from this word for the womb. The first of these, الرحمة, is an extraordinarily frequent word in Arabic, ranked 972 in the *FDA*. By comparison, mercy does not even make the top 3,000 in English. In Arabic, it turns up everywhere, from the most sacred to the most secular contexts. Begging for mercy, Syrian poet Nizar Qabbani (1923–98), famed for his political and erotic compositions, gives this noun's feminine ending a sonorous prolongation, echoing common spoken pronunciation, رحماك *RaHmaak!*

The power of men in ancient—and modern—Arab society is well established, but reverence for the mother was paramount, and the language even has important kinship terms to specifically designate maternal kinship: صلة الرحم *Silat ar-raHim*, the tie of the womb, and *dhawuu al-arHaam* ذو الأرحام or أولو الأرحام *'uuluu al-arHaam* those of the wombs, maternal blood relatives. Appended to the Qur'anic بسملة 113 times, the two most prominent and beloved epithets of God are الرحمن الرحيم *ar-raHmaan ar-raHiim*, rough synonyms meaning the Most Merciful. Whereas رحيم may identify anyone as merciful, الرحمن is a quality only attributed to God. These adjectives yield the comparative/superlative form أرحم *'arHam*, and God is described in the Qur'an (7:151 and elsewhere) as أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ, *the most merciful of those who are merciful or show compassion*. Qur'anically, eleven derivatives of this root occur 342 times, not counting the adjectives appended in formulaic fashion in the بسملة. Also in the adjective domain, this root provides a loving reference to someone who has died, not unlike the English 'the dear departed.' This is المرحوم / المرحومة *al-marHuuum / al-marHuuma*, depending on the gender of the deceased, on whom, it is hoped, God will have mercy.

A family of verbs referring to acts of compassion and mercy are derived from this root. The Form I verb يرْحَمُ – رَحِمَ *raHima* is a great example of Arabic's interesting optative, a past tense verb to be understood as a wish, as in رَحِمَهُ اللهُ *raHimahu Allaah*, May God have mercy on him. Other high-frequency examples of the optative include لا سَمَحَ اللهُ *laa samaHa Allaah* God forbid! and بَارَكَ اللهُ فِيكَ *baaraka Allaahu fika* God bless you!, used especially to thank someone.

A special semantic feature of a few Form II verbs offers a marvel of concision well illustrated by this root. Since رَحِمَهُ اللهُ is an essential formula of condolence, the Form II رَحَّمَ عَلَى, all by itself, means to utter that supplication. This can also be expressed by the Form V verb تَرَحَّمَ عَلَى. Another famous example of one of these concise Form II speech acts is كَبَّرَ, to say اللهُ أَكْبَرُ *Allahu 'akbar*, God is great.

Form VI is used to show mutual action or interaction and تَرَاوَعَا therefore means to show each other kindness and consideration. Should one wish to ask for mercy, then the transitive Form X, اسْتَرْحَمَ is used.



قفا
NAPE

قفاه يقمر
عيش

The nape of his neck could heat (stale) bread

القافية
the rhyme

قفا - يقفو
closely following
someone's tracks
قفا أتوه
to follow someone's
example

وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى
ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيْنَ
يَدَيْهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ

Qur'an 5:46

We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps, confirming the Torah (that had come) before him.

- Mactoot -

114

قفا – أَفْفِيَةٌ / أَفْفَاءٌ Nape

Follow, Emulate

As a nomadic people, the Bedouin needed to move through a challenging, even hostile, desert environment with skill and finesse. Because they lived primarily from trade, keeping the caravan together was crucial, so tracking had commercial repercussions. In addition, raiding and plundering were facts of life, which meant that tracking could also have military relevance. On the offensive, the Bedouin had to be able to follow quarry. On the defensive, or under ordinary circumstances, they needed to ensure there were no stragglers. All of these factors combined to prioritize good tracking skills. Among the specific vocabulary that arose for closely following someone's tracks is the Form I *قفا* – *qafaa*, a verb directly derived from the nape of the neck, an anatomical feature that someone following closely behind could keep within sight. At some point, the practice of physically tailing others became associated with emulation, and *قفا أثره* *qafaa 'atharahu*, to follow his track, acquired the figurative meaning of to follow someone's example.

Despite these rather positive verbal associations, the nape of the neck itself became associated with humiliation. In Arab society, a slap on the back of the neck is inflicted not so much to do damage, but rather to demean the victim. In a spoken Egyptian context, *قفاه يقر عيش* '*afaa yi' ammar 'eesh* means 'The nape of his neck could heat (stale) bread,' that is, it looks red-hot, as if he had just received a stinging and humiliating slap. By extension, even the mention of the nape of the neck can be considered impolite, and it is often avoided in polite conversation. It is not surprising that *القفا* does not figure anywhere in the *FDA*.

However, both Form I *قفا* and Form II *قَفَى* are used in the Qur'an. A recurring Qur'anic theme is how God repeatedly tried to bring various historical peoples who had gone astray back onto the straight and narrow path. The Qur'an says that He sent prophet after prophet, all of whom delivered their messages, trying to show their fellow men God's will. It is in this sense that Form II is used, causing one prophet to follow another. Among others, Jesus is singled out, in 5:46: *وَقَفَّيْنَا عَلَىٰ آثَارِهِم بِعِيسَى ابْنِ مَرْيَمَ مُصَدِّقًا لِّمَا بَيَّنَّ يَدِّيهِ مِنَ التَّوْرَةِ*, *We caused Jesus, son of Mary, to follow in their footsteps, confirming the Torah (that had come) before him.*

The Bedouin Arabs were not only expert traders, trackers, and raiders. They were also masters of the spoken word. Verbal prowess in poetry was held in the highest regard. There were annual regional contests, and winners' fame—and works—spread far and wide. While composing their poetry, the pre-Islamic Arabs also honed their skills at memorizing. Over time, they also developed lots of technical language to describe their poems (like the Greeks with iambic pentameter). Many of these terms were derived from tent structure, but one crucial element, *القافية*, was taken right from the tracking image. This *qaafiya*, literally *the follower*, became the term for the rhyme, one of those features which helped listeners—most of whom would never see the poem written—to commit it to memory.