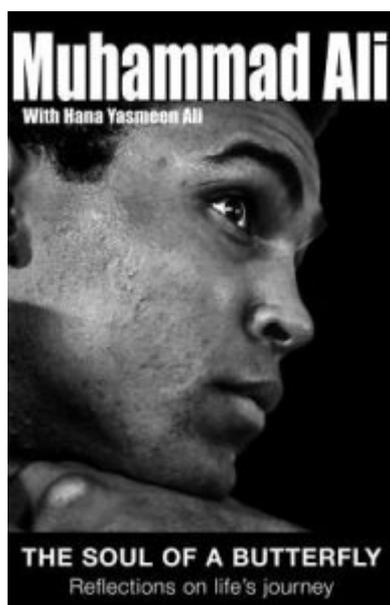


In the past, I have enjoyed articles written on Mohammed Ali's boxing expeditions and have watched countless video interviews. Without a doubt, he was a very charismatic, thought-provoking character.

"The soul of a butterfly" provides real insights into the mindset of this legend, going well beyond his experiences in the ring.



This book is not about showcasing the fights he has won or lost. Rather this book is about Mohammed Ali's whole life. The journey from being born into a household which was struggling to make ends meet but had a strong family bond. The journey from being Cassius Clay to Mohammed Ali, who many refer to as "the greatest boxer of all time".

This book will give you an insight into the challenges he faced growing up in the 60's. At a time when a black person was not socially seen as an equal to a white person. A time when a black person was refused enrolment at schools, to eat at diners, to use a bus and even refused service at their general convenience store.

We hear about it all the time, we see it in movies and even read about it, but sometimes it's hard to understand what it must have been like for a person of colour in that error. In essence, a black child's freedom was taken away from them the second they left the safe haven of their mothers womb.

It was in this climate and in the face of these challenges that Mohammed Ali was nurtured.

He talks about how once in a very hot day, his mum had walked into a shop asking for a cup

of water for the then Cassius Clay to drink but was refused - because she was a "negro".

Mohammed Ali, mentions how he confronted his fears and took on the challenges to make the difference he so much believed in.

He wanted to show the world he was not a slave and that his people should be free to participate in society without the shackles of race, culture and colour of their skin defining what they can and cannot do, where they can and cannot go.

He showed the world that even after he won a Gold medal for his country he was still refused privileges en par with someone of white skin complexion

Ali mentions how he thought the Olympic medal would make way for him and take away the barrier of race and colour, if not for everyone but surely at the very least for him. That wishful thinking was proved wrong when he went to a diner with a friend and was refused service even after telling the staff member that he was Mohammed Ali and he's won a medal for America, the staff went to ask permission from the diner owner only to come back still upholding the refusal to serve and ordered Mohammed and his friend to leave the diner.

Mohammed Ali quickly realised the medal alone was of no use, and even if he put the encounter aside he wasn't content with barriers being lifted solely for him based on his victory medal. It was of no use if these "privileges" didn't include the whole black community.

It goes to show the true heart of a hero who pushes through with belief and passion for a better future for all.

Allah (SWT) has created people uniquely and with different talents. Mohammed Ali felt he knew what he was put on earth for from a young age.

When he became a Muslim, his purpose was reaffirmed and made stronger. He changed his name from one given to his ancestors by their slave owner and mentally and psychologically freed himself from the label of a "slave". He pursued his life ambition and struggled and strived to make a difference.

No-one went without when they came to him for assistance he says in the book. Do I believe it? Yes, I do, because at a prime time of his career when he could have chosen to earn his millions he stood up for what he believed in by refusing to "kill people who have not harmed him" in Vietnam, resulting in significant hardship for himself and his family in the process.

For sure, Mohammed Ali was no angel but he never claimed he was. Like any other human, he made his mistakes but he learned from them and where possible made suitable reparations.

Mohammed Ali was a significant social reformer, who dedicated his life to help change the perception of black people and also of Muslims.