SANKORE'

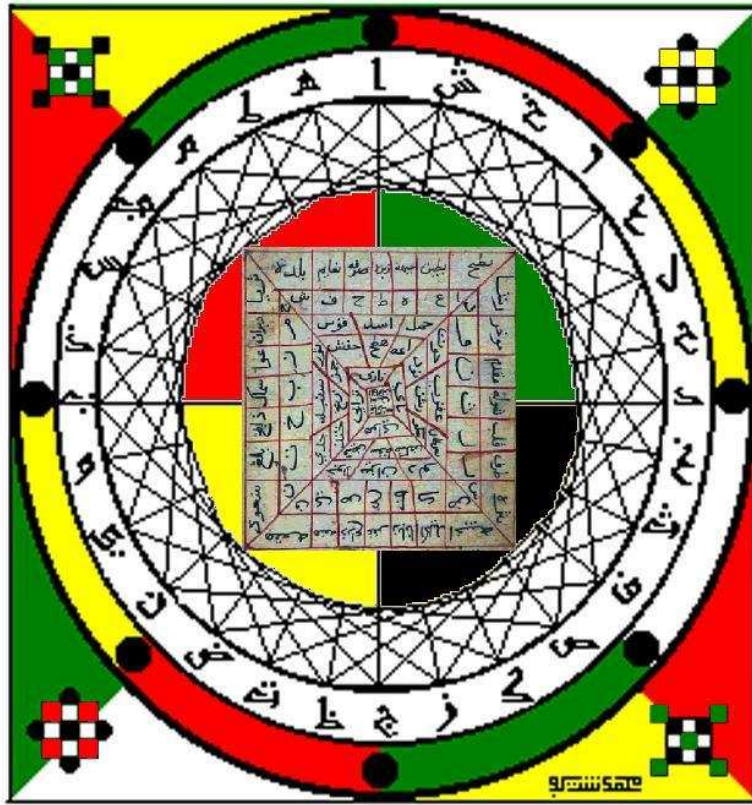**Institute of Islamic - African Studies International**

يَا طَالِبُ الإِعْرَاب

O Seeker of the Science of Syntax

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرّحِيمِ وَصلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وعلَى آلِه وَعلَى آلِه وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيماً [1]

أَيَا طَالِبَ الإِعْرَابِ دُونَكَ جُمْلَةَ   مِنَ احْرُفِهَا أَلَّفْتُهَا لَكَ فِي الشَّعْرِ

1. O student of the science of syntax before you is a summation
    Of its particles which I have composed for you in the form of poetry

تُعَلِّمُكَ الإِعْرَابَ وَهِيَ قَرِيبَةٌ   مُنَظَّمَةٌ يَسَّرْتُهَا أَيَّمَا يُسْرِ

2. To teach you the science of inflection, and it is in easy to understand
    Poetic verses which I have made extremely simple in every way

ثَلاثِينَ بَيْتًا فَارْعَهَا وَثَمَانِيَهْ   تُعَلِّمْكَ يَوْمًا مَا تُعَلَّمُ فِي الشَّهْرِ

3. In thirty verses at most, along with eight additional verses
    You can learn in one day what is normally learned in a month.

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[1] This succinct but brilliant poem by *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye`, may Allah be merciful to him and provide us with his *baraka*; regarding the particles of inflection (*huruuf'l-`iraab*) was first published according to my knowledge by *Shaykh* Abdullahi al-Ilorin al-Qaadiri of the southern region of Nigeria; which I used as the basis of this translation. The poem comprises thirty-eight stanzas and briefly covers the basic functions of the particles related to nouns and verbs and give simple examples for each. *Shaykh* Abdullahi did not cite all of the particles in order to keep the text as concise as possible. I am presently working on a commentary upon this text, explaining the meanings of the technical terms, as well as providing the inflections of the examples the *Shaykh* offered. It must be understood that *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fuduye` was an absolute scholar of independent judgment (*mujtahid mutlaaq*) in the linguistic sciences, and did not adhere to either the Kufan or Basran schools of grammar; but as *Shaykh* Ibn `Ajiba said of *Shaykh* Ibn Ajurum: "He inclined to the truth wherever he discovered it." As the *Shaykh* states, he originally composed the text for 'the student of the science of syntax' in order to cut short the time normally required for learning this science. Because the text is extremely brief, and because of the extensive knowledge the author possessed of the Arabic linguistic sciences; it is my opinion that *Shaykh* Abdullahi utilized the text to give indications of a far more transcendent and spiritually elevated science, than the science of syntax. This becomes apparent when the expressions '*taalib*' (student) and '`iraab' (syntax) are given an esoteric significance; such as 'seeker' and 'transformation' respectively. That is to say, that this poem, like the renowned al-Ajurumiyya before it, contains gateways through which the gnostics and sages of Islam can comprehend and transmit the esoteric sciences, such as the transformation of character (*takhalluq*) and the sciences of Divine realities (`uluum 'l-haqaa'iq). Allah willing, it is our intention of composing an elucidation of this poem utilizing the methodologies of *Shaykh* Maymuun al-Fasi, *Shaykh* Ahmad Zaruq and *Shaykh* Ibn `Ajiba in their extraordinary transmutation of the al-Ajurumiyya into a canon for decoding the science of the soul, and gnosis of Allah; as well as the esoteric approach to the general science of grammar transmitted to us by *Shaykh* al-Qushayri in his Nahw'l-Quluub. In this daunting task we seek the assistance of Allah in making our humble efforts purely for His sake; since there is no power or might besides Him, the Exalted the Mighty.

فَمِنْ وَإِلَى حَرْفَانِ مِنْ أَحْرُفِ الْجَرِّ كَقَوْلِكَ: مِنْ هِنْدٍ كِتَابٌ إِلَى بِشْرٍ

4. For *min* and *ila* are two particles from the genitive particles
  Like your saying: "*Min Hindin kitaabun ila Bishrin.*"[2]

وَعَنْ وَعَلَى مِنْهَا كَقَوْلِكَ: سِرْ وَإِنْ حَضَرْتُ عَلَى عَمَّارٍ فَاسْئَلْهُ عَنْ عَمْرِو

5. And `*an* and `*ala* are among them like your saying: "*Sir wa ‘in*
  Ḥaḍartu `ala `Amaarin fa ‘as’alhu `an `Amrin"[3]

وَرُبَّ وَوَاوٌ لِلْيَمِينِ وَتَاؤُهَا وَكَافٌ بِهَا التَّشْبِيهُ تَأْتِي مُدَى الدَّهْرِ

6. And *rubba* and the particle *waw* for making oaths and its *taa*
  And *kaaf* by which resemblance is made for all eternity

فَكُنْ سَائِلاً عَمَّا بَقَى مِنْ حُرُوفِهِ فَإِنِّي اقْتَصَرْتُ الْقَوْلَ جَزْمًا عَلَى الْقَصْرِ

7. Therefore be inquisitive about the remainder of its particles
  For I have restricted the words, determined to be abridged

فَأَنْ مِنْ حُرُوفٍ تَنْصِبُ الْفِعْلَ عِنْدَنَا كَقَوْلِكَ: أُرْجُو أَن أَفُوزَ اَدَى الْحِبْرِ

8. For ‘*an* is from the particles which make the verb subjunctive with us
  Like your saying: "*Arjuu ‘an afuuza adaa ‘l-ḥibri*"[4]

وَكَيْلاَ وكَي مِنْهَا كَقَوْلِكَ: زُرْنِي كَيْ أُفِيدَكَ عِلْمًا لَن يُفِيدَكَهُ غَيْرِي

9. And *kaylaa* and *kay* are among them as well like your saying: "*Zurnee kay*
  Ufeedaka `ilmaa lan yufeedakahu ghayree"[5]

وَلَنْ وَإِذَنْ مِنْهَا وَحَتَّى وَلاَمُ كَيْ وَلاَمُ الْجُحُودِ بَعْدَهَا أَبَدًا تَجْرِي

10. And *lan*, *idhan* are among them, as well as *ḥattaa* and the letter *laam* of *kay*
  And the letter *laam* of repudiation, which always follows in its judgment

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[2] Trans: "It is a letter from Hind to Bishr."
[3] Trans: "Journey, and when you reach `Amaar, ask him about `Amr."
[4] Trans: "I hope that I can succeed in becoming an erudite."
[5] Trans: "Visit me so that I can benefit you with knowledge that no one else besides me can benefit you with."

وَأَمَّا حُرُوفُ الْجَزْمِ فَهِيَ كَثِيرَةٌ   أُفِيدُكَ مِنْهَا مَا يَدُلُّ عَلَى الأَثَرِ

11. As for the particles of the imperative, they are many
    I will delineate some of them to you which will give indication of the rest

وَلَمْ وَأَلَمْ مِنْهَا وَلَمَّا وَمَنْ وَمَا   كَقَوْلِكَ: لَم يَفْهَمْ كَلَامِي أَبُو بَكْرٍ

12. For *lam* and *'alam* are from among them, as well as *lammaa*, *man* and *maa*
    Like your saying: "*Lam yafham kalaamee Abu Bakrin*"[6]

وَمِنْهَا مَتَى مَا ثُمَّ أَيْنَ وَأَيْنَمَا   وَأَيُّ وَلَاَمُ النَّهْيِ وَاللَّامُ لِلأَمْرِ

13. And among them are *mataa maa*, then *'ayna* and *'aynamaa*
    And *ayyu*, the letter *laam* of negation, and the letter *laam* for the imperative

وَقَدْ قَالَ أَقْسَامُ الْكَلَامِ ثَلَاثَةٌ   أَبُو الْقَاسِمِ النَّحْوِيُّ فِي أَوَّلِ الشِّعْرِ

14. For he said that the parts of speech are three
    That is, Abu'l-Qaasim an-Nahwi in the beginning of his poem

فَإِسْمٌ وَفِعْلٌ ثُمَّ حَرْفٌ يَجِي مِنْ   مَعَانِي وَنِعْمَ الْقَوْلُ مَا قَالَهُ فِهْرِي

15. For the noun, the verb, then the particle comes from
    Its meaning, and the best of words is what Fihri said

فَقَامَ يَقُومُ الْفِعْلُ وَالإِسْمُ كُلَّ مَا   لَهُ ظُلَلٌ كَالدَّارِ وَالثَّوْبِ وَالدُّرِّ

16. For *qaama*, *yaquumu* are verbs and the noun is every thing which[7]
    Possesses a shadow like *ad-daari*, and *at-thawbi* and *ad-durri*[8]

فَأَمَّا الْمَصَادِيرُ الْقِيَامُ وَنَحْوُهُ   وَأَمَّا بِالْحُرُوفِ عَنْ وَمِنْ وَإِلَى فَأَدْرِ

17. As for the verbal nouns such as *qiyaam* and its like
    It is by the particles `an, min, and ila, they are brought forth.[9]

وَيَرْفَعُ أَهْلُ النَّحْوِ مَا كَانَ فَاعِلاً   كَقَوْلِكَ: قَدْ نَادَى الْمُؤَذِّنُ لِلظُّهْرِ

18. The grammarians make the doer from these nominative
    Like your saying: "*Qad naadaa al-mu'adhinu li'd-dhuhri.*"[10]

وَيَنْتَصِبُ الْمَفْعُولُ بِالْفِعْلِ عَنْدَنَا   كَقَوْلِكَ: دَعْ زَيْدًا فَقَدْ جَاءَ بِالْعُذْرِ

19. The object is made accusative by means of the verb with us
    Like your saying: "*Da` Zaydan faqad ja'a bi'l-udhri.*"[11]

وَإِنْ جِيءَ بِالْمَفْعُولِ مِنْ غَيْرِ فَاعِلٍ   فَاعْرَابُهُ بِالرَّفْعِ عِنْدَ ذَوِي الْحَجْرِ

20. When the object of the sentence comes without a doer
    Then it is inflected in the nominative case with the possessors of firm speech

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[6] Trans: "Abu Bakr does not understand my words."
[7] Trans: '*qaama*' is a past tense form of the verb and means 'he stood'; while '*yaquumu*' is the present tense form of the same verb and means 'he is standing'.
[8] Trans: 'the house'; 'the attire'; and 'the pearl'; are all nouns because they and their like cast shadows; or they have effective meaning (shadows) in themselves.
[9] Trans: the expression '*qiyaam*' (standing) is a verbal noun (*masdar*) and is governed by the same governing agents which govern nouns.
[10] Trans: "The caller to prayer made the summons for the *dhuhr* prayer."
[11] Trans: "Leave Zayd alone, for he came with an excuse."

كَقْوِلكَ: لَمْ يُضْرَبْ غُلاَمُ مُحَمَّدٍ　　　ولَمْ يُعْطَ زَيْدٌ حَقَّهُ مِنْ أَبِي عَمْرو

21. Like your saying: "*Lam yudrab ghulaamu Muhammadin*"[12]
　　　And "*Lam yu`ata Zaydun haqqahu min Abi `Amrin.*"[13]

ومَهْمَا أَضَفْتَ إِسْمًا إِلَى إِسْمٍ خَفَضتَهُ　　　كَذَا قَالَ أَهْلُ النَّحْوِ فِي الْكُتُبِ الزَّهْرِ

22. And whenever a noun is annexed to another noun it is made genitive
　　　Likewise do the grammarians say in the radiant books of grammar

كَقَوْلكَ: هَذَا عَبْدُ زَيْدٍ فَبِعْ لَهُ　　　ويَعْطِيكَ دِينارًا إِلَى آجِرِ الشَّهْرِ

23. Like your saying: "*Hadha `abdu Zaydin fa bi` lahu.*"[14]
　　　And: "*Yu`teeka dinaaran ila ajri as-shahri.*"[15]

ومَهْمَا عَطَفْتَ إِسْمًا إِلَى إِسْمٍ عَرَفْتَهُ　　　فَإِعْرَابُهُ بِالرَّفْعِ وَالنَّصبِ وَالْجَرِّ

24. And whenever a noun is conjuncted to another noun, then you know
　　　That it is inflected with the nominative, accusative and the genitive cases.

كَــــــــقَوْلكَ: أَكْرِمْ خَالِدًا وَمُحَمَّدًا　　　وأَحْسِنْ إِلَى زَيْدٍ وَعَمْرو ومَدَى الدَّهْرِ

25. Like your saying: "*Akrim Khaalidan wa Muhammadan...*
　　　Wa ahsin ila Zaydin wa `Amrin wa madaa 'd-dahri."[16]

وقَدْ جَاءَنِي عَمْرٌو وَزَيْدٌ وَجَعْفَرٌ　　　رُكُوبًا عَلَى خَيْلٍ مُحَجَّلَةٍ غُرُّ

26. And: "*Qad jaa'anee `Amrun wa Zaydun wa Ja`farun...*"
　　　...rukuuban `ala khaylin muhajjalati ghurrin."[17]

كَذَا النَّعْتُ وَالتَّوْكِيدُ وَالْبَدَلُ اجْرِهِ　　　فِي الإِعْرَابِ مَجْرَى الْعَطْفِ فَاصْحَبْ ذَوِي الْجحْر

27. Likewise with the adjective, the corroborative, and the substitute they follow
　　　The rule of the conjunction in inflection, so adhere to those of firm speech

وكُلُّ مُنَادَى عِنْدَنَا النَّصبُ حُكْمُهُ　　　سِوَى الْمُفْرَدِ الْمَعْرُوفِ فَاصْغِ إِلَى ذِكْرِي

28. And every vocative with us is made accusative in its judgment
　　　With the exception of the singular definite noun, so hold to my reminder

كَقَوْلكَ: يَا عَبَادُ فَاتْبَعْ أَمَانَتِي　　　ويَا يُوسُفُ اكْتِمْ مَا لَدَيْكَ مِن السِّرِّ

20. Like your saying: "*Yaa `ibaadu fa atba` 'amaanatee*"[18]
　　　And: "*Yaa Yusufu aktim maa ladayka min as-sirri*"[19]

وَحُكْمُ الْمُضَافِ النَّصبُ فِي حَلَّةِ لِلنِّدَا　　　كَقَوْلكَ: يَا عَبْدَ الْكَرِيمِ امْتَثِلْ أَمْرِي

30. The rule of the annexed noun is that it is accusative in the action of the vocative
　　　Like your saying: "*Yaa `Abda 'l-Kareemi amtathil `amree.*"[20]

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[12] Trans: "The servant boy of Muhammad was not struck."
[13] Trans: "Zayd was not given his rights from Abu `Amr."
[14] Trans: "This is the captive of Zayd, so transact the sell on his behalf."
[15] Trans: "You will be given a gold coin equal to the recompense of a month."
[16] Trans: "Show respect to Khalid and Muhammad; and be generous towards Zayd and `Amr at all times."
[17] Trans: "`Amr, Zayd and Ja`far came to me mounted upon prancing white hoofed stallions."
[18] Trans: "O servants follow my supervision."
[19] Trans: "O Yusef conceal that which is with you from the secret."
[20] Trans: "O Abd'l-Kareem obey my command."

إِلاَ الْمُنْكَرَ الْمَقْصُودَ قَدِ اسْتَنْيْتُهُ   كَقَوْلِكَ: يَا رَجُلُ فَقَدْ جَاءَنِي خَيْرِي

31. Except for the indefinite noun which is intended it is excluded from this
    Like your saying: "*Yaa rajulu faqad jaa'nee khayree*"[21]

وَحُكْمُ الْمُنَادَى الْمُنْكَرِ النَّصْبُ مِثْلُهُ   كَقَوْلِكَ: يَا رَجُلاً لَقَدْ فَزْتَ بِالدُّرِّ

32. The rule of the vocative noun which is indefinite is accusative like
    Your saying: "*Yaa rajulan laqad fazta bi'd-durri*"[22]

وَيَرْفَعُ أَهْلُ النَّحْوِ إِسْمًا بِالإِبْتِدَإِ   كَقَوْلِكَ: زَيْدٌ عَالِمٌ عَاقِلٌ مُقْرِي

33. The grammarians make the noun which is the subject nominative
    Like your saying: "*Zaydun `aalimun `aaqilun muqree*"[23]

وَإِن كَانَ خَبَرَ الْمُبْتَدَإِ إِسْمًا رَفَعْتَهُ   تَفَهَّمْ وَلاَ تَسْأَمْ مِنَ الدَّرْسِ وَالْفِكْرِ

34. And if the predicate of the subject is a noun you make it nominative
    So understand and do not become bored with studying and reflecting

وَجُدْ بِدُعَاءِ الْخَيْرِ لِإِبْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ   كَمَا حُدْتُ فِي تَعْلِيمِكَ النَّحْوَ فِي شِعْرِ

35. And make effort in supplicating for the good for the Ibn Muhammad
    Just as I have delineated to you the instructions in grammar using poetic verse

وَلَمْ يَنْطِق الْمَرْءُ السَّفِيهُ لِيَبْتَغِي   بِهِ غَيْرَ رِضْوَانِ الإِلَهِ مَعَ الْغَفْرِ

36. And a foolish person should not speak in order to gain
    My means of it other than the pleasure of Allah along with forgiveness

سَأَلْتُكَ يَا وَهَّابُ هَبْ لِيَ نَفْعَهَا   وَحُطّ بِهَا الأَوْزَارَ بِيَ عَنِ الظَّهْرِ

37. I ask You O Benefactor provide me with its benefit
    And remove the errors from my back by means of it.

أَجَابَكَ مِنْهُ رَبَّنَا وَأَجَابَنَا   أَخِي فِيكَ بِالْغُفْرَانِ مِنْهُ مَعَ الشُّكْرِ

38. May you receive an answer from Him our Lord, as well as us
    And may He place in you my brother forgiveness from Him and gratitude.

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[21] Trans: "O man, my good as come to me."

[22] Trans: "O man, you have achieved abundance."

[23] Trans: "Zayd is a learned intelligent reciter of the *Qur'an*."

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