

SANKORE'



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَي سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا

A Poem on Sufic Technical Terminology

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful, all praises are due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and the best blessings and most perfect peace be upon our master Muhammad, and all his family and companions.

Says the poor needy of Allah, Abd'l-Qadir, the offspring of Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad, may Allah pardon all of them. To continue: these are words which express the meanings composed in poetic form versifying the technical terminologies of the *Sufis*. I composed it for two reasons: oft times many of their terms have remained hidden from most people having never grasped the meanings of the origins of their technical terms, secondly due to the fact that it was never the intention of the *Sufis* to prevent people from examining the science of *tasawwuf*. Thus, our objective in composing this poem is as an incentive for them and in order to encourage them in spiritual advantages, emanation and arrival, and Allah is the true Helper.

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Says Abd'l-Qaadir ibn al-Mustafa

Recognizing what he has gathered and harvested
Hoping by it for the mercy of his Lord, the Eternally Self Subsistent
Making manifest by means of It based upon what was desired
All praises are due to Allah who caused to dawn
Upon the People the illuminations of fearful awareness
And blessings of Allah be upon Muhammad

His companions and upon those who are guided by his *deen*
To continue: these are compositions of a comprehensive poem

On the technical terms of the People, he will succeed who pays attention.
Explaining their meanings and significance and disclosing

And revealing their linguistic expressions, in view of the fact it is known.
That the Sole Sustainer of the Throne is my sole Reliance

And in His Divine Pleasure is my sole desire and profit.

I say, and success in that is from Allah, I began my poem with my name and the name of my father because that is what is required in any composition. This father of mine, he was Mustafa, the son of Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Musa ibn Ali (written as Aal)¹. He was a learned scholar, a deep cave of comprehension, extremely proficient in the sciences of Arabic, and having outstanding skill in the authoritative sciences of the religion. He was a traditionist skilled in prophetic traditions, an expert in Qur'anic exegesis, an authority in the principles of law and a jurist. He was a master of all the adjunct sciences and surplus disciplines. He possessed an authoritative grasp of the science of prophetic traditions and an exalted place in the comprehension of the sciences of scholastic theology, jurisprudence and legal judgments. Along with being superior in the intellectual and religious disciplines, he also examined deeply the enigmatic mysterious sciences, along with this he was very amenable, patient, and very virtuous. We previously mentioned his biography in our book called The Delightful Call Regarding the Scholars of the Time. So if you like you can reference it.

My words regarding the meaning of 'praise', and the difference between 'praise' and 'gratitude' and the meaning of "blessings" are among those ideas, which have been expounded on extensively by the foregoing scholars. My words "giving commentary" means elucidation upon the entire work, that is to say, removing the covering from it. The use of the verbal form is from the basis of a linguistic carrier, like "*He commented with a commentary.*"

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¹ His full paternal lineage was Abd'l-Qaadir ibn al-Mustafa ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim ibn Musa ibn Aal ibn Jubba ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Maasiran ibn Ayyub ibn Buba Baba ibn Abu Bakr ibn Musa Jokolli ibn *Imam* Dambuba at-Turuudi al-Fudawi as-Salaame'. His mother was the pious and erudite Khadija the daughter of *Shehu* Uthman ibn *Fuduye'* Muhammad ibn Uthman ibn Saalih ibn Haruun ibn Muhammad Ghurdu ibn Jubba ibn Muhammad Sanbu ibn Maasiran ibn ayyub ibn Buba Baba ibn Abu Bakr, the son of the above mentioned Musa Jokolli ibn *Imam* Dambuba.

The Divine Essence is what gives support to the Divine Attributes

The clarification regarding Divine specification and designation

The Name is what designates and specifies the Named

So investigate and you will find what is desired with It.

And the Quality is what confirms the state of the Attribute

Censured is the one who attains It or opposes It.

I mean here that “the Divine Essence” is the Absolute Being upon which the Divine Attributes and Names are supported in their quintessence, not in their existence. For, every Divine Name is supported by Something, and that Something is the Divine Essence of the Absolute Being. The Divine Essence of Allah is a mode of expression designating His inimitability by which He exists.

I say, realize, that the Divine Essence of Allah is the Unicity in non-manifestation to which every mode of expression of His Names and Attributes are in conformity with, from the perspective that They do not fully elucidate the real meaning of His Essence, in spite of Their multiplicities. For the Divine Essence is not comprehended by what is understood from any mode of expression, nor is It understood by any symbolic expression that is known. This is because a thing is normally known by what it is related to, and is usually contrasted to that which is incompatible with it and thus its opposite is known. However, the Divine Essence has nothing in existence which has a connection with It, that is incompatible with It, and that is in contrast to It, or Its opposite.

My words: “And the Name is what designates and specifies...” until the end of the poetic verse, means that the Divine Name is a Thing which designates the Named through comprehension and formulates an intellectual construct in the imagination and makes Its meaning present in the soul. The expression “the Quality” means, by that, the Divine Attribute is an expression that allows you to realize the Divine state of the One described. By means of the Divine Name one is able to attain comprehension of His meaning and knowledge of His state. Thus, comprehension of His Attributes will suffice you when you gather Them into your spiritual endeavors, explore Them with your reflection and draw near to Them in your reason. For, then, you will attain immediate tasting of the state of the One described by His Divine Attribute. At this stage the nature of the one realizing this will either be predisposed to the meaning of the Divine Name due to the existence of its own conformity, or it will flee from It due to the immediate tasting of its own contradiction or rebellion. This is the meaning of our words: “Censured is the one who attains It or opposes It.”

The comprehensiveness of all the created opposites and created loci
Invoke the existence of the Divinity the Sole Possessor of Majesty
The Unicity of the One in the language of spiritual purification
Is the unification of the totality; however this unification causes its own end
For there is nothing other than the Divine Essence which manifest in it
The one who pays attention to these meanings will achieve Divine secrets
So gather the meanings of the Divine Names and Attributes

And His Oneness, however do so based upon the decree of the Divine Essence
I mean here that the Divinity is the comprehensive stratum, which embraces the Absolute Existence (in non-manifestation) and the three strata of: the existence of created things; inconceivable non-existences; and the conceivable things. Allah possesses a Name that embraces all of these strata, and He has circumspection and comprehensiveness over the Self-manifestation and suzerainty of every Divine Attribute and Name based on the meaning when I said: “The comprehensiveness of all the created opposites and created loci”, to the end of the poetic verse. The expression of “Unicity” is a strata, just like the strata “Divinity”, except that it is a descent lower from the strata of Divinity, because Divinity gives each thing its right and places each thing in its proper correspondence, while Unicity gathers together all of encompassed realities without making them manifest, because It is the treasurer of the Divine Essence by the decree of Self-manifestation, while in this strata, the Divine Names and Attributes have no effectual appearance in the Unicity, because It is the first of the Divine descents of the Divine Essence emanating from the obscure anonymity of the Cloud into the strata of Self-manifestation, so understand and beware of mistakes!² This is the meaning of the two poetic verses.

As for “Oneness” in the last poetic verse It is the strata comprising all the effects, except that It is actually the comprehensiveness of the Divine Essence, because the Divine Essence is manifest in the Divine Attribute and the Divine Attribute is manifest in the Divine Essence.

The difference between the stratum of Oneness and that of Unicity in the stratum of Divinity is that the Divine Names and Attributes manifest in the stratum of Divinity with the judgment that each Name and Attribute necessitates designation from the whole; while, the Divine Names and Attributes manifest in the stratum Unicity, but are not distinguishable from the whole. This is an indication of the Absolute transcendence of the Divine Essence in Its precise implementation of Its concerns. On the other hand, the Divine Names and Attributes manifest in the stratum of Oneness, in accordance with the judgment of the Divine Essence, not with a judgment of separation, so understand. The stratum of Divinity is a Self-manifestation in which each entity is given its right, while the stratum of Unicity is a Self-

² The words of the *shaykh* are a clear indication of the meaning the prophetic tradition narrated by Ya`ala ibn A`taa on the authority of Waki`u ibn Hadis on the authority of his uncle, Abu Razeen who said: “I once said: ‘O Messenger of Allah where was our Lord before He created creation?’ He said: ‘He was in the Primordial Cloud under which there was no space and over which there was no space; and He then created His Throne upon the Primordial Waters’.” Ahmad ibn Mani`u said that Yazid ibn Harun said: “The Primordial Cloud means in this context is that there was nothing in existence with Him”, as al-Bukhari and others narrated on the authority of `Imraan ibn Hussien who said that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace once said: “Allah was and there was nothing in existence besides Him, and His Throne was upon the Primordial Waters”. The meaning of his expression: ‘...and His Throne was upon the Primordial Waters’, means that He created the Primordial Waters, and then created the Throne the Primordial Waters, and then the remembrance of everything was transcribed.” And Allah knows best.

manifestation of: (“Allah was and there was nothing with Him and He is now as He was.”))

That which is summarized in the Divine Attributes

And that which has a perspective from creational effect

For these are the compassionate effects of the All Merciful One

May we be included among the group of the trusted ones

For creational realities have no standpoint at all

The ‘standpoint’ is in reality Lordship in Its immutability

What I mean is that the stratum which encompasses the Divine Attributes is encapsulated by the Divine Essence of the Absolute Being. And between the Divine Attributes which encounters the cosmos and the cosmos itself there is a fusion of affective influence which is called the aspect of mercifulness in the technical language of the *Sufis*. That is to say, that the aspect of mercifulness is a manifestation of the reality of the All inclusive Divine Names and Attributes encapsulated by the Essence of the Absolute Being in the Names of the Divine Essence.

The Names of Essence do not encounter created things as does the Divine Names like: the All Knowing, the All Hearing, the Omnipotent, the All Seeing and what resembles these from the Divine Names which bring to fruition the realities of existence. For the aspect of mercifulness is a gathering of all the strata of the Absolute Being while the strata of creational realities have no acquisition in this realm. Thus, It is more specific than the stratum of the aspect of Divinity due to Its solitude by which the Absolute Being stands Alone; while the stratum of the aspect of Divinity is a gathering of the principles of the Absolute Realities and creational realities. For, universality is for the stratum of the aspect of Divinity and particularity is for the stratum of the aspect of Mercifulness. So understand.

As for the aspect of Lordship It is the requisite stratum for the Divine Names which existent realities require in order to exist. Included among these are the Divine Names: the All Knowing, the All Hearing, the All Seeing, the Omnipotent, The Determiner, the Sovereign and what resembles these from the Divine Names and Attributes.

Thus, the All Knowing requires that which is known. The Omnipotent requires that over which power is exercised, and the like with the remainder of the Divine Names.

What becomes apparent from what we have established is that under the aspect of Lordship are Divine Names that are participants between It and His creation and responsible for the creation with specific function of affective influence. Thus, foremost of the affective influences is that of the Divine Names: the All Knowing, the All Hearing and the All Seeing; and then secondarily comes the affective influences of the Divine Names: the Omnipotent, the Creator and the Provider. So understand!

The reality of all the realities is the Primordial Cloud

Based upon the technical language of those who possess eminence

The uniqueness of the Predominant One is His transcendence

And the forms of creational manifestations, call it His immanence.

His Beauty are His Attributes of beauty

While His Majesty are His Attributes of majesty.

What I mean is that the Primordial Cloud is an idiomatic expression of the Reality of all realities, which is neither described by the aspects of the Absolute reality or creational realities. It is the Presence of the Essence because It is not associated to any of the strata, whether Absolute or creational.

The difference between It and the aspect of Unicity is that Unicity has actual disposal of the Absolute Essence by virtue of Self-Manifestation, as we mentioned previously, while the Primordial Cloud has actual disposal of the Absolute Essence by virtue of Self-Occultation. So understand and avoid errors!

As for the aspect of Transcendence, It is an idiomatic expression of the uniqueness and inaccessibility of the Pre-Eternal One in His Divine Attributes, Names and Essence, from what is necessary to Himself from Himself by way of concern and exaltedness.

As for the aspect of Immanence, it is an idiomatic expression of the forms of the creational manifestations by the Self-Manifestation of the Divine Names and Attributes.

The aspect of Beauty is an idiomatic expression of His Divine Attributes of beauty. This is Its meaning in general terms; as for Its minute meaning, Its likeness is like the Divine Names: the Forgiving, the Merciful, the Giver, the Opener, the Provider, the Forbearing, the Benefactor, and the Unfolder.

The aspect of Majesty is also an idiomatic expression of His Divine Attributes of majesty. This is Its meaning in general terms; as for Its minute meanings, Its likeness is like the Divine Names: the Immense, the Overwhelming, the Overbearing, the Mighty, the Humiliator, the Avenger, the Withholder, the Fierce, the Constrictor, and what resembles these Divine Names in the two aspects of beauty and majesty.

And by His absence they mean by It, His 'He-ness'

And the opposite to It, is the meaning of His 'I-ness'

The priority of Perfection was not preceded

By the time of His Eternity, therefore understand

In perpetuity is His quintessence, and the Foot

Is the necessity of His Essence, and He is the Best Knower

His Days are those Self-Manifestations

Which are recognized by the trustworthy notables

And the Attributes of the Omnipotent One whenever It reveals Itself

Are the clanging of the bells, which is so named in their circle

The 'Mother' is about the what-ness of realities

An expression used in the teachings of everyone of the foremost

And the Absoluteness of existence, It is called 'a Book'

Let there be no doubt or misgivings in you regarding that

I mean here that the 'He-ness based upon the technical terms of the *Sufis* is His absence which is impossible to be manifested. It is the reality of His Essence, and the reality of His Attributes with regard to His unseen-ness is also that.

And by 'I-ness' I mean an idiomatic expression of the reality of His Essence and the reality of His Attributes, with regard the manifestation of that to Him. That is the meaning of our words: 'And the opposite to It, is the meaning of His I-ness'.

As for 'Eternity' it is an idiomatic expression about the judgment of the unseen adjudicated by it to Allah the Mighty the Majestic from the perspective of His Perfection, not from the perspective of His priority by extensive time to in-time creation.

And my words: 'In perpetuity is His quintessence' is that 'Perpetuity' is an idiomatic expression of the judgment of subsequent-ness adjudicated by it to Allah the Mighty the Majestic from the perspective of His Perfection, not from the perspective of the continuity of time.

As for 'Foot it is an idiomatic expression of the Essential Being. For the Essential Being is the One who manifest the Name Preexistence to the Absolute

Being, not the One whose existence is necessary by His Essence, because He was not preceded by non-existence. That which is not preceded by non-existence, it is necessary that He be preexistent based upon judgment.

And the 'Days of Allah' are His Self-Manifestations and Appearances based upon the requirements of His Essence according to the multiplicities of Perfection. And for each of His Self-Manifestations, glory be to Him there is a Divine judgment which is indicated by the term 'Affair'. And this particular judgment in existence is an affective influence suitable to that particular 'Affair'. For, the differences of existence, I mean, its transformation in each time, for it is simply the affective influence of that particular Divine Affair.

As for 'the clanging of the bells', it is an idiomatic expression of the disclosure of the Attributes of Omnipotence from the cuff by way of Self-Manifestation, which is a kind of immensity, which is the meaning of the poetic verse.

The 'Mother', it is an idiomatic expression of the 'what-ness of the realities. It is the intrinsic quality of the Divine Essence for which no name, attribute, adjective, existence, non-existence, creation or reality can apply.

As for my words: 'And the Absoluteness of existence, it is called 'a Book', it is an idiomatic expression of the Absolute Existence which has no non-existence in It. And the 'what-ness of the Intrinsic Quality is the 'Mother of the Book, while the Absolute Existence is the Book because existence is subsumed in It just as letters are embodied within ink.

And about the Self-Manifestation of the Essence, it is called *Qur'an*

And about the heaven regarding the Divine Attribute, it is called *Furqan*.

Their *Torah* is the spiritual response of the Divine Attributes

And their *Zabuur* regards that of the Divine Actions, O firmly established
For their *Injeel* regards that of the Divine Name, and the Celestial Sofa

Is the strata of the aspect of the All Merciful One, O adherent
And their Crown concerns the none existence of termination

And their Oddness is being summoned in the Presence of Allah
His Appearances means that by which He descends

And there is no anthropomorphism with regard to His Attributes
And regarding the stature of Divinity they call It

Their Celestial Pillow, therefore do not make It corporal, for it is error.

Realize that the *Qur'an* in the technical terminology of the *Sufis* is an idiomatic expression of the Self-Manifestation of the Essence, which embodies all Divine Names and Attributes. The *Furqan* is an idiomatic expression of the reality of the Divine Names and Attributes. The *Torah* is an idiomatic expression of the Self-Manifestations of the Divine Attributes, and that is the appearances of the Absolute Being glory be to Him in the aspect of absolute manifestation. It is from that perspective that the distinction between it and *Furqan* is realized. As for the *Zabuur*, it is an idiomatic expression of the Self-Manifestation of the Attributes of Divine Actions only. The *Injeel* is an idiomatic expression of the Self-Manifestation of the Names of the Divine Essence only. As for the 'Celestial Sofa', it is an idiomatic expression of the strata of the aspect of mercifulness, which is the rank of Divinity. The 'Crown' is an idiomatic expression of the non-existence of termination in rank and honor, in accordance with the requirements of His Essence. As for 'the Descent', it is an idiomatic expression of the descent of the Absolute Being the exalted in every atom from the atoms of existence. As for the 'Celestial Pillow', it is an idiomatic expression of the rank of Divinity in all of existent things.

Absolute-ness and created-ness are His Two Feet
 While mercy and blessings are His Two Sandals
 And the first of the individual determinations is the Primordial Pen
 Based upon the technical terminology of those who comprehend
 And the Tablet with the People is Absolute Light
 If It is imprinted upon It, then it is creational light
 The Attributes of Divine Actions is the Footstool
 While Its locus of manifestation is called His Holy Throne
 The station is the stopping point in which spiritual resolution discontinues
 Meaning by that in the Presence of Those of the Lote Tree
 And the origin of Divine punishment and blessing
 Is the form of that of the Generous Chosen One
 And what we desired to versify here has ended
 And praises are to Allah without termination or ending
 Blessings be upon His Generous Messenger
 Our Master who is described with the Divine Name of Merciful
 And his family and Companions and those who follow in the rear
 To a Day when forelocks and backs will be seized

I mean here that ‘the Two Feet’ is an idiomatic expression of the decrees of the two contrasting opposite paired essences, like the absolutes essences and the creational essences. The ‘Two Sandals’ is an idiomatic expression of the dynamics of the two contrasting opposite paired attributes, like mercy and wrath. As for the ‘Primordial Pen’, I mean by It an idiomatic expression of the first of the individual determinations of creational manifestation based upon the technical terminology of the *Sufis*.

As for the ‘Tablet’ it is an absolute light which is the locus of manifestation in the location of creation in which is an imprint of all existing things. As for the ‘Footstool’ it is an idiomatic expression of the locus of manifestation of the totality of the Attributes of Divine Actions. It is a locus of the influential authority of the commands and prohibitions, as well as locus of the appearance of Divine Power. As for the ‘Throne’, based upon verification, it is the locus of the appearance of Magnificence, the station of Glory, the exclusive locus of the Divine Essence, the Axis of the Divine Presence and Its Station. However, It is a Station which is boundless of the six directions.

As for the ‘Lote Tree’ it is the final station that the servant reaches on his spiritual journey to Allah the exalted. As for what comes after It, there only exist the exclusive station of the Absolute Being solely. For after that there is no where for a created thing to proceed. As for the ‘Muhammadan form’, upon Its possessor be the best blessings and endless peace, it is an idiomatic expression of the Light from which Allah created Paradise and Hell, and It is the Origin from which existed Divine Punishment and Blessings.

Here I end with the bounty of Allah the Exalted and His assistance the commentary upon these utterances. I have made its commentary very concise taking precaution from intrusion and enticement. In the commentary, I relied heavily on the text of the Sage and Gnostic of Allah the exalted, Abd’l-Kareem al-Jaylani called al-Insaan the excellent.

If it were not for Allah’s encompassing mercy, boundless favors and assistance to me, where would I be in this. However, the Divine gift of the Absolute Being abides in all seasons and never ceases time after time, and all praises are due to Allah the Lord of the worlds.

I ask Allah, that the one examining these words that he examine it with the eye of contentment, and overlook every mistake and try to understand my expressions and meaning, because these maxims are apart of Divine gnosis which are exclusive to a People who the like of their existence is rare, especially in these times in which there is little good and evil has spread, and there only remains of the religion it's name and nothing remains of the *Qur'an* except its' writing. Glory be to Allah and to Him is our final return.

I was only motivated to compose these instructions in order to gain benefit, bring benefit to others and in order to incite the spiritual resolution of those who possess the desire and hope for spiritual excellence and increase.

A poem:

Verily I, even if I have not attained their *baraka*

I will still mention them often and extensively

For repetition of their remembrance is enjoyment

Itself, and incites the rider to continue and increase

It is enough for me even if I am left all alone after them

For verily by means of them I am entreating and a hanger-on

Praise is to Allah the Lord of the worlds, and blessings and peace be upon the Master of the Messengers. The commentary was completed by my hand on Friday, with nine days remaining (the 21th) of *Dhu'l-Quida* in the year 1236 from the *hijra* of the Prophet,³ upon him be the best blessings and most pure peace as long as the Kingdom of Allah remains, by the hand of the author – **Abd'l-Qaadir ibn Mustafa**.⁴

³ *Shaykh* Abd'l-Qaadir completed this poem when he was merely seventeen years old and it is considered to be the first of his works. It was completed on Friday, the 21st of *Dhu'l-Qa`ida* in the year 1236 of the *hijra* (approximately the 17th of August in the year 1821 C.E.). All praises are due to Allah, I was also able to complete the transcription of the poem in Arabic along with its editing on Wednesday, the 21st of *Dhu'l-Qa`ida* in the year of 1427 of the *hijra* (approximately the 12th of December in the year 2006 C.E.). I praise and thank Allah ta`ala for this coincidence and ask Him that He provide us with the *baraka* of the author, the Gnostic *shaykh*, the realized teacher Abd'l-Qaadir ibn al-Mustafa, and make us among those who inherit his sciences, gnosis, unveiling, stations, actions and spiritual path; and that He gather us with him in the Hereafter and in this world in night visions and in visions of the waking state by the *baraka* of our master Muhammad, may Allah bless him, his family and Companions and give them much peace.

⁴ I completed the translation of this text from Arabic to English on Thursday night, 17th of *Rabi' Thani* in the year 1428 of the *hijra*, (approximately May 4th, 2007). After the transcription of the actual poem there is written the words: "he transcription was completed with the praise of Allah and the best of His assistance and success, and blessings and peace be upon Muhammad, His prophet, by the hand of Uthman ibn *Imam* Abd'l-Majid ibn *Imam* Ali ibn Ahmad ibn al-Qadi, may Allah forgive him and his parents and the entire *Umma* of the Prophet of mercy, Amen, Amen Amen." To the right of this transcription is written the following: "O Allah do not make this my last transcription. It was transcribed for Muhammad al-Amin and it belongs to Allah." Above this transcription is written the following: "The transcription remains while the scribe of the transcription is beneath the earth buried."