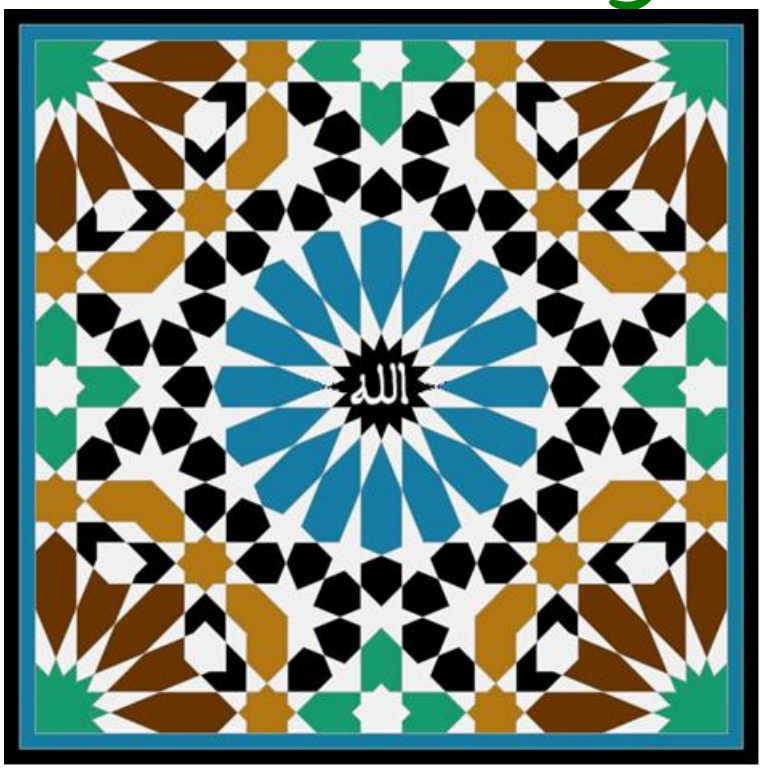
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A Poem of the Hierarchies of Existence

By
The Most Erudite Scholar of the Black Lands, the Knower of Allah

Shaykh ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Turūdī
May Allah's Mercy be upon him

edited, commented upon and translated

By

the one in need dire of Allah ta`ala

Shaykh Abū Alfā Umar Muḥammad Shareef ibn Farīd Shareef

May Allah pardon him and forgive his teachers, his parents, his family, and his children. Amen.

A Summary of the Life and Times of *Shaykh* ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn al-Muṣṭafā

The historical trajectory of Islamic societies in the Western and Central Sudan cannot be understood through the conventional lens of dynastic succession alone. Instead, as *Shaykh* Abdalqadir al-Sufi al-Murabit observed, the true pulse of Islamic civilization is located in the dynamic and often tense relationship between the governors of the polity and the autonomous scholar-notables (*fuqahā, ʿulamā, marabouts*, *karamoko* and *alfas*) who carry and preserve the foundational ideals of the community.

In Sahelian Africa, this scholarly class found its most influential expression in the Turudbe (Tukulor / Torodo) ethnicity. Operating with a high degree of autonomy from central political authorities, the Turudbe served as the primary purveyors of literacy, law, and spiritual reform from the ancient empires of Takrūr, Mali, and Songhay down to the eighteenth-century Islamic abolitionist confederations of Futa Toro, Futa Bundu and Futa Djallon, culminating with Jihad polities of Hamdullahi, Segou and the Sokoto Caliphate. *Shaykh* ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn al-Muṣṭafā—universally known as Dan Tafa (literally "the son of Tafa," Tafa being the Hausa-rization of al-Muṣṭafā)—stands as one of the most brilliant exemplars of this intellectual lineage. Born on the very eve of the 1804 *hijra* that inaugurated the Sokoto Caliphate, Dan Tafa bridged the heroic era of state-building and the subsequent intellectual consolidation of the nineteenth century as an independent scholar, historian, geographer, secretary (*kātib*), and state advisor.

The origins of the Turudbe are rooted in the ancient western Sudanese state of Takrūr, which embraced Islam under King War Jabi ibn Rabis and subsequently allied with the Almoravid (*Murābiṭūn*) movement. While early European and colonial observers offered varying interpretations of their social stratification—ranging from free elite groupings (*rimbe*) to client scholarly networks—the internal historiography preserved by scholars such as Waziri Junayd ibn Muhammad al-Bukhari traces their synthesis to ancient migratory movements and genealogical unions with early Arab expeditions, notably that of ʿUqba ibn Nāfiʿ across North Africa.

Unlike other pastoral Fulani clans, the Turudbe abandoned cattle-herding to adopt the "craft of Islam," functioning as urban and rural jurists, educators, scribes, and spiritual guides. Following the Moroccan invasion and destruction of Songhay in 1591, which shattered the autonomous scholarly centers of Timbuktu, Tuat and Djenne, the Turudbe and associated clerical families of the Djiawara, the Wangarawa, the Sarakollé and others, dispersed across the Sahelian Sudan. This dispersion catalyzed a profound shift: scholars who had previously maintained a strict advisory distance from unjust states now assumed a militant posture of *amr bi'l-maʿrūf wa-nahy ʿan al-munkar* (commanding good and forbidding evil), laying the groundwork for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century *jihad* movements in Futa Jallon, Futa Toro, and ultimately Hausaland.

In Hausaland, the Turudbe coalesced into prominent scholarly households, most notably the House of Aal, which served as the axis of learning and spiritual discipline under the Qādiriyya Sufi brotherhood of the time. From this lineage emerged *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fūdī (the *mujaddid* or reviver of the thirteenth Islamic century) and his brother *Shaykh* Abdullahi ibn Fūdī, who spearheaded the reform movement against the syncretic practices, unjust taxation, and administrative corruption of the Hausa (Habe) kingdoms.

The educational framework established by the Fudiyawa was rigorous, lifelong, and comprehensive. It integrated the foundational Islamic sciences. The outward sciences (*ʿulūm al-ẓāhir*) included: Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr*), prophetic

traditions (*ḥadīth*), Maliki jurisprudence (*fiqh*), Arabic grammar, rhetoric, and legal theory. The inward and gnostic sciences (*ʿulūm al-bāṭin*) included: Sufi spiritual purification (*taṣawwuf*), gnosis (*maʿrifa*), and the realization of divine realities. The natural and mathematical sciences (*ʿulūm al-awā'il*) included: medicine, physiognomy, astronomy, arithmetic, geomancy, and the science of letters (*ḥurūf*).

Dan Tafa inherited the pinnacle of this intellectual environment. His mother, Khadija, was the eldest daughter of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fūdī —a renowned Sufi scholar, teacher within the women's educational network (Yan Taru), and author who translated foundational Maliki texts into Fulfulde. His father, Mallam al-Muṣṭafā (Tafa), was a close companion of *Shehu* Uthman, head of the community's scribes (*kuttāb*), and a trusted household secretary (*amīn*).

Dan Tafa's education was broad and deeply specialized across multiple branches of learning: [1] Jurisprudence and linguistic sciences, studied under his father, who transmitted the rigorous legal methodologies of *Shaykh* Abdullahi Ibn Fūdī. [2] Spiritual purification and gnosis, where he completed his training in Sufism and inner realization under his maternal uncle, *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fūdī. [3] In the natural philosophy and the occult sciences, he mastered astronomy, medicine, and the sciences of letters under his uncle Muhammad Mudi ibn Layma.

His key teacher in the esoteric sciences was his maternal uncle, the above-mentioned *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu, who, of all the children and siblings of *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fūdī, had attained the greatest share of the spiritual unveiling and sainthood of his father. From the *Shehu*, *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu mastered the esoteric teachings of *Shaykh* Muhyi al-Din ibn Arabi and his commentator *Shaykh* Abd al-Karim al-Jilli. It was from *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu that *Shaykh* Dan Tafa was able to master the Akbarian esoteric cosmology; as this text, the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*, clearly demonstrates. *Shaykh* ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā said in al-Kashf wa al-Bayān: “I received this book (the *al-Insān al-Kāmil*) through transmission from my master, the righteous, ascetic saint and knower of Allah, my maternal uncle *Shaykh* Muḥammad Sanbu. He received it from his father, *Shehu* ʿUthmān ibn Fūdī (may Allah have mercy on them both). Then he added many great insights to most of the book’s passages.” In his autobiographical poetic work, *Durrat al-Laṭā'if fī Anwār al-Maʿārif*, Dan Tafa details his mastery across dozens of distinct categories of knowledge, dividing his spiritual and intellectual attainments into divine truths, saintly secrets, and natural cosmological frameworks.

A profound window into Dan Tafa's ethical and intellectual character is found in his manuscript treatise *Kitāb al-ʿUhūd wa al-Mawāthīq*, in which he outlines twenty-one personal covenants made with Allah regarding his conduct toward creation. These oaths are systematically structured into four dimensions: [1] Character (*akhlāq*): Vowing to extend universal compassion to all creation (Muslim and non-Muslim, human and animal) without arrogance, and deriving self-worth solely from divine gnosis rather than lineage or worldly status. [2] Behavioral Etiquette: Pledging never to oppose others out of petty rivalry, to mirror the emotional states of his companions in joy and sorrow, and to return good for evil even toward his worst enemies. [3] Scientific and Cosmological Viewpoint: Rejecting materialist reductions of existence by viewing nature as the outward manifestation of divine command (*amr*) and the unfolding of the Guarded Tablet (*al-lawh al-maḥfūẓ*), wherein human wisdom lies in recognizing natural laws as expressions of divine will. [4] Theory of Knowledge: Insisting that doctrinal beliefs must be anchored directly in the Qur'an

and *Sunna* rather than speculative Greek philosophy, while exercising strict discretion in concealing esoteric gnostic sciences from the spiritually unprepared.

Dan Tafa was the premier historian and geographer of the Sokoto Caliphate. Composing his major historical work, *Rawdat al-Afkār* (The Sweet Meadows of Contemplation), at the young age of twenty, he synthesized lost regional king-lists (such as the Gobir king-list) with eyewitness accounts of the Sokoto *jihad* up to 1824. His historiography posited that human history is not a series of random occurrences, but the systematic, preordained manifestation of divine will directed by the *Muqallib al-Umūr* (the Sole Transformer of affairs) and *Muṣarrif al-Duhūr* (the Sole Administrator of the ages).

His intellectual stature extended beyond the borders of the Sokoto Caliphate. When the German explorer Heinrich Barth visited Sokoto and Katsina in 1853 under the guise of "Abd al-Karim," local scholars directed him to Dan Tafa as the most learned man of his generation. Barth relied heavily upon Dan Tafa's prodigious memory for the historical traditions of the Songhay Empire and the western Sudan, and Dan Tafa's cordial diplomacy facilitated Barth's engagement with Caliph Ali ibn Bello. Throughout the reigns of succeeding Caliphs, Dan Tafa operated from his *ribat* (military garrison) in Salame, composing over ninety works spanning history, geography, Sufism, and jurisprudence, while acting as a vital ideological compass or rudder, keeping the Sokoto state aligned with the foundational principles of its founders. Although political realignments prevented him from officially holding the post of Wazir upon the accession of Ahmad Zaruku, his influence remained paramount. Dan Tafa passed away in 1864 at the age of sixty, leaving behind an intellectual legacy carried forward by his many children. *Shaykh* ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Turūdī (Dan Tafa) had ten children in total: eight sons and two daughters. [1] *Shaykh* Muhammad Mu'ahal Yiti; [2] a daughter Mu'ahal Yit; [3] *Shaykh* Ahmad al-Bakkai; [4] *Malam* Talha; [5] Muhammad Wali; [6] *Malam* Sulayman Dabwa; [7] *Malam* Bayero; [8] *Malam* Māsirān; [9] an unnamed daughter; and [10] *Shehu* Uthman.

When the British colonial forces invaded Northern Nigeria in 1903, the youngest son, *Shehu* Uthman joined Caliph Muhammad Attahiru in the historic *hijra* eastward, eventually settling in Maiurno on the Blue Nile in the Republic of Sudan. From what we have learned is that *Shehu* Uthman ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā had two sons, both who attained very high status as scholars in the Sudan: *Shaykh* Abd al-Rahmān Ya`bana and *Shaykh* Abd al-Rāziq, the latter being appointed as the chief *Imam* of the central mosque of Maiurno. There, the descendants of Dan Tafa preserved the manuscript archives of the Fudiyawa, ensuring the unbroken transmission of West African Islamic scholarship into the modern era. It was 1986, in the home of my teacher, *Shaykh* Muhammad Bello ibn Abd al-Rāziq ibn *Shehu* Uthman ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā that I found a copy of this manuscript: the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*. It was not until twenty-four years later in 2010, while in the quiet provincial town of Zunyi, China that had the opportunity to reevaluate the importance of this poem and give it its due.

Intellectual Preparation and the Mastery of Esoteric Sciences in Dan Tafa's *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*

The composition of *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* by *Shaykh* Abd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Tūrūdī (Dan Tafa) represents the culmination of a rigorous, multi-layered intellectual and spiritual formation. As detailed in his *Shukr al-Wāhib*, Dan Tafa's profound grasp of metaphysics was built upon a precise hierarchy of

knowledge, wherein each scientific discipline served as an indispensable stepping stone to compose this definitive didactic manual on existence.

The foundation of this intellectual preparation was laid through the elemental sciences (*'ulūm al-awā'il*). Grounded in disciplines such as medicine (*al-ṭibb*), astronomy and cosmology (*al-hay'a* and *ḥikmat al-nujūm*), arithmetic (*al-ḥisāb*), and logic (*al-manṭiq*), Dan Tafa developed an acute mastery over the physical, quantitative, and rational structures of the universe. Furthermore, his study of natural constitutions (*al-ṭibāʿī*), geomancy (*al-raml*), onomatomancy, and divinatory tables provided him with a structural framework for understanding how physical laws mirror unseen realities. This empirical and rational grounding was vital; it disciplined his intellect to perceive macrocosmic proportions, numerical balances, and natural ordering before attempting to translate abstract ontological principles into verse.

Building upon this rational foundation, and with the help of his illuminated guide, *Shaykh* Muhammad Sanbu, Dan Tafa ascended into the sciences of secrets (*'ulūm al-asrār*), encompassing both the traditional Sufi path and hermetic methodologies. Through the technical keys of numerical tabulations (*al-jadwāl*), tridimensional spiritual mechanics, and the linguistic properties of the *Ḥawāmīm* Quranic chapters (the seven chapters that began with two sacred letters *ḥā mīm*) and the other fourteen disconnected letters which open the Quranic chapters; Dan Tafa attained absolute precision regarding the formal properties of sacred language and cosmic configurations. Simultaneously, the inner experiential sciences of the Sufi path—ranging from the annihilation of universal existence (*talāshi al-kawn*) and the contemplation of cosmic veils to the gnosis associated with the Throne, the Footstool, the Lote Tree, and the Primordial Pen—transcended ordinary ratiocination. By navigating these stations of divine attraction and ontological witnessing, Dan Tafa's consciousness was expanded to comprehend the invisible hierarchies that structure existence from the First Intellect down to corporeal molds.

Finally, this trajectory culminated in the sciences of the greatest unveiling (*'ulūm al-kashf al-akbar*). Mastery over the meanings of the most immense concealed Divine Name (*al-ism al-aʿẓam*), the deciphering of cosmic talismans, and the direct perception of the realities of night, day, and prophetic inheritances represented the apex of sapiential attainment for *Shaykh* Dan Tafa. Through this comprehensive integration—moving seamlessly from the empirical laws of the elemental sciences through the hermeneutics of letters and numbers, and onward into the unmediated visions of supreme unveiling—Dan Tafa was intellectually and spiritually equipped to write the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*. Each science functioned as a vital instrument, refining his cognitive and spiritual faculties until his intellect became a clear, authoritative vessel capable of mapping the exact trajectory of existence from its divine source back to humanity.

The Source of Wisdom Prophet Idris/Enoch/Hermes and His Immortality

The most striking verse of the poem states: "*From Ḥaramayn (Hermes) it descended until it alighted in the mold of the body for the wisdom of manifestation."* Oral traditions among Sahelian Islamic sages identify Ḥaramayn as Hermes, who is universally identified in Islamic history with the Prophet Idrīs (Enoch). The cosmological architecture of *Shaykh* Dan Tafa's *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* explicitly invokes this ancient Kemetic lineage in its opening thematic descent: By rooting the macrocosmic descent of the primordial intellect (*al-ʿaql al-awwal*) in Prophet Idris, Dan Tafa demonstrates that the esoteric heritage of the Sahelian African

tajdīd was consciously linked through the Akbarian esoteric school to the ancient Nilotic transmission of esoteric wisdom.

Of all the Muslim Sufi sages, Ibn ʿArabī (d. 1240) delved the deepest into the esoteric topics of this poem by *Shaykh* Dan Tafa. The doctrines of the fixed entities, the intermediate imaginal world (*barzakh*), and the descent and return of the soul are the hallmarks of his system. Later Abd al-Karīm al-Jīlī (d. 1428) systematized these teachings, while the author of our poem, Dan Tafa (d. 1864), brilliantly distilled this Akbarian metaphysics into a didactic poem for the sages of the Sokoto Caliphate.

Historically, Hermes Trismegistus was a fusion of an ancient Egyptian sage later identified with the 'god' Thoth and the Greek Hermes; credited with founding alchemy, astrology, and the sciences. Islamic scholars, such as the astrologer Abū Maʿshar al-Balkhī in his *Kitāb al-Ulūf*, explicitly linked Hermes to the Qur'anic Prophet Idrīs. The Nubian Sufi saint, Dhu al-Nūn al-Miṣrī, was a primary conduit for merging Hermetic/Enochian philosophy with Islamic Sufism. Later, Shihāb al-Dīn al-Suhrawardī (the founder of the Illuminationist school) and Ibn ʿArabī (who called Idrīs the "Prophet of the Philosophers") cemented his status as the archetype of the sage who receives divine wisdom. Abū Maʿshar spoke of three Hermes (one before the Flood, one in Babylon, and one in Egypt). The Qur'an states that Idrīs was "*raised to a high station*" [Q 19:57] and did not die. If Idrīs is immortal and exists in a supra-temporal state, he is not bound by linear time. Like the immortal al-Khiḍr, Idrīs/Hermes could manifest at different points in history to renew the esoteric sciences. Thus, the "three Hermes" are not contradictions; they are three manifestations of a single, immortal archetype (*ʿayn thābita*).

In classical Islamic metaphysics, philosophical exegesis (*tafsīr 'irfānī*), and Sahelian African intellectual history, the figure of Hermes—referred to in Arabic manuscript traditions as Ḥaramayn—occupies a pivotal position as the primordial sage, historically identified by classical chroniclers and esoteric commentators with the Qur'anic Prophet Idris (Enoch). Within ancient Mediterranean and Nilotic traditions, Hermes-Thoth is indelibly anchored to the sacred landscape of ancient Egypt (Kemet) as the master builder, physician, astronomer, and founding father of the esoteric elemental sciences (*'ulūm al-awā'il*). The cosmological architecture of *Shaykh* Abd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Turūdī's (Dan Tafa) *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* (The Hierarchies of Existence) explicitly invokes this ancient lineage in its opening thematic descent: "From Hermes it descended…". By rooting the macrocosmic descent of the primordial intellect (*al-'aql al-awwal*) in Prophet Idris, Dan Tafa demonstrates that the intellectual heritage of the *Sahelian* African *tajdīd* movement was consciously linked to the ancient Nilotic transmission of esoteric wisdom.

The existence of such comprehensive texts proves that African Muslim sages never divorced themselves from ancient Kemetic esoteric knowledge. Just as the early Muslim philosophers and theologians of Baghdad purified Aristotelian and Neoplatonic philosophy of its Hellenistic polytheistic mythological base and reformed it into a rigorous, monotheistic rationalist science (*falsafa* and *kalām*), similarly the African Muslim sages of the African Sahel distilled from ancient Kemetic mythology its innate rationalist and esoteric foundation. Rather than rejecting the ancient indigenous wisdom of the Nile Valley, scholars like Dan Tafa and his Sokoto forebears systematically extracted the core metaphysical truths, cosmological hierarchies, and sciences of letters (*'ilm al-ḥurūf*) from their ancient mythological wrappers. They integrated them seamlessly into an unshakeable Islamic framework grounded in divine unity (*tawḥīd*), Quranic exegesis, and Sufic ontology. Through this

intellectual refinement, the esoteric sciences inherited from ancient Kemet were successfully harmonized with the Shari'a, proving that Sahelian African scholarship preserved, elevated, and sanctified the profound intellectual legacy of the ancient African continent.

The poem *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* is thus, a masterpiece of Sahelian African Sufi scholarship. It maps the journey of the intellect from the immortal source of Idrīs/Hermes, through the stages of elemental embodiment, to its final return. It teaches that the physical body is constituted by the elements, sustained by heat, and governed by the soul's spiritual regard. Ultimately, it calls the seeker to spiritual discipline (*riyāḍa*) so that the soul may achieve perfection and abide in everlasting bliss, perfectly mirroring the "ordering of existence" established by Allah.

The Six Days of Ontological Descent: Structural Framing in Dan Tafa's *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*

In the structural framing of the poem, the structural correspondence mirroring the Qur'anic and Biblical Six Days of Creation is embedded directly into the progressive, ontological descent (*nuzūl*) of the macrocosmic worlds. In the Qur'an, Allah asserts explicitly that the creation of the heavens and the earth took place in "six days" (*fi sittati ayyām*). Allah ta`ala says in *Surah al-A'rāf*: "*Indeed, your Lord is Allah , who created the heavens and the earth in six days*" [7:54]. He ta`ala says in *Surah Hud*: "*And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne had been upon water - that He might test you as to which of you is best in deed...*" [11:7]. He ta`ala says in *Surah Al-Furqan*: "*And He who created the heavens and the earth and whatever is between them in six days…*" [25:59]. He ta`ala says in *Surah Qāf*: "*And We did certainly create the heavens and the earth and what is between them in six days and there touched Us no weariness*" [50:38].

For masters of Sufi ontology like Muhyiddin Ibn Arabi, Abd al-Karim al-Jilli, and their intellectual heirs, the "six days" (*sittat ayyām*) of creation were never understood as linear, chronological periods of 24-hour solar days or standard historical time as we understand it now. Instead, within their metaphysical framework, time itself is a created category, and the "days" of creation represent ontological tiers, cosmic epochs, or eternal, ever-renewing vertical stages of divine self-manifestation (*tajalli*). Rather than marking a past historical sequence, the six days represent the foundational phases through which the Divine Essence manifests Itself out of the hiddenness of unknowability into the grades of being (from the Divine Names and Attributes, through the spiritual kingdoms, down to the corporeal world).

Ibn Arabi and al-Jilli view the cosmos as continuously created anew in every single breath of the All-Compassionate. What are described as "days" are macrocosmic cycles of divine expiration and inspiration, where the divine breath actualizes the immutable archetypes (*ayān thābita*) into manifest forms. In works like *al-Insān al-Kāmil*, al-Jilli explained that cosmic time and the periods of creation correspond to the unfolding deployment of the Perfect Universal Man (*al-insān al-kāmil*), wherein each "day" is a vertical hierarchy of Divine Names governing a specific plane of existence rather than a duration measured by the movement of the sun. Because Allah's command for creation is a simultaneous "Be!" (*Kun*), the division into six days signifies structural order (*tarkīb*) and wisdom (*ḥikma*), demonstrating how creation manifests gradation and proportion for human comprehension, while existing eternally in the divine knowledge outside of linear clock-time. Consequently, through these profound ontological frameworks, the traditional concept of duration dissolves into an eternal, vertical descent of divine

reality that utterly transcends our conventional understanding of time. Rather than being set aside as a standalone narrative, the six days operate as the underlying ontological chronology governing the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* 's core framework, aligning seamlessly with the poem's systematic mapping of existence.

Thus, *Shaykh* Dan Tafa maps the "six days" within his poem in the following manner: [1] The First Day represents the descent of the First Intellect (*al-ʿaql al-awwal*); and mirrors the primordial inception of universal light and intelligence, mapping to the descent originating from Prophet Idris/Hermes and the initial macrocosmic differentiation of being. [2] The Second Day represents the universal soul (*al-nafs al-kulliyya*); which corresponds to the formation of the celestial spheres, the universal orbit (*aṭlas*), and the dynamic mediums of cosmic rotation. [3] The Third Day represents primordial matter (*al-hayūlā*) and the elemental foundations; which corresponds to the establishment of the foundational elements (*al-ṭibāʿī*): fire, air, water, and earth; and the stabilization of the natural matrix. [4] The Fourth Day represents the celestial bodies, stars, and celestial mansions; which mirrors the establishment of the cosmic clockwork, planetary movements, and stellar configurations (*al-hay'a and ḥikmat al-nujūm*) that regulate time and worldly cycles. [5] The Fifth Day represents the emergence of living forms and spirits; which corresponds to the infusion of animating spirits (*al-arwāḥ*) and the enlivening of creation across the intermediate unseen kingdoms (*malakūt and jabarūt*). Then finally [6] the Sixth Day represents the corporeal molds and the perfection of humanity (*al-insān al-kāmil*); which manifests at the final stage of descent, where all prior cosmic hierarchies converge into the physical human mold (*nāsūt*), establishing humanity as the macrocosmic summation and ultimate vicegerent (*khalīfa*) of existence. Thus, section by section, Dan Tafa structures the poem's metaphysical verses so that each tier of existence unfolds precisely like a cosmic 'day' of divine architecture, translating the macrocosmic act of creation into an intimate map of ontological descent.

The *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* (The Hierarchies of Existence)

Thus, it is clear that this poetic text by *Shaykh* Abd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Turūdī, the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*, stands as one of the definitive culminations of the Sokoto esoteric tradition. Grounded in the sovereign self-determination and deep scholarly confidence of the *Shehu*'s *tajdīd* movement, the poem weaves together classical ontology, metaphysical psychology, and cosmology into an intricate but concise didactic manual. It serves as an architectural bridge between macrocosmic emanation and the micro-cosmic discipline of the human soul, charting the exact trajectory of existence from its primordial divine source down to the physical world, and providing the spiritual roadmap for the spiritual seeker to re-ascend to the Divine Presence. The poetic text belongs to the sciences of Islamic theoretical philosophical Sufism, specifically the Akbarian school, alongside scholastic theology (*kalām*), natural philosophy—evident in its use of Aristotelian/Neoplatonic terms like prime matter (*hayūlā*), and Galenic medicine (*ṭibb*), seen in the discussion of innate heat).

When classifying *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* within the traditional taxonomy of Islamic sciences (*al-ʿulūm al-islāmiyya*), it finds its most precise home within the science of Sufism and the realities of knowledges (*ʿilm al-taṣawwuf wa maʿārif al-asrār*), often coupled with ontology and speculative theology (*ʿilm al-kalām / ʿilm al-tawḥīd*). Specifically, within classical Islamic classifications of knowledge (such as those outlined by *Imam* al-Ghazālī in his *Iḥyā' ʿUlūm al-Dīn* or *Imam* al-Taftāzānī), this poetic text belongs to the sciences of the hereafter and the

interior (*ʿulūm al-mukāshafah* / the sciences of spiritual unveiling and inner realization) rather than the purely exoteric legal sciences (*ʿulūm al-muʿāmalah* like jurisprudence).

More specifically, it can be broken down across three overlapping traditional categories: [1] the science of ethics and purification of the soul (*ʿilm al-akhlāq wa tazkiyat al-nafs*). This is evident in the poem's exhaustive chapters dedicated to the rigorous training and disciplining of the intellects, lower souls, and spirits. [2] The second is the science of eschatology and ontology (*ʿilm al-maʿād*). This is addressed through its meticulous tracking of the soul and body's post-mortem journey, its intermediate *barzakhian* judgment, and its ultimate resurrection. [3] The third is the science of esoteric realities and wisdom (*ʿilm al-asrār wa al-ḥikmah*). This is represented by its macrocosmic mapping of emanation, the first intellect, primordial matter (*al-hayūlā*), and the descent of spiritual essence from the teachings of Prophet Idris/Enoch/Hermes.

Thus, while the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* utilizes didactic verse structures common to pedagogical tracts, its core substance is a masterwork of Sufi ontology and psychological metaphysics. The cosmological architecture of the poem opens with the praise of Allah, who established the precise arrangement of existence, before positioning the Intellect (*al-ʿaql*) as the noblest of gifts. The text traces how the spiritual essence originates from the celestial realms and cascades downward: "…from Hermes it descended until it alighted / In the mold of the body for the wisdom of manifestation". Within the Sahelian African esoteric and intellectual framework, the term Ḥirmān (rendered in variant forms) invokes the primordial sage Hermes—historically identified by classical chroniclers and esoteric commentators with the Qur'anic Prophet Idris (Enoch). This is significant because it demonstrates that Enochian esoteric teachings were actively engaged during the pre-colonial African Islamic era.

In the conceptual universe of the poem, this spiritual descent (*nuzūl*) is not a punitive exile, but a calculated ontological progression. As the spiritual substance moves downward, it is "dragged by the reins of the divine decrees" through successive evolutionary phases (*al-aṭwār*) until it reaches the physical baseline of primordial matter (*al-hayūlā*) and takes on corporeal form. This emanation mirrors the primordial days of creation, where reality transitions from pure light through subtle domains and prime matter down to the generated composite entities (*al-muwalladāt*), encompassing minerals, plants, and animals.

Transitioning from the macrocosm to human anthropology, the poem defines the internal faculties with precise terminology. The soul (*al-nafs*) is described as that which holds meanings within the human being, while the intellect (*al-ʿaql*) comprehends these meanings for the one endowed with clarity. The source of the intellect is "from the world of spirits," acting as the governing light that roams freely beyond the physical body and expands it. In contrast, the physical body (*al-jism*) is composed of specific elemental natures—moisture, dryness, heat, and cold—functioning as a particularized, formulated creation that eventually returns to its origin. The life of this physical vessel is maintained by heat (*al-ḥarārah*); as long as heat remains, its source overflows. However, as age advances, containing heat weakens, concealed coldness emerges, and diseases multiply until life is suspended by the demise of the body's heat. Meanwhile, the soul transcends physical mortality: when life is suspended, the soul transitions and manages affairs independently, since it "does not die".

Because the human being contains this complex interplay between the celestial intellect, the carnal soul, and the physical mold, the poem prescribes a rigorous tripartite methodology of spiritual training (*riyāḍah*) to harmonize the internal faculties. [1] The first spiritual training (*riyāḍah*) is that of disciplining the intellects (*riyāḍāt al-ʿuqūl*). This is achieved through devoted patience (*al-ṣabr al-wafī*), vigorous austerity in actions, undertaking all matters to distinguish obligatory from supererogatory acts, preventing the soul from base desires, avoiding prying into defects, and practicing silence, deliberate caution (*tawakhkhī*), and solitary reflection (*khalwah*). [2] The second spiritual training (*riyāḍah*) is that of training of the souls (*riyāḍāt al-nufūs*). This is accomplished through humility (*tawāḍuʿ*) despite high status, restraining harm, loving the poor, curbing eagerness in the presence of superiors, enduring voluntary estrangement, practicing arduous self-denial (*taqashshuf*), and embracing sorrow and self-restraint. [3] The third spiritual training (*riyāḍah*) is that of disciplining the spirits (*riyāḍāt al-arwāḥ*). This is mastered through feigning ignorance (*al-tajāhul*), denying what is known by feigning unawareness, and accepting knowledge humbly from peers, subordinates, opponents, and adversaries alike. The poem concludes by mapping the post-mortem trajectory and ultimate resurrection of both soul and body. The final destination of the soul strictly corresponds to its state—either everlasting bliss resulting from its perfection or painful torment resulting from inherent deficiency. The physical body returns to its elemental origin, its specific worldly judgment wiped away due to the absence of moral weight.

Finally, the resurrection of the spirits (*baʿth al-arwāḥ*) is described as their spreading forth to seek their original settled resting place, formulated with the shapes of the body and assisted by the invocation of the Divine Name from which it derives. The resurrection of the body (*baʿth al-jism*) manifests as its appearance unified with the spirit, taking formation in the expansive world where it spiritually delights in its tasting, fully actualized through metaphysical perfection. Through this comprehensive framework, *Shaykh* Abd al-Qādir al-Turūdī provides us with an enduring masterwork that anchors human ethical responsibility directly within the eternal machinery of existence.

The *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* by *Shaykh* Abd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Tūrūdī (Dan Tafa) stands as a peerless masterpiece of esoteric architecture, perfectly capturing the intellectual zenith of the Sokoto *tajdīd* ignited by *Shehu* Uthman ibn Fūdī. By mapping the descent of existence from the First Intellect down to corporeal molds through a precise cosmological framework that mirrors the Six Days of Creation, Dan Tafa unlocks the deepest ontological secrets of *nuzūl* (descent). This profound text demonstrates how the Sahelian scholarship of the Fudiyawa seamlessly integrated classical Sufi ontology, letters, and numbers into a rigorous monotheistic science, proving that African Muslim sages preserved and elevated the ancient wisdom of the Nile Valley within an unshakeable framework of divine unity.

The Style, Metre and Prosodic Structure of the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya*

The style of Dan Tafa's poem is written in the classical genre of didactic and gnostic verse (*al-manẓūmah taʿlīmī ʿirfānī*), specifically characteristic of Sahelian African scholarly and Sufi pedagogical literature. Its primary purpose was to condense complex metaphysical, ontological, and psychological doctrines into an easily memorizable mnemonic form. The metre (*baḥr*) of this poem is composed in the *rajaz* metre (*baḥr al-rajaz*), which is the standard, preferred meter across Islamic literary traditions for didactic and scientific poems (*urjūza*) because its rhythmic foot

structure facilitates effortless memorization and recitation. The prosodic structure (*wazn*) of the poem in each hemistich, follows the standard prosodic pattern of the *rajaz*:

مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ مُسْتَفْعِلُنْ

mustafʿilun mustafʿilun mustafʿilun

The prosodic structure utilizes paired rhyming couplets (*mashrūʿ* / monorhyme per line pair) where each of the 59 hemistich lines flows with uniform cadence and precision. An exact hemistich from the opening verses of Dan Tafa's poem illustrates this *rajaz* meter:

أَزْكَى صَلَاتِهِ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْكَمَالِ

azkā ṣalātihī ʿalā ahli al-kamāli

"The purest of His blessings be upon the people of perfection"

The *rajaz* metre and its extended poem form known as the *urjūza* (plural *arājīz*) have a long and illustrious history in Arabic literature, stretching from the pre-Islamic (*jāhilī*) period all the way through the classical, medieval, and Sahelian African Islamic era of *Shaykh* Dan Tafa. Because *rajaz* is naturally rhythmic and easy to memorize, it evolved from short battle chants and camel-drivers' songs (*hidāʾ*) into a sophisticated vehicle for both epic narrative and didactic educational compositions.

During the *Jāhilī* and early Islamic period *rajaz* as short chants and incitement was typically composed of succinct, punchy single-hemistich lines rhymed consecutively. A famous early historical example is the battlefield chant recited by Hind bint ʿUtba and the Qurayshi women at the Battle of Uhud (625 CE):

نَحْنُ بَنَاتُ طَارِقِ نَمْشِي عَلَى النَّمَارِقِ

وَالدُّرُّ فِي الْمَخَانِقِ وَالْمِسْكُ فِي الْفَفَارِقِ

naḥnu banātu Ṭāriqī
namshī ʿalā al-namāriqī
wad-durru fī al-makhāniqī
wa al-misku fī al-fafāriqī

"We are the daughters of Ṭāriq,
Walking upon cushions
Pearls are in our collars,
Musk in our partings..."

During the Umayyad era, master poets like al-ʿAjjāj (d. 710 CE) and his son Ru'bah ibn al-ʿAjjāj (d. 762 CE) elevated the *rajaz* out of short martial bursts into long, sophisticated *qaṣīda*-style poems; extending the lines with paired rhyming couplets, known as *muzdawij*. They used the exact same parallel foot structure to compose descriptive poems on desert journeys, wildlife, and panegyric.

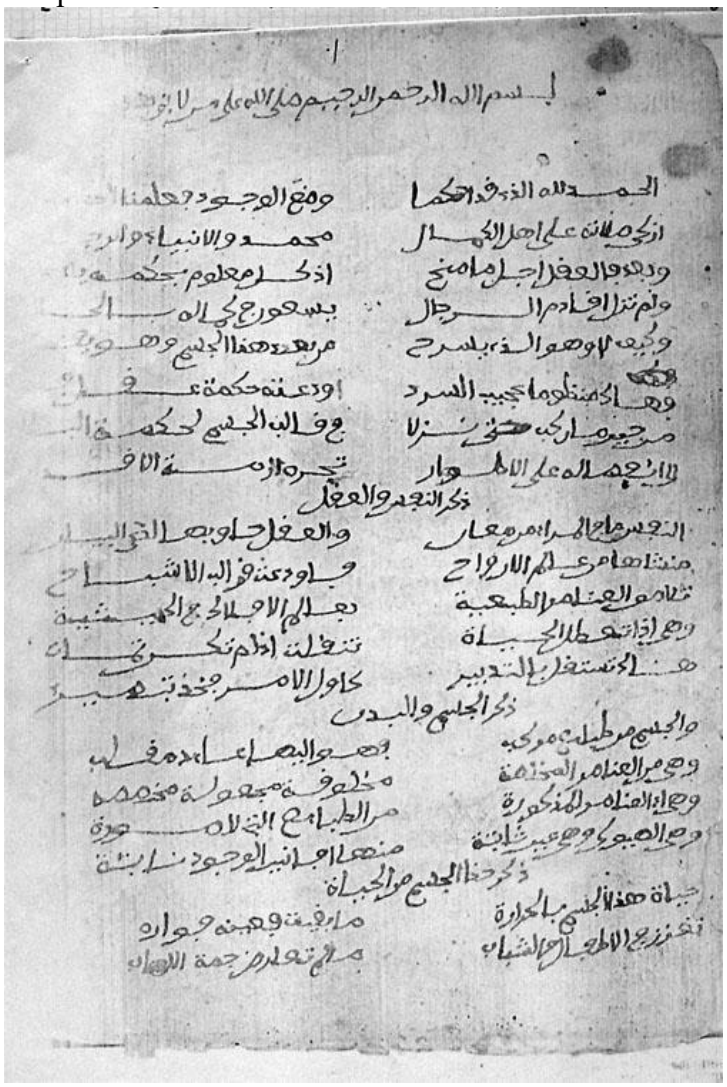
During the Abbasid period and onward there emerged a more classical and post-classical didactic *rajaz* tradition (*al-urjūza al-taʿlīmīyya*). This era was the period of the codification and systemization the Islamic sciences. Thus, the scholars recognized that the *rajaz* meter in paired couplets was the ultimate vehicle for memorizing technical knowledge. This directly gave rise to the didactic *urjūza*—the exact genre to which Dan Tafa's *Naẓm al-Marātib* belongs.

Famous classical examples include the *rajaz* poetry of Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d. 1037 CE) in his famous *al-Urjūza fī al-Ṭibb*; a famous medical poem in *rajaz* comprising over 1,300 verses used to teach Galenic-Islamic medicine. An even more famous *rajaz* poem is that of Ibn Mālik al-Andalusī (d. 1274 CE) in his *al-Fiyya*; a

1,000-line grammatical *urjūza* in *rajaz* meter that generations of students across the Islamic world, including Sahelian Africa, memorized word-for-word. *Shaykh* Dan Tafa, himself, studied and memorized this famous grammatical *rajaz* poem with his father, *Shaykh* Muṣṭafā ibn Muhammad al-Turūdī. He in turn mastered the *al-Fiyya* from, *Shaykh* ʿAbdullāhi ibn Fūdī (Dan Tafa's uncle, d. 1829 CE); considered as an absolute authority (*mujtahid muṭlaq*) in Arabic linguistics, morphology and grammar. He composed numerous didactic *urjūza* poems in the exact same Sokoto scholarly tradition, such as *Umiyyat al-Tisyān* and grammatical/legal versifications, proving that Dan Tafa was working within an established Sahelian African methodology of codifying complex gnostic and legal sciences into mnemonic *rajaz* verse.

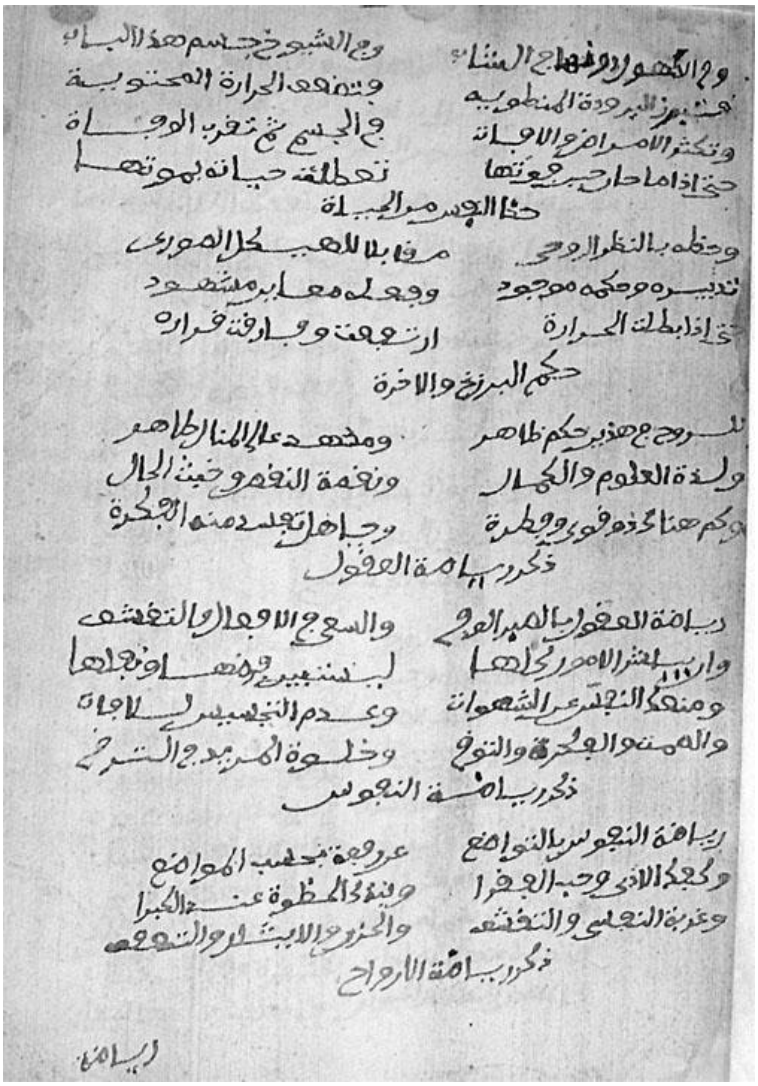
Condition of the Manuscript

It was during the *Ramadan* of 1986, that I came across this copy of the *Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya* by *Shaykh* ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā al-Turūdī in the private archive of *Shaykh* Muhammad Bello ibn Abd al-Rāziq ibn Uthman ibn ʿAbd al-Qādir ibn Muṣṭafā in the Blue Nile town of Maiurno in Sudan. *Shaykh* Muhammad Bello allowed me to borrow the manuscript which I took to Khartoum and made a xerox copy. In Khartoum, I was able to make a distinct codicological and paleographic analysis of the original and noted that it was characteristic of the Sokoto Caliphate manuscript tradition.



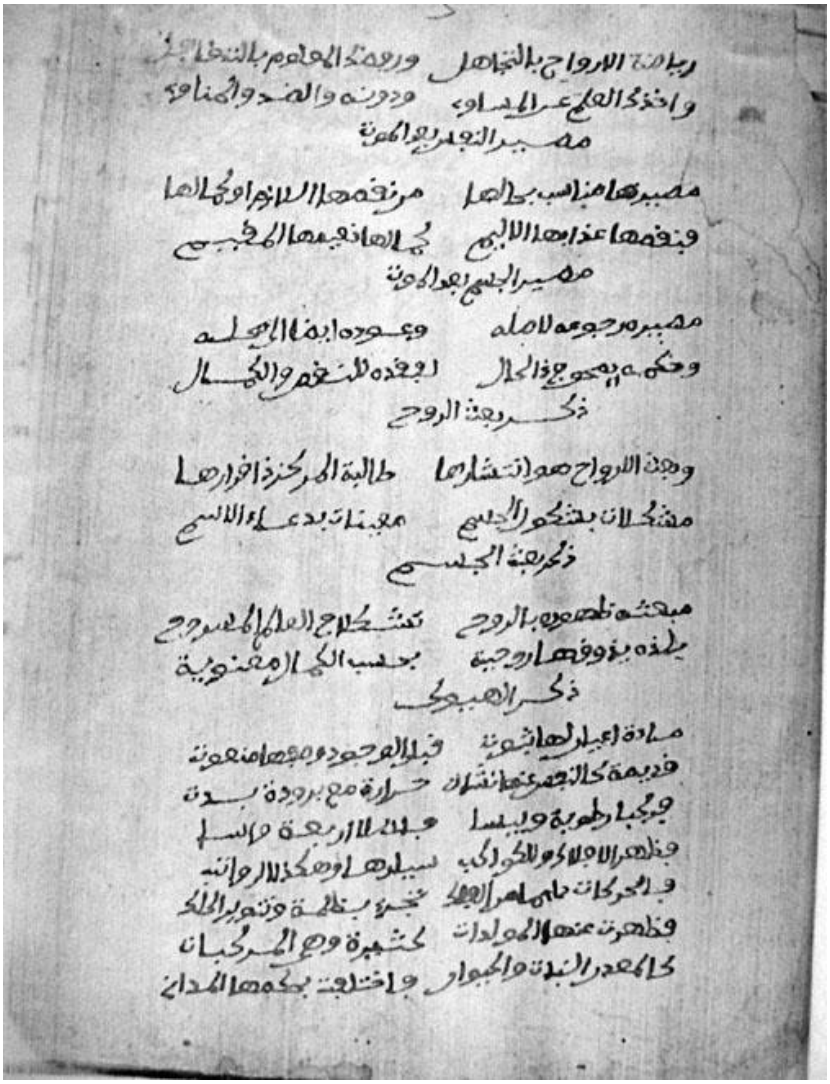
Folio 1

The manuscript is four folios and each folio is 23 cm in length by 12.5 cm in width. The hand writing covered 20 cm x 10 cm of every folio except the fourth which was 4.5 cm x 10 cm. The folios exhibited a standard vertical codicological frame typical of Sahelian African scholarly production. The original paper showed slight toning and archival aging, with visible marginal wear and faint chain-line impressions consistent with imported Mediterranean trade papers circulating through Saharan routes.



Folio 2

The *ductus* (order, direction, and manner in which the strokes of a letter are executed) exemplifies the classical Sahelian Sūdānī script style called *jihadi* associated with the Sokoto literary and intellectual milieu (often linked with the scribal traditions of the *jihād* leaders and their scholarly households). It featured rounded, fluid letterforms, sweeping baseline descenders on terminal letters (such as *nūn*, *fā'*, and *qāf*), and a compressed vertical stacking of words. In accordance with Sahelian orthographic norms, the pointing system was distinctly localized: the letter ق (*qāf*) was marked with a single dot above, while the letter ف (*fā'*) was marked with a single dot below. Letter connections and isolated letters (such as unpointed *hā'* and final *alif* variants) displayed traditional Sahelian *ductus* habits, prioritizing writing speed and economy of movement without sacrificing legibility.



Folio 3

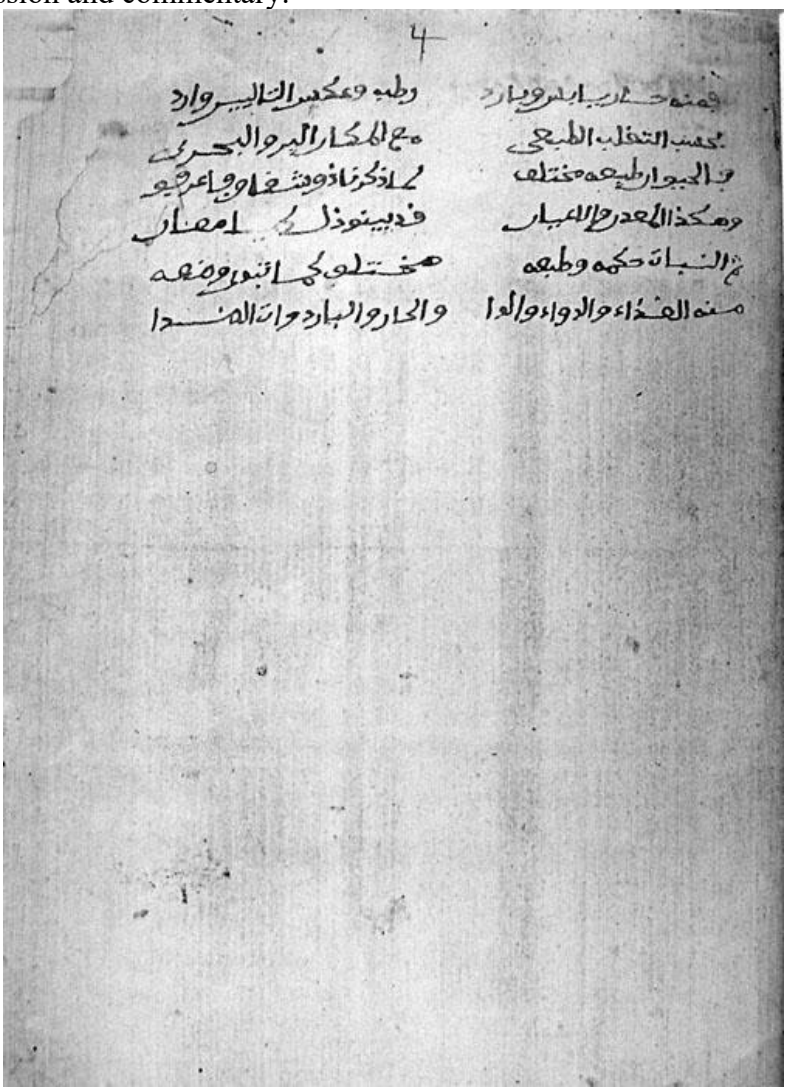
Folio numbering appeared at the top center/margin (e.g., numerals “1” through “4” clearly marked in the upper margin), and section headers or thematic markers (such as *dhikr al-tajarrud wal-ʿaql* or *dhikr al-jism wal-badan*) served as structural signposts for the poetic discourse on existential levels (*marātib al-wujūd*).

So, through examining the codicological and script descriptions of the four folios of this poem, focus can be had on how the manuscript's internal architecture, orthography, and layout directly serve its function as a pedagogical and spiritual guide. This can be seen in the structural signposting and navigation of the poem; where Dan Tafa includes distinct thematic headings; such as *dhikr al-tajarrud wal-ʿaql* and *ḥukm al-barzakh wal-ākhira*) embedded across the folios serving as immediate visual landmarks. This allows scholars and students to navigate complex ontological tiers instantly without needing to scan the entire poetic text sequentially.

One of the distinguishing marks of this poem is the compact scribal economy of the *jihadi* script. The dense, flowing Sahelian Sūdānī ductus utilized by the scribe of this poem is the *jihadi* script —characterized by compressed vertical word-stacking and sweeping terminal descenders. This script was engineered for portability and efficiency, because the scholar warriors of the Sokoto Caliphate were a peripatetic clerical unit who could not afford to carry large voluminous texts. The *jihadi* script while akin to the Sahelian scion of the Andalusian/Maghribi scripts; such as the *Timbuktu*, the *Sahrawi* and *Barnawi* scripts; the *jihadi* script was much tighter and

afforded the scribe to condense more writing on a single folio; saving paper and quantity. This also enabled a vast framework of Akbarian metaphysics to be preserved concisely within a compact four-folio format.

When examining the regional orthographic precision of the *jihadi* script; the localized pointing conventions, such as placing a single dot above ق and a single dot below ڤ, acted as a vital safeguard. For students reading or copying the text in Fudiyawa scholarly circles, this ensured precise phonetic decoding of nuanced philosophical and anatomical terms. The physical arrangement—pairing rhythmic, rhyming rajaz verses with clear section breaks—transformed the manuscript into an active pedagogical tool. It was designed for rhythmic internalisation, allowing the seeker to memorize intricate cosmological hierarchies before unpacking them through oral transmission and commentary.



Folio 4

To ensure that every layer of metaphysical depth, lexical nuance, and cosmological reference embedded within the poem is fully accessible to the reader, Allah willing, I will include in a latter edition a complete, comprehensive commentary provided as end notes; as well as an appendix which provides a glossary of the technical terms cited in the text. These detailed end notes will draw directly upon its classical Sufi Akbarian esoteric origin, ontology, and the broader esoteric legacy of the Sokoto *tajdīd*, offering the scholar and seeker a rigorous textual apparatus that bridges concise didactic verse with its expansive underlying esoteric reality.

The Text of the Arabic and English of the
Naẓm al-Marātib al-Wujūdiyya
(A Poem of the Hierarchies of Existence)

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَى مَنْ لَا نَبِيَّ بَعْدَهُ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Blessings upon the one after whom there is no prophet.

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ اَلَّذِي قَدْ أَحْكَمَا وَضْعَ الْوُجُودِ فَعَلَّمَنَا

All praises are due to Allah, who has set precisely
The arrangement of existence, thus teaching us.

أَزْكَى صَلَاتِهِ عَلَى أَهْلِ الْكَمَالِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَالْأَنْبِيَاءِ وَالرِّجَالِ

The purest of His blessings be upon the people of perfection
Muhammad, and the Prophets, and the Men of Allah.

وَبَعْدُ: فَالْعَقْلُ أَجَلُّ مَا مُنِحَ إِذْ كُلُّ مَعْلُومٍ بِحُكْمِهِ يُضَحَ

And after that: the intellect is the noblest gift bestowed
Since every known thing is illuminated by its judgment.

وَلَمْ تَزَلْ أَقْدَامُ الرِّجَالِ يَسْعَوْنَ فِي كَمَالِهِ بِالْحَالِ

And the feet of the Men of Allah have not ceased
Striving for its perfection through their spiritual states

وَكَيْفَ لَا وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَسْرَحُ مِنْ بَعْدِ هَذَا الْجِسْمِ وَهُوَ يَشْرَحُ

And how can it not be, when the intellect is the one that roams freely
Beyond this physical body, and the intellect is what expands it

فَهَاكَ مَنْظُومًا عَجِيبَ السِّرِّ أَوْدَعْتُهُ حِكْمَةَ عَقْلٍ فَرْدِ

For, here is a poem of wondrous composition
I deposited in it the wisdom of a unique intellect

مِنْ حِيرْمَانَ كَبَّ حَتَّى نَزَلَا فِي قَالَبِ الْجِسْمِ لِحِكْمَةِ جَلَا

From Hermes it descended until it alighted
In the mold of the body for the wisdom of manifestation.

إِلَى انْفِصَالِهِ عَلَى الْأَطْوَارِ تَجُرُّهُ أَزِمَّةُ الْأَقْدَارِ

Towards its separation, through stages,
It is dragged by the reins of the divine decrees.

ذِكْرُ النَّفْسِ وَالْعَقْلِ

A Mention of the Soul and the Intellect

اَلنَّفْسُ مَا فِي الْمَرْءِ مِنْ مَعَانٍ وَالْعَقْلُ حَاوٍ بِهَا لِذِي الْبَيَانِ

The soul is that which, in the human being, holds meanings,
While the intellect comprehends them for the one endowed with clarity

مَنْشَؤُهَا مِنْ عَالَمِ الْأَرْوَاحِ فَأَوْدَعَتْ قَوَالِبَ الْأَشْبَاحِ

The source of the intellect is from the world of spirits
And thus, the soul consigned the meanings into the frames of bodily forms

تَلَاصُقُ الْعَنَاصِرِ الصَّبِيعِيَّةِ بِعَالَمِ الْأَفْلَاكِ فِي الْحَيْثِيَّةِ

The contiguity of the natural elements
To the world of celestial spheres in respect to spatiality

وَهِيَ إِذَا تَعَصَّلَتِ الْحَيَاةُ تَنَقَّلَتْ إِذْ لَمْ تَكُنْ تَمَاتُ

And the soul, when life is suspended,
Transitions— since it does not die.

هُنَاكَ تَسْتَقِلُّ بِالتَّدْبِيرِ كَأَوَّلِ الْأَمْرِ فَخُذْ تَبْصِيرِ

There, it manages affairs independently,
As at the very beginning, so take this as an insight.

ذِكْرُ الْجِسْمِ وَالْبَدَنِ

A Mention of the Physical Substance and the Physical Form

وَالْجِسْمُ مِنْ صِبَاعٍ مُرَكَّبٌ فَهُوَ إِلَيْهَا عَائِدٌ مُقَلَّبٌ

The body (*jism*) is composed of natures,
So, it returns to them, being turned about in them.

وَهِيَ مِنَ الْعَنَاصِرِ الْمُخْتَصَّةِ مَخْلُوقَةٌ مَجْعُولَةٌ مُخَصَّصَةٌ

And the body is from the specific elements
It is a particularized formulated creation.

وَهِيَ أَيِ الْعَنَاصِرِ الْمَذْكُورَةِ مِنَ الصَّبَائِعِ الَّتِي لَا صُورَةَ

And it, that is to say, the mentioned elements
Is from the natural constituents that have no form.

وَهِيَ الْهَيُولَى وَهِيَ عَيْنٌ ثَابِتَةٌ مِنْهَا أَفَانِينُ الْوُجُودِ نَابِتَةٌ

And it is prime matter, and it is a fixed entity;
From it the diverse varieties of existence propagate.

ذِكْرُ حَظِّ الْجِسْمِ مِنَ الْحَيَاةِ

Mention of the Body's Share of Life

حَيَاةُ هَذَا الْجِسْمِ بِالْحَرَارَةِ مَا بَقِيَتْ فَعَيْنُهُ فَوَّارَةُ

The life of this body is by heat
As long as it remains, its source is overflowing.

تَغُرُّ فِي الْأَطْفَالِ مَا لِلشَّبَابِ مَا لَمْ تُعَارِضْ جُمَّةَ اللَّهَابِ

It penetrates in children — what belongs to youth
As long as it does not oppose the mass of flame.

وَفِي الظُّهُورِ دُونَهَا فِي الشَّابِّ وَفِي الشُّيُوخِ جِسْمُ هَذَا الْبَابِ

And in manifestation, less than it in the young man,
And in the elderly — the body of this domain.

فَتَبْرُزُ الْبُرُودَةُ الْمَنْصَوِيَّةُ فَتَضْعُفُ الْحَرَارَةُ الْمُحْتَوِيَةُ

So, the concealed coldness emerges,
And the containing heat weakens.

وَتَكْثُرُ الْأَمْرَاضُ فِي الْآفَاتِ ... فِي الْجِسْمِ ثُمَّ تَقْرُبُ الْوَفَاةُ

And diseases increase in afflictions
In the body — then death approaches.

حَتَّى إِذَا مَا حَانَ حَرُّ فَوْتِهَا ... تَعَطَّلَتْ حَيَاتُهُ بِمَوْتِهَا

Until, when the heat of its passing comes,
Its life is suspended by the demise of the its heat.

حَظُّ النَّفْسِ مِنَ الْحَيَاةِ

The Soul's Share of Life

وَحَظُّهُ بِالنَّظَرِ الرُّوحِيِّ ... مُقَابِلًا لِلْهَيْكَلِ الصُّورِيِّ

And its share, by the spiritual consideration,
Is correspondent to the formal frame.

تَدْبِيرُهُ وَحُكْمُهُ مَوْجُودٌ ... وَفِعْلُهُ مُعَايَنٌ مَشْهُودٌ

Its governance and its ruling are present,
And its action is witnessed and observed.

حَتَّى إِذَا بَطَلَتِ الْحَرَارَةُ ... ارْتَفَعَتْ وَفَارَقَتْ قَرَارَهُ

Until, when the heat becomes void,
The soul rises and departs from the body's resting place.

حُكْمُ الْبَرْزَخِ وَالْآخِرَةِ

The Judgment of the Barzakh and the Hereafter

لِلرُّوحِ فِي هَذَيْنِ حُكْمٌ ظَاهِرٌ ... وَمَشْهَدٌ عَالِي الْمَنَالِ طَاهِرٌ

To the spirit in these two there is a manifest judgment,
And the witnessing of the lofty attainment is pure.

وَلَذَّةُ الْعُلُومِ وَالْكَمَالِ ... وَنَقْمَةُ النَّقْصِ وَخُبْثِ الْحَالِ

And the delight of knowledges and perfection,
And the punishment of deficiency and the evilness of the state.

وَكَمْ هُنَاكَ ذُو قُوًى وَفِطْرَةِ ... وَجَاهِلٍ تُفْسِدُ مِنْهُ الْفِكْرَةُ

And how many there are possessing strengths and innate nature,
And an ignorant one whose thought corrupts him.

ذِكْرُ رِيَاضَةِ الْعُقُولِ

Mention of the Disciplining of the Intellects

رِيَاضَةُ الْعُقُولِ بِالصَّبْرِ الْوَفِي ... وَالسَّعْيِ فِي الْأَفْعَالِ بِالتَّقَشُّفِ

Disciplining of the intellects is by devoted patience,
And striving in actions with vigorous austerity.

وَأَنْ يُبَاشِرَ الْأُمُورَ كُلَّهَا ... لِيَسْتَبِينَ فَرْضَهَا وَنَفْلَهَا

And that he undertakes all matters
In order to make clear their obligatory and supererogatory aspects.

وَمَنْعُكَ النَّفْسَ عَنِ الشَّهَوَاتِ وَعَدَمُ التَّجْسِيسِ لِلْآفَاتِ

And your preventing the soul from desires,
And the absence of prying into the defective afflictions.

وَالصَّمْتُ وَالْفِكْرَةُ وَالتَّوَخِّي وَخَلْوَةُ الْمُرِيدِ فِي التَّرَخِّي

And silence, and reflection, and deliberate caution,
And the solitude of the spiritual aspirant in times of leisure.

ذِكْرُ رِيَاضَةِ النُّفُوسِ

A Mention of the Training of the Souls

رِيَاضَةُ النُّفُوسِ بِالتَّوَاضُعِ عَنْ رِفْعَةٍ بِحَسَبِ الْمَوَاضِعِ

Disciplining of the souls is through humility,
Despite high status, according to circumstances.

وَكَفُّكَ الْأَذَى وَحُبُّ الْفُقَرَاءِ وَقَيْدُكَ الْحُظْوَةَ عِنْدَ الْكُبَرَاءِ

And your restraining harm, and loving the poor,
And curbing your eagerness in the presence of superiors.

وَغُرْبَةُ النَّفْسِ وَالتَّقَشُّفُ وَالْحُزْنُ وَالْإِيثَارُ وَالتَّعَفُّفُ

And estrangement of the soul, and arduous self-denial,
And sorrow, giving preference to others, and self-restraint.

ذِكْرُ رِيَاضَةِ الْأَرْوَاحِ

Mention of the Disciplining of the Spirits

رِيَاضَةُ الْأَرْوَاحِ بِالتَّجَاهُلِ وَرَفْضُكَ الْمَعْلُومَ بِالتَّغَافُلِ

Disciplining of the spirits is by feigning ignorance,
And by your denying what is known by feigning unawareness.

وَأَخْذُكَ الْعِلْمَ عَنِ الْمُسَاوِي وَدُونِهِ وَالضِّدِّ وَالْمُنَاوِي

And your taking knowledge from the peers,
And from those below them, and from opponents, and adversaries.

مَصِيرُ النَّفْسِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ

The Destination of the Soul After Death

مَصِيرُهَا مُنَاسِبٌ بِحَالِهَا مِنْ نَقْصِهَا اللَّازِمِ أَوْ كَمَالِهَا

The destination of the soul is suitable to its state,
From its inherent deficiency or its perfection.

فَنَقْصُهَا عَذَابُهَا الْأَلِيمُ كَمَالُهَا نَعِيمُهَا الْمُقِيمُ

Thus, the destiny of its deficiency is its painful torment,
The destiny of the soul's perfection is its everlasting bliss.

مَصِيرُ الْجِسْمِ بَعْدَ الْمَوْتِ

The Destination of the Body After Death

مَصِيرُ مَرْجُوعِهِ لِأَصْلِهِ وَعَوْدُهُ أَيْضًا إِلَى مَحَلِّهِ

The destination of the body is its return to its origin,
And its return also is to its place.

وَحُكْمُهُ يُمْحَقُ فِي هَذَا الْحَالِ لِفَقْدِهِ لِلنَّقْصِ وَالْكَمَالِ

Its judgment is obliterated in this circumstance,
Due to its lack of deficiency and perfection.

ذِكْرُ بَعْثِ الرُّوحِ

Mention of the Resurrection of the Spirit

وَبَعْثُ الْأَرْوَاحِ هُوَ انْتِشَارُهَا طَالِبَةً الْمَرْكَزَ هَذَا قَرَارُهَا

The resurrection of the spirits is their spreading forth,
Seeking the center of their settled resting place.

مُشْكِلَاتٌ بِشُكُولِ الْجِسْمِ مُعِينَاتٌ بِدُعَاءِ الِاسْمِ

Formulated with the shapes of the body,
Assisted by the invocation of the Divine Name.

ذِكْرُ بَعْثِ الْجِسْمِ

Mention of the Resurrection of the Body

مَبْعَثُهُ ظُهُورُهُ بِالرُّوحِ تَشَكُّلًا فِي الْعَالَمِ الْمَسْرُوحِ

The body's resurrection is its appearance with the spirit,
Taking formation in the expansive world.

يُلَذِّذُهُ بِذَوْقِهَا رُوحِيَّةً بِحَسَبِ الْكَمَالِ مَعْنَوِيَّةً

The body spiritually delights the spirit by its tasting
Based upon the metaphysical perfection, in meaning

ذِكْرُ الْهَيُولَى

Mention of Prime Matter

مَادَّةُ أَعْيَانٍ لَهَا ثُبُوتٌ قَبْلَ الْوُجُودِ وَصْفُهَا مَنْعُوتٌ

The material substratum of entities that have fixity
Prior to existence — their description is described.

قَدِيمَةٌ كَالنَّفْسِ عَنْهَا نَشَأَتْ حَرَارَةٌ مَعَ بُرُودَةٍ بَدَتْ

Eternal like the Soul, from which it emerged
Heat entities along with cold entities that appeared.

فَرَكَّبَا رُطُوبَةً وَيُبْسًا فَاضِلًا أَرْبَعَةً وَأُسًّا

So, the two compounded entities of moisture and dryness
Yielded the four elements and as a fundamental foundation.

فَظَهَرَ الْأَفْلَاكُ وَالْكَوَاكِبُ سَيَّارُهَا وَهَكَذَا الرَّوَاتِبُ

Then the celestial spheres and the stars appeared
Their orbiting planets, and likewise the fixed stars.

فَالْحَرَكَاتُ دَائِمًا مِنَ الْفَلَكِ تَجْرِي بِظُلْمَةٍ وَتَنْوِيرِ الْمَلَكِ

For motions and movement always proceed from the sphere
Coursing through darkness by means of the illumination of the angel.

فَظَهَرَتْ عَنْهَا الْمُوَلَّدَاتُ كَثِيرَةً وَهِيَ الْمُرَكَّبَاتُ

Then from them the generated things appeared
In multitudes, and they are the composite compounds.

كَالْمَعْدِنِ النَّبَاتِ وَالْحَيَوَانِ وَاخْتَلَفَتْ بِحُكْمِهَا الْمَدَانِ

Like minerals, plants, and animals
And the proximate entities differed according to their judgment.

فَمِنْهُ حَارٌّ يَابِسٌ وَبَارِدٌ رَطْبٌ وَعَكْسُ التَّأْلِيفَيْنِ وَارِدٌ

From it is entities hot-dry and cold-cold
And the opposites of the two compositions occurred.

بِحَسَبِ التَّقَلُّبِ الطَّبْعِيِّ مَعَ الْمَكَانِ الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِيِّ

According to their natural transformation,
Along with their location, on the land and the sea.

فَالْحَيَوَانُ طَبْعُهُ مُخْتَلِفٌ لِمَا ذَكَرْنَا ذُو شِقَاقٍ فَاعْرِفُوا

Thus, the animals their natures are varied and diverse
Based on what we mentioned, characterized by divergence; so know this

وَهَكَذَا الْمَعْدِنُ وَالْأَعْيَانُ قَدْ بَيَّنُوا ذَلِكَ يَا مَعَانُ

And likewise, the mineral and the determinate essences
They have made plain and clarified that, O one of meanings.

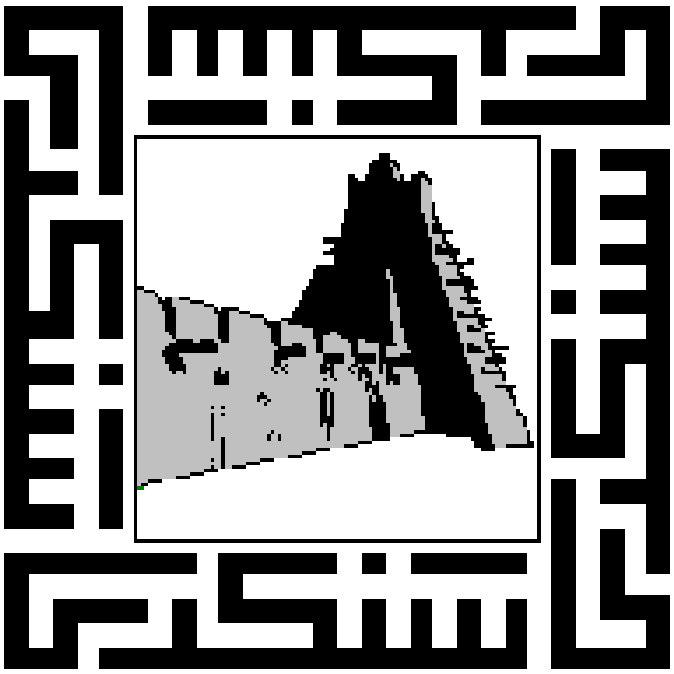
ثُمَّ النَّبَاتُ حُكْمُهُ وَطَبْعُهُ مُخْتَلِفٌ كَمَا تَبَدَّلَ وَضْعُهُ

Then the plants, their judgements and natures
Differ just as their elemental composition changes.

مِنْهُ الْغِذَاءُ وَالدَّوَاءُ وَالدَّا وَالْحَارُّ وَالْبَارِدُ وَأَتَى الضِّدَّا

From it emerges food, medicine, and disease
And hot elements and cold elements, that induce their opposites.

SANKORE’



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