



LINGUISTIC FEATURES OF THE INTRODUCTION OF “RAVZATU-S-SAFO” IN
MUNIS’ TRANSLATION

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Abstract: This article explores the linguistic features of the preface to “Rawzat as-Safa” translated by Munis Khwarazmi. The study provides a lexical-semantic analysis of the text, revealing layers of theological, philosophical, and mystical vocabulary. Terms such as Wājibu-l-wujūd, Fayizu-l-wujūd, Ṣāni‘, mufradāt and murakkabāt are examined within the frameworks of Islamic theology (kalām), rational philosophy (ḥikmah), and mysticism (‘irfān). The analysis demonstrates that the preface serves not merely as an introduction but as a profound reflection of Munis’s philosophical and mystical worldview, embodying a synthesis of reason and revelation.

Keywords: Munis Khwarazmi, Rawzat as-Safa, linguistic analysis, lexical semantics, mysticism, Islamic philosophy, kalam, mufradat, murakkabat, ontology.

Introduction

The translation of Ravzatu-s-safo, created within the 19th-century Khorezm literary and scholarly milieu, is one of the major sources reflecting Munis Khorezmi’s religious, philosophical, and literary thought. Its preface (debocha) is valuable not only as the introductory section of a historical work but also as an independent scholarly and philosophical text. The aim of this study is to identify the lexical-semantic and philosophical layers of the preface and to reveal the semantic system of the major religious-mystical terms used in the text.

Research Methods

A complex linguistic analytical approach has been applied in this research:

Lexical-semantic approach – the semantic scope of the key terms was determined and analyzed contextually;

Philosophical and mystical commentary – interpretations of the terms in kalam, wisdom, and Sufism were compared based on the dictionaries of Dekhoda and Sajjadī;

Conceptual analysis – the semantic hierarchy of terms such as mavjudot (existents), mufradot (simple entities), and murakkabot (composite entities) was examined.

Results and Discussion

The linguistic features of the preface to Munis’s translation of Ravzatu-s-safo begin with the following sentences:

“It is the inscription of the page of purposes and the seal of the compendium of felicity, founded upon the narratives of the noble predecessors and based on the reports of the virtuous successors. It is the praise and glorification of the Necessary Being (Wājib al-wujūd), from whose sun of beneficence all existents are but a single flash; and the thanksgiving and exaltation of the Bestower of Being (Fayḍ al-wujūd), from whose cloud of generosity the existence of all creatures is but a single drop.

He is the All-knowing, whose eternal knowledge encompasses the spheres of dust and the orbits of the skies;

The All-powerful, who, through the pen of His might, brought simple and composite beings from the realm of the unseen into the world of testimony with only a combination of two letters;



The Most Merciful, whose revelation of the verse “We narrate to you the best of stories by what We have revealed to you” (Qur’an 12:3) is a sign of relief for the hearts of the elect of the Divine Court, by His abundant mercy;

The Most Generous, whose verse “And those who strive for Our sake...” (Qur’an 29:69) stands as an exemplary honor for the strivers in the path of God, by His perfect grace;

The Creator, who polished the sword of speech with the shine of success, so that by its power the clear signs may silence the deniers and the radiant miracles may affirm the claims of the truthful.”

This excerpt is taken from the preface of Ravzatu-s-safo, that is, from its praise section (hamd va sano). It is distinguished by its complex syntactic structure, highly elevated literary style, and rich religious-philosophical vocabulary.

Lexical-Semantic Analysis

The vocabulary of the text consists mainly of three major layers: Turkic, Persian, and Arabic. Most of the lexicon in this passage expresses religious-philosophical and scholarly-literary concepts. These can be divided into the following semantic groups:

1. Lexicon related to the names and attributes of God:

Wājib al-wujūd (the One whose existence is necessary),

Fayḍ al-wujūd (the Bestower of existence),

Rahīm (the Merciful),

Karīm (the Generous),

Ṣāni‘ (the Maker),

Dānā (the Knowing),

Tavānā (the Powerful).

Some of these theonyms belong to the Asmā’ al-ḥusnā (the Most Beautiful Names of God). Specifically, Rahīm and Karīm are among the Asmā’ al-ḥusnā.

Ṣāni‘ means “Creator.”

Dānā, a Persian word meaning “knowing,” corresponds to the divine name al-‘Alīm.

Tavānā, also Persian and meaning “powerful,” corresponds to al-Qādir.

2. Lexicon related to creation and existence

Mavjudot (Existents).

In the sentence “...all existents are but a single flash of the sun of His beneficence...”, the word mavjudot is not used as a simple lexical unit. Rather, it appears as a term embodying rich religious-philosophical and mystical-cosmological meanings. Its interpretation can be explained through the following aspects:

(a) Etymology and general meaning.

The word mavjudot (Arabic: موجودات), the plural of mavjud, denotes all created things in existence – the universe, creatures, created entities. In Persian, it is synonymous with makhlūqāt, āfaridegān, kā’ināt. In this context, it refers to all living and non-living beings created by God.

(b) Meaning in the context of the text.

In Munis’s preface, mavjudot appears in the phrase jami‘ mavjudot (“all existents”), extending its semantic scope. Here it signifies the entire created universe in relation to the Necessary Being. According to the text, the whole of existence is not independent but is merely a single ray (lam‘a) of the divine sun of beneficence. This expresses one of the central principles of Islamic kalam and Sufi metaphysics.

(c) Philosophical-mystical interpretation.



In the works of Muslim philosophers and Sufis, *mavjudot* carries profound philosophical significance. Its classification varies. According to the Dehkhoda dictionary, existents are divided into:

- physical (perceived by the senses) and spiritual (perceived by the intellect);
- particular (mutable) and universal (constant);
- external (objective) and mental (subjective).

According to Dr. Sajjadi's Dictionary of Mystical Terms, this concept receives an even more precise mystical-Sufi interpretation.

From his perspective, *mavjudot* (existents) may be classified in relation to different realms of existence. Thinkers such as Azizuddin Nasafi divide existence into three principal realms, and the expression *jami' mavjudot* ("all existents") encompasses all three:

1. The Realm of Jabarut (World of Divine Might):

The realm of divine power and attributes. It represents the highest and purest spiritual level of existence.

2. The Realm of Malakut (World of Spirits):

The world of souls, angels, and unseen forces. It is a subtle level of existence, devoid of materiality.

3. The Realm of Mulk (Material World):

The physical, tangible world we inhabit. This is the level of existence perceived through the senses.

Thus, Munis Khorezmi's expression "*jami' mavjudot*" includes not only the visible material world (*'Ālam-i Mulk*) but also the worlds of *Malakut* and *Jabarut*, embracing the fullness of existence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of the lexeme *mavjudot* demonstrates that it is a universal concept encompassing not only the visible material world (*'Ālam-i Mulk*), but also the realm of spirits and angels (*'Ālam-i Malakut*), as well as the realm of divine attributes (*'Ālam-i Jabarut*).

Thus, in his preface, Munis Khorezmi synthesizes the intellectual achievements of his era, praising God's power and creativity through both scholarly structure and mystical reflection. This provides full grounds to evaluate the preface to *Ravzatu-s-safo* in Munis's interpretation as a unique monument of the 19th-century Khorezm literary and scholarly tradition.

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