



MAYDONI'S ENDURING INFLUENCE IN SCIENCE AND SPIRITUAL THOUGHT

F. R. Yakubova

Oriental Non-State University, Department "Oriental Languages"

Head teacher

yakubovafiruza@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The renowned linguist Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani is the author of numerous works on Arabic grammar, jurisprudence, and literature. This article provides information about some of the scholar's works. It discusses his contributions to linguistics, including Majma' al-Amthal, Al-Sāmī fī al-Asāmī, Kitāb al-Hādī wa al-Shādī, Baḥth 'an Binā' al-Jam' wa al-Ḥurūf, Risā'il Naḥwiyya Ṣaghīra, and Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Şarf.

The study of Arabic morphology (*'ilm al-sarf*) has been extensively explored by scholars across different eras. Among these distinguished figures are Sibawayh (760–796), Abu 'Uthman al-Mazini (d. 249/863), Abu al-'Abbas Muhammad ibn Yazid al-Mubarrad (825–899), Ibn al-Sarraj (316/929), Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Sa'id al-Mu'addib, Abu 'Ali al-Farisi (900–987), Abu al-Fath 'Uthman ibn Jinni (941–1002), Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani (d. 518/1124), and Mahmud al-Zamakhshari (d. 538/1143). These scholars made significant contributions to the field of Arabic morphology and authored influential works that have left an indelible mark on the discipline.

Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani, renowned for his work *Majma' al-Amthal* ("Collection of Proverbs"), is among these notable figures. A contemporary of Mahmud al-Zamakhshari, Maydani passed away in 1124 in the city of Nishapur. Revered with titles such as "The Imam of Imams" and "The Heart of the Most Virtuous Scholars," he was a prolific author whose works spanned Arabic grammar, jurisprudence (*fiqh*), and literature.

The eminent German scholar Carl Brockelmann, in his *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur* (*Tārīkh al-Adab al-'Arabī*), attributes nine works to Maydani¹:

1. مجمع الامثال - *Majma' al-Amthal*
2. السامى فى الاسامى - *Al-Sāmī fī al-Asāmī*
3. كتاب الهادى للشادى - *Kitāb al-Hādī li al-Shādī*
4. بحث عن بناء الجمع و الحروف - *Baḥth 'an Binā' al-Jam' wa al-Ḥurūf*
5. رسائل نحوية صغيرة - *Risā'il Naḥwiyya Ṣaghīra*
6. نزهة الطرف فى علم الصرف - *Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Şarf*
7. منية الراضى برسائل القاضى - *Muniyat al-Rāḍī bi-Risā'il al-Qāḍī*

ص 73م 1975. سماخلا ع زجلا. رصمب فراعملا راد. يبرعلا بدلأا خيرات. لراك ناملكورب¹



8. قيد الاوابد من الفوائد - Qayd al-Awābid min al-Fawā'id

9. تفصيل النشاطين - Tafsīl al-Nash'atayn

Among these, the works specifically focused on Arabic linguistics include *Majma' al-Amthal*, *Al-Sāmī fī al-Asāmī*, *Kitāb al-Hādī wa al-Shādī*, *Baḥth 'an Binā' al-Jam' wa al-Ḥurūf*, *Risā'il Naḥwiyya Ṣaghīra*, and *Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Ṣarf*.

Additional works, such as *Kitāb al-Naḥw al-Maydanī*, *Sharḥ al-Mufaḍḍaliyyāt*, and *Kitāb al-Namūdhaj*, have also been attributed to him in some sources. However, Ibn Khallikan, in his *Wafayāt al-A'yan*, mentions only two of Maydani's works: *Kitāb al-Amthal* and *Al-Sāmī fī al-Asāmī*².

These varying accounts reflect differences in the preservation and interpretation of Maydani's legacy. Some sources identify his works by different titles, while others introduce previously unmentioned works. Through an analysis of these records, the significance of Maydani's contributions to Arabic literature, syntax, and morphology becomes evident.

Maydani's *Majma' al-Amthal*, widely known as *Jāmi' al-Amthal* or *Kitāb al-Amthal*, earned him lasting fame. This comprehensive collection includes nearly 5,000 Arabic proverbs and approximately 1,000 sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), his Companions, and various caliphs. This monumental work has been the subject of numerous commentaries and annotations by scholars such as Ibn Muhammad 'Alī al-Bukrjī al-Halī (d. 1169/1756), 'Abd al-Qadir Shams al-Din, and Ibrahim al-Ahdab. The scholar Qasim al-Karmani also reorganized and republished the work in Tehran between 1290 and 1293 AH. Manuscripts and lithographic copies of this work are preserved in libraries and collections worldwide, including Berlin, Aya Sophia, the British Museum, Paris, Tehran, and Cairo.

Another significant contribution by Maydani is his work on Arabic morphology, *Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Ṣarf* ("A Journey into the Science of Morphology"). This text is of great value to the study of Arabic linguistics, particularly morphology. Unlike many linguistic works of its time, which attempted to cover morphology, syntax, and phonetics simultaneously, this treatise focuses exclusively on the morphological aspects of the Arabic language. This specialized approach makes it a rare and highly significant resource for the field³.

Structure and Analysis of Maydani's Work "Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Ṣarf"

The work *Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Ṣarf* comprises 10 chapters, divided into 2 main sections and 13 sub-chapters. It covers various grammatical categories in Arabic, including the formation of nouns, verbs, verbal nouns (*maṣādir*), participles, rules concerning the glottal stop (*hamza*), the imperative mood, and the paradigms of verbs. Particular emphasis is placed on verbs and their conjugation patterns. Each chapter is presented within its respective section, providing detailed explanations.

The text offers an in-depth discussion on the transformations that occur during the conjugation of weak verbs and addresses issues of uniformity in verb conjugation. Each grammatical category is supported by concise explanations, clear rules, and illustrative examples to enhance understanding.

Manuscript and Print History. Manuscripts of *Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Ṣarf* are preserved in several renowned institutions worldwide, including:

² www.Maktabat-al-maorif-al-islamiyya/cjntents/exit.htm

³ Гиргас В. Очерк грамматической системы арабов. СПб., 1873. - С.16



Spain (Manuscript No. 196); British Museum (Manuscript No. 5964, third volume of fifty); Cairo (Manuscript No. m 12/B 4); A lithographed version published in Istanbul in 1299 AH (1881 CE), facilitated by Yahya al-Nihani.

Additionally, a lithographed copy of the work is stored at the Abu Rayhan Beruni Institute of Oriental Studies in Tashkent under Inventory No. 6913.

The Nuzhat al-Ṭarf was the first work in a compilation published by Al-Jawā'ib Press in Constantinople in 1299 AH (1881 CE). This compilation includes three works:

1. Nuzhat al-Ṭarf fī 'Ilm al-Ṣarf by Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani, focusing on Arabic morphology.
2. Al-'Unmūdhaj fī al-Naḥw ("A Model in Syntax") by Mahmud ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhshari.
3. Al-'I'rāb fī al-Qawā'id al-'I'rāb ("Parsing Rules in Syntax") by Jamal al-Din Abu Muhammad 'Abdullah ibn Yusuf Ibn Hisham, a preeminent grammarian of later generations.

This scholarly collection remains an underexplored area in linguistic studies, despite its potential as a foundational source for understanding Maydani's contributions to Arabic grammar. The Nuzhat al-Ṭarf stands as a testament to Maydani's mastery in the field and awaits further academic investigation.

Another of Maydani's significant works in Arabic grammar is Kitāb al-Hādī wa al-Shādī, a treatise written in Persian. This work reflects Maydani's proficiency in both Arabic and Persian, showcasing his ability to compare grammatical categories across the two languages. It is believed to have been composed after his work Al-Sāmī. Manuscripts of Kitāb al-Hādī wa al-Shādī are housed in: Al-Hindi Press (Manuscript No. 1027); Aya Sophia (Manuscript No. 4441); Paris manuscript No. 6066).

Maydani's Al-Sāmī fī al-Asāmī is another testament to his expertise in both Arabic and Persian. This annotated lexicon, remarkable for its elegance and originality, is organized into five chapters. Each chapter presents a set of Arabic nouns, with their Persian equivalents provided as annotations. These examples complement one another, highlighting the linguistic capabilities and nuances of both languages⁴.

Dr. Musa Hindawi, a scholar in the Oriental Languages Department at the Egyptian Academy, has worked extensively on this text, offering detailed commentary on each Arabic noun and its Persian equivalent. Manuscripts of this work are preserved in: Berlin (Manuscript No. 7040), British Museum (Manuscript No. 755), Aya Sophia (Manuscripts Nos. 4670–4671), Alexandria (Manuscript No. 13); Paris (Manuscripts Nos. 3974–3975); Cambridge (Manuscript No. 750); A modern edition, translated by Muhammad Musa Hindawi, was published in 1998⁵.

Maydani's son, Abu Sa'id ibn Ahmad, followed in his father's footsteps by composing Kitāb fī al-Asāmī, inspired by his father's Al-Sāmī fī al-Asāmī.

In 2020, at the Institute of Philosophy, Political Science, and Law of the Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Tajikistan, the dictionary "As-Sami fi-l-Asami" by Abulfazl Maydani was published in Dushanbe, edited by Ahmad Hojizoda Madrushkat.

ص 75 م 1975. سماخلا عزجلا. رصمب فراعمال راد. بپرعلا بدلا خيرات. لراك ناملكورب⁴

⁵ www.Maktabat al-maorif al-islamiyya/cjntents/exit htm



In conclusion, Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani's enduring contributions to Arabic grammar, literature, and jurisprudence are evident in his extensive body of work. His scholarly achievements continue to influence linguistic studies and offer valuable insights for researchers today.

The contributions of Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Maydani to Arabic grammar, jurisprudence, and literature are profound. Each of his works merits dedicated scholarly attention and serves as a significant object of study, demonstrating his status as one of the preeminent linguists of his time.

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