



جامعة الموصل

كلية الآداب

قسم اللغة العربية

العتبات النصية في منجز أبي العلاء المعري (ت ٤٤٩ هـ)

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رسالة ماجستير

في الأدب العربي

بإشراف

الأستاذ الدكتور

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٢٠٢٥ م

١٤٤٧ هـ

Abstract

In recent decades, literary and critical studies have witnessed a significant shift in their approach to texts. Instead of concentrating solely on the internal structure of the text, increasing attention has been directed toward the textual and contextual elements that surround it—commonly referred to in contemporary theory as paratexts. This concept has gained prominence within structuralist and post-structuralist criticism, particularly in reception theory and discourse analysis, where it plays a crucial role in guiding the reader and shaping meaning from the very first encounter with the text.

Although this concept originated within the framework of Western literary theory, paratexts are not unfamiliar to the Arabic literary tradition. Classical Arab writers frequently prefaced their works with striking titles, philosophical prefaces, or interpretive conclusions—elements that can now be identified as paratextual. However, traditional Arabic criticism has generally overlooked these components, focusing primarily on internal textual analysis.

This study aims to reassess the significance of paratexts through the works of Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī (363–449 AH), one of the most complex and influential figures in Arabic literature, renowned for his use of symbolism, irony, and dense expression. Al-Ma‘arrī crafted his titles and introductions with deliberate intent, embedding philosophical and interpretive dimensions that reflect his distinctive intellectual vision.

This study consists of two chapters, each comprising three sections, organized as follows:

- Chapter One: Paratexts in the poetic works of Abū al-‘Alā’ al-Ma‘arrī, focusing on titles and introductions in his major poetry collections, such as Saqṭ al-Zand, al-Du‘ariyāt, and al-Luzūmiyyāt.
- Chapter Two: Paratexts in al-Ma‘arrī’s prose works, analyzing paratextual elements in texts such as Risālat al-Ghufrān, Risālat al-Ṣāhil wa-l-Shāḥij, and al-Fuṣūl wa-l-Ghāyāt..

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**Paratexts in the Works of Abu al – Ala
al-Maarri (d . 449 AH)**

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A Master's Thesis
in Arabic Literature

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