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# Title of research article



Messaoud Boudoukha's Intellectual Engagement with Modern Western Stylistics and the Reinterpretation of the Classical Theory of Nazm: Towards a Comparative Rhetorical-Linguistic Discourse in Arab Scholarship

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	1

### **Abstract**

The interaction between modern Western stylistics and classical Arabic rhetorical theories has generated a significant intellectual debate among Arab scholars. At the forefront of this discourse stands Messaoud Boudoukha, whose works Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language and The Theory of Nazm: Its Foundations and Applications reflect a profound reception of both Western and Arab intellectual traditions. This study investigates the ways in which Boudoukha engages with Western stylistic methodologies while simultaneously re-evaluating the classical theory of nazm in the light of contemporary linguistic and critical perspectives.

The research employs descriptive, analytical, and comparative methods to explore two central questions: (1) How does Boudoukha position himself within the field of modern stylistics, particularly in relation to its terminological, methodological, and applicative frameworks? (2) What distinctive features characterize his reinterpretation of the theory of nazm and its integration into modern critical discourse?

Findings reveal that Boudoukha's reception is neither passive translation nor uncritical adoption. Rather, it represents a dialogic appropriation that situates Arab rhetoric within global stylistic debates. He foregrounds the historical continuity of Arabic rhetoric, emphasizing the anticipatory nature of nazm in relation to stylistics, while also highlighting points of convergence such as textual coherence, semantic organization, and pragmatic functionality. This approach underscores the ability of Arab scholars to contribute to global stylistics not as imitators but as participants in a shared intellectual space.

By positioning nazm as a dynamic interpretative framework, Boudoukha's work provides a model for renewing classical heritage in a way that resonates with contemporary linguistic criticism. This study therefore contributes to understanding how Arab scholarship negotiates between preservation of tradition and openness to modern theories, offering valuable insights for comparative rhetoric, stylistics, and cross-cultural literary criticism.



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#### Introduction:

The relationship between stylistics and rhetoric is among the most prominent topics addressed by modern Arab scholars. Since these researchers encountered the Western current represented by stylistics, they have sought to define it and translate the seminal works of its Western pioneers. They subsequently applied their methodologies to both classical and modern Arabic works. Some of them endeavoured to relate it to the Arab rhetorical and linguistic heritage, aiming to establish an Arab grounding for stylistics and to affirm that Arab rhetoricians had already engaged with many of its fields of inquiry, anticipating the formulation of numerous recently coined terms through a search for their objective equivalents.

Turning to the theory of *nazm*, modern Arab scholars have received it in varying ways: some have introduced it and traced its historicity in an effort at grounding; others have moved beyond definition and grounding towards application and practice; yet others have benefited from Western linguistic and theoretical research, seeking to establish comparisons between it and the theory of *nazm*.

In this study, we attempt to review both Western and Arab scholarly positions concerning the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric. We then provide a reading of two works by the Algerian scholar Messaoud Boudoukha: Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language and The Theory of Nazm: Its Foundations and Applications to examine the form of reception manifested in each.

# 1. Stylistics and Rhetoric: Inheritance or Rupture?

Stylistics intersects with several linguistic sciences and exceeds them to overlap with literary criticism. The relationship between modern stylistics and rhetoric is undeniable because it takes diverse forms that confirm multiple points of convergence between them. Nevertheless, the central problem here lies in this relationship: Is it one of inheritance, wherein modern stylistics is acknowledged as the heir to classical rhetoric, establishing itself as a substitute for the latter? Or is it instead a relationship of interconnection and intersection that preserves the particularities of each discipline, delineates their boundaries, negates the claim of inheritance, and rejects the idea that stylistics is a modernised rhetoric that has superseded its predecessor?

Those who examine the views of Western and modern Arab scholars on the relationship between modern stylistics and rhetoric encounter divergent and varied positions, which can be divided into two main categories: one that considers this relationship from the perspective of Western foundationalism concerning both parties, namely, modern Western stylistics and classical Western rhetoric, and the other that approaches it from the standpoint of the Arab grounding of modern stylistics, linking it to classical Arabic rhetoric. This study will attempt to present the views of some Western scholars on the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric, followed by the opinions of some Arab researchers who have engaged with modern Western stylistics and their positions regarding their relationship with both Western and classical Arabic rhetoric.

Heinrich F. Plett stresses, in the preface to his book *Rhetoric and Stylistics: Towards a Semiotic Model of Text Analysis*, the historicity of the overlap between rhetoric and stylistics and reveals the extent of this intersection by



highlighting its breadth and limitations. He writes, "Rhetoric and stylistics have long maintained close relations; stylistics does not simply contract or reduce rhetoric, nor does it cease to exist in successive generations. Instead, stylistics becomes a part of communicative rhetoric, sometimes separating from the model, and expanding to the point of almost representing rhetoric entirely, understood as a condensed rhetoric." According to Plett, the close relationship between the two disciplines is affirmed, indeed their interrelations, and it is historically grounded by an intellectual phase during which the two sciences were reduced to one, as stylistics encompassed the fields of rhetoric.

Pierre Guirraud does not limit himself to affirming, at various points in his book *La Stylistique*, the oscillation of the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric in terms of fragmentation and reduction; instead, he explicitly acknowledges the inheritance of rhetoric by stylistics and its revival as a substitute or the renewal of rhetoric in the form of a new science called stylistics. Relying on the views of his predecessors and emphasising the precedence of the term "stylistics," he states: "We may say that stylistics is modern rhetoric in a doubled form; it is the science of expression and a critique of individual styles [...] Novalis was the first to use this term, and for him stylistics was intertwined with rhetoric, and later Hilaire (1837) described it as a rhetorical science." Thus, Pierre Guirraud is an advocate of stylistic inheritance of rhetoric.

Guirraud traces the development of Western rhetoric and its historical transition, situating it in the classical era: "Rhetoric passed from ancient times to the Middle Ages, then crystallised in the classical era, forming a stylistics that is at once the science of expression and the science of literature."

He addresses the problematic distinction between stylistics and the science of style by linking them to rhetoric: "Rhetoric is the stylistics of the ancients; it is the science of style." From this conclusion, it becomes clear that stylistics not only inherits rhetoric but also overlaps with it in such a way that each substitutes for, signifies, and complements the other. Guirraud continues to affirm the integration between stylistics and rhetoric, drawing on the beginnings of stylistics' foundation after the student Charles Bally benefited from his teacher Saussure: "As for the stylistics of expression, as corrected by Bally, it emerged from ancient rhetoric but by new means." According to Guirraud, without rhetoric, stylistics would not exist.

In his book *Towards Linguistic Stylistic Theory*, Willy Sanders aligns his voice with those of his predecessors in affirming the hereditary relationship between stylistics and rhetoric. He traces the historicity of the term "style" from its early meaning as a mode of presentation, as understood in fifteenth-century German culture, to the nineteenth century, when the modern concept of stylistics emerged. He observes that until that time, the standards of rhetoric (*Rhetorik*) predominated and performed the same functions later assumed by stylists to such an extent that rhetoric could be considered the legitimate predecessor of normative stylistics, despite their differences in focus. While stylistics relies primarily on written language, rhetoric is rooted in spoken language.

Sanders titles one chapter of his aforementioned book *Rhetoric: The Predecessor of Stylistics*, highlighting the notions of inheritance, succession, and substitution embedded in this relationship. He follows this with the chapter *The Legacy of the Old Paradigm on the Concept of Style*, which begins by stating, "As long as stylistics, within the framework of rhetoric, included specific normative constraints regarding stylistic means and their usage, it was not problematic and only became so after rhetoric was chosen and elevated to the status of an independent science. Stylistics, as the most prominent heir to classical grammar and rhetoric in general, and to late poetics in particular, maintains a strong, doctrinal, and established relationship with poetic language among the great poets and writers."

Sanders cites Tzvetan Todorov in underlining the intertwined relationships among stylistics, rhetoric, linguistics, and poetics. Todorov maintains that the development of stylistics, influenced by this rhetorical and poetic legacy, accounts for the intermingling observed today between stylistics, linguistics, and poetics. This affirms the complex interrelationship between modern Western stylistics and its predecessor, classical Western rhetoric.

The preface of *Rhetorique Générale* affirms that the author Jacques Dubois and colleagues acknowledge the presence of obsolete methods in classical rhetoric. They do not consider these shortcomings sufficient grounds to abandon the art altogether, nor do they believe that the study of style can dispense with many of its concepts.



However, in their view, rhetoric requires reconsideration, not restoration, but reconstruction of new foundations so that it can be utilised effectively in stylistics (*Stylistique*). Implicit in their statement is a recognition of the independence of rhetoric from stylistics.

Their rejection of a hereditary relationship between stylistics and rhetoric is made clear when they state, "Some have regarded rhetoric as the stylistics of the ancients, but those committed to stylistics reject any comparison between themselves and rhetoricians. Their aim is not to teach the art of writing, as rhetoric does, nor do they consider rhetorical terminology appropriate for their purposes." This statement implicitly calls for a renewal of rhetoric, ushering in a new rhetoric that intersects with stylistics but without inheritance or fusion. The existence of stylistics does not necessitate the death of rhetoric in favour of substitution. This view outright denies any hereditary claim and instead establishes the principle of complementarity and overlap that preserves the independence of both disciplines. The result is the coexistence of an old rhetoric and a new rhetoric, renewed through a re-examination of its classical predecessor and supported by modern stylistics.

Turning to contemporary Arab scholars' positions on the relationship between rhetoric and stylistics, it becomes clear that most view the relationship through the lens of Arab grounding for modern stylistics, linking it to the classical Arabic rhetorical tradition. An example of this is Shukri Muhammad Iyad, who begins his introduction to An Introduction to Stylistics by emphasising the authenticity of modern Western stylistics within the rich heritage of classical Arabic rhetorical studies. He states, "The discourse on style is ancient, but the science of stylistics is very recent. However, by presenting this book, I do not intend to offer you newly imported merchandise, for stylistics has a venerable lineage with us, as its origins trace back to the sciences of rhetoric, and our Arabic culture prides itself on a rich heritage in rhetorical sciences." This scholar not only acknowledges the inheritance of modern Western stylistics from classical Western rhetoric but also affirms the originality of the modern Western stylistic approach rooted in the esteemed Arabic rhetorical tradition. The preface of Rhetorique Générale affirms that the author Jacques Dubois and colleagues acknowledge the presence of obsolete methods in classical rhetoric. They do not consider these shortcomings sufficient grounds to abandon the art altogether, nor do they believe that the study of style can dispense with many of its concepts. However, in their view, rhetoric requires reconsideration, not restoration, but reconstruction of new foundations so that it can be utilised effectively in stylistics (Stylistique). Implicit in their statement is a recognition of the independence of rhetoric from stylistics.

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foundations to be harnessed within stylistics (Stylistique). This view suggests the independence of rhetoric from stylistics.

Their position against a hereditary relationship between stylistics and rhetoric is explicit: "Some have viewed rhetoric as the ancient form of stylistics, but stylisticians reject comparisons with rhetoricians, as their goal is not to teach the art of writing like rhetoric, nor do they find rhetorical terminology suitable for their aims." This statement invites a renewal of rhetoric, leading to a new rhetoric intersecting with stylistics without inheritance or fusion. The existence of stylistics does not necessitate the death of rhetoric or its replacement. This view denies heredity, establishing instead principles of integration and overlap that preserve both sciences' independence, resulting in the existence of an old rhetoric and a new rhetoric, renewed through reappraisal of the classical and supported by modern stylistics.

With respect to contemporary Arab scholars' views on the relationship between rhetoric and stylistics, most consider it from the perspective of the Arab grounding of modern stylistics, linking it to classical Arabic rhetorical heritage. A case in point is Shukri Muhammad Iyad, who opens his *introduction to Stylistics* by affirming the authenticity of modern Western stylistics within the rich heritage of classical Arabic rhetorical studies: "Discourse on style is ancient, but the science of stylistics is very recent. However, in presenting this book, I do not offer new imported goods; stylistics has a long-standing lineage here, as its origins trace back to the sciences of rhetoric, and our Arabic culture boasts a rich heritage in rhetorical sciences." This researcher not only acknowledges the inheritance of modern Western stylistics from classical Western rhetoric but also affirms the authenticity of the modern Western stylistic enterprise rooted in the venerable Arabic rhetorical tradition.

The researcher continues to outline the main framework of his work, which undertakes the project of benefiting from the modern Western influx in renewing Arabic rhetoric while preserving its distinctive Arabic character. He states, "The work presented here does not stem from a desire for modernity or updating, nor from an attempt to entice people with a novel invention from Western culture. Rather, it seeks to establish a new science within our Arabic culture, drawing upon our linguistic and literary heritage, responding to the reality of development within this living tradition, and benefiting from Western studies to the extent that allows a historical vision of contemporary progress and a contemporary reading of history." This confirms the existence of two rhetorics in Arabic: one traditional, established by ancient scholars of rhetoric and language across different eras, and the other new, which the researcher aspires to revive and create, intersecting with modern Western stylistics and drawing from its wellspring.

The presence of these two rhetorics invites inquiry into their relationship. Does Shukri Iyad intend for the new rhetoric to replace and demolish its classical predecessor to erect a new edifice? He answers this question unequivocally: "The adversary this book seeks to overcome is not our great ancient rhetoric but the rhetorical and indeed linguistic chaos that has spread among us in recent years, especially among younger writers. These individuals seem intent on destroying all established rhetoric yet remain incapable of creating a new rhetoric in its stead. This book wants to convey to them that renewing artistic language is no trivial matter, and behind every good literary work lies immense effort in linguistic formulation." This effort does not renounce its authentic culture or its deep-rooted ideas in the past but simultaneously seeks contemporaneity.

Shukri Iyad devotes a chapter in the theoretical section of his book to exploring the relationship between stylistics (film al-usloob) and rhetoric, extensively surveying their points of similarity and difference. He identifies the similarities as residing primarily in stance, modes of expression, and objectives. The differences, however, are affirmed in terms of their historical origin, methods for studying linguistic phenomena, and scope of investigation, as the horizons of stylistics are broader than those of rhetoric. He noted, "Stylistics studies all linguistic phenomena, from the lowest level the abstract sound to the highest, which is meaning. It studies these phenomena in states of simplicity and complexity [...] Stylistics does not limit itself to studying linguistic phenomena within a single era nor does it blend eras as rhetoric does; rather, it can trace the development of phenomena across periods." In his review of the similarities and differences between stylistics (the science of style) and rhetoric, the researcher integrates their Western origins with the distinctive features of Arabic rhetoric.



Salah Fadl's view in his book *Stylistics: Its origins and* procedures do not diverge significantly from those of his predecessor, particularly with respect to the challenge of accommodating Western stylistics without neglecting serious traditional research. He narrows the relationship between modern Western stylistics and its antecedent, classical Western rhetoric, emphasising the latter's importance over the former. He observes that when modern stylistics was established, it effectively replaced classical rhetoric during that phase, explaining: "When stylistics matured, it became the new rhetoric with its dual role as the science of expression and the critique of individual styles." He then acknowledges that a new Western rhetoric has emerged, seeking to establish its own identity and distinctiveness. Some modern Western scholars contend that contemporary rhetoric is experiencing a genuine revival. Recent calls have been made to revive textual rhetoric, leading to the formation of a Rhetoric and Stylistics Association within the International Association for Applied Linguistics. Moreover, the International Society for the History of Rhetoric was founded and began publishing its periodical in 1978, whereas the Rhetoric Society of America has issued its journal since 1976. Numerous seminars and conferences have been regularly held in recent years to discuss issues related to modern rhetoric and stylistics. This confirms two points: first, stylistics progress alongside rhetoric, embodying their interconnection, overlap, and perhaps complementarity; second, modern or new rhetoric asserts its separation from stylistics and denies any hereditary relationship between them.

Adnan bin Zreil dedicates a chapter in his book *Text and Stylistics Between Theory and Practice* titled *Between Rhetoric and Stylistics*, in which he shares the views of his contemporaries and predecessors, affirming the interrelation and overlap between stylistics and rhetoric. He states, "Today, scholars of rhetoric and stylistics acknowledge a shared zone between 'rhetoric' and 'stylistics,' which they study and benefit from in the manner of text analysts, especially regarding what is called the 'stylistic bundle,' that is, the indicators within the text that are significant or meaningful: these are the indicators in which rhetoric, aesthetic sense, and aesthetics intersect." He explains that these significant indicators refer to the deviations contained within the literary texture of the text, which cause rhetoric and stylistics to intermingle, an intermingling that preserves the particularity and independence of each discipline.

Bin Zreil emphasises the differentiation between rhetoric and stylistics and the preservation of their individual scopes of study, thus affirming their independence while maintaining their overlap and intersection. He writes, "Stylistics directly engage with literary utterances in their immediate sensuality, revealing their specificity and thus their uniqueness, whereas rhetoric, in its systematic nature, exposes the reality of this uniqueness by uncovering the deviations present in the writing. The views and theories that have established the connections between rhetoric and stylistics, despite the independence and flourishing of each in its specialised domain literature, literary criticism, and style, demonstrate that while the principle of deviation or shift brings rhetoric and stylistics together, it simultaneously denies any hereditary or substitutive relationship between them."

Abdelsalam Al-Masadi's position in his book *Stylistics and Style* is explicit and clear in rejecting any hereditary relationship between Western stylistics and Western rhetoric. After acknowledging the close relationship between stylistics and linguistics, both modern sciences, he asserts, "Our fundamental premise is that stylistics and linguistics can coexist, but stylistics and rhetoric, as intellectual constructs, represent two opposing and conflicting forces that cannot cooccur harmoniously within a unified foundational thought. He not only rejects any inheritance relationship between them but also denies their coexistence within a unified intellectual framework that grounds both sciences. The discrepancies between them are numerous and substantial, separating them more than uniting them, in contrast to the overlap between stylistics and linguistics, where the latter encompasses the former."

The researcher justifies his rejection of a hereditary relationship between stylistics and rhetoric by responding to those who advocate such inheritance or substitution. He states, "The reason lies in the historicity of the stylistic phenomenon in the modern era. If we adopt the premises of researchers and theorists, we find that they assert that stylistics is born from rhetoric and is its heir, meaning that stylistics have emerged as a substitute for rhetoric. The foundational concept of a substitute, as we know, arises from an existing reality whereby the heir's presence negates what gave rise to it. Stylistics is both an extension of rhetoric and its negation simultaneously; it is at once the line of continuity and rupture." This view aligns with Al-Masadi's position regarding the existence of a new



rhetoric that has inherited the old, revitalising it as an intellectually independent discipline alongside stylistics, each maintaining its distinctive characteristics.

Referring to Youssef Abu Al-Adous's book Stylistics: Vision and Application, one finds a dedicated section on "Stylistics and Rhetoric" in the second theoretical chapter: "Stylistics: Its Definition, Origins, and Relation to Linguistics, Literary Criticism, and Rhetoric." Abu Al--Adous begins by acknowledging the competition between stylistics and rhetoric in the modern era, a rivalry that led some Western scholars to argue for stylistics' inheritance of rhetoric and its role as a substitute. However, Abu Al-'Adous, like Abdelsalam Al-Masadi, rejects this relationship, reasoning that one cannot "deny the truth of the growth and continual development of sciences, especially within the humanities. It is difficult to accept the idea that one science inherits another, given that such inheritance implies the eradication of the predecessor science as an independent discipline with its own particularity. The existence of postinheritance is limited to that shadowy form of existence without real being. There is a significant difference between saying that a science has witnessed significant progressive developments and saying that one science fully inherits another. The former refers to natural evolution and continuity, whereas the latter claims that the first science can no longer maintain the conditions for its survival." Abu Al-'Adous concludes that such inheritance would lead to the erasure of the predecessor and the birth of a new science, a conclusion he rejects. Instead, he affirms the existence of two distinct sciences in kind and nature, interrelated procedurally and purposely, one old but renewed in modernity, and the other emerging from the former's framework, thereby denying inheritance and substitution.

The review of contemporary Algerian researchers' views on the nature of the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric reveals their agreement with their fellow modern Arab scholars in affirming the connections, intersections, and overlaps between the two fields. At the same time, they attempt to link modern Western stylistics with classical Arabic rhetorical and linguistic research, thereby affirming the authenticity of stylistic studies within the classical Arabic linguistic, rhetorical, and critical tradition.

In his book *Introduction to Stylistics*, Rabih bin Khuwaiya explores the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric. At the outset, he acknowledges that "stylistics cannot be discussed as an independent science without being accompanied by discourse on its relationship with the science of rhetoric, which is considered among the auxiliary sciences to it, much like linguistics, which, although originally part of rhetoric, has developed over time into an independent science." He examines the points of shared subject matter and the scope between them. He observes that the stagnation and sterility of rhetoric during its decline prompted a revival under the name of stylistics. He rejects the idea of stylistics' inheritance of rhetoric and its role as a substitute, affirming instead the existence of two distinct sciences in kind and specificity.

Additionally, bin Khuwaiya extensively examines the presence of modern stylistic studies within classical Arabic rhetorical heritage, stating, "Our literary heritage was acquainted with the stylistic phenomenon and studied it within rhetorical studies, which were generally stylistic in nature. This was only possible because linguistic and linguistic-based studies preceded rhetorical studies of Arabic heritage. Thus, stylistic study converged with rhetoric in examining the secrets of linguistic and rhetorical miracles ('i'jaz), and classical rhetoric transformed into stylistic aims."

In bin Khuwaiya's position, there is a confirmation that denies the inheritance of modern Western stylistics from classical Western rhetoric while acknowledging their connection, which simultaneously indicates their divergence. Furthermore, he aligns with Arab voices that root stylistics in the classical Arabic rhetoric tradition.

Moving to Nour al-Din al-Sad in his book *Stylistics and Discourse Analysis*, he begins by distinguishing stylistics from rhetoric and other sciences, stating, "Discussing stylistics as a science with its own concepts and criteria for dealing with and analysing literary discourse necessarily differentiates it from some sciences that share the same subject, namely, literary discourse including rhetoric. However, this differentiation does not imply a complete separation between rhetoric and stylistics, as they intersect as much as they diverge." The researcher enumerates seventeen elements of differentiation that establish stylistics' distinctness from rhetoric. The number of differences



may prompt the question of whether these distinctions refer to the relationship between Western stylistics and Western rhetoric or to its relationship with Arabic rhetoric.

Nour al-Din al-Sad clarifies his stance on the nature of the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric, particularly in relation to Arabic rhetorical heritage, commenting on seventeen points of distinction: "This is in addition to other differences. Notably, the discussion of stylistics encompasses all its directions, and the discussion of rhetoric refers to this science in Arabic. The differences indicated in the table are fundamental between the two sciences; nevertheless, there are peripheral issues in which stylistics may overlap with rhetoric, especially when stylistics analyses rhetorical issues in literary discourse that constitute stylistic markers therein."

A key takeaway from Nour al-Din al-Sad's position on the relationship between stylistics and rhetoric is his recognition of two points: first, that his distinctions encompass both modern Western rhetoric and classical Arabic rhetoric; second, that the fundamental principle between them is difference, which is central, whereas their intersection is limited to secondary and incidental matters.

Next, the Algerian scholar Messaoud Boudoukha's book *Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language* will be read to ascertain his stance on the relationship of stylistics and to see how this work represents a form of contemporary algerian-Arab reception of modern Western stylistics.

## 2. Modern Western Styles: Defining Concepts and Foundations

The Algerian scholar Messaoud Boudoukha's book *Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language* embody a form of contemporary Algerian Maghrebi reception of modern Western stylistics. This reception has drawn the attention of Algerian researchers in particular, and Maghrebi scholars more broadly, comparable to their Eastern counterparts, who have engaged with its diverse directions with extensive research, exploration, and authorship. Their approaches vary, sometimes focusing on defining its concepts and highlighting its theoretical foundations and procedural bases, while at other times applying its procedural levels to both classical and modern poetic and prose corpora. Some also engage in translation, Arabisation, compiling specialised dictionaries for stylistic studies, and tracing the presence of stylistic terminology within the Arabic corpus. This activity may even extend to critically appraising Western stylistic studies and proposing alternatives or establishing an authentic Arabic stylistic methodology that respects Arabic specificity.

Boudoukha introduces his book with a preface emphasising the aesthetic nature of classical rhetoric and its continuation in a new guise, benefiting from modern critical studies. He noted "the methodological precision and thematic delineation found in modern critical studies, which have turned their attention to the richness of rhetoric's elements such as context,  $maq\bar{a}m$ , and the pragmatic aspects of discourse. Adding to this are other aspects originally encompassed by classical rhetoric related to discourse, such as mechanisms of influence, persuasion, and others." This focus on the aesthetic dimension of rhetoric is primarily justified by much of the book's content, which is linked to the aesthetic orientation of modern stylistics.

At first glance, this preface prompts the question of the relationship between the aesthetic character of classical rhetoric and the modern stylistics that are the book's subject. Intriguingly, the author does not explicitly or implicitly mention stylistics herein. This may seem peculiar, yet adopting the researcher's stance following Western scholars who view stylistics as the heir or substitute of rhetoric may partially explain this peculiarity by attempting to establish the connection between the preface and the ensuing material, namely, between classical rhetoric and modern stylistics, as will be shown in the study's first chapter.

The researcher begins the first chapter, titled "The Aesthetic Dimension of Modern Stylistic Studies," by addressing the aesthetic aspect in three concepts: stylistics, poetics, and literature. He attempts to delineate the boundaries of these concepts by focusing on their aesthetic facets while excluding the rational, persuasive, and normative descriptive dimensions. He affirms that "one of the most important terms introduced in the twentieth century as alternatives to classical rhetoric, and through which their proponents endeavoured to penetrate the depths of the text and encompass its artistic dimensions are the terms stylistics, poetics, and literary studies."



However, there is evident overgeneralisation and a lack of scientific substantiation in the researcher's assertion, as opinions vary regarding whether stylistics among the terms mentioned are indeed the heir to classical rhetoric and its extension, as previously discussed in this study.

The researcher cites views from Abdelsalam Al-Masadi, Abdulmutallib Muhammad, Ahmad Darwish, and Sa'd Abu Al-Ridha among Arab scholars, as well as Pierre Guirraud among foreigners, while tracing the evolution of stylistics starting from its founder, Charles Bally, who excluded any aesthetic or literary concern from the definition of stylistics. He briefly touches on the origin of stylistics and their relationship with classical rhetoric. However, the presentation appears concise and lacking in analysis and discussion of these opinions. The researcher did not sufficiently justify the aesthetic nature of stylistics that he aimed to affirm. Additionally, there is a disproportionate emphasis on Arab scholars who received stylistics rather than relying on the concept of stylistics from their Western founders.

He then moves on to define the concept of poetics and specify its terminological boundaries, considering poetics as a substitute for classical rhetoric, much like stylistics. He cites the opinion of Qasim Adnan Hussein, who elaborated on the role of poetics within stylistics, highlighting that poetics addresses the shortcomings that appeared in stylistics. Poetics does not limit itself to the manifest and apparent linguistic structure in the literary text but exceeds it to explore what is latent and implicit. Upon revisiting what Qasim Adnan wrote on this subject, Roman Jakobson affirmed the claim that poetics transcended the visible linguistic structure in his reference to the characteristics of poetics and its relationship to semiotics. The researcher then attempts to link poetics to classical rhetoric, focusing on aesthetic aspects, as the poetic function is often associated with the aesthetic function. He concludes that the term poetics has evolved from being restricted to the poetic genre to encompassing all literature.

The researcher defines the term "literariness," acknowledging the difficulty in precisely delimiting it and the vagueness involved in apprehending and defining literariness. He affirms that the three terms stylistics, poetics, and literariness share an aesthetic dimension. From what the author presents about these concepts, especially the third, it appears that the study could have focused solely on stylistics and poetics owing to their dominant presence in the book's title (*Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language and its Text*). At the same time, the term literariness is almost absent from the index of topics. Moreover, the researcher states in the conclusion of this section that "attempting to answer the questions raised within these concepts brought to light many important issues related to attempts at interpreting verbal art and delineating its components. Among the most significant of these are the concepts of style, poetry, and the elements of the aesthetic function," thereby establishing stylistics and poetics as the core of this study, fulfilling the thematic scope suggested by both the title and the chapter's contents.

In the second section, the researcher explores the concept of style and its aesthetic parameters through two prominent principles: the principle of specificity and the artistic-aesthetic principle. He then moves to the determinants of style, limiting them to choice, deviation, and addition. He subsequently addresses the concept of poetry, distinguishing it from prose, enumerating types of poems, and relying chiefly on John Cohen's *poetic theory*, which appears to be his primary translated source. The section concludes with a discussion of the poetic function based on Roman Jakobson's work, although the researcher does not engage directly with Jakobson's original or translated texts; instead, he presents his views filtered through the interpretations of scholars such as Abdelsalam Al-Masadi and Pierre Guiraud, among others. The researcher could have strengthened this section by consulting Jakobson's works directly, given their accessibility.

Messaoud Boudoukha titles his second chapter "Elements of the Aesthetic Function in Stylistics." He begins with the element of deviation, tracing the term's emergence in Western studies starting from Leo Spitzer and explaining how this concept became a theoretical pillar for several schools despite their methodological and foundational differences. He also highlights the challenge posed by its translation in Arabic studies and attempts to reveal the loci of beauty in deviation, which has captivated many researchers. He reviews various types of deviation according to Ivankos, Saporta, and John Cohen, culminating with Roman Jakobson's discussion of structural and



substitutive deviations. Furthermore, he acknowledges the role of the transformational generative school in consolidating the principle and concept of deviation.

In examining Rivière's connection between the measure of deviation and the concept of the model reader, the researcher ultimately acknowledges two truths related to the principle of deviation: first, deviation in its various forms is a phenomenon characteristic of most literary styles aimed at producing aesthetic impact, and its psychological effect on the recipient cannot be denied; second, one should not overstate the role of deviation, as it does not always create literature on its own, and the linguistic and extralinguistic context must always be taken into consideration. The researcher is quite correct in concluding that deviation is one of the most important elements of aesthetic appeal in literary texts, supported by other aesthetic components.

The term "parallelism" is identified by the researcher as among the essential factors of literariness for stylisticians. He credits Roman Jakobson with establishing this concept after analysing hundreds of poems across different languages. For Jakobson, parallelism implies the matching and equality of structures and meanings in lines of correspondence, extending beyond mere repetition to encompass opposition, contradiction, and contrast. This principle is particularly prominent in poetic texts because of its connection with rhythm and rhyme. The researcher concludes that parallelism "constitutes another pillar of aesthetic appeal for stylistic scholars; it is a consequence and a form of deviation." Its aesthetic significance is evident in poetic texts, where it may represent a boundary of the concept of poetry.

Messaoud Boudoukha closes his second and final chapter with a discussion of suggestions (*al-iyha*), which he regards as one of the most important components of artistic beauty in literary styles. Suggestion is inseparable from the two previously discussed elements: on the one hand, it is one of the main aims of deviation, as every deviation seeks to move from the level of referential language to the level of suggestion; on the other hand, various forms of correspondence contribute to producing suggestions. This element has connotations centred around the implicitness and indirectness extracted from the text's nuances and concealed shadows.

The researcher reviews the forms of suggestions, beginning with phonetic suggestions and then structural suggestions. He elaborates extensively on metaphor and the extent to which suggestion is realised through it. He cites François Moreau's statement in his book *Rhetoric*, which affirms that the aesthetic impact of the metaphor's deviant nature is linked to the degree of deviation it represents: the more divergent and separated its elements are, the more it arouses and astonishes the recipient. The researcher then addresses the issue of ambiguity, including the gaps and blanks within the text filled by the reader. Ambiguity is regarded as one of the most significant elements of suggestion. He concludes that "suggestion is among the most distinctive features of literary style and one of the foremost components of aesthetic appeal. While suggestions fundamentally serve semantic purposes, their forms and phenomena are manifold. It may be a phonetic suggestion, or a structural suggestion and what overlays it, such as figurative imagery, the metaphor being the most famous and abundant example. Ambiguity is among the most important manifestations of suggestion, primarily through the text's openness to diverse interpretations, varying connotations, and multiple meanings that require a cultured reader to interpret the text and investigate its suggestions.

In conclusion, the Algerian researcher Messaoud Boudoukha's book *Stylistics and the* characteristics of poetic language represent a form of contemporary Arab and specifically Algerian reception of modern Western stylistics. The researcher confines his study to defining this Western influx by reviewing concepts and tracing the aesthetic orientation of stylistics as expressed through the aesthetic elements that realise the aesthetic function. The effort expended by the researcher to achieve this goal is notable; however, the study lacks some references that would have enriched the research, enhancing its analytical depth and strengthening its argumentative validity.

## 3. The Theory of Nazm: Foundations and Practice

The second book by the Algerian scholar Messaoud Boudoukha, *The Theory of Nazm: Its Origins and Applications*, represents a form of reception of linguistic and rhetorical studies in Algeria regarding the theory of



nazm. This section presents a descriptive-analytical study of the book to examine how the author received the theory of nazm.

As the title indicates, Boudoukha addresses the theory of *nazm* by discussing its origins, roots, and emergence, followed by its applications. The choice of this dual-focus title is consistent with his previous works, which often encompass two different yet interrelated and integrated concepts. For instance, his books *Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language* and *Introduction to Arabic Rhetoric and Its Sciences* follow this pattern. The present book similarly blends foundational theory with practical application, as the title suggests.

In the preface, the author clarifies the purpose behind writing the book, stating: "These are studies explaining the theory of *nazm*, the principles of which were established and expounded by Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani," highlighting the importance of the theory of *nazm* as a focal point converging several sciences such as *i'jaz* (linguistic miracle), rhetoric, criticism, and the science of speech. Notably, the preface incorporates elements typical of academic research introductions, including underscoring the significance of the topic by emphasising the centrality of the theory of *nazm*, which he regards as a meeting point for many disciplines, such as *i'jaz* and rhetoric. He further remarks on its overall solidity and resilience when confronted with various currents derived from *i'jaz* studies.

Moreover, the preface lists the primary sources relied upon in the investigation, principally limiting them to Dalā'il al-i'jāz (The Proofs of the Miraculous Nature), expressly stating his keen interest in citing al-Jurjani's texts from this book, as it constitutes the primary source and foundation of the theory of nazm. However, the preface notably omits a crucial component of academic research introductions: the methodology adopted in the study. The importance of clearly outlining the research methodology in academic work cannot be overstated, as it is regarded as the art of properly organising a series of multiple ideas.

An examination of the book clearly reveals that Messaoud Boudoukha employs a historical method to trace the theory of *nazm* from its initial indications to its scientific establishment by al-Jurjani. Additionally, he relies on description, analysis, and the extraction of conclusions to elucidate the theory of *nazm* and apply it to selected examples.

Messaoud Boudoukha divided his book into three chapters: the first addresses the issue of the Quran's miraculous nature (*i'jaz*), tracing the intellectual origins of the theory of *nazm* prior to al-Jurjani and outlining the various stages it underwent before its clear conceptualisation by Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani. The second chapter focuses on the foundations and principles of the theory of *nazm*, as will be evident upon analysing the book's content. The final chapter applies the theory of *nazm* to selected examples drawn from al-Jurjani's explanations throughout his articulation of the theory.

Boudoukha begins his work with the subject of *ijaz* and the development of the concept of *nazm*. He emphasises that the unique style and powerful impact of the Quran prompted some scholars to seek the secret of its distinctiveness and miraculous nature, initially adopting the idea of *ṣarfah* (diversion) as the earliest explanation for the Quran's miraculousness. He writes, "At the earliest stages, the view of *ṣarfah* emerged." He concludes that proponents of *ṣarfah* argue that the Quran's miracle lies not in superior rhetoric, eloquence, or clarity but rather in diverting the will and determination of opponents from opposing it, despite the feasibility of such opposition. Some scholars, including al-Nazzam and his followers, contend that there is no difference between the Quran and eloquent, carefully crafted speech, arguing that Arabic contains compositions rivalling the style of the Quran.

However, Boudoukha criticises this view as neglecting the essential aspect of the uniqueness of the Quranic discourse, its aesthetic charm and the splendour of its expression, distinguishing it from other speech and all forms of rhetoric. Notably, Boudoukha relies solely on al-Khattabi's critique of *ṣarfah*, who opposed the doctrine, and refrains from delving into other proponents, such as al-Nazzam, al-Sharif al-Radi, al-Jahiz, and al-Rummani, who varied in their definitions and endorsements of it. This limited engagement likely reflects the strong opposition *ṣarfah* faced, as he expressly states: "This view did not gain acceptance among the majority of rhetoricians."



Boudoukha examines the theory of *nazm* prior to al-Jurjani by focusing on doctrinal disputes among scholars, highlighting the influence of theological background in shaping the concept of *nazm*. He states, "The idea of *nazm* required approximately four centuries to develop within the discourse of kalam (Islamic theology) and critical opinions, from al-Jahiz to Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani." He identifies the origin of the *nazm* concept within the Mu'tazilite school, noting that "some scholars argue that the idea of *nazm* first appeared among the Mu'tazilites, who opened the door to investigating the miraculous nature of the Quran." He then moves to discuss *Nazm* as treated by Al-Jahiz, whom he considers the first to introduce the term and establish its rhetorical foundations, thereby defining distinctive features of the Mu'tazilite approach to Quranic miraculousness. He further observes that the Mu'tazilites did not rigidly adhere to al-Jahiz's terminology and subsequently examines the contributions of al-Rummani, al-Khattabi, and al-Baqillani.

Readers of *the theory of Nazm:* Its origins and applications highlight the absence of a clear, singular definition of *nazm* despite tracing its development from al-Jahiz to al-Jurjani. When discussing *nazm* in the works of al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar and al-Jurjani, Boudoukha does not elaborate on the distinctive features separating their approaches as he does with al-Jahiz, al-Rummani, al-Khattabi, and al-Baqillani, limiting himself to a chapter entitled "*Nazm* Between Abd al-Jabbar and Abdul Qahir."

Boudoukha argues that the level of maturity reached by the theory of *nazm* under al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar rivals that achieved by al-Jurjani, asserting that "the idea of *nazm* attained with al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar a degree of maturity comparable to what was later realised by al-Jurjani." He acknowledges a strong convergence between the doctrinal views of al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar and al-Jurjani in matters of *nazm*, noting: "Indeed, upon close examination of some of al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar's texts, one observes a significant proximity between his approach and that of Abdul Qahir regarding *nazm*." He illustrates this similarity via the notion of eloquence (*fasaha*), which, according to al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar, does not appear at the level of individual words but through *idgham* (coordination in rhetoric). In contrast, al-Jurjani is embodied in *nazm* and commentaries.

After various opinions associated with a disagreement between al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar and al-Jurjani, Boudoukha concludes that the theory of *nazm* reached an advanced stage of development under al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar and was subsequently crystallised into a clear, well-defined theory by al-Jurjani. He reassures readers that *nazm* as a concept evolved steadily, reaching significant maturity with al-Qadi Abd al-Jabbar but attaining only a clearly articulated theoretical form in the hands of Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani.

In discussing the intellectual foundations of the theory of nazm, Messaoud Boudoukha begins with one of the most significant doctrinal disputes between the Mu'tazilites and the Ash'arites concerning the relationship between the word  $(lat\bar{z})$  and meaning  $(ma'n\bar{a})$ . He explains how Abdul Qahir al-Jurjani constructed his theory upon Ash'arite foundations, benefiting from the theological debates among different sects regarding the miraculous nature of the Quran.

Boudoukha summarises al-Jurjani's principles of the theory of *nazm* into three binary oppositions: (meaning/words), (structures/units), and (image of meaning/essence of meaning), emphasising that in each pair, the focus is on the first element, that is, meanings rather than words; structures rather than units; and the image of meaning rather than its essence.

Turning to the final chapter of his book, titled *Applications of the Theory of Nazm*, Boudoukha limits himself to explaining the examples originally presented by al-Jurjani in *Dalāʾil al-i'jāz*, including instances such as attribution and reporting, preposing and postposing, separation and conjunction, among others, contained in that work.

From this overview, it can be concluded that Messaoud Boudoukha has rooted the theory of *nazm* in its intellectual dimension by situating it within the theological milieu from which it arose, tracing its key stages prior to its crystallisation into a clear scientific theory by al-Jurjani. He elucidates the differences between the Mu'tazilite and Ash'arite views concerning the word-meaning relationship and the impact of this dispute on one of the principal foundations of the theory of *nazm*.



However, a significant shortcoming of the book is the absence of a clear definition of the theory of *nazm* linked to contemporary linguistic studies. Instead, the author confines himself to explaining the theory within its classical heritage sources. Thus, the work represents a second form of reception of the theory of *nazm*, characterised by its grounding of the theory and application to issues in Arabic grammar and rhetoric.

### Conclusion:

The study reaches the following conclusions:

Many Western and modern Arab researchers have sought to affirm the relationship between modern Western stylistics and classical Western rhetoric. In contrast, numerous modern Arab scholars have endeavoured to link modern Western stylistics with the classical Arabic rhetorical tradition.

Opinions among Western and Arab scholars vary regarding the nature of this relationship: some advocate inheritance and substitution, whereas others support overlap and intersection that preserve the distinctiveness of each discipline, resulting in modern Western stylistics accompanied by a new Western rhetoric that succeeds classical Western rhetoric.

Many Arab researchers have aimed to connect modern Western stylistics with their counterparts, classical Arabic rhetoric, rooting stylistic studies within ancient Arabic rhetorical and linguistic research and emphasising the deep heritage of the Arabic stylistic tradition and the knowledge of early Arabs.

Messaoud Boudoukha's book *Stylistics and the Characteristics of Poetic Language* exemplify a form of Algerian reception of modern Western stylistics, wherein the researcher confines himself to defining modern Western stylistics, affirming its inheritance of rhetoric by reviewing concepts and tracing the aesthetic orientation of stylistics as represented by the aesthetic elements fulfilling the aesthetic function.

Similarly, his book *The Theory of Nazm: Its origins and* applications represent a form of contemporary Algerian reception of the renewed classical theory of *nazm*, wherein the researcher blends the definition and historical grounding of the theory with its practical procedural applications in Arabic grammar and rhetoric.

## **Findings**

- Reception of Stylistics: Boudoukha integrates key principles of Western stylistics (such as focus on language, structure, and function) while adapting them to Arabic literary criticism.
- Renewal of Nazm: He reaffirms the classical concept of nazm as a precursor to modern stylistics, showing its relevance in analyzing coherence, textual order, and semantic connectivity.
- Comparative Contribution: His approach establishes a dialogue between Arab and Western intellectual traditions, contributing to the universality of stylistics as a discipline.
- Practical Application: Through critical readings of Arabic texts, he demonstrates that stylistics and nazm are complementary rather than conflicting methodologies.

#### **Ethical Considerations**

This study is based exclusively on published works and secondary sources. No human participants or confidential data were involved. The research was conducted in accordance with ethical standards for academic research, ensuring objectivity, transparency, and proper attribution of intellectual sources.



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#### Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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