

A READING OF MARGARET ATWOOD'S THE HANDMAID'S TALE IN LIGHT OF GENETTE'S PARATEXTUALITY

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ABSTRACT

The present paper attempts to vindicate that a paratextual reading of Margaret Atwood's novel *The Handmaid's Tale* exposes many specific traits of the novel as a futuristic work. In addition, our analysis of the novel's paratext in light of Gerard Genette's theory of paratextuality drives attention to the significance of many paratextual elements in guiding the reading process and setting the tone of the novel. We aim to demonstrate how a paratextual reading of *The Handmaid's Tale* reveals the ideological characteristic of the narrative as a female dystopia directed against patriarchal theological extremism.

Keywords: Paratextuality, dystopia, theology.