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"There is a Jāḥiẓ for Every Age": narrative construction and intertextuality in al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*[1]

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Introduction

In The *Maqāma* of al-Jāḥiẓ (al-*Maqāma al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya*) by Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī (d. 398/1008) the narrator, ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām, and his friends meet what appears to be an ordinary man at a banquet. The man turns out to be an authority on eloquence and rhetoric (*balāgha*), however, and with a masterful speech he convinces those attending the banquet, who support al-Jāḥiẓ (d. 255/869), that they are misled about the latter's rhetorical skill. As he wins a reward, he is recognized by Ibn Hishām to be none other than Abū 'l-Fatḥ al-Iskandarī, the hero of many of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt*.

One of the more perceptive interpretations of *al-Maqāma al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* views the text as an illustration of the differences between two theories of *balāgha*.[2] Regarding al-Iskandarī's definition as representative of al-Hamadhānī's own, Kilito compares al-Jāḥiẓ, the author, with al-Iskandarī, the character. While this interpretation may accurately register the changing conceptions of rhetoric in Arabic culture between al-Jāḥiẓ and al-Hamadhānī, it does not specifically comment on the literary aspects of this *maqāma*. Close reading of the text suggests that al-Hamadhānī's relationship to his predecessor is more complex and more playful than previously understood. It reveals an elaborate narrative scheme by means of which al-Hamadhānī simultaneously sets himself off from his character, al-Iskandarī, and his predecessor, al-Jāḥiẓ. Al-Jāḥiẓ is not 'discredited' on the basis of a sound theory of rhetoric but by means of an artful narrative that implicitly situates itself within al-Jāḥiẓ's legacy even as it explicitly denigrates it.

The carefully knit intertextual relationship between these two stances suggests that al-Hamadhānī is better versed (and immersed) in al-Jāḥiẓ's work than the open discourse of the *maqāma* would initially suggest. It demonstrates al-Hamadhānī's creative reworking of themes and characters invented by and associated with his celebrated predecessor. On a broader level, that *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* is devoted to the most prominent figure of *adab*—the master *adīb*, al-Jāḥiẓ—makes it particularly fitting for an inquiry into how the *maqāma* both breaks with *adab* conventions and works through them, ushering in the genesis of a genre.[3] My analysis of the interconnected levels of addressees and addressors in the *Maqāmāt* as a whole suggests that a distinction should be made between al-Hamadhānī as a speaker/writer who produces *maqālāt* (speeches or texts that may or may not be read in the presence of an audience) and al-Iskandarī, who, in the course of his adventures, may or may not resort to *maqālāt* (speeches, rhetorical tricks, poetic riddles).[4]

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After analysing the narrative construction of the story, the concept of *balāgha* advocated by al-Iskandarī is examined and compared to other relevant theories. Once the parodic nature of the text is established, the *maqāma* is reread through al-Jāḥiẓ's own work. The conclusions touch upon the broader context in which it is suggested that the *Maqāmāt al-Hamadhānī* should be interpreted.

Codes of Reading

Al-Maqāma al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya begins thus:

> ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām related to us and said: I and a few friends were excited at receiving an invitation to a banquet [*walīma*]. I accepted it in accordance with the well-known Tradition [*ḥadīth*] of the Apostle of God upon whom be the blessings of God and peace, "If I were asked to share the shin-bone of a sheep, I would not refuse, and were I presented with a leg of beef, I would accept it." [5]

Roland Barthes' terminology in *S/Z* suggests that there are five codes that "create a kind of network, a *topos* through which the entire text passes (or rather, in passing, becomes text)." [6] They are action (accepting the invitation, going to a feast); the hermeneutic code (accepting the invitation implies that there is a sequel, a story to tell); the symbolic code (invitation, acceptance); the semantic code (banquet); and the cultural reference (religious code, hospitality code, *ḥadīth*). A 'contract' of narration is laid out. Of the five codes used by Barthes' to 'read' Balzac's *Sarrazine*, the hermeneutic code is most relevant to my argument. It allows me to examine the construction of the narrative as it moves from the formulation of the enigmas to their resolution as the story unfolds. Barthes defines this code in the following way:

> Let us designate as *hermeneutic code* (HER) all the units whose function it is to articulate in various ways a question, its response, and the variety of chance events which can either formulate the question or delay its answer; or even, constitute an enigma and lead to its resolution.[7]

In the 'rewriting' of the story, special attention will be given to rhetorical strategies. The cultural code is evoked occasionally, but only as it pertains to rhetoric.

Since my argument requires showing the presence of al-Jāḥiẓ as text in *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya*, I add another paradigm of reading that I call the al-Jāḥiẓ code.[8] This denotes instances that refer the reader, explicitly or implicitly, to al-Jāḥiẓ. This is of course a flexible paradigm that depends on the reader's knowledge of al-Jāḥiẓ.[9]

From Food to Rhetoric: transgressions of *adab*

After 'launching' the story by introducing the place and occasion of the event, ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām, the narrator, describes the beauty and charm of the house, the hosts and their guests, and the food and drinks. He then adds: "Now with us at the feast was a man," thus focusing the reader's attention on one particular person and arousing our curiosity about his identity. Further description concerning this person's odd behavior at the table increases our interest.

The man's hand wanders "over the table playing the role of an ambassador between the viands of various hues, seizing the choicest of the cakes and plucking out the centers of the dishes pasturing on his neighbour's territory, traversing the bowls as the castle traverses the chessboard." [10] He transgresses the code of 'table manners', or *adab*

al-mā'ida, and even disobeys one of the Prophets *ḥadīth*s: "Eat from what is near thee!" This violation of *adab* in the widest sense of the term (proper manners on such a basic level as communal eating as an invited guest) presages other transgressions as the narrative progresses.

Amidst the prolix talk expected on such occasions the man "was silent and spoke not a word". But had he conformed to the conventions and engaged in conversation, he would not have attracted the narrator's attention, he would not be different, worthy of a narration. However, by remaining silent in such a context, the man violates *adab al-mujālasa* (the code of social intercourse). The hermeneutic enigma to be solved is who this silent, impolite person is.

ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām adds: "We were conversing the while, until we got to the subject of Jáḥiz and his oratory and a description of Muqaffaʿ and his eloquence." The cultural code is no longer food but literature, more specifically eloquence and oratory. A transition is made from *adab* as proper behavior to *adab* as literature. This raises for us other hermeneutic questions: how will the 'transgressor of *adab*' react in this arena? Will he transgress here too?

Discussion at the feast restricts the wide field of rhetoric to two figures, al-Jāḥiẓ and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. 139/757) and thus guides the response. But the man is presented as silent, the opposite of eloquent. He does not seem qualified to engage in a conversation about two of the most revered figures in the art of speaking in premodern Arabic culture. The man's response is, however, not long in coming: "Where are ye in the discussion which ye were engaged in?"

Silence turns out to be a 'snare', as Barthes would say. Yet, one wonders if this is not merely the curiosity of a pseudo-authority? For how can a man of such tactlessness in eating and good company engage in a critical discourse of high caliber? The enigma pushes the story forward.

"So we began to praise what we knew of Jáḥiz and his language, of the elegance of his style and quality of his rhetoric." The narrator's words betray a subtle flexibility. He says: "We began to praise what we knew of Jáḥiz..." They did not praise al-Jāḥiẓ, but what they 'knew' of him. The narrator implies that their knowledge may be incomplete, or flawed. The area of discussion is narrowed to one author only (al-Jāḥiẓ) and to one aspect of his work (style). It thus guides the response of the 'transgressor of *adab*' towards a 'manageable' field. There seems to be a hole in the defense of al-Jāḥiẓ, but this hole turns out to be fake, a trap. It allows room for retaliation only to keep it in check. Here is the attack: "O people! Every work hath its men, every situation its saying, every house its occupants, and every age its Jáḥiz." When challenged in the area of eloquence, his response was up to the test.

The man's speech, like conventional sermons or formal lectures (*khuṭba*), begins with a conventional address ("O People!") followed by four maxims presented as general universal truths.[11] The four statements emphasize relativity of truth and discourage absolute judgement. The man proceeds: "If ye were to examine Jáḥiz critically, your belief would be falsified." There is a promise to turn the conversation into a criticism of al-Jāḥiẓ through an argument against dogmatic belief in general. Truth is established through critical examination, the nemesis of (blind) belief. We now move away completely from a possible development of the narrative into a story about food, hunger, mendacity, or adventure. This last sentence sets the narrative firmly into 'the branch' of *adab* called criticism (*naqd*).[12] At this point the 'transgressor of *adab*' assumes the role of 'critic of rhetoric'. The enigma that arises here is who is this person who is capable of criticizing al-Jāḥiẓ in one of his fortes, rhetoric. He must be either a

false rhetorician, in which case al-Jāḥiẓ's position is reaffirmed, or an unknown authority. The hermeneutic codes are not fully revealed, so the narrative must proceed.

The man's claim against al-Jāḥiẓ does not go unchallenged. Here is the audience's reaction: "At this every one curled his lip in disapproval and turned up his nose in contempt." In Arabic the response is described in terms normally attributed to animals (*kashshara ʿan nābihi*, he snarled or bared his fangs). Al-Jāḥiẓ's supporters are cast in the bestial register. They are unthinking, uncritical, devoid of reason. This rhetorical move—in a discussion on eloquence, there is no room for snarling, anger or frowning—is particularly effective since al-Jāḥiẓ had built a reputation for argumentation and logical disputation.[13] The narrative threatens to take yet another turn away from a discussion of al-Jāḥiẓ's style and into a fight, the kind expected from angry uncritical supporters. An intervention is needed.

ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām saves the situation: "But I smiled encouragingly upon him in order that I might draw him out and said: 'Inform us and tell us more'." The narrator, who is a supporter of al-Jāḥiẓ, seems to be ready to give up his 'dogmatic' belief in this author's talent. His complicity with the 'transgressor of *adab*' (turned rhetorician) fosters the audience's faith in the latter. The narrator intervenes, we are told, for the sake of the conversation, but the formulation is ambiguous. It may be interpreted as a false interest in the discourse of the man, designed to allow him to speak so that he can be discredited, or it can be understood as a move designed to create the right setting to discredit al-Jāḥiẓ by an anonymous party guest. In both cases it functions as a distancing device that allows a distinction between the narrator's opinions and those of the main character.

The 'critic of rhetoric' says: "Verily Jáḥiz limps in one department of rhetoric (*balāgha*) and halts in the other." What are the two branches? The man continues: "The eloquent man (*balīgh*) is he whose poetry does not detract from his prose and whose prose is not ashamed of his verse." This definition of rhetoric is itself rhetorical. It disqualifies al-Jāḥiẓ from the outset since he did not write any poetry. The man's next question, "Do you know of a single fine poem by Jáḥiz"? becomes a rhetorical question. There is of course no verse to discuss so the man turns to al-Jāḥiẓ's prose. He says:

> It consists of far-fetched allusions (*baʿīd al-ishāra*), a paucity of metaphors (*qalīl al-istiʿāra*), and simple expressions (*qarīb al-ʿibāra*). He is tied down to the simple language he uses (*ʿuryān al-kalām*), and avoids and shirks difficult words.[14]

The man then follows with another rhetorical question: "Have you ever heard of a crafted expression or any unusual words of his?" The audience predictably responds in the negative.

We should keep in mind that the audience is not called upon to share the definition of rhetoric proposed to them. Rather, they are asked to confirm what they already know: al-Jāḥiẓ is not known for his poetry.[15] Likewise, the audience is not allowed to challenge the man's definition of good prose. Instead, they are asked to confirm what they have known all along: al-Jāḥiẓ argues against crafted language and unusual metaphors and does not favor preciosity and artifice (*ṣanʿa*) in style.[16] The proposed definition of prose disqualifies al-Jāḥiẓ on its own terms. Instead of criticizing his theory of rhetoric, it takes the opposite view and thus avoids it altogether.

The 'critic of rhetoric' then solicits a reward. The narrator gives him his mantle, and he delivers a short piece of poetry in praise of the narrator's generosity. More gifts follow

from the crowd, the newly converted, former Jāḥiẓites. Unlike the conventional reward 'contract' between poet and patron, the man is rewarded on his knowledge of rhetoric. More precisely, if we take criticism to mean satire (*hijā'*), he is rewarded for an attack on al-Jāḥiẓ. This practice was by no means rare in al-Hamadhānī's time.[17] What was unusual was that the most famous reward in the history of Arabic poetry—the mantle (*burda*) that the Prophet Muhammad gave to Ka'b Ibn Zuhayr for a *panegyric poem*, that came to be known as *qaṣīdat al-Burda*—is here bestowed on an anonymous person for a *'satire' in prose*. The choice of the mantle as gift is the last (in narrative sequence) and the most suggestive (as to the generic nature of the text) in the series of transgressions enumerated thus far. Because it highlights humor in the *maqāma* and elucidates its parodic nature, it helps determine the tone and type of the text. I will return to these two elements toward the conclusion of my argument. In the meantime, let us go back to the story.

The distribution of rewards is the successful resolution of the hero's quest. But the central enigma is still unresolved. Who is this man preaching an alternative notion of *balāgha*? It is as much a mystery to the reader as it is to 'Īsā Ibn Hishām. He says: "When we became mutually friendly, I enquired, 'Where is the orient of this full moon?' " He hopes that a clue to the man's place of origin may lead to his identity; but the man responds with a riddle in verse:

> Alexandria is my home,
> If but there my resting-place were fixed,
> But my night I pass in Nejd,
> In Ḥijaz my day.

Although the response is evasive, it reveals the man's name. Reference to Alexandria is a hint that he is Abū 'l-Fatḥ al-Iskandarī, the character that appears in more than two thirds of al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*. The enigma is solved. Al-Iskandarī removes his mask.[18]

On the surface, the story as a whole introduces the illusion that there is a convincing theory of eloquence (*balāgha*) capable of winning over even the most zealous of al-Jāḥiẓ's supporters. The foregoing analysis of the narrative construction of the *maqāma* reveals a different story. It shows that al-Jāḥiẓ is displaced from the sphere of serious debate on rhetoric—the kind undertaken in epistles or treatises—to a context where all seriousness is transgressed (rules of good behavior, patron/poet relationship, *majālis* or learned circles.) The displacement is accomplished by using two elements that need further elaboration: the concept of *balāgha* and the image of the *balīgh* in contemporaneous literature.

Balāgha and *Balīgh*

Li kulli maqām maqāl

Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī (d. 395/1005), a contemporary of al-Hamadhānī, writes: "*Balāgha* is an attribute of speech not of the speaker (...) To call the speaker *balīgh* is an extension (*tawassu'*). In reality, it is more accurate to say his speech is *balīgh*." [19] Since *balāgha* pertains to speech, focus should be on statement or discourse. As the word's etymology shows, *balāgha* pertains to meaning and expression (*ma'nā* and *lafẓ*) as they relate to each other. The verb *balāgha* means to reach an aim or a destination, whereas *ballagha* can be translated as to convey information or to communicate. Since the purpose of an utterance is to convey meaning, the expression used should serve this aim.

Al-ʿAskarī suggests that the best definition of *balāgha* is "every situation has its proper expression" (*li kulli maqām maqāl*).[20] This is to say that the determining factor is the *maqām* or situation. The term is, however, ambiguous. It involves the audience as well as the topic dealt with. *Maqām* refers to two distinct elements in the communicative act: content/message and receiver (it excludes the form of the message, referred to here as *maqāl*). In order to deserve the title of *balīgh*, the speaker's *maqāl* (utterance) must be in harmony with *maqām* (topic and/or audience).

One of the earliest references to this proverb turned theory of rhetoric is found in a book by al-Jāḥiẓ. He writes in *al-Bayān:*

> The best [definition of *balāgha*] that we have collected and written down is this: 'Speech may not deserve the title of *balāgha* until its meaning competes with its expression, and vice versa so that the expression should not reach your ear before its meaning reaches your heart. [21]

Harmony between *maqāl* and *maqām* must be perfect.[22] What distinguishes regular, everyday communication from *balāgha* is the kind of expressions, images and techniques used to draw the meaning nearer (*taqrīb al-maʿnā*). ʿAbd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī (d.471/1078) commented on al-Jāḥiẓ's statement with the following passage:

> What they meant [by it] is that the speaker should strive to organize words, polish them, and preserve them from what may hinder signification and prevent clarity. They did not mean that the best speech should be vulgar like the speech of children or the market place.[23]

Since *balāgha* is a quality of speech, as al-ʿAskarī argues, the epithet *balīgh* came to be said of the person whose language is 'good' (*ḥasan*) and whose meaning is clear. The way this theory functions in *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* will be addressed next.

Al-Iskandarī is acutely aware of his public; his *maqāl* is tailored to the level of those who listen to him. Al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* are in fact superb illustrations of the harmony between style and topic. Their language and style vary according to topic, from sensual language in *al-Khamriyya* (The *Maqāma* of Wine), to erudite style in *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* where al-Iskandarī uses the register of rhetoric, maxims, and literary criticism to persuade his audience that their opinion is groundless. In *al-Māristāniyya*, he makes use of the *kalām* register to address a famous *mutakallim*. *Maqām* and *maqāl* are in harmony.[24]

One way of looking at the much-researched origin of the term *maqāma* may lie in an investigation of this proverb. Besides being a theory of *balāgha* it may facilitate the understanding of *maqāma* as a mode of writing. Al-Hamadhānī used both terms, *maqām* and *maqāl*, in connection with his work at various occasions.

In *al-Asadiyya* (The *Maqāma* of The Lion) ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām embarks on a journey in search of al-Iskandarī motivated by what he has heard about "al-Iskandarī's *maqāmāt* and *maqālāt*." [25] This, however, is a rare instance where the word *maqāmāt* is used in connection with al-Iskandarī rather than with al-Hamadhānī, their author. Beyond the rhyme created by the words *maqāmāt* and *maqālāt* we can detect a more suggestive distinction between the two. *Maqāmāt* refers to al-Iskandarī's deeds, tricks and situations whereas *maqālāt* denotes his speeches, sayings and verbal performances.[26] In al-Hamadhānī's book there are instances where al-Iskandarī has a *maqām* without a significant *maqāl* as in *al-Asadiyya*; he may combine both as in *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya*; and he may have neither, as when he disappears altogether in *al-Baghdādiyya* (The *Maqāma* of Baghdād), *al-Bishriyya* (The *Maqāma* of Bishr), *al-Ghaylāniyya* (the *Maqāma* of Ghaylān), and *al-Ahwāziyya* (The *Maqāma* of Ahwāz). Predominant definitions of

maqāmāt as 'assemblies', or 'séances', gatherings or sessions, account for the setting and ignore the discourse.[27] The assumption is that al-Hamadhānī's texts are verbal performances before an audience.[28]

So far I have been working with *maqām* in the sense of topic or situation. The distinction between *maqām* and *maqāl* becomes more complicated when we examine the audiences. There are three audiences in *al-Jāḥiẓiyya*. ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām tells a story to an audience referred to as 'us' ("ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām told 'us"). Within this story there is a speaker and his audience. Al-Iskandarī tries to convince a group of al-Jāḥiẓ's apologetists that their belief in their hero is baseless. Their conviction is supposed to be transferred to ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām's mysterious audience designated as 'us'. This audience in turn transmits its belief to the reader/listener. ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām's listeners are twice removed from the 'real' story. The use of the first person plural means that no one person can claim origination. It also introduces the possibility that the account is verifiable since it suggests that there may have been more than one listener when ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām related the story. The presumed author is disseminated in the collective 'we'.[29] The chain of audiences in the narrative is not, however, as harmonious as we may think. The text is structured in such a way that the distinction between audiences serves specific rhetorical purposes. The way they relate and interact determines in part the kind of *balāgha* operating in *al-Jāḥiẓiyya*.

There are, therefore, two kinds of audiences, one is fixed while the other changes. In *al-Jāḥiẓiyya*, we see the interplay between what we may call 'internal audiences'. In each *maqāma*, al-Iskandarī's *lafẓ* (expression) changes to fit the topic and the particular audience (the *maqām*). A similar conclusion can be reached when we consider the audience of the work as a whole (the 'fixed' audience).[30] Al-Hamadhānī's targeted audience must have been made up of sophisticated intellectuals ("public raffiné et blasé," as Kilito suggests), an audience that "cherished the artistic, the esoteric, and the ethical."[31] Al-Hamadhānī would fit the canonical definition of *balāgha*. In *Maqāmāt*, "every situation has its proper saying".

In *al-Jāḥiẓiyya* there is, however, a puzzling tension between al-Iskandarī's professed belief in this definition of *balāgha* at the beginning of his address, and the (new) one he uses to discredit al-Jāḥiẓ. On the one hand, al-Iskandarī adopts the proverb "Every situation has its proper saying," on the other, he criticizes al-Jāḥiẓ's prose because its allusions are far-fetched (*baʿīd al-ishāra*), its metaphors are few (*qalīl al-istiʿāra*), and its expressions are simple (*qarīb al-ʿibāra*). He considers al-Jāḥiẓ's language bare (*ʿuryān al-kalām*). The tension between the two definitions makes us wonder if the criticism levelled against al-Jāḥiẓ is to be taken seriously.[32]

The balīgh *transgressed*

Al-Jāḥiẓ was also dismissed as a viable *balīgh* on the grounds that he did not write poetry. This 'shortcoming' did not escape al-Jāḥiẓ himself. In *al-Bayān wa-l-Tabyīn* he devoted a section to *balāgha* in poetry and prose. His conclusion is a quotation from Sahl Ibn Hārūn (d. 245/859): "*Balāgha* of speech and good poetry are rarely united in one person. It is even more difficult to excel in the *balāgha* of poetry and the *balāgha* of pen (prose)".[33] According to al-Jāḥiẓ poetry pertains mostly to natural talent (*ṭabʿ*). He writes: "Despite the *balāgha* of their pens and tongues, ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd and Ibn al-Muqaffaʿ (d. 139/757) were unable to compose any noteworthy poetry."[34] This factor does not make them lesser *bulaghāʾ* but shows that excellence in both modes is rare.[35]

Between al-Jāḥiẓ's time and al-Hamadhānī's era there seems to have occurred a shift in criteria. Kilito detects in it a change in the role played by the *balīgh*. He writes:

> We can say that starting with the fourth century [9th/10th century AD], the image of the ideal universal rhetorician began to take shape. He is capable not only of using all poetic meters, but also of excelling in all genres, and moving with equal ease in poetry and in prose.[36]

Kilito finds evidence of the shift in *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya*. He writes in "Le genre 'séance': une introduction": "In opposition to 'near' (*qarīb*) and bare (*ʿuryān*) discourse there is a poetic discourse of contradictory features, responsible for 'signalling' poetry and rhetoric..." [37] Literate audiences during al-Hamadhānī's time valued those who could excel in poetry and in prose. They admired what Kilito calls "le rhéteur total" (*al-balīgh al-kāmil*), a prominent example of which is, presumably, al-Hamadhānī.

Abū l-Fatḥ al-Iskandarī, usually referred to as hero or rogue in literature on *Maqāmāt*, takes the name of *balīgh* in Kilito's work (apparently inspired by Ibn Sharaf). He is placed alongside the author. Kilito writes: "Praise addressed to the *balīgh* aims indirectly at the author. The 'Séances' contain speeches and flattering comments on these speeches. This is a characteristic feature of the genre." [38] There are, however, as I hope to have demonstrated, two levels of rhetoric in *maqāma*: one pertains to al-Iskandarī's discourse (*maqāl*) whereas the other has to do with the narrative construction of the same *maqāl*. The protagonist's *maqāl* (speech/statement) is orchestrated in and defined by a particular *maqām*.[39]

In *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya*, the two levels are set *against* each other. Al-Iskandarī's speech is constantly undermined by the irony of the situation (*maqām*) as a whole. (The applause directed towards al-Iskandarī comes from a conventional audience that is itself subjected to irony.) The only character aware of the maneuver—because he is relating events he witnessed and obviously manipulated—is ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām. His praise of al-Iskandarī plays a narrative function, as I have shown above. By rewarding al-Iskandarī he feeds narration while deconstructing the illusion.[40] Al-Hamadhānī's creativity resides in the 'orchestration' of all these levels: ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām seduces al-Iskandarī, al-Iskandarī dupes Jaḥiẓites, ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām unmasks al-Iskandarī. The reader regains his confidence in al-Jāḥiẓ and acquires esteem for al-Hamadhānī at the same time.

Al-Iskandarī is no more a *balīgh* in *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* than elsewhere in al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*. Put to the test in *al-Dīnāriyya, (The Maqāma* of the Dīnar) he fails to defeat his opponent.[41] In *al-Asadiyya* (The *Maqāma* of the Lion), the long and dramatic search for al-Iskandarī ends in disappointment.[42] He turns out to be unworthy of the reputation that raised ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām's interest in him. Likewise, al-Iskandarī's eloquence is not always praised. In al-Ḥulwāniyya (The *Maqāma* of Ḥulwān), he is a verbose barber, and in *al-Qirdiyya* (The *Maqāma* of the Monkey), he plays the role of a ridiculous monkey trainer.

In *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* al-Iskandarī comes through as a shrewd manipulator of discourse but hardly worthy of serious praise. His transgression of codes of appropriate behavior in the feast shows a disrespect of the *maqām* (the situation/the company). His description of al-Jāḥiẓ's style is unnuanced. Al-Iskandarī condemns his predecessor's art, not on the grounds of the relationship between topic, audience and style, but for lack of craft (*ṣanʿa*) in language. Al-Jāḥiẓ's critic is a transgression of the canonical critic. He is impolite, anonymous, manipulative, a beggar. In this he joins a whole line of similar characters that appear throughout 'classical' Arabic literature, and most prominently in

al-Jāḥiẓ himself. In fact, as shown below, al-Iskandarī may owe his very existence to the writer he sets out to ridicule.

The al-Jāḥiẓ Code

So far I have looked at the presence of al-Jāḥiẓ in al-Hamadhānī's text on one level: al-Jāḥiẓ as a subject of the *maqāma* and of al-Iskandarī's speech. The angle of analysis has been al-Hamadhānī's text. Let us now take al-Jāḥiẓ as a point of departure, as a code of reading *al-Jāḥiẓiyya*.[43]

In *Kitāb al-Bukhalā'* (The Book of Misers) al-Jāḥiẓ emphasizes the contradiction between the *bakhīl*'s wit and eloquence and his avarice. He writes:

> Isn't he [the *bakhīl*] the one who displays ignorance and simple mindedness, fakes innocence and stupidity, and then argues for stinginess [*bukhl*] with sound meanings, good expressions, conciseness, accessible meanings (*taqrīb al-maʿnā*), easy utterance, and pertinence? All this is done in such a way that his meanings and speech expose his apparent ignorance and shortcomings. Why is it possible that his mind could perceive what is far and obscure, yet fail to recognize what is close and sublime?[44]

The prototype of the 'learned' *bakhīl* is perhaps Khālawayh al-Mukaddī.[45] Al-Jāḥiẓ says: "He was a *qāṣṣ* (story-teller), a *balīgh*, and a shrewd religious scholar. The two story-tellers, Abū Sulaymān al-Aʿwar and Abu Saʿīd al-Madā'inī, were his disciples." [46]

In a will to his son, Khālawayh explains his 'trade': "If I run out of money I will sit and tell stories or become a *mukaddī* and travel all over, as I used to. My beard is long and white, my voice is deep and fresh, my manner is pleasing, and people trust me." [47] Khālawayh's extensive travel and variety of ways to attract gifts are accompanied by a glossary of the tricks he devised, a few of which appear in al-Hamadhānī's collection.[48] Through Khālawayh a link between al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt* and al-Jāḥiẓ's *Bukhalā'* can be established on two levels, the character himself and his rhetorical procedures.

On the level of character, Khālawayh, the witty adventurer, who makes a living telling stories and juggling words, provides a model for al-Iskandarī's wit and eloquence. In fact the similarities between al-Hamadhānī's hero and Khālawayh are so striking that the question would arise whether al-Hamadhānī and al-Jāḥiẓ were relating stories attributed to the same historical figure if we did not know that Khālawayh is the fictional creation of al-Jāḥiẓ. *Al-Bukhalā'* is the only source where Khālawayh is to be found.[49] That al-Hamadhānī creates a character (al-Iskandarī) that evokes Khālawayh suggests that he must have been aware of the model.

Not only does al-Iskandarī seem patterned after Khālawayh, he shares a lot with other characters from al-Jāḥiẓ's book as well. He eats like Qāsim. Al-Jāḥiẓ writes: "Qāsim was a greedy and messy eater [a glutton] ... He was not content with the violation of conventions of eating in the company of Thumāma and used to bring along his son Ibrāhīm." [50] One instance of his transgression of 'the gastronomic code', or *sū' al-adab* in the words of al-Jāḥiẓ, brings to mind al-Iskandarī. Al-Jāḥiẓ writes:

> Qāsim took what was in front of him, then moved to the right and ate what was between him and Thumāma leaving only a thin slice in front of his host. He then turned to the left side and did the same. His son imitated him and competed with him.[51]

In the more concise and metaphorical *Maqāmāt*, al-Iskandarī pastures "on his neigh-

bour's territory".[52] Qāsim was also a man of learning who belongs with al-Jāḥiẓ's favorite butt for jokes, "the learned *bukhalā'* and the stingy men of learning".[53]

On the lexical level, al-Jāḥiẓ's work provides a reservoir of terms rich enough to cover al-Iskandarī's wide repertoire of manners and tricks. While Khālawayh's stories provide a glossary for the trickster, Qāsim's anecdotes and those of al-Ḥārithī list two dozen names for gluttony. Al-Jāḥiẓ offers a terminology to rewrite the *Maqāmāt*. In *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* we encounter al-Iskandarī at a *ma'dūba*, a word which, al-Jāḥiẓ, says, is "said of any food you are invited to".[54] But unlike the narrator and his friends, who were invited, al-Iskandarī is a *ṭufaylī*, a gate-crasher. More specifically, he is a *rāshin*, an "uninvited guest to food".[55] From the way he is eating, he is best described as a *lakkām:* "he who eats quickly one mouthful after the other"[56]. He was rewarded for his 'eloquent' rebuke of al-Jāḥiẓ and deserved to be called *mukaddī* (a beggar who uses eloquence, disguise, ruse).[57] In other *maqāma*s he resorts to tricks from Khālawayh's glossary. In *al-Makfūfiyya* (The *Maqāma* of the Blind) he fakes blindness (he is an *iṣṭil*); in al-Qazwīniyya (The *Maqāma* of Qazwīn), he requests that the narrator does not reveal his identity to the others and asks him for money (he is a *musta'riḍ*); in *al-Azarbayjāniyya* (The *Maqāma* of Azarbayjān) he asks for a contribution to travel (he is a *mazīdī*).[58]

The affinity between the two covers the conceptual level as well. Al-Iskandarī's definition of *balāgha* at the beginning of his address echoes the following passage from *al-Bukhalā'*, with a twist:

> We know that innovation out of its rightful place is different from creation. God, the high and the transcendent, created *a place for everything* and gave it a suitable position. He also created *men for every age* and *a saying for every situation (li-kulli maqām maqāl)*.[59]

Instead of "men for every age", al-Iskandarī says "a Jāḥiẓ for every age".[60] Al-Jāḥiẓ is recognized as the model, but he is confined to a particular time frame. His authority is affirmed, but room is made for other authorities. Al-Iskandarī seems to say: 'When it comes to *balāgha*, I am the al-Jāḥiẓ of this age.' [61]

Conclusions

Al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya

Instead of studying *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya* as an instance of rhetoric for reward (food, money, etc) or *kudya* (mendacity), as is prevalent in scholarship on the *maqāma*, I have shifted the focus to the rhetoric of food. The humor of the situation betrays the irony that links al-Iskandarī's discourse to the narrative. Al-Jāḥiẓ's supporters are represented in a way that makes al-Iskandarī 'preach to the converted'. This complicity between preacher and converts makes the whole critique of al-Jāḥiẓ look *staged*, orchestrated. The parodic nature of the reward at the end of the *maqāma* strengthens the argument for a more profound relationship between the writer and his predecessor. The 'al-Jāḥiẓ Code' demonstrates the extent of this relationship.

Maqāmāt al-Hamadhānī

I have attempted to make the study of *Maqāmāt al-Hamadhānī* more nuanced by introducing a number of distinctions.

(1) I distinguish between al-Iskandarī's *maqāma*s on the one hand, and those of ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām or other characters, on the other. This distinction makes the argument for a unified structure in the collection as a whole problematic.
(2) Within each text, I differentiate between the *balāgha* (rhetoric) of a *maqāma* as a whole and that of its hero. The character's language is set apart from the narrative and studied as one element among others. In *al-Jāḥiẓiyya*, al-Iskandarī's discourse is prepared by the narrative sequence but at the same time 'deconstructed' by it.
(3) A distinction is made between *maqām* and *maqāl*. It allows closer study of the place occupied by al-Iskandarī's discourse in the *maqāma*.

Al-Hamadhānī's work can be divided into three kinds of *maqāmāt*. These are the *maqāmāt* of al-Iskandarī, those of ʿĪsā Ibn Hishām, and those where the hero is a historical figure or a third character. Although all of them are situations, they do not all have a *maqāl* by the hero. Taking into account these distinctions turns attention to affinities and differences between individual texts. Rather than imposing an imaginary overarching structure on the work, this paper explores the process through which the generic features are formed. This move rejects the 'naïve' assumption that the hero represents the author. Al-Iskandarī is part of al-Hamadhānī's 'play' (in the sense of 'game' as well as 'stage production').[62] His rhetoric is to be taken rhetorically, teasingly. In *al-Jāḥiẓiyya*, al-Hamadhānī's *balāgha* (eloquence) lies in the playfulness of his narrative and the staged conversion of Jāḥiẓites, more than in any 'neat' definition of the term.

Genre, Mode, Adab

There is no record of al-Hamadhānī's sources, his *sariqāt* or borrowings. Since prose was still considered dispersed discourse (*manthūr*) that no one could claim as theirs, his connection with al-Jāḥiẓ was overlooked.[63] Al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*, being primarily written in prose did not attract the kind of intensive scrutiny reserved for poetry, and escaped the persistent source hunting that preoccupied Arab critics.[64] Al-Hamadhānī, who condemns plagiarism in poetry (in The *Maqāma* of Ghaylān), boasted of being the inventor of the *maqāma* and refrained from acknowledging al-Jāḥiẓ as a source.[65] For prose to be treated equally it had to appropriate some attributes of poetry like shorter sentences, rhyme, etc.[66] On the level of style, al-Hamadhānī's *maqāma*s are an early systematic attempt to narrow the gap between prose and poetry and to establish *sajʿ* (rhyming prose) as an appropriate style in fiction writing.[67]

In this paper I have attempted to show that in *al-Jāḥiẓiyya* one can sense two kinds of struggle. One is waged against the large body of humorous and satirical literature produced by al-Jāḥiẓ, the master of fictional narrative and transgressor of serious *adab*, in order to assert the *maqāma* as an independent mode of writing (genre). The other contends with a canonical theory of rhetoric advocated by al-Jāḥiẓ as well.[68] By making al-Iskandarī's critique of al-Jāḥiẓ ironic, al-Hamadhānī writes his predecessor *in* and places his own work within a particular branch of *adab* that revolved around its main figure, al-Jāḥiẓ.[69] At the same time, he endeavors to affirm the *maqāma* as an independent mode of writing (genre) by tightening and systemizing anecdotes.[70] The way al-Jāḥiẓ's glossary and character models are woven into the *Maqāmāt* shows al-Hamadhānī's ability to rework a tradition and emerge as a writer (and a would-be 'author-function') no less powerful than al-Jāḥiẓ himself.[71] By drawing on develop-

ments in prose and in theories of *balāgha*, al-Hamadhānī created texts where the wide repertoire of contemporaneous genres of writing and branches of knowledge converge. To establish the *maqāma*, he had to distance himself from al-Jāḥiẓ, who was considered the encyclopedia of Arabic literature and knowledge. Interpretations of the *maqāma* as the triumph of stylization and verbal embellishment over simple prose are unable to grasp the scope and depth of this relationship. They merely recycle some of al-Hamadhānī's contemporary critics and neglect elements of parody, irony, pastiche, and narrative creativity in the *Maqāmāt*.

The *Maqāmāt* are a bold attempt to usurp a whole 'horizon of expectations' (that of al-Jāḥiẓ) in the area of 'radical *adab*'. Al-Hamadhānī endeavored to create the conditions of his own reception. He neutralizes the ancestor (al-Jāḥiẓ) by assigning him a particular historical moment. His attempt to alter the field of reception to allow room for a whole genre of discourse, a mode of writing, the *maqāma*, stems from the awareness that the culture allows for late-comers to surpass earlier icons. Ibn Rashīq writes:

> If a follower takes up a theme and makes it better [than his predecessor] he becomes more worthy of it than the poet who created it. If he comes up with an equally good poem, he is credited with a good imitation. But if he falls short of the original, that is an indication of a lack of talent and ability.[72]

The foregoing reading of *al-Jāḥiẓiyya* hopes to offer a frame of interpretation that highlights the line of the development of Arabic fictional writing from text (*adab*) to genre (*maqāma*) at a fascinating moment: the genesis of a systematic convention of writing. The *Maqāmāt al-Hamadhānī* illustrate the formative process of a genre when the struggle to break away from tradition is at its crucial stage. The *maqāma* later became clearly recognizable and yet flexible enough to respond to the 'generic signals' and changes that have affected Arabic literature throughout the last 10 centuries.

Notes and References

1. A la mémoire de Najib al-Bartaji qui a choisi de partir sans bruit le 2 Août 1993, mais qui a refusé de 'passer sur la terre comme une ombre'.
2. In his groundbreaking work on the *Maqāmāt*, A. Kilito interprets *al-Jaḥiẓiyya* as evidence of the rise of a new breed of rhetoricians capable of excellence in both poetry and prose with heavy emphasis on craftsmanship. ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ Kilito (1976) Le genre 'séance': une introduction, *Studia Islamica*, 43, pp. 25–51. Also of relevance are Kilito (1985) *L'auteur et ses doubles* (Paris: Editions du Seuil); Kilito (1983) *Les Séances* (Paris: Sindbad); and Kilito (1987) *Al-Ghāʾib: Dirāsa fī maqāma li-l-Ḥarīrī* (Casablanca: Dār Ṭubqāl).
3. The term *adab* covers a wide spectrum of topics and has gone through significant changes. It means codes or conventions of appropriate behavior, but also refers to belles-lettres (writings that are not of a technical, legal, scientific, or religious as nature) as well as anecdotal and fictional narratives. Today it simply means literature although it never lost the connection with good manners. For a recent comprehensive examination of *adab*, see Bonebakker, S. A. (1990) *Adab* and the concept of belles-lettres, in: *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: ʿAbbasid Belles-lettres*, ed. J. Ashtiany (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. 16–30. Stefan Leder and Hilary Kilpatrick offer a useful guide to students of *adab* in their article: Leder, S. & Kilpatrick, H. (1991) Classical Arabic prose literature: a researcher's sketch map, *Journal of Arabic Literature*, **XXIII**(1), 1–25.
4. *Maqāl* can be translated as utterance, saying, speech. I use it here to mean a verbal performance, *written or oral*, for an audience.
5. The *Maqāmāt of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī*, ed. and trans. W. J. Prendergast, (London: Curzon Press, 1915, 2nd Edn, 1973), pp. 70–1. All references to *Maqāmāt* are from this translation unless otherwise indicated. Other editions consulted are *Maqāmāt Badīʿ al-Zamān*

al-Hamadhānī, edited by Farūq Sa'd (Beirut: Dār al-Āfāq al-Jadīda, 1982) and Muḥyī al-Dīn 'Abd al-Ḥamīd (n.d.) *Sharḥ Maqāmāt Badī' al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyya). All translations from other Arabic sources are mine. The same *ḥadīth* is quoted in al-Jāḥiẓ, *al-Bukhalā'*, ed. Ṭaha al-Ḥājirī (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1981), p. 11.

6. Barthes, R. (1981) *S/Z*, trans. R. Miller (New York: The Noonday Press), p. 20.
7. Ibid., p. 17. Barthes' definitions of the other codes are: the semantic code or "the connotative signifiers referred to in the lexia"; the symbolic code or multivalent and reversible elements that "make depth and secrecy problematic"; and action or the sequences labelled under headings like "stroll, murder, rendezvous". Ibid. pp. 17–19.
8. Al-Jāḥiẓ is arguably the most versatile writer in the history of Arabic literature. His books range from satire to zoology. See Pellat, C. (1990) al-Jāḥiẓ, in: J. Ashtiany (Ed.) *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: 'Abbasid Belles-lettres*, pp. 78–95 for an overview of the author. For background, see Pellat, C. (1953) *Le milieu basrien et la formation de Ǧāḥiẓ* (Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient).
9. There is no separate code for intertextuality in Barthes' codes of reading. The function 'cultural codes' which appear to be the closest he gets to a 'traditional' view of intertextuality designates "references to a science or a body of knowledge": Barthes (1981), p. 20. It is restricted to recognizable texts often explicitly attributed to a particular author. 'Cultural codes' refer explicitly to quotations.
10. Al-Hamadhānī, *Maqāmāt*, 71.
11. The proverb "every situation has its saying" appears in *al-Bukhalā'*, p. 12. But there is a reference to it in al-Maydānī's *Majma' al-Amthāl* (Beirut, 1955), ii, 197, number 4485. It appears in a line attributed to Ibn al-A'rābī (d. 231/845–6). It is not clear, however, if Ibn al-A'rābī was the first to use the proverb since al-Maydānī's collection was written well after al-Jāḥiẓ who may have originated it. The saying 'every age has its Jāḥiẓ' has, since al-Hamadhānī, become proverbial.
12. *Naqd* becomes distinct from *adab* around the time when specialized manuals of *naqd*, like *Naqd al-shi'r* by Qudāma Ibn Ja'far (d. 337/948), for example, were produced. During al-Jāḥiẓ's time (3rd/9th century), however, the distinction was not yet made. Al-Jāḥiẓ's *al-Bayān wa-l-tabyīn*, ed. A. S. Hārūn (Cairo, 1950) is a work of *adab* and *naqd* at the same time. The practice of literary criticism has never really left *adab*. This paper is in part a study of a case where *naqd* is embedded in an *adab* work, more specifically, a fictional narrative.
13. 'Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjānī quotes al-Jāḥiẓ as saying: "The goals minds strive to reach and the struggle that wears them out are thinking, meditation, analogy, and deduction" ('Abd al-Qāhir al-Jurjanī (n.d.) *Asrār al-Balāgha*, ed. Muhammad Rashīd Riḍā (Beirut: Dār al-Ma'rifa), p. 126.
14. Al-Hamadhānī, *Maqāmāt*, 72. The translation fails to convey the man's attempt to use technical jargon in his criticism of al-Jāḥiẓ (I have supplied the original between parentheses). Al-Hamadhānī uses *ba'īd* and *qarīb*, far and near respectively, to describe figures of speech. He also uses *'uryān* or naked expression to mean poor, and later in the text, *maṣnū'* or crafted speech. Throughout the paper I have kept the Arabic words *balāgha* and *balīgh* in the English text because they have no single equivalent. *Balāgha* refers to rhetoric, eloquence, and oratory.
15. A rare reference to al-Jāḥiẓ's poetry is to be found in Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (1988) *Mu'jam al-Udabā'* (Beruit: Dār Iḥyā' al-Turāth al-'Arabī), pp. xvi, 80.
16. In *Maqāmāt* all opportunity to question the discourse or comment on it—a common practice in *majālis*—is suspended. There is no dialogue between the *rāwī* and his audience. The privilege of interrogator is exclusively turned over to the *rawī* himself. He can question the hero, challenge him, suppress his message, or press him on a detail. It is true that within the *maqāma* there is a lecture—a presentation of sorts—that often reproduces the *majlis* setting. But, the fact that the *rāwī* may be part of the action, or even the main character, in some instances, makes interpretations of *maqāma* as *majlis* or session problematic.
17. *Hijā'* used to be an integral part of the poet's skill. Rulers and critics tolerated and even rewarded *Hijā'* (See van Gelder, G. J. (1988) *The Bad and the Ugly* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), for an excellent account of the reception of invective poetry in Arab culture).
18. In *al-Fazāriyya*, al-Iskandarī says: "...before my name is a veil which the mentioning of no proper name can remove" (*Maqāmāt*, p. 68). The poetry in the text serves yet another function. It is consistent with the definition of the perfect *balīgh* since it demonstrates the man's skill in poetry after his presumed success in prose.
19. Abū Hilāl al-'Askarī (1971) *Kitāb al-Ṣinā'atayn*, eds Muḥammad al-Bijāwī & M. Abū 'l-Faḍl Ibrāhīm (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr al-'Arabī), p. 13.

20. Ibid., 33.
21. Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Bayān*, i, 115.
22. Al-Jāḥiẓ writes in *Kitāb al-Bukhalā'* (The Book of Misers): "If a man were to attribute a dull story to Abū 'l-Ḥārith Jummayn, Haytham Ibn Muṭahhar, Muzabbid, or Ibn Aḥmar, it would become exciting. And if he were to create a 'hot' anecdote and attribute it to Ṣāliḥ Ibn Ḥunayn, to Ibn al-Nawwā', or some despised character, it would turn dull or mild—mild is worse than dull" (*Bukhalā'*, 7).
23. Al-Jurjānī, *Asrar*, 123. Ibn Rashīq (1983) writes in *al-ʿUmda fī Ṣināʿat al-Shiʿr*, ed. M. M. Qamīḥa (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya), that Jaʿfar Ibn Yaḥyā defines *bayān* (al-ʿAskarī uses the word *balāgha* in the same quotation: *Kitāb*, 48) as follows: "Your expression should convey your meaning and inform about your intention. It should avoid confusion and should not resort to length. It is necessary that language should be free of pretence, artifice, and complication. Your speech must not require interpretation" (176).
24. This shows al-Hamadhānī's command of various discourses and allows al-Iskandarī to pass as authoritative in a particular field. While al-Hamadhānī's mastery is affirmed, the rule of the game—al-Iskandarī's capability to dupe his audience—is maintained.
25. Prendergast's translation reads: "There used to reach me of the *maqámát*—discourses and the like—and sayings of al-Iskanderi..." *Maqāmāt*, 14.
26. *Lisān al-ʿArab* defines *maqām* as the place where one stands, the assembly. See Manẓur, I. (n.d.) *Lisān al-ʿArab* (Beirut), pp. xvii, 497–507.
27. A. F. L. Beeston argues that *sajʿ* may be at the root of the term *maqāmāt*, which he translates as "standings" as opposed to sittings or *majālis*. He adds: "The point has been obscured by many European translators with their use of either the ambiguous term 'assemblies' for *maqāmāt*, or the outright mistranslation 'sessions, seances'." See (1990) al-Hamadhānī, al-Ḥarīrī and the *Maqāmāt* Genre, in: J. Ashtiany (Ed.) *The Cambridge History of Arabic Literature: ʿAbbasid Belles-lettres*, p. 127.
28. The suggestion that al-Hamadhānī delivered his *maqāmāt* 'impromptu' in *majālis* is hard to prove. In an epistle, he refers to composing *maqāmāt* and challenges his opponent al-Khwārazmī to do the same. See Monroe, J. (1983) *The Art of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī As Picaresque Narrative*, (Beirut: American University), p. 61. Al-Ḥusrī says that al-Hamadhānī imitated (*ʿāraḍa*) Ibn Durayd who composed 40 speeches. See *Zahr al-ādāb*, ed. Zākī Mubārak (Beirut: Dār al-Jalīl, 1972), p. 305. Both instances seem to point to written composition rather than oral *irtijāl*. Moreover, we know that al-Hamadhānī created his work over several years (see *EI2* 'al-Hamadhānī'). It took his most illustrious follower al-Ḥarīrī twenty years to write his volume of *maqāmāt*.
29. Kilito makes use of this feature to bring out affinities between *maqāma* and *Ḥadīth* (the prophet's life and sayings) and *Khabar* (biographical and historical anecdotes) (Le genre 'séance', pp. 37–40). He also notes the ambiguity of the word 'us' as it may refer to one or more people and suggests that the phrase "So and so told us" is "la marque infaillible du discours rapporté" (Ibid., 37).
30. Kilito's suggestion that the public square is one of two locations where *maqāmāt* were delivered (the other being the court) (Le genre 'séance', p. 42) confuses al-Iskandarī with al-Hamadhaīnī. It is hard to imagine al-Hamadhānī reading a text like *al-Ǧāḥiẓiyya*, for instance, in a public square unless he is completely oblivious to the requirements of his audience (*maqām*).
31. Kilito, Le genre, p. 48. Kilito suggests that *maqāma* is a meeting point between erudite and popular literature since the hero of *maqāmāt* is a *'balīgh'* and an 'amuseur public, un *maddâḥ*, un sermonnaire populaire (*qâṣṣ*)' (Ibid., 42).
32. Al-Iskandarī's definition of *balāgha* seems to be uninterested in meaning (*maʿnā*). It may be considered a theory of expression (*lafẓ*) rather than a theory of meaning. It should not be confused with al-Jurjānī's theory of *naẓm* which focuses on the construction of words. Here, organizing words is a function of the 'rules of grammar' on the one hand, and the structure of the psyche on the other. *Naẓm* privileges context—the relationship between words in a sentence, for instance. It is the organization of language into text. On this subject, see Abu Deeb, Kamal (1979) *al-Jurjānī's Theory of Poetic Imagery* (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd).
33. Al-Jāḥiẓ, *Bayān*, i, 243. Sahl Ibn Hārūn is a major authority in books of rhetoric and eloquence. He is also a notorious miser. The epistle that opens *Kitāb al-Bukhalā'* by al-Jāḥiẓ is attributed to Sahl Ibn Hārūn (9–16). *Balāgha* and mendacity are not al-Iskandarī's alone.
34. *Bayān*, i, 208.
35. Ibn Rashīq adopts a similar theory in favor of *ṭabʿ* (natural talent) but concludes: "The most eloquent mode is undoubtedly poetry" (*ʿUmda*, 20).

36. Kilito writes: "on peut dire qu'à partir du IVe siècle commence à se dessiner l'idéal rhéteur *total*, capable non seulement d'utiliser tout les mètres poétiques, mais aussi d'exceller dans tous les genres et de se mouvoir avec la même facilité dans la poésie et dans la prose" (Le genre 'séance', p. 30).
37. "Face au discours 'proche' (*qarīb*), 'nu' (*'uryân*), se dresse le discours poétique aux attributs opposés, chargé de "signaler" la poésie et la rhétorique..." (ibid., 47).
38. "Les éloges descernés au *balīgh* s'adressent indirectement à l'auteur: les séances contiennent des discours et des jugements (toujours élogieux) sur ces discours: c'est là une charactéristique du genre" (Le genre 'séance', p. 37).
39. According to Bakhtin, the novelistic discourse requires the analysis of the "orchestrating and distancing discourses" that "traditional stylistics", which relies "on the unity of language and on its unmediated equivalence of intentionality throughout", has been unable to provide. Such analysis must address words "*formally* belonging to authorial speech but clearly distanced from the mouth of the author by ironic, parodic, polemical or some other pre-existing 'qualified' intonation". Bakhtin, M. (1981) *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, trans. Michael Holquist & Caryl Emerson (Austin: University of Texas Press), pp. 415–16.
40. The literature on the *Maqāmāt* does not agree on 'Īsā Ibn Hishām's relationship to al-Iskandarī. Kilito says that the *rāwī* preserves the *balīgh*'s discourse, and acts as a disciple to the latter (Le genre 'séance', p. 37). 'Īsā Ibn Hishām, in a sense, affirms the *balīgh*. Monroe sees him as a victim of the *mukaddī*: "As readers, we are thus led by the author to realize what the narrator 'Īsā never fully grasps (...) Iskandarī is a teacher of false doctrines" (Monroe, *Art*, 31). Neither, however, comments on the playfulness that binds the two.
41. After hearing the two contestants delivering vicious satires of each other, 'Īsā Ibn Hishām declared them equally worthy of the prize (*Maqāmāt*, 164).
42. Ibid., 46.
43. Theories of intertextuality tend to ignore the writer or, as in Bloom, H. (1973) *The Anxiety of Influence* (London: Oxford University Press), focus on the later writer's struggle to overcome the legacy of earlier masters. What I examine in this paper, is not, however, the writer as a psyche, but as a master of language, a rhetorician, the one who writes himself *in* even as he writes himself *out*. In the sense that writing is seduction, intertextuality is the art of seducing the reader to perceive/receive the intertext in a particular way. It is the manipulation of another's discourse (manipulation as maneuvering and persuasion). In this definition I keep a useful bond between Barthes' "already read" and Bakhtin's examination of the ways authorial intention is orchestrated through the language of others.
44. *Bukhalā'*, 2. Malti-Douglas argues convincingly in her book (1985) *Structures of Avarice: The* Bukhalā' *in Medieval Arabic Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), that "the mere translation of the word *bukhl* by words like avarice or stinginess cannot possibly convey the entire spectrum of meanings of the Arabic term" (6).
45. Al-Jāḥiẓ says that another miser, al-Thawrī, is one of two people who had written treaties on *bukhl* (*Bukhalā'*, 106). The other is Sahl Ibn Hārūn who presumably wrote the epistle on *bukhl* that opens al-Jāḥiẓ's book.
46. *Bukhalā'*, p. 47.
47. *Bukhalā'*, p. 49.
48. See *Bukhalā'*, pp. 51–3 for glossary.
49. Although Yāqūt (d. 626/1229) includes an entry for Khālawayh in his biographical dictionary, he relies exclusively on al-Jāḥiẓ in his account. See (1957) *Mu'jam al-Udabā'*, i, (Beirut: Dar al-Iḥyā'), p. 42. Sources agree that Khālawayh is created by al-Jāḥiẓ. (See Sa'd's introduction to *Maqāmāt al-Hamadhānī*, p. 11 and al-Ḥajirī's glossary of names in *Bukhalā'*, pp. 304–8).
50. *Bukhalā'*, pp. 198–9.
51. *Bukhalā'*, p. 199.
52. *Maqāmāt*, p. 71. Al-Jāḥiẓ writes in praise of conciseness: "Brevity in speech is best for it saves you from prolixity". *Bayān*, i, 83.
53. Ibid., p. 40.
54. *Bukhalā'*, p. 213.
55. Ibid., p. 78. Al-Jāḥiẓ notes that the generic word for this category, *ṭufaylī*, refers to a historical figure by the name of Ṭufayl (Ibid.). Al-Jāḥiẓ apparently had written a book on intruders and uninvited guests.
56. Ibid., p. 53.
57. Ibid., p. 53.

58. Ibid., p. 53.
59. My emphasis. Ibid., p. 12.
60. Ibid., p. 72.
61. The echo may well be in al-Hamadhānī's own *laqab*, *Badīʿ al-Zamān* or the marvel of the age.
62. I am referring to Kilito's insightful remarks on the dramatic aspect of the *maqāma:* "Il y a du théâtre dans les séances". He notes that al-Iskandarī and his company are comedians in a tripartite production: (1) a prologue by the narrator; (2) a presentation; (3) an epilogue in which the hero takes off the mask (Le genre 'séance', p. 43).
63. In Arabic the word *naẓm* (verse) means ordering, arranging, stringing together whereas *nathr* (prose) implies dispersion, scattering. The common practice had been that transmitters (*rāwīs*) memorize and propagate poetry. Ibn Rashīq says: "It is said that Arabs have produced more good prose than fine poetry, but of all poetry no more than one tenth is lost and of all prose no more than one tenth is preserved" (ʿUmda, p. 16).
64. Al-Ḥuṣrī argues that al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* are a creative imitation (*muʿāraḍa*) of Ibn Durayd's 40 discourses (*Zahr*, p. 305). He thus looks at both as a genre of writing to which one could apply the criteria of poetry.
65. *Isnād* (attribution) is viewed with a certain reverence in Arabic literature. In fiction as in historical accounts, the chain of transmitters had to be explicitly mentioned. But, while al-Jāḥiẓ was careful to mention his sources (*Bukhalā'*, pp. 7–8) and even attributed his own books to others, al-Hamadhānī's *isnād* is openly fictional and his claims of authorship are unambiguous. On the classification of texts according to the type of *isnād*, see Kilito, Le genre 'séance', pp. 38–41.
66. The competition between poetry and prose evidently has grounds in the intellectual, professional, and social life of the time. It is also part of a gradual move towards the domination of written over oral cultural production. By the 15th century when al-Suyūṭī wrote his *maqāma*s, it had become obvious that the criteria of borrowing, plagiarism, and theft were equally applied to poetry and *maqāma*. See his *Maqāma fī'l-fāriq bayn al-muṣannif wa-l-sāriq* (A *maqāma* on the distinction between the author and the plagiarist) in Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (1989) *Maqāmāt*, 2 vols, ed. Samīr Maḥmūd al-Durūbī (Beirut: Mu'assasat al-Risāla), pp. 818–855.
67. On prose during al-Hamadhānī's time see Mubārak Zākī (1975) *al-Nathr al-Fannī fī l-Qarn al-Rābiʿ* (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl). On al-Hamadhānī's *sajʿ* see al-Masʿadī Maḥmūd (1981) *Essai sur le rythme dans la prose rimée en arabe* (Tunis: Editions Abdelkerim Ben Abdallah).
68. Manuals of *balāgha* do not mention al-Hamadhānī as an authority on the subject. Instead, he is quoted as a *balīgh*—an eloquent man, not as a theorist but as a practitioner of rhetoric. He frequently occupies the space of footnote, illustration, or example, but rarely the privileged position of an authority on *balāgha*. This place is generally accorded to Sahl Ibn Hārūn, Khalaf al-Aḥmar, Ibn al-Muqaffa', and, more to the point here, to al-Jāḥiẓ.
69. Peter Heath calls this branch "radical *adab*" (literature that "sought to deconstruct the conventions and protocols upon which mainstream *udabā'* relied to guide their everyday behavior"). He distinguishes it from "conservative *adab*" or literature that "seeks to *conserve* and *preserve* branches of knowledge"), and "mainstream *adab*" or "works of aesthetic refinement and general-interest anthologies". See Heath, Peter (1991) Conservative *adab* and radical *adab:* tensions within Islam, paper presented at the *Middle East Studies Association*, 26 Nov. 1991, Washington D.C., pp. 10, 14, 17. He observes that the distinction is that "of the different attitudes that each form displays toward the material that they share".
70. Jonathan Culler writes: "The poetic text is produced in the complex movement of a simultaneous affirmation and negation of another text". Culler, J. (1981) *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), p. 107.
71. Michel Foucault defines author-function as follows: "The author's name serves to characterize a certain mode of being of discourse...[It] is a speech that must be received in a certain mode and that, in a given culture, must receive a certain status". Foucault, M. (1979) What is an author?, in: Josué V. Harari (Ed.) *Textual Strategies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), p. 147.
72. ʿ*Umda*, p. 461.