INTRODUCTION

Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī and His *Maqāmāt*

Maqāmāt (Cl. Ar. sing. *maqāma*) are a form of fictive short tales composed in rhymed prose (*sajʿ*) that have had a long history in the literary languages of the Middle East, especially Arabic and Hebrew. Over the course of a millennium, the *maqāma* form and its near relatives traveled across most major areas in the Islamicate World from Central Asia and beyond, becoming one of the most recognizable of pre-modern Arabic narrative types.[1]

The littérateur (*adīb*) Abū l-Faḍl Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Hamadhānī (358–398/959–1008) invented the *maqāma* while residing in the city of Nishapur in Central Asia in 380/990. Known during his lifetime as "The Wonder of the Age" (Badīʿ al-Zamān) in recognition of his remarkable linguistic ingenuity in the new style of Arabic poetics, al-Hamadhānī lived the life of a courtier who served and entertained the local *amīr*s of the Muslim states across the cities of western Iran and Central Asia.

Composed for the consumption of the intellectual cadres of the court and their acolytes, al-Hamadhānī's *maqāma*s reflect the nexus of aesthetic and pragmatic interests of a vibrant and competitive intellectual scene. Weaving together ornate prose letters (*rasāʾil*) with occasional poetry, the *maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī tell the tale of how verbal mastery and cunning can sustain and protect a man on life's treacherous paths.[2]

Travel, performance, and trade inform each *maqāma* tale, as the characters circulate through a world in which words are the currency of exchange. The tales begin as the narrator goes to a new location (mosque, market, hospital) where he encounters a mysterious stranger who has a large audience gathered. This stranger often wears a disguise, uses mysterious language, or performs an ornate linguistic ruse to obtain money from his unwitting victims. Sometimes, the narrator recognizes the notorious trickster rogue; on other occasions he

1 For a general description, see Rina Drory, "Maqāma (Pl. Maqāmāt)," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Arabic Literature*, ed. Julie Scott Meisami and Paul Starkey (Oxford: Routledge, 1998), 507–8; Devin Stewart, "The *Maqāma*," in *Arabic Literature in the Post-Classical Period*, ed. D.S. Richards and Roger Allen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 145–58; Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *Maqama: A History of a Genre* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002).

2 See Devin J. Stewart, "Professional Literary Mendicancy in the Letters and *Maqāmāt* of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī," in *Writers and Rulers: Perspectives on Their Relationship from Abbasid to Safavid Times*, ed. Beatrice Gruendler and Louise Marlow (Wiesbaden: Reichert Verlag, 2004), 39–47.

steals away undetected. At the end of the *maqāma*, the trickster often reveals himself offering wisdom about the real workings of the world. Deception and dishonesty are the only means for him to survive. And then, he is gone, only to appear in another locale in a new disguise.

The mobility of the *maqāma* is evident, too, in the movement of the text across intellectual fields and domains, through which the clever littérateur demonstrates the modes by which knowledge proves useful. The *adīb*'s intellectual forays are dramatized, as each *maqāma* of al-Hamadhānī displays a different field of erudition that turns on different tricks. In one *maqāma*, the trickster poses as a madman who debates a famed theologian in an insane asylum in southern Iran, in another the trickster is a false prophet attempting to bring a dead man back to life in Mosul. In a third, set in Ahwāz, he is a fraudulent doctor attempting to sell wondrous medical products to an unsuspecting audience. Each draws on specialized language and learning, expressing the ethos of learning known as *adab*, the capacity to take a little from every domain of knowledge. Throughout these tales, the trickster's mind and body never fully come to rest.

While Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī composed his *maqāmāt* to be read as a group with a common set of protagonists and narrative conventions, the sheer inventiveness and vitality of his *maqāma* tales defies the categorizations that have often been placed on them by later readers and critics. Even al-Hamadhānī's great follower, al-Ḥarīrī (d. 516/1122), while acknowledging his indebtedness to Badīʿ al-Zamān, channels the multiple energies of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāma* into courses proper to his own time and preoccupations. Al-Ḥarīrī's *maqāma*s too would be rewritten and transformed over and again in novel ways. Like its ever-wandering heroes, the *maqāma* form keeps moving on.

The *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī between Tradition and Modernity

The recent work of Ahmed El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics* contends that the intellectual classics of the late nineteenth century created the canon of classical Arabic literature. Although several key figures across Egypt, the Levant and Turkey were responsible for crafting the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī into one of the pre-eminent works of Classical Arabic literature, the modern study of the *maqāma* was a product of a process involving both Orientalist and Arab scholars.

Beginning in the eighteenth century, Orientalists had already considered the importance of the *maqāma* in general and the *maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī in particular. European Orientalists such as the Dutch scholar Everard Scheidius (1742–1794) produced the first partial print editions of the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī. Scheidius' knowledge of the genre had doubtless come from his association with his teacher Albert Schultens (1686–1750) who had compiled a

Latin translation of the work of al-Ḥarīrī.[3]

Antoine Sylvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), however, fixed the place of al-Hamadhānī's work as an important model of the *maqāma* genre. De Sacy had included selections from al-Hamadhānī's *maqāma*s in his *Chrestomathie arabe, ou, extraits de divers écrivains arabes, tant en prose qu'en verse à l'usage des élèves de l'École royale et spéciale des langues orientales vivantes* published in 1826. De Sacy presented a copy of this work to his Egyptian student Rifāʿa al-Ṭahṭāwī (1801–1873) following the successful completion of his exams in Paris in 1828. As al-Ṭahṭāwī notes, de Sacy preferred the writing of al-Hamadhānī over al-Ḥarīrī (in the French edition of this book) even though de Sacy had famously prepared an edition of the latter. The *Chresthomatie arabe* was later published in Būlāq in Arabic in 1879 and may well have influenced later generations of intellectuals such as Muḥammad ʿAbduh (1849–1905) as to the value of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt*.[4]

With access to manuscripts in Istanbul, the Dār al-Jawāʾib Press established by Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq (1805?–1887) printed the first comprehensive edition of the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī in lithograph in 1298/1881. Shidyāq himself was a practitioner of the *maqāma* form, including four *maqāma*s in the text of his remarkable *Leg over Leg* (*al-Sāq ʿalā l-sāq*). While he acknowledges al-Hamadhānī as the creator of the *maqāma* form, there is no evidence to suggest that he had read al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*.[5] Yūsuf b. Ismāʿīl al-Nabhānī, who was in charge of the press at this time, states that his edition is based on two manuscripts which he had access to in the famed Ottoman collections (MS Aya Sofya 4283 and MS Nurosmaniye 4270).[6]

The high status of al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt* is most indebted to the well-known Egyptian reformer Muḥammad ʿAbduh who produced the first modern print edition of the *Maqāmāt* in 1889. ʿAbduh had worked on this edition and commentary on the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī while serving as the rector of the Sulṭāniyya modern school in Beirut.[7]

As El Shamsy notes, ʿAbduh envisioned a clear relationship between language and ethics, a concept which had been drawn from his reading of premodern works. By producing printed volumes such as an annotated edition of the

3 See Chapter Three, "The Yale Manuscript."

4 Ahmed El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics: How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020), 77. See Rifaʿa Rafiʿ al-Tahtawi, *An Imam in Paris: Account of a Stay in France by an Egyptian Cleric (1826–1831)*, trans. Daniel L. Newman (London: Saqi, 2011), 191.

5 Aḥmad Fāris al-Shidyāq, *Leg over Leg: Or the Turtle in the Tree concerning the Fāriyāq*, ed. and trans. Humphrey Davies (New York: New York University Press, 2013), introduction.

6 Ibrahim Geries, "Badiʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāma* of Bishr b. ʿAwāna (*al-Bishriyya*)," *Middle Eastern Literatures* 14 (2011): 123.

7 El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*, 150, n.10.

Maqāmāt ʿAbduh sought to position himself as an educated authority who could introduce students to the most towering figures of their literary heritage.

ʿAbduh makes plain in his introduction to his edition, that he is an admirer of the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī, and that the text needs to see the light of day because of its importance as a model of Arabic *adab* that could serve as an educational tool in the modern era:

> It has been said that he [al-Hamadhānī] composed more than four hundred *maqāma*s, however people have not been able to find more than a small number of them, roughly fifty which were recently published in Istanbul. Despite there being a small quantity, they are of great value, possessing many rare gems, and a multitude of different arts and disciplines, ranging through many different things, and the learned man (*ʿalīm*) will gain much from them, and an adolescent could follow them as a model.[8]

In the introduction to the edition, ʿAbduh positions himself as a philological authority. He notes that there are two main obstacles to the use of the *Maqāmāt* in his own time, both of which are textual:

> The first is what damage the copyists had caused in the language of the text through errors (*taḥrīf*) that had corrupted the text's foundation and changed its meaning with interpolations (*ziyāda*) which damage the originals and distract the mind from the intended meaning, and deletions, which obscure the stylistics and weaken the supporting structures. The person considering this book, if he is weak will be misled and become confused, while even a knowledgeable person will be prone to fail.[9]

Next, he lists the problems presented by the language of the work:

> The second difficulty is the rarity (*gharāba*) of some of the words, the hidden nature of his references, and the obscurity of the manner in which he has constructed his expressions. Beginners would have difficulty in understanding the meaning of the text, whereas those of learning would have trouble in comprehending the import.[10]

8 Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī, *Maqāmāt*, ed. Muḥammad ʿAbduh (Beirut: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Kāthūlīkiyya, 1889), 5.

9 ibid., 5.

10 ibid., 5–6.

In a passage evocative of the introductions to traditional Islamicate book culture, ʿAbduh describes how "one of the scions of the Arabs in Syria" asked him to work on the text of the *Maqāmāt* and produce a commentary (*taʿlīq*). He notes with some flourish how he had "no precedent" in his work, and "no material except for his innate Arab nature and his literary taste" (*lā māddata lī illā ṭabʿ ʿarabī wa-dhawq adabī*). He remarks further that his commentary relied upon "major sources of language" (*ummahāt al-lugha al-ḥāḍira*), "common proverbs" (*amthāl li-l-ʿarab sāʾira*), and so on, that were useful to him in the editing of this work.[11]

ʿAbduh extends his own authority as an *ʿālim* and *adīb* asserting that this learning and sensibility allowed him to understand and convey the meaning and import of the work. He states that he was guided by the fact that al-Hamadhānī would have produced language that was grammatically coherent:

> As for the correction of the text of the book, God has blessed us with a multiplicity of manuscript copies, even as it has increased the difficulty of choice between them. For their readings (*riwāyāt*) are often at odds with one another, and sometimes they are in agreement on what is neither good sense nor pleasing in form. In these circumstances, we resorted to the linguistic context (*al-waḍʿ al-lughawī*), and common usage as our guides. The high-standing of the author among the scholars of language (*ahl al-lisān*) acted as our arbiter, and was the guide upon which we worked in our corrections.[12]

ʿAbduh understanding of the role of the modern scholar privileged linguistic rectitude over the transmitted text. For instance, he states that in the case of multiple correct possibilities, he would select the most appropriate linguistically (*awlāhā bi-l-waḍʿ*) either because it corresponds with other readings, or suits the surrounding linguistic context. ʿAbduh adds that he would preserve the other variants and place them in the footnotes to the text. Nowhere however does he mention the manuscripts upon which he relied, nor does he evince any interest in the history of textual transmission.

ʿAbduh did not limit his authority to amend the text on grammatical or lexicographical grounds, but also assessed the contents of al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*, particularly in excising those passages which he thought collided with his own sense of ethics and morality. He explained this act of suppression in the following terms:

11 ibid., 7.

12 ibid., 7–8.

> It now seems necessary to mention that the author of the *Maqāmāt* al-Badīʿ (may he rest in peace) possesses a wide diversity of types of speech and some perhaps which would cause the cultured man of letters (*adīb*) some embarrassment in reading, and one of my stature would be ashamed in explicating its referent. Men should not seek to understand crude language (*sadhaj*) or attempt to explore its import.[13]

ʿAbduh then quickly moves to absolve al-Hamadhānī from any blame, by stating that he is not casting any aspersions that could taint the reputation of this great writer. Rather, he opines, "to every age there is a proper speech, and to every space there is a proper imagining" (*li-kull zamān maqāl, wa-li-kull khayāl majāl*) implying thereby that there were elements of al-Hamadhānī's *adab* that are out of step with the current context and state of culture.[14]

ʿAbduh's main aim was to remove references to homoeroticism in the text by excising the *maqāma Shāmiyya* in its entirety[15] and abridging some sentences from the *Ruṣāfiyya*[16] and deleting unseemly words and expressions elsewhere. He grounds this radical editorial decision in the practice of religious scholars (*sunnat al-ʿulamāʾ*) offering that it was their prerogative to "refine and rectify, correct and abridge" (*bi-l-tahdhīb wa-l-tamḥīṣ wa-l-tanqīḥ wa-l-talkhīṣ*) thereby eliding the models of linguistic and presumed ethical rectitude, and conjoining them with a reformist impulse. ʿAbduh finally notes that to have been silent on this issue (allowing the morally suspect passages in the text) would have proved an enticement to sin and error.[17]

ʿAbduh's edition and commentary on al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt* while raising the stature of the text and providing a print edition, still left many features of its history unexplored. Although his edition attempted to reconstruct an earlier version of the text based on linguistic and ethical rectitude, he did not adhere to the editorial practices which would have enabled a more historically grounded exploration of the text, paratext, and history. As such, even as his linguistic work at times illuminated the readings he chose, the text that he produced concealed important features of the text's history, and at times obscured traces of its authorship.

13 ibid., 7.
14 ibid., 7.
15 See Chapter Six.
16 See Chapter Seven.
17 ibid., 7.

A Wonder of the Age: Al-Hamadhānī among the Literary Critics of the Twentieth Century

ʿAbduh's edition of al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt* was a decisive moment in the history of this text and in many ways set the stage for its later reception by twentieth century critics. As writers of the Arabic *nahḍa* grappled with questions of authority and authorship, much of the early attention paid to al-Hamadhānī centered on his role in the innovation of the *maqāma* form. In the 1930s, scholars such as Zakī Mubārak (1892–1952) and Muṣṭafā Ṣādiq al-Rāfiʿī (1880–1937) feuded with one another concerning al-Hamadhānī's invention of the form. [18]A generation later, Mārūn ʿAbbūd (1886–1962) writing in the early 1950s saw it as a "fruitless task" (*ʿabthan*) to go in search of an author other than al-Hamadhānī as the creator. He states, "We closely examined his fifty-one *maqāmāt* and we saw much that al-Badīʿ had taken from others which he polished with his own style (*uslūbihi al-maṣnūʿ*) and they became as if they were his own."[19]

Scholars of the *maqāma* in the second half of the twentieth century have focused on a variety of different topics relating to Badīʿ al-Zamān and his *maqāmāt*. Much work has focused on the genesis of the *maqāma* form and its relationship to other works of Arabic literature such as those by by A.F.L. Beeston,[20] John N. Mattock,[21] and more recently in the detailed literary historical studies of Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila culminating in his important monograph, *Maqama: A History of a Genre* published in 2002 which devotes more than a quarter of its pages to Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī.[22]

Theoretical and interpretative discussions first began in many ways from the perspective of possible linkages to the picaresque, such as in the work of James T. Monroe in 1983. Monroe's book on al-Hamadhānī was wide-ranging, exploring both the generic qualities of the *maqāma* as well as attempting to interpret particular *maqāma*s, and address questions relating to the author's biography.[23] The same year brought the highly nuanced work of Abdelfattah Kilito, which explored what he termed the cultural codes that were central to

18 Arthur Goldschmidt, *Biographical Dictionary of Modern Egypt* (Boulder and London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999), 133 and 164–5.

19 Mārūn ʿAbbūd, *Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī* (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1954), 35.

20 A.F.L. Beeston, "The Genesis of the *Maqāmāt* Genre," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 2 (1971): 1–12; Abdelfattah Kilito,"Le genre 'séance': Une introduction," *Studia Islamica* 43 (1976): 25–51.

21 John N. Mattock, "The Early History of the *Maqāma*," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 15 (1984): 1–18.

22 Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, *Maqama: A History of a Genre* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2002).

23 James T. Monroe, *The Art of Badīʿ az-Zamān al-Hamadhānī as Picaresque Narrative* (Beirut: American University of Beirut Press, 1983).

the construction of individual *maqāmāt*.[24]

Of the two approaches, Kilito's work has proved the more generative, encouraging a diverse range of scholars such as Philip Kennedy,[25] Mohamed-Salah Omri,[26] Katia Zakharia,[27] and Fedwa Malti-Douglas to look further at the manner in which al-Hamadhānī constructed particular *maqāma*s.[28] Further biographical work and attention to al-Hamadhānī's letters and intellectual milieux is exemplified in the work of Everett Rowson,[29] Wadād al-Qāḍī,[30] Vahid Behmardi,[31] and Devin Stewart.[32] Noteworthy work has also been done on the prose stylistics and metrics of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt* by Mahmoud Messadi[33] and Geert Jan van Gelder.[34]

Scholarly attention to the *Maqāmāt* has been almost entirely based on studies of the standard edition of ʿAbduh as their starting point. This began to change in 1992 when Donald S. Richards published an important article examining

24 Abdelfattah Kilito, *Les séances: Récits et codes culturels chez Hamadhani et Hariri* (Paris: Sindbad, 1983).

25 Philip F. Kennedy, "Some Demon Muse: Structure and Allusion in al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāma Iblīsiyya*," *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literatures* 2 (1999): 115–35; idem, "The *Maqāmāt* as a Nexus of Interests: Reflections on Abdelfattah Kilito's *Les séances*," in *Writing and Representation in Medieval Islam: Muslim Horizons*, ed. Julia Bray (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 153–214

26 Mohamed-Salah Omri, "'There is a Jāḥiẓ for Every Age': Narrative Construction and Intertextuality in al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*," *Arabic and Middle Eastern Literature* 1 (1998): 31–46.

27 Katia Zakharia, "*Al-Maqāma al-Bišriyya*: Une épopée mystique," *Arabica* 37 (1990): 251–90.

28 Fedwa Malti-Douglas, "*Maqāmāt* and *Adab*: 'Al-Maqāma al-Maḍīriyya' of al-Hamadhānī," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 105 (1985): 247–58.

29 Everett K. Rowson, "Religion and Politics in the Career of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 107 (1987): 653–73.

30 Wadād al-Qāḍī, "Badīʿ az-Zamān al-Hamadhānī and His Social and Political Vision," in *Literary Heritage of Classical Islam: Arabic and Islamic Studies in Honor of James A. Bellamy*, ed. Mustansir Mir (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1993), 197–223

31 Vahid Behmardi, "Rhetorical Values in Buyid Persia According to Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī," in *The Weaving of Words: Approaches to Classical Arabic Prose*, ed. Lale Behzadi and Vahid Behmardi (Beirut and Würzburg: Orient-Institut; Ergon-Verlag, 2009), 151–64.

32 Devin Stewart, "ʿĪsā b. Hišām's Shiism and Religious Polemic in the *Maqāmāt* of Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamaḏānī (d. 398/1008)," *Intellectual History of the Islamicate World* (published online ahead of print 2021).

33 Mahmoud Messadi, *Essai sur le rythme dans la prose rimée en arabe* (Tunis: Éditions Ben Abdallah, 1981).

34 Geert Jan van Gelder, "Rhyme in *Maqāmāt* or Too Many Exceptions Do Not Prove a Rule," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 44 (1999): 75–82.

several of the older manuscripts of al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*.[35] Richards pointed out significant discrepancies across various manuscripts of the work. In 2011, Ibrahim Geries offered a seminal criticism of Katia Zakharia's work that demonstrated the pressing need to return to the manuscript tradition prior to the work of interpretation.[36]

Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī: Authorship, Texts and Context

Despite the large volume of studies on al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*, and the increasing sense that the standard nineteenth century editions of the *Maqāmāt* were flawed (or at least bowdlerized), scholars had not yet thoroughly examined the extant manuscript evidence available. In the year 2011, the authors of this book for the first time acquired digital images of the oldest manuscripts of al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*. Over the course of several years, and through the kindness and generosity of many individuals, Bilal Orfali and Maurice Pomerantz gathered more than 40 manuscripts including the major early witnesses to this important text.[37]

Textual scholarship is often understood as aiming solely at the revelation of a putative Ur-text. While it cannot be denied that reconstructing the earliest possible layer of the textual tradition would be a useful starting point for future scholarship on the *Maqāmāt*, we believe that through investigations of the manuscripts, we are also exploring other important aspects of the text's life. Relying solely on the flawed nineteenth century editions not only compromises the results of modern scholars' investigations of al-Hamadhānī's text, but also prevents us from appreciating the literary culture that created this work. How were the individual *maqāmāt* composed? How were they performed? How were they recorded, lost, found, collected, and transmitted?

The broad concerns of the book are divided into three sections: authorship, texts, and contexts, although there are some overlaps across these fields. One constant is that each chapter in this volume investigates hitherto unstudied textual materials related to al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāmāt*. We hope that these studies encourage other scholars to continually revisit questions of textual history in their studies of pre-modern Arabic literature.

Part 1 of the book, Authorship, begins with two studies related to al-

35 D.S. Richards, "The *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī: General Remarks and a Consideration of the Manuscripts," *Journal of Arabic Literature* 22 (1991): 89–99.

36 Geries, "Badīʿ al-Zamān al-Hamadhānī's *Maqāma* of Bishr b. ʿAwāna (*al-Bishriyya*)," 121–53.

37 The authors have also gathered a large number of manuscripts of the *Rasā'il* of al-Hamadhānī and are also working on this important neglected work.

Hamadhānī's authorship. In Chapter One, "Ibn Fāris and the Origins of the *Maqāma* Revisited," we review several theories about al-Hamadhānī's reliance on earlier forms in the creation of the *maqāma*, and provide an edited fragment of a lost work by the well-known grammarian Ibn Fāris (d. 395/1005), which may have been an important model upon which al-Hamadhānī had drawn. Chapter Two, entitled "Assembling an Author," describes the way that al-Hamadhānī's individual *maqāma*s came to be included in manuscript collections in the years following his death. The study further suggests how al-Hamadhānī's collection of *maqāma*s grew larger after his death, possibly on account of the ascendant fame of the *Maqāmāt* of al-Ḥarīrī.

Part 2, Texts, presents the editions of four *maqāma*s attributed to al-Hamadhānī in the manuscript tradition, that were not included in Muḥammad ʿAbduh's printing. Chapter Three, entitled "Lost *Maqāma*: the *Ṭibbiyya*," provides the *editio princeps* of a *maqāma* on medicine, the *Ṭibbiyya*, and discusses its relationship to the other extant *maqāma*s of al-Hamadhānī. Chapter Four, "Three *Maqāmāt* Attributed to al-Hamadhānī," provides the editions of three further *maqāma*s (*Sharīfiyya*, *Hamadhāniyya*, *Khātamiyya*), along with a discussion and analysis of their contents in relation to the extant corpus of al-Hamadhānī's *maqāmāt*.

Part 3 of the book, Contexts, provides studies of several key *maqāma*s of al-Hamadhānī. Chapter Five, "*Adab* and Metamorphosis: The *Mawṣiliyya*," is an edition, translation, and modern commentary on this *maqāma* in which Abū l-Fatḥ famously attempts to raise a dead man from the grave. This commentary identifies sources from which al-Hamadhānī may have drawn, affording modern readers further context with which to explore this tale. Chapter Six, "What the Qadi Should not Hear: The *Shāmiyya*," provides the first scholarly edition of this *maqāma*, which ʿAbduh excised from the 1889 Beirut printing. The study explores how this *maqāma* draws upon ideas about the limits of proper and improper speech. Chapter Seven of this volume, "A Fourth/Tenth Century Commentary on the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī," offers a study and edition of a hitherto unknown commentary on the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī that we argue may be an example of auto-commentary. Even putting aside the important question of al-Hamadhānī's authorship of the commentary, our proposed interpretation has profound implications for how the *Maqāmāt* of al-Hamadhānī were understood by the first generations of readers, including the writers of *maqāma*s who followed him.