

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910827886903321
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Titolo	The reader in al-Jahiz : the epistolary rhetoric of an Arabic prose master // Thomas Heftner [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Edinburgh : , : Edinburgh University Press, , 2014
ISBN	1-4744-0096-5 0-7486-9275-4
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (vii, 277 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	Edinburgh studies in classical Arabic literature
Disciplina	892/.783408
Soggetti	Books and reading - Islamic Empire Arabic literature - 750-1258 - History and criticism Islamic Empire Intellectual life
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 09 Sep 2016).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Acknowledgements -- Introduction -- 1. The Addressee and the Occasion of Writing -- 2. Epistolary Confrontations and Dialectics of Parody -- 3. Undisclosed Origins and Homelands -- 4. Faulting Misers in the Introduction to Kitb al-Bukhal -- 5. Passive Addressee and Critical Reader in the Ab al-/Ibn al-Tawam Debate -- Conclusion -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	The 9th-century essayist, theologian and encyclopaedist Amr b. Bahr al-Jahiz has long been acknowledged as a master of early Arabic prose writing. Many of his most engaging writings were clearly intended for a broad readership but were presented as letters to individuals. Despite the importance and quantity of these letters, surprisingly little academic notice has been paid to them. Now, Thomas Heftner takes a new approach in interpreting some of al-Jahiz's 'epistolary monographs'. By focussing on the varying ways in which he wrote to the addressee, Heftner shows how al-Jahiz hid his conversations on the page in order to guide (or manipulate) his actual readers and encourage them to engage with his complex materials. Key Features * Looks at letters from one of the most unique minds of the Abbasid era that cover sectarian and ethnic rivalries, ethical questions, intoxicating beverages and daily life *Relates al-Jahiz's experiments with the letter

frame to his views on occupations, human geography and other issues of his day *Examines the role of self-parody in al-Jahiz's fictional conversations with his addressees *Explores the rich interplay of contending voices
