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***101 Middle Eastern Tales and their Impact on Western Oral Tradition* by Ulrich Marzolph**

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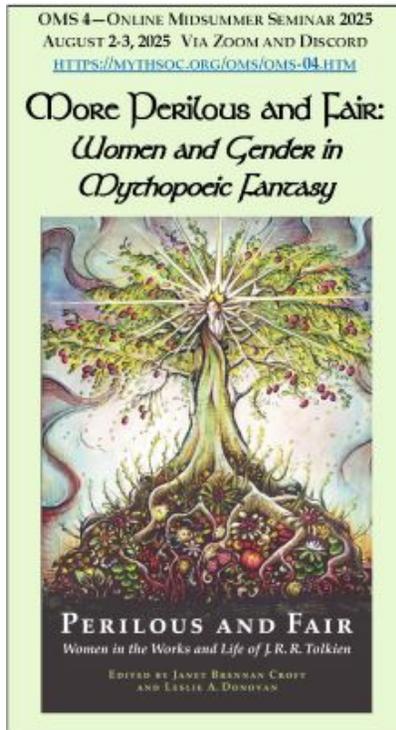
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101 Middle Eastern Tales and their Impact on Western Oral Tradition by Ulrich Marzolph

Abstract

Review of Ulrich Marzolph, *101 Middle Eastern Tales and their Impact on Western Oral Tradition*

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BRIEFLY NOTED

101 MIDDLE EASTERN TALES AND THEIR IMPACT ON WESTERN ORAL TRADITION. Ulrich Marzolph. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2020, 706 p. ISBN 978-0-8143-4773-7. \$49.99.

MARZOLPH HAS COLLECTED TALES that originated from or passed through the Middle East and were recorded from oral performances by Western observers in the last two hundred years. These are restrictive criteria in line with the author's quest for ongoing oral traditions that might be popular in the sense of being known among the folk in Europe and the European diasporas. For each tale he traces the earliest oral performance and its connection to written sources.

Indices facilitate maneuvering through the massive volume. Beyond works cited, there is an index of narrators and collectors, another of names and motifs in the tales, and a general index, which includes a list of tale types.

The work shows how Oriental tales impacted Occidental oral culture, and they have done so quite a lot. The Thousand and One Nights figure prominently here, but there is no discussion of Western narrators such as Washington Irving. In his *Tales of the Alhambra* (1832) he tells several tales he heard from contemporaries, but he is far from an anthropological source. Marzolph's extensive scholarship leaps from every page. Each essay is independent, and notes are appended right after it. As Marzolph points out, early students did not have the linguistic competence to follow the tales, as he does, through Arabic, Persian, and Ottoman Turkish.

Marzolph, who is retired from Göttingen, specializes in Persian folk tales and has published an encyclopedia of the Thousand and One Nights (2004) with Richard van Leeuwen.

Who could use this book? Anyone interested in how Western oral tradition might have picked up "Oriental" stories, but those interested in how the Thousand Nights and One and other stories live on in written literature may be frustrated.

—Daniel C. Snell

DANIEL C. SNELL has retired from the University of Oklahoma, Norman; his most recent book is *A New Workbook of Cuneiform Signs* (2022).

