

Article

Folklore of the Arab World¹

Hasan El-Shamy

Department of Folklore and Ethnomusicology, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405, USA;
elshamy@indiana.edu

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Abstract: Four major stages in the development of interest in folklore in the Arab World may be designated. A neglected (or suppressed) facet of Arab life is the centrality of the *khâl*. An examination of the impact this familial character has on the social structure of the group regardless of ethnicity and religion is absent. (1) Is the early Islamic period and how religious dogma regarded negatively cultural expressions of polytheism? (2) The age of the spread of Islam and the Arabic language. Religious narratives (mostly “exempla”) dominated the Arab Islamic scene. (3) Is the short-lived era of the emergence of an ephemeral trend towards objectivity and of growth of interest in indigenous culture? In this regard the Basrite Al-Jâhiz (9th C. A.D.) is to be acknowledged as the first folklorist; he treated genuine folklore occurrences and sought to verify their veracity through fieldwork. (4) This stage came in the 1950s when literary scholars became aware of “folklore” as an academic discipline in the West; the attention westerners paid the *Arabian Nights* triggered interest in that work among some Arab scholars. Along with that European interest, ethnocentric hypotheses about lack of creativity among Semitic groups flourished. Regrettably, these wayward views still find supporters today. With political changes and the emergence of populism, folk groups and their culture varieties acquired special importance. Conflict between religious circles and nonreligious intellectuals over the use of terms *turâth*/*ma’tûr* (legacy/Tradition), labels previously reserved for religious heritage. This conflict seems to have abated. Currently, especially in the newly independent Arab Gulf states, “folklore” is proudly held to be a depository of a nation’s memory, history, ‘soul’, and character. However, it should be born in mind that while folklore cultivates positive principles, it also harbors destructive values.

Keywords: Islam; *turâth*; *khâl* (maternal-uncle); Syndrome; Motif; genres; memory; *sîrah*; Creativity; Gulf States; National Heritage

During the past nearly two centuries when learned interest in “folklore” emerged among scholars in Europe and until it was discovered around the middle of the Twentieth century in Arab lands, it has undergone numerous phases of development. These phases applied to its subject matter, affiliation (e.g., literature, social science, art), purpose (function), form, among other issues. The present work perceives “folklore” as follows:

¹ Companion works by the present writer, provide elaboration and basic documentation issues treated in the present essay. These references are:

1. MCA-IFT (El-Shamy 2016): Motif Constituents of Arab-Islamic Folk Traditions: A Cognitive Systemic Approach. See Appendix B, below. <https://iuscholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/20938>;
2. GMC A (El-Shamy 1995): Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification; and
3. DOTI A (El-Shamy 2004a): Types of the Folktale in the Arab World.

Regrettably, some of these references demonstrating the applications are missing from the Bibliographies of some of the present writer’s works (for reasons most of which proved to be beyond his control). For Abbreviations and Signs, see Appendix A, below.

“Lore” is a category of culture; it is distinguishable from the rest of cultural phenomena by being traditional and formulistic. It is traditional in that it has continuity in both time and space (i.e., being trans-generational and communal); it is formulistic in that its phenomena are patterned combinations of form, contents, medium of communication, affect, etc. Thus, whatever culture may be, folklore is that in addition to the requirements of traditionality and formularization [...]. No one is lore-free. (El-Shamy 1997, p. 233)²

Anonymity of origin or author was often cited as a prerequisite. However, recurrence seems to have eclipsed “anonymity” as a requirement.

At the outset of this essay a basic theoretical principle should be presented: in experiencing folklore materials, a listener’s reactions to its *impersonal* descriptions of “‘life’ and ‘living’” are not subjected to censorship as *personal* ones are. (El-Shamy 1995, vol. 1, p. xiii). Consequently, lore proves more representative of a community’s sentiments than questionnaires and interviews which are often answered defensively.³ “How much truer can a fairy tale be?” is an assertion appearing on the back of the cover of El-Shamy’s *Beyond Oedipus* (2013). The unstated but fully documented answer is: “It cannot!”

1. Geographic Boundaries

The term “Arab World” stands for an entity inherently linked to the anthropological concept of “culture area” and its “institutions”, as well as to that of the political state.⁴ This designation was reproduced in terms of the “Middle East” (and Near East) in Raphael Patai, “Culture Areas of the Contemporary Middle East,” during the 1950s.⁵ As the name indicates, an “area” is stretch of land within given geographic boundaries. Considering the time of the beginnings of academic awareness of “folklore” as a discipline among Arabs of the Middle East in the nineteen fifties, two studies by sociologist Morroe Berger seem to be especially helpful in illustrating the nature of the culture and social diversity of inhabitants of this wide landmass during that time period.⁶ In light of the profound cultural and social changes, especially economic institutions, that took place since the 1950s, culture areas described in Patai’s work as the least westernized/(developed) have become among the richest and “most” technologically advance.

As part of the broader Middle East, the Arab World is characterized by its “mosaic” demographic composition: ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups have long lived side by side and intermingled intimately without becoming assimilated into a single entity. Among many non-Arab groups, Arabic is

² On the same issue, also see, Emergence of Interest in Arab Folklore Materials (see p. 6, below).

³ Motifs: Z13.8\$, Speaker disclaims responsibility for offensive contents. Z13.8.1.1\$, ‘Conveyer of disbelief (kufr) is not a disbeliever [*nâqil al-kufr laysa bi kâfir*]’.

Link: |K1683.3\$, Chaste man punishes messenger delivering message of illicit love. |P469.0.1\$, A news-bearer (envoy, messenger) is required only to convey the message.

Z13.8.2\$, “This is what they say!” (or the like): speaker disclaims responsibility for the unbelievable (fantastic).

Link: |J1156\$, The fantastic (unbelievable) may be reported, but only as ‘news/report’.

Ref.: Jâhiz IV 107; Littmann (1910), Tigré 61 No. 44, 61 No. 45, 62 No. 46, 65 No. 49, 84 No. 65, 89 No. 72, 96 No. 76.

⁴ See: Murdock, G.P., Clelland S. Ford, and Alfred E. Hudson, Raymond Kennedy, Leo W. Simmons, John M. W. Whiting, 1938 ff. *Outline of Cultural Materials*. (New Haven, CT: Institute of Human Relations, Yale University).

⁵ In (Patai 1969, *Golden River to Golden Road: Society Culture and Change in the Middle East*, pp. 64–69, Areas 1–14). Culture areas 1 through 14 represent the Arab World:

1. The Nile Valley Area; 2. The Coastal Agricultural Area; 3. Northwestern Oasis Area [Berber]; 4. Northeastern Oasis Area [Berber]; 5. Northwestern Nomadic Area; 6. The Tuareg Area [Berber]; 7. The East Saharan Area; 8. Camel-Cattle Area; 9. The Beja Area; 10. The North Arabian Desert Area; 11. Southwestern Arabian Area; 12. The Eastern Arabian Area; 13. The Levant Coast Area; 14. The Mesopotamian Area.

Also see, Eickelman, Dale. 1981. *The Middle East: An Anthropological Approach*. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall. And D. Bates, and A. Rassam. 1983. *Peoples and Cultures of the Middle East*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

⁶ *The Arab World Today* (Berger 1964a), “Islamic Background of Arab Society” (Berger 1964c, pp. 20–41), and “Patterns of Living: The Desert, Village, and Urban Communities” (Berger 1964b, pp. 42–97).

spoken as lingua franca. Exchanges between Arabs and distinct ethnic and/or racial groups—such as the Berbers of North Africa, Nubians of Egypt and the Sudan, Persians, Kurds and Turks of Iraq, in addition to numerous sub-Saharan African kinship groups—have been part of the cultural and social scenes for millennia: a fact clearly reflected in the lore and other aspects of Arab World traditions.

Arabic language and monotheistic religions, especially Islam, are intertwined. Islam provides a background for all patterns of behavior in the Arab World regardless of ethnicity or faith. (Berger 1964c, Chpt. II “Islamic Background of Arab Society”). Arabia is the birthplace of Islam (in the VII century A.D.), the home of Prophet Mohammad and the Arabs. The spiritual appeal of the land and its inhabitants in Arab and Moslem cultures is immense and pervasive. With the spread of Islam, Arabic language and culture, Arab ways of life were adopted by populations in regions extending from the shores of the Atlantic in the East to the borders of China in the west, and from northern Spain to the heart of sub-Saharan Africa. These populations were heirs to the cultural legacies of ancient civilizations (e.g., Egyptian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Berber, Sudanic, . . .) that entered into the forming of the Arab World and its traditions. Five broadly culture areas within the Arab World may be designated: Arabian Peninsula; Mesopotamia (Iraq); *Al-Shâm* (or the Levant Coast); The Nile Valley; Maghreb or ‘North Africa’. (See, below)

These areas share a vast reservoir of traditions associated with their common religion(s), and language(s). For example, tales and other traditions that seem to exist exclusively in one area are very few; their occurrence can be attributed to atypical circumstances or recent external influence. In the Arabian Peninsula Tale-type AT 306, “*The Danced out Shoes*”, [magic dancing: secret of princess’s worn out shoes discovered by youth]” is due to erroneous collecting methods; in the Nile Valley/Egypt, AT 361, “*Bear-skin*”. [Bargain with the Devil]” is due to equivocal (deceptive) specification of the text’s source. Meanwhile, among North Africa’s Berbers AT 715A, “*The Wonderful Cock*”, [helps owner(s) to king’s riches: foolish Imitation by hen]”, AT 925*, “*The Most Beautiful [in the Garden]*”, [princess chooses the youth who says she is]”, AT 1415, “*Lucky Hans*” (foolish bargains)”, and AT 545B, “*Puss in Boots*”, [cat helps master obtain ogre’s possessions]” seem to be due to recent European influence (most likely French in North Africa).⁷ Some traditions prove unique to one culture area due to historical conditions and circumstances under which culture and social change had occurred. An example of such a case is the ritual underlying the account of “*al-Muḥalliq and Jamjûm*” in the Sudan (Area 8, “*Camel-Cattle Area*” also labeled “*Baggâra*”, i.e., “*Baqqârah*”, Cow-herders). An ancient un-Islamic and non-Arab marriage ritual constitutes the core of the account (El-Shamy 1999, pp. 388–89, n. 510). The rationale for the conforming to the motivational core for the action is sway folk customs hold over other considerations, including religious ones.⁸

A head of a band of cattle robbers (named Al-Muḥalliq) married an extremely beautiful girl named Tâjûj. He gave in to demand by his best friend (named Jamjûm) to enforce an ancient tribal marriage custom of permitting the groom’s friend to spy on the bride while she is “naked”. The friend quoted a folk truism: “Custom is ‘*alzam*’ (more compulsory) than religious service”. Al-Muḥalliq asked his wife (bride) to allow the spying. The wife, in disgust, refused to grant her husband’s request. But faced with his insistence, she finally relented with the condition that he would fulfil for her one wish to be specified afterwards. He agreed and she disrobed (usually only partly). The friend was spying on the wife from a treetop, and was crazed by her beauty; he fell and was seriously injured (or died). As for the wife’s wish: she demands divorce. The husband felt deceived, but he had to fulfil his promise. He tried repeatedly to remarry her, but she refused.

Tâjûj was subsequently wed to one chieftain or powerful man after another; but each marriage ended with her abduction by another powerful man, and consequent war of rescue. Finally, a band of robbers attack a caravan in which she was traveling. The robbers fought over her. An elder robber,

⁷ For further information on these tale-types, see *Types of the Folktale in the Arab World: A Demographically Oriented Tale-Type Index* (El-Shamy 2004a).

⁸ Motif: P601.1\$, “Customs are as compulsory as religious services”.

who wanted to spare his group and the community the havoc her beauty has wreaked on everyone, killed her. She was buried on the spot where she fell. That site came to be called Tâjûj.⁹

Another case deals with the ritual of defloration:

At the night of consummation of marriage, the ritual of defloration is undertaken by an old male member of the by group. He would be concealed near the bride, and from his hiding place would plunge his middle and index fingers into the bride's vagina.¹⁰

Such a practice is unheard of among Arab and other communities in the Arab World. Yet, equally harsh and humiliating rituals are still practiced.¹¹

Yet, many kinship groups (tribes)—especially in the Gulf Region (Culture Area 12, “East Arabian”)—lived in regions that were split into different states during independence movements. Thus segments of tribal groups became separated by political borders but still continue to live as one ethnic groups straddling political boundaries. Examples of this situation may be found in such works as Dickson's *The Arabs of the Desert* (Dickson 1951), and *Kuwait and Her Neighbors* concerning Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and other Gulf states (Dickson 1956), and Leo Frobenius' *Volksmaerchen der Kabylen*, where the traditions of the Berber nation cover major segments of both Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia (Frobenius 1921–1923).¹²

2. Common Affective Grounds

From a psychological perspective, folk traditions of the entire Arab World, except for a few isolated cases, lack expressions that may be interpreted as Oedipal, dealing with the triad of son-father-mother. These traditions, regardless of ethnicity, race, religion, or gender, universally—from the Atlantic to the Eastern borders of Iraq—project what has been termed “The Brother-Sister Syndrome”. The “Syndrome”

⁹ Designated as Type He-S, 880A\$, *Husband's Indiscreet Boast about his Wife's Beauty Brings about her Destruction*. Motifs: N104\$, “Unfortunate beauty: beauty of innocent woman causes communal conflicts (wars). She is blamed”; F575.1.5.1.1\$, “Remarkable beauty: woman with buttocks so high that a pomegranate (apple, orange, watermelon, etc.) rolls through underneath small of her back as she lies on floor”; etc.

¹⁰ Reported from North Africa (Culture Area 6 Tuareg). Motifs:

T160.0.2.1\$, T0160.0.2.1\$, “Digital defloration”; T160.0.1.2.3\$, “Defloration by proxy (an arbitrator who would testify to the bride's virginity)”.

The present writer had read this account as reported by one of the Gulf WEB journals a few years back. The biographical information was committed to the internal Hard Disk on my computer. Unfortunately, that disk broke down and proved to be beyond repair.

¹¹ The ritual for defloration, especially in desert, rural and lower-class urban communities, is undertaken by the groom or a midwife in the presence of the bride's male relatives and is celebrated publicly by displaying the bloody kerchief used to clean the bleeding bride. Proud chants accompany the display.

Yâ ‘arûsah, bayyadî esh-eshâsh,
“O Bride! you have whitened the gauze,
Yâ ‘arûsah, haliqîk rashshâsh
O Bride! Your ‘earring’ is a sprayer [of blood].”

The following introduction to a Cairene urban joke (titled “Instant virginity”) illustrates some facets of the continuation of the folk process among the middle class:

A maiden's virginity is of paramount importance in Arab culture; bleeding after the ritual-like defloration procedure is the only acceptable proof of a girl's virginity. Although the defloration ceremony is not a part of wedding procedures among the middle class, a bride's bleeding as a sign of virginity is still closely watched for. (El-Shamy 1979, pp. 231–32, No. 68).

For an encompassing survey of this ritual, see: (Ghanim 2015, *The Virginity Trap in the Middle East*, pp. 123–35). For select motifs associated with this ritual, (see Appendix C).

¹² It may be noted that these regions are not presented here as constituting a *homogeneous* society/culture. This is due to the fact that the anthropological concept of “culture area” (of which the Middle East is supposed to have 23 [at the period of awareness of our present subject matter]. The “Arab World” within the Middle East is constituted of 14 such areas. Some may be designated as *non-“Arab,”* e.g., Area 6 “The Tuareg” and Area 9 “The Beja”), but the concept of a “culture area” presupposes sharing significant features with its neighboring areas to warrant similarity, but diverges on significant features to warrant dissimilarity.

revolves around the affectionate tie binding brother-and-sister; all others who may enter the sphere of that tie become part of Syndrome. The maternal uncle (*al-khâl*) is pivotal in the Arab World in providing his sister's children (usually, the son) with love and affection (El-Shamy 1981, 2013).

Typically, scholars in the Arab World follow Europe-trained psychologists (psychiatrists) and adopt their Oedipal (Freudian) argument presumably because it is thought to establish desirable common grounds between Arabs and the West.¹³ Meanwhile they totally ignore the "Brother-Sister" documented argument.¹⁴ Perhaps because it applies to them personally and would entail disgracing themselves (El-Shamy 2013, pp. 25–26, n. 32). In the Arab World, Oedipal themes do occur infrequently, but these occurrence hardly ever crystallize into an Oedipus Complex. The following are relevant tale-types with Oedipal or Oedipal-like themes reported from various parts of the Arab World (El-Shamy 2004a).¹⁵

A Contemporary Psycho-Political Case

The prestigious *Al-Ahram* daily published on its web version¹⁶ a "reportage" on the personal life of the celebrated poet ʿAbd-el-Rahmân El-Abnûdî, who gave re-created folksongs a powerful presence in the Arab World. He acquired the national nickname of "*El-Khâl* (The Maternal-uncle)". His sister's son wrote affectionately:

Thanks to the *khâl*: what a *khâl*! My *khâl*, the brother of my mother! My mother told me when I was little, "Your *khâl* has no match: [if] you obey him, you will win; [but if] you 'exit [the realm] of obedience to' him"

I replied, "How would I—O mother of mine—disobey, while you . . . and my *khâl* are from the same mud [clay] and earth!"

The maternal nephew described the living circumstances under which the nuclear family was living at the time. Notably, no mention of a wife for the *khâl* nor a husband for the mother:

The *khâl* was living with us.¹⁷ Many a time has my mother—who was older than the *khâl*—said to me, 'Go, O my son, call the *khâl*'.

¹³ It seems that the existence of an Oedipus Complex among members of an ethnic group has become a source of pride: "to be like the West" (El-Shamy 2013, p. 44). A few years ago, members of "Adabiyât" ['Adabiyyât] email received a declaration that an "Oedipus" tale has been discovered in Iran (regrettably, the present writer did not keep that message). Surprisingly and without notification, in one major case researchers (Johnson and Price-Williams 1996) altered data given in one of the present writer's publications so that they may comply with their own readings of field texts manifesting an "Oedipus Complex" pattern. (See: DOTI, p. xiii). The same approach is employed with reference to structure/morphology of a North African folktale; see: El-Shamy's review of Vladimir Propp and the *Universal Folktale* by Peter Gilet (El-Shamy 2011).

¹⁴ Except for a single case by Lundell (2015), Westerner as well as Arab scholars do not even mention the Syndrome. Consequently discussions of its merits or demerits do not exist. Lundell stated:

"El-Shamy is correct to respond to folklorists who insist on placing the oikotype of the Oedipal syndrome into a global arena, particularly into a North African/Southwest Asian context. It is, in large part, this critique that is the major element driving the argument in *Beyond Oedipus*."

¹⁵ Tale-Types: AT 931, "Oedipus. As foretold by the prophecy, the hero kills his father and marries his mother". He-S 931A\$, "Oedipus-unfulfilled: Mother-son Incest Averted". 931B\$, "A Father Rapes his Daughter". 931C\$, "The Father who Hates his Daughters and Kills them. One is spared and he falls in love with her; she flees and eventually marries her rescuer". 932\$, 933, "Brother-sister Incest: the Sethian Complex (Syndrome)". 932A\$, (formerly-932\$), "The Sister who Desires a Son Sired by her Brother Achieves her Goal: the Unsuspecting Brother". 932B\$, "A Mother's own Daughter as her Daughter-in-law; Bride Behaves as a Daughter-in-law. Brother-sister marriage (sister as wife)". 932C\$, (formerly-932A\$), "Paternal-cousins (or Foster Brother and Sister) Commit Adultery (Fornication)". 933, "Gregory on the Stone. [The son of an incestuous union between brother and sister is abandoned [. . .], and undergoes penance]". 933A\$, "The Fate of the Son Born of a Brother Raping his Sister". Cf., Tale-type AT 613C*, "Brother and Sister Heal the King. [They had fled home because of father's intent for the brothers to marry their sisters. Masking as man sister heals king; he marries her later]".

¹⁶ Dated 2/9/2014. For Abnûdî's associations with the *ṣīrah* genre, see p. 32, below. (Al-Ahram Daily Newspaper: <http://ahram.org.eg/>).

¹⁷ Motif, P254.0.1\$, "Household composed of only brother and sister(s). They live alone in palace (house, cave, etc.)".

This familial arrangement, where an unwed brother resides with his sister's family, indicates that the "*khâl*" (El-'Abnûdî) and his wife were separated at that time. Journalistic attempts were made at a later date to present him in a more favorable

For fifty years I have been listening to The *Khâl*. [...].

The appearance of “maternal-uncle” in a folklore item is merely like the appearance of the tip of an iceberg. As the quote shows the speaker (ego) and his mother who is the “*khâl*’s” sister are interconnected “systemically” (a term to be differentiated from the adjective “systematically”): this is the essence of the concept of a “syndrome”: if a constituent is found, others are more than likely to be there as well. The newspaper article is an illustration of a phenomenon: the seemingly endless cases of boy maternal-uncle (hyphenated) affectionate bond. This bond is an inherent component of the brother-sister tie. (See Appendix D).

The “Brother-Sister Syndrome” is *not* confined to Egypt. Evidence of its existence in other Arab lands abound. A case from Lebanon is given in Suad Joseph anthropological study titled “Brother/Sister Relationship: Connectivity, Love and Power in the Reproduction of Patriarchy in Lebanon.” (Joseph 1994) Unfortunately, since the Egyptian data are derived primarily from folklore, Joseph treated them as “romantic view” (i.e., fairytale-like) rather than “real” living human’s actual experiences (El-Shamy 2013, pp. 26–30).¹⁸

3. Emergence of Interest in Arab Folklore Materials

Considering the fact that “folklore” is human “behavior” (El-Shamy 1967, 1976b), be it utilitarian aimed at satisfying needs (such as food, dwelling, physical wellbeing, etc.) or aesthetic/artistic (meant to be expressive of sentiments and emotions such as love, hate, fear, etc.), its various facets have been exercised by populations for millennia. With reference to the Arab World, four major stages may be designated:

First: Early Islamic Period.

Second: Age of the spread of Islam and the Arabic language as its inseparable companion.

Third: Emergence of short-lived trends towards objectivity. Al-Jâhiz as the first folklorist.

Fourth: Becoming aware of “Folklore” as a discipline in Europe and the USA.

3.1. First: Early Islamic Period (Continued Emphasis on the Poetry and the Poetic)

Islam, like its two monotheistic predecessors: Judaism and Christianity, has been strongly averse to artistic expressions of polytheism (e.g., painting, sculpture, songs, dances, narrative accounts and poetry of polytheism, etc.). In fact, religious interdiction against painting and photography still lingers until the present time viewing photography and sculpting are sinful since they imitate God’s creation. Also, Islamic teachers, who assumed the responsibility for telling the best and most truthful narratives, considered narrating for entertainment to be an idle activity that bordered on violation of religious tenets. For example, oral narrative arts encountered the same prohibition directed against poetry, music and singing, play and games, and drawing and sculpture. Poetry—in spite of religious condemnation survived and thrived. It continued to play an important role in the formal cultures of Muslim states. Contemporary Arab states set lavish prizes for both classical (*fushâ*) odes as well as poems in vernacular. In the Arabian Peninsula, the birthplace of Islam, “*nabati*” (vernacular) poetry continues to maintain powerful presence (Sowayan 1985, 1992). Meanwhile, sculpture was totally stamped out. Narration, especially for entertainment, survived in varying degrees—as did music, dance,

familial light by citing his remarriage to another, and dropping mention of the first unsuccessful marriage altogether. Hostility toward a *khâl*’s wife is an essential part of the Syndrome (Mot., P297.2.8\$, “Maternal-uncle’s wife (*marat-khâl*)”; K2218.5.3\$, “Treacherous maternal-uncle’s wife”). El-’Abnûdî’s recent death, in April, 2015, was treated as a national loss. °Adly Mansour, the interim President of Egypt then, joined the funeral of “*El-Khâl*” (as the deceased was dubbed). Compare the familial setting from Colombia indicated on p. 25, below.

¹⁸ For a broader application of “Brother-Sister” ties as a new “archetype,” see El-Shamy’s “Sister and Brother (Motif, P253)”, in (El-Shamy 2005, pp. 349–61). Also see the recent American motion picture “Gifted” (2017); where a “maternal-uncle” becomes a sociological father to his deceased sister’s daughter (his niece).

play and games—but mainly outside the sphere of formal Islamic teachings which invariably tagged them with their condemnation. Koran branded poets as liars and vagrant (El-Shamy 1979, p. lvii).

At the end of the Nineteenth Century, Richard Burton registered the general attitude of ‘good men’ of his time toward folk non-religious arts:

“[T]he taint still lingers in Al-Islam: it will be said of a pious man, ‘He always studies the Koran, the Traditions and other books of Law and Religion; and *he never reads poems nor listens to music or to stories.*’ ” (Burton, vol. 10, p. 128; *Ital. added*).

3.1.1. Early Narration in Hijaz (Arabia)

The most prominent feature of expressive verbal utterances in Arabia has been poetry and the poetic. Little is known about narratives in pre-Islam Arabia (*Jāhiliyyah*-Era). As lately as 1964, the question: “Did Arabs know the story?” was being considered by Arab literary scholars. (Al-Shūbāshī 1964). He argued that poetry and poets, such as ‘Antar ibn Shaddād al-‘Absī, ‘Imrī’ al-Qays, and Tarafah ibn al-‘Abd were held to be the reporters of social events and keepers of tribal history and public image. Yet, there is no poem from that time period which constitutes a full narrative. Only references to single themes (motifs) or fragmentary episodes are to be encountered in poetic repertoires of that period (and to a great extent until the Twentieth Century.¹⁹ Similarly, sacred narrative accounts (myths) of pre-Islam deities are conspicuously absent. The exception seems to be a sketchy account of how two lovers (‘Isāf and Nā’ilah),²⁰ who violated the sanctity of the shrine of idols in Mecca were turned into stone, thus becoming idols themselves.²¹

Heroic poetry labelled ‘*Ayyām al-‘Arab* (Arab Days), is a field that attracted the attention of searchers for “epics” in Arab literature. Typically the materials offered in that field is treated as part of formal (classical) literature. (See below). Two “heroic” accounts, presumed to be historical, received special attention: “The Basūs War,” and “Dāhis and al-Ghabrā’ War” (See Hindāwī 1974?, below). One of the early European studies that characterized these events as “Epic” is Caskel (1930). Here, two uses of the word “epic” should be differentiated: “epic” as genre with characteristics set in Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and “epic/’*ustūrī/khurāfi*” as an adjective used for the semantic effect of exaggeration (e.g., “epic fight,” “epic celebration,” or “epic meal,” etc.). C. Werner’s *Ajyām al-‘Arab; Studien zur altarabischen Epik*, belongs to the latter usage.

Some time around the 1300–1400s a match to/replica of the ancient “Days of the Arabs”/“Arab Days” emerged among Arab folk groups. This category of the poetry that combines poetry with prose is labelled *sīrah*.²² Unaffected by Islamic interdiction, the desert tradition of tribal raids and counter-raids continued among desert Arabs until modern times (Kurpershoek 1997).

During the beginning of the period of search for epics (*malāhim*) in Arabic literature during the mid 1950s, *siyar* were characterized as “epics”. Though widely accepted, this depiction is inaccurate. Enno Littmann had offered his views on this issue introducing an Egyptian heroic saint’s folk legend about “Ahmed il-Bedawi”,²³ which he labeled “Lied” (i.e., song) (Littmann 1950a).

¹⁹ For additional information on this subject, see (El-Shamy 1979, p. xlii n. 3).

²⁰ Ibn al-Kalbī (d. A.H. 206/A.D. 821/822). *al-‘Asnām* (Idols) (Ibn al-Kalbī 1952; Ibn al-Kalbī 1965).

²¹ Motifs: C116, “Tabu: sexual intercourse in sacred precinct”; and Q551.3.4, “Transformation into stone [(petrification)] as punishment”. Type: 779E\$, 1645D\$, cf. 707.

Link: |A977.5.5.1.1\$, Rock in shape of animal (man) is that animal (man) petrified. |D231, Transformation: man to stone. [Petrification]. |F768.1, City of petrified people.

Ref.: Qazwīnī I 279; Chauvin V 196 No. 115; DOTI 308 386 895/[lit.]; MITON; Sâfī 221–29 No. 52[+1].>

See: Faris, pp. 8, 25”. Compare the modern account titled “An Arch-Saint’s Attempt to Punish Sinners,” (El-Shamy 1979, pp. 151–53 and notes p. 278).

²² Motif J169\$, *sīrah/siyar*: personal life-history (biography, vita).

²³ Motifs: A110.1\$, Modern demigod (saint, hero) a retention from ancien deity. El-Badawī (Bes), El-Disūqī (Horus), Saint Patrick, etc.); and A199.8.2.1\$, Bes: deity with contrasting roles.

Ref.: Ions 110–11; Shamy (el-) “Eg. Balladry”: Intro. “el-Badawī and Bint-Birri” No. 56 4.>.

Clearly influenced by the characteristics of the Babylonian Gilgamesh epic, Littmann observed that “Among the Arabs and the Abyssinians, and also perhaps among the Hebrews and the Arameans, the epic of ‘hero-legends’ (probably meaning accounts about a demigod) is expressed in prose. Only among the Ugaritics and Babylonians were there *true* epics whose origin is perhaps due to foreign influence.” (El-Shamy 1976a, p. 5. *Ital.* added).

Similarly William Kelly Simpson, in his introduction to *The Literature of Ancient Egypt* (Simpson 1972, p. 2) stated:

“The [formal] culture of Egypt was not expressed in epics or drama . . . ” (El-Shamy 1976a, p. 5).

However, the desire to add the prestige of having “epics”, like Greeks and Indians, etc. do, proved stronger than historical and literary realities. (See *Sîrah*, below).

3.1.2. Poetry-Like Proverbs

Most of the “classical” (older) Arab anthologies of proverbs belong to the literary category of culture. They were covered amply and meticulously in Victor Chauvin’s *Bibliographie* (Chauvin 1892–1922, a misnomer for this Encyclopedic work). Occasionally, an old proverbial utterance seems to continue into contemporary usage. Modern collection (e.g., Taymûr 1871–1930), typically indicate that a proverb in their collection has its counterpart in a classic anthology (e.g., Ibn-^cAasim (1960, 1982)/Al-Dabbî, al-Maydânî, etc.).

Heretofore untreated features of Arabic proverbs are identified and contrasted to their counterparts in Western proverb studies. (Taylor 1962)

From a folkloristic perspective, four general sub-genres of proverbial utterances may be designated: (I) “True proverb,” (II) “proverbial phrase”, (III) “proverbial simile”, and (IV) “Wellerism”. (See Taylor 1962 *The Proverb*). These may be translated into Arabic as follows: *al-mathal al-haqq*, *‘ibârah mathaliyyah*, *tashbîh mathalî*, and the *maqûlah Guhawîyyah* or *qawl-wa-radd* (quotation-and-reply),²⁴ respectively; with reference to Arabic proverbs, the proposed latter term designating quotation-and-reply (cf. No. 28, below) only approximates the structure of the “Wellerism” (quotation-ascription-action). Other proverb-like categories such as “truism”, “maxim”, “cliché”, “epithet”, etc. may also be designated. Each of these sub-genres has its own identifying features.

Although not *per se* “poetry”, proverbs use—as do “true riddles”—most of the devices of poetry: e.g., meter, binary construction, balance and end rhyme (the *bayt* with dual-hemistiches format, and occasionally the stanza format), alliteration, assonance, consonance, hyperbole, personification, parallelism, paradox, unusual syntax, etc. The generic qualities of an utterance, and the presence or absence of these traits play major roles in determining the effect a ‘proverb’ generates. (El-Shamy 1990b, pp. 153–60).

An example of the association between proverbs and tales is illustrated by Arab accounts of events in which a protagonist, human or non-human, utters a statement. Frequently that utterance would be characterized as “*fa sârat mathaln*” (it became a proverb).²⁵ Also see, Al-Bâzargân (1983).

R165.1, Rescue of poor girl by St. Nicholas. Saint keeps her from being sold into slavery. Type: cf. 516E\$.

Ref.: DOTI 281 282/{Sdn}; Shamy (el-) “Eg. Balladry”: “Khadrah *al-sharîfah*” No. 57/cf.>

²⁴ Examples: J1309.4\$, “O Gohâ, count your sheep!”: “One standing up and one lying down!”.

Ref.: Taymûr (2000) No. 2195.>

P262.5.1.1\$, “Gohâ was told, ‘Your mother-in-law likes (loves) you’. He replied, ‘Perhaps she has gone insane’”.

Link: P798.4.2\$, They said [to the man]: “Your mother-in-law likes (loves) you!” He answered, “And I like (love) her daughter ‘to death!’”.

Ref.: Anîn 65/(stepmother); Taymûr No. 2200/(stepmother).>

²⁵ Examples, Motifs: K2042.1\$, ‘It is for some reason that Qasîr cut off his own nose’.

Ref.: Damîrî II 132; Aalûcî II 181–83/(lacks elabor.): Shamy (el-) “Arab Mythology” No. 122; Al-Hujelân (2009) 241 413–14 No. 26–6.>

P26.2\$, Defeated queen commits suicide: “[Better] with my own hands than my enemy’s (‘Amr’s)!”.

Ref.: Jâhîz V 279 n. 2/(Hârûn: résumé and references).>

In numerous cases the stories generating a proverb had faded away, but the proverb remained in oral circulation, thus making reviving the vanished tale possible. This phenomenon has been labelled: “latent tradition,” a concept exemplified by Motif, P253.3, “Brother chosen rather than husband or son”. It incorporates the familial situation presented in Tale-type: AT 985, *Brother Chosen Rather than Husband or Son*. Although the proverb is still invoked constantly in daily life, the story associated with it seems not to be known.

It has been pointed out:

This rendition of a literary narrative represents what may be described as *latent folk traditions* brought forth into the overt expressive realm (folklore) via a popular or academic culture channel of communication. The traditionality of the value of the narrative’s contents is evidenced by the recurrence of the expression of the strong emotional bond between brother and sister. As a *folk narrative*, the present text demonstrates the high degree to which a “latent tradition” is readily embraced by an individual who is cognitively and affectively apt to perceive and identify with its contents (El-Shamy 1999, p. 318, No. 45). (See Appendix E)

3.1.3. Genres

Concerning Arab folk narrative prose genres, El-Shamy (1979) presented an inclusive anthology covering virtually every *prose* narrative genre (Maerchen, legend/pre-legend, memorate/post-memorate, joke, anecdotes, formula, cycles, etc.) found in Egypt, the Arab World, and sub-Saharan Africa. For example, a coptic religious (saint’s) legend from Egypt (Type AT 300, *The Dragon Slayer*) seems to be associated with a Nigerian political about account about the Hausa states.²⁶ (See El-Shamy 1979, and Appendix F). Another work by the present author on the same topic is “Factors involved in Typological and Genre Studies.” (El-Shamy 2007). However, as the present essay demonstrates, features of other genres and fields of folklore are addressed within specific contexts via the concepts of “motif” and Tale-type. A more encompassing work on literary genres, including narratives, songs, proverbs, riddles, etc., was given by Ibrâhîm (1981).

3.2. Second: Age of the Spread of the Arabic Language and Islam

Arab and Islamic traditions were adopted by various nations and ethnic groups living in areas extending from the Atlantic Ocean in the East to the western borders of China. The cultural legacy of early Islamic-Arab period was referred to as “*turâth*”, a label that came to stand also for folk “legacy”.

In Arab and Islamic communities the word *turâth* (legacy/heritage or “lore”) is inherently connected to Arab culture in general and the Arabic language—its inseparable companion—in particular. Of the various dialects (*lahajât*) of the Arabian Peninsula, the Quraysh dialect became the only recognized form of formal Arabic (“classical”) literature due to its close association with the Koran and Hadîth which are held as sacred. In this respect Arabic occupies a unique position, perhaps unparalleled, in the value systems of Arab and Muslim peoples. It is also believed to be the language of creation (Genesis) and of the inhabitants of Paradise in the hereafter (*‘ahl al-jannah*). It is God’s Language, but only man’s parlance. Therefore, any threat to its purity is met with fierce resistance. Since the term *turâth* is also applied to folk traditions, usually expressed in colloquial Arabic, a clash between religious “*turâth*” and folk “*turâth*” was unavoidable.

²⁶ Text No. 34. “*Mari Girgis and the Beast*.”

The dragon slayer tradition is recurrent in sub-Saharan Africa and in a number of cases is associated with nationhood. A salient example is the “Legend of Daura,” which accounts for the establishment of the seven Hausa states. This narrative is also referred to as the story of “Bayazida,” or “Abuyazid” or “Bayajida”; see Johnston, No. 41; also nos. 28 and 32.

For an impressive anthology of Moroccan Arab and Berber genres—ranging from the Maerchen to *Gôḥa* anecdotes (“Adventures of Jha,” to riddles and proverbs, see Galley and Sinaceur (2016). Probably due to its massive volume, typological identification pioneered by Galley in her earlier works from Algeria were, regrettably, not applied.

3.2.1. Shared Sacred Islamic Narratives

There are two major sources for the sacred and the presumably sacred Islamic narratives (religious tales) that are common to all Arab and Islamic societies: 1. Koranic Texts, and 2. Hadith Texts attributed to Prophet Mohammad.

(1) Koranic Texts

With the introduction of Islam in Arabia a new phase was ushered in. Sacred narrative accounts constituting full stories (*qisās*) appeared on the scene as part of the Koran. Since numerous Arab tribes had embraced Christianity and Judaism and were aware of biblical stories, it may be assumed that the Koranic texts had oral traditional parallels and that they generated vernacular renditions as well.

In addition to stories about God's Messengers and Prophets, the following sacred stories may be cited as affiliated with the sacred texts and shared by all Muslims, Arab and non-Arab:

Tale-type AT 759, *God's Justice Vindicated*. (The Angel and the Hermit)—[apparent misdeeds explained] (Koran 18: verse 65–82); and new Tale-type He-S 917\$, *Innocent (Chaste) Man Slandered as Seducer (Rapist): Subsequently Vindicated* (Batu/Baīfī and Anubu's wife, Joseph and Pharaoh's wife, etc.). (Koran 12: Verses 23–56)

Some of the narratives show strong affinity to ancient religious accounts, as in the case of new Tale-type, He-S: 470C\$,/801A\$ *Man in Utopian Otherworld Cannot Resist Interfering: He is Expelled*. Motif C411.1, "Tabu: asking for reason of an unusual action" (Koran 18: verses 66–83) (El-Shamy 1979, pp. 258–60 No. 12). How these narratives are perceived is an issue addressed by the preset writer in a heretofore an unpublished paper: "Typology and the Sacred Qur'ānic and Quasi Qur'ānic Narrative in Islamic Literature" (El-Shamy 2011).

These narratives include Tale-types: HeS: 470C\$,/759/+801, *Man in Utopian Otherworld Cannot Resist Interfering: Meddler Expelled*. ("It Serves me Right!"), which is contrasted to the Qur'aanic *qissah* (story) of "Moses and El-Khidr. And Type: AT 725, *The Dream*, a novella that describes how a "youth was persecuted for not relating to his seniors his dream of future greatness"; the tale is based on motifs: C53.5.2\$, Tabu: dealing with omens (dreams) without saying, "Good, if God wills"; and V515.2.4\$, Vision in which youth sees Sun and Moon at his right and left, and king (father) kneeling (humbled) before him. And Type: HeS: 917\$, *Innocent (Chaste) Man Slandered as Seducer (Rapist): Subsequently Vindicated*. (Batu/Baīfī and Anubu's wife, Joseph and Pharaoh's wife, etc.), which concludes with the Motif, J1174.5, Man's torn garment as proof of his innocence of rape. [Joseph falsely accused].

(2) Hadith Texts

Some of Prophet Mohammad's reported narrative Traditions entered the realm of folklore (without being associated to the sacred source). Due to their recurrence, both have been designated as new tale-types.

The first is He-S: 620A\$, *Benevolent (Hospitable) Lies and Malevolent (Miserly) Ones Become Truths*. (El-Shamy 1988b, pp. 91–92). It may be viewed as an "exemplum".

It tells of a man, his wife, his mother and wife's mother (his mother-in-law). The wife insists on having her husband's mother moved away from their home. The husband obeys and moves his mother to a humble place. Holy men happen to visit the man's main home. They are discourteously treated by the wife's mother who claimed that the sounds of live stock they heard were those of wild beasts (predators). The holy visitors stop by the place of the man's mother. She welcomes them and tries to assuage their fear of sounds of wild beasts they hear by claiming that the sounds are of cattle and sheep they own. The holy men declare: "'u^ctiya mutaminnin mâ tamannâh ... (Each wisher is granted what he wished for), even if evil" (Ibn-^cAasim 1982, 168–69, No. 280).²⁷

²⁷ This story incorporates the following Motifs: D2105.8\$, "Pretended provision (food, drink, etc.) supernaturally materialize"; H594.2, cf. "Enigmatic statement: the flocks are only rocks and grass"; P249.3.5\$, "Conflict between husband and wife over

The second Tradition may be identified as encompassing two separate Tale-types: He-S 705B\$, “I Have Begotten Children from my Loins, and from my Womb!”: *Khurâfah’s Experience*; and He-S 953A\$, *Captive in Jinn-land is Ransomed by Telling Stories: (Khurâfah’s Report)*. (Ibn-^cAasim 1982, 169–71, No. 280). The narrative constitutes a frame story incorporating two other tale-types: AT 1889N, *The Long Hunt*, and AT 1511, *The Faithless Queen*. [Wife prefers loathsome paramour], or AT 590, *The Prince and the Arm Bands*. [Faithless mother conspires with paramour against her son]. (El-Shamy 2004a)

In a broader context, “Khurâfah” is the indigenous label for of the mythological; hence the Proverbial Simile: “Like Khurâfah’s Report”. It may also be used to designate a “fairytale” with fantastic unbelievable contents.

This narrative attributed to the Prophet (but the link is judged as doubtful) is a frame story that clarifies the meaning of the Arabic proverbial simile, “[Like] Khurâfah’s *ḥadīth* (report)”. Khurâfah being a man (with children) from the Tribe of ʿUdhrah who was taken as captive by jinn after being transformed into a woman (for disobeying a mystical command not to drink from a certain well). He lived among the jinn for years, married and begot children as a woman; then transformed back to a man when he submerged himself in a river. Consequently, he returned to his people and related his bizarre experiences: hence the expression.²⁸

These stories, clearly derived from oral traditions and passed as religious truths, indicate the presence in Arabia of a repertoire of fantasy tales (*Maerchen*) as early as the seventh century A.D. However, the majority of such tales seem to have dissipated with the passage of time, in addition to the religious interdiction of listening or telling them. Yet, some of them have become part of the folklore of Arab and Islamic lands.

Some accounts of ancient Assyrian or Greco-Roman myths and legends associated with material cultural relics in modern Syria are sometimes presented as Syrian. Such an identification is problematic. Usually, there are no detectable connections between the ancient myth or legend and the contemporary Syrian lore item. Such is the case, for example, with the account of “The Marriage between the Youth Pelops and the Maiden Hippodameia” presented as one of the “*ʿAsâṭīr shâmiyyah*” (Syrian Myth/Legends) on basis of a painting on display at the National Museum of Damascus (Al-Aswad 1985, pp. 249–52).

3.2.2. Shared Sacred “Islamic”, “Coptic” and “Jewish” Narratives (Saints and Sainthood)

Narratives and poetry in the realm of Islamic, Christian, and—to a lesser extent—Jewish beliefs, are expressed in a variety of forms. These include Sufi *madīḥ* (praise), saints’ legends and miracle-like *karâmât*, vrsified folk prayers, etc. and have overpowering presence in the enitre Arab World. Although such accounts do not necessarily originate in that time period of the “age of the spread Islam” many such accounts have their roots in ancient belief practices. Patai characterized Area 2 of North Africa as a region with “strong saint cult in the west” (p. 64). Actually, veneration of saints and other human beings is a striking feature of the various groups in the Arab World (with the possible exception of areas where strict-Wahhabi jurisprudence is dominant).

In his book titled *Gâmi^c karâmât al-ʿawliyâʾ* (*An Inclusive Collection of Saints’ Miracle-like Manifestations*), Yûsuf al-Nabhânî lists approximately fourteen hundred saints whom he had located in printed sources. About three percent of these saints are females. The *karâmât* (manifestations) al-Nabhânî cited are, in his words, “no less then ten thousand.” He outlined twenty-five major types

the treatment of each’s parent(s)”; P262.8.1\$, _cf. “Bad relations between husband’s mother and wife’s”; Q1.1, “Gods (saints) in disguise reward hospitality and punish inhospitality”; Q194\$, “Reward: lie (benevolent) becomes truth”; Q286.1, “Uncharitableness to holy person punished; Q591.2.2\$, Punishment: person says flock is rocks; it becomes so”.

²⁸ Motifs: C964\$, “Transformation to person of different sex for breaking tabu”; C963, “Person returns to original form when tabu is broken”; D12, “Transformation: man to woman”; D555.3\$, “Transformation by drinking from well (spring)”; F779.1\$, _cf. “Extraordinary experiences while bathing (usually illusory, hallucinatory)”; D695, “Man transformed to woman has children”; N793\$, “Adventures from entering pit, hole, cave, well, or crack (in ground)”; T578.2, “Man transformed to female (human or animal) bears offspring”.

of saints' manifestations, ranging from the ability to resuscitate the dead to the capacity to consume huge amounts of food.

A great many of the saints' manifestations have also been attributed to prophets as miracles. Al-Nabhâni states: "Whatsoever was a *karâmah* for a saint, is a *mu'gizah* for His [(God's)] Prophet," (Al-Nabhâni 1962, vol. 1, p. 11.); and that "sainthood is a less specific type of prophethood." (Al-Nabhâni 1962, vol. 1, p. 86).

The typical manner through which an ordinary person becomes a *waliyy* (saint) is to manifest a *karâmah* (act of benevolence from God, usually of supernatural quality). The Typical way for a saint to have his/her own shrine, if his community has not erected one already, is for the "dead" saint (i.e., his soul) to visit a living person and demand that one be erected.

In Egypt, for example, the saint cult often eclipses formal religious creeds.

Believers belonging to all levels of society, including "the elite", typically attribute these beliefs to personages associated with religion. Occasionally, a modern saint's legend can be traced to an ancient prototype. Beside Motif, A110.1\$, (in n. 23, above), another example may be found in the modern legend titled "The Generating of a Saint for a 'Saint-less' Community: A Dead Person Demands Recognition, (El-Shamy 2008, No. 38, pp. 277–79, 304). This account is actually a modern variations on the same ritual (process) described in an ancient text titled "The Prince and the Sphinx" (Green 1967, pp. 60–64, No. 6). The account involves the Sphinx, his site in a sad state of disrepair, coming to young Prince Thutmosis in a dream and asking that the site be restored. Thutmosis performed the task and the Sphinx rewarded him with becoming Egypt's ruler. This communication took place some 3400 years ago. (El-Shamy 2008, pp. 181–82, n. 657)

A contemporary occurrences of such instructions from the dead took place last year (2017). It involved a man (M.^cA.M.) who was 55 years of age when he died. The media reported the event widely (Al-Wafd newspaper, 9 February and 10 February 2017.) In this case, taking place in Qûs, Upper Egypt, the deceased did not show a *karâmah* (miracle-like manifestation) entitling him to the rank of sainthood; but the *umdah* (Mayor, administrative headman) of the village testified that the deceased was simply a pious man who spent most of his time in his room [presumably meditating]. Yet, spending most of one's time worshipping in cloistered quarters is hardly a supernatural manifestation deserving to be considered a *karâmah*. The deceased's *karâmah* was reported by others as:

"He came in a *ru'yah manâmiyyh* [i.e., sleeper's vision] to a number of his relatives and asked to be moved from the place of his burial [(presumably in the communal cemetery)] to the place of his *khulwah* in his own house."

Sadly, this case had a tragic ending. Upon requesting from civic authorities permission to unearth the corpse, the General Attorney's office and Forensics Department supervised the opening of the grave of the deceased who was to be enshrined. Newspapers reported (as a headline):

"His Tomb Was Opened. It Was Discovered that he Died Only a Few Hours Earlier Not 35 Days [Ago]."

Thus, through haphazard following of folk beliefs, the "deceased" proved to have been buried alive. His sufferings during the last thirty five days of his life must have been excruciating.²⁹ (For typological identification of the account, see Appendix G)

²⁹ For discussions on the centrality of the veneration of saints in the Arab World, see: Gilsenan (1973); Mostafâ (1981) where a general treatment of sainthood in Egypt is offered; also see Mu'awwad (2017) describing the rituals associated with al-'anbâ Shinûdah, a Coptic saint in Upper Egypt. Also see El-Shamy (1979), "Saints and Culture Heroes," pp. 140–69; and El-Shamy (2008, "Moslem 'awliyâ ('God's Favorites') and Coptic shuhadâ ('Martyrs')," Chp. III.B.3 pp. 144–52, and Chp. IV, "DEIFIED HUMANS" pp. 161–71).

3.3. Third: Emergence of Trends towards Objectivity (Early Classification of Folk Traditions)

The beginning of a short-lived Arab-Islamic awareness of “folk” practices (behavior) may be attributed to Abu-^cUthmân ^cAmr Ibn Bahr nicknamed Al-Jâhiz (d. 868 or 9 A.D.), an early Arab Intellectual (from Basra, Iraq).³⁰

Narration (*qasas*) has been a salient aspect of Arab-Islamic traditions. The early stories encompassed a wide variety of Arab-Islamic activities ranging from beliefs and rituals to mere supposedly historical occurrence (*akhbâr*/news). Lying has been associated with *qussâs* (narrators of stories/reporters of happenings): a label restricted to those who interpret seriously held sacred beliefs through narratives, outside formally acknowledged circles (El-Shamy 1979, p. xlvii.). By contrast, fantasy tales, held from both religious and historical perspectives to be frivolous and of nonserious consequences, were labeled “*khurâfât*” (nonsense, non-truths, superstitions, “myths”), as opposed to “*qisas*” (i.e., truthful or serious stories). Yet the term “*khurâfah*” as indicated above also stood for “myth”—“myth” being a matter of faith considered to be the truth (usually in a sacred sense) by someone other than the person using the term, for whom the matter was not so. Within this context, the cultural phenomenon labeled “women’s talk,” “women’s say,” “women’s tales,” or “old wives tales,” has been perceived and defined. (For examples of women’s creativity. (See Appendix H)

Although women poets, women priestesses and oracles (*kâhinât*), and women pseudo-prophets (*nabiyyât*) were reported throughout Arab history, no differentiating characteristic mannerisms were reported as their culture specialty. Thus, the assigning of this female-bound aspect of cultural behavior—namely, the telling of *khurâfât* or fantasy tales—to a category of a given population in the Arab World may be seen as an early case of demographic orientation in the study of that population. The association between women and nonserious narratives such as a “fairytale” still persists until our present time. It has been responsible for the development of faulty European perceptions about Arab narratives and their psychological implications. (See, fallacious “theories” p. 20, below).

3.3.1. Al-Jâhiz as the First Folklorist

Perhaps the earliest student of Arab folk cultures and communities to report this phenomenon in the eighth or ninth century A.D. was Al-Jâhiz a rationalist and promoter of the empirical, objective approach to the study of natural, social, and cultural issues. Also, it may be argued that he was the first Arab intellectual to present a folk narrative in full in its traditional folk style and dialogue (Al-Jâhiz 6, pp. 451–52).³¹ He also exhibited the qualities of rationalism, responsiveness to a female’s right to self-esteem. and freedom from traditional, negative stereotypical views of women. He used folk tradition of the time to buttress his non-orthodox views.

Attitudes of Moslems toward women stem primarily from the sacred Koranic accounts of the creation of Adam, his primacy and the subsequent creation of Eve as a derivative from and subsequent to Adam; also influential in the formation of these attitudes are the beliefs concerning the responsibility for the original sin of eating from the forbidden tree (or fruit) and consequent eviction from paradise. An overlooked fact may be pointed out: in spite of the fact that Koran assigns responsibility for the commission of the sin to both Adam and Eve (Koran 7:20–23) or even to Adam alone (20:117, 120–21), the prevailing view places much of the blame on Eve as the instigator and establishes a link between her and Eblis (Satan). This general perspective, formed loosely in reference to the sacred dogma, was

³⁰ Especially in his book titled *Kitâb al-Hayawân*. (*The Book of Animal[s]*). 8 vols., ^cAbd-al-Salâm Muḥammad Hârûn, ed., (Cairo: al-Halabî, 1938–45).

The author was nicknamed “Al-Jâhiz” (Popeyed/Googled-eyed) due to his protruding eyes. (Cf. Motif, F512.7\$, “Popeyed person (*jâhiz*, ‘*buhluq*’”). He was born in the year 150 A.H. and died in 255.

³¹ A “Narrative’s dramatic dialogue—(told as drama, as opposed to mere description)” is designated as Motif, Z18.0.1\$. “The story is an anecdote involving a debate between husband and wife; it contains the following motifs”: J960.1\$, “Man tries to persuade woman that elongated shadow of his limb (organ) on wall is indicative of his prowess”; U281.4\$, “Merits and demerits of size (large or small, tall or short)”; U281.4.0.1\$, “Size is unimportant; quality of performance is what counts”.

elaborated on by early interpreters of the Koran. According to these elaborations, God punished all creatures involved in this act: Adam, Eve, Satan, the viper (or the serpent), etc.; the severity of the punishment was proportionate to the degree of culpability. Thus it was reported that God meted out fifteen additional punishments to Eve and her daughters (i.e., women). Deficiency in mind and lack of religiosity were two of these punishments; and hence, the often quoted utterance, “*nâqisât ʿaql wa dîn* (They [i.e., women] are deficient in mind and religion).³² Associating women, especially the old, with Satan (the Devil) is a recurrent theme in daily social life and in folklore; though such expressions may not be taken seriously, they tend to reinforce the stereotype.³³

Contrary to this central matter of faith, Al-Jâhiz regarded both women and men as subject to the same environmental forces (cultural, social and physiological).³⁴ He boldly proclaimed:

“A woman is of sound religion (faith), sexual-honor, and heart, unless . . . [motivated by scruples or lust].”³⁵

This declaration by Al-Jâhiz’s, within the context of examining folk values, stands in sharp contrast to the assertion that “Women are lacking in mind and religion,” which was also reported as a saying by the Prophet Mohammad (*ḥadīth*). Considering the fact that Koran does not single Eve for the blame, the judgement of women involved seems to have been meant for a certain period or social situation under given conditions—as Al-Jâhiz stated. Yet, through males’ interpretation of religious dogma, the utterance has come to be treated *as if* it were a divine (Koranic) creed stipulating that women were created with this condition of deficiency.³⁶ Applying his viewpoint in assigning given practices as characteristic traits of a specific category of members of a population, he wrote:

With reference to the “say of women and the ‘womanlike’ [i.e., womanlike, the effeminate] (*qawl al-nisâʾ wa ʿashbâh-al-nisâʾ*)” concerning bats, they claim that if a bat bites a boy, he [the bat] will not retract ‘his’ fang[s] from his [the boy’s] flesh until ‘he’ hears the braying of a zebra. I will not forget my horror of a bat’s fang and my apprehension caused by its being nearby, due to [my] faith in that saying, until I came of age.

Women and the womanlike have *khurâfât* (superstitions/myths), . . . concerning this [belief] and [other beliefs of] its sort[;] perhaps we will mention some of them when we reach the [proper] spot [‘if God wills’]. (Al-Jâhiz, *al-Hayawân*, 3, p. 534).³⁷

Similarly, with reference to the *tinnîn* (dragon), Al-Jâhiz reported:

³² Motif, W256.6.1\$. “‘Stereotyping: ‘Women are lacking in mind and religion’”. For a list of these punishments see Hasan El-Shamy (2008): *Religion among the Folk in Egypt*: pp. 136–37, nn. 492 and 493.

³³ See Tale-types: AT 1353, *Old Woman as Trouble Maker*. Beats the devil; 1378, *The Marked Coat in the Wife’s Room*. [False token of woman’s infidelity]. and He-S 1353C\$, *Old Woman beats the Devil*: “Close this Crack [Vagina]!”.

³⁴ Motifs: T9.0.1\$, “Sexual frustration (deprivation)”; T271, “The neglected wife”; T201.1.1\$, “Marriage fatigue: decreasing value of (affection for) a spouse with passage of time”; T317.2.1\$, “Repression of lust by reading (reciting) holy book”; U248.4\$, “Sexual desire (love) affects perception”; H631.4.1\$, “What is strongest? Woman’s resolve.”

³⁵ Al-Jâhiz 3, p. 291, *ital.* added. Motif, V384.1.1\$, “Counter-belief (counter-interpretation): “A woman is of sound faith, honor, and heart)”.

Modern research addresses the issue of women and social power: Jalali (2017) discusses the issue of women and musical heritage in Tunisia; Slyomovics (Slyomovics 2001) explores the influence of popular culture in Algeria and Tunisia on feminine power; and (Slyomovics 2014) discusses poetry and power in Algerian anti-colonial resistance.

³⁶ This argument concerning the Koranic dogma is developed by the present writer. Motif, V384.1\$, “Extreme interpretations of religious dogmas concerning females (social category)”; and U248.5\$, “Gender affects perception: males and females perceive different things (and view the same thing differently)”.

³⁷ Motifs, P611.3.1.1\$, “Women’s talk (superstitious ways, old wives’ tales, old wives’ medicine, etc.)”; W202.1.1.3\$, “Indicator of femininity: women’s superstitious ways (old-wives’ tales, old-wives’ medicine, etc.)”; B789.0.1\$, “Bat fastens self with its fangs to victim’s face”; B789.1.1.1.1\$, “Bat releases victim upon hearing zebra’s braying”; J29.2.1\$, “Learning to overcome childhood fear.” . . . (The statement within brackets is a precautionary addition by the contemporary book editor.

Persians claim that [the multi-mouthed [female] supernatural being called] “al-ʿAgdahâni” is of greater [size] than a bull-camel, and that she may meet some people and swallow [many] a human-being from each direction of a mouth [of hers].³⁸

He then concluded:

“This is of the talk of vendors [(cf. *al-sûqah*)] and *al-ʿajâʾiz* (old women, or the aged)”. (5, p. 155)

Of thieving animals, Al-Jâhiz mentions a certain type of mouse that hoards and plays with money. He gives an account of a story (probably a ‘legend’) that tells of a mouse’s treasure. This narrative may be summarized as follows:

A man from ‘El-Shâm’ (Syria) spied [from a hiding place] a mouse bringing a *dînâr* (gold coin) from ‘his’ (its) hole. Knowing that the animal would bring out all its possessions, play with them, and then return them one-by-one back to the hole, the man waited till it became evident that all the gold had been brought out, and the mouse had played, and began returning them by taking back the first piece. During its absence, the man took all the money and went back to his hiding place. When the mouse returned and discovered the loss, it began leaping into the air [in fury] and hitting itself against the ground until it died.

Al-Jâhiz concluded that “this *ḥadīth* (report, account) is of women and the womanlike” (Al-Jâhiz 5, pp. 301–3).³⁹ Clearly, this old folk story dealing with animals is an indigenous Arabic development rather than a tale borrowed from India as some contemporary “specialists” assert. (Reynolds 2015, p. 258)

Evidence that Arab traditions provide across several centuries confirm the scarcity of the Panchatantra-like “animal tale” among groups in the Arab World.⁴⁰ The possible exception are the appearance of the hedgehog and the jackal as tricksters in Berber folk traditions of North Africa.⁴¹

On the basis of the above, it may be concluded that as early as the ninth century A.D., the role of telling *fantasy tales* was assigned to women and the womanlike. This assignment still prevails today as

³⁸ Motif, B15.1.2.6.1, “Seven-headed serpent”. Ref.: Jâhiz 155; DOTTI 100 250 285 402/{Mrc}; TAWT 25 n. 45.>

³⁹ This narrative is to be viewed as a legend. In addition to formal and stylistic characteristics, its contents are possible, but—as Al-Jâhiz concluded—improbable (while the “myth” is beyond the possible). The story belongs to a cycle of tales affiliated with Tale-type He-S: 327L\$, *Brother and Sister Possess Supernatural Animal’s (Cat’s) Treasure*; in which the magic animal suspects an organ of his of theft and beats it (himself) to death. (See introduction to El-Shamy 1999). Motif, B277\$, “Animal’s own property (possessions: field, crop, treasure, etc.)”; B778.1.2\$, “Mouse (rat) as thief”; N534.1.1\$, “Treasure discovered by following an animal”; F981.9.1\$, “Animal kills self (commits suicide)”.

⁴⁰ Concerning the absence of literary narratives from oral folktales, see (El-Shamy 1979, pp. lxxviii-l); also see, the section titled: “The Philosophy of Romanticism and the East,” in (El-Shamy 1990a, esp. pp. 67–71).

The evidence that El-Shamy (2004a) provides supports this relatively early observation concerning animal, including tales reported to be included in school textbooks. For examples, see tale-types:

AT 57, *Raven with Cheese in his Mouth*, was reported from oral traditions only twice (Oman and Algeria).

AT 76, *The Wolf and the Crane*, was reported only three times: two literary (Chauvin, Marzolph) and a single occurrence from supposed oral traditions. However the trustworthiness of the printed German text is in doubt since the source of the text is more likely to be Jehia (1967) himself re-presenting school reader’s text from his own memory.

AT 91, *Monkey (Cat, [tortoise]) who Left his Heart at Home*, was reported from current oral sources only twice (Egypt, Morocco). Chauvin cites the tale-type from literary sources only twice (*Kalilah*, and Ibn ʿArab-Shâh).

The same scarcity can be observed in El-Naggâr (1985, pp. 787–841). He provides presumably verbatim copies of a stack of literary narratives as “Samples of Animal Tales” from different ages, beginning with “*ḥikâyât al-hayawân min al-shiʿr al-Jahili* (Animal tales from Pre-Islamic poetry)” and concluding with the modern fables by Ahmad Shawqî’s (1868–1932). This indiscriminate sample includes evident texts from the literary *Kalilah wa Dimnah* (the Persian/Arabic adaptation of the Sanskrit *The Panchatantra*), as evidence of “Subjection of the text to Islamic culture” (El-Naggâr, p. 805), which has virtually no oral circulation.

⁴¹ See for example the data associated with new Tale-Type: He-S 59**\$, *Tricks and Countertricks: Two Animals Make Trouble for Each Other*. Series of Tricky Adventures; (the Jackal and the Hedgehog). Of the 21 occurrences DOTTI-A lists, only two are from the Levant Coast Area.

a gender-bound ‘culture specialty.’ Until relatively recently, collectors, with few exceptions, have not paid sufficient attention to females, the normal bearers of the fantasy tale (*haddūtah*, *Zaubermaerchen*, fairytale) characterized by the fantastic, as a source of Arab tales.⁴² Thus the absence of *Maerchen* from early folklore studies and tale indexes was a result of inadequate collecting and careless surveying of the available literature. Theories with racial overtones, such as C. W. Von Sydow’s on the origin of the *Maerchen* as a genre and its presumed absence among certain unimaginative peoples, are a product of these ethnocentric attitudes.⁴³

3.3.2. Folklore and Mental Health (An Early Case of Marital Counselling)

The sweeping declaration cited above was made in reference to actual social situations that seem to have prompted Al-Jāhiz to react to the negative stereotyping of women. One of these situations is presented in the form of another personal account given by a wise man describing how he used the social life of pigeons to solve a friend’s marital problems; the narrative may be summarized as follows:

A young man married a fine maiden, but she was very shy. In spite of his affection, she refused to allow him conjugal relations. All his gentle attempts to approach her, including advice from women relations of his and hers, failed. He considered divorcing her, but a wise friend (the narrator)—who raises pigeons and is familiar with the birds’ amorous nature—advised him to do the following: set the bride alone in a comfortable dwelling; provide her with all the necessities and many females’ luxuries; assign a maid who does not speak the bride’s language (Arabic) to serve her—so that they can have minimum communication but not a conversation; as she becomes lonesome, present her with a few pairs of pigeons (doves) as pets; she will watch them and will observe the satisfaction consensual tender mating bestows on both the female and the male; arrange for a wise woman to visit her and make sure that the link between gentle sexual intercourse and contentment is clearly understood; shortly afterwards, visit and converse with her; then try to get closer; if she is still resistant desist, and send the wise woman again.

When the bride overcame shyness (or aversion), she “permitted him her self.” Both emerged from [a state of] “*wahshah* (apprehension/loneliness)” to [one of] “‘*uns* (mirth/togetherness)” due to the pigeons’ example (Al-Jāhiz, 3, pp. 287–90).⁴⁴

The prescribed treatment here is comparable to the “reorganization of the social system to accommodate the afflicted party,” a technique applied by contemporary faith healers; in this case, both parties had to undergo changes. The shy bride’s refusal to honor marital commitments

⁴² Among the relatively early collectors of the folktale (excluding the ‘personal narrative’), who were successful in acquiring “fantasy tales” from women are the female collectors Légey (1926), and Stevens (1931); other female fieldworkers seem to have collected tales only from men (e.g., Blackman (1972). Male field workers who collected from women include Mueller (1902), Desparmet (Desparmet 1909–1910), Bergsträsser (1915), and H. Schmidt and P. Kahle (Schmidt and Kahle 1930). Aarne-Thompson’s *The Types of the Folktale* largely ignores these anthologies.

⁴³ Also see: (Taylor 1931), and (El-Shamy 1967, pp. 108, 285; 1979, p. xlviii; 1986c, pp. 269–70, spec. n. 27 and 29; 1986d, p. 28; 2004b, p. 152). Ignoring or suppressing the evidence offered in this regard leads to the perpetuation of academic fallacies such as those maintained by scholars such as Reynolds (2015, p. 258) (see p. 27, below).

⁴⁴ This factual account belongs to a cycle of narratives on “The taming of a difficult person,” (Tale-types 901–909\$); it is designated as a new Tale-type He-S, 904\$, *Tender Persuading of the Shy (Innocent) Maiden (Bride, Girl, Virgin)*. It incorporates the following motifs: P529.0.5\$, “Refusal by wife to honor legitimate marital obligations”; T311.0.3\$, “Overcoming aversion to conjugal relations through conditioning (psychotherapy, resocialization)”; T160.0.5\$, “Tender defloration (first sexual intercourse)”; T311.0.3.1\$, “Gentle arousing of bride’s interest in sex”; F1043\$, “Reaction to sensory deprivation”; U315.1\$, “Seeking a conversation (social interaction)”; F951.3.2.1\$, “Watching mating between lovebirds (pigeons, doves) arouses sexual desire”; J133.9\$, “Kindness learned from example of animal’s (bird’s) kind behavior: imitated”.

It is worth noting in this regard that this case should not be perceived as “folk medicine”, a field that folklorists normally treat. Al-Jāhiz, cites several cases such cases of folk medicine; see motifs: D1500.1.29, “Magic healing honey”, and F950.0.4.1\$, “Animal excreta as medicine”.

(affliction) was accommodated (El-Shamy 1972; El-Shamy 2008, pp. 92, 102, 235, 241).⁴⁵ Compare Sengers (2003) study on “*Women and Demons*”, a serious work shackled by misconceptions and unsupported inferences.

3.3.3. Al-Jāhiz’s Fieldwork

Al-Jāhiz characterized seemingly *individualistic reports given as current practices* as “lies” (fabrications). Thus, he wrote the following account—a ‘memorate’—concerning his professional fieldwork experience with reference to a report about a two-headed viper:

The author of *al-Mantiq* (*Logic*, [i.e., Aristotle]) claimed that a viper with two heads appeared [(i.e., was reported to have been seen)].

Trying to confirm the reliability of the report, Al-Jāhiz resorted to the standard practice of verification via the typical sources of Arab-Islamic traditions (especially language). Thus he writes:

I asked a Bedouin about that [phenomenon]; he claimed that this [report] is true. I said to him: ‘From which direction of the two heads does she *tas‘â* (creep forward)? And from which of the two does she eat and bite? He stated: ‘As for creeping [-forward], she does not creep, but seeks her need [(i.e., reaches her target)] by rolling over, like little boys roll over sand. As for eating, she eats the evening meal with one mouth, and the noon meal with another. As for biting, she bites with both heads simultaneously.

Al-Jāhiz judged his Bedouin informant in reference to this account: “Thus, he proved to be the biggest liar in all of creation (Al-Jāhiz, 3, p. 156).⁴⁶ Conversely, Al-Jāhiz used oral traditions to refute certain non-Islamic intrusive beliefs.

One such case is that accounting for the zoological fact that a viper (snake) has no legs.

It was then believed by some that the viper used to be like camel in size and form.

A comment by al-Jāhiz reveals some aspects of what must have been then a significant debate concerning the nature and source of extra-Quranic religious narratives that seemed to enjoy great popularity among the masses, who seem to have argued that it must have been a pre-Islamic Arab belief and denied its derivation from biblical sources. Rejecting this argument, Al-Jāhiz envisioned an arguer for the contested belief. He stated:

“If you were to allege that [...] this [account] is of the myths (*‘khurâfât’*) of Jāhilyyah [Pre-Islam] Bedouins, and that ‘Umayyah [ibn Abi al-Salt, the teller] did not take this from the ‘People of

⁴⁵ Motif, F959.8.2\$, “Treating mental illness by reorganization (rearrangement) of communal expectations (social roles). Thus, patient is better adjusted for living in community”.

⁴⁶ Motif, B15.1.2.1.1, “Two-headed serpent. One head in front and one at rear.”

With reference to the fabricated information (*‘intihâl*, or ‘fakelore’), compare the situation reported with reference to a contemporary dishonest informant employed by an unsuspecting collector (NakaNo 1982). The “informant” provided totally fabricated texts. (El-Shamy 1990a, p. 76, spec. n. 75)

Another more harmful case where the author is the source of forgery was also identified:

In 1991 a university press in the United States asked [the present writer] to evaluate a “collection” of tales recorded from women at a site in Cairo, Egypt. The “collection” was a part of a thesis successfully submitted to a European university for a graduate degree in anthropology, and had already been accepted for publication by a European press; the European publisher-to-be was seeking a co-publisher in the United States. After careful examination of the texts, [the present writer] concluded that all eighteen stories in the “collection” were fabrications [with evident European themes], and that none had any existence in the oral or written traditions of Egypt, or any other Arab country. The supposed collector/editor of these texts was invited to provide a rebuttal to the reasons cited as proof of the texts’ spuriousness, or show evidence of their authenticity; none was offered. (The U.S. press rejected the manuscript, but the thesis is out there in an academic environment ignorant of its misleading nature). (El-Shamy 1999, pp. 18–19. n. 1).

the Book' [...], I will cite for you a poem by ^cAdiyy ibn Zayd, who was a Christian . . . " that included the belief. (Al-Jāhiz, 4, pp. 164, 197–99, 200).⁴⁷

The observations of Al-Jāhiz on traditional folklife of his time was not confined to the verbal nor to just women. He reported on facets of hunting, food, wisdom, deception, ecology, religious groups, legal aspects of slavery, small group dynamics, natural medicine,⁴⁸ games and play/pastime,⁴⁹ professions,⁵⁰ etc. A salient example of his views that are still relevant today is his association between religions belief and "Characteristic manifestations of pious asceticism (*nusk*) among different ethnic, professional, and religious groups." He perceptively characterizes a Kharijite in terms that may be equated to a member of the current ISIL/ISIS.⁵¹

With the downfall of "rationalism" and its companion belief that man is responsible for his own actions (ⁱ*c* *tizāl*) as a system of Islamic thought,⁵² serious treatment of lore diminished.

The following centuries witnessed the absolute dominance of orthodoxy and belief in predestination. The adjective "*mu^ctazilī*" became a pejorative and Al-Jāhiz became a butt for ridicule.⁵³ Yet, Arab and Moslem authors still recorded a variety of the traditions that circulated during their era (El-Shamy 1995, vol. 1, p. vi).

⁴⁷ Motifs: A2371.3.1.1\$, Why viper has no legs—at first camel-like;

A2236.2.1.1.2\$, Punishment of viper: loss of legs (must creep on stomach);

A1737\$, *sakht*, *maskh* (devolution): creation of animals through degeneration to present forms.

A2236.2.1.1\$, Viper smuggles devil into paradise in her mouth: she is cursed.

Motifs: A2371.3.1.1\$, Why viper has no legs at first camel like;

A2236.2.1.1.2\$, Punishment of viper: loss of legs (must creep on stomach);

A1737\$, *sakht*, *maskh* (devolution): creation of animals through degeneration to present forms.

A2236.2.1.1\$, Viper smuggles devil into paradise in her mouth: she is cursed.;

For a recent treatment of this topic, see: (Fakhrānī 2018).

⁴⁸ Modern Studies: Hannā (1989a) traditional Medicine in Qatar (Arabic); Hannā (1989b) explores the medical wellbeing of mother and Child in Qatar; El-Hinnāwī (1998) explores the relation between folk medicine and environment in an Egyptian coastal area. Maqramī (1987), presents the related issue of national addiction to *qāt* in Yemen.

⁴⁹ A sample of recent studies on games and pastime are: Mslini (2017) describes children's games in Tunisia; Mahmūd (1976) discusses games of young boys and children in the Sudan; Shlābī (1996) reports on games and riddles in Libya. Also, compare: El-Naggār (1985, *Al-Ghatāwī al-Kuwaytiyyah* (Kuwaiti riddles)).

⁵⁰ Hussein (2017), clothes washers in Bahrain; and Al-Ghānim (1994) Diving as a profession the Gulf Region (and accompaniments).

⁵¹ Motifs: W5.1\$, Religious groups (denominational, sectarian) manifestations of asceticism.

Ref.: Jāhiz I 218–9.>

W5.1.1\$, Kharijite's asceticism: exaggeration of others's sins (disregarding the fact that God hates injustice even to the most unjust of all people).

Link: | A102.16.3\$, God hates injustice even to the most unjust (of all people). | V84.0.1\$, *takfir*: person judged as having become a disbeliever. | V357.4.1\$, Kharijites (*khawārij*) waged the first sectarian war in Islam.

Ref.: Jāhiz I 219.>

W5.1.5\$, Jew's asceticism: exaggeration in observing Sabbath.

Link: | V371\$, Moslem traditions about *al-kitābiyyīn* ("People-of-the-Book": Jews and Christians Also called *dhimmiyyīn*/*ahl al-dhimmah*).

Ref.: Jāhiz I 219.>

W5.1.2\$, Moslem-Sufi's asceticism (if he dislikes working): becomes fundamentalist (extremist), deems profit sinful, resorts to begging (soliciting alms). Type: cf. 1645B*.

Link: | J702.1, Dervish who stops work. [Imitates bird feeding its young; shown his mistake].

Ref.: Jāhiz I 220.>

W5.3.2\$, Gardener's pious asceticism: giving up stealing crop.

Link: | P410, Laborers. | P411.5\$, Gardener. | P723.1\$, Characteristic behavior of peasants (farmers, countrymen).

Ref.: Jāhiz I 219.>

⁵² Motif, V318.0.1\$, "Counter-belief: free-will. Man is responsible for own action by virtue of rationality—the Mutazilites (*Mu^ctazilah*) doctrine".

See "al-Mu^ctazilah (Mutazilites)" School of theology.

⁵³ Mot., F576.1.2\$, Extraordinary ugliness: person presented as image of satan.

Ref.: Ibshihī 355.>

Z84.2.1\$, Insult: ugliness ('buffalo-face,' 'drumstick-leg,' etc.)

Ref.: Ibshihī 355/pig-face/poem about al-Jāhiz.>)

For detailed treatments of the issues involved in the theological school of *ʿIʿtizāl* (also termed *Gāhiziyyah* (i.e., *Jāhizism*) and rationalism/objectivity.

For the extensive discussions on the Muʿtazilite School (See Appendix I).

3.3.4. Interest in Folklore Texts (Verbal and Non-Verbal)

Journals

Currently, there are a number of government financially-supported periodicals dedicated to the study of Arab folklore. In sequence of the date of their introduction to the public, these are:

Al-Finūn al-shābia [i.e., al-Shʿbiyyah], (Cairo, Egypt);

Al-Turāth al-Shaʿbī (Folk Heritage) (Baghdad, Iraq). Stopped;

Al-Maʿthurāt al-Shaʿbiyyah (Folk heritage) (Doha, Qatar), 1986-ff. (discontinued);

Al-Thaqāfah al-Shaʿbiyyah/Folk Culture (Manama, Bahrain);

Al-Fenūn/Al-Funūn al-Shaʿbiyyah (Jordan);

Al-Turath wa al-mujtamaʿ (Heritage and Society) (Palestine). Ceased to exist after 15 years of publication.

3.4. Fourth: Becoming aware of “Folklore” as a discipline in Europe and the USA.

Adoption by various Arab governments of “folklore” as a field worthy of consideration.

Forerunner of “Folklore” Studies as a Discipline

Interest in folk materials seem to have developed incidentally in 1929 when the Higher Institute of Arabic Music was established. It was constituted of two performing groups: one dealt with Band for Arab Music labeled the ‘Omm Kulthum (a star singer whose songs were mostly non-folksy); the other, labeled “Religious Recitation Band”, may be viewed as dealing with the verbal and musical performance of religious hymns most of which are folksy in nature.

In spite of vividness of Al-Jāhiz’s pioneering reports on folk traditions of his era, these reports did not generate further interest on the part of students of Arab culture. Interest in “folklore” in the Arab World as an academic discipline has its roots in Western intellectual circles, especially Germany where the collection of the Brothers Grimm had far reaching cultural and social effects. The extent of this effect is still largely unexplored. (See above)

While a few North African language specialists collected and published folktales for educational purposes, not a single Arab—save the supposed copiers of the *Thousand and One Nights*, ventured into publishing a collection of folktales or songs.

It was French and German collections of field texts and other reports on folklife that contributed significantly to the preservation of various aspects of Arab folk traditions. The former was mainly due to colonial ambitions in North Africa, especially among Moslem but non-Arab Berbers, while the latter was due to similar interests in South Arabia and East Africa.

French: Basset (1887, 1897, 1909, 1924–26); Delphin (1891a, 1909–10b); Desparmet (1886–1916, 1909–1910); Galtier (1907); de Parçeval, 1858; Machuel (1900). **German:** Jahn A. (1902); Hein, and Mueller 1909); Littmann (1910); Mueller (1902, 1905, 1907); Prym and Socin (1881); Spitta (1880, 1883); Reinisch (1900); Rhodokanakis (1908); Stumme (1895, 1898, 1900); Socin (1883, 1893).

A few such collections in English can be found: e.g., Green (1909); Lane (Lane[1842] 1973); Elder (1927); Sayce (1900, 1920).

As pointed out above, for centuries, Arabic speaking and Muslim populations were viewed as belonging to one of two demographic categories (comparable to, but not identical with, social classes): *al-khāssah* (the literati/elite) and *al-ʿāmmah* (the commoners) or *al-sūqah* (marketplace people) the

latter may be seen as designating ‘the folk’.⁵⁴ Not only that dialectical Arabic and its literatures (*‘adab al-lahajât*) along with other forms of their expressive cultures were shunned, but also viewed as deviations from the correct religious path and a threat to the faith. This attitude still prevails among members of conservative groups until today.

Governments existed to serve the *khâssah* category of the population. As a boy growing up in Egypt during the mid 1940s, the present writer vividly recalls that folk/*baladî* music/song was played on the radio for a mere half an hour (12:30 to 1:00 P.M.), after Friday prayer services were presented in full from 11:00 AM till 12:30 PM. However in the 1950s, with Egyptian Revolution in 1952, the political balance began to shift toward addressing the *‘ammah* (the ‘folk’/commoners) and their arts.

Meanwhile, European scholars, for various reasons ranging from colonial interests to messianic goals or pure academic engagement, explored some aspects of folklore in the “Arab World.” (El-Shamy 1982, p. 28, n. 35)⁵⁵

Littmann’s publications included: folk poetry from Palestine (Littmann 1935a, 1935b, 1935c), and Syria (1902); *‘akhbâr al-‘Arab* (1908, ed./tr.); proverbs (1913 with Singer); proverbs and riddles (1937); Palestinian folktales (1902/1935 translated into English); Exorcism or “Geisterbeschwörungen” (Littmann 1950b); Cairene Marchaen and anecdotes (Littmann 1955), and Cairene folklife/Volksleben (Littmann 1966). The most precise and comprehensive identification of an anthology of Arab tales by types and motifs is Samja A. Jahn’s *Arabische Volksmaerchen* (Jahn 1970); in this respect, she seems to have followed Dov Noy’s typology pattern set in his Yemenite Jewish collection (Noy 1963).

Meanwhile, awareness of the discipline of “folklore” in the modern “Arab World” was virtually non-existent, even among college students of Arabic literature, until it was kindled in Egypt in the middle of the twentieth century.

Although a number of intellectuals dealt with folk materials, their studies did not lead to discovering or establishing “folklore” as an academic discipline. Among those intellectuals were Ahmad Taymûr, and Ahmad Amîn—(around the late 1930s) who reported on narrative materials and other forms of folk literary expressions. In this respect, their works were treated as *‘akhbâr*/news/reports to be read by the literati.⁵⁶ Both Taymûr and Amîn spoke of the bearers of the materials they treated in terms of being “the other”: “they say,” “they believe,” “they mispronounce [for the sake of rhyme],” etc. Clearly, neither viewed himself as member of the “folk”. Hence, Taymûr’s works did not usher in interest in the discipline of “folklore”; for it was considered part of the Arabic anthologies of classical proverbs (e.g., Al-Maidânî, ‘Ibn-‘âşim/Al-Dabbî, etc.).

Two pioneering *works* served as pilots ushering in serious studies on folklore. The first was *Qâmûs al-‘âdât wa al-taqâlîd wa al-ta‘âbîr al-misriyyah* (Dictionary of Egyptian Customs, Traditions and Expressions) (Amîn 1953). It was begun in 1938 by Ahmad Amîn, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts (until 1939), Cairo University, and a distinguished historian of Islam. It is significant to note here that a delegation of the professors of the Faculty of Arts met with Amîn and asked him to renounce treating such materials because it was adverse to “*galâl al-‘imâdah* (the majesty of deanship)”. Evidently, Amîn conceded but

⁵⁴ For the various meanings in which the word “folk” has been used, see (Hultkrantz 1960, General Ethnological Concepts, International Dictionary of Regional European Ethnology and Folklore). Arabic translation by El-Gohary and El-Shamy (1972, *Qâmûs mustalahât al-‘ethnolojyâ wa al-folklore*).

⁵⁵ The distinguished orientalist-folklorist Enno Littmann (1875–1958), who taught at Cairo University after its establishment (in 1908), may be designated as the first folklorist of Arab/Semitic traditions. Beginning in early 1900s, Littmann, made serious contributions to the study of Arab dialects and folklore. Regrettably, in spite of their prominence and Littmann’s rigorous reliance on field work as a research approach, these studies had virtually no effect on students of traditions in the Arab World, especially Egypt. (In this respect, it suffered the same sad fate that Chauvin’s *Bibliographie* suffered by remaining totally unknown).

⁵⁶ Motif, P12.15.5.1\$, Historical narratives and legends (*‘akhbâr*) are habitual topics of conversations of kings (not of merchants/market people/*al-sûqah*).

Link: |H38.1, Disguised king (noble) recognized by his habitual speech. |J169\$, *sîrah/siyar*: personal life-history (biography, vita). |P60.1.3.1\$, Gentlewomen and sophisticated men socialize around intellectual (philosophical) topics. (Salon and salonniers). |P469\$, Newsman, reporter, informant, etc.—(*‘ikhbârî*). |P484\$, Historian (*mu‘arrikh*, “*akhbârî*”).

Ref.: MITON; Ibshihî 148; Alf III 122/(Solomon’s).>

resumed his folklore research in 1948 after leaving the Dean's post (Amîn 1953, p. A; El-Shamy 1990a, p. 68, n. 34).⁵⁷

As the leading figure in promoting and defending the study of folklore and Arabic dialectal literature, Amîn observed the difficulty European scholars have with Egyptian (Arabic) folk idioms and reported this problem as one of the reasons as to why vernacular Arabic needs to be studied. Thus he wrote:

"[T]he essence of the matter as far as I am concerned is that I believe that [Moslem] historians fell short by neglecting the "folk" sides when they recorded history. This is so due to their holding dear their aristocratic status, in spite of the fact that "folk literature"—in many ways—is no less than Classical Arabic (*fushâ*) and its literatures" (Amîn 1953, p. B).

An example of such a problem is found in one of the most recent works on Arab folklore. The author's use of "'Mother Ghoul' (*umm Ghûla*)" is non-existent in Arab folklore. He states,

"In Arabic the ghoul is a female creature, sometimes call[ed] mother ghoul" (*umm ghûla*)" (Reynolds 2015, p. 260).

This presentation is erroneous in two respects; the first is a matter of gender: in Arabic, 'ghoul' is masculine, while '*ghûla*' or '*ghûlah*' is feminine; the second is a matter of grammar: "*umm Ghûla*" signifies ("mother of ogress", in lieu of the typical "*umminâ el-ghûlah* (Our Mother the Ogress) which carries significant psychological interpretations.

The second work is ʿAbd al-Hamîd Yûnus's *Al-Hilâliyyah fî al-târîkh wa al-ʿadab al-shaʿbî* (*Al-Hilâliyyah in History and Folk Literature*).⁵⁸ Yûnus was another major figure in the Department of Arabic, Cairo University. *Al-Hilâliyyah* is a bard/minstrel's (lit. poet/*shâʿir-rabâbah*) performed lengthy tradition in which action is advanced through rhymed prose and poetry. Typically, Arab folklorists label such a genre as "*malhamah*" (epic; lit., a battle overlaid with the *lahm*/flesh of the slain). Since the Cairo University (Department) permitted no academic thesis treating vernacular Arabic expressions, Yûnus's success in overcoming this rule is regarded as a major accomplishment. His thesis also established the study of folklore as "oral literature", a status that continues until the present time. Cairo University has no "folklore" department.

Due to the fact that most of scholars who engaged in Egyptian/Arab "folklore" were members of the Department of the Arabic Language and Literatures, the long awaited institutionalization of the discipline came in the form of a chair in that department. Researchers who treated primarily folk beliefs, customs, rituals, and other mainly nonliterary aspects of folklore were associated with the sociology department.⁵⁹

However, this newly emerging interest in folk and regional cultures in Egypt, and the Arab World, was met with strong resistance. Many Arab nationalists, literary scholars and formal religious authorities held the viewpoint that paying attention to folk literatures in Arabic dialectics erodes the primacy of classical Arabic (*al-fushâ*) and encourages the institutionalization of regional differences and the development identities separate from that of a "unified Arab Nation". Consequently, it was feared that bestowing academic legitimacy on Arabic dialects would ultimately lead to the eroding the

⁵⁷ A similar situation was reported from Saudi Arabia in the 1960s. Folktale collector ʿA. Al-Juhaymân reported that under pressure from his colleagues he had to abandon his interest in the folktales seen as an "immorality" and dedicate himself to the study of the respectable proverbs. See, vol. 4.

The massive (*Al-Dâʾirah* 2000) contained no folktales. Also see (El-Shamy 2004b, pp. 1148–53).

⁵⁸ Doctoral dissertation in 1950. published in 1956. Ordinarily his name is pronounced: "Yûnis".

⁵⁹ A department of "Anthropology" did not exist then. In one case (Heliopolis University), anthropology was taught in departments of geography.

At Cairo University, since the 1970s, Mohammad El-Gohary has promoted folklore studies within the sociology department, especially among his disciples. His survey on *Al-Folklore al-ʿarabî . . .* (*Arabic folklore . . .*) ignores works by scholars whom he considers rivals (El-Gohary 2000, see Vol. 1, p. 683, Entry "Hasan").

primacy of classical Arabic—the language of the Koran, contribute to the emergence of new “languages” out of these dialects (as in the case of Italian and French, for example springing out of Latin), and would further fragment Arab unity.⁶⁰ In this respect and with reference to pan-Arab nationalism, the study of verbal folklore was seen as promoting “regionalism” and, consequently, is anti-nationalistic and—in some circles—anti religious.⁶¹ Additionally, the label: “*turâth sha‘bî*” (i.e., folk legacy/tradition), which folklorists have been using to refer to the subject-matter of their field of inquiry was met with apprehension, especially among fundamentalist Muslims. Folklore conferences and symposia—which are held under the title “*turâth sha‘bî*” generate feelings of ill-will. The main source for concern is the use of the word *turâth* (traditions, legacy, etc.). Considering the fact that for the past fourteen centuries this word has designated theological and related writings other than the *Koran* and *hadîth* (“Tradition,” i.e., sayings and descriptions of deeds attributed to Prophet Muhammad).⁶²

Arab folklorists have attempted to assuage these fears. In recently held symposia, resolutions were adopted calling for “translating folk literature [which is invariably] expressed in *lahajât* (dialects) or *al-‘arabiyyah al-dâriyah* (vernacular Arabic) into *fusha* (classical Arabic);” the neutral term “*ma‘thûrât*” (legacy, traditions, etc.) has been adopted as a substitute for the religion-bound term “*turâth*.”⁶³

A fairly recent event that occurred in Egypt placed additional pressure on the study of folklore in general, and the collecting and publishing of folk narratives in particular. A vehement reaction by “fundamentalist” Moslems to the “immorality” expressed in the story of “The Porter and the Three women of Baghdad”⁶⁴ (in which erotic words and descriptions of acts are graphically presented) led to the banning—though temporary—of *‘Alf laylah wa laylah* (Thousand Nights and a Night) from public circulation. Another source of conflict with religious circles is the mythological elements in the *Nights* (El-Shamy 2006b). With the élite and other literate/learned groups, this anthology is perceived as *the model* for the folktale. In some Egyptian institutions of higher education the western title “*‘ilm al-folklore* (the science of . . .)” is used to designate the discipline. Meanwhile, the popular usage for an event of traditions is, “*min al-folklore al-sha‘bî* (i.e., from the folk’s folklore)”

4. Modern Studies

Since the late 1950’s an explosion of attention to indigenous, orally transmitted folk narratives has taken place. Interest in other fields of folklore such as music and dance, healing, medicine, and architecture (Fathî 1976, Berger, Jalali 2017), jewelry (Al-Ghânim 1993), followed. Although not in general public use and should not be seen as “folk”, as is the case with goldsmithing (Roberts 1972, p. 234), the traditional *mashrabiyyah* and Islamic *Arabesque* woodwork craft has received considerable attention, especially on elite governmental levels such as parliaments and state mansions (Nadim 2014). More recently embroidery and other forms of adornment received an encompassing contribution in the form of an encyclopedia on embroidery in the Arab World (Vogelsang-Eastwood 2016) published.

A number of factors are responsible for the generating and sustaining this new trend toward folklore:

⁶⁰ Lewis ‘Award, “al-folklore wa-al-‘isati‘mâr” (folklore and colonialism).

⁶¹ ‘Abd-ul-Ĥamîd Yûnus, *Difâ‘an al-folklore* ([In] Defence of Folklore), Cairo, 1971.

⁶² Expressed during the 1988 Janâdiryyah Folk Festival, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

⁶³ The “Concluding Statement” of the Baghdad Symposium on “Folklore and The Arab Identity” held in 1978 included a “Recommendation” to “translate colloquial into classical”. (Ital. added)

⁶⁴ For a brief description of the event, see “The Tale of the Stern Judge”, in *Time: The Weekly Newsmagazine* (New York), June 3, 1985, p. 35.

This tale is a frame-story comparable to AaTh 471, *The Bridge to the Other World*. [Extraordinary (eccentric) happenings explained]. It is likely to be a literary rendition of a variant (subtype) current in oral traditions and lacks the erotic component. Victor Chauvin characterized this episode [(Type: He-S 1425B\$, Seduction: Putting the Bird (or Animal) in its Natural Habitat.)] as “obscène plaisanteries.” See Chauvin, Vol. 5, p. 251, No. 148.

- (1) The recent emergence of modern nationalistic ideologies stressing political entities acquiring the status of a “state.”
- (2) Reliance on the *gamâhîr* (“masses”) and local communities and their cultures (i.e., regional cultures, or culture areas). Such social groups were previously referred to as *‘ammah* (i.e., commoners, or *al-ghawghâ’* or *al-sûqah*, i.e., lit. ‘market people’, the vulgar classes). Now they are referred to as *al-sha‘b* (the ‘people’/‘folk’/nation). This trend was a companion force of to nationalism.
- (3) The introduction into the academic realm of modern scholarly theories justifying the study in Arab universities of “folk literature,” in vernacular Arabic. Aḥmad R. Ṣâlih registers the sources that encouraged him pursue his childhood fascination with the lore (colloquial literature) experienced in his village in Upper Egypt:

“I have examined *European* and Arabic writings dealing with colloquialism and its literatures [...], and I searched for references on the *science of folklore*, and was successful in acquiring some of them. (Ital. is added).” (Ṣâlih 1954, p. 6)

Yet, he felt that the manner in which proverbs, songs, riddles, etc. were performed by their bearers still was required along the verbal text for a full appreciation of an item of lore. Due to Ṣâlih’s efforts, a folklore center was established in Egypt in 1958. Similar centers were founded in virtually every Arab country during the past half century. Academic institutions and other government-sponsored establishments (e.g., museums, “mass-culture” divisions in ministries of culture, dance troupes, etc.) were created in order to address the need to collect, study, preserve and process folklore materials for use on a national level.

4.1. Departments in the Lead Folklore Center (Cairo)

The “Centre” was divided into departments:

- (1) Folk Literature (and Archives dealing mostly with the literary holdings);
- (2) Folk Custom and Traditions;
- (3) Folk Music;
- (4) Folk Dance; and
- (5) Museum and Material culture.⁶⁵

A modest, but functional, folklore library and an electrical services unit assisted researchers.

4.2. More Representative Studies

An inclusive survey of the folk narrative traditions in the Arab World was developed under the title: *Types of the Folktale in the Arab World: A Demographically Oriented Tale-Type Index* (El-Shamy 2004a); also see the rationale for the need for the index (DOTTI) in (El-Shamy 1988a, Gay-Para, ed.). The data cited are given in conformity with the system adopted in *Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification* (El-Shamy 1995). Additional data *Folktales of the Jews ‘from Arab Lands’* became available (Ben-Amos 2006).

Although *Types of the Folktale in the Arab World* deals primarily with tales, it also serves as an inventory of recurring beliefs, customs, rituals, kinship ties, belief-characters (e.g., ogre, devil, afrit), material culture (e.g., garments, buildings, jewelry, food, and the like), nature of life, etc. occurring in narratives. As pointed out,

“since a folk narrative is a description of life—real or fictitious, contents of narrative and related folkloric materials deal, in essence, with ‘life’ and ‘living’ in the broadest sense”. (El-Shamy 1995, p. xiii)

⁶⁵ This division coincides with Richard M. Dorson’s views on this matter, “The Fields of Folklore and Folklore Studies” (Dorson 1972, pp. 2–5).

A vivid example of how a critical concept for social structure such as ‘kinship’ is portrayed in folk narratives is given in the examination of the “brother and sister” ties in terms of affective relations with family members such as “parents”, “paternal uncle”, “maternal uncle”, “other siblings”, etc. This format indicated the far reaching impact sentiments acquired through socialization have on the structure of the family in the Arab World (El-Shamy 1976c, 1979). This pattern of analysis was copied in Muhawi and Muhawi and Kanaana (1989); (also see the *khâl* in “Common Affective Grounds,” p. 5, above). In addition, the index seeks to remedy numerous aspects of culture, society, and psychological processes that Thompson’s *Motif Index* does not handle (such as psychological factors as means for classification, i.e., identification).

4.3. Implicit Theoretical Findings: Geographic Sequence

A secondary objective for developing the pattern of geographic distribution (cited below) is to examine the degree of similarities between Indian narrative tradition once postulated to be the main source for Arab tales, and the narrative traditions of the Arab World, especially in the Arabian Peninsula. Surprisingly, this unfounded postulate still finds believers among some “specialists” today, in spite of the fact that modern research finds virtually no evidence to endorse its viability.

The order in which the regions of the Arab World (Peninsula, Mesopotamia, Levant Coast, Nile Valley/Egypt, Nile Valley/Sudan, Maghreb) are given is as follows:

- PEN: Arabian Peninsula (Bahrain, the Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Yemen including Hadhramout, and Arabic-speaking groups in Zanzibar, Eritria, and Somalia);
- MSP: Mesopotamia (Iraq);
- SHM: *El-Shâm* (or the Levant Coast: Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, and indigenous groups in Israel);
- NLE: Nile Valley—Egypt (including Berber-speaking Siwa, culturally, part of Maghreb Berbers);
- NLS: Nile Valley—Sudan formerly NLḏ)
- MGH: Maghreb (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco).

The pattern of presentation reflects that of the spread of Arab culture and Islam. It begins from the Arabian Peninsula, the birthplace of Arab culture, and proceeds counter-clockwise northward and then to the east and south toward the inland of Africa and Morocco on the Atlantic Ocean. It is also designed to test ‘theories’ about the borrowing of the fairytale from India. (See “Indianists,” below).

4.4. Stereotypical Academic Beliefs about Semitic Lore (Persistent Stereotyping: Fallacious “Theories”)

Old dysfunctional ‘theories’ may cease to be cited, but their effect seems to persist. Influenced by anthropological theories, folklore adopted a number of such ‘theories’ such as “Diffusion”. In folklore, imitation and “learning from” have been studied under various titles. *Diffusion* as an ethnological concept is basically an act of imitative learning by social groups; it is copying from a neighboring culture or subculture. Thus understood, ‘Copying’ formed the basis of such theories as Grimm (1856, pp. 427–29), which attributed the origins of folk narratives to Indo-European (Aryan) peoples, and C.W. Von Sydow’s asserting that true *Maerchen* (magic tales/fairytales) existed solely within Indo-Germanic linguistic boundaries (Von Sydow 1926, pp. 207–15). Similarly, the “Indianist” theory, suggested by Loiseleur-Deslongchamps (1838), and developed by Benfey (1859) and Cosquin (1922), was based on the principle of copying, citing India as the original source for all folktales except Aesop’s fables. Both the Grimm-Von Sydow school and the Indianists attributed folktale origins to racial stocks, suggesting the “Indo-Europeans,” or the Aryans and the Indians, as the originators of the tales which later spread throughout the world. The Aryans and the Indians then, served as *models* for other peoples who *copied* the folktale tradition from their behavior. Thus,

Arab folklore, (among that of other Semites) was judged as lacking the *Maerchen* due to deficiency in creative faculties that generate it.⁶⁶

Regrettably, this misguided viewpoint was developed in near total absence of knowledge of the folktale in the Arab World. It impacted European approaches to the study of Arab folklore in general and the folktale in particular, which happened to be the cardinal topic of interest during the period of formulation of indexes on the folktale. The second enlargement of *The Types of the Folktale* in 1961 by Stith Thompson, is a vivid example of this deficiency (where a mere 64 tale-types are listed from all the Arab World). It is even more regrettable that after the presentation of massive research reports and copious evidence from the field this ethnocentric view (with condescending racial overtones) still finds influential supporters in the twenty first century. The one anthology of tales that received broad attention in the West, and adopted later by Arab literary scholars, is the *Thousand and One Nights* (also known as the *Arabian Nights*) (El-Shamy 1990a, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). It is claimed, against extensive evidence to the contrary, that this work is not Arab because of its creativity:

“This collection of tales, fascinating though it may be, is only partially based on Arabic stories and, in its modern form, *owes more to European than Arab Creativity* [(Ital. added)]”.

(Reynolds 2015, p. 258)

Like the type index, this claim is characteristically based on insufficient information. It should be born in mind that insertions of texts by European editors were taken from the oral traditions of the Arab World (Marzolph et al. 2004). Also, further research on narrative traditions in the New World reveals evidence of the derivation from tales of the Arab World. For example, *Animal Tales from the Caribbean* (List 2017) includes texts with pivotal motifs linking them to North Africa (presumably via Spain). In tale No. 2 titled “The Goat”⁶⁷ it was observed that, in addition to a host of other motifs, this text from Colombia

“shares with a North African Arab counterpart from Libya the significant theme of the brother staying, unwed, with his sister and her husband after their marriage” (El-Shamy 2017, pp. 106–8).

As pointed out above (see n. 17, p. 6, above) this theme has major impact on the structure of sentiments and patterns of interaction within the nuclear family. Formerly in North Africa during centuries of fusion with the Iberian Peninsula (Andalusia/Al-Andalus), but here in the Spanish lore of the Caribbean.

In tale No. 11 titled “The Rabbit Who Wanted to Be the Largest Animal in the World,” it was noted that the text

“speaks of a copra/she-snake, addressing her as “*aunt snake*”. In this respect the femaleness of the cobra, a viper, is significant. It suggests the possibility of an overlap with a significant aspect of Arab and Islamic cultures depicted in Motif B3\$, “Viper (*ayyah*, female serpent) as animal central to supernatural beliefs (religious records)” (El-Shamy 2017, pp. 118–20. Ital. added).

Also works that indicated the existence in the Arab World of all the genres of the folktale, including the *Maerchen* (theorized to be limited to Aryans) were ignored. For example, *Folktales of Egypt* provides texts from every genre of the prose narrative (El-Shamy 1980).

⁶⁶ The absence of a systematic approach for identifying the genre to which a narrative belongs has been discussed in a number of publication by the present writer (El-Shamy 1996b, 1997, 2011). Many Western scholars ignore data that may disagree with their academic conviction (Pinault 1992; Johnson and Price-Williams 1996; Kurpershoek 1997; Kossmann 2000; Reynolds 2015). In this regard, see the reviews of Pinault’s book in *Asian Folklore Studies* (El-Shamy 1996b), and Kurpershoek’s in *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol. 57, No. 1 (El-Shamy 1997).

⁶⁷ Tale-type, AT 450, *Little Brother and Little Sister* (pp. 34–37), Motif: T133.7.1\$, “Bride (sister) joined by her brother at home of her groom (husband)”.

A map (chart) designating “Locations of tale-types in the Arab World”, including *The Thousand and One Nights* as treated in Chauvin’s *Bibliographie*, should provide answers to some questions about genres and the extent to which a given story is present in the Arab World (El-Shamy 1995, I, pp. 415–41). This unique chart has been totally ignored.

Similarly, G. Maspero’s *Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt* (Maspero 1915) was not included in Aarne-Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale* in its revised and enlarged edition (1961). Ancient Egypt’s tales were reduced to merely a couple of tale-types acknowledged in the Aarne-Thompson Index.⁶⁸ In addition, a score of ancient Egyptian tales complying with the typological characteristics of the international folktale were introduced (Maspero and El-Shamy 2004, pp. xxiii–xxviii). Notably, one story includes a situation that may be viewed as a prototype “frame story” (El-Shamy 2002, “[No. 2]. “King Khufu and the Magicians,” p. xxiv). (See Appendix J)

On the basis of the narrative repertoire in contemporary Egypt, it was concluded:

“Folklore in general and the folktale in particular seem to have existed for millennia coterminous with learned elite culture. On the whole, it seems that the emergence of lore was not dependent on the development of a specific social class, nor was the emergence of the folktale ushered in by the disintegration of priestly accounts (El-Shamy 1979, p. li).

5. Application

After a slow start, the Folklore Center in Cairo generated wide public interest in folk artistic expression in Egypt and, eventually, the rest of the Arab World (via performers and Arab graduate students at Egyptian Universities). The Department of Folk Literature drew public attention to folk poetry and song, particularly the *sîrah* (lit., life history). Cairo sole radio station broadcast recordings of interviews with performers of *siyar* (*shu‘arâ’-rabâbah*) and presented samples of their memorized art sung to the tunes of the *rabâbâh* (rebec/rebab) and the *târ* (frame drum); occasionally a pipe (*mizmâr*) may be also present in such presentations. Two rebec-poets, each specializing in one *sîrah*, acquired considerable fame: Shamandî who performed the *sîrah* of Abu-Zaid the Hilalite,⁶⁹ and Mitqâl who performed the *sîrah* of ‘Antar ibn Shaddâd. Eventually, their fame and appeal to *al-khâssah* (elite/literati) led them to performing in nightclubs in Cairo.

Through public performances, members of the departments of Music and Dance redefined the concepts of “dance” and “belly-dancing”—(scorned as *hazz el-baṭn*/the shaking of the belly)—in the minds of the public.⁷⁰ Members of upper and middle classes who associated “dancing” with the lowest strata of society and the morally depraved were faced with a totally different situation. The establishment of Rida Folk Dance Troupe/Company (1959) flaunted a lead female dancer (Farida Fahmi) who projected the exact opposite public image of the traditional belly-dancer. As a dancer, Fahmi was educated, with considerable poise, endowed with remarkable athletic posture, and “daughter of a university professor”. She commanded respect from all who dealt with her, and ushered in a public admiration for the folk dancing and its accompaniments.⁷¹ Currently there are numerous folk dancing groups throughout the Arab World who advertize and market their art on the Web.⁷² Arab chiefs proudly display their traditional dances at home and abroad. An example is to found in

⁶⁸ These are: AT 318, *The Faithless Wife*. Batu: the Egyptian “Two Brothers” Tale. [The chaste youth severs own organ to show innocence, and is subsequently betrayed by his divine mate (wife)]; and AT 950, *Rhapsinitus*. [Series of skilful thefts and daring escapes from king’s treasury by a master thief and assistant] (attributed to Herodotus).

⁶⁹ UNESCO: Lists the Hilaliyyah *sîrah* as “Inta[n. 70]. (Publication of Egyptian Society of Folk Traditions 2006).ngible Cultural Heritage of Humanity—2008.” URL: <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/al-sirah...>

⁷⁰ See: “raqs el-‘awâlim”/“raqs el-ghawâzî” (Amîn 210–212, Lane 377–382).

⁷¹ For a detailed historical analysis of the dances in Egypt and their historical roots, see: (El-Khâdim 1972).

⁷² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Utud5Vg2DaM>.

the recent sharing of “^cArdah” sword dance between the Saudi royal hosts and the USA distinguished diplomatic and military visitors headed by President Trump.⁷³

Shift in economic conditions empowered the urban *baladî* (country-style) classes. City craftsmen: plumbers, mechanics, carpenters, etc. enjoyed major upward rise in their fees and dispensable income. Meanwhile, the income of government employees and the rest of the middle effendi-class remained stagnant. “Lower” class craftsmen spent lavishly on the *baladi* arts with which they were familiar and turned away from government sponsored radio programs of music, songs, plays, etc. that were authored by semi-elite professionals. One *baladi* singer named ^cAdawiyyah represented an interesting phenomenon during the last quarter of the twentieth century. Government radio and television services refused to acknowledge the art of Mr. ^cAadawiyyah and shunned him. However, his fans spent lavishly on his public performances to the extent that it was remarked in the newspapers that he could purchase the entire governmental broadcasting system. The cassette recordings of *baladi* songs (which depended on the ability to purchase a tape player) thrived during that period, but declined along with subject matter it propagated (notably, the folk ballad (*mawwâl qasasî*), i.e., narrative folksong).⁷⁴

Numerous city/urban groups had their interest in *baladî* things awakened. Thus admitting liking *baladî* jewelry, costume, music, cuisine, etc. became fashionable. For example, the poor classes daily meatless foods such as *fûl*/fave-beans, “^ta^cmiyyah” (deep fried fava bean patties, called “*falâfil*” in Alexandria) and “*biṣârah*” (bean mash) became exalted for their health benefits.⁷⁵ A motion picture titled “*Laylat al-^cîd* (The Eve of the Bairam)” (1949) focuses on a penniless sister (played by Shadyah) and her two brothers (Ismâ^cîl Yâsîn and Shkookoo) looking for work in Cairo. They enter a humble *fûl*/beans restaurant. The waiter chants

“O gentlemen, the *fûl* is ^cagamiyyah ([as sweet as] palm-date paste used to fill certain types of baked crackers and cookies); it gives satisfaction and cure to the eater!”

The sister advises her two brothers, who are sick and tired of *fûl*, to imagine that it is roast lamb. They do. All three eat the disliked dish with gusto. (El-Shamy: personal knowledge).

More recently, in the wealthy Gulf Region, a famous singer named Shimûkh, started a restaurant business. It was advertized as offering only “authentic Gulf food and authentic Gulf music and singing, all prepared and served by Shimûkh, the owner, personally” (Google News Nov. 15, 2017). Other relatively recent studies dealing with traditional foods and food preparation: include a survey of various types of bread in Egypt (Sha^clân 1998); food utensils used by Arabs of the Peninsula (Sulaymân 1989); and food rituals and rules of hospitality in Tunisia (Barahimi 2017).

As indicated above with reference to the ballad (narrative folk song), *baladî* singing is inherently paired with *baladî* music (which differs from *sîrah* music). In the early 1950s Abu Bakr Khayrat, an Egyptian composer of Western-style classical music, introduced a composition based on a folksong prevalent in Upper Egypt. It states, “^catshân yâ sabâyâ dillûni ^clâ es-sabîl (O maidens. I am thirsty, show me where the [free] water-stand is!)”. This early music suite usher numerous works inspired by

⁷³ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/video/2017/may/21/trump-joins-ceremonial-sword-dance-in-saudi-arabia-video>.

⁷⁴ For an overview of the ballad subject matter, see, Appendix III: “The Egyptian Folk Ballad and Related Lyric Narrative-Songs, 1900?-1982,” (El-Shamy 1995, Vol. 1, pp. 445–48). Sixty three ballads were reported. The first identification of the narrative “*mawwâl*” as a “ballad” (paralleling the Euro-American counterpart) was made in El-Shamy’s doctoral dissertation (1967 pp. 244–46). El-Shamy, presented the term “*mawwâl qasasî*” in 1970, the Arabic translation of R.M. Dorson’s *Introduction to Folklore and Folklife*, under the title: *Nazariyyât al-folklore al-mu^câirah* (“Theories of Contemporary Folklore”). El-Gohary and El-Shamy (1972, see especially pp. 36-37 n. 34, 55 n. 57, 57 n. 59, 58 n. 60). Compare Cuchia (1989): which contained eleven ballads.

⁷⁵ Amîn 312–313; Burton IV 166 n./(Egyptians). Motifs. F561.13.1\$, “People who live on beans (*fûl*)”, and F850.2.3\$, “Hated bean mash (*biṣârah/bisârah*)”.

folk melodies. Other composers, such as Gamal ʿAbd El-Rahîm, and ʿAzîz El-Shawwân, followed in the same track of reworking folk musical themes into native symphonies and suites.⁷⁶

The formal Islamic negative stand towards Music and its accompaniments may be seen in the following motif associating “pipe” (music) with Satan: Motifs, C5.2\$, “Satan’s voice (caller of Satan, summoner of Satan): pipe (music)”; U286.3.1\$, “Listening to melody evokes sexual desire”. In spite of this negative association, love for music has always been evident among Arab masses: Moslem and non-Moslem. Examples from various stories of the *Thousand Nights* (e.g., Motif, U315.0.1.1\$, “Listening to music (song) is food for the soul”) illustrate this fact. (El-Shamy 2006a).⁷⁷ More recent studies on folk music and musical instruments are available: El-Sayad (2010) discusses the drum; Jalali (2017) treats women and musical heritage in Tunisia; Al-Duraidi (2017) examines the relation between folksongs and nationalism; Al-Jibour (2017) explores folksongs and social change in Jordan; ʿOmran (1998) discusses religious *ʿinshâd*, usually labeled “muwashshah”.

Also, a central element emerged on the “popular culture” scene at that time period. ʿAbd-el-Halîm Hâfiz, a most celebrated and beloved singer, partnered with ʿAbd-el-Rahmân El-Abnûdî, a famous poet in performing popular compositions in folksong style, imagery and colloquial (vernacular) parlance such as: “I swear by her [Egypt’s] sky and her dust”, “The daytime has elapsed and sunset is coming masking [itself] behind trees”, “Your son, O hero (*yâ batâl*), says to you ‘bring me a victory’,” etc. (See also “A contemporary Psycho-political Case”, pp. 4–5, above).

A number of ballads illustrating real social events gained national popularity in Egypt (El-Shamy 1995, App. III, pp. 445–48). Among these is the ‘incident’ of “Hasan and Naʿîmah” (ʿAbd-al-Hakîm 1957, pp. 119–35; El-Shamy 1995, App. II.1, No. 21) which describes how Hasan, an itinerant *baladî* singer, was murdered for daring to ask for the hand of Naʿîmah, his beloved, in marriage. Reflecting Upper Egyptian stern values, the girl’s father retorted to Hasan’s request by stating, “Never! We don’t give our girls/daughters to singers.” (p. 120) To cleanse the family name of disgrace, Hasan was murdered. At the trial Naʿîmah testified against her father and mother, who received long prison sentences. She vowed never to marry, and advised those who live in strangerhood never to fall in love away from their own home.⁷⁸ This affair was made into a radio-play of thirty episodes in the early 1950s. The program gained wide popularity. Because of its success, it may be presumed that it was followed by another titled “Samarah”, that told a story about an Alexandrian tough maiden. However the follow up lacked the folk spirit of the ballad and failed to gain an audience (El-Shamy: personal knowledge).

Motion pictures were based on actual communal events (legends) that turned into folk ballads. The first identification of such an item of lore as “ballad” came with reference to an older version of the ballad titled El-Adham El-Sharqâwî and collected from an Egyptian immigrant in Brooklyn, New York in 1964. (El-Shamy 1967; 1995, pp. 244–46, No. 33). In that older version of the ballad dating back

⁷⁶ See: Samha El-Kholy. *Al-qawmiyyah fî mûsîqâ al-qarn al-ʿishrîn* (Nationalism in twentieth Century music). ʿAalam al-Maʿrifah, Kuwait: 1992.

⁷⁷ Also see Motif: J133.0.1.2\$, Horses drink to whistling sound: so is man’s thirst (love) for music, appearing in the tale titled “Anîs al-Jalîs” in: *Alf I* 139, (poem, /horses drink to whistle’s sound); Burton II 29. Chauvin V 120–24 No. 58; ANE 316–17 No. 35.

And Motifs:

F689.0.1\$, “Music (melody) so moving that it can energize the lifeless (melt solid rock or iron)”; F689.1\$, “Ecstasy from immersion in music (song)”; F689.1.1\$, “Madness from listening to marvelous music or song (violent reactions: ecstatic convulsions, clothes slit, self-injury, etc.)”; H35.1.0.1\$, “Recognition by unique musical style”; P60.1.1\$, “Diverse artistic skills of gentlewoman (poetry, music, singing, etc.)”; P196.8.2\$, “Listening to song (music): an accompaniment of liquor-drinking”; P196.8.2.1\$, “Liquor-drinking without listening may cause headaches (illness)”; P779.1.3.1\$, “Imported fine musical instruments”; T11.9\$, “Falling in love with thrilling music (melody, song, poem recitation)”; Z117.6.2\$, “Musician’s (singer’s) love for musical instrument: “mother and her child”.>

⁷⁸ Motifs, P428.0.2\$, “Musicians and singers are admired, but have low social status”; W22.3.1\$, Aversion to estrangement from homeland (*ghurbah*, strangerhood, exile-like).

to the late 1920s, El-Adham is portrayed according to the informant, who hailed originally from the environs of Alexandria, as a social rebel who “took from the rich and gave the poor”. He dodged the government’s attempts to capture him until he was betrayed by his closest friend in a manner that led to his death. (See sample, below).

Recently, a motion picture bearing the ballad’s title was produced. In that new unauthentic version, El-Adham was presented as a national hero struggling against the British colonial occupation of Egypt.

Another folk ballad appearing as a motion picture accounts for the life of an outlaw is titled “Bahyyah and Yâsîn” (El-Shamy 1995, No. 33). In the folk rendition, Bahyyah is merely a common female who is Yâsîn’s illicit lover. The motion picture presents them as national heroes fighting the British occupation of Egypt.

5.1. Arab Poetic Reports and Siyar

Another category of narratives associated with classical Arabic literature was labelled ‘*akhbâr* or ‘*ahâdîth*. This genre may be characterized as historical legends. It consisted mostly of stories of unusual events presumed to have actually happened.⁷⁹ Intertribal battles and ‘heroic’ deeds by extraordinary individuals constituted the central themes of that genre, known as “‘*Ayyâm al-^c Arab* (Arab Days).⁸⁰

If we accept this title as a label for the genre of the *sîrah* (pl. *siyar*), then the ballads (described above) may be labeled “‘*ayyâm al-fellahin* in Egypt”.

5.2. SAMPLE: A Blood Vendetta

33. El-‘Adham esh-Sharqâwî⁸¹

01. Where will we get people for the meaning of the talk to recite it

[It is] like recorded [things] for the schooled, when they learn sciences, and recite.

02. The incident which afflicted an Eastern [province] lion

His name is L’Dhamm, but the surname is: *Sharqâwî*

03. The lad was in school when he was thirteen years of age,

and remained in school till he became eighteen years of age.

04. He had no cares, but [suddenly] the news of the death [i.e., murder] of his paternal uncle reached him

He kept on weeping and the pupils [were] weeping around him.

05. They said to him, “Why are you weeping, Adham; and what is the cause for this crying?”

He answered them, “Companions, my paternal uncle died, “And what is my standing in the village.””

06. And he went to the village and yelled, “Hâ-â-âs! Watch out for me!”

And guide me to the house of the enemy:”

07. He took on the enemy’s son, and tore him apart with his [bare] hands.

And killed three of those who were around him.

08. The government came saying: “Adham, why did you do that?”

⁷⁹ Motif, P12.15.5.1\$, “Historical narratives and legends (‘*akhbâr*) are habitual topics of conversations of kings (not merchants)”. See the story of: Ishâq al-Mûsilî and Khadîjah bint al-Hasan: in *Alf laylah* II 186, Chauvin V, 241–42, No. 142.

⁸⁰ See (Hindâwî 1974?, ‘*Ayyâm al-CArab* (Arab Days))

⁸¹ From El-Shamy, Hasan M. 1985. Kinship Ties in the *sîrah* of al-Zîr Sâlim and the Trasformation in Egypt: The Conflict between Paternal and maternal-uncles. Unpublished Manuscrip. Paper Read at the First International *sîrah* Symposium. Fall: Cairo University. 1964, see (El-Shamy 1967, “Folkloric Behavior”, pp. 244–46).

He replied, "Government, 'Get lost!' When my paternal uncle was killed, what did you do?"

09. The lad was sentenced to death as a punishment to him.

10. The lad's family had money by the load
And all of them were Beys and rich.

11. They paid for L'Dhamm "one hundred in lieu of each pound [expected as a bribe]
Thus, the lad was sentenced to six years [imprisonment] as punishment.

[... The government bribes Adham's best friend to betray him. He agrees and leads the police to his hiding place. The friend starts a conversation with Adham.]

52. As they were talking, the trooper who was assigned the shooting
pressed the trigger; the aim proved to be a hit.

53. The first aim hit his left breast and kidney.
He [i.e., Adhamm] said, "Adham, you have no more ministers nor deputies."

54. "The fault is with me for having taken for myself deputies."

55. The second aim hit his right breast, [and] shook him.
He said, "Shame, my eyes, to be irritated by the shooting by a villain.

56. "And shame on you shooting [of firearms] to hit the body of the free-one and shake it!"
The third bullet hit his left breast with [dead] aim.

57. He said, "If I were to live, government, instead of fezes, I will make your wear [women's] head-shawls and veils:'

I have scored three [times] against you, government, accurately / ('with aim'):

58. "Government, I have killed while present in your prison.
"The Lord is present; [His presence] needs no evidence or witnesses.""

59. "The first score, government: arms, I collected from you."
"The second score, government: I lit the house with candles for you.

60. "The third score, government: from the other road I met you.
Arabic and French and in every tongue I spoke to you."

61. "And said to you, 'I am L-Adhamm' And [i.e., But] you did not understand me."
"The fourth bullet [hit] between the heart and the navel.

62. Blood, enough for a swim, washed L-Adhamm down the pebbly trail.

63. He said, "Adhamm, you are dead.' There is no more trail for you in the open space.
"And the fault is with me for having shown 'the son of a woman' the trail."

64. "[It is a] trust: you who survive me, never to trust the companion of a deceptive world."
"There is no friend who will not bring you harm with his [own] hands.

65. "Sharqâwî family, I trust that you do not feud with [any] one, after me.
"Neither a paternal uncle nor a maternal uncle of mine, should seek vendetta for me."

66. You all, who are sitting, 'state the Oneness of the Lord.'

This incident happened to an eminent [lit.: agile, lively] lion; the most trivial of men snared and killed him."

5.3. The *Sîrah* (“Epic” ??)

While European scholars showed interest in some of the bloody “Arab Days” especially ‘Antar’s,⁸² no such interest was displayed for poems in vernacular Arabic. The disdain the urban literate displayed toward Upper Egyptian work songs that fascinated Maspero is highlighted in the behavior of his Arab secretary concerning Maspero’s order to write down these songs. In fact, the secretary chose to be dismissed from his job than to obey his employer repeated order (El-Shamy 2002). After years of attempts Maspero finally succeeded in finding employees who captured the texts of the *Chansons populaires* from Upper Egypt (Maspero 1914). This disdain continued until the mid 1950s.

Sîrah (i.e., the “life history of . . .”) is a narrative of extraordinary length spanning the lives of several generations, combines prose with poetry (cf., cante-fable, or “epic-romance”), and is normally chanted or sung to the accompaniment of a rebec or a like instrument. Due to its length and complexity the *sîrah* is dependent on the professional bard as a memorizer and performer. The *sîrah* proved to be a prominent genre within this field labeled ‘Arab Days’. The literary side of this field is mostly pre-Islamic Hindâwî 1974?: Al-Basûs vols. 1–2; Dâhis and al-Ghabrâ’ vol. 3. Vols. 4–10 deal with Islamic events such as the Battles of Badr, al-Qâdisiyyah, and al-Yarmûk).⁸³

Other examples of *siyar* are to be found in the story of ‘Antar ibn Shaddâd (cited above), the pre-Islamic black Arab hero, which describes his love for his ‘white’ paternal-cousin ‘Ablah, and his struggle to gain recognition of a black man’s merits in a nation of whites (including his biological father who sired him by Zubaybah, a black Ethiopian slave woman). Another such ‘heroic’ account is that of Kulaib ibn Rabî‘ah (or “al-Zîr Sâlim”/Kulayb ibn Rabî‘ah). This *sîrah* describes Zîr’s extreme measure in avenging the unintentional killing of his brother, and portrays the brother-sister affection, fraternal blood-vendetta, and primacy of paternal ties over maternal, in addition to a great deal of intertribal warfare and carnage. (El-Shamy 1985, MS)⁸⁴

Although most *siyar* cohere around fraternal or intertribal wars, some describe heroic events of Arab or Islamic forces against non-Arab or non-moslem adversaries. Sayf ibn Dhî Yazan and az-Zâhir Baybars revolve around wars with the Ethiopians, and with the Mongols respectively, while Dhât al-Himmah and ‘Umar ibn al-Nu‘mân revolve around conflict with Christian Europeans. It is noteworthy to observe that the *sîrah* of ‘Umar ibn al-Nu‘mân is concluded with peace and intermarriage between the two warring parties.

The *sîrah*-genre received considerable academic attention eclipsing until relatively recently interest in the prose folktale. In their concept for Arab ‘epics’, a quest that did not exist in Arab cultures till the 1950s, Arab scholars characterized these partly poetic heroic accounts as “epics” (*malâhim*/sing. *malhamah*). Though widely accepted, this characterization is inaccurate. Except for length (355 verses), there is only nearly semi true epic in Arab lore. (El-Shamy 1976a, 10:1 pp. 1–13, and 9:3–4 pp. 140–64). Over the past several decades, publications on the *sîrah* genre have flourished greatly. Beside Yûnus’s

⁸² Hamilton (Hamilton 1981, trans., *Antar: a Bedoueen Romance*); Richmond (c1978, ‘Antar and ‘Abla: a bedouin: a bedouin romance’); Paret (2009, *Siirah Sayf ibn Dhi Yazan: An Arabic Folk Epic B*).

⁸³ Motifs: N387.2.1\$, Dispute over horse race starts the “Dâhis and al-Ghabrâ’ War”.

Link: | F1012.2.1\$, The long war. Ref.: Ibn-‘Aasim (1982) No. 442.>

F1012.2.1.1\$, War lasts for forty years.

Ref.: Zîr 141.>.

⁸⁴ It is argued that the negative attitude the *sîrah* adopts toward maternal-unclehood is due to the *sîrah*’s emergence during a period during which the kinship system in agricultural Egypt was being transformed to the patriarchal in the manner of the desert Arabs.

Motifs: P200.0.1\$, Patriarchal family (patriarchy).

P263.2.1\$, Woman’s brother kills his brother-in-law (his sister’s husband);

T198\$, Return to parents’ (father’s) home after end of marital relations (divorce, or death of spouse);

P201.2\$, Reconciliation (accommodation) is not possible between hostile brethren (paternal cousins, etc.);

P201.3\$, Accommodation (‘detente’) possible between warring non-Arabs, but impossible between feuding Arab cousins (brothers);

P509.2.1\$, “Two swords cannot be kept in one sheath; two stallions cannot share one stall”.

ground breaking work on *Al-Hilaliyyah* (1956, Ar.), a wide array of Hilaliyyah treatments (perhaps in the hundreds) have been offered.⁸⁵

Numerous other scholars followed Yûnus' steps. In her doctoral dissertation, N. Ibrâhîm pointed out the literary impact of *Dhât al-Himmah* on European literature and analyzed its historical and religious contents (Ibrâhîm/Sâlim 1966 Gr., 1994 Ar.); Slyomovics (1987b) offered an analysis of the Hilaliyyah, and a character examination of the Arab hero of "epics" (1999); Kurpershoek (1997) offered a coverage of the same topic in contemporary Arabia. More recently, a study offered an examination of the *sîrah* on Egyptian theater El-Shâfi'î (2016), while another (Al-Qâ'ûd 2013) reported on a new versified play by dramatisst Salâh 'Ads reflecting on the effects of the Abu Zaid and the Hilâlies on the state of Islam and the fate of Moslems in Andalusia; (this essay advance the earlier survey on the use of folk traditions in the modern Egyptian theater (Husayn 1993). Some *siyar* were converted into TV programs. A case of such usage is "Al-Zeer Salem," which sparked the 40 years war over the killing of Seer's brother (Syrian T.V. Series 2000).⁸⁶ Of the dozen or so of *siyar* reported throughout Arab history,⁸⁷ only a few seem to still circulate in oral traditions through the professional bard (*shâ'ir-rabâbah*). A few others became subject for Television recasting as a series of events. The most prominent among these *siyar* is the one labeled "Abu Zaid al-Hilâlî" (or "al-Hilaliyyah"). It may be argued that due to the archetypal circumstances of the birth of its black hero to a white mother with sacred descent (being a *sharifah*)⁸⁸ because of craving when pregnant and subsequent accusation of unchastity followed by affirmation of her innocence,⁸⁹ this *sîrah* seems to have gained wide and sustained popularity. According to some scholars, it may be the only one that is presently still in oral circulation (personal communication).

International recognition was assigned to "Al-Sirah al-Hilaliyya: an Egyptian Oral Epic," which was awarded Shiekh Zayed Bin Sultan Al-Nahayan Prize. It was also recognized by the UNESCO as a "masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity" (Morsi 2006, www.esft.org).

A recent report announces the establishment of the "Museum for Al-Sîrah Al-Hilaliyyah" in the village of Abnûd, Qina (the birthplace for El-Abnûdî in Upper Egypt). The museum will also include the Abnûdî library "the largest epic work in Arab literature", as well as the tape recordings from Gâbir Abu-Husain, the reciter of the Hilaliyyah *Sîrah* for Abnûdî⁹⁰ Anis/(Anîs) conducted an interview with Abnûdî on the occasion of his 70th birthday. He gave a fairly comprehensive survey of his works (Anis 2015).⁹¹ Beside the Hilali *sîrah* as part of living bard-lore among certain categoris of the masses,

⁸⁵ These include: Guiga (1968: offering thirty-one selected poetic passages); Galley (2005: reporting on the *Taghrîba* (drive westward) of the Hilalites; Galley and Ayoub (1983); Grech (1989: on *indexation de la geste de Banu Hilal*); El-Naggâr (1979) discusses the symbolism of Abu Zaid; El-Naggâr (1995, pp. 847–73, 873–85): offers a résumé and an evaluating of the Abu Zaid *sîrah*; Reynolds (1995) discusses the ethnography of performance in Arabic oral epics; Slyomovics (1987a) describes a Hlali oral epic poet in performance; Slyomovics (1999) analyzes psychological traits of Arab epic hero outcast; and Wickett (2012: pp. 3–72, 137–19, 180–190). offers select field texts of the Hilali *sîrah*.

⁸⁶ Al-Zeer Salem (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt3109706/releaseinfo>.Al-ZeerSalem).

⁸⁷ As reported by (Lyons 1995), these are: These are: *Qissat al-Zîr*. Cairo 1288, A.H. *Sîrat 'Antar Ibn. Shaddâd*. Cairo 1962 (8 vols.); *Kitâb al-Muqaddam 'Alî al-Zaibaq*. Cairo n.d.; *Sîrat al-Zâhir Baibars*. Cairo n.d. (5 vols.); *Sîrat al-Amîra Dhat al-Himmah*. Cairo n.d. (70 parts); *Qissat Fayrûz Shâh b. al-Malik Suhrâb/Dahrâb*. Beirut n.d. (4 vols.); *Qissat al-'Amîr Hamzat al-Pahlawân[?]*. Cairo n.d. (4 vols.); *Sîrat Banî Hilâl al-Kubrâ*. Beirut n.d. (46 parts);

Qissat Abî Zaid al-Hilâlî wa'l-Nâ'isa. Cairo n.d.; *Taghrîbat Banî Hilâl*. Beirut n.d.

Qissat Fâris al-Yaman al-Malik Saif b. Dhî Yazan. 4 vols. Cairo: n.d.; *Sîrat Saif al- Tîjân*. Tunis: 1344 A. H.

Additionally, an elaborate narrative from *Thousand and One Nights* may be considered: [*The sîrah of*] "Umar al-Nu' mân and his Two Sons-Sharkân and Daw' al-Makân". (Alf Vol. I 162–60, 290–320, Vol. II 1–21, Chauvin Vol. VI 112 No. 277; Burton No. 8).

⁸⁸ Motif, P70\$, "Sherifs: descendants of Prophet Mohammed ('ashrâf, sâdah)".

⁸⁹ Motifs: "T570.1\$, Pregnant woman's wish (craving)"; T570.2\$, "Characteristics of newborn are due to mother's craving"; and V515.2.5\$, "Vision (scene) in which white chieftainess (woman) sees black bird defeat numerous white ones: she gives birth to black son who will becomes hero"; N342.1.2\$, "Virtuous woman (maiden) hastily condemned as adulteress (unchaste)".

⁹⁰ (Al-Ahrâm No. 46451: Sunday, 9/Feb./2014. Arabic).

⁹¹ For an elaborate presentation of the Hilâlî *sîrah* (or Abu-Za1d) as reconstituted by El-Abnûdî, see (El-Abnûdî 1988).

other channels for propagating the *sîrah* beyond its typical home communities may be recognized. (See Appendix K)

In this respect, preservation of traditional artifacts has become a noticeable occurrence among Arabs, especially the inhabitants of the Gulf Region. Beside national museums the “Personal Museums” of traditional artifacts have become wide spread (Khalifah 2016).

5.4. National Archives and Research Needs

Little is known about the activities of CFMC (Center of Folklore, Ministry of Culture) of Egypt, or AGSFC (Arab Gulf States Folklore Center) in Doha, Qatar. A report outlining the need for the facility was prepared by the UNESCO in 1984.⁹² Both facilities were established in the mid 1950s, and 1980s, respectively. Subsequently, Arab Gulf States culture ministers terminated the AGSFC due to its “uselessness”. More recently, it has been reported (Aqil 2013) that Arab ministers of culture met in 2010 in the Qatari capital [Doha] and selected the Arab republic of Egypt for the founding of “al-’arshîf al-qawmî li tawthîq al-ma’tûrât al-sha’biyyah (The National Archives for Documenting [Arab] Folk Tradition).” A symposium (*nadwah*) in Manama, Bahrain took place in 2012 and issued “The Manama-Covenant (’ahd/pledge) for Folk Arts” and confronting the challenges of ’awlamah (globalism/globalization). The symposium

“[...] called for the resuscitation of the project for Arab Repository / Archives for Folk Culture, and the necessity of establishing a base of unified scientific data for the recording of Arab culture and her/its occurrences [...].”

The author remarked,

“If we were to turn the hands of the clock backward we will stop at the experience of Folklore Center of Gulf Arab States [AGSFC], which closed its doors for managerial and financial debatable reasons. [We will find out that] all the important documents were lost along with the Center.” (Aqil 2013, p. 5)

There has been no further information on the establishment of that pan-Arab national archives or knowledge base center in Cairo. Current literature on “Egyptian Society for Folk Traditions (ESFT)” reports the existence of an Archives Department (which may be presumed to have been absorbed into the new ESFT setting), with Ahmad Aly Morsi as Director General. The new setting is closely associated with the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, and publishes schedules for its “Participants in statutory meetings,” and samples of Egypt’s folk arts.

However, there is no information on the pan-Arab “National Archives for Documenting [Arab] Folk Tradition” cited above (Aqil 2013).

Khalifah (2018), founder and Editor in Chief of *Al-Thaqâfah Al-Sha’biyyah / Folk Culture* sums up the reasons behind the lagging of Arab folklore studies behind other nations. He lists the following:

1. Late start due to the *dniyyah* (lowly) regard toward folk culture in all Arab nations until relatively recently
2. Successive relapses of official starts
3. Disputes among nations involved
4. Scarcity of academically qualified personnel
5. Selfish ambitions (*’atmâ’*, lit., greed) of certain individuals
6. Vicious conflict (*tanâhûr*, *nahr*: slaughter) among gang-like cliques (*shilal*, i.e., *thulal*), groups and bands. Here, the present writer would add:

⁹² Parker, J. Stephen. “Report prepared for the Government of the State of Qatar by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco).” <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0005/000585/058560eo.pdf>.

7. Vandalizing or suppressing the accomplishments by independent scholars, and—in some cases—the absence of “ethical neutrality”.

In the absence of viable folklore centers and archives, emphasis seems to have shifted to governmental departments of culture and tourism, and museums in order to cultivate the national *turâth* (“legacy/traditions/folklore”) especially of a newly founded State/Nation. From one end of the Arab World to the other, the evidence in this regard may be seen as countless. (See Appendix L). Yet, there is evidence indicating the dire need for archives and data indexes along with the proper academic training for their staff and compilers (or developers).

Examples:

Bazzî (2013) offers a broad spectrum of Lebanese folklore genres and fields, characters and concepts—ranging from “greetings” and “food” to “*siyar*” and their characters. He points out the modern activities generated by the rise of interest in folklore (folk culture), and argues for reliance on Arabic scholarship and shunning western studies. For him, the true understanding of Arab culture

“... happened after a *nahdah ma^crifiyyah* (knowledge revival) that treated *thaqâfat al-sha^cb* (the culture of the folk/nation”, that is: after we used to beg for an item of research from here or an essay or a piece of superficial knowledge by a traveler or a [western] orientalist from there [...] (p. 17).

Citing the typical arguments of the influence of Arab narratives on European tales and writers, Bazzî tries to explain how folklore brings different peoples closer together. Treating *al-hikâyah al-sha^cbiyyah* (the folktale) within “*al-qissah al-^carabiyyah* (the Arab Story)” (pp. 17–21), he reports:

In a study based of fieldwork a group of folktales were collected from South Lebanon. After the female-researcher viewed folktales in Egypt a rapprochement (*taqârob*) occurred between the two [samples]. Thus the title of the research became: The Folktale: a Comparative Study between some tales in South Lebanon and some Egyptian Folktales.

Bazzî concludes:

Folk culture is not separated by [political] boundaries for it is within its power to fly on two wings.

Though useful, it is evident that neither the unnamed authoress of the “comparative study,” nor Bazzî, nor the submission referees for the magazine/journal where the article was published are acquainted with any of the aspects of international folk narrative research.

The same lack of knowledge is true with reference to other folklore genres. Treating an old Arab proverbial simile “*ma^wa^cid ^cUrqûb/^cArqûb*” ([Like] ^cUrqûb’s promises,” Bazzî adds: “And a promise must be kept” (p. 18). In this respect he could have applied the concept of “motif” and reached the data El-Shamy (1995) provides from the Arab World”⁹³ as well as Stith Thompson’s (1955–1958) from other parts of the world.

Another case where lack of knowledge of folkloristic techniques hampers ascertaining lore’s representation of living realities (social, cultural, or psychological), is found in an article titled “Fairytale in Kabylie Region: An Anthropological Approach” (Shab^hah 2013). The author does not give a single full text of a tale or a verbatim passage from one. The presentation is hampered by his own interpretations of the contents in terms of themes and practices that may be viewed as motifs or tale-types.

⁹³ Motif, P525.0.1, “It is a debt if it is. Type: 310, 432.

NLV, EGYPT:- el-Shamy “Arab Women” No. 33.1; NLV, SUDAN:- .Al-Tayyib (1970) *al-Humrân* 39, 44; MGH, TUNISIA:- Galley-Ayoub 172/3 (divorce).

The description of the text (to be differentiated from a résumé) speaks of a mother who conspires with an ogre lover against her son. After a number of attempts, she finally succeeds in killing him by poison (p. 30). A score of Berber beliefs, practices and rituals are cited but explained away by Shabḥah's philosophical interpretation. These cultural phenomena could have been related folkloristically to motifs to ascertain their frequency.⁹⁴

Another Berber "text" is given in the following manner:

As for the tale of "The Girl with the Three 'Powers'," the female appears in it as a toy-doll represented by the Sultan's beautiful daughter who has the metaphysical powers/abilities of the shining of the Sun and the coming down of rain. ... And the image of the male represented by the sultan who wishes to possess/own her and confine her in his palace as an art piece and as a substance to be kept in a safe place so that he may amuse himself by looking at her whenever he wished. She is an instrument for enjoyment/pleasure (*mutCah*) that he wants to own her and marry her by force in spite of her and her father's wishes.

The procession comes to take the bride/doll [to her husband]. An old woman ('*sattût*') in order to plant terror in her. She is the aged woman symbolizing all types of evil and harm even in Kabylie [real social life]. The beautiful girl turns into a pigeon; a pigeon is a docile, obedient, submissive bird. It is the symbol of the woman/female with all her weak attributes. She did not turn into a strong eagle or a frightening lion. That "*sattût*" recognized the pigeon, she caught it away into the field of an old man. The pigeon turns into a (beautiful pomegranate): edible fruit and fruit for enjoyment. It is always the symbol of 'a woman', [and is] the imagination itself and the same regard at things repeats [itself] [??]. She is given as a gift to the sultan, [who tries to eat it but she reverts to her first [i.e., human] nature. The sultan avenges himself on "*sattût*" and his first wife who had conspired with her. Thus good wins over evil. The one who endures harm always wins at the end. (Shabḥah 2013, pp. 31–32)

In this supposed résumé, Shabḥah does not differentiate between what texts the nonexistent teller actually said and texts representing his own "anthropological" interpretations. Actually, a folkloristic approach would have been of more use. The tale (a "distorted text") is atypical and may indicate the disintegration of traditions. It carries some marks of Tale-type 707C\$, *Infants Cast away, (by Jealous Co-wives, Mother-in-law, Slave, etc.), and Subsequently Reunited with their Parents*,⁹⁵ but deviates to the ending episode in Tale-type 325, *The Magician and his Pupil*. [Apprentice overcomes

⁹⁴ The Text is related to AT 590, *The Prince and the Arm Bands*. [Faithless mother conspires with paramour against her son]. The tale also includes elements from Tale-type 318, *The Faithless Wife*. Batu: the Egyptian "Two Brothers" Tale, especially Motif, E631, "Reincarnation in plant (tree) growing from grave."

Other occurrences of Tale-type 590 in the Arab World (El-Shamy 2004a gives 28 texts). These include the following from Maghreb (North Africa).

MGH:

Tunisia:

(23) Hejajj (1996), *Tunis*, 230–32, No. II-5 –: <885 =, /590, -cf. /315 + 311D\$, P295.1\$, P681.0.1\$ Σindivid., atypical> (N. I f, 55, non-litr., widow, racont.; col. f).

Algeria

(24) Dermenghem, *kabyles*, 69–75, [No. 8] –: <590 = Σ> (I m, presum. adult);

(25) Frobenius, *Kabylén* II, 71–78, No. 8 –: <590 = Σ> (I);

(26) Mouliéras/Lacoste, *Kabylie*, 72–87, No. 5 –: <590 = + 300 Σ> (I);

(27) Savignac, *Kabylie*, 114–18, No. 13 –: <590 = + 300 Σ> (I m/?, x). Morocco:

(28) Noy, *Moroccan*, 64–69, No. 17 –: <590 = Σ> (I m, J, Russian fa and Mrc. mo).

⁹⁵ Magreb texts of this tale-type are:

MGH:

Algeria

(17). Frobenius, *Kabylén* III, 164–68, No. 40 –: <707C\$ =, -cf., 707 Σ> (I);

(18). Nacib, *Djurjura*, 17–20, No. 1 –: <707C\$ = Σ> (Brb/KbylI);

evil master's magical arts]; Motif: E711.2.4.1\$, "Soul in pomegranate seed (section)." It also seems to bear some themes from Tale-type 403C, *The Witch Secretly Substitutes her own Daughter* for the bride. [Substitute bride thrown under bridge; reed grows out of her navel].⁹⁶ Clearly, what is needed in this and similar studies is *folkloristic analysis* more than an anthropological one, as is the case in numerous situations that deal with folkloric materials but under rubrics that many authors consider more prestigious.

6. Conclusions

In dealing with contemporary "folklore of Arab Lands", four stages may be recognized:

1. Ambivalence and/or hostility. Typically motivated by the false perception that dialectical lore is a threat classical Arabic (al-*fushḥā*) and consequently to Islam.
2. Cautious approach motivated by Western patterns of scholarship
 - 2a Early perception of "folklore": Literature (narratives, poems, rhymes—including proverbs.
3. Recognition of "folklore" as both worthy literary/cultural materials and as a legitimate field of scholarship/discipline. This stage witnessed the: Establishment of the first "Center for Folklore" in Arab lands, within the Ministry of Culture in Cairo Egypt. More inclusive pattern, as conceptualized by Ahmad Rushdī Sālīh, the actual founder of the facility. The Establishment of The Arts Academy (with Folklore being one of its divisions (1981), beside such high-culture specializations as Acting, and Ballet)
4. Adoption by of the Arab states, especially newly founded ones in the Gulf, of folklore as a precious national asset. Major institutions and lavish monetary awards became a common feature in these new states thus attracting writers from all over the Arab World.

Folklore and folklore studies have become major fields for both creative artistic works as well as a worthy field of academic scholarship. However, it should be born in mind that a social group's or a nation's folklore represents both the meritorious as well as the debasing. Perhaps the *sīrah* of Abu-Zaid demonstrates this moral problem: it represents a great example of learning and recall (memory), but it also advocates tribalism and bloody conflicts.

In an insightful statement, Al-Ahrām daily newspaper offered the following comment on a new play (by Salāh ^cAds) based on Abu-Zaid's *sīrah*:

Conflict between Arab nomads and Tunisian Moslem Amâzigh Berbers proved to be disastrous for Andalusian Moslems. Al-Mu^ctamid Ibn ^cabbād, the ruler of Ashbiliyyah (Seville), pleaded with Ben-Zîrî, the powerful Tunisian leader, to aid him/them against Christian warriors who were seeking to evict them from the Iberian Peninsula. Ben-Zîrî was receptive and began preparations send reinforcements. As he was preparing an army, he was shocked by a surprise attack of Abu Zaid and his army from the East. Tragically, his attempts failed: no Amâzigh heroes were left to undertake the task. Abu Zaid had finished them off.⁹⁷

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

(19). Scelles-Millie, *algériennes*, 87–95, No. 4 –: <707C\$ = ,cf. Σ" c.-merv."> (1 ?/"B.B.");Morocco

(20). Koudia, *Moroccan* (El-Shamy 2003), 96–99, No. 15 –: <707C\$ = , K2116.1.1.1, H51.1, S117, Q416,-cf. Σfantasy-tale/novella> (1 m, elite, auth.-col., re-wrt., pre+sum. after f).

⁹⁶ Other motifs include: K2293, Treacherous old woman; K2222, Treacherous co-wife (concubine); D211.2, Transformation: man (woman) to pomegranate; and Q411.4, Death as punishment for treachery.

⁹⁷ Qâ'ūd (Al-), M. 'A. (2003) "Hifnat suṭūr: Abū Zaid al-Hilālī" (A Handful of Lines: Abū Zaid al-Hilālī). *Al-Ahrām* No. 46171. 5/May/2013, Vol. 1377. www.ahram.org.eg/News/810/11/208313/aspx.

Appendix A

Appendix A.1 Abbreviations and Signs, Archives and Archival Materials

Unpublished materials constitute a major building block in the formation of the present work. These raw data are viewed as more authentic than most published texts which are often altered for various reasons. These materials are either field recordings on magnetic sound tapes, or written manuscripts and are on deposit at public facilities (archives, libraries) or are privately owned. The archival materials are designated as follows:

AGSFC—Arab Gulf States Folklore Center, Ministry of Information, Doha, Qatar

CFMC—Center for Folklore, Ministry of Culture, Cairo, Egypt

AUC—The American University in Cairo. Field collections undertaken by students during the academic years 1971 and 1972, and submitted to H. El-Shamy, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for “Anthropology 206: Folklore.”

HE-S—Hasan El-Shamy’s collections, private archives including the American University in Cairo: Student’s Collections, and “Miscellaneous Manuscripts.” El-Shamy’s fieldwork and the materials which he collected as an official of the CFMC are cited as archival holdings of that governmental agency.

IUFTL—Indiana University Folklore Tape Library (Folklore Archives), Bloomington, Indiana.

With reference to tape-recorded data, citations of specific items are given as follows:

1. Depository (AGSFC, AUC, CFMC, HE-S, IUFTL).
2. Region where item was collected
3. Date item was collected (which is also used here as the call number for the tape); the first hyphenated set of figures represents the last two digits of the year the field trip was undertaken and the month: 71-3 means March 1971
4. The second set of three hyphenated figures refers to the number of the reel in the collection, followed by the track number on the tape, then by the number of the item on that track. When the item number is undetermined (often due to lack of, or incomplete, cataloguing), an x is used.

For example,

CFMC—Oases 71-3, 3-1-1, stands for: the Oases/New Valley collection, trip undertaken in March 1971, reel number 3, track number 1, item number 1.

AGSFC—QTR 87-3, 676-1-133-66, stands for: Qatar collection, trip undertaken in March 1987, tape number 676, track number 1, *tape-counter* 133 to 166.

AUC—The American University in Cairo (1971-72). The figure following AUC refers to the serial number of the collection; the ensuing figure refers to the tale number in that collection.

For example,

AUC—3, No. 3 stands for: paper number 3 in the American University in Cairo collections, text No. 3.

Appendix A.2 Name Abbreviations and Other Marks

Designates a tale read by El-Shamy (and millions of pupils from Iraq to Morocco) as part of school curriculums during the 1940s and 50s. (=Arabic reader; /E = English reader; /F = Farsi reader; Cin college. French high school readers held only a few folk motifs)

Aa-Th/AT—Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson, *The Types of the Folktale*

Eberhard//Boratav—E-B—W. Eberhard, and N. Boratav. *Typen Türkischer Volksmaerchen*

ELSF—Nikita Elesséeff, *Thèmes et motifs de mille et une nuits*

Grimm/Uther—Hans-Jörg Uther, ed., *Kinder- und Hausmaerchen*

Jason/Avishur, Iraq—Heda Jason, Folktales of the Jews of IRAQ
 Marzolph, pers—Ulrich Marzolph, Typologie des persischen Volksmaerchens
 Marzolph, *Ridens*—*Arabia Ridens* (Marzolph 1992)
 Nowak/NK—Ursula Nowak, “Beitraege zur Typologie des arabischen Volksmaerchens”
 Ranke—Kurt Ranke (in *Nubische Maerchens* (Kronenberg and Kronenberg 1978))
 Tubach—Tubach, Frederic C., Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales
 Uther—Hans-Jörg Uther (in Werner Daum’s *Maerchen aus dem Jemen*)

Appendix A.3 Sub-Saharan Africa

Arewa—E.O. Arewa, A Classification of the Folktales of Northern East African Cattle Area by Type.
 Haring—Lee Haring, *Malagasy Tale Index*.
 Lambrecht—Lambrecht, Winifred, “A Tale Type Index for Central Africa”
 Klipple—May Augusta Klipple, African Folktales with Foreign Analogues

Data Fields: The following characters are applied to designate fields of data:

{ }—Remarks and comparative notes on the tale-type
 Additional bibliographic remarks and sources
 C—Partition; end of bibliography, beginning of typology
 <>—Types and motifs identified in the text treated. Primacy is assigned to the cardinal tale-type
 Partition: preceded by the cardinal tale-type; additional types and motifs follow
 Σ—Partition within the <>-field; commentary on the text follows
 ()—Informant data: information on location, narrator, and collector
 |—Separates location of text from informant data within the ()-field
 /?—Uncertain information, or missing data
 _cf. —Placed following the motif or type number to insure that computer managed sorting is done according to the number rather than “cf.” Within the informant field, the following abbreviations recur:

Gender:

f = female,
 = male
 = child

Kinship/affinity:

br = brother, div. = divorced, fa = father, gr. = grand, mat. = maternal, mo = mother, pat. = paternal, sis = sister, wed = married

Age: c = child, adult, mid-age, elder, etc.

Religious affiliation: Chr = Christian, J = Jewish, Mos = Moslem.

Occupation: empl. = employee/*muwazzaf*, grad. = graduate, lit. = literary text, litr. = literate informant, frag. = fragment, profess. = professional, retr’d = retired, sch = school, trdtns = tradition(s), u. = university.

Other features:

auth. = author,
 elem. = elementary,
 narr. = narrator,
 wrt. = writer/in writing,
 re-wrt. = rewritten.

Appendix A.4 Abbreviations of Locations and Ethnicity

With reference to geographic locations within a country, the following abbreviations are used

C. = Central
E. = East
N. = North
S. = South
W. = West

Abbreviations and other terms used to refer to aspects of a text:

composite = constituted of several independent stories
“c. plsnt” = *conte plaisant*/humorous tale
“c. merv.” = *conte merveilleux*/Maerchen
“l.r.” = *legende religieuse*/religious legend
elements = few major themes of the tale-type are present
fin = concluding episode
frag. = fragment/incoherent
gen. = general
incompl. = ending episode(s) missing
Hierogl. = Hieroglyphic
moral. = moralistic
prov. = proverb
un-doc. = Undocumented text

Other abbreviations used to refer to province, governorate, town, and ethnic group (tribe):

Alex = Alexandria, Eg.
Alg = Algeria
Arb = Arab
Armc = Aramaic
Ayyt = el-)Ayyât, S. Eg.
Bdw = Bedouin/“*badawî*”, Arab nomad
Bgh = Baghdad, Iraq
Bn.-Swf = Banî Suwaif, S. Eg.
Brb = Berber
Cro = Cairo, Eg.
Canal = Suez Canal region
Dhfr = *Zofâr*/Dhofar, Oman
Dlt = Delta, Eg.
Dmsc = Damascus, Syria
Dqh = Daqahliyyah, Eg.
Eg. = Egypt
Fyym = Fayyoun, Eg.
Gen = Genera
Ghr = Gharbiyyah, Eg.
Irbl = Irbil, Irq.
Ism)l = Ism)iliyya/Canal
Jrslm = Jerusalem

J^cly = al-Ja^cliyyîn, Sudan
 Kby = Kabayle-Berber
 Kfr-Shk = Kafr el-Shaikh, N. Eg.
 Krd = Kurdish
 Krdfn = Kordofan, Sudan
 Kwt = Kuwait
 Lâdhiq = Lâdhiqiyyah, N. Syr.
 Ling. = lingual
 Mnf = Munûfiyyah, N. Eg.
 Mnsrh = Mansûrah, N. Eg.
 Mrc = Morocco
 Msl = Mosul, Iraq
 Ma^cl = Ma^clûla, Syria
 Nu = Nubian
 Nu-Fâ = Nubian-Fâdidchî
 Nu-Knz = Nubian-Kunûzî
 O-Rir' = Olad-Rir', Algeria
 Oss = Oases, Eg.
 Plstn = Palestine
 Qlli = Qulalî, Cairo, Eg.
 Qlql = Qalqiliyyah, Plst.
 Qly = Qalyûbiyyah, N. Eg.
 Qrsh = Qirshah/Girshah-Nubia, Eg.
 Qtr = Qaṭar
 Sctr = Socotra/Soqoṭra Island, African Horn, Oman/Yemen
 Sdn = Sudan
 Shrq = Sharqiyyah, E. Eg.
 Shyq = al-Shâyiyyah, Sudan
 Snbllwn = Sinbellawain, Dqh, N. Eg.
 Syr = Syria
 Tlwnh = Telwânah, Eg.
 Tns = Tunisia
 Trdndt = Taroudannt, S. Morocco
 Trk = Turkish
 Trkmn = Turkmân, Turks, Iraq
 Trbn = Tarâbîn Arabs, Eg.
 U = Upper/deep Southern, Eg.
 Zqzq = el-Zaqâzîq/Zagâzîg, E. Eg.

The syntax of the annotation line is as follows:

(serial No. of the item in DOTTI-A's list of tale-types). author, ref. title remarks on ref., sources, reprints, etc. – <cardinal tale-type No. =, other types and major motifs found in the text Σadditional info.> (location of text | information on narrator; information on collector).

Examples are:

(1). al-Bâtîni, *hikâyat*, 106-9, No. 19 →: <123 = + 327F, K1832 + K1832.2\$ Σ> (| f, auth.-col., from f kin). (See p. 49).

- (3). Maspero/El-Shamy, *Ancient Egypt*, 1-16, No. 1 1917: pp. 1-20, “The Story of the Two Brothers” –: <318 = + 917’ + 516B + 315,/590A, T479\$, A6.3.1.1S, T479.1\$ Σfantasy-tale/myth> (l m, scribe, presum. adult, wrt., hierogl.). (See p. 140).
- (4). Stevens, *Iraq*, 246-52, No. 43 NK 58a –: <545F\$ =, B422 + F857.1, 545H\$, -cf. Σ> (l f, youthCKurd, in Ar.; col. f, Euro.). (See p. 299).
- (8). Muhammad ^cAlî Nâsir, *Turâth* XI:11/12, 189-92 q.sh.^ci.-I, 385-89, [No. 63] C: <676A\$ + Q68.3.1\$, Q68.1./Q263 + 834A,-cf. Σlocal subtype> (C [=Central]-Najaf l f, 67). (See p. 370).

All data cited about a given text should be considered in relationship to the broader context in which the text appears. These include the *title* of the source, the *general heading* under which the text is listed (e.g., LIT.-TREAT, PEN, MSP, etc.), and the general *category under which the Aarne-Thompson index lists the tale-type* (e.g., Animal Tales, Tales of Magic, Jokes and Anecdotes, etc.).

Appendix B

Appendix B.1 A Note on Transliteration and Abbreviations

The transliteration system adopted in this work is as follows:
Short vowels:

a *faṭḥah*
] [i/e *kasrah*
o/u *ḍammah*

Long vowels:

â aa/Aa (The “î” capital form is not available in the present font)
î ee/ii
û oo/ou/ô
ai/ae/ü ‘*imâlah*’/(as in german Umlaut)

Appendix B.2 Abbreviations and Signs: A Note on Data Presentation

Alf: Alf Laylah wa Laylah.
AT/AaTh: *The Types of the Folktale* (Aarne and Thompson 1964).
ATU: *The Types of International Folktales* (Uther 2004).
Burton—*Arabian Nights: The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* (Burton 1894).
Chauvin—Victor Chauvin, *Bibliographie des ouvrages arabes ou relatifs aux arabes* (Chauvin 1892–1922).
DOTTI: *Types of the Folktale in the Arab World* (El-Shamy 2004a).
GMC-A: *Folk Traditions of the Arab World* (El-Shamy 1995).
Maspero/El-Shamy—*Popular Stories of Ancient Egypt* (Maspero and El-Shamy 2004).
MITON: Hasan El-Shamy, *A Motif Index of The Thousand and One Nights* (El-Shamy 2006a).
ANE: *The Arabian Nights Encyclopedia* (Marzolph et al. 2004).
Mot./Motif: *Motif-Index of Folk Literature* (Thompson 1955–1958).
RAFE: *Religion among the Folk in Egypt* (El-Shamy 2008).
TAWT: *Tales Arab Women Tell* (El-Shamy 1999).

Abbreviations Used to Refer to Nations/States

Alg = Algeria
Eg./Egy = Egypt

Ert. = Eritrea
 Kwt = Kuwait
 Mrc = Morocco
 Omn = Oman
 Plstn = Palestine
 Qtr = Qatar
 Sctr = Socotra/Socotra Island, African Horn, Oman/Yemen
 Sdn = Sudan
 Syr = Syria
 Tns = Tunisia
 Ymn = Yemen

Appendix B.3 Other Abbreviations

Cf. = Compare
 Elabor. = Elaboration
 Incompl. = Incomplete
 Lit. = Literary
 n. = note
 Sim. = Simile
 Var. = Variant/Version

Appendix B.4 Sequence of Citing References

I: Ancient
 Badawî: *Herodot*
 Budge, E.A.W.: *Gods*
 Bduge: *Mummy*
 Budge/Spitta, W.: *Romances*
 Green, R.L.
 Hassan, S.: *Mawasû^cah*
 Hollis, S.T.
 Ions. V.
 Maspero, G.
 Müller, W.M.
 Romer, J.
 Simpson, W.K.
 Vinson, S.

Appendix B.5 II: Classic Arabic-Islamic sources cited according to author's date of death

Ibn al-Kalbî, (d. 826)
 Jâhîz, (al-), (d. 868–69). Unless otherwise stated, all citations refer to his *al-Hayawân*.
 Ibn-^cAasim, (d. 903)
 Kisâ'î (al-), (d. 904)
 Tabarî (al-), (d. 923)
 Tha^clabî (al-), (d. 1035/1036)
 Ibn-al-Athîr, (d. 1233)
 Qazwîni, (al-), (d. 1283)
 Ibn-Kathîr, (d. 1373)

Damîrî, (al-), (d. 1405)
 Ibshîhî, (al-), (d. 1446)
 Ibn-^cArabshâh, (d. 1450)

Appendix B.6 III: All Other references Follow Alphabetically

Note on References to Specific Motifs

Interconnectedness

The present work is a continuation of other indexes and studies by the present writer. It expands and clarifies the theoretical approach begun in *Folkloric Behavior* (1967). Due to practical factors little known reference to a motif are not cited here. The acronyms *MITON*, *RAFE*, or *TAWT*, for example, will guide the reader to main works that will provide additional references to a motif in the present work. For example:

Motif C1.1\$, "*al-harâm*: Sacred (religious) tabu. 'The illegitimate' (illicit, 'not permitted')—opposite of: *al-halâl* (the licit or legitimate, permitted by God)", cites the following references: Maspero 60 No. 3 n. 2; Tha^clabî 12–13: Shamy (el-) "*Arab Mythology*" No. 30; *DOTTI* 910/{lit.}; and *MITON*. By consulting these works, additional references will be found: *Alf* IV 155; Burton I 32–34. Chauvin VI 9–11 No. 184; *ANE* 237–38 No. 236. This Motif is also comparable to Motifs A608\$, "*Determination of al-halâl* (the licit, legitimate) and of *al-harâm* (the illicit, sinful) for man"; C59\$, "*Tabu: Ritual uncleanliness while before God (performing religious duties: Prayers, etc.)*", and C60\$, "*Tabu: Violators of ablution-state (wudû': Being ritually clean) Critical contaminants (nagâsah): Acts and objects that defile, or cause ritual uncleanliness and becoming unfit to perform certain religious rituals*".

Similarly, Motif Z13.5.2\$, "*Tale character (speaker) instructs self (usually reprimandingly and emphatically)*", cites only *MITON*. However, by referring to *MITON*, the following additional occurrences will be found: Burton VI 70. Chauvin VII 26–29 No. g; *ANE* 386–87 No. 179.

Appendix C

Motif:	T319\$, Restoration of damaged virginity. Type: 1542***.
Link:	!K1912, False virgin. Various deceptive practices to mask bride as virgin. !T59.2.1\$, Accidental defloration. !T160.0.2.2\$, Midwife ensures bride's bleeding at defloration (by scratching bride's vagina).
Ref.:	<i>DOTTI</i> 854/Egy; Shamy (el-) <i>Egypt</i> 231 No. 68.>. T59.2.1\$, Accidental defloration. <i>Alf</i> I 147; Burton II 50. Chauvin V 277 No. 160; <i>ANE</i> 178 No. 37.>.
Other Motifs:	T160.0.2\$, Traumatic (cruel) defloration.
Link:	!A1650.5.2.16\$, Punishment of eve: Suffering defloration pains. !K1912.3\$, False virgin's pseudo-bleeding: Internal self-inflicted wound will reopen at defloration (intercourse). !T289\$, Marital rape: Husband has sex with his wife by force.
Ref.:	Damîrî II 167/cf./("like brute animal"); <i>DOTTI</i> 151 289 624 642/{lit.}; Landberg (1909) II, 867–86; <i>MITON</i> ; Rhodokanakis <i>Zfâr</i> : <i>SAE</i> VIII 80–82 No. 38; Wehr 429 No. 17; HE-S Cairo/Turah 1982–6.>. T160.0.2.1\$, 'Digital defloration'.
Link:	!H1580\$, Test (recognition) of sexual deviance.
Ref.:	Burton V 279 n. 2.>. T160.0.3\$, Publication of defloration: Blood displayed.

Ref.:	<i>DOTTI</i> 515 553/Mrc; <i>MITON</i> ; Amīn 350; Diyāb 299; CFMC: Oases 71-3 1-2-No. [1].>.
Motif:	Z186.9.1.1\$, Symbolism: Ring—vagina, anus.
Link:	E761.4.4.1\$, Life token: Ring tightens around finger. J1807.3\$, Penis mistaken for an object (finger, pin, etc.). X245\$, Girl is too little for marriage; shoemaker (suitor): Will 'stretch her on the mold' [...] .>.

Appendix D

For examples in broader sociocultural context see the following motifs in *MCA-IFT*:

P293.2.1.1\$,	Boys take after their maternal-uncles.
Link:	P294.0.1.1\$, Girls take after their paternal-aunts.
Ref.:	Jāhiz / (<i>al-Bayān</i>) I 103: Shamy (el-) "Arab Mythology": "Luqaym" No. 62; Aalūcī III 212–13; <i>RAFE</i> 158 n. 583; Schmidt-Kahle 46–49 No. 23/cf.; Shamy (el-) "Mahfūz's Trilogy" 64; Taymūr No. 3023/(Taymūr: "I don't know why").>.
	P294.0.1.1\$, Girls take after their paternal-aunts.
Link:	P293.2.1.1\$, Boys take after their maternal-uncles. W251.2.1\$, <i>makhwal</i> ('maternal-unclehood') as basis for judging character.
Ref.:	Burton I 303 n. 1/cf. (take after mother); <i>RAFE</i> 158 n. 583; Taymūr nos. 833 3023/(Taymūr: "I don't know why [emphasis added]").>.
	W251.2.1\$, <i>makhwal</i> ('maternal-unclehood') as basis for judging character.
Link:	P293.2.1, Children take after their mother's brothers. W251.2.3.2\$, Motherhood as basis for judging character.
Ref.:	<i>DOTTI</i> 501; Mahfūz III 32; <i>RAFE</i> 158 n. 583; Schmidt-Kahle 46–49 No. 23.>.
	P297.2.2\$, 'A maternal-uncle is a father [to his sister's child]' (<i>el-khāl wālīd</i>). Type: cf. 850A\$.
Link:	L111.5.1\$, Child born of brother-sister incest as hero: 'Son of own maternal-uncle'. P253.0.1, Sister's son [(nephew) and mother's brother (<i>khāl</i>)]. P293.1.1\$, Brother adopts his sister's child.
Ref.:	Diyāb 262; <i>DOTTI</i> 348 469 508/Sdn; <i>TAWT</i> 405 n. 811.>.

Appendix E

Motifs: P12.2.2.1\$, "al-Hajjāj as tyrant"; P12.2.2\$, "Tyrannical viceroy (or minister)"; P506.3\$, "Rebellion against government"; Q218.1\$, "Rebellion against government (ruler, king, etc.) punished"; J226, "Difficult choices between relatives"; P253.3, "Brother chosen rather than husband or son"; P798.1.0.5\$, "Triads revolving around brother and sister as unbalanced (Sethian syndrome)"; P798.1.1\$, "Conflict within a triad: one party is removed so as to restore stability (balance)"; Z19.3\$, "Etiological tales: 'That-is-why'-tales."

Occurrences:

- (1). Basset *Mille* II, 252, No. 29__after, Rink et Vater –: <985 =, -cf. Σ" c. divers"> (|);
- (2). Chauvin II, 190, No. 2—after, Ibn ʿArabshāh, *Fākihah* –: <985 = + 816A\$, /as-intro. Σ> (|).

PEN:

3 additional texts [of the narrative] are available. The ratio of f:m narrators is 1:1. The following renditions were narrated by females (or children):

NLS

- (1). Kronenberg, *Nubische*, 196–206, No. 42 –: <857\$/516F\$ = T257.0.2\$, T562 + H506.9 + 884C\$ + 985, -cf. [Ranke: "00"]> (f, 35).

Other Rendition(s):

NLE: (2). Taymûr, *al-'amthâl*, 186, No. 986 –: <985=, Σ: folk prov., lit. narrative, abstract> (); (3). HE-S: Cairo 1985 –: <985 =, Σ: lit.> (m, 28, engin., read in magazine).

Appendix F

Genres of the Folk Narrative (El-Shamy 1999 pp. 523–24)

In introducing the texts of narratives included in the present work, a term indicating the genre(s) to which the story belongs is given (e.g., fantasy tale: *sabhûnah*, *hujwah*; religious story: *qissah min ed-dîn*, *exemplum*, saint's legend; humorous narrative: humorous anecdote, joke; etc.). To help the reader in relating a given genre term to the broader folk narrative system, the following general chart is provided. It outlines the various generic categories of the folk narrative as applied in the present and other works by the present writer (El-Shamy 1979, pp. xlv–xlvi). The genre to which a story is assigned is reckoned in terms of a patterned combination of several factors that include form, style, structure, contents, medium and direction of communication, and the story's manifest function according to the narrator's intent.

Many stories manifest characteristics of more than one genre, and the genre to which a story belongs can be transformed into another through the narrator's intent and the context in which narration occurs:

I. Genres of the *prose* folk narrative:

1. Fantasy narratives (*haddûtah*, *khurraifah*, *hujwah*, *hikâyah*).
Maerchen/magic-tale, cf. fairy-tale.
 Novella/romantic tale.
 Animal tale (cf. fable).
 Formula tale (*hizr*, *fazzûrah*, *nuktah*): Cumulative, Catch, Endless, Rounds (clock).
2. Humorous narratives (*nuktah*, *nâdirah*, *haddûtah*).
 Merry tale/humorous tale.
 Humorous anecdote/*Schwank*[Gr.] (*nâdirah*, *qafshah*).
 The joke/*Witz*[Gr.] (*nuktah*).
3. Knowledge, narratives expressing (*qissah*, *'ustûrah*, *sîrah*, *târîkh*).
 The legend (*'ustûrah*, *qissah*).
 Historical legend/*Sage*[Gr.]; life history.
 Historical anecdote (cf. etiologic tale).
 Migratory legend.
 Memorate, personal experience legend.
 Urban legend, etc.
4. Didactic narratives (*mathal*, *hikmah*, *qissah*). Dilemma tale: (*hizr*, *fazzûrah*)—scarce in Arabic lore. Riddle tales. Fable (cf. *exemplum*, animal tale) . . .
5. Belief narratives (*qissah*, *maw'izah*, *'ustûrah*, . . .).
 Sacred belief story (cf. "religious legend"), religious tale.
 "Myth," (*khurâfah qasasiyyah*) [misabeled, *'ustûrah* by most Arab writers].
 Exemplum (*wa'z*/*'irshâd*, *qissah dîniyyah*).
 Belief legend: Local legend, migratory legend, personal experience legend/memorate, urban legend.

II. Genres of the versified (poetry) narrative:

Epic: *Malḥamah*, poetic *qaṣīdah* (ode)—Typically a versified religious belief or quasi-religious belief account, a historical-legendary account (for arguments on the characteristic of “true” epic, see: Werner, Littmann, Simpson, p. 8, pp. 30–31, above).

Cante fable (*sīrah*, narrative in prose and poetry, ballad)—labeled “epic” in recent academic literature.

The ballad (*maṭwāl qaṣaṣī*)—typically a “legend” or “belief” account [...].

Appendix G

0506**, *The Grateful Saint*. The hero redeems a saint’s maltreated picture and is afterwards rewarded by the grateful saint.

G.1. Tale-type He-S 760B\$, *Restless Soul: Deceased cannot rest because of worldly concerns; his soul contacts the living to make his wishes known*.

INDEXES: {Cf. 506**, 780B, 1645C\$}.

MOTIF-SPECTRUM:

D1610.18.1.1\$, Sphinx speaks.

E419.1, _cf. ISoul wanders and demands that a temple be built for him;

E721.1.0.1\$, The dead ‘come to’ (communicate with) the living in dreams (visions).

J169\$, *sīrah/siyar*: Personal life-history (biography, vita).

J169.5\$, _cf. Epitaph: Inscription on grave sums up owner’s accomplishments in life;

J760.1\$, IBurial plot (grave) prepared (along with other accompaniments—coffin, shrouds, prayers, etc.).

N848.1, Hero ransoms maltreated picture of a saint. As reward he gets help from the grateful saint.

V68, Preparations for burial;

V113, Shrines;

V113.0.1.1\$, Shrine built (repaired) at the demand of (dead) saint;

V220.0.8.2.0.1\$, _cf. Saint causes mischief to enforce demand;

V510.1.1\$, Image of deity speaks in vision to devotee;

V510.3.1\$, Sacred person (prophet, saint) speaks in vision to mortal.

Occurrences:

LIT.-TREAT. -:

NLE:

Egypt

(1). Maspero/El-Shamy, *Ancient Egypt*, 229–32, No. 20 (1917, pp. 275–79, “Fragments of a Ghost Story” -: <760B\$ =,/506**,-cf. Σ > (I);.

(2). HE-S: Kafr-el-Zaytûn 80–4, No. xx -: <760B\$ =/506**,-cf., E419.1,/shrine, V113.0.1.1\$, V220.0.8.2.0.1\$,/spooks away riding animals of tomb-visitors Σsaint’s *karâmah*> (Dlt/Ghr | m, janitor, personal experience).

Appendix H

An example of the creativity associated with women’s songs is illustrated by the following motif derived from a Nile Delta wedding. The new motif is a derivative Motif, F1009, “Inanimate object acts as if living—[miscellaneous].” As performed by a woman, accompanied by a throng of females, the song states:

“Fassalî el-qamîs, yâ ‘arûasah, wi ‘isimî el-badâyî^c fih”.

wi ‘irsimî nakhlah bi-balahâ, li-l ‘arîs yitla^c yigma^châ”.

wi ‘irsimî maq^cad ‘a-l baharî, li-l -‘arîs yshsha^ctar fih!”.

“O bride, fashion the slip/(nightgown) and draw (embroider) exquisite things on it.”

And draw a [female] palm-tree with dates for the groom to climb for harvest her.”

And draw a cool (‘a-l-baharî/‘northerly [from which seabreeze blows southwards]) lounge for the groom to scatter himself [in/on it].”

Motif: F1009.7\$, Bride advised to fashion her slip and draw (embroider) exquisite things on it: To draw a palm-tree with dates for the groom to climb for harvesting, and a cool (‘a-l-baharî/[‘northerly’) lounge for the groom to scatter himself [in it].

Link: |T59.9\$, Foreplay and other erotic acts—miscellaneous. |U248.5\$, Gender affects perception (phantasy): Males and females perceive different things (and view the same thing differently).

Ref.: CFMC: 1960s/[?]: El-Gimmaizah collection/women’s wedding song.>.

Another song from a similar female source states:

“Yâ habîbî, law gait ‘andinâ,”

l-ahottak fî ‘yûnî wi tibqâ minninâ”

wi ‘in gat ‘ommak tidawwar ‘laik,”

l-ahlif, bi-l-‘amânah, mâ gait ‘andinâ.”

“O sweetheart, if you were to come to us,”

would put you in my eyes and you would become from us.”.

And if your mother were to come looking for you,”

would swear, by honesty, that you did not come to us.”

Motif: F1035.6.2.1\$, Girl would conceal her sweetheart in her ‘own eye (under eyelid)’ and cover him with kohl (formulaic).

Link: |Z63.2.4.1\$, Lover to beloved: “I’m the eye, you’re the pupil”—inseparable. (Typically said by female). |Z66.1\$, To be ‘in (on) one’s eyes’—endearment. |Z139.9.4.1\$, “Kohl-applicator (-needle) in kohl-pot” (al-mirwad fî al-‘makhalah’/mikhalah) = full sexual intercourse.

Ref.: MITON.>.

These highly imaginative images parallel those used by the heroine to hide her beloved from her ogre parent in the typically female-narrated tale. Tale-type: HE-S 310A\$, *The Maiden in the Tower: Louliyyah*. Youth cursed to fall in love with ogre’s (ogress’s, witch’s) daughter: Elopement, transformation (separation), and disenchantment (reunion). (See [El-Shamy 1979](#), No. 8, esp. p. 60, where the heroine hides her beloved, whom she had bewitched into a pin, on her chest)

Appendix I

Issues involved in the theological school of ‘I‘tizâl:

Goldziher, Ignac. *Madhâhib al-tafsîr al-‘Islamî*. Translation of: *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill 1920 and 1952; ‘)Abd al-Halîm al-Naggâr tr. Cairo: Al-Khângî, 1955.

Goldziher, Ignac. “Die Heiligenverehrung in Islam.” In: *Muhammedanische Studien*, Vol. 2 Hildesheim: Olms, 1961.

Goldziher, Ignac. *al-‘Aqîdah wa al-shar‘îah fî al-Islâm*, (translation of: *Vorlesungen über den Islam*: Heidelberg, 1910/1925). Moḥammad Y. Mûsâ, ‘Alî H. ‘Abd-al-Qâdir, and ‘Abd-al-‘Azîz ‘Abd-al-Haqq, trs. eds. (Cairo: Dâr al-Kitâb al-Hadîth, and Baghdad: Al-Muthannâ, 2nd, 1964).

Goldziher, Ignac *Vorlesungen über den Islam* (Introduction to Islamic Theology and Law), Andras and Ruth Hamori, trs.; with an introduction and additional notes by Bernard Lewis. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1981.

Also see, [El-Shamy \(2008\)](#), *Religion among the Folk in Egypt*: p. 25 n. 069; p. 60 n. 200; p. 71 n. 235; p. 89 n. 298; p. 144 n. 522; p. 151 n. 560; p. 152 n. 564; p. 165 n. 610; p. 166 n. 614; p. 193 n. 687; p. 284 n. 687.

Appendix J

In the sequence of their appearance, these tale-types are:

844C\$, *Search for a Virgin (Chaste Woman)*. None is found readily; 318, *The Faithless Wife*. *Batu: The Egyptian "Two Brothers" Tale*; 917\$, *Innocent (Chaste) Man Slandered as Seducer (Rapist): Subsequently Vindicated*. (*Batu/Baiti and Anub's wife, Joseph and Pharaoh's wife, etc.*); 516B, *The Abducted Princess (Love Through Sight of Floating Hair)*; 315,/cf. *The Faithless Sister*. [Treacherous sister conspires with paramour against her brother]; 590A, *The Treacherous Wife*. [Faithless wife conspires with paramour against her husband]; 1920,/cf., *Contest in Lying*; 1920E1\$, *Contest: Strangest (Most Bizarre) Story Awarded Prize*; 1359, *Husband Outwits Adulteress and Paramour*; 930E\$, *Prophecy: Unborn Child (Infant) Predestined to Replace King*. (Attempts to get rid of child follow; 922A,/cf. *Achikar*. Falsely accuse minister reinstates himself by cleverness; 938,/cf. *Placidus (Eustacius)*. [Loses all, then regains all]; 936A\$,/cf. *Voyages (Adventures) of an Entrepreneur (Sindbad the sailor)*. (Focus); 954A\$, *Enemy's Defences Overcome by Smuggling Concealed Warriors Past Fortifications (Garrison, Moat, Wall, etc.)*; 954,/cf. *The Forty Thieves*; 1645D\$, *Perilous Journey in Search of Treasure Trove*; 792\$, *Resuscitation in order to Learn Truth (Get Information about Past Events)*. The tell-tale corpse (mummy); 1469\$, *Foolish Person Tricked into a Humiliating (Disgraceful) Position*; 681,/cf. *King in the Bath*; *Years of Experience in a Moment*; 471B\$, *Enigmatic (Eccentric) Occurrences in another World Explained to Hero*; 325A\$, *Contest in Magic between Two Master Magicians*; 817*, *Devil Leaves at Mention of God's Name*; 934A1, *Three-fold Death*; 870D\$, *Youth Raised in Solitary Confinement Gains Access to outside World. Adventures follow*; 870,/cf. *The Princess Confined in the Mound*. [Digs her way out, and eventually marries her sweetheart to whom she had been betrothed]; 530;II-III,/cf. *The Princess on the Glass Mountain*; 950, *Rhapsinitus*. [Series of skilful thefts and daring escapes by a master thief and assistant]; 875B,/cf. *The Clever Girl and the King*. For each impossible task she gives countertasks. [Also told of clever boy]; 760B\$, *Restless Souls: Deceased cannot rest because of worldly concerns*; his soul contacts the living to make wishes known; 506**,/cf. *The Grateful Saint*. The hero redeems a saint's maltreated picture and is afterwards rewarded by the grateful saint. [A recurring theme in modern life].

Other ancient tale-types cited in passim (including the celebrated "Cinderella") are:

325, *The Magician and his Pupil*; 801, *Master Pfriem* [Man expelled from heaven for interfering]; 470, *Friends in Life and Death*, pt. II, *The Journey*; 470C\$, *Man in Utopian Otherworld Cannot Resist Interfering: He is Expelled*. ("It Serves me Right!"); 510, *Cinderella and Cap o'Rushes*; 613, *The Two Travelers (Truth and Falsehood)*; 980*, *The Painter and the Architect*. [The noble barber and the vile dyer ...].

Appendix K

Two Styles for mass-cultural propagation of the Hilâlî *sîrah*: Academic (Learned) and popular.

The academic was represented by ^cAbd al-Rahmân El-Abnûdî's oral presenters was a gifted bard named Gâbir Abu-Husain. In a radio (oral-to-aural) program Abnûdî presented taperecorded "informant-responses" (at the request of a collector, [El-Shamy 1967](#), pp. 54, 56) by Gâbir Abu-Husain. In the radio program, Abnûdî would introduce a situation/theme (in prose), then say, "*wi qûl yâ ^camm Gâbir*" / (O uncle Gâbir, speak/recite!), a command to which a relevant tape-recorded passage would be played back by Abnûdî (or, perhaps, an assistant) to the accompaniment of a single instrument

(the *rabâbah*/rebec). Certainly, the presented passage had to have been taperecorded earlier from Gâbir himself. In other words, Gâbir was not in the studio when his performances were aired. The radio audience seems to have remained confined to listening to the radio where the reaction of the supposed audience to the material presented could not be measured.

The popular: Was represented by two Upper Egyptian bards named Shamandî [Tawfiq] and Mitqâl [Qinâwî]. They performed at the Folklore Center in the late 1960s as duo in which one chanted/sang to the tunes of his own rebec, while the other served as a “*sannîd*”/(backer up/sidekick) providing musical (rebec or drum) and vocal support (when the lead singer would run out of breath, for example). Each of the duo offered appealing segments of the *sîras* of Abu-Zaid, ^cAntar or an Upper Egyptian traditional *baladî* (country-style) “red *mawwâl*” (cf. the American blues), such as:

‘ayyân yâ tabîb! mâ ḥadd jânî wi gâl “^cawâfe-e”.

doctor, I am ailing! No one came to me and said, ^cawâfe-e (“**Health to you!**”).

The lion of the mountains, succumbed. The village dog ^cawâ feeh (**howled at him!**).

The fruit-trees of the gardens, withered; and *sâr* (wasted away), and ^cawâ feeh (was **howled** in it).Etc.

And:

zâhar ma^cî jarḥ, yâ tabîb, min juwwa al-ḥasha “mayteen (dead)”.

doctor, a wound has afflicted me from the very inners/(guts): It is “*mayteen* (set/dead)”.

The doctor of wounds, prescribed the medicine for me: “*mayy-teen* (mud-water)”.

Over a fine fellow (*jada^c*), whose worth of men is that of “*mayy-teen* (two-hundred)”.

From the day the loved ones were gone, I count the years by the day.

censurers, don’t be happy, for everyone has his day [of reckoning coming].

It is certain (*ḥalbatt*) that a day will come and the fine fellow will regain his strength (“*awafeeh*”).

The homophony, accomplished via varied pronunciation of the holophrases “^cawâfe-e” and “*mayteen*”, generate a sense of mirth and enjoyment for the listener. Moreover, listeners become ego-involved for most—if not all—of them identify with the song’s character so perfidiously treated.

These segments were presented with more elaborate and gripping musical accompaniment undertaken by both performers. Consequently, the duo was employed by night casinos where they performed “operant-responses”/(El-Shamy 1967, pp. 54, 56, songs of their own choosing in response to the audience’s reactions). The clientele was mostly upper and/or middle class professionals many of whom hailing recently from rural areas. When compared to radio’s popular songs/“art songs” delivered mostly in serene monotonous style, the “country-style” performance is typically highly intense both voice-wise/(volume) and bodily expression-wise/(facial). In this respect the impassioned folk style may be compared to the American “soul music”.

Motifs:

W172.5.1.1\$, Self-pity song (poem): *Mawwâl ‘ahmar* (‘red-mawwâl’), *ghurbah*-song (‘song of strangerhood, ‘being a stranger’)—i.e, ‘the blues’. Type: 425E, cf. 451A.

Link: | H65\$, Indicators (signs) of change in mood (disposition). | P790.1.2.2\$, Song (poem) of joy (festivity): *Mawwâl ‘akhḍar* (‘green-song’). | W250.1.2\$, Personality type: *Turâbî* (‘earth-prone\$, melancholic, passive). | W251.2.1.3.1\$, *bilâ-khâl* (person with no maternal-uncle): Lonesome, melancholy (‘hollow-hearted’). | Z141.1, Red garment to show anger of king. | Z141.3.1\$, Red as symbol of evil (danger, drought, etc.).

Ref.: DOTTI 204 227; MITON; RAFE 307 n. 53.>.

Z95\$, Puns (homophony).

Link: | J1805.1, Similar sounding words mistaken for each other. | M412.4\$, Curse which mimics an action demanded. Retort formula; e.g., A: “Stop!” B: “May water stop

- in your throat!", A: "Go!" B: "May your life be gone!". | X1900\$, **Humorous pun**. | Z97\$, Alliteration (simple, plain). | Z108\$, Sound (name) symbolism: Association based on sound similarities (homophony).
- Ref.: Maspero lvi/(love of) 37 No. 2–4 n. 4 38 No. 2–4 n. 2/("nubu") n. 4/("sâhû"), 39 No. 2–4 n. 1/("Kakuai"); Simpson 27 n. 19; Damîrî II 64; Amîn 141; Anonymous (n.d.) "'Idhak 'ala mahlak" 9; Anonymous (n.d.) "Nawâdir Abu-Nuwâs" 6–7; Laoust *Maroc* 45 No. 36; MITON; RAFE 210 n. 739; Sha'ân 372; [Slyomovics \(1987b\)](#) 62ff.; Zîr 127.>.
- X1915\$, Humor based on cross-lingual puns (phonetic similarities between words of different languages); e.g., Arabic: grät (I ran away)–English: great. Type: 1322, 1337E\$, 1699, 1700.
- Link: | J2496.2, Misunderstanding because of lack of knowledge of a different language [i.e., language different] than one's own. | K1874.0.1.1.1\$, The Lord says: "*lâ taqrabû as-salâtah*/[prayers] *wa 'antum sukârâ* (Thou shall not approach 'salad' while you are drunk)". | K1874.0.1.2\$, The Lord says: "*'innahâ la-kabîrah* ...< (It is indeed a gross [sin] ...): taken to mean: "It is indeed *laka bîrah*" /'beer' for you). | X481\$, Jokes concerning battle won. | Z96\$, Cross-lingual puns (based on phonetic similarities).
- Ref.: DOTTI 742; Shamy (el-) "Folkloric Behavior" 208, Webber (1987) 6 no. 5.>

On a more sophisticated level of the use of punning for "assaulting with words" within the religious context of Sudanese communities, see: A. A. [Ibrahim \(1994\)](#).

Appendix L

Examples of promotional announcements by these agencies are:

The Department of Culture and Tourism in Abu-Zaby celebrates the Day of World Traditions on Thursday and Friday 19 and 20 of the current month of April, at the in Palace [Museum].

This is the Second celebration Y. Where group of familial, cultural, Traditional, educational and recreational workshops for children activities are undertaken; along with the presence of kiosks for folk foods. Meanwhile, live displays of traditional crafts and folk arts.

The undertakings concentrate on offering items/components of traditions that are included on UNESCO's list f or "World Traditions" under the rubric "Our Traditions for Our [Upcoming] Generations". Thus the displaying of Arab coffee preparation according to genuine traditions, in addition to displays of 'ayyâlah and al-'âzî, which are arts that combine/mix poetry and prose, and the presence of falconers in order to display their skills in handling falcons. (Google News 4/15/2018).

(2) Sharjah: 2018.

- The Theater of Sharjah's Traditions Days: A window over the Tale-teller (*hakawâtî*).
- Sheikh Zayed ibn Sultan Al-Nahayan's efforts to preserve traditions (*al-hifâz 'alâ al-turâth*). (Google-News 14/04/2018).

(3) Abu Dhaby/Zaby: 2018,

- Poetry festival reports participation of more than 200 poets. (Google-News 3/8/2018).

(4) Dubai, Rebec musical Display:

Google News, reported an article titled "*Lawhah ghnâ'iyyah trathiyyah* (A Traditional Singing Portrait", which the anchorwoman characterized as "*naḥḥat ḥanîn 'ilâ al-turath wa da'wah li al-muḥâfẓah 'alayh* (A gust of yearning to the past and an invitation/call for its preservation."

The event set an impressive 500,000 Dirhams as awards to winners. (Google-News 4/22/2018, after *Al-Bayân* of Dubai).

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