Book of the Month II

Tales of Juha
Classic Arab Folk Humor

Edited by Salma Khadra Jayyusi
Translated by Matthew Sorenson, Faisal Khadra, and Christopher Tingley
Foreword by Said Yaqtine

Available from online booksellers worldwide, directly from the publisher at www.interlinkbooks.com, or in Jerusalem from Educational Bookshop.

Juha is an old Arab comic literary figure (known also to Persians and Turks) around whom countless popular anecdotes were written. He appears variously as preacher and beggar, porter and petty merchant, thief and honest man, judge and social critic, wise man and fool, and jester and charlatan (though never as a wealthy man or oppressor).

Referring to the introduction by Said Yaqtine, Banipal magazine states, “Yaqtine’s remarkable introduction allows readers to enter the world of Juha and get a better understanding of Arab humor and anecdote traditions.” While the subject matter is Arab or otherwise Islamic, the humor transcends national and cultural boundaries to achieve a universality that is instantly recognizable and accessible today.

This unique collection by the late Salma Khadra Jayyusi is a treasure. Dr. Jayyusi was one of the Arab world’s most distinguished literary personalities. Born in Safed to a Palestinian father and Lebanese mother, she obtained a PhD in Arabic literature from the University of London and taught at the University of Khartoum, Sudan, and at the University of Algiers and the University of Constantine in Algeria. A renowned writer, translator, and anthologist, she was widely known for her poetry and literary criticism. Her books include Trends and Movements in Modern Arabic Poetry, The Legacy of Muslim Spain, The Literature of Modern Arabia: An Anthology, and Anthology of Modern Palestinian Literature. Dr. Jayyusi was also the founder of PROTA (Project of Translation from Arabic) to make Arabic literature available in the English language. She passed away on April 20, 2023, in Amman, Jordan, at the age of 95.