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YAMANAKA, Y., and T. NISHIO (ed.) — *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism. Perspectives from East and West*, I.B. Tauris, London & New York, 2006, (22,5 cm, XVII, 269). ISBN 978-1-85043-768-8. £ 42,50.

One of the interesting developments in Thousand and One Nights studies in recent years is the emergence of scholarly attention for the tales in Japan. The Japanese tradition of the Thousand and one nights goes back to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when a — partial — translation of the work was made by Nagamine Hideki (1875), based on an English anthology by Townsend. A second translation, entitled *The most curious book in the whole world* and made by Inoue Tsutimu, appeared in 1883, also based on an English anthology. From that period onwards many translations of separate stories were published, besides complete translations of the English versions of Edward Lane and Richard Burton and the French version of Mardrus. Only in recent years a complete translation from the Arabic was published, made by Maejima Shinji and Ikeda Osamu.

This brief but rich tradition of translations generated a genuine popularity of the Thousand and One Nights in Japan and secured the influence of the tales in Japanese literature and culture on several levels. Traces of the Nights can be found in poetry and the theatre, in youth literature and pornography, and, more recently, in the cinema. Two well-known modern authors who explicitly refer to the Thousand and One Nights are Junichiro Tanizaki (*Some prefer nettles*, 1929) and Yukio Mishima (*Arabian naito*, 1966). Besides, a tradition of illustrations of the Thousand and one nights developed whose main representative was Furusawa Iwami (1912-2000).

This information can be found in the contribution of Hideaki Sugita to the collection *The Arabian Nights and Orientalism; perspectives from East and West*, which contains the proceedings of a conference held in Osaka in 2002. The contributions relate to the fields of folklore-studies (Marzolph, El Shamy, Müller), the narratological and philological analysis of stories (Aoyagi, Yamanaka), Japanese Orientalism (Sugita, Nishio), and illustrations (Kobayashi, Suni/Clüver, Sironval). The quality of the articles varies and new information is especially to be found in the articles on the Japanese Thousand and One Nights tradition and the tradition of illustration. It is especially the latter field which has received little attention until now and which would deserve further research, both from an art-historical and iconographic perspective and from a philological perspective. Kobayashi's survey will be a useful starting point for further research.

University of Amsterdam,  
August 2009

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