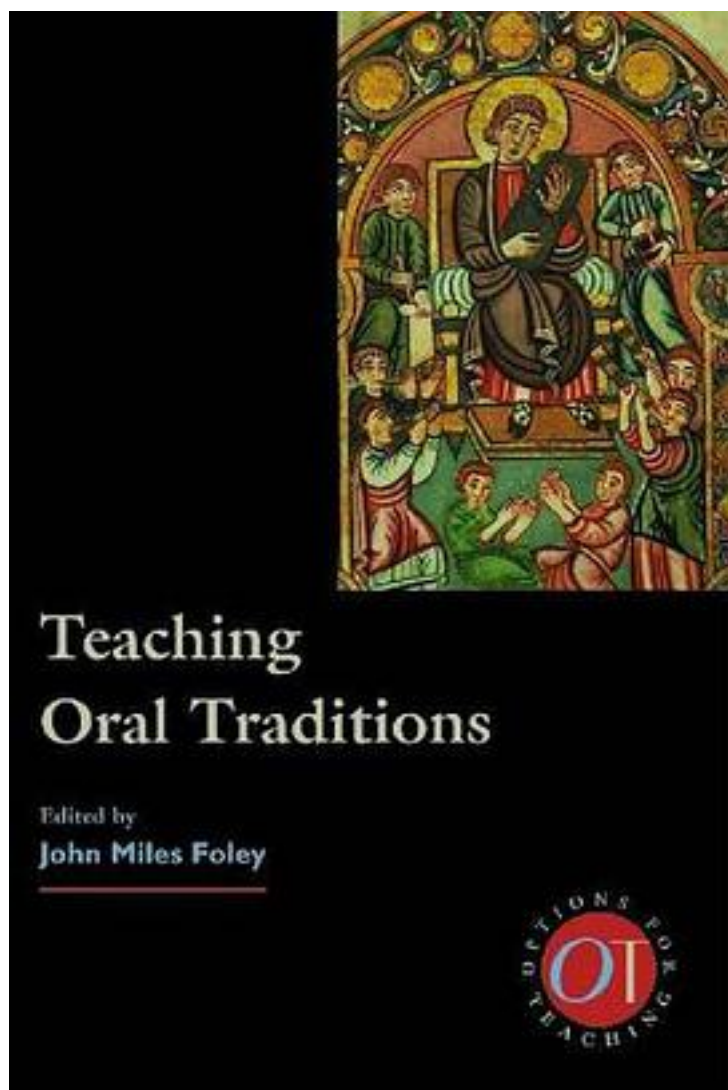


Teaching Oral Traditions



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Research is beginning to unearth the astounding wealth of oral traditions that have served as a vital cultural activity and verbal art for peoples throughout the world, from antiquity to the present. In this volume of the MLA series Options for Teaching, forty-two scholar-teachers bring these discoveries and rediscoveries from the scholarly forum to the classroom. Part 1, "Canon or Cornucopia?", provides an introduction to the nature and scope of oral traditions; part 2, "Critical Approaches," presents menu of useful methods for studying them; part 3, "Praxis: Oral Traditions in the Classroom," gives twenty-five brief tutorials on commonly taught works and areas; and part 4, "Courses, Readings, and Resources," offers teachers pedagogical examples and audiovisual resources. Among the subjects discussed are the unwritten roots of the Bible; the genesis and art of the Homeric poems; Native American traditions, like the Zuni "Deer Boy" tale and the Quechua proverb "Corn-Planting Day"; the oral traditions behind Beowulf and behind the Canterbury Tales; the professional entertainers (jongleurs) of medieval France; Icelandic sagas; and more.

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