

Historical Studies



Peter Gran is Professor of History at Temple University. In his words: “The need for paradigm change in modern Egyptian history-the area of my ongoing work- arose for me out of the experience of writing three inter-related books on this subject as well as from the experience of doing research in Egypt off and on since the 1960’s. *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt 1760-1840* (1979), found that the ‘oriental despotism model,’ the prevailing model of interpretation in my field, could not account for the cultural flourishing which preceded the coming of the West in Egypt, which my work uncovered. This book elicited a good deal of reaction. Why just Egypt some readers wondered? Obviously my intent was not to privilege Egypt, another book was called for. This led to *Beyond Eurocentrism* (1996) which took up this problem as one of roads to the modern world, finding that there

were four and only four types of stratification systems which would underlie the emerging forms of national sovereignty. Of particular interesting was the discovery of the similarity of Egypt to Italy, Mexico and India, all of which were countries in which the regional question was a key to the stratification system. And, while a comparative approach to national trajectories clarified a good deal, as various readers pointed out to me, it failed to address the broader issue of what was the meta-narrative of history, the one which would justify freeing the subject of Egypt, however one would understand it, from its ‘Orientalness,’ this leading to my writing *The Rise of the Rich* (2009). This book introduced a framework allowing one to speak of paths to the modern world without reference to Orient and without abandoning a consideration of who had power. I am now trying to pull together this project.”



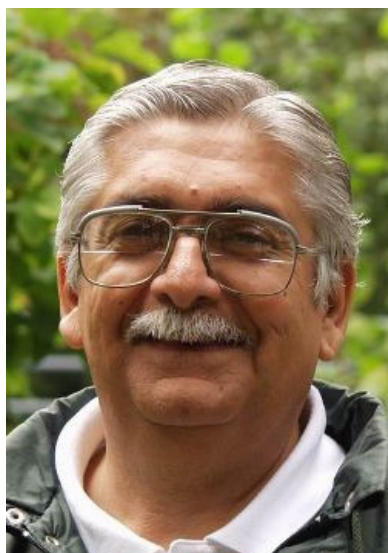
Fatima Harrak is an historian and political scientist, a graduate of the Institut d’Etudes Politiques in Paris and the University of London School of Oriental and African Studies. She is a research scholar at the University Mohamed V Institute of African Studies and served as its Director from 2003 to 2008. She has been a visiting professor and lecturer at a number of African, European and U.S. universities. She is the coordinator of a research structure at the Institute of African Studies dealing with “Religious Dynamics in Africa” and is the author and co-author of several books, studies, articles and book reviews published in Moroccan and foreign scientific journals. Her research covers the themes of slavery in Moroccan-African relations, women and the transmission of learning in the Islamic West (16th-19th centuries) and the

religion-migration dynamics in Africa.



Shamil Jeppie is a senior lecturer in the Department of Historical Studies at the University of Cape Town. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for Popular Memory (CPM) at the University of Cape Town, and a member of the SEPHIS steering committee. Jeppie is a key advisor to the South Africa -Mali Timbuktu Manuscript Project. His books include *Language, Identity, Modernity: The Arabic Study Circle of Durban* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2007), and, as editor, *Toward New Histories for South Africa: On the Place of the Past in Our Present* (Lansdowne: Juta Gariep, 2004). He has also co-edited,

with Ebrahim Moosa & Richard Roberts, *Muslim Family Law in Sub-Saharan Africa: Colonial Legacies and Post-Colonial Challenges* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010), and, with Souleymane Bachir Diagne, *The Meanings of Timbuktu* (Cape Town: HSRC Press, 2008).



Abdul Sheriff was born and educated in Zanzibar. He studied at the University of California at Los Angeles, and the School of Oriental & African Studies, University of London (PhD 1971). He taught history at the University of Dar es Salaam from 1969. In 1993 he was appointed Advisor & Principal Curator of the Zanzibar Museums until 2005. He also served as Chairman and Member of the Presidential Committees on the State University of Zanzibar (1995-2002). He is now the Executive Director of the Zanzibar Indian Ocean Research Institute (ZIORI).

He has been a Visiting Professor or Fellow at the universities of Wisconsin (1974/5), Minnesota (1991), Hamburg (1992), Bergen (1996), Lisbon (1998), Humboldt, Berlin (1998), the Centre of the Modern Orient,

Berlin (1994, 1997), and the Institute of Advanced Studies, Berlin (2002/3). Professor Sheriff has published and edited a number of books, including *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar* (1987), *Zanzibar Under Colonial Rule*, (ed. with Ed Ferguson, 1991), *The History & Conservation of Zanzibar Stone Town* (1995), *The Architecture of the Stone Town of Zanzibar* (1998), *The Dhow Cultures of the Indian Ocean – Cosmopolitanism, Culture & Islam* (2010), *Mtoni – Palace, Sultan and Princess of Zanzibar* (co-edited Antoni Folkers, et al, 2010), and 'The Indian Ocean: Oceanic connections & Creation of new societies' (ed. with Engseng Ho, forthcoming), as well numerous scholarly articles. His current research interests are on the history of the Indian Ocean, the Swahili Coast, Zanzibar and the Zanzibar Stone Town.