

Honorable Mention, Social Sciences
**Remaking the Modern: Space, Relocation,
 and the Politics of Identity in Global Cairo**
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ABSTRACT: Based on nineteen months of ethnographic fieldwork in al-Zawiya al-Hamra, a neighborhood in northern Cairo, this dissertation argues that the Egyptian "modern" capital is made not only through the discourses and grand plans of the Egyptian state but also through the practices of its ordinary inhabitants. The study focuses on part of the 5,000 Egyptian families that, between 1979 and 1981, were moved from central Cairo and relocated to public housing (*masaakin sha'biyya*) in al-Zawiya al-Hamra. This relocation was brought about by President Sadat's attempts to promote his open-door policy and to construct a "modern" city that meets the demands of tourists and investors. The study investigates how relocation as well as global discourses and forces are shaping identities and practices in al-Zawiya al-Hamra. It first examines the various "tactics" and "strategies" that have been employed by the relocated group to articulate the state's understanding of modernity and hegemonic construction of space with their cultural dispositions and daily needs. These tactics and strategies are not only altering the new apartments and shared spaces but they are also transforming the neighborhood and Cairo at large. Then, the dissertation explores how relocation shaped how the group views public spaces and how they interact with other residents in al-Zawiya al-Hamra. By stigmatizing the relocated population and physically segregating them, the housing project contributed to the fragmentation of identities in al-Zawiya al-Hamra. The study maps the identities that are attached to and formed by the relocated group to show how the displacement of the local by global processes and national policies brought new changes that paved the way for a redefinition of local communal feelings in ways that help people live in the "modern" world. I argue that religious identity, as a hegemonic identity in the formation, is consolidated by the people's daily struggle to appropriate the positive aspects of modernity and relinquish what is perceived as negative.

**Foundation for Iranian Studies
 Dissertation of the Year Award, 1996-1997**

The Committee on the Selection of the Best Dissertation of the Year on a Topic of Iranian Studies of the Foundation for Iranian Studies has chosen Dr. Nader Sohrabi's dissertation entitled "Constitutionalism, Revolution and State: The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the Iranian Constitutional Revolution of 1906 with Comparisons to the Russian Revolution of 1905," submitted to the Faculty of the Division of Social Sciences at the University of Chicago, as the recipient of the Foundation's 1997 \$1000 award.

The committee praised Dr. Sohrabi's work for "exceptional contribution to the field of Iranian Studies as well as political sociology through an imaginative and innovative approach to the study of comparative revolutions...clear statement of the theoretical foundation and the problematic of the subject...judicious use of method to relate multivariate historical and sociological data to the specifics in the stages of revolutionary development in societies with significant variations in history, culture, social organization, and tradition...elucidation of the role of ideas a crucial paradigmatic component in shaping process and defining trajectory in revolutionary organization and behavior...efficient and intelligent use of primary source material...sensitivity to the interaction and impact of intra- and extra- state formations in revolutionary outcome...linking

pre-revolutionary conditions and post-revolutionary outcomes by well-defined and soundly-structured chain of theoretical argument and factual evidence...clarity of meaning...meticulous attention to detail...good organization of the work."

The Committee also cited for Honorable Mention two dissertations—"Self, Culture, and Emotion: An Iranian Case Study" by Dr. Kavous Behzadi of Boston College and "Modernity and Identity in Azeri Poetry: Mo'juz of Shabustar and the Iranian Constitutional Era" by Dr. Hadi Sultan-Qurraie of the University of Washington—for their high scholarship, originality, extraordinary clarity, and contribution to their respective fields.

1997 Albert Hourani Book Award

for Most Outstanding Book Published in Middle East Studies

**Committee: John O. Voll (Chair), Aida A. Bamia, Şerif Mardin,
William B. Quandt, Paula Sanders**

In September a number of major associations sponsored a conference on the subject of "The Specialized Monograph in Crisis," and many discussions speak seriously of "the death of the scholarly monograph." I would like to announce that, as was true in the case of Mark Twain, reports of this death are greatly exaggerated. Because this is the case, the members of the Albert Hourani Book Award Committee for 1997 had a challenging task: our task was not to find the last of a dying breed; it was to choose among a substantial number of excellent monographs and we concluded by deciding to name two co-winners of the Hourani Award for 1997.

The first is *Nationalism and the Genealogical Imagination: Oral History and Textual Authority in Tribal Jordan* by ANDREW SHRYOCK, published by the University of California Press. This book is truly an adventure in the "study of history making in oral and written forms" (p. 1). It successfully combines good story-telling of life among the bedouin with an innovative, multi-dimensional analysis of the development of what Shryock calls "popular genealogical nationalism." In a time when much effort is spent by scholars in the process of contextualizing texts, Shryock describes for us the dynamics of *textualizing* oral history as a part of the process of defining tribal and national identities. As one member of the committee said, "What I particularly like about Shryock's book is the way he uses oral history and ethnography to show how relationships to the past are dynamic political processes."

In announcing the co-winner, I have a slight sense of *déjà vu*. A few years ago I introduced the author to this very same audience and said, at that time, if I needed to introduce this person to this audience, MESA was in real trouble. The co-winner of the 1997 Hourani Book Award is RASHID KHALIDI's book, *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*, published by Columbia University Press. I must confess that when I first received this book, I thought, "Do I have to read another book about Palestine, the Arabs, and the Israelis?" but by the time I finished the first chapter, I was trying to think how I could change the syllabus of my modern Middle East course to use the book. This book does not just provide new information about a subject on which much has been written but it *does do that*: it makes use of some very important but previously little-used sources in the Khalidi library in Jerusalem. Khalidi examines the development of an explicitly Palestinian sense of identity in the last decades of Ottoman rule and the beginning of the British mandate and does so with a conceptual framework which makes this book an important contribution to comparative political studies as well as to Middle Eastern area studies.