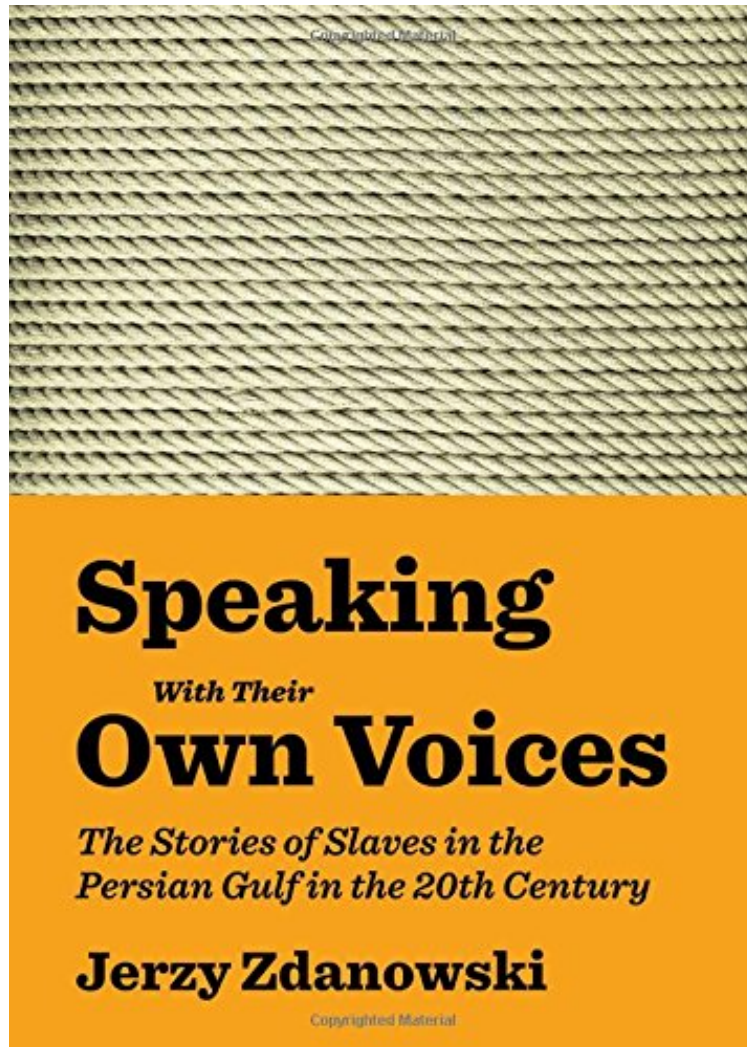


Speaking with Their Own Voices: The Stories of Slaves in the Persian Gulf in the 20th Century

Jerzy Zdanowski

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Jerzy Zdanowski : Speaking with Their Own Voices: The Stories of Slaves in the Persian Gulf in the 20th Century before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Speaking with Their Own Voices: The Stories of Slaves in the Persian Gulf in the 20th Century:

This book presents an analysis of the slavery and manumission practiced in the Persian Gulf region in the first half of the 20th century. It is unique as it exposes the life stories of several hundred slaves, speaking with their own voices. A

striking aspect of the majority of studies on slavery is that they provide the reader with excellent statistics and describe the mechanism of enslavement, the routes of slave trading, and the economic and social conditions of enslaved people, but slaves themselves generally remain anonymous. The premise of this book is to give voice directly to the slaves by presenting in full-length their statements made at the British Agencies in Kuwait, Bahrain, Muscat, Sharjah, and Bushire. Altogether around 1,000 statements were made by slaves asking for manumission certificates, and the analysis of these statements sheds light on various aspects of social, economic and political life on the Arabian shore of the Gulf. This analysis provides the answers to some fundamental questions in understanding the history of Arab Gulf societies, and, in particular, the role of slave labor in the pearl industry, the nature of slavery on the Arabian shore, and the conformity of social practices with religious norms concerning slavery. Given that it uncovers new aspects of the every-day life of the Arabian Peninsula, this book will also be of help to people of this region who are looking for their roots.

"Speaking with their Own Voices sheds light on slavery and manumission in the Persian Gulf during the first half of the 20th century. Its main strength lies in the source material examined, around 1,000 statements made by slaves in order to obtain British manumission certificates. These personal accounts are quoted at length throughout the work, offering striking insights into the lives of slaves at the time. ... [T]his book is a treasure trove for anyone interested in historical slavery or in the socio-economic history of the Persian Gulf." Magdalena Kloss University of Vienna Arabian Humanities 5 (2015) About the Author Jerzy Zdanowski is a Researcher and Professor at the Institute for Mediterranean and Oriental Cultures, Polish Academy of Sciences, in Warsaw. As a historian and Arabist, he has been involved in Middle Eastern studies since 1978. He has been a visiting scholar in various institutions, including Kuwait University, the University of Jordan, Cairo University, Sheikh Zayed University at Abu Dhabi, Princeton University (as a Senior Fulbright Scholar), the SOAS, and Maison Méditerranéenne des Sciences de l'Homme in Aix-en-Provence, and has lectured at Princeton, Columbia, Hebrew University, Haifa, Berlin, Trinity College at Dublin University, and The Great Mosque of Sultan Qaboos in Muscat. He has published both books and articles on the modern Middle East, and especially the Arabian Peninsula. His most recent publications include *Slavery and Manumission: British Policy in the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in the First Half of the 20th Century*; *The Manumission Movement in the Gulf in the First Half of the Twentieth Century*; *Middle Eastern Studies*, Vol. 47, no. 6; and "The Saudi Shi'a and Political Reform in Saudi Arabia" in *Political Change in the Arab Gulf States: Stuck in Transition*.