

Patricia Romero
1934–2015

Patricia Romero was born on 28 July 1934 and raised in Ohio. She earned her B.S. at Central State University in Education in 1964 while raising three boys. She chose Central State, a Historically Black University, both for its proximity and also, according to her middle son Arthur, for the “energy that was manifest in the burgeoning civil rights movement.” After graduating, she pursued her Master’s degree at Miami University of Ohio in 1965, while raising her sons on her own and taking on a teaching role at Central State University. Ohio would round out Dr. Romero’s education as she completed her Ph.D. in African History at The Ohio State University in 1971. She worked as a research assistant at the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, in Washington, D.C., to which she contributed a volume to its series, *I Too Am America* (1969), and as Editorial Director for United Publishing Company. She coauthored or edited four books during those years about Blacks in America, including: *In Black America, 1968: The Year of the Awakening* (ed.) and *Negro Americans in the Civil War* (coauthor). She enjoyed taking her sons around and visiting family members near sites of the nation’s capital.

Dr. Romero’s first academic position took her to the University of South Florida. In 1976, she came to Baltimore for a position at the University of Baltimore and remained based in the Baltimore-Towson area until she died in her Towson home on 6 December 2015. Patricia joined the faculty of Towson University in 1989 as an assistant professor. She was promoted to associate professor in 1993 and to professor in 1997. In addition, Dr. Romero is the founding editor of the *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*. She retired in 2011.

Dr. Romero is well known in Africanist Historiography as a pioneer in many fields. The quality of her scholarship is evident in the enduring referencing of her books and articles, and in her profound contributions towards widening what used to be a very narrow scope of Africanist study. She successfully transitioned from African-American studies to specializing in African History. Undeniably, her most impactful writing came from her research on East Africa. This was somewhat unprecedented in the 1970s when most scholars focused on the African Atlantic world. West Africa had dominated the field because its well-furnished archives provided sources for narrating the African American experience of slavery and emancipation. Her articles supplemented the claims of historians of the Atlantic Slave Trade

to achieve a more fully continental account. In other articles focusing on the region, she uncovered the roles of American merchants in the Atlantic trades after the British Abolition of the slave trade. More significantly, Romero provided critical evaluation of previously assumed understandings of Africa's historical experience by reframing the historical geography, for example, pointing out the Swahili Coast's closer connections with the Indian Ocean world than with the rest of sub-Saharan Africa. Bucking the common patterns of broad narratives, she studied local societies such as Lamu (Kenya) in their local interpretations, as well as crisscrossing global connections. In this manner, she provided for the study of women as a subject of diversity and dynamism, distinct from previous histories that collapsed African women into a single category. Romero emerged as an innovative leader in contemporary thoughts about redressing Eurocentric writings and dismantling dominant narratives—the driving force behind the refashioning of World History beginning in the 1980s. Dr. Romero's theories are reflected in the works of a new generation of African historians focusing on close subjects such as family histories, slave agency, women's biographies, and domesticity.

Colleagues remember her as being exceptionally productive and dynamic, particularly considering her personal circumstances. Patricia Romero leaves three sons: Jeff and his wife, Laura Elliott; Arthur and his wife, Donna, and their children, Tyler and Julia; and Stephen and his wife, Belinda, and their two children, Ryan and Stevie. ✦

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John Ruedy **1927–2016**

John “Jack” Ruedy was an illustrious historian of Algeria, an inspiring mentor, a teacher of great gifts, the founding director of a long-flourishing M.A. program, and a man for whom principle was not a matter of convenience. A Francophile who came to the study of French colonialism in Algeria as the result of an impromptu sail from the south of France to that country while still a student. Jack then engaged deeply with the Maghreb, an interest and commitment that began with his book *Land Policy in Colonial*