

nursery rhymes) and firm logic to bring coherence and clarity to scholarly colloquia. She personally planned and conducted several conferences and colloquia that helped scholars set agendas for their own work. In the mid-1980s with Charles Long, Marilyn convened three informal seminars that brought comparative historians of religion and Islam specialists together to explore such themes as the frontiers of religions and the boundaries that separate religious communities from each other and relate them to each other. Many of the ideas and papers discussed at those seminars were later published by the 15 or so participants, reflecting Marilyn's undeniable influence on their work. I and many of my acquaintance owe much to Marilyn Waldman for the gentle yet powerful guidance that she offered tirelessly to students and colleagues. She frequently saw where we were headed with our ideas and projects more clearly than we did at first.

In addition to her appointment in History, Marilyn built the Center for Comparative Studies at Ohio State, which later became the Division of Comparative Studies in the Humanities. This was to become a model for similar programs at many other universities across the country, to which Marilyn served in many cases as consultant. Within the Division at Ohio State, she established a Religious Studies Program that exemplified her philosophy of comparative, interdisciplinary, humanistic scholarship.

Marilyn Waldman is survived by her husband Loren and her daughter Amy, who gave birth to their first grandchild, Jeremy Aaron, in August. She is survived as well by a grateful generation of scholars and students in history, religious studies, Middle East studies and comparative studies, on many of whose lives and scholarship she had an uncommonly powerful, humane and personal effect.

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EMILE HABIBY (1921-1996) died in May in Nazareth. When I last saw Emile in Haifa in January 1996 in the editorial offices of *Mashārif*, the literary and cultural journal he founded, he did not look his usual self. He had thinned considerably. Gone was part of the laughter and love of life he always carried on his face and in his voice, and he was finding it difficult to write. When I expressed concern, he said: "I am seventy five years old. Isn't that enough? All my friends have already died. I have had a long life. Why shouldn't I die?" He was suffering from cancer, from which he died on May 2nd.

Emile was indeed over seventy, and he had a great life: as a person, as a writer, as a political activist. He was a founder of the Israeli Communist Party and served in the Knesset for two decades, eventually breaking with the party over ideological issues. Habiby also parted with some Arab intellectuals when he accepted the Israel Prize (he had earlier accepted the Jerusalem Prize for Literature from the PLO).

But politics are fickle. A stronger tie bound Emile Habiby to the Arab intelligentsia: a common love for the Arabic language and Arab culture. For Habiby, as for many Palestinian writers who live in Israel, correct knowledge of Arabic is more than grammar. It is an assertion of identity, a politics of sorts.

In an interview, he revealed that he wrote when provoked, usually politically, and that the literary existence of his characters was tied to specific events and people. Or that when he played with narratives intertextually, and especially from the centuries-long Arabic tradition, he did this "intentionally, cold-bloodedly," to "give information from our heritage to the new generations, in order that they will respect it" (Allen Douglas and Fedwa Malti-Douglas, "Literature and Politics: A Conversation with Emile Habiby," *Mundus Arabicus*, 5 [1992]: 11-46). Politics and pedagogy aside, the sense of play was always there in Habiby's numerous narratives, from drama to novels and short stories.

Habiby's most publicized novel was translated into English as *The Secret Life of Saeed, the Ill-Fated Pessoptimist: A Palestinian Who Became a Citizen of Israel* (Translated by Salma Khadra Jayyusi and Trevor LeGassick. New York, 1982). The pessoptimist in his own modern picaresque way is a most unforgettable hero who can bring at once laughter and tears to his reader's eyes. But he is a hero deeply embedded in Palestinian and Israeli history and culture. Years before Habiby's death, I stood on a pier at Acre, staring at the Mediterranean, as Emile pointed to the spot where Saeed's creatures from outer space landed. The narrative had never been so alive for me as it was at that moment. *Ikhtayyi*, the novel, was an ode to Haifa, to the old Haifa that Habiby knew as a child, to the Haifa that was not polluted, as it is now. Anyone who reads that text should not be surprised that Habiby wanted his tombstone to read: "Emile Habiby - Remained in Haifa."

The fact that Habiby had difficulty writing in January 1996 should have been a sign. In an earlier interview, he talked about writing: "We writers think that this is the way to overpower death." He even related a conversation with the famous Palestinian poet Mahmūd Darwīsh, in which Darwīsh asked him about death. Habiby adds: "I told him that I don't want to die. How will one not die, I said. I want to be remembered by my writings." FEDWA MALTI-DOUGLAS

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RAPHAEL PATAI (1911-1996) died on July 20th in Tucson, AZ. Perhaps best known in modern Middle East studies for his *Golden River to the Golden Road: Society, Culture and Change in the Middle East* (1962) and his controversial *The Arab Mind* (1976), Patai authored over three dozen books on scripture as folklore, on ancient and modern Jewish identity, on Jews in Hungary, where he was born, as well as *The Seed of Abraham: Jews and Arabs in Contact and Conflict* (1986) on Israel-Palestine.

Patai was an original in what for many is a receding prehistory of contemporary Middle East anthropology. Born into a scholar's family and brought up in the rabbinical culture and Zionist politics of eastern Europe, he earned a doctorate and qualified as a rabbi at the University of Budapest. Like Bronislaw Malinowski and others from Franz Boas to Ernest Gellner who were rooted in the scholarly and intellectual traditions of Mitteleuropa, Patai "migrated" both physically and intellectually into then-new fields: in his case it was not to