

1986 to 1989. He was also instrumental in the creation of the Association française pour l'Etude du Monde Arabe et Musulman (AFEMAM) and was the vice-president of the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris.

Raymond has received abundant honors: the Palmes académiques; the "Officier du Mérite Egyptien" (1969); Officier du Wisâm al-Istihqâq Syrien (1975); and Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur (1983) as well as an honorary doctorate from the American University in Beirut in 2007. In June 2006 the International Council of the World Congress for Middle Eastern Studies in Amman presented him with the WOCMES Award for Outstanding Contribution to Middle Eastern Studies. He not only taught in several faculties in France, North Africa, and the Middle East but was also a visiting professor at Harvard (1981) and Princeton (1988-1990). As a teacher, he influenced generations of Arab scholars by setting the terms of debate for engaging social history in general and the city in particular. Among his numerous articles and books, many appearing in translation, are: *The Great Arab Cities in the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries: an Introduction*; *La ville arabe, Alep, à l'époque ottomane (XVIe-XVIIIe siècles)*; *Les marchés du Caire* (with G. Wiet), *Le Caire* (1979, 1993), *Le Caire des janissaries* (1995), *Egyptiens et Français au Caire, 1798-1801* (1998); and *Tunis sous les Mouradites* (2006).

His mentor and dear friend, Albert Hourani, once observed that "The oeuvre of André Raymond will stand unassailable for as long as most scholarly work done in our time : solid, beautifully shaped, with details clearly and delicately depicted, but also the product of the imagination and mind of a single author." ✂

Julia Clancy-Smith  
The University of Arizona

## Kamal Salibi

1929-2011

THE LATE DR. KAMAL SALIBI HAS APTLY DESCRIBED HIMSELF as a story teller of a historian, and with this in mind, it seems only appropriate that in our remembrance we start with one of his own. Upon publishing his first, largely unreadable (according to him) article on a dynasty of Egyptian Shafi'i chief qadis of

the Mamluk era, the young Salibi proudly presented an offprint of it to his girlfriend, boasting “look how I have rescued these venerable people from obscurity.” Upon glancing over the article, she responded, “no Kamal, you have rescued them from one obscurity to put them in another.” One might take this as one of his many self-deprecating exhortations for us historians to retain the humility that genuine scholarship demands. As he advised me at my own dissertation defense, “humility is the most highly prized virtue among scholars. The title of doctor is a mockery when it is not coupled with this virtue.”

Indeed, it was this humble nature that drove his unyielding desire to learn, to teach, and to perfect his understanding of the world around him that has so defined his distinguished and often revolutionary career. Though his scholarship covered a number of fields, having published on the history of Arabia, early Islamic Syria, the Hashemite monarchy in his *Modern History of Jordan*, as well as Biblical studies, I will confine my remarks here to his contributions to the history of Lebanon. This interest was approached from a similarly broad and curious perspective, investigating topics ranging from the general, in *The Modern History of Lebanon*, to his groundbreaking dissertation on Maronite historians, to a microhistory of his family’s town of Bhamdoun, to histories of the Druze emirate and an introspective foray into contemporary history with his *Crossroads to Civil War*, which he accidentally began writing as a letter to a friend in the early days of the fighting in 1975. Even in retirement, he found it difficult to allow his legacy to sit, taking it upon himself to edit out copy errors and update those works whose copyright he owned. His last effort to this effect was to revise his well received but somewhat obscure Arabic language history of the Maronites, which he published and distributed to interested friends and colleagues in the spring of 2011 with disarming comments about the low quality of the initial pressing.

Throughout the latter part of his career, his work sought to understand and deconstruct the history of the Lebanese nation, seeking to understand and debunk the nationalist myths espoused by Lebanese nationalists and partisans of its individual communities alike. The critical assessment of Lebanese history and historiography that was his opus, *A House of Many Mansions*, was a challenge to the entire field of Lebanese history, including the perspectives that informed his earlier work, *The Modern History of Lebanon*. It would not be overly presumptuous to assert that modern Lebanese historiography itself may be divided into the periods before and following the book’s publication, as the ideas embodied therein questioned the inherited wisdom and embedded assumptions of Lebanese history,

revealing the flaws and constructions that are unavoidable elements of the history of a nation whose different views of the past are so intertwined with the equally diverse identities of its citizenry.

Though his disregard for the sanctity of the icons and myths of Lebanese history has abraded some, he felt that such historical iconoclasm was necessary for the good of the nation—that once the old foundations had been shattered and brushed away, a new one based on common understanding and mutual respect could form a more lasting basis for a stable society. While concluding *A House of Many Mansions*, published during the latter years of the civil war, Salibi mused that in structurally divided nations like Lebanon, “to gain the degree of solidarity that is needed to maintain viability, their best chance lies in getting to know and understand the full truth of their past, and to accommodate to its realities.” In this sense, *Mansions* is in a unique class among scholarly works; though it was written for the academy, its didactic demolitions were in reality aimed the Lebanese themselves. Although he at times joked in private that Lebanese history was all lies, it is for this very critique that the field of Lebanese history is most in his debt.

With him passes a wealth of private history and stories, treasured by those who heard them, and a wry sense of humor that he found impossible to exclude from his scholarship. Upon bestowing my doctorate, he gave me his own *ijazah*: Abdulrahim Abu Husayn student of Kamal Salibi, student of Bernard Lewis, student of Gibb, student of Arnold, student of Wright, student of Dozy student of Silvestre de Sacy. He must have taken a great deal of pride in the generations of scholars who progressed under his own tutelage to populate the halls of academia, and who continue to enrich the field. Far more than the institutional loss, however, is the deep void that Dr. Salibi’s passing leaves in the lives of those who knew him. We will miss his stories, his unassuming manner and quick wit, his annual Christmas party, and the diversion that his weekly visits provided for the American University of Beirut’s history department. I conclude with the advice he gave me after presiding over my doctoral oral exam, and to which I have humbly tried to submit: “you must always stand ready to reconsider the validity of your findings in the light of new research; to defer to more accurate judgment from others should it at any time obtain, [and] to delight in the acceptance of criticism when such criticism is sincerely meant to advance rather than obstruct knowledge.” ✨

Abdulrahim Abu Husayn  
*American University of Beirut*