

In Memoriam

Christopher Boucek 1973-2011

ON NOVEMBER 2, 2011, THE CARNEGIE ENDOWMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE and the wider Middle East studies community suffered the tragic and premature loss of our dear colleague and friend, thirty-eight year-old Christopher Boucek, as a result of a heart attack. He left behind his beloved wife Marie, and their two young girls Sofie and Mathilde.

Christopher James Boucek was born in Palos Heights, Ill., and was a graduate of Drew University in Madison, N.J. Despite his Midwest upbringing, a high school trip to Egypt in the 1990s led to a lifelong interest in, and love for, the Middle East. He went on to complete a Masters (1999) and Ph.D. (2006) in Near Eastern Studies from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies, as well as a postdoctoral research position at Princeton University before joining the Carnegie Endowment in 2008.

Chris ably straddled the worlds of academia and policy, and had distinguished himself in the field with his path-breaking research on disengagement programs for Islamist militants and extremists. Ambassador Daniel Benjamin, the Coordinator for Counterterrorism at the U.S. State Department, called Boucek a "pioneer in this field, who knew more about rehabilitation programs than almost anyone else out there." Chris's regional interests were diverse, and his focus on issues and countries which were not often in the headlines—notably Libya and Yemen—eventually proved prescient. As one of his fellow Yemen watchers Brian O'Neill wrote, "For a long time, there wasn't much of a Yemen community, but Chris was always

there. He had the foresight and the subtle knowledge to recognize Yemen's importance a long time before almost anyone else, and set his sharp mind to figuring out that distant and obscure land."

Apart from his professional acumen, it was Chris's attributes as a human being—unfailingly kind, self-effacing, and in possession of a delightful wit followed by a deep belly laugh—which won him so many admirers. "When life hands you Yemen," he used to joke, "make Yemenade." He had the rare ability to present tough arguments with a smile. In the words of Jessica Mathews, president of the Carnegie Endowment, "There was a very particular warmth about him, a touch of wisdom, a feeling of personal strength, and a quiet sense of humor—sometimes not so quiet."

In the wake of Chris's passing, hundreds of condolences poured in from cyberspace. In addition, a memorial held for him at the Carnegie Endowment brought together dozens of his friends and admirers from the various worlds he inhabited. Government officials, academics, journalists, and activists from throughout the U.S., Europe, and the Middle East offered the following remembrances:

"I admired his humility and his competence," recalled Boston University's Augustus Richard Norton. "He was one of a handful of Washington-based policy experts who could and would challenge conventional wisdom with hard-earned field experience backed by solid academic training. Of the small cadre of topflight Yemen experts, he flew with the best." "Chris took it upon himself to figure out how to avoid a downward spiral in Yemen," said Brock Renshaw, an intelligence analyst at Special Operations Command (SOCOM). "He appreciated the issues we wrestled with on a daily basis, and was willing to take his knowledge out of theory, outside the ivory tower, and explain it in a way so that a Marine such as myself could consume it, in small words, bite-size pieces."

In the words of Harvard University's Jessica Stern, a fellow terrorism expert: "I was blessed by getting to spend time with Chris at academic conferences, but also on two intense trips, to Saudi Arabia and to Libya. I cannot imagine a lovelier colleague and travel companion. He brought a puppy-like enthusiasm to his very serious work. He had the gift of making everyone around him feel happier, lighter, and brighter. I learned so much from him. A true gentleman of the sort one rarely encounters." "In a profession where we get to know our colleagues by their publications rather than their personalities," said Anouar Boukhars, an Assistant Professor at McDaniel College, "Chris's personality was one I will never forget: he was affable and genuinely kind. I will miss Chris, not only for his brilliant

insight into the lesser-known and forgotten parts of the world, but I will miss most how he would call me brother.”

Those of us who knew Chris as a colleague and a scholar will miss his lucid insights. And those of us who knew him as a friend are better people for it. Rest in peace Chris. ✧

Marwan Muasher and Karim Sadjadpour
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André Raymond

1925-2011

DURING THE 1980s, WHEN I WAS ENROLLED IN UCLA'S DOCTORAL PROGRAM, André Raymond was one of the “rock stars” of Middle Eastern History, a depiction that he would find greatly amusing. We eagerly read his *Artisans et commerçants au Caire au XVIIIe siècle* (1974) as well as other works. I first met Professor Raymond in Tunis in 1983 quite by chance; I had just arrived from France to do archival research in North Africa for the dissertation and learned that Raymond was presenting a paper at a conference held in a hotel at Gammarth. Summoning up my courage, I hesitantly introduced myself; to my surprise, he immediately invited me to “prendre un pot” on the hotel veranda to discuss a decidedly inchoate dissertation topic. Over the years, we reconnected at scholarly conferences in a number of places but Aix-en-Provence was the principal venue for intellectual (and other sorts of) *camaraderie*.

Professor Raymond is best known for his magisterial works on cities and urban populations in the Middle East and North Africa, although his scholarly vision ranged far and wide across the discipline of history and the humanities. His life-long scholarly devotion to the region and its peoples was, however, somewhat serendipitous. During the Occupation of France, Raymond was an activist in the French Resistance as well as a member of the PCF. Subsequently, he enrolled at the Sorbonne, obtaining in 1944 the Licence ès-lettres and the next year his Licence d'enseignement d'histoire. With his newly awarded Agrégation d'histoire in hand, he chose to leave France in 1947 for Tunisia where he taught for two years at the prestigious