Journal of the Palaeontological Society of India
Volume 67(2), December 31, 2022: 366-367
ISSN 0552-9360

OBITUARY

Members of the Palaeontological Society of India (PSI), Executive Council of the PSI and the Editorial Board of the Journal of the Palaeontological Society of India put on record the exemplary services rendered by Late Dr. Marcelle BouDagher-Fadel for the journal. Dr. Fadel was an accomplished researcher, a renowned expert of the larger benthic foraminifera and a supportive member of the Editorial Board of the journal. We express our sincere condolences on her passing away.

Mukund Sharma and Shyam Kishore

Marcelle BouDagher-Fadel

Marcelle BouDagher-Fadel passed away on July 30th, 2022 after a long period fighting ill health. With her passing we have lost a good friend, a well-respected micropalaeontologist, and a colleague with whom it was a real pleasure to work.

Marcelle graduated from the University of Lebanon in the late 1970's and came to the United Kingdom in 1980 where she initially worked on her English language skills for 6 months in Torquay before transferring to University College London to study for a Master's degree in Micropalaeontology. Further micropalaeontological research followed and resulted in her graduating with a PhD in 1986, also at UCL, where she continued to work as Curator of the Micropalaeontology Collection.

Following a break, during which she raised two children, Marcelle returned to her research career and, in 1993, was awarded the highly prestigious Royal Society Daphne Jackson Fellowship which allowed her to maintain her research interests at UCL.

Over the next thirty years Marcelle followed her profession as a research micropalaeontologist. She became internationally recognised for her research into foraminifera; those microscopic organisms which have existed in the earth's oceans since earliest Palaeozoic times through to the present day. She was an excellent research collaborator, working with research teams around the globe, from Brazil, the Caribbean, China, Egypt, France, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and her homeland of Lebanon.

Her research resulted in the authorship of over two hundred peer reviewed scientific papers and books, ranging from the foraminifera of the Mediterranean Sea right through to receiving the Gondwana Research 2016 Best Paper Award at the International Association for Gondwana Research Annual Convention.

Throughout the 1990's she continued to work closely with Professor Fred Banner (UCL and the Natural History Museum London) and this collaboration resulted in the publication of the seminal work "*The Early Evolutionary History of Planktonic Foraminifera*" in 1997. Students throughout the world will have turned to this classic study when attempting to create a stratigraphic framework for the early history of these important organisms.

Having developed a taste for writing major research texts she next turned to the "larger" benthic foraminifera and in 2008 she published "*Evolution and Geological Significance of Larger Benthic Foraminifera"*. This book probably represents one of the first attempts to summarise the evolutionary history of this economically important group of microfossils. There were a few critical discussions of this book, which is perfectly understandable when such a challenging topic is being covered, and a second version of it was later published online by UCL Press.

Notwithstanding, the scale of her work with the "larger" benthic foraminiferal taxa, she also continued to work with the planktonic foraminifera. This resulted in 2012 in the publication of a further major text entitled "*Biostratigraphic and Geological Significance of Planktonic Foraminifera"*. This publication was also followed by a second online version, published by UCL Press, and together these two volumes have been downloaded over 67,000 times in over 150 countries.

The present author first encountered Marcelle in the early 1980's through meetings of the British Micropalaeontological Society and we frequently met and communicated, with intense discussions about our mutually favoured foraminiferal fossils. By 2008 the UCL Masters degree course had closed, but this was replaced in 2012 at the University of Birmingham with the Masters course in Petroleum and Applied Micropalaeontology. Marcelle's assistance, behind the scenes, was invaluable making her publications freely available to each tranche of incoming students. Having such up to date reference texts available for this intense course was an unforgettable gift for which I am extremely grateful.

Marcelle's wide ranging geological abilities were increasingly recognised during the early years of the twenty first century. In 2005 she was employed as an Editorial Assistant for the prestigious journal *Earth and Planetary Science Letters* and in 2007 she was appointed as Senior Research Associate working in the office of the Vice-Provost for Research at UCL. Further promotions followed, with her becoming Principal Research Associate in 2009 and eventually Professorial Research Associate in 2016.

This progression in her professional career was matched by her research progress as she became a member of the Editorial Board of the *Journal of the Palaeontological Society of India* in 2016. In addition to this, she was welcomed as an editorial board member for the journal *Marine Micropalaeontology* at the start of 2019.

Marcelle will be sincerely missed. Missed for her charm, her friendliness and her ability to make anyone welcome to her office. This openness was mixed with strength of character and deep knowledge of her chosen subject which allowed her to commit her thoughts to paper and to publish a significant number of major reference texts. These publications came to press at a time when micropalaeontology as a research subject was under pressure within the United Kingdom. They were welcome milestones, reflecting just how important the subject of Micropalaeontology is on a global scale, in stratigraphy, in climate change research and as a monitor for the state of our oceans.

Marcelle's research was global in its scope and her impact on the progress of micropalaeontological research was on the same scale. Many micropalaeontologists will not have had the pleasure of meeting her and talking about foraminifera with her, but they will know her books and papers and they will continue to cite them for many years to come. That will be her legacy. For me personally, I did have the pleasure of knowing her and frequently discussing micropalaeontological topics with her. I will miss those discussions and I will miss her welcoming smile whenever we met.

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