

In Memoriam

William L. Cleveland (1941–2006)

Bill Cleveland, distinguished Historian and leader in the field of Middle East Studies, died on September 28, 2006 after years of struggle with leukemia and related complications. He had officially retired only the month before from the Department of History of Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, where he began teaching in 1968. He is survived by his wife Gretchen Cleveland of West Vancouver, whom he met in Cairo in 1966.

Born and raised in Des Moines, Bill went east to Dartmouth College (BA. 1963), where a course from Robert Landen captured him for Middle East Studies and pointed him toward graduate study in the Department of Oriental Studies at Princeton (Ph.D., 1968). Surviving intensive first-year Arabic (eight o'clock in the morning, five days a week) with dedicated pioneer of Arab language instruction Farhat Ziadeh, Bill took up Bayley Winder's suggestion of Sati' al-Husri as a dissertation topic and wrote it under the supervision of L. Carl Brown. Bill also benefited from the courses he took in European history under a joint program with the Department of History. Dissertation research in Cairo in 1966–67 began his direct experience of the Middle East. This formative academic year ended adventurously with a drive across Libya to Tunis with Andrew Hess at the time of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war.

In 1968 Bill found an exciting job at innovative, recently-founded Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, where he later served as department chair and associate dean.

His revised dissertation, *The Making of an Arab Nationalist: Ottomanism and Arabism in the Life and Thought of Sati' al-Husri* (Princeton, 1971), won him recognition as a pioneering historian of Arab nationalism and a talented biographer. Next Bill turned to a more religiously-minded thinker and activist, publishing *Islam Against the West: Shakib Arslan and the Campaign for Islamic Nationalism* (University of Texas Press) in 1985. Bill's third venture into Arab nationalism and biography of the generation active between World War I and the age of Nasser resulted in two book chapters on Palestinian George Antonius, author of the famous *Arab Awakening* (1939).

Numerous students and teaching colleagues testify to Bill's formidable mastery of the lecture not only as scholarship but also as an art form. Earlier this year, colleagues joined students in celebrating his valedictory lecture in the last course he taught. But Bill's passion and skill as a teacher reached far beyond the classroom and the public lecture hall, for beginning in the early 1990s he put much of his energy into his widely-acclaimed textbook, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994, 2000, 2004), now in its third edition and going strong. The wide-ranging knowledge, organizational and analytical skill, and gift for narrative which made Bill's lectures so memorable carried over into his gracefully-written textbook. Martin Bunton of the University of Victoria, British Columbia, will continue future editions of the textbook where Bill left off.

Bill was "present at the creation" and played a leading role in both MESA and CANMES (Canadian Committee of the Middle East Studies Association). In the fall of 1966, he

drove from Princeton to MESA's first annual conference in Chicago, continuing on to Des Moines for a visit home. With one or two exceptions, Bill never missed a MESA convention thereafter, keeping in his head a remarkable chronology of the locale of each year's meeting. He worked hard on the MESA board, the Hourani Book Award committee, and several program committees, and in 1994 was nominated for president. His fellow MESA members honored him in 2005 by re-electing him to the board for a second time. Bill was immensely pleased to learn, shortly before the onset of his final illness in August this year, that he had been chosen for MESA's 2006 Mentoring Award.

Bill was happy to become a Canadian citizen and to play a leading role in establishing Middle East studies at both Simon Fraser and across Canada. He was a key organizer, and from 1996-98 founding president of CANMES. As a valued senior statesman he recently participated in discussions reevaluating CANMES's organization and mission.

Bill worked tirelessly to convey his knowledge and empathetic understanding of Muslims and other Middle Easterners and their history to students and the public in the United States and Canada. He did not hesitate to express his dismay at disastrous turns in Middle Eastern events over the years, for many of which his native country bore heavy responsibility.

How to convey something of the sparkle of Bill's personality? He was infectiously gregarious, mixing it up in a pick-up basketball game on the outdoor court at AUC, savoring a Stella on the Nile-side veranda of Cairo's old Semiramis Hotel, chairing a panel or chatting late in the bar at innumerable MESA conventions. Inadequate as they are to capture the richness of his personality, perhaps there is comfort in old clichés. Bill was a gentleman and a scholar. The world seems emptier for his passing. Yet there is consolation in the privilege his many colleagues, golfing buddies, other friends, and several generations of students have had in knowing him.

Donald Malcolm Reid
*Georgia State University and
University of Washington*

Matthew H. Elbow (1920-2005)

Matthew H. Elbow passed away on 8 October 2005. He was Professor Emeritus of History at the University at Albany, State University of New York.

Born 9 August 1920, Professor Elbow earned his formal higher education entirely at Columbia University, where he received his doctorate in history in 1949. In 1947, he joined the History Department at what was then the State Normal School (it became, in 1948, the State University of New York at Albany, now the University at Albany), where he served for his entire career, until retirement in the early 1990s.

Professor Elbow's training was in French and, more broadly, European history. His main publication was *French Corporative Theory 1789-1948: A Chapter in the History of Ideas* (New York, 1953; reprinted by Octagon Press in 1966). In mid-career, however, and like many others of his generation, he became interested in the Middle East. Visiting professorships at the Beirut College for Women (1962-1963; the institution is now known as Lebanese-American University) and Robert College (1963-1964; the institution is now Boğaziçi University), the latter supported by a Fulbright, cemented his ties to the region and its peoples. From then on, he taught the history of the Middle East to several generations