

Distinguishing his career was a concern for the institutional growth and development of Middle Eastern studies. Berger was a leader among the handful of academicians who worked to create MESA, and his selection as our Association's first president was a deserved acknowledgment of his services.

He was also instrumental in the creation of the American Research Center in Egypt, serving as president of that organization in 1974.

Only those who have been privileged to work with him at Princeton can fully measure his sustained support for Princeton's interdisciplinary Program in Near Eastern Studies. He directed this program from 1962 to 1968, and again from 1973 to 1977. Thereafter, until his death, he was a valued adviser to later program directors.

Perhaps Berger's best known work in our field is *The Arab World Today* (1962), a sociological survey, the easy readability of which veils the painstaking research and original interpretations that went into the work. He is also the author of *Bureaucracy and Society in Modern Egypt* (1957) and *Islam in Egypt Today* (1970). He edited a pioneering urban study, *The New Metropolis in the Arab World* (1963).

Berger had as well a marked talent for the short article that either addressed a major topic in a seemingly light fashion, or took an apparently off-beat topic and showed its importance. Many who know his work remember with pleasure and profit his short pieces on such diverse subjects as the sociology of the Oriental dance, American travel literature on Cairo, or Americans of Arab origin.

Berger abhorred ostentation or open display of emotions. He would have wanted this notice to be understated. This much can be said while scrupulously honoring his own pronounced preferences: few scholars had a better feel for modern Egyptian society and, yes, love for Egypt and its people than Morroe Berger. He was devoted to solid, old-fashioned scholarship, the kind that results from empathy, intelligence and—most of all—work, work, work!

He could always be counted on to express his distrust of flamboyant, scholarly precocity, or of theoretical flights of fancy chastely removed from intractable reality; but few showed greater sympathy and support for anyone willing to bring to scholarly inquiry the tools of honesty, integrity and industry.

MESA was well served by its first president—Morroe Berger.

...L. Carl Brown, Princeton University

ŞALĀḤ ʿABD aṣ-ŞABŪR
[1931 to 1981]

Şalāḥ ʿAbd aṣ-Şabūr, one of the greatest modern Arabic poets, dramatists and critics, died of a heart attack in Cairo, on August 14, 1981. Şalāḥ was also, at the time of his death, the Assistant Minister of Culture and Director of the General Egyptian Book Organization. His previous positions included an appointment as Cultural Counselor in the Egyptian Embassy in India.

Şalāḥ was born in 1931 and graduated in Arabic literature from the University of Cairo in 1951. As a poet, he is credited with being one of the founders of the free verse movement in Egypt, and with having been one of its greatest exponents in the Arab world. His poetic collections include: *an-Nās fī Bilādī* (1957), *Aqūlu lakum* (1961), *Aḥlām al-Fāris al-Qadīm* (1964), *Ta'ammulāt fī Zaman Jarīḥ* (1970), and *Shajar al-Layl* (1973).

Perhaps of even greater interest is Şalāḥ's output as a dramatist. He authored five verse dramas, all of them exciting and challenging to reader and critic alike. They include: *Ma'sāt al-Ḥallāj* (1964),

Musāfir Layl (1970), *al-Amīra Tantaḥir* (1970), *Laylā wal-Majnūn* (1971), and *Ba'd an Yamut al-Malik* (1973). Abd aṣ-Ṣabūr's skills as dramatist and poet are richly manifested in these works.

As a critic, Abd aṣ-Ṣabūr wrote several works on poetry (e.g., *Ḥayātī fī ash-Shi'r*, *Qirā'a Jadīda li-Shi'rinā al-Qadīm*), as well as numerous general studies on literature and culture—such as *Rihla alā al-Waraq*, *Qiṣṣat ad-Damīr al-Miṣrī al-Ḥadīth*. Nevertheless, he maintained that whenever he wrote in one genre—poetry—he would intellectually dissociate himself from the other—criticism.

Ṣalāḥ's writings display a great deal of compassion and much affection for humanity. Although he was an innovator in modern poetry and extremely well versed in contemporary European and American literature, Ṣalāḥ still felt that the writer owed much to his tradition. His concern with the vitality of the Arabic literary tradition was shown not only by his efforts to understand and present classical Arabic poetry properly to the modern Arabic reader, but also by his continued evocation of the Arabic literary past in his own work. Ṣalāḥ's work has been translated into numerous languages and he has been the subject of many critical studies in Arabic and European languages. One invariably met people in his office who were preparing scholarly studies of him.

Despite his international fame and visibility, Ṣalāḥ was always generous with his time and ideas. He truly loved learning and one could discuss a plethora of subjects with him and never cease to be amazed at his deep culture and broad spectrum of interests.

Ṣalāḥ's generosity was also evident to researchers who had either direct or indirect contact with him at the Dār al-Kutub. He encouraged and helped American (and other) scholars whose work invariably came to his attention. He was extremely interested in the exchange of ideas and, as head of the GEBO, he encouraged publications in European languages not only by Egyptians, but by Westerners as well.

Ṣalāḥ's warmth and dynamism, coupled with his rare intellectual integrity and critical abilities, made him a very special person for all those whose lives were touched by him. His untimely death means a great loss not only to Arabic literature, but to Arab thought in general. He will be deeply missed by friends, colleagues and, indeed, by all those concerned with an open interchange between the Middle East and the West. But Ṣalāḥ Abd aṣ-Ṣabūr's influence will endure. He will continue to live in the memory of those who knew him and, even more importantly, he will continue to live through the driving force of his life—his words.

...Fedwa Malti-Douglas, University of Texas, Austin