



## IN MEMORIAM

Hassan el Nouty  
Professor of French, Emeritus  
UC Los Angeles  
1925 – 2007

Hassan el Nouty was born in Cairo on June 14, 1925, of an Egyptian father and a French mother. He received his Licence ès Lettres at the University of Cairo in 1946 and his Doctorat ès Lettres from the University of Paris (Sorbonne) in 1953, and was awarded the Prix France- Egypte for his doctoral dissertation, *Le Proche-Orient dans la littérature française de Nerval à Barrès*.

El Nouty began his professional career at the University of Cairo as an Assistant in French in 1947 and served as Lecturer in French literature from 1953 to 1956. He spent 1956-57 as a resident scholar at the Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) in Paris. After coming to UCLA as Assistant Professor of French in 1957, el Nouty took over the teaching of 19th- century literature, while inaugurating the study of Francophone literature (writing in French outside of France); he received tenure in 1962 and attained the rank of Professor in 1967. In 1965, he was awarded a Fulbright- Hays Fellowship. For many years the department's most popular teacher, during a UCLA career spanning thirty- four years, el Nouty directed a total of thirty- four departmental dissertations, a record that still stands.

El Nouty spoke and wrote in a rich, idiomatic French that few natives of France can equal. His early writings, including a short story, were published in Egypt, notably in the *Revue du Caire*, in the late 1950s. In 1958, Nizet published his French doctoral dissertation. For the rest of his career, el Nouty's scholarship would retain its dual focus on the literature and culture of 19th- century France and on that of France's former colonies and sphere of influence. He taught courses and wrote articles on French- speaking authors from both the Maghreb and sub- Saharan Africa. El Nouty's second book, *Théâtre et pré- cinéma: Essai sur la problématique du spectacle au 19e siècle*, again published by Nizet in 1978, is an important contribution to the prehistory of cinema that anticipates much recent research on the "spectacular" nature of Parisian culture in the later part of the 19th century. Another area in which el Nouty was ahead of his time is that of science fiction; he taught courses on such writers as Jules Verne well before they were accepted into the canon of scholarship, anticipating the interest in popular literature in our own era.

Professor el Nouty retired in 1991. Sadly, his retirement was marred by a stroke suffered shortly afterward, from which he never fully recovered. He died on May 16, 2007.

Hassan el Nouty would surely be happy today to see the Francophone field flourishing in our department, which a few years ago changed its name to the Department of French and Francophone Studies. We now have four specialists in the domain whose importance he was first among our faculty to recognize.

Eric Gans  
Stephen Werner