

## Mahmoud Amin El Alem

### His Vita:

- Mahmoud Amin El Alim was born on February 18th, 1922 in ad-Darb al-Ahmar in Cairo.
- He studied philosophy at King Fuad I. University in Cairo (1954).
- Due to his political convictions, he was suspended from his work as assistant teacher at the university in 1954. For the same reasons he was barred from getting a doctorate.
- 1959 he was arrested several of times for his political engagement in the communist party. From 1959 to 1964 he was held as a political prisoner in various prisons and labour camps, where he was forced to work in quarries and in the desert in most difficult conditions.
- Under president Sadat he was again imprisoned with fellow communists and accused of having committed treason against his fatherland. At the end of the trial, however, it was Sadat who was disgraced and El Amin was acquitted. He was prohibited from leaving the country for another year. He then went to Oxford and Paris and pursued an academic career. It was not before Sadat's death in 1984 the he came back to Egypt.
- In later years, he received many honours. 1998 he was awarded the highest Egyptian award, *Ga'izat ad-dawla at-taqdiriyya*.

### He worked as:

- Assistant at the University of Cairo, Dept. Of Philosophy
- Chief director at the State Institute for Theatre, Music and Folklore
- Chief director at the State Media-Institute *Akhbar al-yawm* (1968)
- Senior Associate Member at St. Anthony's College – Oxford University
- University teacher (Maitre Assistant) at the University Paris VIII (1974-1985) and at the Ecole Normale de Paris
- Editor of several newspapers and magazines, for example *Ros al-Yousuf*, *ar-Risala al-gadida*, *Magallat al-musawwir*.

### He is:

- Member of the Egyptian Writers' Union
- Member of the Egyptian Journalists' Union
- Consultant of the Philosophy Board of the High Cultural Council of Egypt

### Currently he works also as:

- Editor of *Qadaya fikriyya.*, an irregularly published magazine with important contributions to the encouragement of freedom, democracy and creativity.

### His most important publications:

- *Egyptian culture*, ed. by M. A. Alem and Abd al-Azim Anis, Dar al-fikr al-arabi, 1955 Beirut
- *Culture and Revolution*, Dar al-adab, Beirut 1970.
- *Searching for Europe*, Al-Mu'assasa al-arabiyya li 'l-dirasat, Beirut 1975.
- *Consciousness and False Consciousness in the Arabs' Way of Thought Today*, Dar ath-thaqafa al-gadida, Cairo 1988.
- *Problematic Concepts and Issues*, Dar ath-thaqafa al-gadida, Cairo 1989.
- *Arab Thought Between Privacy and Globalization*, Dar al-mustaqbal al-arabi, **STADT** 1996
- *From Criticizing the Present to Creating the Future: A Contribution towards building up a New Arab Renaissance*, al-Mustaqbal al-arabi, **STADT** 2000
- several other books, studies, articles and lectures
- 2 collections of poems