

Obituary

Salim Kemal

Sahm Kemal died at home, at the age of fifty-one, on 19 November 1999. Kemal was Chair of Philosophy and Head of the Department of the University of Dundee, Scotland. He was an exacting and careful scholar with a substantial record of accomplishments. His work was evidence of his keen insights into philosophical issues in aesthetics and political philosophy, especially in the philosophy of Kant. He also made diversified and interdisciplinary contributions to scholarship in the areas of the relationship of aesthetics to art criticism, ethics, Arabic philosophy and Nietzsche's thought. He was committed to exploring the interaction of art theories and political and social concerns.

Kemal earned his bachelor's degree at Middlesex University and his master's degree at the University of London. In 1981, he was awarded his Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge. He was an Elected Fellow in 1979, a Resident Fellow 1984–6, and a Research Fellow at Wolfson College, Cambridge, where he was also a Visiting Scholar in 1993. He was an Assistant Professor at the American University of Beirut, 1981–4. He rose from Associate Professor to Professor at the Pennsylvania State University in 1986–95. Kemal's competence in Arabic philosophy was enhanced by his position as a Research Fellow and Senior Research Associate at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, St Cross College. In 1995 he became Chair of Philosophy and Head of the Department at the University of Dundee, Scotland, the position he held until he died. During his tenure at Dundee, he was also appointed as a Visiting Research Fellow at Princeton University, from January until September 1999.

There is a certain kind of Kant scholar (*Paul Gerner writes*) whose work is of no interest to the wider philosophical community. And there is also a certain kind of specialist in aesthetics who reinforces the widespread perception that aesthetics is philosophically peripheral by failing to place their research in the context of philosophy as a whole. Salim was both a Kant scholar and an

aesthete but one who singularly avoided these two professional hazards. This is amply demonstrated by his book *Kant and Fine Art*, but will also be clear to anyone who had the good fortune to hear him speak. It must be said that one had to be pretty wide awake to get the full benefit: he was the Michael Schumacher – or perhaps one should now say, the David Coulthard – of philosophical paper delivery, making Isaiah Berlin seem positively lethargic. Salim was not just a fine scholar and thinker; he was also kind and warmhearted, a person of grace and charm.

CARL HAUSMAN AND PAUL GORNER