



<https://www.soci.org/news/colloids/obituary-tharwat-f-tadros>

18 June 2018

Tharwat Tadros 1937-2018

On 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 Tharwat Tadros passed away. Tharwat was President of the International Association of Colloid and Interface Scientists from 1990 to 1992. He served on the SCI surface and colloid chemistry section committee for some 15 years, being chair from 1987 to 1989. He was presented with a number of awards and medals. These included: the RSC Colloid and Surface Chemistry Medal in 1989; the RSC Silver Medal and Industrial Lectureship in 1990; and the SCI Founders Lecture (now the joint RSC/SCI Rideal Lecture) in 1991.

The obituary written by Brian Vincent can be found on the SCI webpage

He was born in 1937 in Kena, near Luxor, in Upper Egypt. He subsequently attended Alexandria University where he obtained a first-class honours B.Sc. Degree in 1956 – aged 19! He then carried out postgraduate research in electrochemistry with Professor Sadek in Alexandria., after which he was appointed to a lectureship in chemistry at the same university. In 1966 he took up a two-year visiting co-worker position with Professor Hans Lyklema at the Agricultural University in Wageningen, the Netherlands. There he worked on the electrochemical properties of the porous silica /aqueous electrolyte interface. Afterwards, instead of returning to his position in Alexandria, Tharwat accepted a job with TNO in Delft. The main reason was that in Wageningen he had met Wikie Buter, whom he married in 1969 in Wassenaar. Later that year they moved to the UK, where Tharwat began his long association with ICI Plant Protection Division at Jealott's Hill in Berkshire.

Tharwat soon established a strong product development team at Jealott's Hill. Moreover, he was encouraged at that time to make contacts with academic groups to pursue more fundamental studies. Many such long-lasting collaborations were set up, including with Bristol, Imperial College, Liverpool, Nottingham, Reading, Wageningen, Groningen, Barcelona, Sofia and Crackow. This produced a great many PhD graduates and postdocs, whom Tharwat co-supervised. He also had many UK and overseas visitors as research co-workers in his laboratory. Tharwat was appointed as a visiting professor in at least three universities: Imperial College, Bristol and Reading. He gained a strong international reputation as a leading authority on many aspects of both pure and applied colloid and interface science. He published around 300 papers and authored, co-authored or edited some 20 books in the field! He was frequently asked to give both individual lectures and industrial teaching causes in this area. His lecturing style was unforgettable and unique, but much appreciated by those listening! For example, in the old days, when overhead transparencies were the main form of visual aid, Tharwat would arrive at a venue and pull out a great wad of such transparencies from his briefcase. He would then select from this collection, as the lecture proceeded, those that he thought would be suitable for the topic and audience he was addressing. He would frequently modify a transparency or construct a new one as he went along!

When some of the former speciality chemical businesses of ICI were split off, as Zeneca, Tharwat stayed on at Jealotts Hill in the newly formed Zeneca Agrochemicals business. This subsequently became the present-day Syngenta Company. Even after he formally retired in 1994, Tharwat remained as a consultant for this company and others and continued to give short-courses on many topics, travelling all over the world. He was much in demand!

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Tharwat and Wikie were very proud of their family in the UK. Tharwat also strongly supported his family back in Egypt. Moreover, he was truly one of the "father figures" of colloid and surface science. Many people around the world, not least myself, have reason to be grateful to him for his continued support and friendship down the years.

*Brian Vincent, Bristol University.*