

twenty-first century trends than its title suggested and was useful beyond its stated corner of the field.

Professor Chambers' students say about him, "He became my *hoca*," and "He remained an inspiration and a mentor." They call him "a man of integrity" and "one of the leaders in his field." Andras Riedlmayer said it best: "What influenced me, both then and in the long term, was his teaching, his kindness to and respect for his students, his intellectual curiosity and his knowledge of and enthusiasm for Turkish culture, which he was always glad to share." ❖

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Halil İnalçık **1916? - 2016**

Halil İnalçık was born in Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, into a refugee family, probably in 1916 (he did not know his birthday; in Turkey he adopted 29 May, in the US 4 July). He died at age 100 in Ankara on 25 July 2016, as the premier Ottoman historian in the world. To quote one of his students, "Professor İnalçık transformed the field of Ottoman studies from an obscure and exotic subfield into one of the leading historical disciplines that covers the history of the greater Middle East and North Africa as well as the Balkans from the late medieval to the modern period. He set the tone of debate and critical inquiry from the early modern to the modern period." Born an Ottoman, he made Ottoman studies a crucial part of world history.

Coming from a commercial and religious background, he graduated from teacher training college in 1935 and entered the brand-new program in history at the Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi of Ankara University, studying Ottoman history with Fuad Köprülü and gaining his doctorate in 1942. Until his retirement at age 55, he remained with the faculty as a research assistant and later professor, developing the scholarly framework of Turkish national history. He was heavily influenced by Ömer Lütfi Barkan and the French Annales school of social and institutional history, and after a conference in Paris in 1950 introduced him to Braudel and his famous book, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, he

began to write about the Ottomans within a wider framework, that of the Mediterranean, global trade, and economic, social, and institutional change. Although he owed much to these scholars methodologically, he retained a critical attitude toward their work, as to the statements in the chronicles and traditional histories. He rejected the Marxist view of history but shared with Marxist historians an interest in peasant life, the conditions of urban workers, the economic drivers of empire building, and material culture. From a period of study in England he gained the acquaintance of Paul Wittek, from whom he learned the art of the critical interpretation of sources. His first fame came from the publication and analysis of Ottoman documents: the oldest surviving timar register, detailing landholding and taxation in fifteenth-century Albania (1954), and the shari‘a court records of fifteenth-century Bursa, rescued from destruction in the early 1950s, and full of information about textile production and other enterprises. With the wealth of Ottoman documents, he investigated questions of landholding, population, agrarian production, manufacturing, trade, and taxation. In his many articles he wrote “the social history of an empire as told through the careful documentation of its bureaucrats.” He insisted that all his students learn to work with documents, since they would allow the creation of a history of the Ottoman people beyond the limitations of the political chronicles, the observations of outsiders, and the harmful stereotypes of the past.

In 1972 İnalçık moved to the University of Chicago, where he trained a generation of students, over a dozen of whom have become professors in their own right. From that time he began to write in English, enlisting a stream of graduate research assistants to check his grammar. This gave his scholarship a world-wide penetration that it otherwise could not have achieved. His concern for the health of the field was obvious. He stimulated his students by bringing them offprints, copies of documents, and references on every subject. He had colleagues in many countries with whom he kept in constant touch, encouraging Ottoman studies in the Balkans and Arab lands, which were formerly part of the empire, in countries like Austria, France, and Russia, where through historical chance large collections of Ottoman manuscripts and documents have accumulated, and in countries like the United States and Japan, whose wealth and diligence made their scholarship influential. He perpetually reviewed dissertations, book manuscripts, and articles for his colleagues and was constantly asked for contributions to encyclopedias, new journals, and collective histories. His textbook, *The Ottoman Empire: The Classical Age*, has been republished several times and translated into numerous languages. He founded the International Association of Ottoman Social and Economic History and ran a conference

every three years bringing together economic and social historians from around the world. He worked hard to open the archives to research by scholars from all over the world. The award of multiple medals and honorary degrees acknowledged his services to the historical profession and Ottoman history.

In 1986 İnalçık retired from the University of Chicago and in 1994 was hired to establish the history department of Bilkent University in Ankara, where he requested another 20 graduate students to train. There he established the Halil İnalçık Center for Ottoman Studies, to which he left his large collection of notes and document photocopies in order to make them accessible to scholars. He continued to publish new works and republish the old; at the time of his death he had two books just out and four more in the pipeline. His diligence is unsurpassed, his insights are foundational, and his legacy is rich and inspiring. A bibliography of his works, many downloadable, can be found at inalcik.com. A more complete bibliography up to 2005 is in the book, *Tarihçilerin Kutbu “Halil İnalçık Kitabı.”* ❖

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