

IN MEMORIAM

Professor Cengiz Orhonlu, 1927–1976

The death of Professor Cengiz Orhonlu at the peak of an outstanding career full of promises for the future is a tragic loss for the profession, his family, and friends alike. His death, caused by heart failure, occurred on June 14, 1974, just the day he was supposed to be interned in a hospital for treatment. The first symptoms of his illness appeared a few years earlier but he ignored advice and continued his strenuous work in carrying on research, teaching, publishing, and editing reviews and books. His energy, courage, and calm were legendary. I remember traveling with him one rainy night from Sofia to Istanbul. At one point the car I was driving hit a patch of mud on the road and went over the embankment into a corn field. He showed absolute calm, and after asking whether I was alright he lit a cigarette—he was a heavy smoker—and went on with the conversation as though nothing had happened.

Professor Orhonlu held the Chair of Modern History at the University of Istanbul, but his research and interest covered all aspects of Ottoman, Balkan, and Middle East history. His work was based mainly on primary sources of all kinds found in the Başvekalet arşivi and in a variety of other libraries in Ankara and Anatolia. Moreover, he assiduously followed books and reviews published in the West to become one of the best informed Turkish scholars of Ottoman and Middle East studies. A warm and generous human being, he received all visitors any time of the day or night. He provided them with advice and guidance, often by taking them personally to the archives and libraries, and then to a copious meal although his financial resources were incredibly scanty. In fact, it was only during the year of his death that he was able to make a down payment on an apartment in the Etiler district of Istanbul where he moved his wife and two children.

Professor Orhonlu was born on July 17, 1927, in the Nikisar area of the Tokat province in northeastern Anatolia. His father, a teacher in the local elementary school, moved to Istanbul where Cengiz completed all his studies and took a B.A. in the History Department with a thesis dealing with the social history of some districts of Istanbul. After his military service and two years of work as *telhisçi* (a palaeographer who provided a summary of the Vezir's memos to the Sultan) in the archives he joined the Department of History at the University of Istanbul. The fruit of this specialized and painstaking work came out eventually as *Osmanlı Tarihi'ne aid belgeler: Telhisler 1597–1607* (Istanbul, 1970). He received his doctorate in 1958 with a thesis on the attempts to settle the nomadic tribes in the Ottoman Empire 1691–1696 (published in 1963) and spent the next two years in

Montreal, Canada, at the Institute of Islamic Studies, McGill University. He became a docent in 1964 by submitting a thesis on the Derbend (road construction and maintenance organization) in the Ottoman state, and finally received his professorship in 1971, through a work dealing with Ottoman relations with Ethiopia, published later as *Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'nun Güney siyaseti, Habeş Eyaleti* (Istanbul, 1974). Finally in 1973, Professor Orhonlu became a member of the Turkish Historical Society (Türk Tarih Kurumu). Professor Orhonlu's published books, articles, and reviews—appearing in Turkey and abroad—number some 120 items. The subjects of these works can be divided broadly into several categories: (1) studies dealing with Ottoman institutions and occupations, including works on the construction of bridges, canals, ships, and carvansarays, as well as analyses of their socioeconomic role in the Ottoman system; (2) a series of publications in Turkish and English on Ottoman relations with Ethiopia and North Africa, on navigation on the Red Sea, and on the sociodemographic and political situation of various Turkic groups in Europe and Asia; (3) studies on local history, such as those on Malta, Tripoli (Libya), Athens, Bolu, and some Aegean islands, and biographies (Hasan Paşa, Abdulhamid II), some of which appeared in the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, both the Turkish and English versions; (4) studies dealing with the history of the Turkish Republic, including a section in the monumental work *Türk Dünyası El Kitabı* (Manual of the Turkish World) (Ankara, 1976) which he edited; and (6) book reviews and a variety of brief studies on architecture, the state of the art, and other subjects.

Professor Orhonlu was the major force behind the publication of the *Güney-Doğu Avrupa Araştırmaları Dergisi* (South East European Studies Review), a frequent contributor to the *Türk Kültürü Araştırmaları* (Research on Turkish Culture), published by the Research Institute on Turkish Culture, and the *Tarih Dergisi* (Historical Review) of the History Department, University of Istanbul. His works comprise a wealth of social, economic, and political data obtained from a variety of original and unused sources. An English bibliography would be not only a service to the profession but also a long overdue tribute and recognition for Orhonlu's hard work, dedication, and lasting contribution.

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