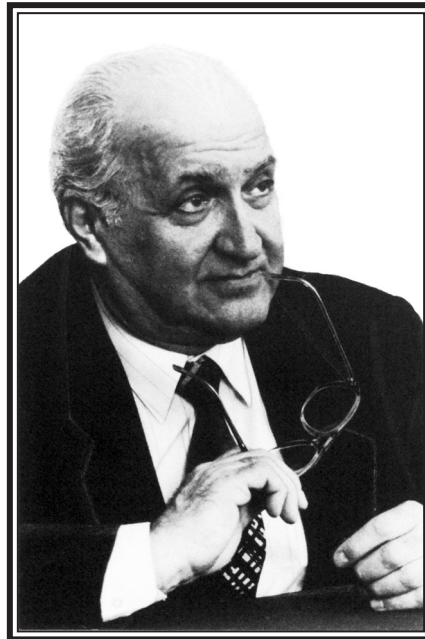

IN MEMORIAM

YURIĬ ASHOTOVICH PETROSIAN (1930—2011)



On December 10, 2011, having battled with long-term illness Yuriĭ Ashotovich Petrosian passed away at 82. Doctor of Historical Sciences and Professor, he was the director of Leningrad Department (Saint-Petersburg Branch) of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences for many years, as well as one of the founders and the first Editor-in Chief of our journal.

Saturday morning on December 10 of 2011 was gloomy and sad. The air was overly humid. The dark streets were deserted. It felt as though everything threatened with misfortune to come. And misfortune did come. That was the day when the man we had all known and loved for 35 years passed away. He was a large-scale scholar, Professor, a great leader to follow and a kind friend. Yuriĭ Ashotovich Petrosian is no more.

He graduated from the Faculty of Oriental Studies of Leningrad State University in 1962. A young scholar that he was, he became a part of the environment of his Turkologist colleagues right away. He was noticed by the senior Orientologist, who was loved and respected by all, Academician Iosif Abgarovich Orbeli. Enthusiasm, which Yuriĭ Ashotovich employed for every task he undertook, magnetized others to him, familiar and unfamiliar alike. Always well-dressed, fit, friendly, cheerful and smiling, he arrived to the Leningrad Department of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the USSR Academy of Sciences, opened in 1956, in the capacity of the assistant of the newly appointed director Iosif Abgarovich Orbeli.

He was lucky with friends and especially with teachers, to whom he was unchangeably faithful to the very last day of his life. The portraits of his teachers — Iosif Abgarovich Orbeli and Andreĭ Nikolaevich Kononov — had their own place on top of his director's fireplace over the course of decades.

It must be particularly emphasized — to be a head of a scientific institution is a special vocation. This vocation requires skills in understanding people, valuing gifts of your colleagues, helping them in their work and creating atmosphere that is conducive to — and not distracting from — enthusiastic scientific work. Curiously, the outward charm in part represents the vocation of a director of a scientific institution. His affability, smile and elegance facilitate pleasure, with which a scholar walks to his workplace.

It is important that the director is not inferior to his colleagues in his scientific success. Yuriĭ Ashotovich always did everything on his own: collected material, assessed it, processed it and attained brilliant scientific results. Let us attempt to comprehend the administrative busyness, work with his students and thorough research labour. All of the aforementioned made it possible for Yuriĭ Ashotovich to establish St. Petersburg school of the new history of Turkey, the so-called