



Professor Dr phil. M.D. Hakan Ertin
(1962-2021)

It was with great sadness that we learned of the sudden passing of our esteemed and admired colleague and friend Hakan Ertin on 15 March of this year.

Hakan had an immense interest in medical humanities and medical ethics, and, having trained and worked for several years as a general practitioner, he returned to his alma mater, Istanbul University, to study and complete a PhD in philosophy. Over the following years he continued working there in medical humanities, becoming a professor at the medical faculty in the Department of Medical History and Ethics. He taught across disciplines and supervised students at every level, many of whom he inspired to expand the field in Turkey. Hakan also was the director of the Besikçizade Centre for Medical Humanities (BETIM) in Istanbul, which he developed into a globally connected, very active centre for interdisciplinary research and education. Furthermore, in August 2020 Hakan was made honorary senior research fellow in the Sociology, Philosophy and Anthropology Department at the University of Exeter.

Hakan had a wealth of expertise in both the history and ethics of medicine. His interest had been to pay diligent respect to the ethical foundations of medical care and to the history of medical science in Turkey. He published over a hundred articles and chapters, and numerous books, including several monographs and series of edited volumes and journals. Hakan's most recent book, *MODERN TIP VE ETİK* (2020 – Engl. transl. *Modern Medicine and Ethics*), Volume 1 of a planned series, achieved his ambition to systematically debate ethical arguments in depth about the changing relationship between clinical care and technological development. The book addresses medical malpractice, rules for human trials, the relationship between medicine and law, as well as the bioeconomy of property regimes and their effects on care – case studies focussed on genetics, organ donation, as well as psychiatric care. It serves as an excellent introduction to ethics for medical students, analysing the particular situation in Turkey by taking an international comparative perspective. Another of Hakan's recent major projects concerns complementary and alternative medicine-ethical, medical, legal, and theological perspectives, with a volume almost ready to go to press.

My own collaboration and friendship with Hakan began when he invited me to Istanbul three years ago for an extended stay and several talks. In turn I invited him to the University of Exeter – he came for a research sabbatical from June 2019 to February 2020. During this time Hakan gave several talks and joined colloquia and seminars. He also conducted research on how medical humanities is understood and taught in Europe, both in medical schools and in humanities' departments, travelling widely in the UK and abroad to meet with colleagues in the field. He and I also developed a research project on Humanitarian Ethics. This new research group between Exeter and Istanbul studies the diverse challenges facing international humanitarian aid organizations as a result of technological change, societal prejudice and injustice, as well as the increasing politicization of aid threatening the post-WWII global consensus and convention on human rights. Disrupted by the pandemic, we had only just started a series of international virtual seminars with many expert participants. We shall continue this project in Hakan's spirit.

Hakan was a passionate and admired scholar and teacher. Yet, the major reason for many people feeling such a profound sense of loss is that he was a wonderful human being. Hakan was exceptionally kind and attentive, mild-mannered and a little shy by nature. He listened, and, with unerring sensitivity found the right words of professional or personal advice, encouragement and support for everyone. He made people feel seen and appreciated. He remembered and cared. This virtuous character made us want to work and be with him. I fondly remember small group tours we undertook to Dartmoor and the Devon coast. How Hakan mattered to people may be best illustrated by the wonderful open house party that the Exeter Turkish Society organized in his honour the day before his return to Turkey in February 2020. More than fifty postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers at the University of Exeter prepared a wonderful buffet of homemade food, decorated the room, and made me and other friends of Hakan feel welcome. Speeches expressed the admiration people felt for him and the bonds they had forged with him during those few months; these are matched by the messages of grief and sadness now.

May his soul rest in peace.

His wife, the photographer Deniz Ertin, their two sons Ömer and Emir with their partners, as well as his mother Melek Ertin, and his sister Sabriye Ertin, survive Hakan. Our thoughts are with them at this very difficult time.

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