



Muharrem Satır on the island of Marmara in 2007.

MUHARREM SATIR

Muharrem Satir was born in 1945 in Rize in the Eastern Pontides, a region famous for producing people of intellect, industry, political skill and temper, which, except the last quality, also characterize Muharrem. Soon after his birth his family moved to Beykoz, at that time a small picturesque fishing village on the northern reaches of Bosphorus, but now the location of the newly founded Turkish-German University in İstanbul. He attended the primary and middle schools in Beykoz and then continued with a state boarding scholarship to the Vefa Lycee in the historic city. He finished the Vefa Lycee in 1962 and went on to study geology in İstanbul University in the heart of the ancient city. Going to university every weekday from Beykoz involved a lovely boat ride at 6.30 in the morning in the company of 40 other students cruising down the Bosphorus and back again in the late afternoon. In those years road connections to the northern reaches of the Bosphorus were still very basic.

Muharrem Satir graduated from İstanbul University with a degree in geology in 1968 and started to work in the mineralogy-petrology division of the Maden Tetkik ve Arama (MTA) Enstitüsü, the acting geological survey of Turkey. In 1969 he obtained a scholarship from the MTA Enstitüsü for a doctoral study and went to Germany to learn German in Freiburg and Munich and then to the University of Bern in Switzerland. In Bern Muharrem Satir initially did a minor in Chemistry in 1971 and then started to work towards his PhD Degree in the Institute für Mineralogie und Petrographie under the supervision of Dr. Jäger, which he completed in 1975. The title of his PhD Thesis was 'Die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Hohen Tauern und der Ötztalmasse auf Grund radiometrischer Altersbestimmungen'.

Muharrem Satir continued as an assistant in Bern after his PhD, and later became a scientific researcher in Berlin Technical University and the University of München in 1976–1977. In 1977 Muharrem Satir returned to Ankara to join the MTA Institute as vice-director of the geology section. Those were turbulent years in Turkey with anarchy reigning in the streets and in offices. He worked for three years at the MTA and left in 1980 just before the military coup.

Between 1980 and 1984 Muharrem Satir worked as a chief assistant in the Geochemical Institute of Tübingen University, and then between 1984–1988 he was employed as a junior (C2) professor in the Munich

Technical University and was finally appointed as a full (C4) professor and head of the Geochemistry Institute of Tübingen University in 1989, where he stayed until his retirement in 2010. In Tübingen he was vice-dean between 1998 and 2000 and dean between 2000 and 2004.

Muharrem Satir's scientific research was initially on the petrology and geochronology of the Alps but later his research diversified and his published papers cover a great variety of topics and methods, ranging from environmental problems, climate research, archaeogeology to tectonics in a wide range of countries including Turkey, Germany, Sudan, Mexico and China. Muharrem Satir has over 90 publications in the SCI journals and many more in other refereed journals and books; his publications have received over 1600 citations. Besides his scientific achievements Muharrem Satir has been very active in the social sphere, furthering constructive relations between Germany and Turkey. At various times, he has been vice-president of the Stuttgart Turkish-German Society, founding member and president of the Turkish-German Liberal Baden-Württemberg Forum, president of the Çanakkale-Tübingen Troia Foundation, founding member and president of the GAZİ – children foundation and a member of the Tübingen Troia foundation. He mentored a large number of geology students from various geology departments in Turkey, both at undergraduate and post-graduate levels. This special issue has many papers from those students and colleagues, who had their first initiation in the techniques of mineral separation and isotope geochemistry in Tübingen. In fact, Muharrem Satir was instrumental in introducing isotope geology to Turkey. For his achievements he was recognized with an honorary doctorate from the İstanbul University.

On a personal level I have known Muharrem since the 1960s. He has always been a gentle, kind considerate person with a constructive and positive approach to life. His sense of humour is legendary and his sense of duty is matched by few. His retirement will open another productive chapter in his life.

Aral I. OKAY

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