

OBITUARY

PROF. CEMİL BEDRİ ŞENVAR (1923–2009)

Prof. Dr. Cemil Bedri Şenvar passed away on December 28, 2009, in İstanbul. He was a well-known figure who inspired many young academics and served as an educator, an administrator and researcher in the field of chemistry.

Prof. Şenvar was born in Reyhanlı (previously Reyhaniye), Hatay, in 1923. He went to school in Antakya and then Adana. After completing his high school education in 1940, he became a student of İstanbul University and graduated in 1944 from the branch of Physics and Chemistry of İstanbul Science Faculty. His wife to be, Hamide, was also attending the same class. After completing his military service in Van and Hakkari, he joined the teaching staff of Sivas High School. He and Hamide got married in Sivas during this period when they were both teachers of chemistry. He decided to pursue a graduate education in Chemistry in 1948 and took up the position of research assistant in physical chemistry at Ankara University Science Faculty, where he completed his PhD in 1952 under the joint supervision of Prof. Yrjö Kauko from Finland and Prof. E. Fisher from Germany. The title of his thesis was "The Kinetics of Acrylonitrile Polymerization in Aqueous Solution with Fe^{3+} - H_2O_2 Redox System". He then spent two years at Liverpool University working with Prof. Bawn in 1952-1954. During 1956-1958 he was at the University of Chicago working mainly on polymerization with gamma ray irradiation. During this period he also attended the courses given at Argonne National Laboratory's Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy program. In 1966, he joined the newly established Hacettepe University as the founding dean of Faculty of Science and Engineering, which later became the Faculty of Chemistry. He was the first chairman of the Chemistry Department and did most of his scientific work at Hacettepe University. In 1980 he moved first to İstanbul University Chemical Engineering Department and two years later to Marmara University, where he served as dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy and later head of the Graduate School.



Prof. Dr. Cemil Bedri Şenvar, 1923-2009

In addition to his mentioned activities, during 1960-1980 Prof. Şenvar played very important roles in the establishment and development of new universities in Turkey, including Samsun Ondokuz Mayıs University, serving as founding dean of some faculties and head of the graduate schools. Despite his intensive administrative duties he never gave up his research activities and established a new nuclear chemistry laboratory at Ankara University and polymer research laboratories at Hacettepe and Marmara Universities. He also assumed active positions in the Turkish Atomic Energy Commission (TAEK).

He gave courses on physical chemistry, nuclear chemistry and polymer chemistry at both undergraduate and graduate levels. He supervised seven doctoral theses, one at Ankara University, five at Hacettepe University and one at Marmara University, on various aspects of polymer chemistry. His PhD students became well-known Turkish academics, such as Emsal Pulat, Mualla Ataman, Zehra Utine, Olgun Güven, Mehmet Şahan, Serap Şenel and Mehlika Pulat. He was among the few scientists who introduced the subject of polymer chemistry, then a newly developing field in Turkey, into the research and education programs of universities. He was fluent in English, French, Arabic and Circassian besides his mother language, Turkish. He published 14 scientific papers and several books in the fields of general chemistry, physical chemistry and nuclear chemistry. Prof. Şenvar retired in 1990. He is survived by two sons and one daughter.

He was a much adored educator with a warm personality. His students and colleagues recall the anecdotes where he always tried to establish strong social ties among the colleagues; lunches, dinners, tea parties and similar occasions served as stimulators for this purpose. As a mentor, he was keenly interested in the career developments of his students.

With Prof. Şenvar's passing, the Turkish chemistry community has lost a profoundly educated scientist, who had an acute sense of responsibility and commitment. His colleagues, friends, and students will remember his amiability and strong will and how he positively influenced others throughout his career.

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