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## Obituary

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## Obituary

### Prof. Dr. Okan Tekeli

Prof. Dr. Okan Tekeli, a prominent Turkish geologist from the Ankara University, died on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2001, a few days after his 58<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was married with one son. Okan Tekeli was born in Alaşehir, western Anatolia, on 2nd August 1943. He completed his primary school education in Adana, and the secondary school in the Haydarpaşa Lyceum in İstanbul. After finishing school he went to Austria, where he completed a B.Sc. and Ph.D. in geology in the University of Graz during the years 1963 to 1972. In 1973 he joined the Mineral Research and Exploration Institute in Ankara, where he served as a geologist until 1988. In 1988 he joined the Geology Department of the Ankara University, where he worked until his untimely death.

Okan Tekeli made important and long-lasting scientific and administrative contributions to the Turkish geology. In the years 1973 to 2001 he worked as a geologist in various parts of Turkey, including Tokat Massif, Aladağlar, Kızıldağ, Armutlu Peninsula, Sivas Basin and Menderes Massif. Probably his most important scientific

contribution to geology was the reinterpretation of the Karakaya formation as a Late Palaeozoic-Triassic subduction-accretion complex. Before his 1981 *Geology* paper<sup>1</sup>, the Karakaya formation was interpreted as the deposits of a Triassic rift. His drastically new interpretation brought a new dimension to the tectonic evolution of the Palaeo-Tethys in the Turkish segment. Okan Tekeli's study of the Aladağlar<sup>2-5</sup> in the Taurides with his team in the MTA Institute stands as the most solid and comprehensive study of the region since Blumenthal. His other noteworthy studies include those on the Kızıldağ ophiolite<sup>6</sup>, Armutlu Peninsula<sup>7</sup> and Menderes Massif<sup>8</sup>. Okan Tekeli's study on the Simav region of the Menderes Massif with his research student Veysel Işık, showed an important episode of Tertiary ductile-to-brittle extension on the northern margin of the Menderes Massif. His students and colleagues are continuing this study successfully<sup>9</sup>.

Okan Tekeli's administrative services to the Turkish geology were just as important as his scientific ones.



Prof. Dr. Okan TEKELİ

While in the MTA Institute he was instrumental in starting and organising a project of compilation and printing of 1:100,000 scale geological maps of Turkey, which is being continued successfully. In the early 1980's as one of the chief editors of the Bulletin of the Turkish Geological Society he spent a great deal of time and energy in raising the standards of the Bulletin, which at that time was the premier Turkish earth science journal. From 1993 to 1999 he was the chief editor of the Turkish Journal of Earth Sciences. Okan Tekeli edited with Cemal Göncüoğlu the proceedings of the International Symposium on the Taurus Belt held in 1983 in Ankara. The book entitled, *Geology of the Taurus Belt*<sup>10</sup>, came out within one year of the Symposium, and is probably the most successful international geology book published in Turkey. It stands out as a reference for the Taurides. Okan Tekeli also served as the executive secretary and member of the Earth Sciences committee of the Turkish Research Counsel, TÜBİTAK, in the years 1992 to 2000.

Okan Tekeli was a memorable person to know. His priorities and interests were not publishing, scientific or fiscal promotion. He was bereft of everyday worries, and never complained. Okan Tekeli was seriously interested in

geology as a discipline and in the state of the Turkish geological community. We can vividly remember him in the early 1980's every saturday in the offices of the Turkish Geological Society in Ankara, along with the late Ayhan Erler, reviewing, discussing and improving the incoming manuscripts to the Bulletin. While in the MTA Institute he started the compilation project of the 1:100,000 geological maps with great energy and enthusiasm. In geology, he laid major emphasis on fieldwork, which he himself greatly enjoyed. For him the unravelling of the complex geology of Anatolia required careful and detailed field studies. In his own work he was meticulous, precise and honest. He often shied from speculation and was very careful about what he published. Okan Tekeli possessed a rigorous work discipline, which often led to complaints from younger geologists in his field camps. The same discipline, pierced by a sense of humour and tolerance, characterized his personal relations. His untimely death is a great loss to the Turkish geological community.

*Aral İ. OKAY and M. Cemal GÖNCÜOĞLU*

*14.11.2001*

#### **Selected Publications of Okan Tekeli**

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4. TEKELİ, O. 1981. Toroslarda Aladağ ofiyolitli melanjinin özellikleri. *Türkiye Jeoloji Kurumu Bülteni* **24**, 57-64.
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