



PROF. CAN SOLAKOĞLU, M. D.

Nurullah ERMİŞ¹,
Kaan ERLER²,
İ. Teoman BENLİ³

¹ Maltepe University Medical Faculty,
Department of the Orthopaedics and
Traumatology, Maltepe, İstanbul,
Turkey.

² Near East University Medical Faculty,
Department of the Orthopaedics and
Traumatology, Lefkoşa, KKTC.

³ Okan University Medical Faculty,
Department of the Orthopaedics and
Traumatology, İstanbul, Turkey.

Address: Nurullah ERMİŞ,
Maltepe Üniversitesi Tıp Fakültesi,
Ortopedi ve Travmatoloji Anabilim Dalı,
Maltepe, İstanbul.

Phone: +90 505 677 35 66

E-Mail: nermis@gmail.com

Received: 1st September, 2017.

Accepted: 20th September, 2017.

ABSTRACT

Prof. Dr. Can Solakoğlu was born in 1962 in İstanbul. He was the oldest son of his family. Since his father was an Officer, he had been in different locations in Turkey until he entered to Kuleli Military High School. After graduation from this school with an honor degree in 1980, he became a military Medical Student at Ataturk University in Erzurum, later he transferred to Gülhane Military Medical Faculty of Medicine in Ankara. After graduation in 1986, he served as a medical doctor for 2 years in Artvin and during this period, he was sent to Military Medical Center in San Antonio - Texas, USA for Public Health in the field. Started his 4 years specialty in Orthopedics and Traumatology in 1990 in GATA. He worked as an Assistant Prof in 1995-1997, GATA Hospital, Ankara, Turkey.

He served as an Military Health Attaché at Turkish Embassy, Washington DC in 1997-2000.

He took his Associate Professor degree in Orthopaedics in 2004 at GATA Haydarpaşa Teaching Hospital, İstanbul, Turkey. His interest in spinal surgery turned to full contribution in this field and has opportunity of becoming a research fellow under the supervision of Ziya Gökalp John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He became professor at Maltepe University in 2012.

His interest of field and publication mainly focused on Spine and Arthroplasty surgery. He had 65 international, 30 national articles.

Key words: Prof. Dr. Can Solakoğlu, Spine surgery, GATA, Maltepe University

Level of Evidence: Biography, Level V

INTRODUCTION

Prof. Dr. Can Solakoğlu was born in 1962 in İstanbul. After graduation from Gülhane Military Faculty of Medicine (GATA) in Ankara. He started his specialty in orthopedics and traumatology in 1990-1994 in GATA. He worked as Assistant and then Associated Professor in Orthopaedics, GATA Hospitals. Then he retired and started to work in Maltepe University as a Professor and chief of the Orthopaedics and Traumatology Clinic (**Figure-1**).

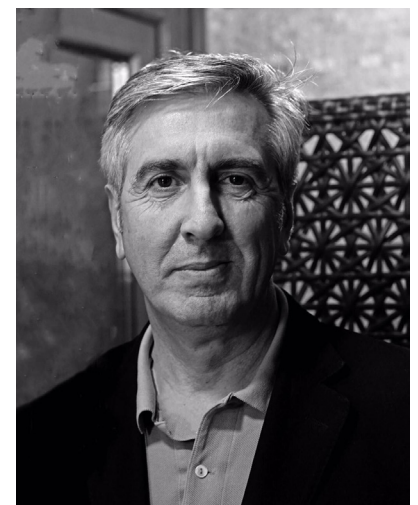


Figure-1. Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU, M.D. (1962-2017).

Dr. Nurullah Ermiş:

First, I met him in a spine meeting. Our friendship started just as a colleague. I was working in public hospital and he was in GATA Haydarpaşa Hospital. One day he called me and asked me to work together in university hospital. I had many questions about university, payments and other things. He just said trust me and I approved. We started to make plans for our new clinic in his private office. In June 2011 we started. Before us, the clinic had nearly 10 surgery per month and 20 outpatients per day. 6 months later, we were doing 80 surgery and 500 patients in clinic. At that time we were not just a colleague and we were best friend each other.

We started to go Azarbeycan to do surgeries. Moreover, some foreign orthopedic residents came to our clinic as a research fellow.

It was a great honor for me to work with him nearly 6 years.

Things I learned from Can: "You can always smile. It makes you feel good and it brighten the day for others. It does not cost anything either. You can always take the fun part of life what you do. This doesn't cost you anything but make your and others' day brighter. Don't complain, find a solution. I never heard Can complain. He was too bust determining the next best next step."

Thank you Can Hoca...

One of his best friend from Kuleli Military High School,
Prof. Dr. Melih Özel says;

Often we are given an honor that surpasses what we deserve. Writing about Can Solakoğlu is an honor for me. We were old friends, who have been together for over forty years. I can regale you with a lot of stories or amusing anecdotes about attending a game, watching TV, making field trips, working together in the same hospitals both here in Turkey and abroad. We did have those times together. Some of you probably only knew Can a short time. You know he did serve at the front. He never stayed at the rear and he served well everywhere he worked.

He was once the Dean of Maltepe University Medical School. He was the Chief of Orthopedics. In the past, he served in the Military at various Hospitals and Medical Schools and he served as the Military Medical Attaché at the Embassy of Turkey, Washington D, and USA. I had the privilege of serving with him in almost all of those settings. What he has left behind in all places he has worked was remarkable and unforgettable.

He was always full of energy and joy. He played volleyball and tennis; he was a very energetic fan of football and Galatasaray. He was very keen in finding the amusing parts of games and making fun of all these tools in life. The tragedy that separated him from us, hit unexpectedly and hard. He was a very careful motorcyclist. In addition, he died while he was doing one of the things he loved to do."

Prof. Dr. Kaan Erler:

I had first met him in 1976 at prep Scholl of Kuleli. It was the beginning of a 41 years journey of good friendship that we shared every moment of life not only socially but also scientifically. We both wanted to become a war pilot but we failed and changed our passion to medicine. He was a brilliant and hard-worker student. He was a good player of Volleyball team.

His learning curve in foreign language was superior to any other students. He graduated from the High Scholl with an Honor degree. We passed the entry exams of medical faculty and begun to Medical Faculty in 1980. We did not only study medicine but also got interested in playing tennis. We represented our faculty in all sportive organizations. Prof. SOLAKOĞLU was interested in scuba diving (Figure-2).

At the end of the six years, we graduated as a military medical doctor. He was assigned to Artvin where he spent 2 years as a doctor. During this period, he was sent to study Military Public Health in the field to San Antonia Military Medical Center in Texas for 3 months.

In 1989, I was accepted for GATA Orthopaedics Residency program. He said that "Orthopaedics is not suitable for me, I would prefer Plastic Surgery". Next year he was with me in Orthopaedics as mine junior assistant.

It was the beginning of a long academic carrier we walked together. We were completed our residency in one of the best training Hospital of the Country, GATA, produced a lot of academic papers (Figure-3).

He interested in Spinal Surgery and was trained under the supervision of Prof Dr. Mehmet Altınmakas who was a very well-known pioneer in Spinal Surgery (Figure-4).

In 1997, he passed all the exams including very hard English tests both written and verbal and he chosen for a Military Medical Attaché in Washington DC for three years. While he was there, he also visited different clinics of John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore including Spinal Center.

He became Associate Prof in 2004 at Gülhane Haydarpaşa Training Hospital and became the Chief of Spinal Division where he performed surgeries and valuable academic researches until 2011 (Figure-5).

After this, he begun to work at the Department of Orthopaedics in Maltepe University, and got his Professor degree in Orthopaedics in 2012. He later was became the Dean of the Faculty for 3 years. All I can say that we lost a diamond, which is priceless (Figure-6).



Figure-2. Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU was interested in scuba diving.



Figure-4. Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU, in the operating theatre.



Figure-3. AAOS Meeting in Chicago in 2011.



Figure-5. Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU, with Rauf Denktaş who was the president of the Republic of Northern Cyprus in GATA.



Figure-6. While Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU was making a scientific presentation in the University of Maltepe.

LIFE STORY

He was born in 1962 in İstanbul. His father was military personnel. So he traveled a lot of city in turkey because of his father missions.

He was educated in Balıkesir for primary school. He wanted to be soldier like his father and started to Kuleli Military High School in 1976. He was hardworking; he decided to be a doctor in 1980 his faculty of medicine education started. When he finished at 1986 his first military mission started in Artvin Military Hospital.

Artvin was small place to do social events for his free time. There were some unused motorcycles in the military. Moreover, he started to drive. He was so happy when he drive but this hobby caused the end of his life in 2017.

In 1990, he was accepted in Orthopaedics and Traumatology Clinic for GATA, Ankara. After residency, he worked as an Assistant Professor until to 1997 in the same clinic.

He served Military Medical Attaché, Turkish Embassy, Washington DC in 1997-2000. Then he turn back to GATA and at 2004, he got Associated Professor title. In 2009 he went to John Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore USA for spine fellowship for one year. He worked in GATA Haydarpaşa Hospital until 2011 and retired.

He started to work in Maltepe university hospital as a chief of Orthopaedics and traumatology clinic. In 2013, he was assigned as a dean of faculty of medicine in Maltepe University and finished this job at 2016. In this time, he solved many problems about faculty. Education in English started and stem cell and gene laboratory placed.

His wife Dr. Gevher Solakoğlu and their handsome two sons were everything for him.

He was very social and liked traveling by motorcycle. At his last travel to Bulgaria, a traffic accident took him from us (Figure-7).



Figure-7. Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU, with his motorcycle, which was his passion.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SPINAL SURGERY

The contribution of the Prof. Solakoğlu was important for occurring of the GATA ecolé in the spinal surgery practice. He was the student of the Dr. Mehmet Altınmakas. Especially their new classification of the spinal tuberculosis and guidelines of the surgical treatment of the Pott's disease is the first classification in the literature ⁽⁴⁾.

He operated many patients with vertebral fracture and idiopathic scoliosis. He was interested in the patients with tethered cord. He reported that effects of untethered procedures on scoliotic curve in 2009⁽³⁾. In 2009, he and his colleagues also presented that incidence of symptomatic re-tethering after surgical management of pediatric tethered cord syndrome with or without duraplasty⁽⁵⁾.

The study of him about the changes of the pelvic incidence after resection of the sacral tumors was printed in 2011⁽¹⁾. On the other hand, his important contributions are studies on the sagittal plane. He reported that parameters of the sagittal plane in the two different groups of the patients with acondroplasia in 2012⁽²⁾. He joined many international congress and reported many case and original articles in English and in Turkish in the main journals (Figure-8)⁽⁶⁾.

He always hard worked in the Turkish Spine Society; he presented many oral presentation and panel speech in the International Congresses of the Turkish Spine Society. He shared his Knowles and experiences with his students and residents. As a result, he was a frontier of the Turkish Spinal Surgery.



Figure-9. Prof. Can SOLAKOĞLU, in the wedding ceremony of his daughter.

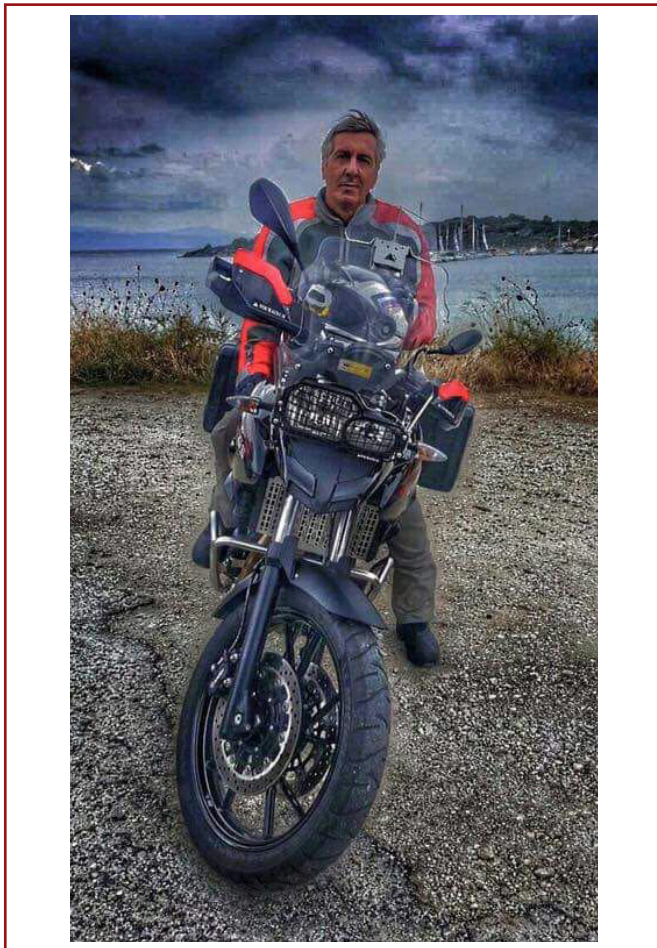


Figure-8. Grand Canyon Excursion in 2013.

*Prof. Dr. İ. Teoman Benli, Editor of the JTSS:
He was a master and smart Orthopaedics surgeon and scientist.
He was also a polite and good man and good friend. Sleep in the lights.*

REFERENCES

1. Gottfried ON, Omeis I, Mehta VA, Solakoglu C, Gokaslan ZL, Wolinsky JP. Sacral tumor resection and the impact on pelvic incidence. *J Neurosurg Spine* 2011; 14(1): 78-84.
2. Karikari IO, Mehta AI, Solakoglu C, Bagley CA, Ain MC, Gottfried ON. Sagittal spinopelvic parameters in children with achondroplasia: identification of 2 distinct groups. *J Neurosurg Spine* 2012; 17(1): 57-60.
3. McGirt MJ, Mehta V, Garcés-Ambrossi G, Gottfried O, Solakoglu C, Gokaslan ZL, Samdani A, Jallo GI. Pediatric tethered cord syndrome: response of scoliosis to untethering procedures. Clinical article. *J Neurosurg Pediatr* 2009; 4(3): 270-274.
4. Oguz E, Sehrioglu A, Altinmakas M, Ozturk C, Komurcu M, Solakoglu C, Vaccaro AR. A new classification and guide for surgical treatment of spinal tuberculosis. *Int Orthop* 2008; 32(1): 127-133.
5. Samuels R, McGirt MJ, Attenello FJ, Garcés Ambrossi GL, Singh N, Solakoglu C, Weingart JD, Carson BS, Jallo GI. Incidence of symptomatic retethering after surgical management of pediatric tethered cord syndrome with or without duraplasty. *Childs Nerv Syst* 2009; 25(9): 1085-1089.

-
6. Xu R, Solakoglu C, Maleki Z, McGirt MJ, Gokaslan ZL, Bydon A. Hemorrhagic synovial cyst: the possible role of initial trauma and subsequent microtrauma in its pathogenesis: case report. *Neurosurgery* 2011; 68(3): E858-65; discussion: E865.