PROCEEDINGS OF
THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
ON EARTHQUAKE HAZARD AND RISK
IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Hüseyin GÖKÇEKÜŞ • Editor

Volume I

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Hüseyin GÖKÇEKÜŞ * Editor

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FOREWORD

Throughout history, earthquakes have influenced man in every corner of the world, irrespective of country, religion, language or race.

Until now humanity proved to be impotent against the dreadful effects of earthquakes everywhere. With the advent of advanced technology, precautions are being taken against earthquakes and as a result the number of deaths due to earthquakes has dropped but by no means eliminated. i.e. the number of people killed in earthquakes in 1999 is almost twice the average of the last 100 years.

Our universe possesses a dynamic structure and since its inception has constantly been moving and evolving. In this respect, tectonic movements of differing velocity are taking place in all parts of the world. These in turn cause the risk of an earthquake in a country to be high or low, depending on the characteristics of the tectonic structure of the area. The Mediterranean region forms one of the few most active earthquake belts of the world.

We can say that Cyprus, which is situated between the African and Anatolian plates, shows a very complex and intricate tectonic structure. Being one of the countries in the Mediterranean region susceptible to earthquake hazards and risks, TRNC was a suitable and, I am happy to say, a welcome venue for the International Conference on Earthquake Hazard and Risk in the Mediterranean Region. The Conference held in the Near East University, Lefkoşa, TRNC, 18-22 October 1999, brought together more than 500 scientists from 53 countries with different approaches in 234 excellent presentations and 12 interesting posters.

The Conference which was originally announced at the International Conference on Water Problems in the Mediterranean Countries in November 1997, was the first of such conferences to be organised after the earthquakes in İzmit – Türkiye, Athens – Greece, Taiwan, Mexico and Los Angeles and it has proven its timely contribution to the better understanding of the earthquake phenomenon. It also provided a platform for discussing and exchanging ideas soon after these major earthquakes thereby generating great interest.

We aimed that the Conference be honoured by specialists, administrators and other interested parties to provide a forum to discuss and exchange experiences and information on a variety of aspects related to earthquake hazards and risks in the Mediterranean regions. This, we are pleased to say, materialised and the entire spectrum of earthquake related topics such as:

Earthquake is a multidisciplinary concern. For the studies in this field to yield results the research workers, the local administrators and the relevant state departments should cooperate and work together.

I hope the conclusions of these discussions will provide all concerned – scientists, research workers, technocrats, law-makers, decision making organs and organisations and whoever else is concerned with preserving the socio-economic potential of a country against earthquake hazards and risks – with some scientific and technical assistance in their efforts to formulate national earthquake policies.

The success of the Conference was ensured by the painstaking studies of a large number of people and institutions. Special thanks to members of The Technical and Organising Committee, The Scientific Committee, The Speakers and all the participants for their invaluable contributions to the International Conference on Earthquake Hazard and Risk in the Mediterranean Region.

20 July 2000 - Near East University, Lefkoşa, TRNC

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Volume I

### SPECIAL SESSION ON AUGUST 17, 1999

**İZMİT EARTHQUAKE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neotectonic Frame Of Turkey: A Special Emphasis On The 17 August 1999 Gölcük-Arifiye Earthquake (NE Marmara, Turkey)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ali Koçyiğit, Erdin Bozkurt, Mustafa Cihan, Arda Özacular and Bülent Teksöz, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The August 17, 1999 İzmit Earthquake, M=7.4, and November 12, 1999 Düzcé Earthquake, M=7.2, Eastern Marmara Sea Region</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aykut Barka, Serdar Akyüz and Erhan Altunel, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mechanism Of The 17 August 1999 Gölcük (Kocaeli) - Arifiye (Adapazarı) Earthquake, NW Turkey</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ergun Göktén, I. Çemen, Volkan Özaksoy and Cenk Erkmen, Turkey- USA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preliminary Results Of The Trench Studies On The 1999 Rupture Of The İzmit Bay Earthquake, İzmit, NW Turkey</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramazan Demirtaş, Cenk Erkmen and Rüçhan Yılmaz, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Deformation Of The 17 August 1999 İzmit Earthquake And Its Neotectonic Significance</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K. Ş. Kavak, S. Özdén, S. Zeki Tutkun, O. Tatar and B. Doğan, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On The Seismotectonics Of The Marmara Region: Source Characteristics Of 1999 Gölcük, Sapanca, Düzcé Earthquakes</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuncay Taymaz, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The August 17, 1999 İzmit Bay Earthquake, NW Turkey</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rüçhan Yılmaz and Ramazan Demirtaş, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cyclic Behaviour Of Soils And Effects Of Geotechnical Factors During 17 August 1999 Kocaeli Earthquake</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atilla Ansal, Turkey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Engineering Geological Characteristics Of August 17, 1999 Eastern Marmara Earthquake
K. Ergin Kasapoglu, Rezaat Ulusay and Candan Gokceoglu, Turkey........................................... 105

Earthquakes In Turkey Of 17.08.1999: Comparative Analysis With Other Destructive Earthquakes In The Central Part Of The Alpine Belt Of Eurasia.
Kondorskaya Nadezhda, Levin Leonid and Solodilov Leonid, Russia............................................. 115

The Sea Of Marmara: A Deep Intracontinental Marine Basin Formed By The North Anatolian Fault Activity
Naci Gurur and Namik Cagatay, Turkey.................................................. 121

Lessons Learnt From Izmit Earthquake (Turkey) Of 17 August 1999 Ms=7.8; Case Study Of Severely Damaged Industrial Facility
A.I. Salama, Egypt............................................................................ 135

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN TECTONICS

Tectonics Acting To The West Of Cyprus, Eastern Mediterranean
Ali Pinar, Semir Ozer, Dogan Kalafat, Ahmet Mete Iskara and Aykut Barka, Turkey........................................... 145

Some Remarks About The General Tectonic Framework Of The Eastern Mediterranean
Mustafa Ergun and Ersel Zafer Oral, Turkey.................................................. 157

Caspian Region: Prediction Of Seismicity For Provision Of Safety Of Oil And Gas Industry From Earthquakes.
Levin Leonid and Solodilov Leonid, Russia.................................................. 169

Geodynamics Of Western Turkey
M. Salk, Y. Altiner and M. Ergun, Turkey – Germany.................................................. 179

Seismic Activity In The Cyprus Region Preceding Major Earthquakes In Turkey
Levent Gulen, USA............................................................................ 189

Global Positioning System Measurements Of Present-Day Plate Motions And Intra-Plate Deformation In The Eastern Mediterranean Region
Robert Reilinger and Aykut Barka, USA – Turkey.................................................. 201
Earthquakes In And Around The Island Of Cyprus In The Last 30 Year
D. Ibrahim, D Erdel and B. Erdel, UK................................................. 203

PALEOSISMOLOGY

Paleoseismological Investigations Along The Kera Fault Zone, Western Crete: Implications For Seismic Hazard Assessment
Vasiliki Mouslopoulou, Cleanthi Andreou Kuvvet Atakan and Ioannis Fountoulou, Norway...................................................... 211

The Holocene Seismic History Of Some Regions Of The Alpine Belt Of The Eurasia From The Trenching Data
Eugene Rogozhin, Russia................................................................. 221

EARTHQUAKE PREDICTION

Electron Density Perturbations Prior To Strong Earthquakes
N.M. Rotanova, V.N. Oraevsky and A.H. Depueva, Russia................................................................. 227

The Relationship Of Geothermal Activity And Earthquakes In Turkey, Two Examples From Bursa And Erzincan
Zeynel A. Demirel, Turkey................................................................. 237

The Most Modern Methods In Time-Frequency Analysis Of Seismic Signals
Codruta Pricop, Mihail Pricop and Kunsel İz et Ünsalın, Romania................................................................. 249

The Deep Geophysical Investigations For Prediction Of Source Of The Destructive Earthquakes
Konovalov Yuli, Popova Oksana and Solodilov Leonid, Russia................................................................. 257

Social Issues Of The Problem Of Earthquake Prediction
Akhundova Svetlana Beyuk-Aga Kysy, Azerbaijan................................................................. 265

Engineering-Geonomical Model Of The World Forecasting Earthquakes
SH. Usupaev, Kyrgyz Republic................................................................. 269

Seismodislocations And Their Manifestation In Radioactive Fields
T. A. Zolotovitskaya, Azerbaijan................................................................. 277
To Hear The Voice Of The Earth
Askold Belyakov, Ulpe Ras.............................................................. 287

APELL (Awareness And Preparedness For Emergencies At Local Level)
J. David Thwaites, France................................................................. 293

STRONG MOTION

Evaluation Of Strong Motion Network Data In North Cyprus
E. Durukal, H. Gökçekuş, M. Gül, A. Mert,
Turkey-T.R.N.C................................................................. 301

Developments Of Turkish National Strong Motion Network
Zahide Çolakoğlu, Engin İnan, Nejat Bayülke, Hüseyin Güler and Tülay Uğraş, Turkey.................................................. 327

Local Amplification Effects During The 1997 Umbria-Marche Earthquake
Tito Sano, Italy............................................................................ 335

A Novel Based Criteria For Evaluating The Maximum Seismic Ground Acceleration
Djawad Zendagui, Abdelmalek Bekouche And Abdelkader Djedid, Algeria.......................................................... 347

Site Amplification At The Deep Sedimentary Deposits
Aybige Akinci, Robert B. Hermann and Nihal Akyol,
Turkey – USA............................................................................ 355

SEISMIC RISK ANALYSIS

Seismic Vulnerability Of Megacities
Mustafa Erdik, Turkey................................................................. 363

Iran’s Achievement During Idn dr And Dimehr For Future
Mohsen Ghafory-Ashtiani, Iran.................................................... 375

The Results Of Researches At The Environmental-Protection Polygons For The Aim Of The Earthquakes Prediction In Two Regions-The North Caucasus And Southern Kazakhstan
Solodilov Leonid, Vasilyev Stanislav, Kadurin Igor and Korobov Vladimir, Russia...................................................... 387
Preparation Of Potential Earthquake Risk Map Of Two Districts Of Eskişehir By Using 3- Dimensional Geographic Information Systems Techniques.
Metin Altan, Ferah Öztük, Gülnur Gençler and Can Ayday, Turkey........................................ 397

Practical Engineering Approaches To Mitigate Earthquake Disasters
Ilyas Yılmazer, Özgür Yılmazer and Hüseyin Gökçekuş, Turkey – T.R.N.C.................................. 409

On The Tectonic Framework Of The Cyprus Arc
J.M. Woodside, The Netherlands.................................................. 417

Earthquake Disaster Master Plan For İzmir-Turkey (Lifelines)
Özal Yüzüglü and Gülüm Birgören Turkey...................................... 427

Tensional Tectonic Regimes And Engineering Works: Interactions And Mitigation Measures
Ilyas Yılmazer, Özgür Yılmazer and Hüseyin Gökçekuş, Turkey – T.R.N.C.................................. 439

Earthquake Hazard: A Great Risk For Urban Inhabitants In Bangladesh
Afia Akhtar, Bangladesh............................................................... 445

Hazard Assesment And Seismic Risk Mitigation Of Blasting Operations In The Arnota (Bistritza, Romania) Limestone Quarry
Aurelian I. Pantea, Angela N. Constantin and Marza I. Vasile, Romania – Brasilia................................ 463

A Perspective Of Disaster Management In Turkey: Issues And Prospects
Oktay Ergünay, Turkey................................................................. 471

Synthetic Seismograms And Deterministic Seismic Zoning In The Circum-Mediterranean Region
F. Vaccari and G. F. Panza, Italy.................................................... 481

Hazard Assesment And Seismic Risk Reduction In Rock Removal Blasts On Site Of Cernavoda Lock Of Danube-Black Sea Canal
Aurelian I. Pantea, Angela N. Constantin and Marza I. Vasile, Romania – Brasilia.......................... 491

Probabilistic Response Spectra For Strong Ground Motion Records From The Republic Of Moldova
Zaicenco, V. Alkaz, Moldava.......................................................... 495
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model-Free Seismic Hazard Estimation</td>
<td>Stanislaw Lasocki, Andrzej Kijko and Gerhard Graham, Poland – South Africa</td>
<td>503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake Analysis Of A Sample Building According To Different Earthquake Codes</td>
<td>Hikmet H. Çatal, Cüneyt Tüzün and Halit Yazıcı, Turkey</td>
<td>509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seismic Codes-Revisited</td>
<td>Mehedi A. Ansary, Munaz A. Noor and Salek M. Seraj, Bangladesh – Japan</td>
<td>519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seismic Hazard Description For Design Applications In Slovenia</td>
<td>Janez K. Lapejne and Blaz Zabukovec, Slovenia</td>
<td>531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Design As A Framework For Disaster Management In Kathmandu metropolitan City</td>
<td>Bijaya K. Shrestha, Japan</td>
<td>541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seismic Risk Study Of Aegean Region</td>
<td>Günruh Bağcı, Turkey</td>
<td>551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Risk</td>
<td>S. Hülya Ilgen, Turkey</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Do We Learn From Recent Earthquake To Reduce The Damage?</td>
<td>Riadh Aljibouri, Turkey</td>
<td>569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering-Seismological Approaches To The Problem Of Urban Earthquake Risk Mitigation: Experience Of The Idndr-Radius Project For The City Of Tashkent, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>S.A.Tyagunov, K.N.Abdullabekov and V.A Ismailov, Uzbekistan</td>
<td>573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Configurations For Seismic Area And A Contemporary Building Example</td>
<td>Özlem Eşsiz, Turkey</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seismic Hazard Estimation In The Main Seismogenic Zones In North Algeria</td>
<td>Mohamed Hamdache, Algeria</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative Investigation Of The Earthquake Risk Analysis Methods</td>
<td>Hüseyin Kirbaş and Sonat Ermez, Turkey</td>
<td>605</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Microzonation Study On Earthquake Induced Landslides In Sapanca Region.
Bilge Gökmirza Siyahı and D. Volkan Okur, Turkey .......................... 613

The Migration Feature Of A Current Tectonic Pressure Within The Black Sea–Caspian Sea Region Both The Quantitative Estimation Of Failure Risk On The Engineering Objects Under The Geodynamic Factor
N.A. Kasyanova, Russia .................................................................. 625

Experience Of Special Mapping For The Estimation Of Total Risk Of Direct Social And Economic Damage Under The Pessimistic Scenario Of Earthquake On The Territory Of Sochi G. L. Koff, O. V. Nazarova and O. V. Popova, Russia ........... 633

Seismic Hazard Assessment Of Kyrgyz Republic
Turdukulov Asker Turdukulovich, Kyrgyz Republic .......................... 637

Estimation And Management Of Risk
Babayev Gulaga Huseyinaga, Azerbaijan ........................................ 639

Volume II

EARTHQUAKE STUDIES

Earthquakes: Risks Or Resources? One Example In South Western Sicily Pietro L. Cosentino, Italy ................................................................. 649

Coseismic Crustal Deformation Modeling For The 1946 Nankai Earthquake
Yoshiyuki Kaneda, Phil R. Cummins and Jin-Oh Park, Japan .......... 659

Seismic Activity Zones In Yemen And Adjacent Areas
Jamal M. Sholan, Yemen Republic ..................................................... 669

The Posoče Earthquake (Slovenia), April 12, 1998 Damage To Nature
Mihael Ribicic, Renato Vidrih, Slovenia .......................................... 683

The Earthquake Ground Cracks In Jahan Basin & Adjacent Areas “Dhamar-Yr”
Othman Abdullah Mohammad, Yemen Republic ........................... 693
## STRUCTURAL ENGINEERING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eurocode 8-Geotechnical Aspects</td>
<td>Pedro Simão Sêco E. Pinto</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structural Repair And Seismic Upgrading For Severely Damaged Bearing Walls Structure</td>
<td>A.I. Salama and A. Badawy, ABU-SENA</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Amplifications In Asymmetric Buildings Subjected To Earthquakes</td>
<td>David Thambiratnam, Matthew Welch and Jessica Puce</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>833</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seismic System Selection For UHQ Building</td>
<td>Atila Zekioğlu and S. E. Limin Jin</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>843</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Frequencies And Mode Shapes Of Asymmetric High-Rise Spatial Building Structures</td>
<td>Atila Orbay</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practical Design Of Mdof Structures With Supplemental Viscous Dampers Using Amplifying Devices</td>
<td>H. Gluck and Y. Ribakov</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing The Cladding Of Tall Buildings In Seismic Regions</td>
<td>Aysin Sev</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Technique Of Studying A Current Condition Of Buildings And Structures By Stationary Waves</td>
<td>A.F. Emanov, V.S. Selseznov, A.P. Kuzmenko I.A. Danilov and A.A. Bakh</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Performance Analysis Of Base Isolation System</td>
<td>Meltem Şahin</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earthquake Influence On Stone Masonry Construction</td>
<td>Nasser M. Al-Mukhadry</td>
<td>Yemen Republic</td>
<td>915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental Investigation Of The Nonlinear Dynamic Parameters Of A Structural Part Under Impulse Loading</td>
<td>Ishkakov Iakov and Ribakov Yuri</td>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seismic Analysis Of Stiffened Coupled Shear Walls With Flexible Connection</td>
<td>H. Murat Arslan and Orhan Akdoğan</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrofitting A Ten-Story Steel Framed Hospital</td>
<td>F. Nateghi-A.,</td>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>945</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From Earthquake Acceleration Recording To The Assessment Of Structural System Reliability
Azer Arastunoglu Kasumov, Turkey .................................................. 957

Effect Of Deep-Top-Beam On The Behavior Of Tall Building During Earthquakes
Hussain Kazem and F. Nateghi-A., Iran ............................................. 971

Quality Control Of Concrete For Earthquake Resistance Structure
Selcuk Turkel, Turkey ................................................................. 983

The Relationship Between Tall Building Configuration And Seismic Behavior
Ayshin Sev, Turkey .................................................................. 991

Criteria And Parameters For Redesign Of Existing Masonry Buildings In Seismic Regions
Miha Tomazevic, Slovenia .......................................................... 1007

Vulnerability Of Life-line Systems In Tashkent, Uzbekistan And Ways For Damage Reduction
T. Rashidov and E. Kuzmina, Republic Of Uzbekistan .................. 1017

Applications Of The Weighted Residual Method To Diffraction Of SH Waves By 2-D Arbitrary Cavity In Elastic Infinite Medium
Abdul Hayir and Ibrahim Bakirtas, Turkey ...................................... 1027

The Performance Of Adhesively Bonded Steel Anchors Into Concrete
Adnan Colak and Bahar Sayil, Turkey ............................................ 1037

Analysis Of Earthquake Damage In Central Asia And Problem Of Underground Structure Earthquake Resistance
T. Rashidov, Republic of Uzbekistan ............................................. 1043

Some Wrong Applications In Construction Which Cause Collapse During The Earthquake
Riadh Aljibouri, Turkey ............................................................... 1051
SOIL DYNAMICS

Seismodynamical Processes In Loess Soils And Conditions Of Their Development
Mavlyanova N.G., Uzbekistan............................................. 1057

The Analysis Of The Wave Forms Of Instrumental Records Of Soil Strong Motion And Economical Ranging Of Seismic Hazard
Elgudj A. Barbakadze, Z.V. Zaalishvili and G.A. Lomidze, Georgia...... 1065

The Effect Of The Infill On The Dynamic Characteristics Of The R.C. Frame Structure
Mustafa Duzgun and Cuneyt Tuzun, Turkey.................................. 1073

Microtremor Observations For Local Site Conditions
Nawal A. Al-Ridha, Iraq.................................................. 1081

CONCLUDING REMARKS ................................................. 1085
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İZMİT EARTHQUAKE