

## A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF BURAK ÖZBAĞCI

Burak Özbağcı received his Ph.D. degree in Mathematics in June 1999, at the University of California at Irvine, under the supervision of (Emeritus) Prof. Ronald J. Stern. In his Ph.D. thesis, Özbağcı developed a method to calculate the signatures of some symplectic 4-manifolds via Lefschetz fibrations.

During his graduate studies, Özbağcı started a fruitful collaboration with Prof. András I. Stipsicz (currently a member of the Alfréd Rényi Institute of Mathematics, Budapest) which eventually lead to the publication of some joint papers along with the book “*Surgery on contact 3-manifolds and Stein surfaces*”, a major achievement in Özbağcı’s career.

From August 1999 to August 2002, Dr. Özbağcı worked as a Visiting Research Instructor at the Michigan State University, where he collaborated with Prof. Selman Akbulut. The joint work of Akbulut and Özbağcı has appeared in some top-level journals.

After his 3-year appointment at the Michigan State University, Dr. Özbağcı returned to his home country Turkey and became an Assistant Professor at Koç University, a non-profit private university of high-caliber located in Istanbul. During 2003-2006, his research was supported by the Outstanding Young Scientist Grant of the Turkish Academy of Sciences. Dr. Özbağcı received the TUBITAK (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey)–TWAS (Third World Academy of Sciences) Research Encouragement Award in 2006.

In the academic year 2005/2006, Dr. Özbağcı received a National Science Foundation Focused Research Group Grant (in the amount of \$50,000 for nine months), to visit Prof. John B. Etnyre at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. Özbağcı and Etnyre produced two papers together which were subsequently published in very prestigious journals.

In 2007, Dr. Özbağcı was promoted to the rank of Associate Professor at Koç University. During 2007-2011, Dr. Özbağcı’s research on the “Topology of contact 3-manifolds” was supported by a TUBITAK Research Grant.

Dr. Özbağcı spent his first sabbatical year as a member of the Mathematical Sciences Research Institute (MSRI) in Berkeley, California from August 2009 until May 2010. The main program at MSRI was “Symplectic and Contact Geometry and Topology”. While at MSRI, Dr. Özbağcı collaborated with Prof. Yankı Lekili (currently at the King’s College, London) to write a joint paper. During his visit to MSRI and the following year when he returned back to Istanbul, Özbağcı’s research was supported by a *Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship* (in the amount of 193,449.00 €) of the European Research Council. Dr. Özbağcı is the first mathematician ever from Turkey who received a Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowship. In the summer of 2010, Dr. Özbağcı was a visiting scholar at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

In 2012, Dr. Özbağcı was promoted to the rank of Full Professor at Koç University. During 2012-2016, Dr. Özbağcı produced many papers in collaboration with authors of various nationalities, including Prof. Anar Akhmedov (University of Minnesota), Prof. Otto Van Koert (Seoul National University), Prof. Mohan Lal Bhupal (Middle East Technical University) and Prof. Patrick Popesu-Pampu (Lille University).

During the academic year 2016/17, Dr. Özbağcı spent his second sabbatical year at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) to visit Prof. Ko Honda. During this period, Dr. Özbağcı's research was supported by a TUBITAK Grant in the amount of \$22,500. While visiting UCLA, Dr. Özbağcı collaborated with Prof. Youlin Li (Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China), to work on a joint paper. In an other direction, Dr. Özbağcı collaborated with Prof. Nick Castro (University of Arkansas) to write a paper on a completely different topic.

On January 1, 2019, Burak Özbağcı became the youngest elected President of the Turkish Mathematical Society, at the age of 46.