



## **Associate Professor Fatih Şen's name is removed from the BAGEP 2015 Award List**

Allegations of multiple violations of scientific ethics in articles from Assoc. Prof. Fatih Şen's research group were published on a web site on 3 August 2020<sup>1</sup>. Some recipients of the Science Academy - Bilim Akademisi - BAGEP Research Award, of which Fatih Şen was a recipient in 2015, and members of the Science Academy brought these allegations to the attention of the president of the Science Academy.

Those receiving the BAGEP Award are obligated to abide by the Science Academy's Declaration of Academic Merit, Freedom and Integrity<sup>2</sup>. Seven expert members of the Science Academy were separately asked to assess the relevance of the allegations. In separately prepared reports, all seven referees confirmed the allegations with examples from various published papers of Fatih Şen. Upon careful evaluation of these reports, the Science Academy's Ethics Committee has found that all referees confirm the violations of scientific ethics, with numerous examples of the use of the same plots and experimental images in different articles, and the presence of repeated segments in plots of background noise which should be random. The Ethics Committee combined these examples around concrete questions which were posed to Fatih Şen in demand of an explanation. In correspondence granting him the time he requested the Academy re-emphasized that detailed scientific explanations were expected in response to the concrete questions.

However, Fatih Şen's response received on 7 September 2020 did not provide satisfactory explanations and answers to the questions raised about his publications. His answers were that all these instances arose due to errors of communication within his research group and of the transformation of noise data during 'smoothing'. Members of the Science Academy Ethics Committee were not convinced that the cases in point could be explained by errors only, and relayed their unanimous findings on 9 September 2020 to the Executive Board of the Science Academy in a detailed report with attached files. The report states, in summary, that it is not possible that the cases in so many articles arise from errors. Furthermore, they also noted that

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<sup>1</sup> <https://scienceintegritydigest.com/2020/08/03/big-trouble-in-a-nanoparticles-lab/>

it was not possible that random noise, which should be accidental, can contain repetitions in the data from even one single experiment. The fact that such examples have been published is a responsibility of Fatih Şen as the principal investigator of the research group.

Based on the Ethics Committee’s report and recommendations, The Executive Board has identified the ethics violations in point as ‘Fabrication’ and ‘Falsification’ according to the definitions in “*The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity*”<sup>3</sup>, of ALLEA, the European Federation of Academies, of which the Science Academy is a member. The definitions are in Section 3- *Violations of Research Integrity*; Article 3.1 *Research Misconduct and Other Unacceptable Practices*<sup>2</sup>.

The Science Academy’s relationship with Fatih Şen consists solely of having awarded him one of the BAGEP 2015 prizes. The Science Academy Executive Board has concluded that Fatih Şen has acted in clear violation of the fundamental values of The Science Academy as stated in the Declaration of Academic Merit, Freedom and Integrity. The Board has therefore decided that his name be withdrawn from the list of BAGEP Award recipients, that he is not entitled to cite the BAGEP Award on his website and publications, and that this situation be made public on the website of the Academy and brought to the attention of journals and institutions relevant to the case.

### **The Executive Board of the Science Academy – Bilim Akademisi**

**September 14, 2020**

[www.bilimakademisi.org](http://www.bilimakademisi.org)

<http://en.bilimakademisi.org>

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<sup>2</sup> “The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity” is available at: <https://en.bilimakademisi.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/h2020-ethics-code-of-conduct-en.pdf>.

An authorized Turkish translation, “Araştırmalarda Dürüstlük Konusunda Avrupa Davranış Kodu” is at: <https://bilimakademisi.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/arastirmalarda-durustluk-konusunda-avrupa-davranis-kodu-turkce.pdf>