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**EXCURSIONS REGARDING GEOGRAPHY  
TEACHING IN FACULTY OF EDUCATION, MUĞLA  
UNIVERSITY**

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**Özet:**

*İnceleme gezileri, coğrafya öğretiminde kullanılması gereken önemli bir tekniktir. Çünkü, coğrafya konularının laboratuvarı olan arazide geziler yapılmadan gerçekleştirilen öğretimle öğrenciye verilen bilgiler, ezberden öteye gidememekte ve kalıcı olmadığı için zamanla unutulmaktadır. Bu nedenle, coğrafya öğretiminde gezi-gözlem yöntemi uygulamalarına da yer verilmesi, hem coğrafi bilgilerin akılda sürekli kalacak şekilde öğrenilmesi hem de ülkemizde coğrafya öğretiminin daha sevimli hale getirilmesi açısından büyük önem taşımaktadır.*

*Sınıf ortamında teorik olarak işlenen konuların pekiştirilerek daha kalıcı hale getirilmesini sağlamak amacıyla, Fakültemizdeki coğrafya öğretiminde gezi-gözlem yöntemi uygulamalarına ağırlıklı olarak yer verilmektedir. Bu amaçla, 2001-*

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2002 eğitim-öğretim yılında; 6'sı kısa mesafeli inceleme gezisi, 1'i de uzun mesafeli inceleme gezisi olmak üzere toplam 7 inceleme gezisi yapılmıştır. Bu gezilere, toplam 274 öğrenci katılmıştır.

**Abstract:**

*Observation and research trips are important and necessary techniques to be used in geography teaching. Because the knowledge taught theoretically in the class may be forgotten in time for it has only been memorised. Whenever it is reinforced with the observational and research trips, it may remain furthermore. Therefore this application process should be placed in the curriculum of geography teacher training program in Turkey so that the courses may be more interesting and enjoyable.*

*According to the realities of this teaching technique, the Faculty of Education at Muğla University organised seven geographic trips in 2001-2002 teaching session. Six of them were short, and one was long. Totally 274 students took part in those excursions.*

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## EXCURSIONS REGARDING GEOGRAPHY TEACHING IN

### FACULTY OF EDUCATION, MUĞLA UNIVERSITY

Muğla Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesinde Coğrafya Öğretiminde İnceleme  
Gezileri

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#### 1. Observation Trips as a Geography Teacher-Training Method

Excursion and observation is the best method of geographic studies and data collections. Geography is not a science supported with scientific researches but with observations and studies<sup>1</sup>. The subjects to be studied in the principles of Geography are mostly obtained with the observational studies of the events on the earth. All kinds of geographic events, occurrences and formations can either be observed as they are happening or their formatted features in the history can be observed and discovered at present<sup>2</sup>. The observational trip method is a kind of academic level of geographic studies that takes part in the geography lessons of primary schools Teacher-Training Curriculum at the Faculties of Education in Turkey. Because the theoretical knowledge taught in the classroom is mostly repeated, restudied and reinforced in those kinds of observational excursions. For example; the rivers and streams and the valleys with their plantation fields, geological formations, villages, towns and cities, industrial areas and overpopulation around those zones, city and inter-city roads, railways, railway stations, docks, harbours, ships and ferryboats and the usage of them in transportation, the management and running of those systems and etceteras. All those complex matters, events and systems can be learnt effectively when they are studied theoretically in the classroom, then can be seen and observed directly with trips.

Although the schools or the universities have complicated technological equipment in their laboratories like overhead projector, epidiascope, digital camera, and it is possible to show the geographical events or formations to students with those equipment, they cannot be learnt as effectively as they can in real life. Therefore the geographic trips can give

the students this kind of effective learning opportunities. According to the educators, the students who are in learning process gain 75 % of their learning through in visual methods, 13 % as hearing and 12 % with the other methods or techniques<sup>3</sup>. As a result of this theory, the importance of observational trips in geography classes is clear enough.

The students may gain rich and meaningful experiments during the trips and they may use them in their own lives or they may transfer those experiments to the new learning processes in future. So it becomes an effective and active learning.

Students can improve their scientific study and research abilities in those kinds of trips including observation, measurement, classification, communication, data collection, evaluation of the data and interpretation the results<sup>4</sup>. In addition, geographical trips give motherland love to the students, and the love of the environment. The students who are taking part in those kinds of trips can improve their social attitudes and behaviours, may learn the principles of group work, and may apply their learning actively in the group or groups, in which they take part at that moment.

Muğla University, Faculty of Education has the opportunity of giving students various educational trips because the university has been located in an area rich with geographic characteristics (Map 1). Especially because the area is in the climate of Mediterranean, the seasons are quite suitable for those kind of educational trips. Daily or weekend trips can be organised in any season. Even the surroundings of the University Campus is available for those short of educational excursions because it is in the hilly area covered with pine trees and bushes which is 5 kms out of the city centre. For example; while the climate of Mediterranean and the typical plants of it are being taught in the classes, observational study of the subject can be realised by the students with a leading professor after having a short walk around. Studying the soil of terra-rossa on the lime stones under the effect of Mediterranean climate, observing and studying the scrubs and like the others can be the examples of geographical live studies out of the classroom.

Since Muğla University is a young one, there is the shortage of hard ware and soft ware in the laboratories, so the geography classes cannot be sufficiently given under the benefits of visual or audio-visual environment. Instead of lacking the benefits of this technical equipment, it is possible to have more educational trips with the aim of improving knowledge of geography. Especially, when the administrators supply the vehicles for the short trips, the students say that they are ready to support the cost of the fuel, and the expenses of the driver.

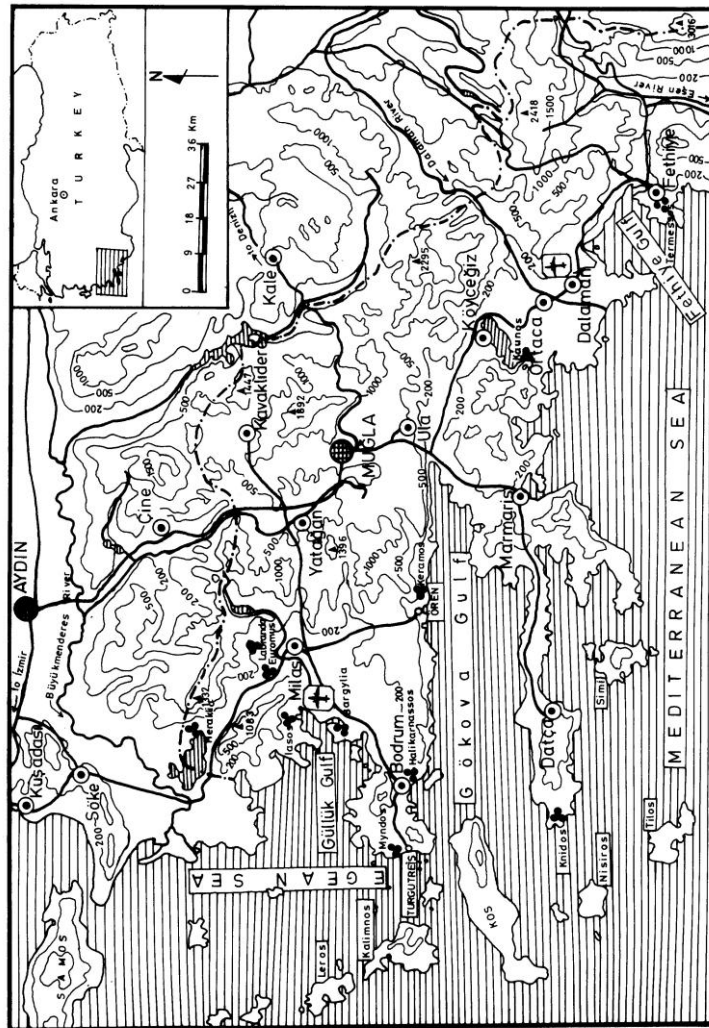
By this way, more excursions can be organised after the classes. However, the long way trips cannot be as easy as the short ones because the administrators may not think in a positive way about the benefits of those kind of educational trips. They say it is because of the shortage of the University budget, and on the other hand, some students do not know and do not believe in the benefits of those sorts of trips, either. It is because they are the first year students and it will not be the same in the following terms.

## **2. Educational Trips Done At The Faculty of Education**

An observation trip can be called as an educational one when it is organised according to a well-planned programme<sup>5</sup>. If a trip is not planned before it starts, it cannot be expected that it is going to be sufficient and beneficial enough. On the contrary it can be a waste of time and money.

At the Faculty of Education (Muğla University), seven educational trips were organised in 2001-2002 educational year. Six of them were short-trips; only one was a long trip. The schedule of those trips were planned at the beginning of the educational year and announced. The students were also informed about the content and the aim of the trips in details distributing some advertisement. For the long trip organisation, the students were given an informational meeting 25 days before the trip. At this meeting, the students were asked to make their own pre-educational preparations including the distribution of the handouts prepared by their professors. The content of those handouts were about the map of the trip, the students' clothing, geographical and folkloric characteristics of the places that were going to be visited and the students' group names. Because there were more

students than it was expected to attend, they were organised as small groups. Those groups were organised according to both the students' preferences and their professor's so that their educational interactions could occur as they were studying the matters in groups during the trip. Each group had a group leader voted and chosen among 6 or 7 students at least. In this way, the students were taught to study in teamwork.



**Map 1.** The Physical Map of Muğla Province

### **a) Educational Short Trips**

Muğla University is located in an area quite convenient for the short trips because the touristic inter-city roads reaching to the best touristic Mediterranean Sea coast towns like Bodrum, Datça, Marmaris, Dalyan and Fethiye pass thorough Muğla city. It means that the University is located in the centre of the best touristic area in Turkey. Some other touristic cities or towns are also not far from Muğla. They are Aydın, Kuşadası, Selçuk, Denizli and Pamukkale. It is not farther than 160 kms from any of those sites mentioned above. Thus, it is possible to organize daily educational trips to those cities or towns. Six short trips were organised with the students of Faculty of Education in 2001-2002 academic year. 274 students from the departments of primary education Teacher-Training and the Turkish Teacher-Training took part in those short trips (Table 1). The total of students of those departments are 160. This means that each student in the programmes may have taken part in one of those short trips at least.

The first aim of those kind of short educational trips is to study and to teach the natural, geographical and environmental characteristics of Muğla city and its surroundings. After each trip the students' experiences were debated in the classes and they were asked to prepare written homework to hand in. Those were evaluated by their professors and group leaders and given back and debated on again as the feedback process.

Muğla and the area around look like a natural laboratory for studying the contents of Geography classes. For example: There is the typical Mediterranean climate by the Mediterranean Sea Coast and so the mountains and the hilly areas around is full of typical plants of this climate like pine-trees and scrubs. Sığla-tree is another characteristic plant of Mediterranean climate, which naturally grows in Marmaris, Köyceğiz and Göcek towns. On the coast, olives, oranges, lemons and grapefruits are other typical products of Mediterranean climate. There is also the breeze from the sea to the land and from the land to the sea on the whole coast. But the area is mostly hilly and the mountains go into the inner land with high-level plateaus after some distance. Those areas have a broken type of

Mediterranean climate, so tobacco farming, and wood industry come to the fore as the main work of the people of the area. 3050 metres height Akdağ, in the east of Fethiye, is well known by the Geographers and the botany researchers because there are different kinds of plants on each level of it. During the trip, the characteristics of plantation, and farming were studied together with students.

**Table 1.** Short Educational Trips were Organised At the University of Muğla, Faculty of Education in 2001-2002 Teaching Session.

The Route of The Trip	Return kms of The route	Date of The Trip	Department or The Programme of Students Took Part in Trips	Number of The Students Took Part in
Muğla-Yatağan-Milas-Bodrum	275	13 <sup>th</sup> Oct. 2001	Social Science Teachers Training and Turkish Teachers Training	56
Muğla-Köyceğiz-Ortaca-Dalaman-Fethiye	380	20 <sup>th</sup> Oct. 2001	Primary School Teachers Training and Turkish Teachers Training	52
Muğla-Gökova-Köyceğiz-Dalyan	154	03 <sup>rd</sup> Nov. 2001	Primary School Teachers Training and Turkish Teachers Training	56
Muğla-Gökova-Marmaris-Datça	284	06 <sup>th</sup> Apr. 2002	Turkish Teachers Training	28
Muğla-Gökova	60	07 <sup>th</sup> Apr. 2002	Social Science Teachers Training and Primary School Teachers Training	56
Muğla-Yatağan-Milas-Bodrum	270	04 <sup>th</sup> May. 2002	Primary School Teachers Training	26

Muğla area is the continuing west part of the Toros Mountains in a sense; and it is full of calcareous rock formations. As a result of this landscape, it is possible to observe, lapya, doline, uvula, pole, hum, canyon



valley, blind valley, and obruk type of geomorphologic forms. Muğla city is located in a polye. Because of the landscape formations mentioned above, it is easily possible to study the live examples of geography lessons in the nature. The Sakar Hill is over Gökova Bay and there are water springs coming out from the bottom of the hill and running into the sea. These are known as karstik springs. They were studied as the examples of those springs during the geographic trips. In the west part of Bodrum Peninsula, there is the characteristic of volcanic landscape. Therefore the students were taken to this area in a trip after studying the volcanism in the geography lessons. Ölüdeniz –Mild sea is a well-known touristic beach in the southeast of Fethiye and it is a typical sample of Lagoon Lake. Besides, Köyceğiz Lake and Bafa Lake are the samples of alluvial bending ones. Muğla area is also interesting with its the sea coast line form. While the subject is being studied in lessons; the ria type of coast form, the low coast and the high coast forms in Gökova Gulf are observed and studied in the trip organised by the students with their faculty administrators and the professors.

As the subject of anthropogeography, the effect of landscape to the location of the cities, towns and villages can also be studied in Muğla area in nature. Because the population density is mostly in the valleys or in the touristic coast towns, the small villages are on the hilly areas or in the forests far from the coast line and the soil of those places is calcareous and so the lack of spring water is another big problem for those areas. The citizens of those villages are poor and they can only earn their lives raising domestic animals like sheep, cows but mostly the goats. Apart from those, the climate and the landscape may affect the formation of local architecture as the houses in Bodrum are with flat roof in white lime wash. They are stone houses with slopping roofs in the villages on the mountains in the inner land. All those characteristics of Muğla city and its surroundings were both studied theoretically in the classes and observed and researched during the educational trips so that the students could learn the subjects effectively.

The coast of Muğla province is the most important part

of the touristic line from İzmir to Antalya. Those touristic sites on the line are Bodrum, Datça, Marmaris, Dalyan and Fethiye. During the trips organised to those areas, the students were explained and studied about why the tourism developed and what circumstances affected the development of tourism so fast in those sites. The results of those researches are that the beach tourism and the yacht tourism are the most important parts and there are also cultural tourism, health tourism, eco-tourism and the tourism of entertainment in the whole area.

#### **b) Educational Long Trips**

Forty-five students from the departments of Primary School Teacher-Training, Turkish Teacher-Training, and Social Sciences Teacher-Training took part in the long trip organised by the Faculty of Education dated 15<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> of May 2002. Their geography professor was leading them and the route they travelled was totally 1100 kms return. The group travelled about 275 kms a day (Map 2).

On the first day of this trip Denizli city and the touristic village of it, Pamukkale, were visited because it is known as historical Hierapolis and famous with its terraces of travertine under control of UNESCO as one of the world's cultural heritages (Photograph 1). Then the Lake Acıgöl as a source of sodium, Dinar as the source of The Menderes River was visited. Burdur city and the Lake Burdur were visited and studied. As the students were travelling and observing, they were advised to take some notes about the characteristics of the places for the purpose of geography subjects.

On the second day, The İnsuyu Cave was visited and the geological formations in the cave were explained taking notes (Photograph 2). Then Sagalassos antic site was visited (Photograph 3). On the way to Antalya, they stopped at the Çubuk Passage which is a natural way connecting the inner land of Anatolia to the Mediterranean sea coast through the Toros Mountains. The meaning of natural passage and the importance of it for the transportation was studied in a live laboratory. Then the Karain Cave and Kırkgöz Springs on the foot of The Toros Mountains were visited and studied. The Karain Cave is a well-known place where the oldest prints of

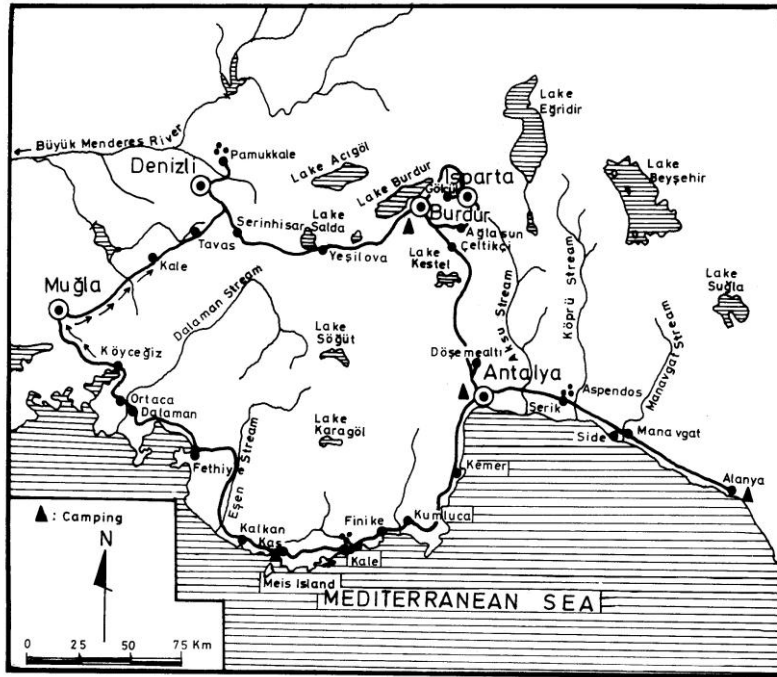
the Anatolian civilisations were discovered. Burdur is a city in the inner-land, but Antalya is a city on the Mediterranean Sea coast. Students attending to this trip were asked to make a comparison between those city centres and their surroundings. They observed the differences. Antalya is a developed touristic wealthy and big city while Burdur is a small, poor and undeveloped one. As a result of this, Antalya is overcrowded while Burdur is not. The students not only observed and studied those characteristics of those cities but also discussed about the circumstances of present life.



**Photograph 1.** The Students Visited Denizli City Centre on 15<sup>th</sup> of June 2002.

During the third day of this trip, the natural and historical beauties of Antalya were visited. The characteristics of tourism, the vegetable and fruit farming in the area were also observed, clarified, the effects of geographic circumstances on this development were noted. Düden, Kurşunlu and Manavgat Falls were seen and there was a debate on why there are many falls in the area. Clines were taught to the students during the discussion on waterfalls. Aspendos antic amphitheatre, Alanya Castle, Dim Cave and Damlataş Cave were also visited and studied on the third day of this trip. The Bay of Bellek was visited as well.

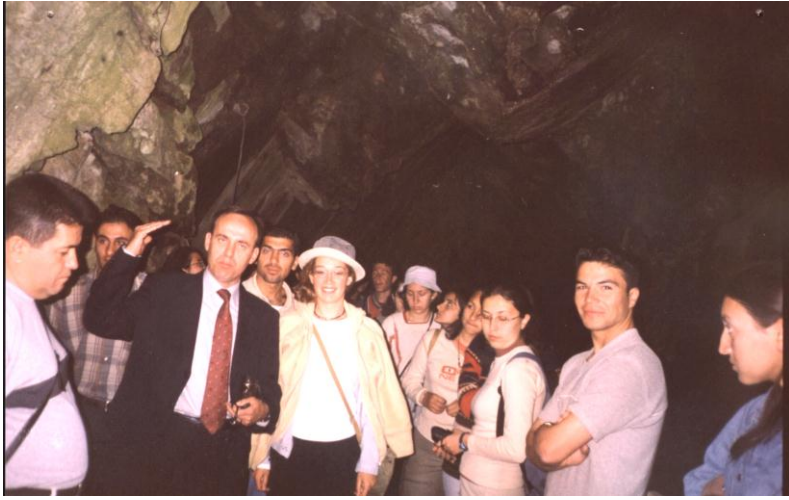
During the forth and the last day of the trip, Teke Peninsula of Anatolia was studied as the whole area of Burdur, Antalya, Isparta cities and some small towns. The students noticed that the cities and the towns on the coastline of Teke Peninsula are well developed or developed enough and overcrowded while the ones in the inner-side of the area are small and undeveloped. The causes of this difference were studied theoretically in the classes and it was noticed that it is because the Toros Mountains are running parallel to the sea coast line and so the inner-land is high and cold while the foot of the mountains has fertile valleys, and the tourism on the coast line is another economical benefit to the citizens living there. On the coastline, both the touristic and historic site, Patara has the longest beach of Turkey, as it is 18 kms long.



**Map 2.** The Route of Educational Long Trip

A typical characteristic difference between the coastline and the higher plates of the area was observed and noticed between Kalkan and

Burdur. While the cereals were almost ripened in Kalkan village on the coast, they were still green on the top in Burdur city although they are not far from each other geographically. The students were taught the effect of climate and the change of the height for the ripening of the crops.



**Photograph 2.** A view from İnsuyu Cave with travelling students



**Photograph 3.** A view from antic Sagalassos city with travelling students

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The subjects taught and studied during the trip included notes into their educational travel notebooks so that they may not be forgotten in time. At the each arrival place a meeting was organised and what were seen and what were observed and what were taught could be evaluated. At the end of the trip, the whole programme and the students' experiences were debated again and they were asked to prepare reports about the whole as well.

### **Conclusion**

Observational and educational trips at the Faculty of Education are a part of academic research studies in geography and they are important in the teaching process of geography lessons in the curriculum. Because the lessons are being taught theoretically in the classes can be reinforced by the students during the observational trips. Therefore, those kinds of educational trips can be helpful as a technique in geography teaching like using the other useful techniques in the teaching process.

Because the Faculty of Education in Muğla University is still one-year old, the basic knowledge of the students about geography and the importance of educational trips in geography is not known well enough by the students. This seems to be a disadvantage. Yet the students noticed the importance of those short of trips in learning process as means giving them opportunities.

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<sup>2</sup> Hayati Doğanay, *Coğrafya Öğretim Yöntemleri*. Aktif Yayınevi, Erzurum, 2002, p. 170.

<sup>3</sup> Hayati Doğanay, 2002, i.b.i.t, p. 172.

<sup>4</sup> Kamuran Çilenti, *Fen Eğitimi Teknolojisi*. Kadioğlu Matbaası, Ankara, 1985, p. 68-70.

<sup>5</sup> Hayati Doğanay, 2002, i.b.i.t, p. 305.