Prof. Jean-Paul Cadet

IUGS Councillor

Prof. Jean-Paul Cadet studied geology at Paris' venerable Sorbonne (founded 1257!) in the 1960s. He started his career as a young lecturer in the newly founded University of Orleans, where he was one of the founding members of the Earth Sciences Department.

At the same time, he started working for his PhD under Prof. Jean Aubouin, focussing on the stratigraphy, tectonics and paleogeography of a segment of the Dinarid Belt on the border of Serbia and Bosnia, a place that has recently been a theater of conflict.

This study led to reconstituting the evolution of the Apulian (=African) paleo-margin from Triassic rifting to the Cenozoic collision with Eurasia.

Following the gaining of his PhD and post-doctorate work in the USA (Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory and Scripps Institution), J.P. Cadet turned to the west Pacific so as to get a better understanding of Alpine Belts genesis through the analysis of present geodynamics and its relation to peri-Pacific mountain belts. He mainly focused on Japan, where, after participating in DSDP Leg 57 on the margin of the Japan trench, he was the initiator (with Prof. X. Le Pichon) of a fruitful French-Japanese cooperative programme, named KAIKO, devoted to the study of the Japanese subduction trenches.

The KAIKO programme (Kaiko means "trench" in Japanese) involved numerous geology-geophysics cruises, including submersible dives down to 6000 m in the Japan trench with the French Nautilus submersible, which J.P. Cadet participated in or directed.

His major contribution was a better understanding of tectonic erosion processes, in which the subducting plate shaves material from both the toe and the base of the upper plate.

At the same time, J.P. Cadet shared with several students (who are now all professors!) the study of the structure of the Japan Island Arc and the Korean continental margin, this approach being necessary to a full understanding of the geodynamic evolution of this peri-Pacific domain. He specially studied the Mesozoic orogen of northern Japan and the Paleozoic belts of Korea.

Again, to better understand subduction and its consequences, J.P. Cadet studied ash layer repartition in deep sea sediments (based on DSDP and ODP active margin legs) and he showed a global synchronism in Neogene peri-Pacific explosive arc volcanism.

Meanwhile, he maintained a strong interest in peri-Mediterranean belts, and so was actively involved in the Tethys (1989–1992) and Peri-Tethys (1994–2000) programmes dealing with paleotectonic and paleogeodynamic reconstructions of the Tethyan domain, as well as the study of the kinematics of nappe emplacement in Albanian outer zones, the modelization of post-orogenic tectonics in central Italy and research related with the analysis of the transition from collision to extension in Alpine belts (Greece, Turkey).

Prof. J.P. Cadet is the author of more than 100 articles in professional journals, as well as of two books. Among the awards he has received are the French Academy of Sciences

Tchihatchef prize and the Visquenel prize of the Société Géologique de France.

After over 25 years of research and teaching in Orleans as a lecturer and an associate professor, J.P. Cadet moved to the Pierre and Marie Curie University in Paris as a full professor. For 12 years from 1987, he was chairman of the Geotectonics Department of this University and director of the CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research)-associated team specializing in tectonics and geodynamics.

Prof. J.P. Cadet has shouldered many responsibilities in the French Earth Sciences community, among them as councillor of the Earth-Ocean-Space Direction of CNRS, member of the CNRS National Committee, member of the University National Committee, President of the French ODP Scientific Committee, of the French National Committee of Geology, of the French National Commission for Marine Geosciences, etc.

Prof. J.P. Cadet has also been strongly involved in the organization of several major international oceanographic programmes, mainly DSDP and ODP as Tectonic Panel member (1982–1984), Planning Committee (PCOM) member (1994–1998). These experiences gave him a good grounding in international programme management and scientific project promotion.

Now, Prof. J.P. Cadet is President of the CGMW (Commission for the Geological Map of the World, UNESCO-IUGS), a non-governmental organization responsible for global-scale map realization in all fields of Earth Sciences (geological map of the world, seismo-tectonic map, structural map of the oceans, etc).

He was elected at the 31 IGC in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as IUGS councillor for the period 2002–2006, when he will have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the activities of the Union.

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