



## OBITUARY

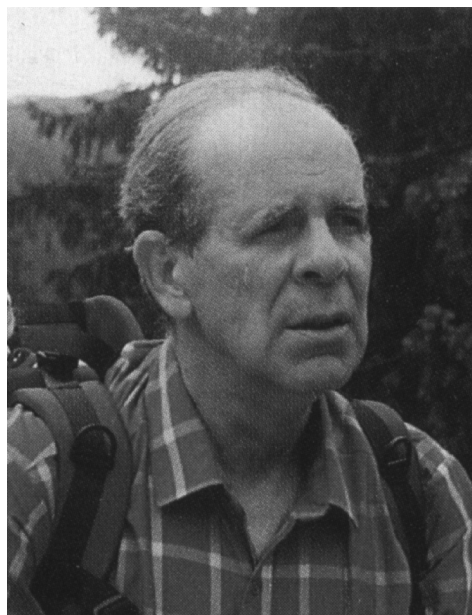
### Ryszard Dadlez (1931–2008)

On March, 14th we gathered in the Powązki Cemetery in Warszawa to express our last farewell to Professor Ryszard Dadlez who passed away on March 5th as a consequence of cerebral hemorrhage. Thus terminated the earthly life of this outstanding geologists who rendered an extraordinary service to the Polish Geological Institute and to Polish geology in general.

Ryszard Dadlez was born in 1931 in a teacher's family in Ciechanów — a small Mazovian town north of Warszawa. During the years 1949–1953 he studied geology under the tutorship of professors Jan Samsonowicz, Edward Passendorfer and Stefan Zbigniew Różycki. While still a student he was employed on a contractual basis as a research assistant at the Polish Geological Institute. At first he worked in the Holy Cross Branch in Kielce, later he moved to Warszawa, to join the Raw Minerals Department and the Basic Geological Studies Department. Since 1954 he was employed in the Department of Geology of the Polish Lowlands. This regional scope remained his field of geological interest until the end of his scientific activity.

In his parent department he served as the head of regional groups, at first of that of Northern Poland, after that — of Geology of the Pomeranian Region. In the years 1973–1976 he was appointed the head of the Petroleum Geology Department, later (1977–1988) — of the Department of Stratigraphy, Tectonics and Palaeogeography.

Parallel with advancement in administrative hierarchy followed successive stages of the scientific career of Ryszard Dadlez in the PGI. He obtained his Ph. D. degree after defending the thesis “Stratigraphy of the Liassic in western Poland”. In 1975 he was awarded the doctor habilitus degree after submitting the monograph “Tectonic studies in the area of north-western Poland”. Finally, in 1981 he became a professor. On that year he was appointed to the Scientific Council of the PGI, serving as its vice-chairman until 1999, for four successive tenures. During that time he was also appointed to various committees and panels both by the Polish Geological Institute and by supervising governmental institutions. He was also elected as vice-chairman of the Committee of Geological Sciences of the Polish Academy of Sciences in the years 1981–1989.



It is true, however, that fulfilling the administrative duties or holding executive posts was not the favourite activity of Professor Dadlez — first and foremost he was a man of science. He was deeply devoted to regional geological studies in Poland, particularly of the Permian and Mesozoic of the Polish Lowlands. His interests evolved from stratigraphy and sedimentation to more tectonically-oriented studies. Among his 230 publications there are numerous detailed stratigraphic and tectonic contributions. However, the most remarkable and most appreciated of his achievements are broader regional syntheses. They all bear a characteristic individual trait related to an outstanding ability to synthesize facts while maintaining a constant respect for detailed data — plain geological evidence. He did not hesitate to formulate bold, indeed courageous hypotheses, related e.g. to the significance of salt tectonics, the structural inversion of the Mid-Polish Trough or the Early Palaeozoic tectonic evolution of the Polish Lowlands area. At the same time, however, he firmly stood on the grounds of empirical evidence while his interpretations were based on clearly pronounced premises.

The scientific creativity and regional knowledge of professor Dadlez were particularly well expressed in his cartographic achievements. He was keen and brilliant author and editor of various geological maps, atlases and regional cross-sections. One should mention his leading role in compiling two successive editions of the “Tectonic map of the Zechstein-Mesozoic complex in the Polish Lowlands” (1979, 1998), a significant contribution to the “Gravimetric atlas of Poland” (1996), the

“Geological map of the Baltic sea bottom without Quaternary deposits” in the scale 1:500 000 (1999), the “Palaeogeographical atlas of the epicontinental Permian and Mesozoic in Poland” (1998), the “Geological map of Poland without Cainozoic deposits” (1:1 000 000) (2000) and the “Mid-Polish Trough — geological cross-sections” (2001). A detailed list of his cartographic and other publications may be found in the volume of the *Geological Quarterly* (2002, no. 3) published on the occasion of the 70th birthday of Professor Ryszard Dadlez and the 50th anniversary of his scientific work. Some of the facts regarding his life and scientific achievements were taken from the biographic essay “Ryszard Dadlez and his scientific career” written for this volume by Jerzy Znosko and Sylwester Marek.

Owing to his publications and participation in international conferences Professor Ryszard Dadlez was widely known abroad. His papers were commonly cited and he was personally respected by eminent European geologists. Many times I had an opportunity to hear positive opinions about his scientific achievements expressed by our foreign colleagues. Of the numerous international projects in which he contributed one should particularly stress his active participation in the ESF-funded EUROPROBE Programme (1991–2001). This international cooperation resulted in several important publications which cemented the scientific reputation of Professor Dadlez both at home and abroad.

Professor Dadlez had an enormous regional knowledge of Polish geology but he did not content himself with producing successive descriptive papers and monographs. Instead he was always open to new ideas in geology, widening possibilities of new concepts and explanations. He was one of the first geologists in Poland who introduced and popularized plate tectonics at times when this theory still did not find a place in many university courses. He also actively supported introducing the research strategy of sedimentary basin analysis at the Polish Geological Institute. For a long time and particularly during the last years he appreciated the importance of the new generation of geophysical methods, including seismic and potential fields data processing. Among other projects, he devoted much time to insightful geological interpretations of a wealth of seismic data acquired during the POLONAISE refraction and wide-angle reflection seismic profiling project. His sudden death sadly ended his participation in the interpretation of the international CELEBRATION 2000 seismic project results.

The geological research conducted by Professor Ryszard Dadlez was commonly closely connected with petroleum exploration in the area of the Polish Lowlands (Polish Permian-Mesozoic Basin and its basement). The results of his stratigraphic and tectonic studies contributed in an indirect way and sometimes quite directly to several oil and gas discoveries in the Polish Basin. On several occasions he was appointed as a consultant to petroleum companies which highly appreciated his regional knowledge and experience.

A separate place among the numerous achievements of Professor Dadlez is taken by his editorial work. He acted as the scientific editor of several monographic publications and maps, but first of all he will remain in our memory as a longstanding editor-in-chief of *Kwartalnik Geologiczny* — the *Geological*

*Quarterly* in the years 1976–1997. Earlier he had been connected with the journal as the author of many contributions. In fact one of the first papers ever published in the *Kwartalnik Geologiczny* (no. 1; 1957) was his report on new data on the Mesozoic of the northern part of the Pomeranian segment of the Mid-Polish Swell. Before becoming the editor-in-chief he served, in the years 1966 to 1975, as a member of the Editorial Committee.

He was a very scrupulous and objective editor, caring much about the scientific and linguistic quality of publications and always offering to authors his priceless and unselfish advice. During the long tenure of Professor Dadlez the *Kwartalnik Geologiczny* evolved from a journal that published mostly local and regional contributions to the English-language edition with a modern form and wider scope. It is undoubtedly a personal achievement of Ryszard Dadlez that the *Geological Quarterly* was well-prepared to aspire to attain its present international position as a journal indexed in the Thompson ISI databases. After resigning from the position of editor-in-chief he maintained his interest in editing the journal as a member of the Editorial Advisory Board (1998–2002), serving as its chairman in the years 1998–2000.

The didactic activity of Professor Ryszard Dadlez includes supervising three Ph.D theses at the Polish Geological Institute, as well as providing numerous reviews of Ph.D dissertations, and evaluations for purposes of doctor habilitus and professorship procedures. He also published several papers devoted to the popularization and methodology of the Earth sciences, particularly as regards tectonics. This activity was crowned by publishing in 1994 (with Wojciech Jaroszewski) the textbook “Tectonics”. This outstanding volume was awarded in 1995 a special prize of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and even now it is regarded as one of the best Polish academic textbooks in the field of Earth sciences.

Professor Ryszard Dadlez was a modest person who did not seek either posts or honours. Nevertheless, his achievements were appreciated by the directors of the Polish Geological Institute and by supervising governmental agencies. He was awarded the State Prize of 2nd rank (1964) and numerous ministerial and Institute distinctions and awards. He also received state honours, including the Knight Cross of Polonia Restituta (1989). Personally he was very proud of the Golden Badge of the Polish Geological Institute, being one of its first recipients.

Ryszard Dadlez retired in 2001 but continued to maintain his interest in scientific work. In fact several valuable publications appeared during his retirement. He sorely missed his beloved wife Joanna who passed away in 2007 — a sad event which certainly contributed to weakening his health and optimism. Nevertheless he was still active and even a few weeks before his death we still met to discuss current projects and the planning of publications. He left an enormous scientific legacy, which, during many forthcoming years, will provide a priceless source of knowledge on the geology of Poland. We all will long benefit from his contributions.

Marek Narkiewicz