

Obituary

Professor Jerzy Głazek (1936–2009)

Jurek had an immense impact on the science of speleology. Personally, I learned a lot from him, both in a scientific and a social sense by sharing his company. Jurek could always come up with sensible information, often accompanied with humour. With Jurek we have lost one of the last 'mammoths' in speleology and earth science.

Stein-Erik Lauritzen

Later, I had the possibility to learn his extraordinary capacity to work hard. During meetings, our ability to do science was commonly expressed in milli-Glazek.

Paulo Forti

The demise of this world-famous and noble man is an irreparable loss for science and for the geological community of Poland.

Researchers from the Institute of Palaeobiology, Polish Academy of Science

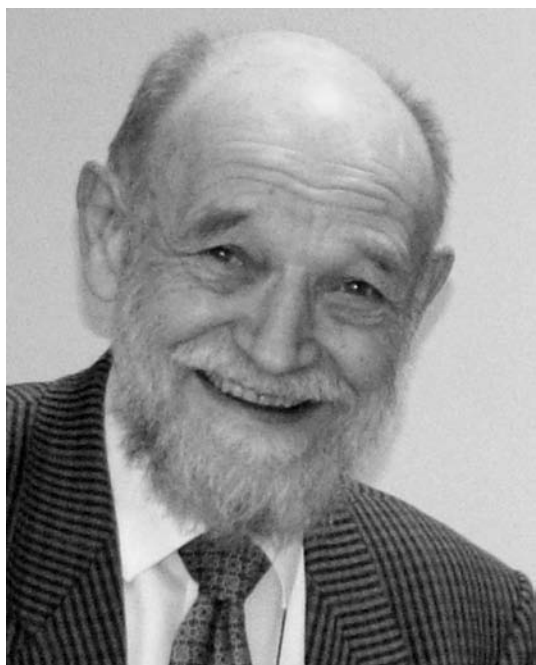


Photo A. Popławska-Raszewska

Professor Jerzy Głazek, a prominent Polish geologist and speleologist, passed away July, 3, 2009, after an eight-month disease. He was born in 1936, in Warsaw. As a child he lived,

among other places, in Bukowina Tarzańska in the Tatra Mountains. His grandparents, Malwina and Gustaw Doborzyński, were among the founders of the Society of Friends of Bukowina Tatrzańska. As it appeared much later, this happy period strongly influenced his geological interests. As a teenager he moved to Wrocław, where he finished secondary school and started studying geology at Wrocław University. After two years of study, he moved to Warsaw, where he received his Master's Degree in geology (1959). His Master's thesis, *Geological mapping of the Koszysta in the High Tatra Mts*, written under the supervision of Prof. Kazimierz Guzik, focused on his beloved Tatra Mountains.

Still being an undergraduate student, he was employed as an assistant lecturer at Warsaw University. After graduation, he continued his scientific and educational work at Warsaw University up till 1991. His Ph.D. thesis (1966) was *Geology of the Land-Khuan area in northern Vietnam, against the geological structure of south-eastern Asia*. The palaeokarst of Poland was

the subject of his habilitation (1990). In 1991, he moved again, this time to the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, where geology was reactivated after a forty-year break. He got a professorship, and from that time on he was employed as the chief of the Department of Physical and Regional Geology. In 1998, the President of Poland granted him the title of 'Professor of Earth Sciences'. In 2005, he was appointed as a correspondent member of the Polish Academy of Art and Science, a highly prestigious position.

The output of Professor Jerzy Głazek, covering a wide array of topics, comprises over 400 papers, book chapters, reviews, popular-science articles and other publications; almost all fields of geology, such as regional geology, tectonics, speleology, isotope analysis, palaeontology, sedimentology, and hydrogeology are included.

The most significant works are the 1989 monograph devoted to palaeokarst processes (*Paleokarst, a systematic and regional review*), authored together with P. Bosák, D. Ford and I. Horaček, and published by Elsevier, and the 1972 book chapter 'Karst of Poland' (in *Karst, important karst areas of the northern hemisphere*), also published by Elsevier. To his most important works belongs also 'Karst aquifer of the Cracow-Wieluń Upland, Poland', authored together with A. Pacholewski and A. Rózkowski, which was published in the 1992 monograph *Hydrogeology of selected Karst Regions*, published by Verlag Heinz Heise (Hannover).

Professor Głazek initiated in Poland U/Th isotopic studies of cave speleothems (a 1984 study with R. Harmon) and he introduced the term 'proglacial caves' (now used in all handbooks and encyclopedias related to karst phenomena and caves). He indicated the Miętusia Cave in the Tatra Mountains as an example, where vertical shafts connecting its horizontal galleries were developed by the water derived from melting glaciers.

Professor Głazek dealt with the tectonics of the Holy Cross Mountains, and put forward arguments undermining the then current ideas about the existence of a Caledonian orogen in NW Poland. Based on geological observations in SE Asia, he also questioned the contempo-

aneous character of orogenic movements of the Earth, even before such a conclusion was drawn as a consequence of the principles of plate tectonics. His activities included also palaeontological investigations: he discovered Miocene beetles and vertebrates in Przeworno (Fore-Sudetic Block), and he studied Middle Pleistocene vertebrates and snails at Kozi Grzbiet in the Holy Cross Mountains, as well as Early Cenomanian trace fossils (with R. Marciniowski and A. Wierzbowski).

One of the major contributions by Professor Głazek was a 1980 study published in *Nature* (with R.S. Harmon and K. Nowak), which evidenced that the age of travertines from Bilzingsleben in Germany containing hominid remains had earlier been overestimated by 200,000 years. His study on fresh-water oncoliths from Northern Vietnam, and the method that he developed for the identification of ophiuroid remains in thin sections (together with A. Radwański) should also be mentioned. Professor Głazek personally considered the rehabilitation of Roland Brinkmann, a German geologist serving in Poland during World War II, as one of his most important accomplishments.

Jerzy Głazek was one of the first to describe the development of karst phenomena in the eastern part of the Tatra Mountains. By tracing the underground water pathways, he discovered the direction of the flow from the Pańszczyca valley to under the bottom of the Sucha Woda valley, then to the Olczyjskie spring, as well as the short and shallow transport routes across carbonate belts towards the Białka Stream, the Kościeliski Stream, and the Chochołowski Stream. Professor Głazek described also the traces of subtropical weathering and karstification of Late Eocene red conglomerates in the Tatra Mountains. He was the first to discover the Brunhes-Matuyama boundary in cave deposits in Poland; he managed to do so by palaeomagnetic investigations at Kozi Grzbiet (Holy Cross Mountains). He recognized the geothermal karst of the Kaczawskie Mountains and investigated the geothermal genesis of the Bielanska cave in the Tatra Mountains of Slovakia.

Moreover, he questioned the leading role of climate in the development of caves, suggest-

ing that rock type and spatial configuration are more determining factors. He emphasized the role of karst phenomena, particularly palaeo-karst, in palaeogeographical and palaeotectonic reconstructions, and drew attention to the practical importance of karst, especially in areas where dams or mines are planned to be built.

Thanks to the efforts of Jerzy Głazek, Poland became a member of the International Union of Speleology (UIS). He was President of the Commission of Paleo-karst and Speleochronology (1977–1986) and Vice Secretary-General of the UIS (1981–1986).

Professor Głazek considered his educational work as highly important. He lectured on physical geology, the regional geology of Poland and the regional geology of the world, isotope geochemistry, karst geology, geology of SE Asia, as well as on stratigraphy and palaeogeography of the Neogene and Palaeogene. Furthermore, he organized classes, seminars and field trips. He was a co-author of *A guidebook for classes in dynamic geology* (in Polish). Professor Głazek supervised 40 M.Sc. theses and 6 Ph.D. theses. He was always open to tutorials and long discussions. Thanks to his great helpfulness and kindness, many more people regard him as their Teacher and Master.

The Tatra Mountains, which Professor Głazek knew since his childhood, were particularly close to his heart. Not only did he carry out there abundant speleological investigations, but he also discovered mineral veins in the granitoids of the Koszysta Massif, Rhetian (Late Triassic) deposits on the Wołoszyn Mountain, and tuffites in Eocene conglomerates. Moreover, he reviewed, together with E. Zastawniak, the Eocene flora from this mountain chain. He was also a co-author and co-editor of the 1979 geological map of the Tatra Mountains at a scale of 1:30,000, and he guided geological field trips for students in these mountains until 2005. His extraordinary fitness and high resistance to changing weather conditions, which he was famous for, allowed him to be particularly good in the fast descent from mountains: the reason why once he got a T-shirt with the inscription 'Faster than an avalanche'.

Jerzy Głazek served also as editor or member of the Editorial Board in many geological journals. These include *Speleologia* (1967–1976), *Kras i speleologia* (since 1977), *Slovenský kras* (since 1999), *Acta Geologica Polonica* (1996–1999), and *Geologos* (1998–2007).

He was a passionate researcher, who willingly shared his time with others and, as a consequence, not always had enough time for himself. We will keep him in our memory as an outstanding scientist, a kind and modest person, and an irreplaceable Master. We will miss him forever.

Ditta Kicińska

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