

# In Memory of Adrian Kin

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Dr. Błażej Błażejowski is president of the Adrian Kin Association of Friends of Geosciences PHACOPS.

**Born on 12 February 1979, Dr. Adrian Kin, a highly gifted and versatile young geologist and paleobiologist, died exactly one year ago. Admittedly, writing in the past tense about someone who passed away so recently is never easy, especially when this concerns someone who was not only a fellow scientist but also a friend**

Born and raised in Łódź, Adrian Kin had been passionate about natural sciences since his early childhood. At the age of seven, he developed a keen interest in the history of life on Earth and began his scientific journey by collecting and classifying fossils. According to his mother, Adrian started to dream about becoming a paleontologist when he was a young boy. As a second grader, he made contact with Karol Sabath from the PAS Museum of Evolution in Warsaw, a prominent popularizer of evolutionary biology and paleobiology, who introduced him into the mysteries of the history of life on Earth. One year later, he became associated with Dr. Jan Ziomek from the Geological Museum of Łódź University's Faculty of Geography and Prof. Andrzej Radwański from Warsaw University's Faculty of Geology, who supported him professionally and gave him a chance to participate in field courses for students. Adrian stressed on many occasions that such authority figures, with whom he could share his first observations and findings, had been highly instrumental in shaping his scientific career.

Adrian was admitted to Warsaw University's Faculty of Geology in 2000. He specialized in exploratory stratigraphic geology and paleontology. In 2003, Adrian wrote his bachelor's thesis, entitled "Biogeographic provinces and the diversity of Late Jurassic ammonite faunas in the world." Two years later, he received his master's degree with honors after successfully defending his thesis, "The biofacies of the Late Jurassic (Lower Kimmeridgian) succession of carbonate sediments between Korytnica and Karsy in the southern part of the Holy Cross Mountains."

Adrian obtained his doctoral degree from the Jagiellonian University's Faculty of Biology and Earth Sciences in 2013. Supervised by Prof. Michał Gruszczynski, his dissertation ("The phenotypic plasticity of ammonites in selected representatives of Acanthoscaphitidae and Desmoceratidae from the Upper Cretaceous formations of Central and Southern Poland"), demonstrated the influence of environmental conditions on the variability of ammonites.

He co-authored exhibitions and workshops in paleontology, geology, natural sciences, and the popularization of Earth Science, as well as acting as a consultant for such projects. He created the innovative educational program "Interactive teaching of the basics of Natural and Earth Sciences." As the founder, leader, and longtime president of PHACOPS, an association of scientists and enthusiasts of paleobiology, Adrian pursued the organization's mission in the field of science, education, and the popularization of Earth Science with professionalism and passion. As part of his activity in the Association, he organized field trips, research projects, exhibitions, conferences, and other activities aimed at popularizing geology and geotourism. In honor of Adrian's memory, PHACOPS has been renamed to bear his name: the Adrian Kin Association of Friends of the Geosciences ([www.phacops.pl](http://www.phacops.pl)).

Adrian authored and coauthored several dozen scientific papers, mostly published in prestigious periodicals. His



Family archives



Family archives

most important scientific achievements include papers on the migration queues of blind trilobites – arthropods from the Upper Devonian (around 350 million years ago) which are to be found in the limestone quarry at Kowala in the Holy Cross Mountains. The fossils, discovered by Adrian, represent the first example of periodical migrations of arthropods known from the fossil record. The trilobites that formed those queues were completely blind and communicated with the external worlds chiefly by means of chemical stimuli, by analogy to today's aquatic arthropods. Adrian interpreted this as a primary chemosensory perception, a phenomenon that had not previously been identified in the fossil record of either trilobites or any other extinct group of arthropods. He believed that chemosensory perception in trilobites might have been based on their group hierarchy, a necessary process of informing other organisms about the direction of movement, or about various environmental factors such as finding food or sensing threats from predators. Adrian's discovery shed an entirely new light on the social behavior and life cycles of this group of aquatic arthropods from hundreds of millions of years ago.

One of Adrian's numerous discoveries was a unique *Fossil-Lagerstätte* (an exceptional occurrence of well-preserved fossil biota) discovered in collaboration with the present author at the paleontological site in the Owadów-Brzezinki quarry near Tomaszów Mazowiecki in April 2012. The site exhibited a rich and exceptionally well-preserved collection of the Upper Jurassic fossils of marine and terrestrial organisms. Its unique character and highly promising potential for further studies are demonstrated by numerous specimens of fish, horseshoe crabs, carideans, lobsters, fragments of small marine reptiles, rare ammonites, terrestrial insects (including dragonflies, grasshoppers, and beetles) as well as fragments of bones

of pterosaurs. A new species of dragonfly was found at the site and named *Eumorbaeshna adriankini* in honor of the discoverer of the site.

Adrian Kin's fascination with paleontology manifested itself in the collection of fossils he had gathered all his life. Fully documented, the collection features around 45,000 specimens of fossils from all over Poland and has already served as a basis for several PhD (doctorate) and DSc (habilitation) dissertations. The author wanted it to be transformed into a publicly available Museum of Natural History. One of these fossils, discovered by Adrian, is the largest ammonite ever found in Poland (a diameter of 1.18 m).

Adrian fulfilled his childhood dream and became a reputable and recognized paleontologist. He continued his scientific pursuits until the end of his life. Unfortunately, he did not manage to put into effect many of his ideas and intentions. After a long illness, Adrian passed away in the loving care of his wife, Kasia, on 26 June 2012 and was buried at the municipal cemetery in Łódź. In October 2012, Adrian's family donated his collection of fossils to the Geological Museum of the Polish Geological Research Institute in Warsaw, where it will be soon opened to visitors.

Adrian was truly one of a kind. Intelligent and witty, he exuded positive energy and never stepped into the background. He expressed his views boldly and courageously. A natural leader, Adrian was a model example of someone who managed to combine a successful scientific career with a personal life. He had great intuition and could keep even the most difficult situations in perspective. Polish science suffered a great loss when Adrian passed away. He was not only a prominent young scientist but also a good friend and an extremely hard-working, widely respected, and well-liked person. Filled with indefatigable energy, Adrian remained creative until the end of his life. He will always be alive in our memories. ■