

## SHORT COMMUNICATION

## In memoriam Katalin Simán (1955–2023)

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At the beginning of December 2023, another colleague of ours left us, Katalin Simán, at the age of 68. Since he no longer actively participated in the research of the Hungarian Paleolithic in the last decade and a half, the younger generation of researchers may know her name through her much-quoted works, covering the entire spectrum of Palaeolithic research, from site surveys and excavations, museum collection revisions, to the historiographical questions and methodological problems of the Palaeolithic period.

She began her career at the Herman Ottó Museum in Miskolc, where she was the first archaeologist specializing in the Palaeolithic, although the museum was created in 1899 precisely by the case of the “Bársony-ház handaxes” and the question of the “Miskolc prehistoric man”. Already her first significant work presented her with a difficult task, she clarified the question of the Avas limnosilicite quarry in Miskolc based on the 1977–1978 excavations and the analysis of the documentation from the 1930s. She also dealt with the issue of flint mines during her later research, exploring the prehistoric quarrying sites of Ravaszlyuk-tető in Korlát. In this field, she carried out fundamental research with Erzsébet Bácskay and Katalin T. Biró, the summary of which was published in the thematic volume of *Archaeologia Polona* in 1995.

In addition to obtaining and extracting lithic raw material, she was more interested in the topic

of production and use of lithic implements. She was familiar with novel approaches that appeared in the international literature in the 1980s and applied them to the Hungarian finds. Based on the relationship between raw material sources and settlements, she tried to interpret the role played by the individual sites in the subsistence strategies of prehistoric communities. For this, it was necessary to understand and reconstruct the process of stone tool production. She was the first in Hungary to apply the approach and methods of new technological research, and also mastered stone knapping in practice, so in the video shown at the Hungarian National Museum’s permanent archaeological exhibition “On the Border of East and West” that opened in 2002, she presents to the visitors how ancient people made stone tools. She was also the first to carry out refitting studies in domestic research on the rich lithic assemblage unearthed during the construction of the housing estate in Avas Alsó-Szentgyörgy, Miskolc. She presented her spectacular results in a lecture at the Tata conference in 2003 but unfortunately did not publish them. As a continuation of her technological research, her article describing the relevant technical terms was published in 2000.

She returned to Budapest in the mid-1980s, and worked at the Institute of Archeology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, then became the director of the Kubinyi Ferenc Museum in Szécsény, where previously there was also no



archaeologist specializing in the Palaeolithic. From this time, important research with Viola T. Dobosi in the Ipoly Valley stands out. Thanks to her excellent language skills, she also made her mark as an English translator. Her work is preserved, among others, in the *Vértesszőlős* monograph edited by Miklós Kretzoi and Viola T. Dobosi (Akadémiai Kiadó 1990) and Luu Tran Tieu's book on European pebble industries (Akadémiai Kiadó, 1991).

Although she stopped her research in paleoarchaeology in the mid-2000s, her excavations, publications, and innovative ideas have written her name into Palaeolithic research history.

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