



Special Issue:

Focus on the lithics: raw materials and their utilisation during the Stone Age in Central Europe

Guest Editors:

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60th BIRTHDAY OF doc. PhDr. MARTIN OLIVA, Ph.D., D.Sc.

We are pleased to be reprinting, on the occasion of the 60th birthday of doc. Martin Oliva, Ph.D., biography published in the *AMM Sci. soc.* (2012) by doc. Karel Valoch.

Martin Oliva was born on August 23, 1951 in Brno. After elementary school he trained at Královopolská ironworks as a boiler-maker and from 1969–1973 studied at the Engineering High School. He then considered his future – and I hope that, even my recommendation that he apply to study archeology at the Faculty of Arts – influenced his decision. Due to certain misdemeanors during the communist era he was only accepted to study at his second attempt, after completing military service. His studies of Archaeology and History at the Faculty of Arts at the then UJEP in Brno (1975–1980) were completed with a dissertation on the Aurignacian in Moravia with was published in 1987 as a monograph in the Studies of Kroměříž Museum.

He became interested in the collection of Paleolithic stone artefacts even as a student. After each ploughing and every rainfall he would diligently search the newly published sites of of the Krumlovský les region and then one day he turned up at the Anthropos Institute to show off his collection. He came into our workshop, where Vilém Gebauer, an experienced collector and preparator, evaluated his finds. It was only later that he plucked up the courage to come to me (it means Karel Valoch, editorial note). When I saw his deep passion for the Paleolithic, I tried to help him. I let him study materials from our collection, during his studies at the faculty I invited him on field trips and introduced him to the loess outcrops around Brno. Together, we carried out investigations into the gravel pit in Mušov and in similar profiles in Ivaň and Drnholec. From 1975–1976 he was on the final stages of the research at Kůlna cave. In 1981, he spent a semester at the Department of Quaternary Geology and Prehistory at the University in Bordeaux. Where he was introduced to the classical palaeolithic research of Prof. François Bordes, who unfortunately died before the end of his stay.

After graduation and temporary jobs at the Department of Prehistory of the Moravian Museum, He moved to the Regional Museum of Třebíč in 1982, where he worked until 1986. At a time when almost no universities in Czechoslovakia had computers, he created the first formalised dictionary of archeological finds for computerised records. At that time I went into retirement, and there was an attempt by the then head of Anthropos, Luděk Seitl and I, to appoint Martin Oliva as archeologist. It was successful and Martin Oliva joined Anthropos Institute MZM on 1. 2. 1986. He took on the opportunity to work in Paleolithic rescue research. During the extraction of loess at Milovice near Pavlov Hills for the construction of a dam at Novomlýnské nádrže Reservoir on the River Dyje, mammoth bones were uncovered. Permission for rescue work was granted to the

Anthropos Institute and Martin Oliva was charged with carrying it out. It turned out to be a number of large accumulation of predominantly mammoth bones, accompanied by stone industry. The subsequent research went on for six years. The outstanding results of the research were the discovery of the circular structure created by large mammoth bones, which constituted the foundation of a hut. This was the first discovery of this kind in Central Europe, and significantly older than similar structures in Ukraine. The results of the research of the Gravettian settlement agglomeration in Milovice have recently been published in an extensive monograph.

The synthesis of the whole Gravettian settlement in Moravia later formed Martin Oliva's doctoral thesis in 1999. This was preceded by the study of the so-called "Shaman grave" in Francouzská St. in Brno, where he was the first to find traces of osteitis in the bodily remains of a Paleolithic man.

At Symposium VIII (Upper Paleolithic) of the UISPP commission at UNESCO in 1990, in Treignes, he was elected as the permanent representative for Czechoslovakia, and later in the Czech Republic. In 1991 he worked as a visiting professor at the Université Paris I - Panthéon-Sorbonne. The younger generation of Czech archeologists, will remember Martin Oliva as an enthusiastic interpreter of the Prehistory, for his lectures at the department of Archeological FF UJEP from 1986 on, (resp. at the Institute of Archeology and Museology FF MU) in Brno, on the introduction course on the Paleolithic, and for his lectures the University of Western Bohemia in Pilsen from 2010 and also at Charles University in Prague. For several years, he led the Paleolithic teaching at the Universities in Opava and Bratislava.

After he finished work in Milovice, Martin Oliva started work on the Aurignacian settlement in Vedrovice, where he found and dated the Aurignacian stone industry and, for the first time in Southern Moravia, a stratified Middle Palaeolithic site was found in the underlying loess. During the research of Krumlovský les Forest, at the foot of which lies Vedrovice, Martin Oliva discovered traces of mining pits, in which chert was quarried for the production of stone artefacts. The research was initiated in 1994 and he discovered a considerable, extensive mining area and also the temporal extent of this chert mining, lasting from the Lower Mesolithic to the Hallstatt era. The work on the prehistoric mine underwent successful habilitation, in 2000. Although the results of the research were publish in a comprehensive monograph, work still goes on in Krumlovský les Forest under Martin Oliva, no doubt hoping to discover more remains from the Mesolithic Age, which so far are unique in Europe.

It only remains for me to wish him on this his jubilee in research and scientific work many more successful years.