



**Professor Krzysztof Sobczyk**

**1950-2024**



## Professor Krzysztof Sobczyk has passed away

On 25 May 2024, it was with great sadness that we said goodbye to our friend, Professor Krzysztof Sobczyk, an outstanding archaeologist and specialist in the field of the Palaeolithic.

He was born on 13 June 1950, in Siemianowice Śląskie, where he graduated from primary school in 1964 and Jan Matejko High School in 1968. In the same year, he began studies at the Jagiellonian University in the field of archaeology, which he completed in 1973, obtaining a master's degree in archaeology based on his master's thesis "The Prądnik Problem in the Light of Numerical Analysis" (supervisor Janusz Krzysztof Kozłowski). From 1 December 1972, to 30 September 1973, he was employed at the Archaeological Department of the Management of the Restoration of the Royal Castle in Wawel, first as an archaeologist's assistant and later as an assistant. From 1 October 1973 to July of the following year, he was employed at the Upper Silesian Museum in Bytom as a museum assistant. In August 1974, he began working at the Archaeological Museum in Kraków, initially at the Branch in Nowa Huta, later at the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Department, and was delegated to rescue work related to the construction of the Kraków-Gliwice motorway in the years 1975-1978. In October 1981, he began working at the Institute of Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University. Here in June 1983, he defended his doctoral dissertation entitled "Morphological and technical aspects of Magdalenian inventories in Poland against the background of Central European assemblages". He obtained his postdoctoral degree from the Council of the Faculty of History of the Jagiellonian University in 1996 and worked as an associate professor for five years.



As an employee of the Upper Silesian Museum in Bytom, he was responsible for organizing the rich collections of Palaeolithic artefacts and in 1974, he began excavations at the Lower Palaeolithic site of Racibórz-Studzienna. As an employee of the Archaeological Museum in Kraków, he participated in excavations at the multicultural Middle and Upper Palaeolithic site of Zwierzyniec I, under the supervision of Waldemar Chmielewski from the University of Warsaw. For several seasons, he participated in fieldwork at the Late Palaeolithic sites in Wołowice and Brzoskwinia, led by Anna Dagnan-Ginter and Bolesław Ginter. He also undertook comparative studies of material from various Stone Age sites in Moravia, using the collections of the Anthropos Museum in Brno and participated in the excavations of Gerhard Bosinski of the Magdalenian camp in Gönnersdorf on the Rhine, as well as in the research of the complex of Neolithic sites on the Aldenhovener Platte near Aachen.

In 1980, he was part of the Janusz K. Kozłowski team investigating the Upper Palaeolithic camp of mammoth hunters in Kraków, Spadzista Street (today Vlastimil Hofmann's Street), which he led in the years 1986-2002, with a break in 1990. He also participated in fieldwork at other Polish sites, such as the Zawalona Cave in the Mników Gorge, the Duża Cave in Mączne Skały in Biały Kościół, the Mesolithic camp in Gojście near Pajęczno on the Warta River, led by Bolesław Ginter, as well as the Upper Palaeolithic Kraków-Przegorzały, cave site in Grota Łokietek and the Late Palaeolithic excavations in Sromowce Wyżne in the Pieniny Mountains, and in the years 1998-2002, at an open site from the Late Middle Palaeolithic in Kraków, Księcia Józefa Street.

He had been to foreign centres for training purposes or participating in various field studies many times. Here, we can mention his stay in Prague in 1984 at the Charles University, in centres in Slovakia, as well as in Korolevo in Ukraine, at the University of Erlangen-Nürnberg, Cologne and in Miskolc. An important part of his biography was cooperation with Slovak researchers, within the framework of which, under the direction of Bolesław Ginter and Janusz K. Kozłowski, excavations were carried out at the sites of the Gravettian complex in the Váh River valley in the localities of Moravany Banka, Žakovska, Lopata and Trenčanska Turnia, which resulted in joint book publications. As part of the continuation of this cooperation, he participated in excavations in the Dzerava Skala Cave in the expedition led by Janusz K. Kozłowski. In 1995-2010, he was one of the leading figures in the international expedition led by Bolesław Ginter and Janusz K. Kozłowski, conducting

excavations in the Greek Klissoura Cave. In 1997, he began cooperation with Musees Royoux in Brussels. In 2001, he travelled to Mongolia, where he discovered transitional materials from the Middle and Upper Palaeolithic at the Kharukhyn gol site with a Belgian-Polish-Mongolian expedition. This was connected with the government scholarship he used in 2001–2003. He cooperated in several grant projects, including the Committee for Scientific Research, entitled “The use of mammoth in the Upper Palaeolithic on the example of the Kraków site, ul. Spadzista B” and the National Science Centre: “Ciemna Cave in Ojców. Cultural groups and chronostratigraphy”, “The last Neanderthals in the Ciemna Cave”, grants from the Ephoeia of Palaeontology-Speleology of Southern Greece in Athens and the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique at the University of Liege Unite de recherches Evolution des Vertébrés et Evolution humaine.

On 23 January 1996, Krzysztof was admitted to the Commission on the Prehistory of the Carpathians Polish Academy of Art and Sciences. Since 2004, he has been a member of the Scientific Council of the Ojców National Park. He was also a member of the Union Internationale des Sciences Préhistoriques et Protohistoriques.

He was undoubtedly a scholar with considerable research experience and excellent achievement in the field of the Stone Age, the technology and typology of stone artefacts, the problems of flint workshops, and Palaeolithic art. His study of the Micoquian asymmetric Prądnik knives in the context of multivariate analysis was innovative. Krzysztof Sobczyk was the author of such monographs as: *The Upper Palaeolithic site Kraków-Spadzista Street C2. Excavation 1980*, *Zeszyty Naukowe UJ, Prace Archeologiczne 42*, Kraków 1987 (with J. K. Kozłowski); *The Late Palaeolithic flint workshops at Brzostwinia-Krzemionki near Kraków*, *Zeszyty Naukowe UJ, Prace Archeologiczne vol. 55*, Kraków 1993; *East Gravettian Settlement in the Vistula Valley near Kraków*, Kraków 1995; *Les Chasseurs de Mammouth de la Vallee de la Vistule*, Bruxelles 1999 (with J. K. Kozłowski, V. Sytlivy).

Finally, his didactic contribution to the education of several generations of archaeologists cannot be ignored. He was an extremely popular and beloved teacher among academic youth, which was helped by his direct attitude to students and constant readiness to provide scientific assistance. In the team of employees of the Institute of Archaeology of the Jagiellonian University, we will remember him as a good colleague and friend, who created the best climate of interpersonal relations.

After the funeral mass, celebrated on Tuesday, 4 June 2024, in the Collegiate Church of St. Anne in Krakow, he was buried that day at the Prądnik Czerwony cemetery (Batowice) in Kraków. There are no words to describe our sorrow.

Paweł Valde-Nowak