

VAGANAČKA PEČINA





Fumier u sondi 2 (foto: M. Bodružić)
Fumier in trial trench 2 (photo: M. Bodružić)

ispod visoravni Velikog Rujna. Položaj pećine uz prastari put koji povezuje Primorje i Liku pokazao se kao povoljan i za pastire čiji su tragovi boravka u pećini vidljivi i danas. Pećina je pregrađena suhozidom koji površinu prednje prostorije dijeli na dva tora za držanje životinja, a jedan zidani zatvoreni objekt s vratima nalazi se uz zapadni zid na ulazu u pećinu.

Nakon što je definirana pozicija stare sonde određena je pozicija nove koja se pruža paralelno sa starom, ali odmaknuta u smjeru zapada oko 1 metar. Dakle, sonda 1 otvorena je u istočnom dijelu pećine, uz istočnu stranu pregradnog suhozida, u dužini od 3 metra i širine 1 metar.

Prvi sloj sačinjavale su nabijene „ploče“ sasušenog životinjskog izmeta, a nakon toga slijedi sloj rahle zemlje s nalazima keramike i kostiju koji vjerojatno pripada razini hodne površine zatečene 1984. te ostacima izbačenog sedimenta iz prvih istraživanja. Tek nakon toga kreće slijed intaktnih slojeva. Daljnji slijed sedimentnih facijesa jasno upućuje na *fumier*, tj. mješavinu stelje i životinjskog izmeta koja se raspala fermentacijom i djelovanjem mikroorganizama. Prepoznaje se po karakterističnim pravilnim nizovima naizmjeničnih crnih i bijelih horizonata koji nalikuju na slojevitu tortu (Gero-

el, below the Veliki Rujno plateau. The location of the cave next to the ancient road that connects Primorje and Lika proved to be favorable for shepherds, whose traces in the cave are still visible today. The cave is partitioned by a dry stone wall that divides the front room into two pens for stabling animals. A closed walled structure with a door is located next to the western wall at the entrance to the cave.

After the position of the old trench was defined, the position of the new one was determined, which runs parallel to the old one, but shifted in the western direction by about 1 meter. Thus, trial trench 1 was opened in the eastern part of the cave, along the eastern side of the partition dry stone wall, with a length of 3 meters and a width of 1 meter.

The first layer consisted of compacted “slabs” of dried animal excrement, followed by a layer of loose soil with pottery and bone finds, which probably belongs to the level of the walking surface found in 1984, and the remains of the sediment dug in the first investigations. Only after that does the sequence of intact layers begin. The further sequence of sedimentary facies clearly points to *fumier*, i.e. a mixture of litter and animal excrement that has been decomposed by fermentation and



... Pogled na istočni profil sonde 2 s pretpostavljenim ostacima suhozida (foto: M. Grgurić Srzentić)
... View of the eastern profile of trial trench 2 with presumed remains of dry stone wall (photo: M. Grgurić Srzentić)





metta, Boschian 2022). Slijed slojeva vrlo siromašnih pokretnim nalazima s obzirom na dosegnutu dubinu od 180 centimetara razumljiv je ako u obzir uzmemo da su se u ovom dijelu pećine zadržavale isključivo životinje. Uzorak zemlje s najdublje razine u sondi 1 smjestio je trenutačnu fazu istraživanja u srednji neolitik. Zanimljivo je da se na šezdesetak centimetara dubine pojavio sloj krupnijeg kamena, veće gustoće i kompaktnije taložen u istočnom profilu, što bi moglo sugerirati ostatke suhozida. Samo 30 centimetara od istočnog ruba sonde nalazi se masivan suhozid koji danas pećinu dijeli na dva dijela. Nažalost, uzorak poslan za datiranje starijeg suhozida nije uspio te će se morati ponoviti.

Sonda je u jednom trenutku istraživanja smanjena na samo jedan od triju kvadranta kako bi se ubrzalo spuštanje razine sedimenata te kako bi se dobilo više vremena za drugu sodu koja je dala znatno više materijala.

Sonda 2 otvorena je uz sjeveroistočni rub zida pećine, oko 1 metar udaljena od sonde 1, a od samog je početka pokazala potpuno drukčiji stratigrafski slijed i fond nalaza u odnosu na prethodnu. U ovoj sondi dosegnuta je dubina od 60 centimetara od današnje hodne površine. Od samog početka nalazilo se na veće ulomke prapovijesne lončarije i

the action of microorganisms. It is recognized by the characteristic regular series of alternating black and white horizons that resemble a layered cake (Gerometta, Boschian 2022). The sequence of layers, which are very poor in finds, given the reached depth of 180 centimeters, is understandable if we take into account that only animals stayed in this part of the cave. The soil sample from the deepest level in probe 1 dated the current phase of the research to the Middle Neolithic. It is interesting that at a depth of about sixty centimeters, a layer of larger stones appeared, denser and more compactly deposited in the eastern profile, which could suggest the remains of dry stone wall. Only 30 centimeters from the eastern edge of the trench, there is a massive dry stone wall that presently divides the cave into two parts. Unfortunately, the sample sent to date the older dry stone wall failed and will have to be repeated.

At one point in the excavation, the trench was reduced to only one of the three quadrants in order to speed up the lowering of the sediment level and to gain more time for the second trench, which yielded significantly more material.

Trial trench 2 was opened along the northeastern edge of the cave wall, about 1 meter away

kosti, ali i slojeve zapečene zemlje koji bi se mogli interpretirati kao ostatci nabijene podnice koja je „popravljana“ u više navrata. Otkriveni ostatci konstrukcije od zapečene zemlje kružne forme i podignutih rubova vjerojatno su ostatci ognjišta, a to sugerira i pepeo u blizini te ostatci pougljenjenih sjemenki. Veliki broj fragmenata grube i fine keramike u istoj sondi također ide u prilog tezi da je dio pećine uz istočni zid bio odvojen kao prostor za boravak ljudi, barem u nekom trenutku u povijesti korištenja ovog objekta. Nekoliko pronađenih pršljena moglo bi se interpretirati kao „vlasništvo“ pastirica, a bez sumnje potvrđuju izradu vunene pređe, odnosno tekstilnu proizvodnju. Keramički materijal pripada isključivo razdoblju prapovijesti, a fragmenti koje je bilo moguće preciznije odrediti upućuju na brončanodobnu zajednicu koja se ovdje zadržavala sa svojom stokom. Materijal poslan na radiokarbonsko datiranje potvrdio je ovu pretpostavku za sondu 2.

Dosadašnji rezultati upućuju na podjelu prostora pećine na dio namijenjen boravku ljudi te dio koji je bio odvojen isključivo za držanje životinja, barem u razdoblju kasnog brončanog doba. Preliminarna analiza životinjskih kostiju potvrdila je prisutnost ovikaprda i goveda, ali i lovnih životinja, poput jelena. S obzirom na to da je poznato da jelen voli boraviti u šumama, ta nam informacija može reći ponešto i o prapovijesnom krajoliku. Na pitanje kako je pećina bila korištena sezonski, odgovor bi trebale dati mikromorfološka analiza i analiza stabilnih izotopa koje tek slijede.

from trial trench 1, and from the very beginning it showed a completely different stratigraphic sequence and assemblage of finds compared to the previous one. In this probe, a depth of 60 centimeters was reached from present-day walking surface. From the very beginning, larger fragments of prehistoric pottery and bones were found, as well as layers of fired earth that could be interpreted as the remains of a rammed floor that was “repaired” on several occasions. The discovered remains of a structure made of fired earth with a circular shape and raised edges are probably the remains of a hearth, which is also suggested by the nearby ashes and the remains of charred seeds. The large number of fragments of coarse and fine pottery in the same trench also supports the thesis that the part of the cave along the eastern wall was separated as a place for humans to stay, at least at some point in the history of the use of this cave. Several found whorls could be interpreted as the “ownership” of shepherdesses, and they undoubtedly confirm the production of woolen yarn, i.e. textile production. The ceramic material belongs exclusively to the prehistoric period, and the fragments that could be determined more precisely indicate a Bronze Age community that stayed here with its livestock. Material sent for radiocarbon dating confirmed this assumption for trial trench 2.

The results so far suggest the division of the cave space into a part intended for human habitation and a part that was set aside exclusively for animal stabling, at least in the Late Bronze Age period. Preliminary analysis of animal bones confirmed the presence of ovicaprids and cattle, but also game animals, such as deer. Given that it is known that deer like to stay in forests, this information can also tell us something about the prehistoric landscape. The answer to the question of how the cave was used seasonally should be provided by the micromorphological and stable isotope analysis that will follow.

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Prosijavanje sedimenta (foto: M. Lorenzo Blaslov)
Sieving of the sediment (photo: M. Lorenzo Blaslov)

