

Prehistoric Herders of Northern Istria (Croatia): The Archaeology of Pupićina Cave, volume I/ Pretpovijesni stočari sjeverne Istre: Arheologija Pupićine peći, 1. svezak

**(Eds. Preston Miracle and Stašo Forenbaher.
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The book *Prehistoric Herders of Northern Istria (Croatia): The Archaeology of Pupićina Cave* is a compilation of multidisciplinary studies on Neolithic and Bronze Age material from Pupićina Cave in Istria, Croatia. This is the first volume of several planned that will present detailed results from excavations at the Pupićina Cave, as well as from other prehistoric sites in Istria. After this volume additional two are planned. These will focus on Mesolithic and Upper Paleolithic remains from Pupićina. In preparing this book, editors had three goals: to introduce this prehistoric site, its setting and methods of excavation and analysis; to provide a complete account of the results of its post-Mesolithic deposits; and also to place the results from Pupićina Cave within the wider regional context of prehistoric Istria and the eastern Adriatic.

The book has 542 pages and is divided in 13 chapters. The text is accompanied with figures, tables and graphs, which provide aid in more comprehensive understanding of the subject. After the Introduction follows the main body of the book – specialist analyses in chapters 2–11. At the end of the volume there are two concluding chapters (chapters 12 and 13) in which the overall results of analyses are discussed. Every analysis focuses on different classes of excavated material using corresponding analytical techniques. Alongside standard analyses of pottery, lithics and stratigraphy of the site, the faunal remains, bone and antler artefacts, mollusks, charcoal and phytoliths, small vertebrates and pollen are subjected to specific analyses.

Book begins with a general introduction to Istrian landscape and archaeological research in Pupićina Cave. A chapter that examines regional evidence of vegetation change from the Ćićarija uplands follows. Third chapter gives the general information about the site and excavation methods used, as well as a detailed description of the stratigraphy and excavated contexts from the Neolithic

period to modern times. Geological analyses focused on micromorphological evidence of stabling deposits are presented in chapter four. The discussion on the typology and technology of excavated ceramics is given in chapter five. Chapter six introduces us to analysis of flaked stone artifacts. The analysis of vertebrate remains is in chapter seven and worked antler and bone assemblage in chapter eight. In chapter nine, the mollusk assemblage is described. After the analyses of wood charcoal and phytoliths given in chapter ten, the last report in the book is about small vertebrate remains. At the end of each chapter there is relevant bibliography covering current issues in Croatian and European archaeology. Last two chapters of the book are concluding ones, bringing together the results of all the analyses. In chapter twelve editors combine all the categories of evidence from the Pupićina cave and its surrounding area to provide synthesis and interpretation of the site. In the last chapter they use the Pupićina Cave data to debate about the spread of agriculture in the eastern Adriatic.

Some chapters in the book offer raw data, completely or in a detailed summary form. This custom is rare, but the benefit from such practice is enormous, as it allows other scholars to evaluate given interpretations and use the data in their research. One of the singularities of this book is in the variety of the contributors. The editors gathered together an international team of specialists to analyze different classes of excavated material. In their analyses they used a wide range of modern scientific techniques that are not very common in Croatian archaeology. Majority of the authors were included in the fieldwork from its beginnings, which is one of the major reasons why they are so familiar with the material and the site.

Books of this length and thoroughness are rare in the Croatian scientific literature. The devoted editors and

multicomponent nature of the site made this possible. The cave has a long continuous prehistoric sequence and is relatively rich in different classes of excavated remains. Bilingual nature of the book makes it available both to Croatian and international archaeological audience to familiarize with the site and research. This will also enable the much needed development of Croatian archaeological technical terms.

Despite the fact that this is an archaeological book it is not exclusively devoted to stratigraphy, chronology and archaeological data summary, but also to the interpretations of archaeological materials in a wider anthropological context. We hope that the additional planned volumes will reach the high standards of this first volume in the series.

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