

Zemono near Vipava 2

IRN 14086	Zemono –archaeological site
Motorway section	HČ Razdrto–Vipava
Geographical coordinates	x 418400 y 79331 z 99
Primary topographical map sheet TTN5	Ajdovščina 14
Cadastral register	c.c. Vipava, cadastral plot nos. 3125/6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 3126/6, 7, 8, 9, 3127/4, 5 & 6
Site type	Base camp (?)
Period	EpiPalaeolithic
Method and date of discovery, site discovered by	Systematic archaeological survey 1999, Gojko Tica and Bojan Djurić
Fieldwork method and date	Excavation 2000–2001
Excavation director	Gojko Tica
Excavated area	8,000 m ²
Site archive kept by	Akord, d.o.o.



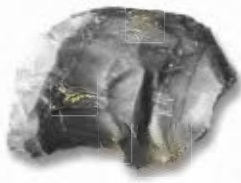
Flint nodule deorated with incisions

The site is located beneath the isolated hill of Zemono beside the main Ajdovščina–Vipava road on an area which is slightly raised above the Vipavska dolina (Vipava valley). The underlying geology of most of the site consists of yellowish-brown silt with rubble in a small area. The south sloping subsoil lay beneath an occupation layer (20 to 30 cm in depth), which was only 60 cm below the ground surface in the northern part of the site, but over 2 m below the ground surface in the southern part. The site stratigraphy indicates that this is a pedogenetic layer, a so-called buried, fossil soil or palaeosol. The occupation layer came into existence during the process of pedogenesis on the underlying geology of the site. The layers above it mainly consisted of alluvial deposits (sandy gravel, sandy silt, and silt), which buried the occupation layer and protected it against anthropogenic intervention and erosion. The alluvial deposits were deposited



by a stream, the palaeochannel of which was recorded as an erosion channel in the occupation layer.

There were numerous traces of human occupation from the end of the Palaeolithic period. Several thousand flint artefacts were discovered, including several hundred typologically definable stone tools: scrapers, backed blades, transverse retouched blades, Gravettien points, etc. The large quantity of artefacts, retouched tools, numerous flakes, waste flakes and core remnants indicate that the tools were manufactured on site and not brought in from elsewhere. Several fireplaces were also discovered, as well as a large quantity of mostly burnt, highly fragmented bones of red deer, wild boar, possibly other animals and a worked red deer antler tine. The most important finds on the site are two stones, decorated with shallow incisions. A prism-shaped flint nodule was marked on all four sides with shallow incisions made by a flint tool. A small shale slab was decorated on one side with single parallel wavy lines, which were bounded by a convex incised line at the base. The other side was decorated with incisions reminiscent of herring-bone decoration, followed by horizontal incisions bounded by pairs of vertical incisions. The stones are the earliest evidence of rock art in Slovenia.



Chert Scraper

Zemona is the first large open site in Slovenia from the Palaeolithic period, or more precisely its final stage, the Epigravettien. However, it has to be pointed out that the excavations did not include the central part of the settlement, but only its extreme north-western edge consisting of an area of circa 2,500 m². The centre of the site is located outside the route of the present road between Vipava and Ajdovščina, probably beside a former meander of the river Vipava. There are other partly excavated settlement traces from the Palaeolithic period in Slovenia, at Jurklošter (Moustérien), Podrisovec near Postojna (Epigravettien), Vrbičev Hribec (Final Late or Final Palaeolithic) or Breg near Škofljica in the Ljubljansko Barje (Mesolithic), but the discovery of such a large open site is surprising.

The layers beneath the plough soil and above the alluvial layers also revealed the sparse remains of a badly damaged Late Bronze Age settlement.

GOJKO TICA

References

- DJURIČ, BOJAN; TICA, GOJKO, *Poročilo o arheoloških raziskavah na najdiščih Zemona 1 in Zemona 2*, Ljubljana 1999.
- JOSIPOVIČ, DRAŠKO, "Zemona – Arheologija", *Enciklopedija Slovenije*, Vol. 15, Ljubljana 2001, p. 161.
- TICA, GOJKO, *Poročilo o arheološkem izkopavanju na najdišču Zemona 2*, Kranj 2001.