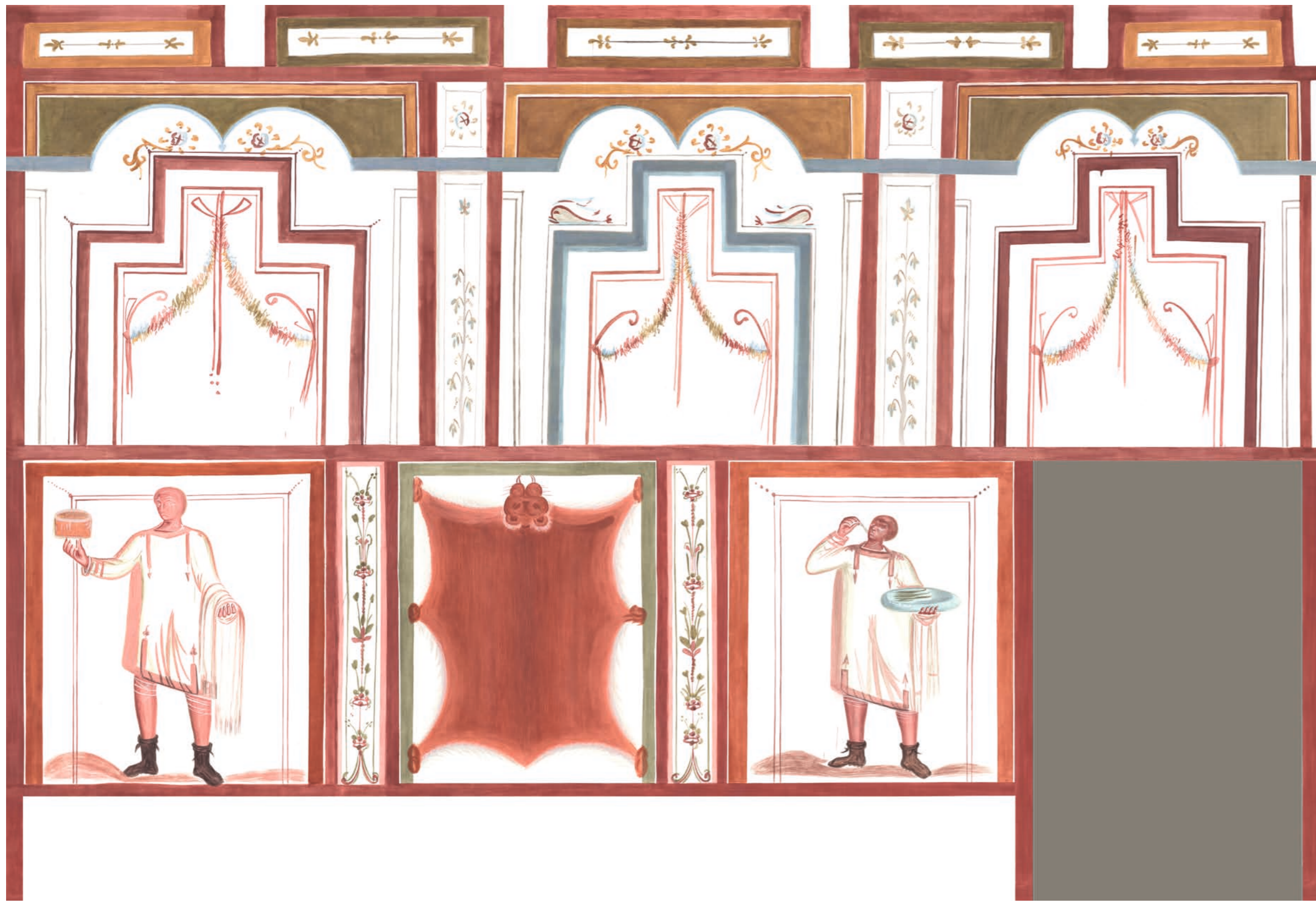


"WARM HOSPITALITY"

Scene with servants from *Brigetio, Pannonia* (Hungary, Komárom/Szőny-Vásártér, III. building 1. room)

Eszter Harsányi – Zsófia Kurovsky



The opening of the new archaeological exhibition at the Brigetio Heritage Visitor Center in Komárom (Hungary) in 2023 provided an opportunity to continue researching the wall painting fragments excavated since 1992 in the civil town of the Roman settlement.

In 1999, during the renovation of the outbuilding of a modern family house, near the central area of the excavations at site Komárom/Szőny- Vásártér (county Komárom-Esztergom, Hungary), the ruins of a building dating back to the last third of the 3rd century/beginning of the 4th century were uncovered. The preliminary report of this excavation and the processing of the wall painting fragments was already presented at the 9th Congress of the AIPMA in Zaragoza in 2004.

Since then, the assembled surface of the mural, which presumably belonged to a former inn, have increased significantly due to newly inserted fragments. The height and construction technology of the known walls, as well as the related details of the roof structure, have been determined.

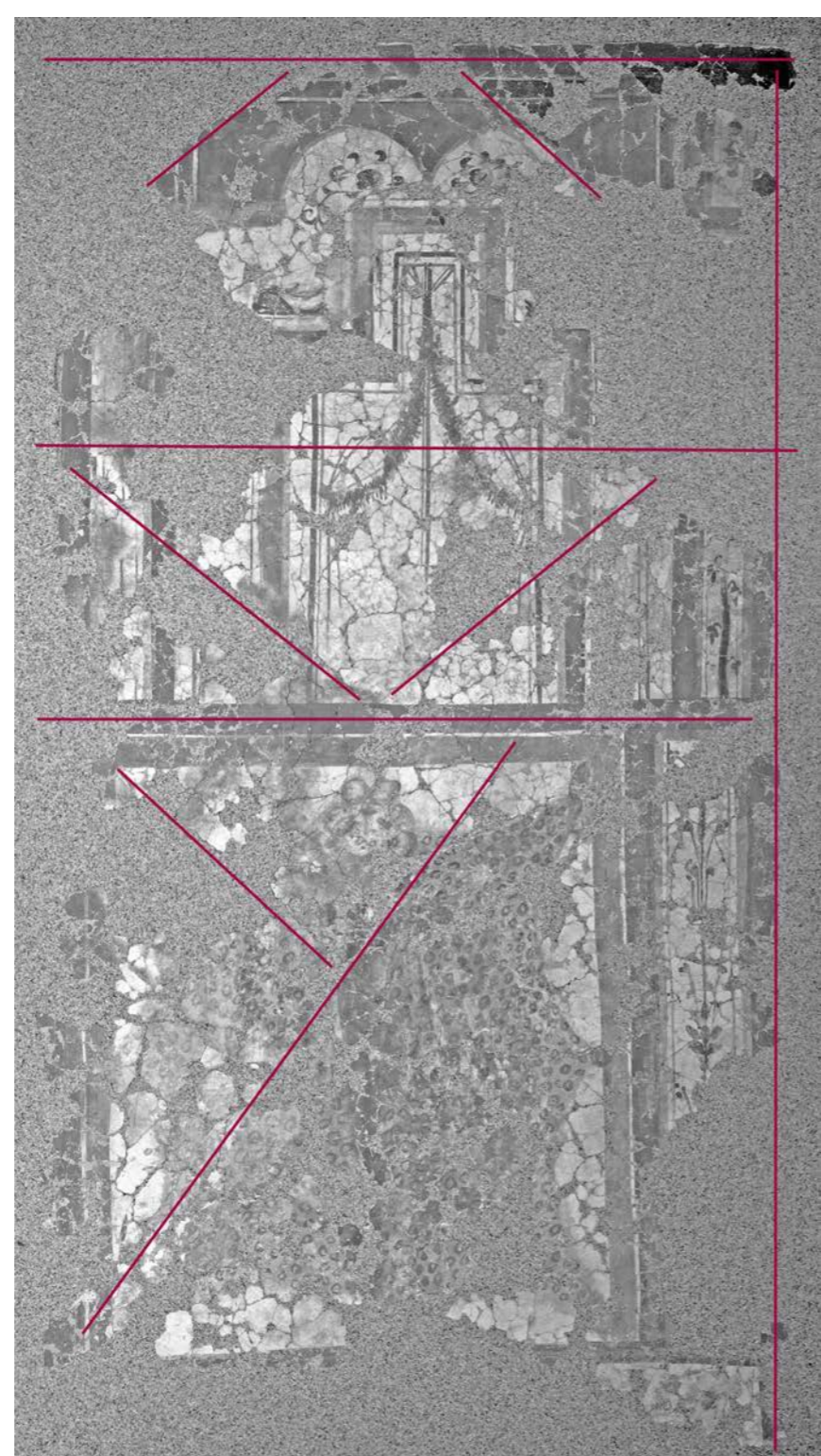
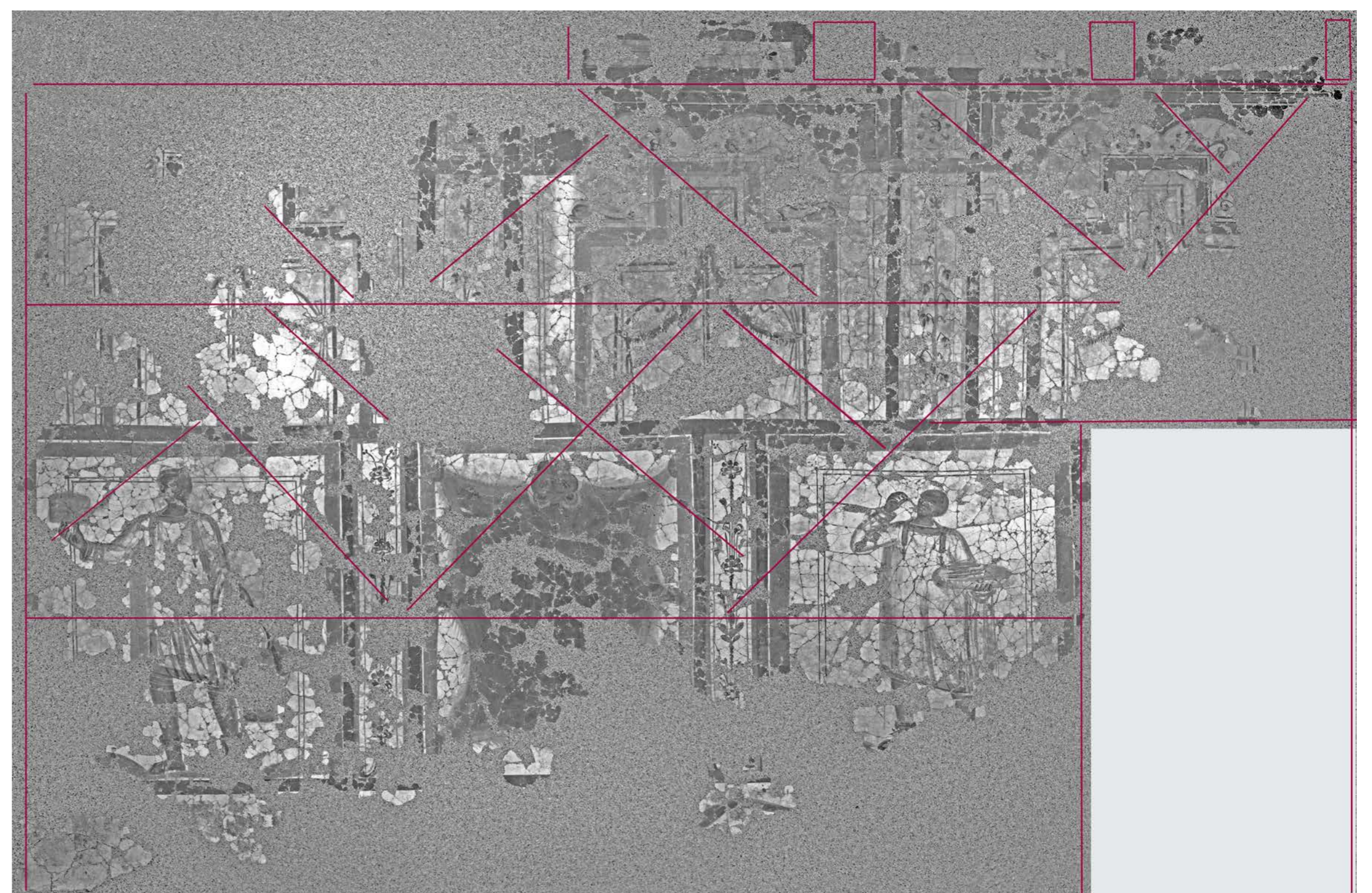
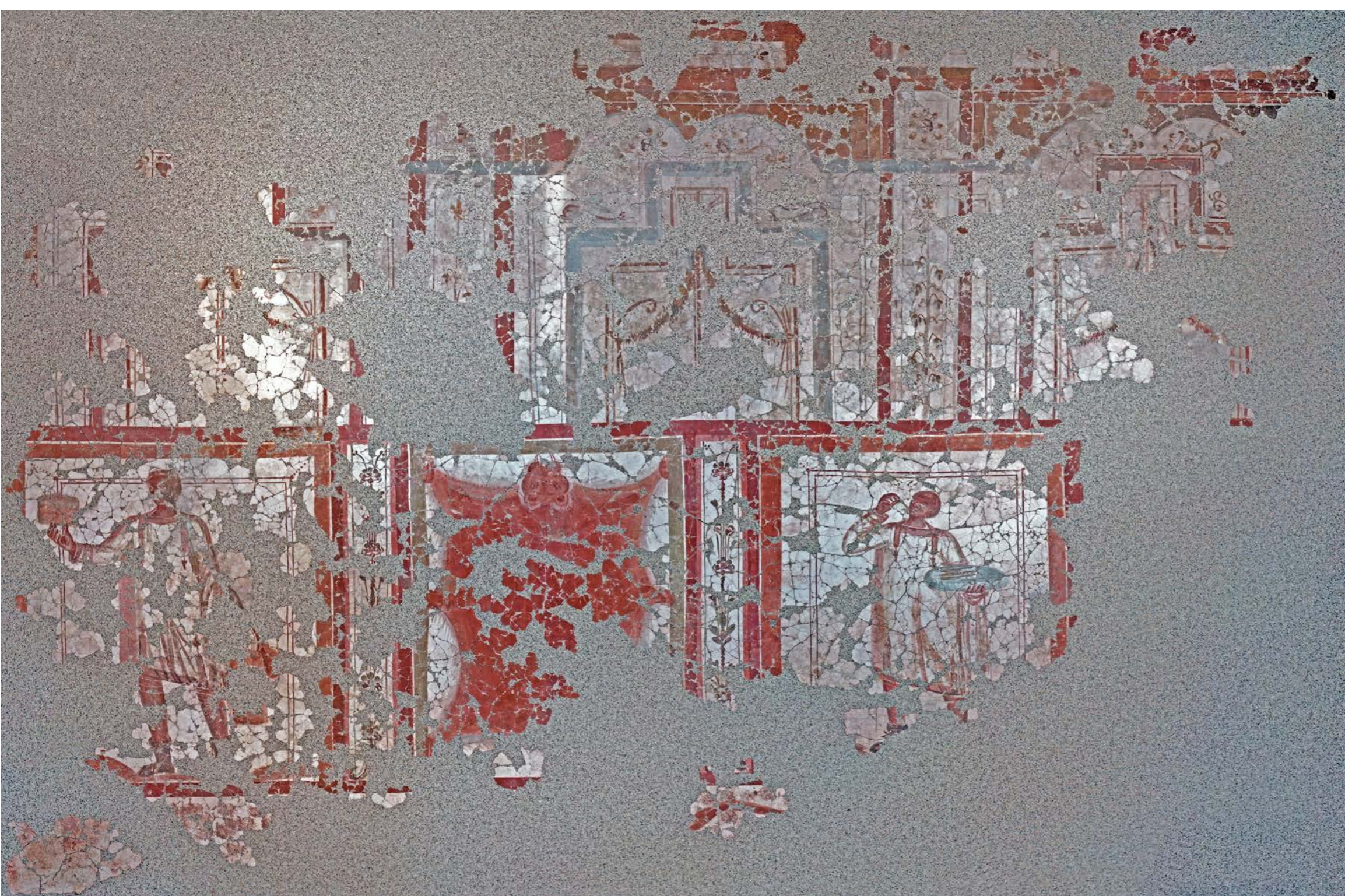
The Roman building, and the room has only been partially excavated, its western wall is known, and details of the northern and southern walls. The location of the eastern wall is unknown.

Three doors are known to the room. One of unknown width, opening from a corridor, at the west end of the south wall. Another, 124 cm wide and at least 186 cm high, at the north end of the west wall. The third door was on the north wall, 160 cm from the western wall. One door step led to it.

The room, based on the simple, rammed floor covered with gravel, the fragments of wall paintings belonging exclusively to the side walls, and the imprint of the eaves of the roofs could have been an inner courtyard.

Based on the assembled surface the composition of the western wall could be reconstructed not only hypothetically. The width of the composition is ~ 530 cm. The height of the plinth is unknown, but it is definitely higher than 34 cm. If it is ~ 44 cm (1.5 Roman feet), then the total height of the composition is ~360 cm.

The composition of the mural on the western wall is divided into four zones in a vertical direction, with on average 6-6,5 cm wide red stripes. The height of the zones measured between the red stripes is as follows: above the plinth the lower zone is 136 cm, above that the upper zone is also 136 cm, and then a closing zone at the top is 18 cm. Within the zones, the panels are separated also by red stripes. In the lower zone above the plinth, wider panels alternate with narrower candelabra fields. The two outer panels depict ¾ life-size male figures in tunic offering food, while the central panel depicts a stretched lion's or perhaps bear's fur. Above them, in the panels of the upper zone, geometric false doors appear, decorated with stylized floral tendrils and dolphins, as well as garlands tied with ribbons. The panels are also separated from each other by candelabra motifs. In the closing zone at the top, between the beam pockets of the roof structure, in variable width horizontal rectangular fields, sticks decorated with leaves are painted.



The western part of the northern wall became known. The previously known decoration of the plinth, the lower and the upper zone is similar to that of the western wall, but the closing zone at the top does not exist, meaning that the height of the mural is that much lower.

According to excavation observations and the large continuous wall painting surface, the western wall of the room is a later wall, the basis of which was a wooden structure built between the walls of the previous buildings/building parts to the north and south. The wooden structure, built on stone foundation, was filled with sun dried clay bricks, onto which two layers of mud plaster were applied before the lime-sand mortar.

The building burnt down. As a result of this, large surfaces of the wall painting came off the mud-plaster or the wall in one piece.

Fracture lines running in straight directions can be seen on the assembled mural surfaces. Some of these indicate the location of the timber elements in the former masonry.

Some fracture lines are oblique close to 45 degrees, approximately parallel or perpendicular to each other, and can be arranged in a system. Due to the lack of clear vertical fracture lines, the location of these elements of the wooden structure can be inferred from the oblique ones. The fracture lines that indicate the location of the horizontal beams are more noticeable.

The width of the segments bounded by the vertical columns fixed between the horizontal beams and the length and direction of the approx. diagonal braces in them do not necessarily match.

The width of the wooden structural elements in the walls cannot be determined because the fracture lines only indicate the direction. However, the variable width of the roof structure's tie beams, between 14 and 21 cm, can be determined based on the beam pockets formed on the assembled surface of the western wall. Their height is 23-24 cm. The painted plaster next to the beam shows that the tie-beams extended beyond the wall plane.

There was a different roof structure above the northern wall. It seems that during the later construction, the roof of the previous building was not modified. At the top of the assembled surface, the imprint of the inclined plane of the boarding at the bottom of the rafters, thus the formation of the eaves can be seen on the plaster.