

STONE ART IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA HAS BEEN A MESSAGE FROM THOUSANDS OF YEARS

Stojan Velkoski

*Institute GAPE – Skopje, Republic of Macedonia
e-mail: contact@igape.edu.mk*

Key words: *stone art, macedonia, stone art in the republic of macedonia, archaeology, healing*

Abstract: *Stone art is both history and art, bestowing spiritual and other messages from the ancient civilizations and peoples; this is especially true for Macedonian people who were present and creating on these regions for thousands of years. Stone art is any engraving or form generated in stone and made by a human hand; hence the name stone art. On the Balkans and especially on the territory of Macedonia there are countless stone engravings bearing diverse messages. Little is known about the messages bestowed by ancient peoples, as the level of information and education thereof is very low. This results in the unserious attitude towards stone art by institution and people in general, and some tendency to its complete destruction.*

Introduction

If the petroglyphs (including the outstanding cultural phenomena known as cubula) reflect the oldest art in the world, than the stone sculpture is the oldest motivated (bestowed) art. For example, the Stone-Age sculptures known as Venus of Berekhat Ram (basalt) and the Venus of Tan-Tan (quarcite) are at least 200,000 years old, while the limestone figure known as Venus of Willendorf dates approximately 30,000 years B.C. One of the reasons known about these examples of prehistoric art is exactly the fact that it was made of material resistant to atmospheric influences as the stone is. Of course, wood carving and ivory carving are equally traditional, but wood is easily deteriorated whereas ivory or other animals' bones are useful for making only small figures. Besides, it is easier to find appropriate stones in different sizes and engrave them, it is also long-lasting and resistant to climate changes. The case with bronze and other metals is different. Marble is more scarce and far more expensive than limestone, but it is used for special purposes by special methods and engraving tools.

Megalith art is also of a high interest and value in stone art, those sculpted reliefs intertwine with regular plastic art, but they are also processed in a special way for each special material, as it is the case with the green jade, so much present in Chinese art. It is known that until the 20th century the creations of almost all master sculptors were stone-engraved, before the artists started to create marble or bronze sculptures, while others as the famous Irish artist Seamus Murphy (1907-1975), dedicated all their lives to stone works. Despite its decline due to the use of diverse synthetic materials, plaster and cement, stone and metal remain the most used media for the famous open-air artistic works: such are the examples of the Titanic Memorial Museum (1931, Washington), by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, the Treblinka Memorial (1958-64) that granite-engraved, unforgettable work from the Holocaust art, designed by the Polish artists Franciszek Dusenko and Adam Hauptman etc.

Prehistoric stone art

It is hard to date the era when stone art began, it can be traced back to the dawn of mankind. The interest and knowledge in the creation of stone art followed the development of mankind. Art did not only reflect elements of people's everyday life: joy, sadness, love, but also some premonitions, visions and information which were completely unknown but appreciated at that time. There is very little such information but researchers strive to eternalize them by photographing and registering them in the files. One of the rare preservers and researchers on the Balkans is Professor Dushko Aleksovski from Kumanovo. He managed to file and safeguard a large collection of stone art pieces reflecting the role of this art in the prehistoric neolith in the region of Macedonia. Egyptian sculpture also made full use of stone both in statues and in reliefs; such is the example of the statue of Akhenaten, 1350 B.C., and the Psamtik plate protected by Hathor 550 B.C., as well as the monumental works as the Giza Sphinx, 2575-2465 B.C. It is known that the Egypt was then ruled by

the Ptolemy Dynasty, who were good sculptors originating from Macedonia. Stone was used in the Persian and in Mesopotamian art and sculpture. For example, the Lamassu of 859 B.C., from the palace of Ashurnasirpal at Nimrud, was a typical example of the Assyrian art of 1500-612 B.C. It is considered that the stone artists and craftsmen of those ancient cultures were influenced by the Macedonian art, which especially holds for the less sophisticated style of the Archaic sculpture of 650-480 B.C., as well as the statue known as Lady of Auxerre, 630 B.C., Le Louvre. Than the greatest Greek art, including that of Parthenon, that was created during the golden age of the high classic antique sculpture, in 450-400 B.C. was made of marble or bronze. An exception is the Rhodes Colossus, 100 meters high, which is a huge statue of Helios, built on the Rhodes island by Chares of Lindos about 280 B.C., in the era of the antique Hellenic sculpture. It is one of the seven wonders of the ancient world, made of stone. Macedonia hosts other gigantic antiquity sculptures but they have so far been permanently attacked and destroyed. Among the first prehistoric stone sculptures were the figures of Venus, which started to appear throughout Europe around 30.000 years B.C. Such are the Austrian Venus from Galgenberg known as Strating figurine, the French Venus of Monpazier, in steatite, The Italian Venus of Savignano, in serpentine, the Russian Venus of Gagarino, in basalt, and the Swiss Venus of Monruz-Neuchatel (cut in smooth stone). The friezes of the sculpture of the stone relief are a popular feature of the Paleolithic cave art, as is the example of Cap Blanc, Roc de Sers and Roc-aux-Sorciers. Examples of Neolithic stone sculptures were also discovered in various parts of Central and East Europe, as well as modern-day Turkey.

Material and methods

On-site gained knowledge and the illegal seekers of hidden treasures who are the majority of these findings were used in this research process. A large part of these artistic works is destroyed by careless and uneducated individuals.

Stone art and healing Official, modern-day medicine is a new method and approach to healing, in its attempt to unite conventional and traditional (alternative) methods. Traditional medicine was performed by specially trained individuals known as shamans. They knew how to relate the spiritual with the nature and the human beings. They chose appropriate rock masses, processed them by certain markings and engravings on the stone itself and performed special spiritual rites. Those rituals most frequently included sacrifice which would be “documented” by visible engravings carrying appropriate memory into the stone. They were thus creating a spiritual – occult altar where they would lay the patients and heal them by a special ritual. Such spiritual activities were performed on several parts of the Macedonian area. One of those locations was the Neolithic observatory of CocevKamen, Kratovo region (Fig. 1) The first estimations indicate that this observatory dates from before 3000 years B.C.



Fig. 1. CocevKamen



Fig. 2. South part of CocevKamen, in front of the altar



Fig. 3. An engraved shamanic altar with a spiritual hole at CocevKamen, around 3000 years B.C.



Fig. 4. Three spiritual holes dug for healing purposes at Cocev Kamen, around 3000 years B.C.



Fig. 5. engraved eye of the Great constructor at the entrance of the CocevKamen dating 3,000 years B.C.



Fig. 6. An engraved protractor witnessing the presence of Freemasonry, around 3,000 years B.C., Kumanovo Region

Stars are one of the stone- engraved elements, as well as the eight- or 16-pointed sun as a characteristic of the ancient Macedonian peoples, (Fig. 7). Besides the engravings, that were used for special purposes, there are also stone-engraved scripts. One of those is the relief script found in Kumanovo which has not been deciphered and is still a challenge to the scientific world.



Fig. 7. Engravings dating earlier than 3,000 years B.C. in the Belasica mountain



Fig. 8. Stone- inscription still unknown for the public and undecoded, dating around 3000 years B.C., Kumanovo region

Gigantic works of stone art

Besides spreading this art throughout the world, the Macedonian builders left important works whose existence remained unknown and were thus spared from destruction. Some of them are the two-meter high King figure in Kumanovo region (Fig. 9), the eight-meter high skull on the Osogovo Mountains (Fig. 10), the "Sleeping Lion" in Prilep region, about 11 meters high (Fig. 11), the Big Alligator about 11 meters long (Fig. 12).



Fig. 9. A 2m high sculpture of a king dating 3,000 B.C., Kumanovo region, purposely damaged by careless people

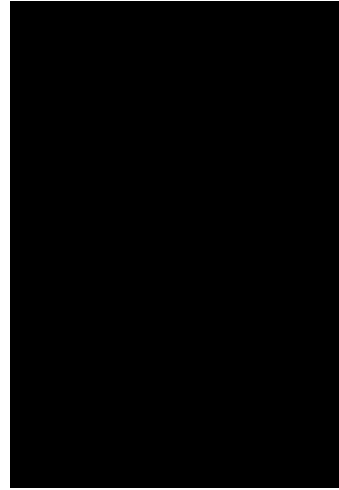


Fig. 10. A skull around 9m high, Osogovo Mountains



Fig. 11. Sleeping Lion, Prilep region



Fig. 12. The Big Alligator, Osogovo Mountains



Fig. 13. A 3 x 3 symbol found in Macedonia, reflecting the three cosmic grids: Curry's, Hartmann's and Stojan's grid

This symbolism depicts the three cosmic grids consisting of 3x3 lines. It is also used in the Freemasons' and Templars' secret signs and elements as is the 3x3 greeting etc. This symbol is frequent in the stone art in Macedonia (Figure. 13).

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to research and analyze the importance and the role of stone art in Macedonia and the reasons for its destruction.

Results

Research revealed serious results regarding the existence and the preservation of stone art in Macedonia to our days. Stone art has been permanently and intentionally destroyed since Roman times for military or political reasons, personal profit, neglect, climatic influences etc. There are individuals and groups who are permanently in quest of some buried or hidden treasure. Others think that a particular work of art contains some bestowed treasure and they will be able to appropriate it. Some who find a such ancient and priceless work think that it contains some riches and break it so nobody else can find the treasure. Thus they think they are the only ones who possess the information which will remain a secret to everyone else. Thirty-five people who were destroying these stone-culture riches under this motto have been analyzed. What is astounding is that twenty-eight of these individuals have already passed away from various reasons. What is happening? Who punishes the destroyers? This still remains to be analyzed. In my view, the stone works of art were built with a purpose and certain spiritual mantras were "incused" into the work of art like a memory. The creation of some of them even included sacrifice, and all these ceremonies created certain bonds with the cosmos; those bonds survived throughout years and centuries. If an ordinary mortal of our times interrupts this process for any reason, all this spiritual rage can fall upon the perpetrator and demand another sacrifice from the said perpetrator or from somebody of their family, which usually happens within the period of three years.

Solution to the problem and recommendations, what is necessary is a highly scientific approach to registration and protection of stone art. A nation-wide strategy of protection of cultural treasures should be elaborated. The competent institutions are those who should revise the Law on Cultural Heritage and organize school and field education to familiarize children and adults with the importance and the role of stone art. People's awareness must be raised to a higher level.

References:

1. Velkoski, Stojan, Institut GAPE, Skopje, R.Macedonia, PROTECTION OF MACEDONIAN STRUCTURAL HERITAGE WITH COMBINED GEOBIOLOGICAL, HYDROGEOLOGICAL AND ECOLOGICAL METHODS
2. Velkoski, Stojan, Jane Velkoski, THE LEGENDS ABOUT THE HIDDEN TREASURE, THE REASONS FOR DESTRUCTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF MACEDONIA .pdf
3. Velkoski, Stojan. RETROSPECTION ON THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN ANCIENT MACEDONIAN MEDICINE AND MEDICINE OF MODERN TIMES, Sofija SENS-2011, 29.11-01.12 2011.
4. PROTECTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA 1. PhD Stojan Velkoski 2.PhD Kiro Ristov 3. Vesna Mirjanoska 4. Viktorija Bojadjev 1. Institute "GAPE" – P.O.Box 891 1000 Skopje, R. Macedonia, NBU 2013 BG
5. Velkoski, Stojan. INSTITUTE GAPE, SKOPJE Macedonia, FREEMASONRY – HISTORY AND PURPOSE, SPACE, ECOLOGY, SAFETY 12 – 14 November SES 2014, Sofia, Bulgaria
6. Sazdovska, Marina, Stojan Velkoski, Faculty of security in Skopje, IGAPE Institute in Skopje, CRIMINAL AND LEGAL PROTECTION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE AND THE NATURAL RARITIES IN REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, , SES 2015.
7. Стојановски, А., Катарџиев И., Зографски Д., Апостолски М.: ИСТОРИЈА НА МАКЕДОНСКИОТ НАРОД, Култура, Скопје, 1988.
8. Донски, А.: ТАЈНАТА НА БАКАРНАТА КНИГА, Штип, 2009.
9. Балабанов, К., Николовски А., Ќорнаков Д.: СПОМЕНИЦИ НА КУЛТУРАТА НА МАКЕДОНИЈА, Мисла, Скопје, 1980.
10. Стојановски, А., Ѓоргиев Д.: НАСЕЛБИ И НАСЕЛЕНИЕ ВО МАКЕДОНИЈА – XV И XVI ВЕК, Институт за национална историја Државен завод на РМ, Скопје, 2001.
11. Rose – Marie & Rainer Hagen, EGYPT, People – Gods – Pharaohs, Taschen GmbH, Köln, 2005.
12. Ancevski, Z., Blazevska Lj., Korzenski F., Misik S., Tasevska M.: MACEDONIA CULTURAL HERITAGE, Mislа. Skopje, 1995.

13. Острогорски, Г.: Историја на Византија, Наша книга, Скопје, 1992;
14. Брајановски, Б.: Тајната на закопаното богатство, Алфа 94, Скопје, 2014;
15. Брестед, Х.: Историја на древен Египет, Марија Арабаџиева, Софија, 2008;
16. Хелсинг, Ј.: Тајните општества 3, Дилок, Софија, 2014;
- 17.. Тасевски, Н.: Времето и знаците, Напредок, Тетово, 2007;
18. Карен, Е.: Клеопатра, Феникс, Скопје, 2007;
19. Библија стар и нов завет, Кршќанска садашњост, Загреб, 1983;
20. Свето писмо (Библија), Македонска книга, 2001.