



Article

DICKS and HEARTS. What Can Modern Wall Self-expression Tell us?

Vasil Zagorov ¹

¹ Faculty of Library Studies and Cultural Heritage, University of Library Studies and Information Technologies, 1784 Sofia, Bulgaria; E-Mail: v.zagorov@unibit.bg

Abstract

The article looks at modern graffiti, in the widest sense of understanding this notion, as a means of studying the prehistoric rock art. Based on the case study approach, a number of locations have been presented of self-expression of modern humans, which are current conveniently forgotten by civilized people practices of the past of human civilization. The object of research is a city wall, which has been a mediator of an active process of written and visual communication for the last decade. An analysis has been made of the means of expression, the motifs and techniques of the messages. Based on this study, the potential of such objects to help the research in the field of prehistoric rock art is present. A series of questions have been posed that can be useful when applying the contemporary methods of studying the early steps of visualizing human thought.

Keywords

Social Communication; Graffiti; Prehistoric art; History; Modern Manifestations; Comparative Analysis

1. Introduction

The study of modern graffiti, understanding the notion in its broadest sense of wall art, already has serious scientific traditions¹. The notion of graffiti as an object of study, is considered an integral part of modern hip-hop culture. It has been studied as vandalism or a cultural phenomenon, as a criminal act or as a social message, but with a clear tendency towards the high achievements of certain artists, writers or the saturation of certain locations and scenes. Motivation, messages and style are actively studied, attempts at classification and deconstruction have been made (Jeffrey Ian Ross, 2016, p.1-8). At the same time, graffiti culture has been seriously underestimated from the point of view of its scientific and information potential. This, according to

Ross, is because the field is: 'dominated by descriptive studies, and minimal theorizing supported with a paucity of data collection. A considerable number of untested and unquestioned assumptions about graffiti and street art exist, and are held not only by the public and agents of social control, but by graffiti and street artists themselves.' (ibidem, p. 8).

On its part, the study of pre-historic art has had its traditions for over a century and a half, and yet the questions outnumber the answers (Moro-Abadía, Morales, 2005). Researchers of prehistoric art have been working on a number of basic methods – art analysis, contextual analysis, structural and comparative analysis (Clotte, 2016; Davidson 2012). The method of analogy with art of modern traditional societies is among the leading ones in the field of research, although it often raises doubts, mainly because it refers to parallels between art and semantic categories, rather than between specific technical drawing features of rock art. Such comparisons do not take into account the effect of Jan Vansina's 'floating gap', in which it becomes clear

1 - A detailed overview of research on the subject of graffiti is given in the preface to Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art, ed. by Jeffrey Ian (London and New York: Routledge, 2016). This collection of research on the subject presents in-depth approaches and the focus of scientific interest in graffiti.

that traditional societies are able to tell more about the distant past than about their recent one (Asman, 2001). Anyway, in the scientific dialogue among researchers in prehistoric art field there goes a discussion whether new methods, tools and approaches can be enlisted (Davidson, 2012, cd-1692).

The possibility of comparative analysis between prehistoric drawings and modern graffiti has not been discussed due to the belief of leading scholars in prehistoric art such as Clotte that modern graffiti is limited to the synthetic 'I was here / we were here' (Clotte, 2016, p. 9). Such conviction is due to the fact that graffiti researchers point out that graffiti are first and foremost an act of individual expression of the personality through an artistically shaped pseudonym (Gottlieb, 2008, p. 6). Therefore, this article attempts to assess the possibility of modern graffiti to become part of the scientific tools for the study of prehistoric art. At the very least, this is relevant because prehistoric scholars often ask questions and develop methodological techniques that can be easily studied through a larger, broad-spectrum study of contemporary graffiti in all its aspects (Pigeaud, 2007).

The hypothesis of this article is that a basis for comparison between prehistoric rock and contemporary graffiti and street art exists, as the archetypal significance of the **Impulse for creativity** and the characteristics of the **Contemporary cave** can help systematize, reformulate and complement in an interdisciplinary perspective of the current scientific opinions, giving different answers in the field of prehistoric art. The basis for comparison is determined by the common features of both types of art: both are a mediated act of communication (Gottlieb, 2008, p. 5), both are realized by specific individuals/groups, with specific motivation and with specific means in their environment, both are semantically loaded and carry specific messages. Given the presence of text in modern graffiti, both categories fit perfectly into Davidson's definition of PEDS – Paintings, Engravings, Drawings and Stencils (PEDS) (Davidson, 1997, 2012)². Last but not least – both categories are often objects of scientific debates over whether they are art or not. Such a comparison cannot answer the question of 'why' our

2 - Modern aerosol graffiti could be seen as a renaissance of the what was registered in the distant past as street drawing, triggered by the easily accessed, convenient and sustained means of drawing and the excessive urbanization.

ancestors began to paint, but it can help reformulate and supplement some scientific questions by art critics and archaeologists regarding prehistoric art – who, when, how, with whom, how long, under what conditions they expressed themselves visually. The approach can also provide partial answers to the intentions of prehistoric artists.

2. Materials and Methods

The approach to the current research is based on the study of an object that is defined with the concept of Contemporary cave. This concept does not apply to geological formations, although it does not exclude them, but mainly to abandoned buildings. After their abandonment, these buildings are subjected to a stage of vandalism and looting, and over time are visited by various individuals and groups of people who have certain feelings and attitudes defined in this study as an "impulse to creativity". This is where a line is drawn between the motive and the impulse, because the study of a large number of Contemporary caves in different cities in Bulgaria, Malta, Spain, Portugal, Sweden and Türkiye. clearly shows that this is not a deliberate purposeful action, but a spontaneous one. Before the purposeful planned and prepared visit to the Contemporary cave by graffiti writers and artists, the space of such objects is saturated with visual and textual messages on the principle of modification of the Theory of the broken window (Willson, Kelling, (1982) 2020). This is not about windows, but about walls or rather surfaces with different shapes and degrees of smoothness. A surface can be empty for a long time, but after the first external creative intervention, the surface begins to saturate with textual and visual messages that express certain ideas and even enter into dialogue (PippilotaM, 2021). This effect can be traced back in time to Roman and Egyptian graffiti (Baird, Taylor, 2016, p. 17, Ragazzoli, 2018), as well as in the modern manifestations of pilgrimage and ordinary tourism – expressed through contemporary dendroglyphs, geoglyphs and even cave inscriptions and drawings, the work of professional and non-professional speleologists (Zagorov, 2020). Such a creative impulse, despite the sacred cliché of books, can be found in the form of drawings going far beyond the concept of book marginalia.

When comparing the prehistoric and modern wall manifestations of self-expression, two remarks must be made. Often the information saturation of the

walls in Contemporary caves is a fact because someone has created there before and one feels obliged to get involved. This impulse will be called a State of prehistory – the desire to communicate with someone on a physical wall, even though there is a 'wall' on Facebook and other channels of communication. The prehistorical character of the communication act is inherent in its impulsiveness and spontaneity seen as a component of primary psychological systems. And of course we must take into account the fact that over time the Impulse for creativity and the State of prehistory are expressed primarily through written rather than visual messages, although the latter are not completely absent. This is due to the growing role of writing systems in human societies over the last 5,000 years, rather than some major change in the way the human brain functions.

The research work in the Contemporary cave is associated with subjective and objective difficulties. Possible problems with unregulated residents and the authorities, the danger of collapse or destruction create some difficulties with larger sites, especially in terms of methodological survey and punctual description. For this reason, a case study with a relatively small object located in a central urban environment, was chosen to confirm the hypothesis. It is a large bank building on the central pedestrian street in the town of Elin Pelin, Bulgaria (population 7,500 people by 2020) (See Figure. 1). The architecture of the building forms a small niche on the sides with two small panels separated by columns that surround the central panel. The niche is not visible from the main street, from the back green area or from the windows of the bank and creates conditions for a certain privacy in the realization of the creative impulse (See Figure. 2). The object was photographed with high resolution and on the basis of the methodology for working with book marginalia all inscriptions and images were read, described and classified. The classification includes two main categories by type of inscription (1): text, tag, image, sticker, combination and the author's intention (2): offensive, love, football agitation, etc. The difference between a personal name and/or a nickname and an artistically designed nickname is marked by two categories: inscription and tag, the former given to the individual by others following certain characteristics, and the latter being an alter ego chosen by the person. Texts and images are described in panels from top to bottom and from left to right. Based on the collected empirical material from the wall, certain qualitative

and quantitative conclusions have been made about the nature, production and composition of textual and visual messages. Based on the conclusions, questions have been formulated that can stimulate the research of experts with richer scientific experience in prehistoric art.

3. Results

A total of 369 tags, inscriptions, images and stickers have been registered on the three panels and the two columns in the niche, which we will conditionally call messages. It should be kept in mind that on the wall are visible traces of a rather faded, illegible inscription. The messages are filled with a wide variety of technical means, pencils, felt-tip pens, markers, sprays, etc. There is a certain regularity in the elaboration of the messages. They are fewer in number on the left (33) and right panels (32), where they rarely overlap or cross, and most on the center panel (248) where, at a height of 1.60-1.80 m they are extremely dense, they often overlap or cover each other. The concentration of messages on the left (28) and right columns (28) is a high frequency compared to quantity parameters with the number of left and right panels, which can be explained by the fact that they are more convex than the wall and the messages stand out clearly. At the base of both columns are blocks for raising the level, which shows that the height of the message matters. The layout of the messages clearly demonstrates several behavioral characteristics. The artist prefers to express him/herself in the central parts of the wall, rather than in its periphery, although the message can be crossed, added or deleted. The author prefers to stretch up so that the message is above all others, but not to squat close to the ground (on the surface of the wall near the ground the messages appear with the lowest frequency). The behavior of the artist is related to both the location of the niche and the height of the people who drew the messages, and the greatest concentration is between the level of the eyes and the waist. According to Ferrell, writers fight for the same walls, and here the identical number of messages on the side panels and columns and the concentration of messages in the middle are clearly visible (Ferrell, 2016, p. xxxii). This pattern is noticeable throughout the niche and may be useful in the study of older localities with graffiti and rock paintings.

The predominant part of the messages is expressed textually and out of the total number they are – 251. In 26 of the cases the inscription is supplemented by

or complements an image. There are a total of 67 images on the wall with different semantic value, and only one of them has artistic and aesthetic qualities. Although the wall is insignificant in terms of graffiti culture, it also contains a large number of tags that can be defined mainly as the work of toy writers (newbies) and even as first attempts. Of the 56 tags, two tags and two spray tags stand out for their quality, and among the names of the writers there is only one that has been more actively on the graffiti scene in Bulgaria. Among the tags there are collective of the so-called crew – 9 in number and individual – 47 in number. Among them there are no personal tags and the tags of the crew by Elin Pelin, known on the graffiti scene outside the town. Quantitative parameters show the great popularity of hip hop culture in Bulgaria, but they definitely emphasize the fact that it is more of a craze and a model for maintenance than a serious occupation. Stickers are the other clearly distinguishable group of messages that are mostly related to football fans, illegal loans and politics, with the weak presence of the latter two groups, but given the location – they are interesting. The number of football stickers is difficult to determine, because they are most often subjected to methodical and thorough destruction by fans of opposing teams. The messages do not comply with any linguistic and aesthetic norms. Cyrillic and Latin are mixed, sometimes in one inscription. Text and image are mixed, no grammatical rules are followed – punctuation, spelling, layout of the text from left to right and top to bottom. There is a continuing script, reversing the direction, a combination of lowercase and uppercase letters, etc.

3.1 Meaningful variety of messages

Clottes is right in his claim that declaring presence is of significance in modern graffiti (Clottes, 2016). The same is true for people who express themselves spontaneously on surfaces in their environment. Most on the wall contains individual inscriptions such as 'I was here' (92) and 'we were here' (24). In the case of individual inscriptions of this type, personal names are found along with the tags, in some cases increasing anonymity by choosing a nickname: 'the Cobble Stone', 'the Herz', 'Skuz', sometimes indicating the initials: 'N. A. was here'. The 'we were here' inscriptions can also be classed as two types – collective tags of crews – RINFHL crew and subculture forms of organization – the most popular on the wall being the hip-hop label MBT = Murda Boyz [Team], and also

enumerating personal names: 'Desi, Marios, Ivet' + the image of a heart. In this regard, in the previous part of the study, after conversations with writers and artists, the similarities were highlighted between hunter-gatherers and subcultural group members, especially graffiti crews (Zagorov, Hristov, 2021).

The Theory of the Broken Window and the spontaneity of the impulse for creativity are most valid in terms of 'I was here' inscriptions. The avalanche effect after the appearance of the first inscription is easily explained. Every next visitor to the wall also wants to leave a memory of themselves or the group they are close to. The other characteristic feature of this type of messages is that they cause delayed mediated communication because they stimulate the impulse of creativity. As a result of the already existing inscriptions and tags, the newcomer experiences various emotional states (love, hate, envy, anger), which are expressed in crossover (replacement with another inscription or image), strikeout (damnation), correspondence (accumulation), threat and offense. This is a chain reaction of spontaneous acts of self-expression similar to the accumulation (or crossing in graffiti language) of drawings of animals in the caves of Niaux and Pech Merle, France. A good example of the impulse of creativity is the writing of the nickname SKUZ five times in addition to an inscription 'Nice SKUZ' and the reaction of the most active 'artist' on the wall – Vanko. Vanko is in 10 inscriptions with more complex content and meaning, entering into dialogue with other 'artists'. His name is an association with the infamous Bulgarian rapper Vanko 1 and is signed as the member of the popular teenage hip-hop label Murda Boyz (MBT), which has been tagged six times with captions and four times with its Bucket Hat skull symbol. Vanko wrote an offensive message against SKUZ, but somebody has scratched out one of the words and turned the meaning into SKUZ favor. The above conclusions about spontaneous chain reaction of self-expression can be confirmed by the fact that the next largest group of inscriptions and images are associated with feelings of hatred and love.

After personal tags and names, most of the messages are offensive – 78 in number. In this group we can distinguish personal insults, most often with sexual overtones (Sagan, 2014, c. 57-58), offensive words to members of the other group, mostly the opposing football team or crew, insulting institutions – MBP (Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria), БДЖ (Bulgarian State Railways), БФК (Bulgarian Football Union). Fake

advert insults are extremely popular – number + name = sexual service: '887762XX'.^{3,4} In some cases, the insults turn into dialogue mixed with threats, which shows that the wall is an active place for communication and some of the artists visit it regularly. Personal insults distinguish between insults to a personal name (most likely peers) and insults to a family name (most likely a teacher or local authority). This difference can be felt in messages such as 'Nakov is a faggot / whorefucker' and 'Adelina is a whore'. In some cases, when we have an insult, the name of the object being offended is crossed out or changed. The insults are often sexual in nature and are directed at females, which can be associated with a lack of attention and unshared feelings: 'Number of a whore' anonymously, 'Maria L. is a whore', 'Miroslava is a whore'. In some cases, inscriptions appear to the same person in both offensive and positive contexts. An example is the mention of the person 'Chukov', which appears in 3 separate inscriptions: 'Chukov go f...' (the panel has fallen, but the beginning is a clear sign that it is an insult), or an inscription emphasizing segregation: 'The town is too small and there is no place for Chukov' and the anonymous love message written mixed in Latin and Cyrillic: 'I love Chukov'.

Inscriptions of interest are the type of 'urban legends' on the verge of insult and often mix popular clichés, desire for self-promotion and domination, as well as personal philosophical views or meaningful thoughts as far as can be understood by a certain circle of people. For instance, the classic for musical hip hop culture claims for sexual activity: 'all women blowjob me, your wife is number 6' (lyrics from Murda Boyz), 'these bitches blow more than BDZ'⁵, 'If the whore is obedient, I'll take

her for a haircut.' There are philosophically cynical ones: 'It's better for your cock to smell like ass than your ass smelling of cock!', 'so much semen have we given to the whores'. The inscriptions state the frequent use of drugs, 21 in number, or demonstrate a revolt, which shows that your habits are different from those of other people: 'drunken me and my bro run away from the blue beacon (cops)'; 'we smoke weed until we feel sick!!!', 'we love the easy, we smoke the funny'. Often this type of inscription contains messages that obviously express some intention, but are not clear such 'There is no, NO', 'Dick pepper'.

As a counterpoint to hatred, it should be noted that 26 of the inscriptions and images are related to the expression of love for a particular person or group. Here, along with the standard explanations of love for a particular individual, strong positive feelings are expressed, especially towards football teams. Very often these inscriptions are complex and show that feelings are unshared or provoke negative emotions based on personal opposition to an identical object of interest: "[Scratched name] someday, if we run into each other somewhere again, meet me again!" + three hearts. Interestingly, love inscriptions resembling magic spells to come true, which are common on other walls, on the current wall are present in only one inscription: K[name] + K[name] + I[name] = BH [(FI) forever inseparable].

The topic of love and hate is also strongly used in the confrontation of fans of opposing football teams. Communication and aggression on a football topic is the most intense and hostile, overwhelmed by extreme feelings. The messages of the football fans show the highest concentration of damnation, cross-out, insults and threats. The messages of the opposing team must be erased, insulted and ridiculed, and the ultimate goal is complete domination through a large number of positive inscriptions about your own team. As in the case of SKUZ and Vanko 1, the hypothesis of 'I was here' is already developed to the marking of a territory so characteristic of most animal species, with the difference that it is not about biological agents and smell, but an artificially created image or a text with a specific message. The State of prehistory of certain groups of is very clear as

3 - The last digit has been crossed out by an unknown person, and the penultimate by the author in order to protect the privacy of the number holder.

4 - The practice – personal phone number + insult/offence are registries in the Torsbergsgymnasiet, Böllnas, Sweden, which leads to the conclusion that this is an autonomously invented practice among students in two remote European countries, between which there is no direct communication and language connection. However, this conclusion needs to be confirmed by further research.

5 - Here, in addition to the vague boast of active sexual life, there is a humorous insult to the Bulgarian State Railways, known for their depreciated wagons, in which there is a current. Depreciated wagon (blowing, air draft) = Oral sex (blowing).

an atavistic activity when we talk about modern territorial sign marking of football hooligans, graffiti writers and gang bands. An instinct registered in different stage of human civilisation a society from hunters and gatherers to post-industrial national states which is very well described by prominent scientist in the field of territoriality (Sack, 1986, p. 6-15, 32; Taylor, 1988, p. 159, 175-179).

The inscriptions and images related to football are 63 in total. This does not include torn and strong football stickers – about 40. The messages on the wall show that between the supporters of the two teams in Bulgaria with the most titles in the history of Bulgarian football – Levski and CSKA, there is an intense aggressive dialogue. Although few in number, this category includes inscriptions from various political factions and subcultural groups: 'GOOD NIGHT LEFT SIDE', 'I DON'T LIKE HEAVY METAL FANS.' In general, textual messages carry out the spontaneous nature of self-expression of basic feelings such as hatred, love, including unrequited one, competition for territories that belong to opposing subcultural groups.

3.2. Visual self-expression in a contemporary city environment.

Dominant for the studied object are the anthropological symbols – hearts, penises, human faces. Rarely, there are plant motifs that, although visually unsuccessful, relate to marijuana smoking. The hearts, 55 in total, are used as a frame in which names are written. Another option is to add images of hearts as decoration to personal name(s), team names, tags, thus replacing the word 'love'. The interesting thing here is that the word "love" is mentioned in the inscription only 11 times, and feelings are expressed more often with the visual equivalent of the word - ♥.

The ratio between the quality and quantity of the penis is a little different. We have 11 times the mention of the word 'cock', where once it is accompanied by the image of the penis. The wall depicts 20 male genitals with varying degrees of abstraction and hyperbole. The most interesting is the penis with four bodies (See Figure. 3) and a penis shaped like a rodent, which has two more detailed drawings of the penis (See Figure. 4). In one case, a penis was added to a human figure bearing the marks of the punk subculture. This tendency – to add male or female genitals – is characteristic of the corrupting existing graffiti or traditional pieces of art depicting people and animals (See Figure. 5, 5a, 5b). In

some cases, however, the penises are painted outside the context of other inscriptions and images on the wall. There are samples presented with details (hair) or in action (ejaculation). Similar trends of cock depiction have been observed in deposits and spots of modern graffiti in Saint Julian's (Malta) and Aveiro (Portugal), as well as in working with control groups with varying degrees of literacy and artistic culture (Hristov, Zagorov, 21). The similarities in different geographical and social strata mean that a more serious scientific answer should be sought to the question of why these days one paints predominantly male genitals on walls.

When depicting people and parts of people, it is clear that there is a serious discrepancy between the artist's desire and the final result, related with the lack of artistic skills and experience of the performer. This factor must be taken into account in all wall and rock paintings and can explain many abstract symbols and images continue to be an enigma to archaeologists and art critics. In fact, of the four images of people and faces, only one is made professionally. Its quality has led to an unsuccessful attempt to simulate the drawing, which remains unfinished due to poor results. A similar discrepancy between the desire and the quality of the drawing is found in attempts to depict a marijuana leaf, and not only on this particular wall. The skull is also a popular image, as on this wall there are 4 identical images of a skull with different quality, which means that the artist has practiced. The skull is associated with the music label MURDA BOYZ and perfectly demonstrates the collective affiliation and self-identification of a group of young people expressed through a specific symbol.

It is very important also to point out the area where the marker is tested, and the end result is also abstract and has a direct parallel in prehistoric art – psychograms, strange shaped signs, abstract symbols, dots and lines (See Figure. 6, 6a). Instead of abstract and individual attitudes, in some of the prehistoric drawings one should look for an attempt to try a certain artistic technique or material.

4. Conclusions

This article does not address the issue of the observed type of places entirely and it is clear that there is a need for comparison with more similar panels and contemporary caves. An initial review of panels in other cities and countries leads to similar conclusions about the spontaneity, concentration, nature and technical

means of implementing the messages. The existence of such localities in chronological order from Modernity to the Middle Ages and Antiquity clearly demonstrates that people need to express themselves publicly outside the official channels and beyond the accepted by modern societies conventions and clichés about written communication (Ragazzoli, 2018). In this informal form of self-expression, with the advent of easier and more convenient to use writing systems – syllabic and phonetic, the text begins to displace the image, which does not completely displace the pictographic way of expression. There is a serious change with the consumer's access to written means, but the impulse is obviously identical. From this point of view, in the direction of a deeper study of prehistoric art, understood not only as Paleolithic and Neolithic, but as a work of societies in a state of prehistory (without written systems), several questions can be asked, derived from the contents of this particular wall.

1. What is the borderline between the formal (official) and the informal (unofficial) in cave art in terms of the performer and the will of the group?
2. Is it assumed that some of the images in prehistoric art may contain insults to certain individuals and groups?
3. Is it assumed that some of the images in prehistoric art may be the product of competition between individuals or fractions in society (hunting group = football team)?
4. What part of the prehistoric paintings are the product of competing personalities and communities, overlapping in one living space or in different time layers?
5. How is a nickname spelled and "I was here" expressed through pictograms and how to change the connotation or cross out such an inscription?
6. What would a materialized visual insult from an illiterate person look like?

The extent to which these questions may be useful in the modern humanities can be traced to an alternative interpretation, in the context of the present study, of The Sorcerer of Gabillou (Dordogne) (Clottes, Figure. 1). As it was have already pointed out, the nicknames express certain character features – 'Paveto' (the Cobble Stone) is hard and hits badly. Along this line, it is possible that The 'Sorcerer' of Gabillou is a nickname for a person with superhuman strength – the power of a bull, which oppresses other members of the group and especially their peers. He depicted himself through his

qualities, through the visualization of his nickname – 'The Bull'. Unable to oppose it, its competitors changed the connotation of the image by adding an arrow to the bull's eye and face. Strokes around the buttocks may also be the result of such redefinition of the meaning with a sexual connotation. Thus, through the anonymous act of vandalizing the figurative nickname, the Bull is defeated. An additional argument in support of this statement is the fact that the 'sorcerer' of Gabillou bears clear traces of a discrepancy between the artistic desire and artistic skill of the artist. In this line, the conclusion of this article is that a classification of contemporary urban graffiti will help to supplement and rethink some postulates in the study of prehistoric art.

Acknowledgements

This research was conducted with the support of the Bulgarian Science Fund under the project: Trends and Parallels in Prehistoric Rock and Contemporary Street Art – ФНН КП-06-M45/2. The project team would like to thank the Helictit Speleology Club, Sofia, Bulgaria; Sofia Graffiti Tour; GRAFFstvoto, 0511 and Torsbergsgymnasiet, Böllnas, Sweden for their assistance.

References

- Asman, I., 2001. Kulturnata Pamet: Pismenost, Pamet i Politicheska Identichnost v Rannite Visokorazviti kulturi. Planeta 3.
- Baird, J. A., & Taylor, C., 2016. Ancient graffiti . In Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art (pp. 17–26). Routledge.
- Clottes, J., Martin, O. Y., & Martin, R. D., 2016. What is paleolithic art?: Cave paintings and The dawn of human creativity. The University of Chicago Press.
- Davidson, I., 1997. The power of pictures. In Beyond art: Pleistocene image and symbol, vol. 23. Edited by M. Conkey, O. Soffer, D. Stratmann, and N. G. Jablonski, pp. 128-158. The California Academy of Sciences.
- Davidson, I., 2012. Symbolism and becoming a hunter-gatherer. In: CLOTES J. (dir.), L'art pléistocène dans le monde / Pleistocene art of the world / Arte pleistoceno en el mundo , Actes du Congrès IFRAO, Tarascon-sur-Ariège, septembre 2010, Symposium « Signes, symboles, mythes et idéologie... ». N° spécial de Préhistoire, Art et Sociétés, Bulletin de la Société Préhistorique Ariège-Pyrénées, LXV-LXVI, 2010-2011, CD: p. 1689-1705.
- Ferrell, J., 2016. Graffiti, street art and the politics of complexity. In J. I. Ross (Ed.), Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art. (p. xxx-xxxviii). Routledge.
- George L. Kelling, J. Q. W. (2020, July 20). Broken windows. The Atlantic. Retrieved July 5, 2022, from <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>
- Gottlieb, L. (2009). Graffiti art styles: A classification system and theoretical analysis. McFarland.
- PippilotaM (2021, July 26). Razmisli na TAGaduck. Graffstvoto. Retrieved July 5, 2022, from <https://graffstvoto.com/tagaduck/>
- Moro-Abadía, O., & González Morales, M. R., 2005. L'analogie et la représentation de l'art primitif à la fin du xixe Siècle. L'Anthropologie, 109(4), 703–721. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anthro.2005.09.001>
- Pigeaud, R., 2007. Determining style in palaeolithic cave art: A new method derived from horse images. Antiquity, 81(312), 409–422. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0003598x00095272>
- Ragazzoli, C., Harmansah, Ö., Salvador, C., & Frood, E., 2018. Scribbling through History: Graffiti, Places and People from Antiquity to Modernity. Bloomsbury Academic.
- Ross, J. I. (Ed.), 2016. Introduction. Sorting it all out. In Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art (pp. 1–8). Routledge.
- Sack, R. D., 1986. Human Territoriality. Cambridge University Press.
- Sagan, C., 2014. Drakoni v rayskata gradina. Iztok-Zapad.
- Taylor, R. B., 1988. Human Territorial Functioning: An Empirical, Evolutionary Perspective on Individual and Small Group Territorial Cognitions, Behaviors, and Consequences (Environment and Behavior). Cambridge University Press.
- Zagorov, V. (2018, March 14). Svinski raboti i nyakoi drugi istorii za obshtuvaneto mezhduraznitsite dvunogi. Knigohranilishteto. Retrieved July 6, 2022, from <https://bgbookhistory.blogspot.com/2018/03/blog-post.html>
- Zagorov, V., & Hristov, H., 2021. Motivi i podbudi pri savremenoto gradsko steno izkustvo (E. Ignatova, R. Yotova, & D. Stoyanova, Eds.; pp. 27–33). Za bukvite - O pismenehy.

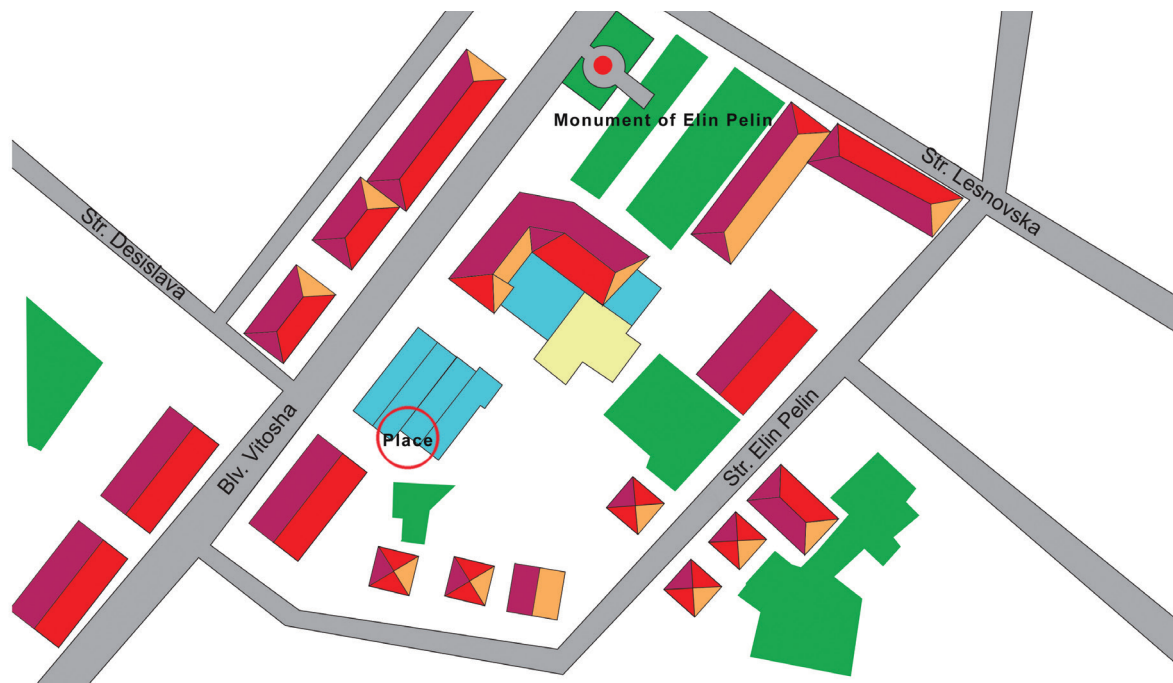


Figure 1. The map of the central pedestrian area of Elin Pelin city and the niche



Figure 2. View from the alcove and panels. The author's height (1.84 meters) serves as a scale (Photo by the author).



Figure 3. Male penis with four bodies.



Figure 4. Penis shaped like a rodent, with two more detailed drawings of the penis



Figure 5 a, 5 b, 5 c, 5 d. Adding male and female genitalia to older wall images or artworks is a common practice.

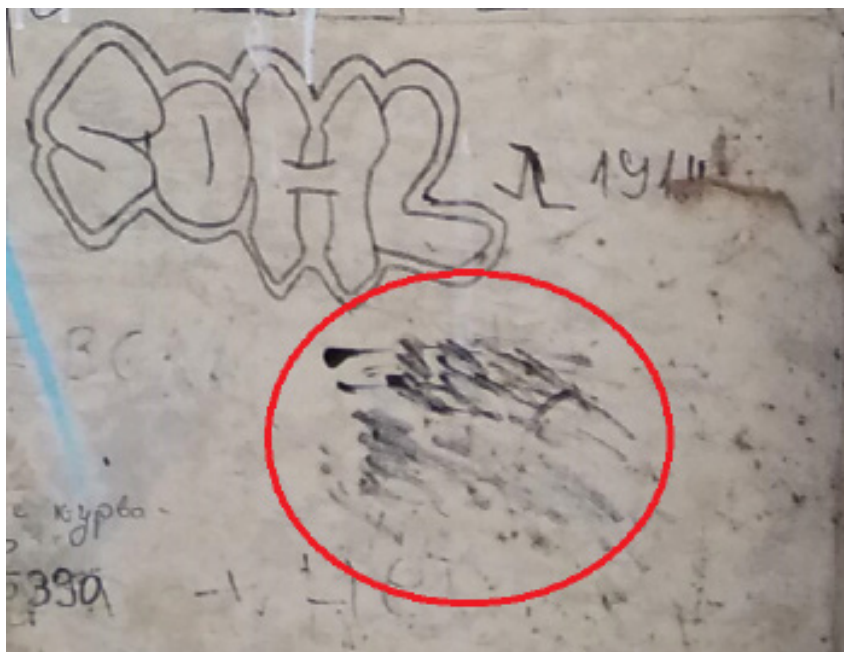


Figure 6 a, 6 b The artist's experiments with paint and drawing materials often create whimsical shapes that resemble meaningful signs.

Note: All materials and photos are created form the project team.