

The first monograph dealing exclusively with Czech megalithic monuments was a book by J. Heišus and A. Hlušítk, "Kamenné otazníky" (*Stone Question Marks*) (*Svojtka a Vašut, Prague, 1991*), which notes above all the stone alignments of Kounovice and findings in Central and Northern Bohemia, along with comparisons with foreign analogous instances.

On the basis of M. Špůrek's materials, the Technický magazín (Technical Magazine) brought a guide to Czech megaliths ("*Tajemné menhiry v Čechách*" – *Mysterious Menhirs in Bohemia, TM 95, 1995*).

The readers' attention was attracted by a series of articles published by M. Špůrek in the Regenerace (Regeneration) magazine under the title "*Tajemství českých menhirů*" (*The Mystery of Czech Menhirs*) (*Regenerace, 1994-1995*), where is the first list of not only existing menhirs, but of extinct ones too and mainly of controversial cases. The serial inspired a number of other readers and explorers to look for new and forgotten localities.

The specialized books by the archaeologist Karel Sklenář began to react to a large number of articles and studies published in more or less popular non-fiction magazines, but often in entertainment magazines and printed matters too, such as "*Tanec obrů. Není jen Stonehenge*" (*The Dance of Giants. There is not only Stonehenge*) (*Academia, Prague, 1996*), which book deals with the general problems of megalithic monuments, or "*Hromové klíny a hrnce tprasílků. Z pokladnice české folklórní archeologie*" (*The Thunder Wedges and Pots of Pygmies. From the Treasury of Czech Folk Archaeology*) (*Set Out, Prague, 1999*). Karel Sklenář's sceptical view can be found in his book "*Slepé uličky archeologie. Záhady, omyly, podvody, objevy ...*" (*The Blind Alleys of Archaeology. Mysteries, Mistakes, Cheats, Discoveries ...*) (*Mht, Prague, 1995*), which holds on to the criterion of the genuineness of megaliths in the areas of findings of tangible artefacts.

Associations and organizations occupying themselves with various unexplained issues and anomalous phenomena tackled the examination and popularization of these problems, such as *Klub psychotroniky a UFO (Psychotronics and UFO Club)*, *Klub Záblesk (Gleam Club)*, *Badatelské centrum Statenice (Statenice Exploratory Centre)*, *Projekt Horizont (Horizon Project)* etc. In the middle of the 1990s, *The Foundation for the Study and Research of Border Phenomena (Nadace pro studium a výzkum hraničních jevů)*, which associated particularly Prague explorers from the circles of the *Glare Project (Projekt Záře)* in 1994-1996, organized a seminar called *Megalitické stavby v Čechách (Megalithic Constructions in Bohemia)*, which took place on October 14, 1996. The authors publishing in the field of various questions of megalithic constructions include J. Heišus, T. Petráň, L. Čermák (*KPU*), J. Zeman, F. Velinský (*Foundation*), J. Lenková (*Statenice Exploratory Centre*), Z. Krušina (*Horizon*), Z. Ministr, P. Kozák, J.J. Novák and others.



## Megalithic monuments in the Czech Republic



### The Psychotronics and UFO Club

Borská ul. č. 19, (Hotel Victoria), CZ 320 22, Plzeň, Czech Rep.

E-mail : [kpufo@kpufo.cz](mailto:kpufo@kpufo.cz) \* Internet : <http://www.kpufo.cz> \*

<http://www.kpufo.cz/oblasti/meg/album/mechanika/album.htm>

IČO 45334871 \* Bank name: ČSOB, div. Pošt. spořitelna: Klub

psychotroniky a UFO, Bank account: 174472622/0300

## History of exploratory activity in the Czech Republic

Probably the first reference to Czech menhirs can be found in the preserved sermons of Master Jan Hus, who opposed worshipping stones and other pagan anachronisms.

More than 250 years later, M.B. Boleucký writes in the book *"Rosa boemica sive Via Sancti Woytechi"* (1668): *"Only a few years ago, the city of Strakonice saw and admired a kind of idol ... Along the path leading to Volyně, near the forest called Hui, a roughly worked oblong stone a bit higher than man used to stay for many years ... The abdomen of the stone is very big, as if it contained a foetus, out of which a superstition arose. That is to say, people assumed it was a goddess – the helper of women in childbirth, and the common people called the stone Elizabeth in their local language ... This heresy survived among the uneducated rustics till 1659 and throughout that period was unknown to the superior authorities ... I myself, when I was the administrator of that rectory, used to see that hideous custom quite often ..."*

Only another 200 years later, however, the problem of megaliths began to be examined within the scope of the arising archaeology and homeland and nature study.

In 1868, Jan Erazim Woceľ registers, at the end of the second volume of his book *"Pravěk země české"* (*The Primeval Ages of the Czechlands*) (Prague, 1868, page 571 and subsequent ones), a report by A. Č. Ludlkar about South Bohemian megaliths and notes megaliths as the relics of primeval culture and religion. The book aroused a natural interest of the Czech patriots, who interpreted the findings as a promotive proof of the cultural maturity of the folk living in the Czech hollow.

The attitudes to these discoveries were represented especially by Dr J.L. Pič, who preferred the genuineness of the megaliths, while the geologist J.N. Woldřich considered all the findings to be natural remnants of rocks and the work of nature. The scientific disputes conducted on the pages of professional journals, in the *"Památky archeologické a místopisné"* (*Archaeological and Topographical Monuments*) journal in particular, gave rise to further examinations of some of the megaliths by J.L. Pič. The archaeological prospectors realized near the menhirs in Drahomýš, Klobúky and Brezno proved that the subsoil material is different from that of the stone raised.

The reports on findings abroad and on megalithic constructions served for useful comparisons, and so chapters dedicated to this theme were not missing in the books dealing with archaeological topics (for example L. Niederle: *Lidstvo v době předhistorické, se zvláštním zřetelem na země slovanské – Mankind in Prehistoric Times with Special Respect to Slavonic Countries. Bursík a Kohout, Prague, 1893*).

Disputes and research regarding megalithic constructions continued in the new century too. Among the archaeologists and explorers noting various questions connected with megaliths were in the 1920s and 1930s for example Prof Dr E. Šimek or Dr Bedřich Dubský, who was convinced of the genuineness of some megaliths, unlike Prof Dr Albin Stocký, who refused their conclusions with saying that "genuine megaliths are not in Bohemia."

In the following years, the interest of the professional and general public in these issues gradually began to decline and only minor articles were dedicated to megaliths in the *"Archeologické rozhledy"* (*Archaeological Prospects*) journal. These articles were focused on individual findings. The names of the authors included Eva Čujanová – Lílková, E. Neústupný, I. Pleinerová, E-Plesnerová – Štiková, V. Podborský, K. Sklenář and others.

This situation changed with the publication of Milan Špůrek's book *"Jehla v kupce sena"* (*A Needle in a Haystack*) (Albatros, Prague, 1990), in which he presented, in one of the chapters (*"Zdvižené prsty krajiny"* – *The Raised Fingers of the Landscape*), the results of his research in the field of the distribution of megaliths and with respect to connections with astronomical aspects and the Celtic calendar.

In the 1990s, interest in megalithic monuments raised a great deal. The reason of it was a return to historical roots, which happens every time a country passes through great social reversals, when the firm foundations of new orders are being sought.

The return to history also revived interest in the Celtic period in the history of settlement of the Czechlands. Since the beginning of examining megalithic constructions, the Celtic period has been considered a period which had merit in the rise of megalithic constructions or their utilization. This despite the fact that the megalithic constructions are much older.

While at the very beginning the interest in megalithic constructions in the Czechlands was incited not only by the rise and development of archaeology, but also by interest in paganism, i.e. the pre-Christian religion of the Celts and Slavs, at present the situation rather repeats. Even now, within the framework of the New Age movement, interest in all extra-Christian and archaic religions and cults strengthens, among which special attention is drawn by the religion of the Celts and magic practices. And megalithic monuments represent an important element in this study.

The first comprehensive list of information, including a list of Czech megalithic localities, was contained in Karel Sklenář's book *"Tajemné megalithy. Svědkové doby kamenné"* (*Mysterious Megaliths. The Witnesses of the Stone Age*) (Horizont, Praha, 1990).

