

# Hidden Messages in African Wood Carvings - Translating Carving Inscriptions

Wood carving is surely one of the oldest forms of art known to humanity. The Wood Age often coincides with the Stone Age as these both are the first forms of art. Africa has been the biggest producer of beautiful wooden artifacts for which the credit goes to Africans' years of practice in the field. Especially tourists who visit Africa, take particular interest in these wooden carvings as well as the history. A [translation services company](#) helps these tourists understand the complex meaning behind these carvings as well as translate the history behind them.

Without further delay, let's just delve in this read and talk about the hidden messages these African wooden carvings contain and how well translation services translate those messages.

## Table of Contents:

[History of African Wood Carvings](#)

[What are the Hidden Messages in African Wood Carvings?](#)

[Human Sculptures](#)

[Weapons and Tools](#)

[Animals](#)

[Geometric Patterns](#)

[Importance of Translating Carving Inscriptions For the World](#)

[Final Words!](#)

## History of African Wood Carvings

Africa is known for its deserts, natural resources like coal mines, petroleum and its historical artifacts. The history of African wooden carvings dates back to thousands of years ago, probably at the time when the Wood Age was popular. These wooden carvings depict the cultural history of Africa and the beliefs people used to have in the 9th and 10th centuries. You will find these wooden carvings in the shape of animals, inanimate objects and even sculptures of humans.

Africans took this culture of wooden carvings from the Egyptians. These Egyptians were excellent in this work, which was later adopted by the Africans. Wooden work then gained success in the African royal empire. Kings and queens used to demand for their statues and scriptures which wooden carvers made with pure dedication. Today, these sculptures and statues are present in African museums which showcase the skills of the former people. In rituals and religious ceremonies, these carvings were displayed which was an act of reverence for their deities and ancestral spirits.

Not only the sculptures, but we also find everyday objects in these carvings such as spoons, combs and even decoration items that depict the intricate designs these carvers were adept in making.

Ancient Kingdoms	Famous Art Form
Ife Kingdom (12th-15th century CE)	Naturalistic bronze evident in religious sculptures
Nok Culture (1000 BCE - 300 CE)	Inspired by terracotta sculptures
Benin Kingdom (13th-19th century CE)	Carvings in the form of royal regalia and ritual objects

## What are the Hidden Messages in African Wood Carvings?

African wooden carvings are full of symbolism and hidden messages. As explained earlier, African wooden carvings were in the form of animals, humans, everyday objects, and even geometric patterns and tools.

### Human Sculptures

Some of the human figures depicted the gods and goddesses while others were created for African famous leaders and people in authority at that time. Africans used to honor their leaders and great men by carving their wooden sculptures and paying respect to them. Some of these scriptures show motherhood and fertility which is why they are often perceived as promoting nudity. However, one must remember that art is really subjective. And everyone has their own understanding and beliefs when it comes to art and art forms.

### Weapons and Tools

In the past, weapons made from stone and wood were used in the war and so was the case with African wooden objects. Spears and shields were used in wars and later these same weapons stated the tales of great warriors who died using them.

### Animals

Animals like elephants, lions, wolves, goats, etc all of them represent certain qualities which were carved especially on wooden weapons and tools.

Animals	What Do They Represent?
Elephants	Power and wisdom
Lion	Courage and strength
Tortoise	Patience and longevity

Crocodile	Survival and adaptability
-----------	---------------------------

## Geometric Patterns

Geometric patterns were a part of wood carvings in which each of them held different meanings. These patterns and meanings are today recognized and studied as the *“Psychology of Shapes”*. These patterns were carved on wood and Africans used to place them in their homes as a symbol of good luck and prosperity.

Even understanding these carvings and the history behind them is difficult for the new generation of Africans. With the help of Somali, Yoruba, and [Amharic translation services](#), the classical text is translated to make it easy for the new speakers to understand their cultural and ancestral history.

Shapes	Symbolic Meanings
Zigzag Lines	Lightning, water, and dynamic nature of life
Triangles and Diamonds	The cycle of life, fertility, and growth
Spirals	Life, evolution and spiritual growth

## Importance of Translating Carving Inscriptions For the World

These carvings need to be translated in order to make people understand the reasoning behind them. These shapes and sculptures are not just for artistic expression rather they show the beliefs and thoughts of the Africans in the past. By getting professional help from a **translation services company**, Africans can translate their ancient wooden sculptures. In this way, the audience will get the true intended meaning behind these carvings.

## Final Words!

To sum up, African wooden carvings are a true picture that depicts the past of the people of Africa. These carvings consist of intricate patterns and designs which include geometric shapes, and animals and even symbolize motherhood and fertility in the sculptures. It is important to translate these carvings so that the world's audiences can understand the history of human civilization.