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Original scientific article
Received: 2 March 2020
Accepted: 10 June 2020

Interdisciplinary research method, protection and presentation of stecaks in the context of iconological studies

Summary

Process of researching stecaks, their protection, conservation, museological and educational presentation require agreed manner of documenting. Indication of the monument orientation has a great importance in the meaning interpretation of the artistic relief message on stecaks. Monument, stecak, stands freely in the space and visual and kinetic experience (moving and perception) of the monument visitors operate together.

Following the guidelines of iconography and iconology, we tried to perceive the meaning of symbols in the context of relief composition of stecaks and at the same time the role which the monument, or its artistic message had in the given time and space.

On the example of spiral, which is historically a motif of long lasting, considering the selected group of monuments, we described the process and adjustments of the symbols meaning in the new iconographic environment (T. I., T. II.).

Perceiving the historical-social framework within which one piece of art is created, applying the theory on copying and usage of model book, with data brought by *Legenda aurea* (Golden legend), book from the 13th century (T. IV.), we tried to define iconographic meaning of the raised right hand with concentrated circles of "ducal figures" on the necropolis Radimlja near Stolac (T. V., T. VI.) and at the same time meaning of the independent motif of a hand with sword which we connect to St. Michael.

With contrastive analysis of the architecture illustrations in the manuscript of Beatus' comment of Apocalypse, we pointed out possible meaning of motifs of arcades with horseshoe arches (T. III., fig. 2).

All the above mentioned observations and conclusions should be confirmed by additional research on the larger group of monuments and through an interdisciplinary approach, where archaeology and forensic anthropology should be of primary importance.

Keywords: documentation; iconology; Radimlja; Golden legend; Beatus.