

NEW DATA RELATED TO ST. JOAN VLADIMIR CULT OBTAINED DURING CONSERVATION WORKS ON TWO BOXES OF RELICS (18TH CENTURY)

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In 2016 the National Historical Museum, Tirana, Albania organized an exhibition regarding the cult of St. Joan Vladimir due to considerable number of objects in storage related to the saint.

A group of significant objects were subject of conservation work. Objects that will be taken in consideration here consisted in two silver boxes of relics. They belong to the Eastern Church and are pieces of Post Byzantine art with strong Baroque influence. During the conservation and documentation processes many details regarding the pieces were revealed and important discoveries were made. Inscriptions were found in both objects, later proved to be of an important historic source of the development of St. Joan Vladimir cult in Albania but not only. One of the inscriptions provided important data, dating the object and revealing its origin, donor and receiver and other data. While the inscription in the other box of relics were controversial, questioning our archival documents regarding thus changing the identity of the object itself. From documentation work was also gained important information regarding the technique used to create and assemble the objects. During work many issues had to be addressed such as ethical issues. In order to complete the full documentation further analysis needs to be done but is it ethical to sacrifice a part of the saints remains for the sake of documentation and knowledge?