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**BULGARIAN SAINTS AND MONASTERIES IN
PILGRIMAGE AND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
AMONG YOUTH**

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A B S T R A C T

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The dissertation consists of 206 standard printed pages. The dissertation contains a Preface, an Introduction, Part One, Part Two with three chapters, a Conclusion, References, an Index, and six Appendices.

The scientific apparatus includes 150 cited publications and 401 footnotes.

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INTRODUCTION

In modern society, many factors are intertwined, influencing the formation of an Orthodox worldview in adolescents. Some of them are new, and others have been passed down through the centuries since the beginning of Christian history. Undoubtedly, however, a fundamental role in the adequate awareness of the present and the building of a true view of the future century is played by our view of the past, of human history, and through the prism of knowledge of God.

The Orthodox Christian view of the world provides an objective toolkit for sifting out good from evil and truth from error – the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Tradition, the deeds and words of the Holy Fathers, and the years of spiritual experience and life in the Holy Sacraments of the Church, in turn, contribute to the development of the Christian's senses to distinguish the serious dangers behind any false teaching. That is why it would not be objective to develop scientific works on Bulgarian history if the vitally important work of the saints for our nation, which are closest to its existence, is not highlighted, and through them – God's intervention in the world and in the life of every person. The monastic works, educational deeds and martyrdom of the Bulgarian saints turn out to be a guiding light in the most difficult moments of our history. They could play a role both in the present and in the future of the nation. A silent witness to these events are the centuries-old fortresses of faith – the Bulgarian monasteries, which seem to remind us that even if the vicissitudes of time exhaust us, the strengthened by God over the years and the sorrows endured becomes more and more precious and beautiful.

It is precisely because of their primordial value as a testimony to God's omnipotence that the knowledge of the personalities who shone forth in our native history and the holy monasteries associated with them is the

basis of the proposed work. It would not be an exaggeration to express the opinion that without knowledge of the native saints it is difficult to know God, Who sent them to preach directly to our nation.

One of the most influential and effective ways to get a real idea of the saints' exploits is pilgrimage – visiting the places associated with the saints, meeting with the spiritual fortresses that they have bequeathed to us and reaching their holy relics. Fundamental in this process is the role of the Orthodox priest and the guide-theologian, who do not just inform the about the life of the saint, but also to reveal the aspirations of his heart and the values that led him along the thorny path of Godlikeness. And when this pilgrimage and educational activity is carried out among young people during the construction of their views on philosophical and social questions about the history and future of mankind, then the probability that the seed of faith will germinate and bear good fruit for life increases significantly.

Unfortunately, in Bulgarian modernity, *organized and regular pilgrimage and educational activities among young people* are very rare. At the same time, only in isolated cases it is related to the examples of holiness closest to our nation, which leads to a very *poor knowledge of our church history and of the life and spiritual contributions of the Bulgarian saints*. In view of the large number of manifestations of holiness in our lands and the preserved data of their lives, this is very disturbing. It is also important to note *the lack of sufficient educational materials and practical methods for pilgrimage and educational activities to support the Orthodox doctrine of adolescents*. These problems are the main reason for writing the proposed work, because in the modern conditions of globalization and liberalization of societies, without adequate knowledge of the primordial national foundations and of the religious truths professed by the most prominent personalities among our nation, the education of Bulgarian children and young people have

no way to lay solid foundations and build worthy successors of our millennial Christian tradition, aimed at the Kingdom of Heaven.

PRESENTATION OF THE WORK

The writing of the proposed dissertation is dictated by the need to solve several existing **problems** related to pilgrimage and educational activities in Bulgaria, which expresses the author's desire to make his modest contribution in this direction.

The first problem concerns the Bulgarian saints and the poor knowledge in modern times of their life example – in the country, where they grew up. Sent by God to preach the gospel of His revelation in Bulgarian lands – both through baptizing, preaching and literary activities, as well as through their hermitage or martyrdom, they contribute to significant spiritual fruits in the places of their sainthood, forming the cultural image of the Bulgarian nation through the centuries. The veneration for them is historically significant, but in the last century it seems that the nation had gradually turned a blind eye to the light they bring us. Love for God and people, reaching self-sacrifice, is increasingly replaced by attachment to fraternal ideologies, secular predilections and material benefits. The Orthodox worldview, which the enlighteners have been building for centuries in their closest people with their life and death, was initially forcibly distorted, and in recent decades mixed with an esoteric perception of spirituality and equated with anthropocentric views. Both the souls of many and historical science suffer from this, for which the isolation of the contribution of the saints in a narrow ecclesiastical aspect is a prerequisite for it to become nothing more than a tree without roots. The way to overcome this destructive tendency is precisely by renewing the veneration of Orthodox saints and adopting their views, starting with those who are most strongly connected with Bulgarian people and lands.

Another problem originating from the first is related to monasticism in Bulgaria and its holy monasteries. The role of monasteries and angel-like

asceticism in Bulgarian lands and throughout the Orthodox world is not only significant in spiritual, literary-educational and cultural-creative terms, but it is civilizational and eschatological. The lack of understanding in this direction leads to a drastic reduction in the number of monastics, which unfortunately has been observed in Bulgaria in the last century, and a decline in the entire value system of the society. It is in these fortresses of faith that a large part of the Bulgarian saints grows up in the knowledge of God, and their grace-filled asceticism and service, in turn, leads to the spiritual flourishing of both the monasteries themselves and the entire community, which perceives them as its example. That is why pilgrimage to the monasteries in these lands is of paramount importance, and not as an excursion or cultural tourism, but with liturgical participation and educational purposes.

The third of the problems, the solution of which is aimed at solving the proposed dissertation, concerns youth pilgrimage and educational activity, which, unfortunately, is also poorly developed in modern Bulgaria. In most of the pilgrimage groups, the participation of adolescents is minimal, especially in one-day events. This is a logical result of the fact that the state educational environment fails to offer modern Bulgarian youth the necessary fundamental knowledge of the Orthodox faith and worldview, due to the anthropocentric humanism on which it is based. The ecclesiastical and doctrinal environment remains closely connected with parish communities and their families, inherited from the atheistic period. The only good practices for a stable relationship between the Church, school and family now are related precisely to visiting churches and monasteries, participating in their liturgical activities and maintenance, and in combination with physical or creative activity, with the obligatory patronage of the respective responsible clergy. If these activities were expanded in the direction of following the life example in the knowledge of God, the spiritual

contributions and the Orthodox worldview of the saints closest to the nation, the good moral fruits would increase enormously. This is the main goal of the proposed dissertation – to support the Orthodox doctrine of adolescents through methodologies and materials for pilgrimage and educational activities related to Bulgarian saints and monasteries.

It is important to note that the proposed dissertation, although developed at the Department of Historical Theology at the Faculty of Theology of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" is the first in Bulgaria prepared within the specialty "Christian Pilgrimage". Therefore, in it, the author, whose secondary and higher bachelor's degrees are in the field of engineering, technical and design sciences, does not strive to follow the approaches, language and structure characteristic of strictly historical scientific circles¹. Instead, the proposed dissertation seeks innovation and practical applicability of the selected information that will serve for the preparation of finished products that solve the current problems mentioned above in a modern way. It consists of a Preface, an Introduction, Part One, and Part Two, which includes three chapters, a Conclusion, References, an Index of the Saints and Monasteries, and six Appendices.

The main goal of the study is *to support the Orthodox catechism of youths through methodologies and materials for pilgrimage and educational activities related to Bulgarian saints and monasteries.*

In this regard, the following tasks were set when writing the dissertation:

- preparation of a complete chronological list of Bulgarian saints in the form of a name book, with the dates of their celebration in the church calendar;
- derivation of basic data about each saint related to pilgrimage and

¹ Usually, in the field of historical theology, theses and dissertations have a narrative character and are built in three chapters of equal volume.

educational activities – chronology and locations of the characteristic moments of his life, as well as temples in his name;

- selection of monasteries directly related to the Bulgarian saints, with basic data on the spiritual and educational activities in each of them;
- making historical references about pilgrimage and educational activities and researching its current state;
- analysis of the adequate means for modern presentation of doctrinal truths and for building an Orthodox worldview among adolescents;
- implementation of the studied data in various spiritual and educational materials aimed at youth – interactive map, board educational game, video presentations, etc.;
- preparation of an annual program for pilgrimage and educational activities for adolescents related to the Bulgarian saints.

For this purpose, **Part One** of the proposed work examines the possibilities for homage to an author's selection of 70 established and canonized Bulgarian saints, describing them in the most strongly related specific locations. The choice of the saints was made among those for whom there is reasonable evidence of Bulgarian origin – based on the current veneration for them, expressed in the ecclesiastical and liturgical plan (by marking their memory annually according to the current calendar of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church and through temple building in their honor on the Bulgarian historical land). Their primary proximity to the national consciousness is also expressed in the established feast of All Bulgarian Saints on the Second Sunday after Pentecost, immediately after the veneration of All Saints. As stated in the Introduction, in order to adequately solve the problem posed in the topic of the dissertation in Part One, a non-traditional approach for scientific circles has been used. It is expressed in the following two directions.

First, the sources of information about the chosen saints are mainly their

lives established in the Orthodox Church. This is not accidental, since it is precisely these seemingly unscientific texts that are embedded in the living Holy Tradition and in the liturgical life of the Church have been the main reading for Christians for centuries, which brings considerable spiritual benefit, and there is no Christian doubts their authenticity. A number of notable ascetics attach paramount importance after the Holy Scripture of the reading of hagiographic literature, such as St. Theophanes Prisoner, St. Seraphim of Sarov and St. John of Kronstadt. One of the reasons they are convinced of their authenticity is that most of the lives were written either by many Christian eyewitnesses of the specific events, or by people who obtained the descriptions of the trials of the martyrs, and the edits over time were diligently made mainly by bishops who further examined the available data. An example is the set of lives for each day of the year by months of St. Dimitri of Rostov, to whom the dissertation mainly refers as the most complete and embodied source in the life of the Church (for the missing Bulgarian saints in it, data are drawn mainly from their lives compiled by Bishop Parthenius of Leukia). It is no coincidence that the work that St. Dimitri used and edited in these twelve editions, is called "Great Cheti-Minei" (of Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow), emphasizing his close connection with the official Minei for each month (texts from which are sung during divine services, and from the first ones are read). All this, confirming the indisputable ecclesiastical authenticity of the official saints' lives, is described in detail by Archimandrite Seraphim (Alexiev) in his article on the subject². The ecclesiastical-pedagogical element of the hagiographies, which is of paramount importance for the proposed dissertation, is also indisputable – when using the data thus synthesized for the preparation of auxiliary materials, the relevant lives of the saints should be cited in them, which could direct interested adolescents to read them and become part of the Church.

The second non-traditional moment in Part One is related to the

² Seraphim (Alexiev), archim. "Are the Lives of the Saints Credible?" *Orthodox Missionary*, 1–2 (1943).

information about the selected saints. Instead of describing the spiritual exploits of each of them (as was the emphasis of the master's thesis of the author of the dissertation), the emphasis is placed on the locations related to their lives and relics. Although in some saints the study was more extensive to clarify certain controversial details, and for others it is simple due to minimal or unambiguous information, the reverence for the saints is expressed through the places of their exploits and residence according to the lives – during their earthly life and after it. A conscious visit to these peculiar "holy habitats"³, characteristic of each of them, is also capable of contributing to the churching and assimilation to God, like the pilgrimage to the places associated with the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Mother of God. The Holy Tradition provides us many cases when the example of the saints favors through the Holy Spirit the place where He acted in their earthly life. But not in an esoteric way, as the pilgrim seems to be automatically acquired by their "energy" when visiting these places, nor by the atheistic-philosophical remembrance of their "immortal memory", like a lifeless monument, but by the effective prayerful connection between living persons with free will – the supplicant, the intercessor and God. It is known that there is a particularly strong intercession of certain saints when there is closeness on a certain basis – both by name or life craft (doctors, warriors, fishermen, etc.) and by their place of residence. That is why those locations, which were especially close to the life of the saint, can become his characteristic habitat, refuge and earthly home, when a temple is built there and in it the pilgrims approach the heavenly dwelling of the saint in a liturgical way. It is precisely the derivation of the most significant "holy habitats" in order to serve to revive the prayer connection through Orthodox pilgrimage that is the desired result of Part One and the basis for Part Two of the proposed dissertation.

³ Prof. Pavel Pavlov in his study "Spaces of Sacred Inactivity" (In: *Christianity and Culture*, 5 (2012), 96–97) uses the term "hierotopos" in the sense of a sacred space, and in historical science the term "chronotopos" is also used, denoting time-spatial localization. The term "holy habitat" expresses a personal-spatial characteristic of the saint and could be understood as "hagiotopos" or "prosopotopos" (Gr. *ἅγιος* – saint, *πρόσωπο* – face, *τόπος* – place, space).

In continuation of the synthesized data, **Part Two** of the dissertation presents selected information about the spiritual and educational activities in the monasteries, most directly related to the life and contribution of the described Bulgarian saints, examines the doctrinal role of pilgrimage and offers specific practical proposals that unite the results obtained.

As mentioned above, the prayerful connection between the personalities of the pilgrim, the saint and God is especially strongly manifested in the characteristic "holy habitats", the places closest to the life of the heavenly intercessors. It is undoubtedly significantly expressed where it is served St. Liturgy – in the churches and monasteries in these places, because then the Heavenly and Earthly Churches become one. In the active holy monasteries, however, prayer is present not only in the daily double service but is also a constant practice of their inhabitants. This immensely results in visible spiritual fruits from the seeds of faith sown by the respective saints. In Chapter One of Part Two, these fruits of literary and educational activity in the monasteries close to the saints in question are sought, as the most vivid example of their living presence even after their earthly death, as well as of the multiplication of the grace of the Holy Spirit so that it reaches many. In this way, the connection between the most radiant personalities in Bulgarian history and the fortresses of the Spirit – the holy monasteries, which became their refuge and fruitful field for their educational work, is traced.

In Chapter Two are examined the need to build an Orthodox worldview among young people, the historical role of pilgrimage in the Bulgarian lands in this direction and good examples from modern times. The history of the studied monasteries shows that most often the first sign of their spiritual flourishing is the establishment of a monastery school. Catechetical care for adolescents is undoubtedly of paramount importance for the gospel, but unfortunately, traditional approaches do not give a satisfactory result in

Bulgarian modernity. This is also noted in the Strategy for Spiritual Enlightenment, Catechesis and Culture of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church as "Problems of the Unchurched and Lack of Spirituality of Contemporary Culture and the Youth Subculture" (Part II, item 6), for the solution of which some of the proposals are "Organizing pilgrimage trips to Orthodox monasteries and shrines" and "Organizing Orthodox camps for children, Youth and Families" (Part VI.B, Tasks 3.4 and 3.5)⁴. It is pilgrimage that becomes a link between the contribution of the saints, the educational work in the monasteries and the spiritual quests of the modern young man. Therefore, in Chapter Two, the concept of religious catechesis is clarified and good examples of its effective application are sought.

As a conclusion of Part Two and of the proposed dissertation, Chapter Three uses the results of the entire study to offer specific guidelines for the development and completion of projects for pilgrimage and educational activities aimed at adolescents. Modern approaches are sought to positively influence people of active youth, in particular between 14 and 22 years old (during their secondary and higher bachelor's education). Author's auxiliary materials and an exemplary annual program in this regard have been prepared, and as a completion and compilation of the analyzed and synthesized data in the dissertation, an interactive virtual map of the places associated with the Bulgarian saints has been developed, which is also published on the official website of the Sofia Holy Metropoly. In this way, the aim is to provide various realistic opportunities for solving the problems raised on the topic through adequate and modern methods, so that the example of the native saints reaches more young people, and they are enlightened about the Gospel of Christ.

⁴ "Strategy for Spiritual Education, Catechesis and Culture of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church – Bulgarian Patriarchate". <https://bg-patriarshia.bg/strategies-1> Date of visit 26.06.2024.

The proposed dissertation is based on a number of **ecclesiastical-historical sources**, as well as numerous scientific studies and publications on the subject. The data on the Bulgarian saints, synthesized in Part One, are extracted mainly from the various editions of their lives, written or collected by St. Patriarch Euthymius, St. Dimitri of Rostov, Bishop Parthenius of Levkia and others in the books "Lives of the Saints. January-December" (2008–2016), "Lives of the Bulgarian Saints" (2002) and the Synodal edition of "Lives of the Saints" (1991), as well as public materials and sources such as "Slavonic-Bulgarian History" by St. Paisii of Hilendar (1762). Thus, Part One aims not so much at strictly scientific evidence, but at maximum binding to the Holy Tradition and with a living reverence for the saints in the Church and in the nation's memory.

The synthesis of the locations identified as suitable for pilgrimage and educational activities is based on the master's thesis of the author of the proposed dissertation, on the topic "The place of the Bulgarian saints in the subject History and Civilizations" (2019), with a supervisor prof. Pavel Pavlov PhD, complemented by a wide range of Internet resources with up-to-date information about the current location of the temples and monasteries associated with the saints in question. Thus, an upgrade of the development in the direction of increasing the level of research in the applied and practical direction is sought.

For Part Two of the dissertation, publications by prominent lecturers from the Faculty of Theology of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" were used, with information about the Bulgarian monasteries in Chapter One – mainly the books of Acad. Ivan Snegarov PhD "History of the Ohrid Archbishopric-Patriarchate" (1924–1932), by Prof. Todor Sabev PhD "Independent National Church in Medieval Bulgaria" (1987), as well as Georgi Chavrakov's "Bulgarian Monasteries" (2000), etc. The understanding of the data on the holy monasteries follows the analysis in the article of Prof.

Pavel Pavlov PhD "Monasteries in the Orthodox Tradition in the Balkans", in the collection "The Orthodox Tradition in the Culture of Macedonia in the Context of the Overall Bulgarian History" (1999).

The study of the methods of catechesis in Chapter Two draws information from another prominent lecturer from the Faculty of Theology – Prof. Boris Marinov PhD, and his book "Lectures on Student Orthodox Christian Societies in Secondary Schools" (1934), as well as from articles on religious education in Bulgaria by Assoc. Andrian Alexandrov PhD. In this way, continuity of research activity in the theological school of the Faculty of Theology was sought.

Chapter Three uses as an example the publications "Stories about the Bulgarian Saints and the Saints Associated with Bulgaria" by nun Valentina Drumeva (2003), "The Kite, the Eagles and the Saints" by Mirela Kyuchukova (2023), "The Prints in the Rila Monastery" by Romyana Radkova (1975), as well as videos from the channel of the Sofia St. Metropoly "Eparchial Voice TV". Also there are included proposals from the author of the dissertation as a complete result of the development and following specific materials and initiatives in this direction of the supervisor Prof. Pavel Pavlov PhD, as well as on the basis of the personal professional and creative experience of the author himself.

The possibilities for application of the dissertation are objectively realistic both in the theoretical and practical spheres. This fact is facilitated by the data synthesized and systematized in Part One and Chapter One of Part Two, the analyzed possibilities with the specific proposals for applicability in Chapters Two and Three, as well as the current participation of the author and the scientific supervisor as guides in the Pilgrimage and Educational Center at the Sofia Holy Metropoly "St. John of Rila" and as lecturers at talks and academic courses. This is the main aspiration in writing

the proposed work – to provide many opportunities for the implementation of new projects in the field of both pilgrimage and spiritual and educational activities.

Possible applications of the dissertation can be:

- application of the proposed materials in the classes of religion – Orthodoxy, history and civilizations, in theological disciplines;
- application of the proposed methodologies, programs and materials in pilgrimage and educational centers and initiatives;
- conducting talks about the Bulgarian saints in parish and other training centers, in religious classes and summer camps on the basis of the data systematized in the study;
- conducting presentations in general and higher education institutions for the proposed pilgrimage and educational activities related to the Bulgarian saints;
- publishing advertising printed materials for Bulgarian monasteries;
- publication of printed geographical maps and albums for the places associated with the Bulgarian saints;
- publishing books with creative stories about the Bulgarian saints;
- preparation of media projects and programs for Bulgarian saints and monasteries;
- development of mobile applications and interactive GPS-maps to stimulate individual pilgrimage related to Bulgarian saints and monasteries;
- making educational board games for Bulgarian saints and monasteries, etc.

The most direct application and direct implementation of the work is offered through the interactive map prepared by the author as a result of the

dissertation with the exact coordinates and information about the places related to the Bulgarian saints – a finished product of the proposed work, published on the official website of the Sofia Holy Metropoly (Appendix 6). It can be used both for organizing group pilgrimage trips and as an assistant for individual visits to the holy places using a mobile device in real time – a method highly suitable for use by young people.

Based on the conditions set for the research, the proposed dissertation has been developed with the following **content**:

PREFACE.

INTRODUCTION (guidelines and scope of the study).

PART ONE. Places of veneration to Bulgarian saints.

1. Saints during the First Bulgarian Kingdom.
2. Saints during the Byzantine rule.
3. Saints during the Second Bulgarian Kingdom.
4. Saints during the Ottoman slavery⁵.

PART TWO. Catechesis and worship.

1. CHAPTER ONE. Educational activity in the history of Bulgarian monasteries (related to the studied saints).
2. CHAPTER TWO. Pilgrimage as a method of building an Orthodox worldview (problems and good practices).
3. CHAPTER THREE. Sample programs and materials for youth pilgrimage and educational activities (annual program, map, board game, videos, etc.).

⁵ The term established in historical science is "Ottoman rule" because of the economic freedoms of some of the Bulgarian subjects of the Empire, despite the presence of domestic slaves and janissary troops. However, the proposed dissertation emphasizes that the religious environment is the most significant factor in the history of the nation. And the mass and arbitrary violence for the adoption of Islam in the Ottoman state is evident from the lives of the Bulgarian saints studied in it – during this period, 29 out of all 32 canonized martyrdoms were committed (three of which were group cases), after the refusal of the subjects to betray their Christian faith. It is precisely because of the lack of freedom of religion in the Empire, the term used in the development is "Ottoman slavery".

CONCLUSION (conclusions, results of the study and opportunities for further development).

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY.

USED LITERATURE (sources, literature and Internet resources).

INDEX WITH NAMES OF SAINTS (mentioned in the text).

INDEX WITH NAMES OF MONASTERIES (whose activity is studied).

ANNEXES (six issues – three of them with the locations of temples named after Bulgarian saints; proposals for the rules of a board educational game and for an artistic story on the topic, and visualizations of the developed interactive map).

CONCLUSION

The proposed dissertation does not claim to exhaust the topic of Bulgarian saints and monasteries – significantly more detailed scientific and historical research exists and can be done about them. At the same time, a considerable amount of literature on the topic was used – 14 source texts (one of them in 12 volumes), 74 scientific papers (one of them in two volumes) and 62 Internet resources, a total of 150 multi-volume editions in 401 footnotes. In the future, the study can be expanded to include less-known confessors of faith, other saints in Bulgarian lands of foreign origin or non-canonized martyrs of the last century in Bulgaria.

The development is mainly with an applied and practical function in the field of Christian pilgrimage, which is the direction of the author's specialization. The aim is through the results of the study to develop appropriate pilgrimage tools and methods to fill a significant gap in the society in terms of youth spiritual and educational activities and acquaintance of adolescents with the most significant personalities in Bulgarian Church history.

In the dissertation, after a detailed analysis and synthesis, a number of specific guidelines, characteristics and suggestions on the topic are given. Its applicability depends on several objective and subjective factors, but above all on God and on the free will of those who take the responsibility to make the necessary efforts to develop the materials and implement the programs in it – diocesan metropolitans, primates of parish churches, leaders in pilgrimage centers, directors or teachers.

The Church as a living organism, preserving unwavering fidelity to the Holy Scripture and the Holy Tradition, it is important to take care the gaps in his educational activity and to constantly look for ways to meet the spiritual needs of modern Christians. Every Christian bears direct

responsibility for this, according to the knowledge and talents given to him by God, which is why the need for practical elaboration on the topic posed in this way is significant. By writing the proposed modest work, the author expresses his hope for assistance in the implementation and dissemination of the proposed tools and program, as well as for a broader public discussion on the significance of the Bulgarian saints and their contribution to the formation of an Orthodox worldview among young people.

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF SCIENTIFIC CONTRIBUTIONS

1. The proposed dissertation is the first collective ecclesiastical and scientific study of the "holy habitats" (places of worship related to the birth, life, death and relics) of 70 canonized Bulgarian saints, including the literary and educational activities in the monasteries closest to them.

2. The main contribution of the development is the preparation of the first of its kind interactive virtual map with the above locations, with navigation and information about their connection with the Bulgarian saints.

3. For the first time, a weekly annual program for pilgrimage and educational activities related to Bulgarian Church history, suitable for wide application among young people, is also presented.

RELATED PUBLICATIONS

I. Scientific

1. Mihaylov, P. "Building an Orthodox Worldview in the Youth according to Prof. Boris Marinov". – In: Toneva, K., Penkov, D., Kanev, Z. (eds.). *Professor Boris Marinov PhD: Life and Academic Activity (1895–1980)*. Sofia: University Publishing House "St. Kliment Ohridski, 2022, 323–331, ISBN: 978-954-07-5400-0.
2. Mihaylov, P. "Frescoes and Prints of St. John of Rila and the Pilgrimage during the Revival". *Theological thought. Vol. XXV. 1* (2020), 155–164, ISSN (print): 1310–7909.
3. Mihaylov, P. "St. Cyprian the Bulgarian, Metropolitan of Kiev and All Russia". *Svetodavetz*, 4 (2023), 38–50, ISSN (print): 2683-0655, ISSN (online): 2683-0531.
4. Mihaylov, P. "Conciliar catechism – the Messages of Bulgarian Saints as a Basis for the Educational Content in the High School Stage". *Thought, Word, Text*, 9 (2023), 115–121, ISSN (print): 2815-2816.

II. Other

1. Mihaylov, P. "Life and Work of St. Equal-to-the-Apostles Tsar Boris-Michael the Baptist", *Eparchial Voice*, 1 (2021), 48–50, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.
2. Mihaylov, P. "The Cross of the Bulgarian Saints", *Eparchial Voice*, 2 (2021), 61–66, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.
3. Mihaylov, P. "The Dragalevski Monastery – a Spiritual Fortress of Three Historical Eras", *Eparchial Voice*, 2 (2021), 67–70, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.
4. Mihaylov, P. "The Day of the Enlighteners and the Beginning of the Bulgarian Revival", *Eparchial Voice*, 3 (2021), 53–56, ISSN (print): 2738-

8271.

5. Mihaylov, P. "Namebook and Map of the Bulgarian Saints", *Eparchial Voice*, 1 (2022), 98–100, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.

6. Mihaylov, P. "St. Paisius of Hilendar – Life and Work", *Eparchial Voice*, 2 (2022), 52–55, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.

7. Mihaylov, P. "The Martyrdom of the Metropolitan of Samokov and Hieromartyr Simeon near the St. Sofia Church", *Eparchial Voice*, 3 (2022), 42–46, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.

8. Mihaylov, P. "210 years since the Dormition of St. Sophroniy of Vratza", *Eparchial Voice*, 1 (2023), 46–48, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.

9. Mihaylov, P. "St. Cosmas of Zograf and the Miracles of Faith", *Eparchial Voice*, 2 (2023), 49–51, ISSN (print): 2738-8271.

III. Participation in rarity

Polycarp, bishop Belogradchishki, Kassabov, A., Mihaylov, P., Ignatova, V. *Eparchial Voice*, 1–3 (2021), 1–3 (2022), 1–3 (2023), 1 (2024), ISSN (print): 2738-8271.