

Sofia University " St. Kliment Ohridski "

Faculty of Theology

OPINION

by **Associate Professor Dr. Kostadin Kirilov Nushev**

Faculty of Theology, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "

On the PhD dissertation on the topic :

**""CHRISTIAN FAITH AND VALUES IN LITERARY CREATIVITY
OF YORDAN YOVKOV AND ELIN PELIN""**

Professional field: 2.4. Religion and theology

Scientific specialty: Christian apologetics

Name of the doctoral student: Yonko Danov Bonov

1. Data for the dissertation and the publications.

The dissertation work of Yonko Bonov, presented for public defense, was developed within the framework of doctoral studies conducted at the Department of Systematic Theology under the scientific supervision of Prof. Dr. Dimo Penkov. The topic of the dissertation is relevant for Bulgarian theological science, and its scientific development contributes to the continuation, deepening and expansion of research in the field of Christian Apologetics, Christian Ethics, Psychology of Religion and other related scientific disciplines in the field of Systematic Theology, as well as for other humanities.

The topic of the presented dissertation research fits into the academic traditions of Christian Apologetics and follows the established critical approaches and models of research of Christian ideas and values of faith in Bulgarian classical literature. In this regard, the dissertation candidate has successfully fulfilled the set goals and objectives of his research.

2. Short description and scientific contributions of the dissertation

Yonko Bonov's research offers a profound and complex analysis of the work of Yordan Yovkov and Elin Pelin through the prism of Christian apologetics. It combines a theological approach with literary methods to explore how Christian faith and moral values are not only woven into literary images, but also how they shape the deep spiritual meaning of the works. The topic is topical and interdisciplinary, successfully raising the question of the interaction between literature and Orthodox theology.

The dissertation meets the requirements of the ZRAS for a successfully completed scientific work with the necessary contributions, as there are a sufficient number of articles and publications on the topic of the dissertation. The complex methodology of the study used corresponds to the subject, object, goals and objectives of the study and represents a relevant toolkit for theoretical analysis and scientific development of the research problems.

The dissertation candidate has participated in various scientific forums and conferences, at which he has presented and approved his scientific theses in relation to the subject of the dissertation research through presented reports, which have been published in scientific collections and theological publications. There are the required number of publications on the topic of the dissertation, which convincingly and to a sufficient extent show the results achieved from the undertaken research and testify to the scientific achievements of doctoral student Yonko Bonov. Two of the publications are on Christian themes in the work of Yordan Yovkov, and one of them on the researched issues in the work of Elin Pelin.

The abstract of the dissertation correctly reflects the content, structure and results of the scientific research and presents the conclusions and contributions in a systematized form.

The subject and problem area of the dissertation research cover current issues of contemporary theological science, cultural history and literary studies and contribute to the re-Christianization of the interpretation and understanding of the classical works of Yordan Yovkov and Elin Pelin, which are of great importance for the Christian spiritual tradition and cultural identity of the Bulgarian nation. The dissertation research is built on an adequate scientific methodology for comparative and interdisciplinary analysis to the object of the research and is structured in terms of content and composition according to the adopted tasks of the research. In his research, the author adheres to the established academic tradition and develops the research on the work of the two classics of Bulgarian literature in accordance with the basic principles, approaches and traditions of Christian apologetics and a systematic model of Orthodox theological science.

2. Comparison between Yovkov and Elin Pelin:

The author traces the importance of religious tradition in the works of the two writers, highlighting how temples, priestly images and rituals become key symbols of the Bulgarian psyche. This aspect is viewed as part of the overall spiritual life of the Bulgarian in the period under consideration. Through comparative analysis, the work explores the similarities and differences in the approach of the two authors to spiritual and moral themes. Particularly interesting are the parallels between female images (such as the temptress in "Unclean Power" and "Albena"), as well as the common motif of suffering as a means of spiritual purification and elevation. Bonov explores how the Christian faith penetrates the characters of the characters, shaping their actions, motivations and aspirations. Particular attention is paid to the themes of sin, repentance, hope for salvation and the power of moral values, as these aspects are presented as basic structural elements in the work of both writers.

3. Scientific contributions of the dissertation work

The subject and problem area of the dissertation research cover current issues of contemporary theological science, cultural history and literary studies and contribute to the re-Christianization of the interpretation and understanding of the classical works of Yordan Yovkov and Elin Pelin, which are of great importance for the Christian spiritual tradition and cultural identity of the Bulgarian nation. The dissertation research is built on an adequate scientific methodology for comparative and interdisciplinary analysis in relation to the object of the research and is structured in terms of content and composition according to the adopted tasks of the research. In his research, the author adheres to the established academic tradition and develops the study of the work of the two classics of Bulgarian literature in accordance with the basic principles, approaches and traditions of Christian apologetics and a systematic model of Orthodox theological science. In his work, the author has examined an impressive corpus of authorial works and a huge amount of scientific-critical literature, skillfully applying the interpretative model of Christian theological science to identify religious accents, religious truths and spiritual values in the significant works of the two authors. The main ideas and moral messages in the work of the two classics of Bulgarian literature are presented through rich source literature and scientific-critical analysis in the perspectives of theology and Christian science. The qualities of the dissertation work from a content and linguistic point of view testify to the seriousness and depth of the research, to a systematic approach to the topic and the relevance of the scientific conclusions and results. The scientific literature and primary sources related to the subject of the study, which are provided within the framework of the doctoral dissertation, are sufficient in volume and quality and are relevant for the purposes of the study in view of the scientific argumentation of the author's theses and for achieving adequate scientific conclusions and results. The study uses a wide range of methods, including comparative analysis, literary approaches, as well as theological apologetic tools.

4. Conclusion

Yonko Bonov's dissertation successfully demonstrates the thesis of Christian faith and values as fundamental ideas for a deep understanding of the work of Yordan Yovkov and Elin Pelin. Through its innovative approach, it becomes a valuable scientific contribution in the field of humanities and theology, opening the way for new interpretations and research. This work emphasizes the enduring importance of the Orthodox faith as a source of inspiration and moral strength in Bulgarian literature. The dissertation expands the field of research in the field of "Orthodoxy and Literature", laying the foundations for new interdisciplinary studies on Christian faith in Bulgarian literature. The study can be useful for teachers and students in theological and literary studies programs, offering an in-depth analysis of the religious aspects in the work of Yordan Yovkov and Elin Pelin. In general, in his dissertation Yonko Bonov successfully realizes the goals and objectives of his doctoral research. There are the necessary results and achievements within the presented dissertation, which sufficiently reveal the achievements obtained within the undertaken research on the topic in the light of the Christian critical analysis. The conclusions

and the contribution moments of the dissertation testify to an emphasized seriousness of the research, to the substantiated scientific interest, systematic approach and Christian critical view to the problems and various aspects of the dissertation research topic. These circumstances, along with good scientific guidance, determine the success of the study with the mentioned conclusions, contributions and results.

Based on the mentioned merits, results and contribution moments of the research, I evaluate the proposed doctoral dissertation of Yonko Bonov as a successfully completed scientific and research work that meets the requirements of the law and regulations for obtaining educational and scientific degree "Doctor". I support with a positive assessment and recommend to the esteemed scientific jury to award the candidate the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific field 2.4. Religion and theology and I will vote in favor of awarding this degree.

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Assoc. Prof. K. Nushev, PhD.....