

## OPINION

by Prof. Dr. Ludmil Martinov Malev - professor in the PBF of VTU "St. St. Cyril and Methodius"

for the thesis, procedure and materials for awarding the scientific degree "**Doctor of Science**" in: field of higher education Humanities professional direction 2.4 Religion and theology, scientific specialty: Medicine, psychology and faith

### 1. General presentation of the procedure and the dissertation

By order No. PD-21-521 dated 29.02.2024 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury for awarding the scientific degree "**Doctor of Science**" by field of higher education Humanities, professional direction 2.4 Religion and theology, scientific specialty Music, psychology and faith . The author of the dissertation is Assoc. Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov. At present, he is a teacher at the Department of Theology of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" . The topic of the dissertation is "The Feast of the Assumption in the Orthodox liturgical tradition (Theological content of the feast based on the hymnographic and homiletic texts of the church)"

The set of materials submitted by the applicant on paper and electronic media is in accordance with the legal framework and includes the full set of documents. In addition to the dissertation, the candidate has submitted a total of 11 scientific publications related to the topic (2 studies and 9 articles).

Assoc. Ph.D. Stoyan Chilikov is a full-time teacher in the Department of Theology at Paisii Hilendarski Polytechnic. His main qualification was acquired at the Faculty of Theology of the SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" – 1996 Master of Theology; Moscow Theological Academy 2001 Doctor of Theology; He specialized in the Lateran University in Rome and in the State University of Thessaloniki. From 2002 to the present, he has been teaching, with the main areas in which he works being Patrology and Liturgy .

## **2. Relevance of the topic**

The actuality of the dissertation results from the very formulation of the topic and its detailed and comprehensive development. There is no similar scientific work in Bulgarian theological literature, and the questions and controversies that cause the problematic, in general, and individual elements, have long been waiting for their scientifically substantiated answers. The author has managed to cope with this task. On the basis of the available literature and the set of liturgical texts, it gives a clear picture of the tradition in the Orthodox worship of one of the greatest church holidays. At the same time, he often has to enter into controversy with long-recognized and established authorities.

## **3. Knowing the problem**

Prof. Chilikov knows in depth the problem underlying his dissertation work. This is evident from the following circumstances: He knows the controversy in church and theological circles and its development in the bibliography and in church tradition; Knows to a degree of comprehensiveness the significant publications not only as titles, but also their content, merits and weaknesses. He knows how to analyze and interpret them, in which he clearly states his opinion and conclusions; He knows the main liturgical and homiletic texts, on the basis of which, in fact, he builds the scientific narrative.

## **4. Research methodology**

The chosen research methodology allows to achieve the set goal and to give an adequate answer to the tasks solved in the dissertation work.

## **5. Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions - presence/absence of plagiarism**

The dissertation work of Assoc. Dr. St. Chilikov has a marked contribution character. In the report on the contributions, placed in the abstract, he has pointed out in detail what they consist of. Having read the text, as well as the publications on the subject, I accept his self-assessment of contributions as real. I would confidently state that to a large extent they are related to the deep research and diligent and long-term

scientific work and his priestly ministry. This work would be a valuable help both to the scientific workers and students specialized in the field, as well as to the hierarchs and officials in the Church, who can enjoy full confidence and well-deserved authority of the author.

The check and my own knowledge give me the right to say that there is no plagiarism (both in general and in individual elements of the dissertation).

## **6. Evaluation of the publications and personal contribution of the dissertation student**

The attached publications on the subject are of a markedly scientific nature. They are placed in authoritative publications and contribute to the personal contribution of the dissertation student in his overall scientific activity.

## **7. Abstract**

The abstract is prepared according to the approved standard. It contains all the necessary attributes and reflects in full, although synthesized, the content of the dissertation work.

## **8. Recommendations for future use of dissertation contributions and results**

My recommendation is that this work be widely popularized to benefit theologians, a large circle of readers, and church and clergy.

## **Conclusion**

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results that represent an original contribution to science. There is no plagiarism and it meets all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of ZRASRB and the relevant Regulations of PU "Paisiy Hilendarski". The presented materials and dissertation results fully correspond to the minimum national requirements, adopted in connection with the Rules of the PU for the application of the ZRASRB.

The dissertation shows that Assoc. Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the scientific specialty Medicine,

Psychology and Faith, demonstrating qualities and skills for conducting research with obtaining original and significant scientific contributions.

Due to the above, I confidently give my *positive* evaluation of the conducted research presented by the above-reviewed dissertation work, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and *I offer to the honorable scientific jury to award the scientific degree "Doctor of Science"* of Assoc. Dr. Stoyan Iliev Chilikov in the field of higher education: Humanities, professional direction 2.4. Religion and Theology, the scientific specialty Medicine, Psychology and Faith.

14.04. 2024.

**Prepared the opinion : .....**

*( Prof. Dr. Ludmil Malev )*