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**EREMITISM AS A PHENOMENON IN MEDIEVAL BULGARIA IN
THE TENTH CENTURY. AN ATTEMPT FOR SYSTEMATIZATION**

(Summary)

This article deals with the phenomenon called eremitism and more accurately its appearance in Medieval Bulgaria in the Tenth century. The paper starts with a short introduction to the history and philosophy of monasticism in the East and with a differentiation of its various forms – eremitism, lavriotie monasticism and coenobitism, all manifestations of the so called angheliki politia (lit. living an angel like life). The main conclusions of the article are that coenobitic monasticism and eremitism should be understood as different forms of one pursuit – the strive for spiritual perfection, outside the world and in seclusion. Eremitism in Medieval Bulgaria exists as an ascetic practice from the beginning of the Tenth century and it's not appropriate to say that this phenomenon occurred during the “bad“ reign of the Bulgarian Tsar Peter I (927–969). The difficult moral situation in the Tenth century could not be regarded as a real cause for eremitism, because the phenomenon itself is not just a run from reality or asocial protest. The reasons for a person to become a monk are mainly of spiritual nature (Religion is a main part of the view of life in the Middle ages). Also there's no direct connection between eremitism and the heretic Bogomil movement. Eremitism should be regarded as a top point of the monastic efforts of living a perfect Christian life, by God's grace. The arousing of the phenomenon is real evidence of the maturity of medieval Bulgarian monasticism, which unlike in other countries, started in a coenobitic form and eventually evolved in its higher form – eremitism.