

**Yordan Minchev**

## **ABOUT THE BIOGRAPHY OF BISHOP ILARION LOVCHANSKI**

(Summary)

Ilarion Lovchansky, who was elected the first Bulgarian exarch, was one of the first Bulgarians to be ordained as the Bishop first of Aksiopol and later of Lovech. In 1868 he broke decisively with the Patriarchate of Constantinople, chaired the Church-People's Council and participated in the Epiphany Action. He is the first and last Exarchic Metropolitan of the Kyustendil Diocese, chairman of the Local Committee „Unity”, and participates in the work of the Constituent Assembly as a deputy „by rights”.

The article presents new facts about the ministry of Ilarion in his capacity as a Protosingel of Metropolitan Neophit of Turnovo and as the chairman of the cathedral “St. Apostles Peter and Paul”, responsible for the parish of the newly-built temple of St. Nicolas in Tarnovo; about his ordination as the Bishop of Axiopol - the first bishop Bulgarian after Sofroniy Vrachanski; about his complicated and delicate activity as temporary administrator of the Turnovo Diocese after the Crimean War, as well as about his relations with individual Revival figures in the beginning of the church struggle of the Bulgarians.