Romanian Monasteries. Website

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Abstract— In this paper we present a website model on the presentation of Romanian monasteries. Religion, arts, history, culture and tourism are some of the reference points which constitute the attraction of this monastery study. In our paper we are focused on the study of the most important monastery features, which make it a touristic point of interest: the geographical position, the type (for monks or nuns), the patrons, the year of the build, if it is a monument, relics, what person buried in the monastery, persons which have lived at the monastery, accommodation possibilities, etc. On our website, the user can select preferences for the features presented above and he can view the monasteries which satisfy the criteria. For example, if the user is interested in the exhibition of icons, he selects this item from the category of the significant objects and he can view all the monasteries that have such expositions. In this way, the user can easily find out the treasures of monasteries which makes the website a good source of information and a tool for increasing the interest for tourism.

Keywords— Websites, tourism, monasteries, Java, SQL Server.

1 Introduction
With more than five hundred orthodox monasteries and sketes, Romania seems to be the country with the highest number of orthodox monasteries of the world (see also [20]).

History, treasury, saints and wonders are the subjects displayed in many books or other presentation items, regarding the monasteries. In our study we are focused on building a website in order to present Romanian monasteries. We use [4] as basic information, where we find 305 of the most important Romanian monasteries. 177 of them are monasteries of monks and the others 128 are monasteries of nuns.


The monasteries were built in different centuries. Parts of some old monasteries have been destroyed over time. For this reason, in the case of the older
monasteries, some parts were rebuilt in various centuries. Even if some monasteries are not old, they were built near the ancient religious sites, such as an old church. Now, considering the oldest part from each monastery, we find 1 monastery from the 12th century, 10 monasteries from the 13th century, 17 monasteries from the 14th century, 27 monasteries from the 15th century, 43 monasteries from the 16th century, 61 monasteries from the 17th century, 43 monasteries from the 18th century, 20 monasteries from the 19th century, 82 monasteries from the 20th century (55 monasteries were built after 1989) and 1 monastery from the 21st century.

Some from these monasteries are historical, UNESCO or architectural monuments.

For a monastery, we find between 1 and 5 holy patrons or religious celebration, depending also on the number of monastery churches. We find the Dormition of the Virgin holy patron in 52 monasteries, the Birth of the Virgin holy patron in 26 monasteries, the Saint Nicholas patron in 25 monasteries, the Holy Trinity holy patron in 23 monasteries, the Saint George patron in 19 monasteries, the Apostles Peter And Paul patron in 15 monasteries, the Holy Virgin's Entering the Church patron in 14 monasteries, the Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel patron in 13 monasteries, the Curing Spring patron in 12 monasteries, the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary patron in 12 monasteries, the Holy Virgin's Veil patron in 11 monasteries, the Prophet Elias patron in 11 monasteries, the St John the Baptist patron in 10 monasteries, the Transfiguration of Jesus patron in 10 monasteries, the Ascension of Jesus patron in 8 monasteries, the Parascheva the Pious patron in 7 monasteries, the Saint Demetrius patron in 7 monasteries, the Beheading of St. John the Forerunner patron in 7 monasteries, the Saints Constantine & Helen patron in 6 monasteries, the Descent of the Holy Ghost patron in 6 monasteries, the Sunday of all Saints patron in 5 monasteries, the Great Martyr Panteleimon patron in 4 monasteries, the Resurrection patron in 3 monasteries, the Ascension of the Holy Cross patron in 3 monasteries, the Saint Antony the Great patron in 3 monasteries and the Saint Andrew patron in 2 monasteries. We find others 23 patrons, each of them as patrons in only one monastery.

In some monasteries, we can find saint relics or important personalities buried inside.

From the types of treasury objects of the Romanian monasteries, we recall (see also Figure 2, the Significant objects list):
- school, school of painting on glass, typography, school of priests, theological seminary, carpet weaving workroom, embroidery workroom, painting school, cultural center, center of famous painters on glass,
- Greek school, orthodox spirituality and culture courses, monastic theological seminary, tailor's workroom, ecclesiastical painting workroom, carpentry workroom, painting workroom, knitting workroom, elementary and secondary school, library, eparchy residence, school of religious painting, school of church singers;
- the miracle-making icon and holy spring;
- old books collection, ecclesiastical museum collection, wood icons, glass icons, ethnographic objects, religious items, historical monuments, sculpture, architecture, objects of medieval art, paintings, mural painting, heritage objects, folk museum collection, bibliophile property, collection of historical and cultural value wines, byzantine architecture, typography, state archives, artistically embroidery, chrism church, old documents, icons in relief, chronicle mural, manuscripts, tailoring for ecclesiastical vestments, painting with artistic and historical value, tapestries, ceramics, wax painting, engravings, rudimentary printing presses, portrait gallery, religious ornaments;
- exhibitions dedicated to the life and activities of bishops, museum, exhibition of icons, religious art exhibitions, ecclesiastical music concerts, memorial houses, famous cultural center (calligraphers, miniaturists, historians), printers, ecclesiastical old art collection, coin museum;
- bishops necropolis and princely necropolis;
- religious assistance, social assistance and asylum of elderly;
- resort, center of treatment, sanatorium center and sulphurous springs;
- vineyards;
- caves.

Starting from the information presented above, in the Section II, we built a database model, used to store the website data. In the Section III, we present the website.

2 Database presentation
The website information is stored in the database presented in Figure 1. Now, we present each table from the database and the signification of fields.
In the Monasteries table we use the followings fields: ID_monastery – for the unique identification of the monastery in database, Name, County, Map_area (for the map area where we can find the monastery), Type (the values in this field are monks or nuns), MYear (this field refers to the year when the oldest part of the monastery was built), MCentury (this field refers to the century when the oldest part of the monastery was built – we use this field because for many oldest monasteries we do not have the value for MYear; in the case of these monasteries only the century is specified), Monument (in this field we save value as: UNESCO, historical, architectural), Address, Telephone, E_mail, Web_address (in this field we save the web address of each monastery; we consider that, at this web address, the important information on the monastery’s present-day activity is displayed) and Abbot_prioress.

In the Patrons table we use the fields ID_patron, PDay, PMonth (for many patrons, in the orthodox calendar we find a corresponding date, e.g. 6 December for the Saint Nicholas holy patron – in this case, we save the 6 value for PDay and the December value for PMonth) and Observation (in the case of certain patrons, we do not have a fixed date in the orthodox calendar – the event takes place on different dates, depending on the year; e.g. for the Ascension of Jesus patron, in the field Observation we save the 40 days after Easter value).

In the Monastery_patrons table, in the case of each monastery, we specify all patrons.

To describe the monastery history, we use the History table. Here we can find the building or rebuilding years and all the remarkable events that affected the monastery.

In the Founders table we save data on the founders. For different cases of monasteries, we find one or more founders, corresponding to different stages of the monastery’s history. Also, we can find a person as founder in the case of more than one monastery (e.g. Stephen the Great).

In the case of different monasteries we can find saint relics. We save this information in the Relics table.

Also, in some monasteries, certain historical personalities have been buried and we save the corresponding data in the Buried table. Over time, remarkable personalities have lived for short or long term, inside of monasteries - we save these data in the Lived table.

Many websites present information on different monasteries. These websites can be dedicated to a monastery or to monasteries from a certain Romanian region or to Romanian orthodox life. Also, on YouTube we find many video files with wonderful movies presenting different monasteries (see, for example, [12]-[18]). In the Websites table we save the address of such websites and we provide a short description. However, in this table we do not consider the monastery’s official web address (this web address is saved in the Monasteries table). In order to display, in our website, image and video files, we use the Photos and Videos tables.

For visiting Romanian monasteries, we have motorway or railway access. We specify this information in the Monastery_access table.

Many Romanian monasteries offer accommodation and we specify this information the Accommodation table.

3 Website presentation

In Figure 2 we present the first page of our website.

If for all components presented in Figure 2, we have selected the all value, then we can view all monasteries ordered by county, as in Figure 4.

We can select a county or a map area, where we want to view the data on monastery. If we select a county, from the map area list, the application automatically selects the all value. Reversely, when we select a certain map area, from the county list, the application automatically selects the all value.
This operation excludes possibilities when the user chooses a county and a map area corresponding to the cases in which the chosen county is not in the chosen map area (such a situation means zero monasteries result records).

Using HTML list components, we can select a single county or a single map area. We also can use other HTML components for selection. For example, we can use for each county a checkbox component. But this means 42 checkbox components only for selecting the desired counties (41 counties and Bucharest). In this way, we consider that the HTML components used in order to build the website are at the discretion of the website builder.

To select the monastery type (monks, nuns or both), we use radio components. Out of all the three possibilities, the user selects only one radio component. For patron, century, monument, relics, buried, lived, founders, access and significant objects (see Figure 2), we use list components. In each case we can view data for all elements or only for a single selected item (see also Figure 3, where we select a county).

With a click on the “see data…” button (see Figure 3) we obtain in Figure 4 all monasteries which correspond to our selection, from the left side of the webpage.

With a click on the monastery “…button (see Figure 4), we can view data on the selected monastery (see Figure 5).

In Figure 5, using the scroll bar, we can view all the data corresponding to the selected monastery: county, map area, type, year and the century when it was built, if it is a monument, its address, telephone, the e-mail, the web address, the abbot or the prioress, the patrons, access, the websites, the information on accommodation possibilities, the historical events, the
significant objects, information on relics, information on person buried in the monastery, information on the person who have lived at the monastery, information on founders and monastery image and video files. In Figure 5, Putna Monastery (which has the largest monastery museum from Romania) is presented.

Figure 5 Website – monastery data
We can use a calendar (see Figure 5) in order to present information from the Orthodox calendar. When we select a date, we can view the corresponding religious information.

4 Conclusion
We can find many sources on Romanian monasteries (books, guides, maps, etc.). Also, many websites (from Romania or even abroad) present one or more monasteries.

Many monasteries have a very long history including very many events. Also, many of them have a very impressive treasury.

In our study we have presented a website model which helps the user to find monasteries according to some criteria. We can find a lot of websites on monastery presentation. But many of them, even if they provide much information, they do not allow us to find monasteries in relation to with some conditions.

For example, in Figure 2, at Significant objects if we select library, we can find all the monasteries that have library. Here, we recall that the Neamț monastery has a library with 18000 volumes, the Agapia monastery has a library with 15000 volumes, the Cernica monastery has a library with 14000 volumes, the Hurez monastery has a library with 4000 volumes etc. In Section I, we have presented the very large set of significant objects that can be found in Romanian monasteries. The selections from our websites can help the user in order to have a cultural image on monasteries.

Also, our website can be a wonderful guide for tourists. With good information from website, the user can create an itinerary for his visit.

References:
[12] http://il.youtube.com/watch?v=eoJXWH1PwJ4
[14] http://il.youtube.com/watch?v=9ACS0n_7z1g
[18] http://il.youtube.com/watch?v=8UwVhovvxEo&feature=related