



OPINION

by Prof. Dr.S. Emil Assenov Atanasov, external member of the jury, UNWE, Scientific Specialty “Accounting, control and analysis of economic activity“ of the materials submitted for a competition to fill the academic post of

Associate Professor at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance (VUZF)

in higher education field “3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Occupational Strand 3.8. Economics: Monetary Circulation and Monetary Systems (Development of Monetary Systems and Coinage)” by Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva, PhD, a part-time lecturer at VUZF, participated as candidate in the competition for Associate Professor announced in State Gazette No 95/16.11.2021 and on the website of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance.

1. General presentation of materials received

By Order No 40 of 2 March 2022 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, I was appointed a member of the scientific jury for a competition to fill the academic post of **Associate Professor at VUZF**, in higher education field “3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Occupational Strand 3.8. Economics: Monetary Circulation and Monetary Systems (Development of Monetary Systems and Coinage)”

One candidate has submitted documents to take part in the competition, i.e.:

Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva, PhD, part-time lecturer at VUZF
(academic degree, forename, surname – academic position in a scientific organization)

The set of materials submitted electronically by Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva complies with the Rules for Development of Academic Staff at VUZF and includes the following documents:

- Habilitation thesis: a monograph with a synopsis, for the Associate Professor academic post
- Copy of a doctoral degree, a recognition protocol from VUZF, and a certificate of recognition No 08-00-14/12.01.2022 by the National Center for Information and Documentation
- European format CV
- List of publications following the doctoral thesis and copies thereof

- Division of labour documents for joint publications
- Statement of fulfillment of minimum national requirements for filling the academic post of Associate Professor
- Reference to original research contributions in literature and to citations
- Personal data processing consent form in connection with participation in the completion

Candidate Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva has enclosed a total of 20 research works, 3 studies, 2 monographs, 2 books and a list of 13 research works. Five research works outside the scope of the dissertation and taken into account in the final evaluation have been accepted for peer review. Fifteen research works within the scope of the thesis and 15 research works outside the scope of the competition have not been reviewed. The distribution of research works by relevant heading, domestically and abroad, is as follows: 12 in the country and 8 abroad.

2. Biographical data of the candidate

Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva graduated from St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia in 1990, majoring in ancient and medieval history. She specialized in ancient history and numismatics and defended a doctoral dissertation at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, where she taught a series of lecture courses on numismatics. She worked as an expert for auction houses in Switzerland and Germany, and as deputy head of excavations for the French Archaeological Institute in Argos, Greece. Since the autumn of 2001, she has been working at First Investment Bank, where she has set up and run the first and unique banking department in Bulgaria, specializing in precious metals transactions, investment advice and numismatic expertise. Since 2008, she has been teaching a Master's course of lectures on „Cultural Heritage: Market and investment“ at the Faculty of Philosophy at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“. Since 2016, she has been teaching a Master's course at VUZF on „Markets and Investment in Precious metals“. She has participated in a number of national and international research projects in the field of cultural heritage and numismatics.

3. General characteristic of candidate's activities

Dr. Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva leads since 2008 Master's degree from lectures on "Cultural Heritage: Market and Investments" at the Master's programme "Management and Socialisation of Cultural Heritage" at the Faculty of Philosophy at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". Her teaching and pedagogical activity is characterized by innovative teaching methods and relies on an individual approach. The choice of teaching aids and information sources in conducting lecture courses is consistent with the specific interests of students and graduates.

The publications and scientific-applied activity of the candidate can be classified on several grounds:

By type: articles and reports - 13 issues;

By importance: articles in publications with impact factor-3 issues; plenary reports - 3 issues;

By place of publication: articles in refereed international journals - 6 issues; reports from international scientific conferences abroad - 3 issues; articles in national journals - 2 issues; reports in papers at international scientific conferences in Bulgaria - 1 issue; reports in scientific papers of universities - 2 pieces;

In the language in which they are written: in English - 5; in Bulgarian - 8; in other languages - 7;

by number of co-authors: individual - 12; with one co-author - 6 pieces; with three or more co-authors - 1 issue.

Scientific and applied contributions

1. The presented habilitation work of Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva on the topic "Monetary system and coinage of modern Bulgaria (1880-2021)" fully reflects the issuance policy of the Bulgarian National Bank in the field of coinage. In addition to the official issues, it summarizes all Bulgarian specimens of coins in the period 1880 to 2021. In the study for the first time the monetary system and coinage of Bulgaria for the period 1880-2021 are considered in their entirety. Conclusions, comments and hypotheses are presented in the context of political and economic history. The currents in the Bulgarian society for the names of the new national currency in the light of the international situation and the external influences on the restored Bulgarian state are also analyzed.

2. The study reviews the iconographic compositions and legends presented on Bulgarian coins and pays special attention to the symbols used and their messages. The main iconographic ideas embedded in the new Bulgarian coinage are professionally and competently presented. The dynamics in their development during the different historical periods and social changes are traced. In the same way the denominations, metals, circulations and mints are considered. The coats of arms, the ruler's portraits, the symbols and the messages for the whole studied period from the time of the Principality of Bulgaria, during the Third Bulgarian Kingdom, to the People's Republic of Bulgaria and finally in the Republic of Bulgaria are analyzed.

3. The study is based on the results of historical, economic and technological analyzes. A critical review of archival units from the Bulgarian state archives in the field of the monetary system and coinage is proposed.

4. The presented habilitation paper publishes for the first time a number of valuable documents from the Bulgarian state archives - the Ministry of Finance, customs, regional administrations, etc., which are related to the monetary system and coinage, such as - coin-shaped monuments (medals, medallions, jewelry). etc.), technological data for production are included. ("Monetary system and coinage of modern Bulgaria (1880-2021)")

5. In the research related to modern coinage, the author uses the accumulated significant experience and builds on the results of her research in ancient numismatics and the history of money. The conclusions are supported by archeological, epigraphic and numismatic data. ("Neue Beiträge zur Erforschung der Münzprägung von Pautalia", *Annotazioni Numismatiche*, Suppl. XII, Milano 1998; "Médicaments et thermalisme à Pautalia, Thrace", *Gesnerus* (Swiss Journal for the History of Medicine and Sciences) 57/2000, p. 238-249; "Les mines du territoire de Pautalia (Thrace)", *Atlas historique des zones minières d'Europe*, Bruxelles, Luxembourg 2000; "Deux médaillons d'Antonin

le Pieux du territoire de Pautalia (Thrace)", Proceedings of the XIVth International numismatic congress Glasgow 2009, vol. I, Glasgow 2011; „Coin finds from sacred places in Pautalia, Thracia: offerings for health and fortune?“ (with Lily Grozdanova). In: Proceedings of the Conference: Coins for the Gods, coins for the merchants – Economy of the sacred compared to the economy of profane, Athens, October 24-26 2019. (forthcoming).

The publications have been used and cited many times by Bulgarian and foreign researchers.

6. Some of the publications indicate for the first time the borders of a separate geographical area in the southwestern parts of today's Bulgarian lands and in part of northern Greece and the island of Thassos in the VI-V centuries BC. New data from dozens of coin finds, data on metal mining and coinage in the region have been published and analyzed for the first time. Corrections have been made to the existing terminology in ancient numismatics and the history of coin money. The term "Thracian imitations of Thassos coins" has been replaced by "Thracian-Greek coinage". („New hoards with small denomination coins of the Island of Thasos (6th – 5th century BC): Context, interpretation and dating“ (with Ilya Prokopov), in *Ex nummis lux Studies in ancient numismatics in honour of Dimitar Draganov*, Sofia 2017; „Нова интерпретация на находки с монети от малък номинал на остров Тасос (VI-V в. пр.Хр.)“, *Пари и култура*, 2022, forthcoming; „Разпръснатото съкровище от статери от типа силен и нимфа“ (в съавторство с Иля Прокопов), в *KRATISTOS Сборник в чест на професор Петър Делев*, София 2017.)

The term has been adopted not only by Bulgarian but also by foreign scholars.

7. A special place in the candidate's publications is given to the analysis and dissemination of scientific information related to the history of precious metals, their extraction in the Bulgarian lands and their products. She is one of the first teachers to start implementing in this direction. The aim is to create a future course in the history of money and finance in antiquity. Such has not been realized to date in Bulgaria. "III. The role of precious metals and coins in the history of finance as a basis for their future sustainable development", co-authored with Ilya Prokopov, in *Sustainability of the financial system - long-term perspectives (ontological and empirical grounds)*, team, Bulgaria 1990-2020. *Economics and Finance: Applied Research*, collected in separate books, Sofia 2021, pp. 116-139; "Guide to the collector and investor in coins and precious metals", co-authored with Ilya Prokopov, Sofia 2017; with precious metals in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic, in *Foreign Trade and Pandemic*, Proceedings of the Roundtable on Foreign Trade and Pandemic, organized by the Graduate School of Insurance and Finance and the Laboratory for Insurance. scientific and applied research to it VUZF Lab on 02.12.2020, Sofia 2021, pp. 103-110).

4. Assessment of the personal contribution of the candidate

The defined scientific and scientific-applied contributions are the work of Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva. She has correctly reflected her own research results. The joint team activities are objectively indicated, and the co-authors and collaborators are cited. All used literature and electronic sources are also presented accurately and correctly.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks on the materials submitted for opinion by the candidate in the competition for "Associate Professor" at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance in the field of higher education related to the essence of publications.

The recommendation I could make is to continue and deepen her research, which is of undeniable public importance, which goes beyond the specialized profile of the issue of coinage and numismatics. I think it is appropriate for Dr. Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva to publish a textbook in which to present the history of proto-money, the role of precious metals in early human economic history.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva **comply with all the requirements** of the Bulgarian Academic Staff Development Act, Implementing Rules thereof, and the relevant Rules of VUZF.

The candidate in the competition has submitted a **significant** number of research papers published after the materials used to defend her doctoral degree. The candidate's works feature original theoretical and applied research contributions that have been internationally recognized, with a representative part of them having been published in journals and scientific collections issued by international academic publishers. Her works have practical relevance, some being directly oriented toward research and learning. Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva's research and teaching qualifications are undoubted and were acquired over the years of research and academic development in Bulgaria and Switzerland. Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva's learning and research achievements are **fully** in line with the VUZF's Implementing Rules for the Bulgarian Academic Staff Development Act.

Having examined the monograph and research works presented in the competition, analyzed their relevance, and theoretical and applied research contributions contained therein, I consider it reasonable and fully convincing to give my positive assessment, and I hereby recommend that the scientific jury draw up a report to the Academic Council of VUZF for the election of Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva to the academic post of Associate Professor at VUZF, in Occupational Strand 3.8. Economy: "Monetary Circulation and Monetary Systems (Development of Monetary Systems and Coinage)".

April, 7th, 2022

Author of the opinion:

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(Prof. Dr.Sc. Emil Assenov)