

## **OPINION**

**by Prof. D.Sc. Dr. of Numismatics Ilya Simeonov Prokopov**

of the materials submitted for participation in a competition for the academic position of 'Associate Professor' of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics: "Money Circulation and Monetary Systems (Development of Monetary Systems and Coinage)"

In the competition for 'associate professor', announced in the State Gazette, issue 95 of 16.11.2021, and on the website of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, the candidate is Dr. Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva, a part-time lecturer at VUZF.

### **1. General presentation of the procedure and the applicant**

By order № 40 of 2.03.2022 of the Rector of the Higher School of Insurance and Finance, I was appointed a member of the scientific jury in a competition for the academic position of 'Associate Professor' at VUZF in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics: "Money Circulation and Monetary Systems (Development of Monetary Systems and Coinage)"

The only candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Dr. Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva, part-time lecturer at VUZF.

The set of electronic materials presented by Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva meets the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of VUZF and includes as follows:

- Habilitation thesis - monograph with a summary of the academic position of "Associate Professor";
- Copy of diploma for educational and scientific degree "Doctor", the protocol for recognition by VUZF, as well as Certificate №08-00-14 / 12.01.2022 for recognition by NACID;
- Curriculum vitae in European format;
- List of publications after the defense of the doctoral dissertation and copies of them;
- Separation protocols for joint publications;
- Information on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for holding the academic position "Associate Professor";
- Information on the original scientific contributions in the works and on the citations;
- Consent form for the processing of personal data in connection with participation in the competition.

The candidate Valentina Grigorova Grigorova-Gencheva has included in the inventory a total of 20 scientific works: 3 studies, 2 monographs, 2 books, and a list of 13 research papers. 5 scientific papers have been accepted for review, which does not fall within the topic of the dissertation and are taken into account in the final evaluation. 15 scientific papers on the topic of the dissertation and 15 scientific papers that fall outside the scope of the competition are not reviewed.

Scientific papers for review are divided into headings as follows:

- 12 published in the country;
- 8 publications abroad.

### **2. Brief biographical data of the candidate**

Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in 1990 in the specialty "Ancient and Medieval History". He works in the field of ancient history and numismatics, specializes in, and defended his doctoral dissertation at the University of Friborg, Switzerland. During his specialization and doctoral studies, he led lectures on numismatics. He works as an expert in the identification and valuation of antique coins for auction houses in Switzerland and Germany. He holds the prestigious position of Deputy Head of the Excavations of the French Archaeological Institute in Argos, Greece. Under her project, in 2001 the first and only banking department of its kind in Bulgaria was established at First Investment Bank, specializing in precious metals transactions, investment consultations, and numismatic expertise. From the same year, she was the head of the department, which later grew into a directorate. Since 2008 he has been leading 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 he has had a master's lecture course at VUZF on "Markets and investments in precious metals". Participates in a number of national and international research projects in the field of cultural values as an element of the luxury market, the history of money in antiquity, and the development of numismatics as a science and place in the luxury market.

### **3. General characteristics of the candidate's activity**

In her educational and pedagogical activity, Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva introduces innovative teaching methods and relies on an individual approach. The choice of teaching aids and information sources when conducting lecture courses is in accordance 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 a 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 habilitation work of Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva "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 prototype coins for the period from 1880 to 2021. It connects the time of realization with events, personalities, and facts in the case of especially important and interesting specimens. This includes professionally prepared reference data outlining the historical and cultural framework that reflected the images and denominations of the coins. For the first time, the monetary system and the coinage of Bulgaria for the period 1880-2021 are considered in their entirety. For clarity and scientific credibility, the conclusions, comments, and hypotheses are presented in the context of political and economic history. The currents in the Bulgarian

society about 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 clarified.

2. The main iconographic ideas embedded in the new Bulgarian coinage are professionally and competently presented. The dynamics of their development during the different historical periods and changes in the state system are traced. Denominations, metals, circulations, and mints are examined in the same way. The coats of arms, the ruler's portraits, the symbols, and the messages for the whole studied the period from the time of the Principality of Bulgaria, during the Third Bulgarian Kingdom, to the People's Republic of Bulgaria, and finally to the Republic of Bulgaria are analyzed. Through comparative analyzes and after reviewing documents from the archives, the author offers reasoned opinions regarding high-rarity specimens from the period before 1944, as well as ambiguities and persistent urban legends about some trial and error specimens in the Bulgarian coinage for the period 1944-1989.

("Monetary system and coinage of modern Bulgaria (1880-2021)")

3. An interdisciplinary approach is applied in the research. Historical, economic, and technological analyzes are combined. A critical review of archival units from the Bulgarian state archives in the field of the monetary system and coinage has been proposed. As an example in the study of coin-shaped monuments (medals, medals, jewelry, etc.), technological data on production are included. ("Monetary system and coinage of modern Bulgaria (1880-2021)")

4. In her research in the field of modern coinage, the author uses the accumulated experience and builds on the results of her research in ancient numismatics and the history of coin money. Bright benchmarks for long-term and scientific pursuits are also evident in the publications of hitherto unknown to science coin types of the city of Pautalia, minted in Roman times (II-III century). They include analyzes of historical sources on economic development and trade links between cities in different provinces in the Roman era. The conclusions are supported by archaeological, epigraphic, and numismatic data. The results eloquently show an objective picture of the importance of Pautalia together with its urban territory. Registered and proven are highly developed as the primary economic feathers for the empire industries such as mining, balneology, and agriculture. "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; "The Mines of the Territory of Pautalia (Thrace)", *Atlas of the History of the Miniature Areas of Europe*, Brussels, Luxembourg 2000; 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 the profane*, Athens, October 24-26 2019. (forthcoming) The publications have been used and cited dozens of times by Bulgarian and foreign researchers.

5. With her research the author influences the introduction of corrections in the conceptual apparatus and terminology in ancient numismatics and the history of money coins. For example, the term "Thracian imitations of Thassos coins" used for a long time 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 honor of Dimitar Draganov*, Sofia 2017; "A New Interpretation of Small Denomination Coins on the Island of Thassos (VI-V centuries BC)", *Money and Culture*, 2022, forthcoming; with Ilya Prokopov), in *KRATISTOS Collection in honor of Professor Peter Delev*, Sofia 2017.) The term has been adopted not only by Bulgarian but also by foreign scholars.

6. The author is one of the founders of the field for research of the use of gold elements as proto-money in the early epochs. She is also among the first teachers to start implementing in this direction. The stated goal 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; precious metals in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic ", in " Foreign Trade and Pandemic ", Proceedings of the Round Table on " Foreign Trade and Pandemic ", organized by the Higher School of Insurance and Finance and the Laboratory of Scientific -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 marked scientific and scientific-applied contributions are the work of Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva. She has truthfully reflected her own results from the purposeful long-term work. The joint team activities are also correctly reflected, and the co-authors and collaborators are cited. All used literary and electronic sources are also reflected very accurately.

#### **5. Critical remarks and recommendations**

Critical remarks to the materials submitted for opinion by Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva in the competition for "Associate Professor" at the Higher School of Insurance and Finance in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic, and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics: "Money circulation and monetary systems (Development of monetary systems and coinage)" in essence I do not have. As a recommendation, I would suggest V. Grigorova-Gencheva publish the requested manual/textbook in order to start and fill the gap in the history of proto-money and the place of precious metals in early human economic history.

#### **CONCLUSION**

The presented scientific papers, documents, and materials by the candidate Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva in the competition for associate professor fully meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for its implementation, and the Regulations of VUZF.

The presented solid volume of scientific papers is from the period after the defense of ONS 'Doctor'.

There are the necessary original scientific and scientific-applied contributions used and cited by scientists from the country and abroad.

The candidate's works have been published in journals and scientific journals, in national and international academic publishing houses.

Some of the research results are practice-oriented, and some are directly oriented towards teaching and learning.

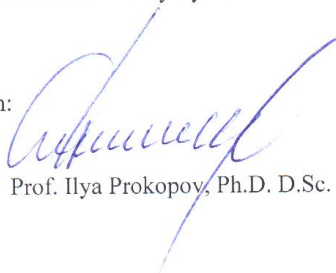
The candidate is well recognizable, and the stages of scientific qualification are clearly visible, both in Switzerland and in Bulgaria.

The results of Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva in the teaching and research activities fully comply with the requirements for application of ZRASRB and the Regulations of VUZF.

After getting acquainted in detail with the materials and scientific papers submitted for the competition and taking into account their importance and the scientific and scientific-applied contributions contained in them, I declare that I give a positive assessment and allow myself to recommend the Scientific Jury to prepare a report to the Academic Council for the election of Valentina Grigorova-Gencheva to the academic position of 'Associate Professor' at VUZF in the professional field 3.8. Economics: "Money Circulation and Monetary Systems (Development of Monetary Systems and Coinage)".

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Author of the opinion:



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