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STATEMENT

done by: Kostadin Rabadjiev, Dr.Sc., Professor in Classical archaeology, member of the Scientific Jury according to the Order of the Rector of “Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov” University, Burgas (No. РД – 245/ 15.09.2022), concerning the competition for the academic position “Associate Professor” in professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology/ Ancient History (including Praehistory), announced in the State Gazette No. 45/ 17.06.2022.

1. In the announced competition, organized for the needs of the Department of History and Philosophy at the Faculty of Social Sciences, the only candidate is Assistant Professor **Martin Asenov Gyuzelev**, Dr.Sc. The reason for his participation in the competition process is the submitted certificate that he fulfils the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff. Martin Gyuzelev graduated in Archaeology at the Faculty of History of Sofia University (1998), was a full-time PhD student at NAIM-BAS with the topic of his dissertation: *The settlements on the West Pontic coast during the 1st Millennium BC: between Emine Cape and the Bosphorus* (defended 2004). He also defended his dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Historical Sciences at the Department of Ancient History, Thracology and Medieval History at the St. Kliment Ohridski University of Sofia with the topic: *Dionysius of Byzantium and his Anaplus of the Bosphorus as a Source for the History and Culture of Southeastern Europe* (2015). Successively Martin Gyuzelev was assistant-professor at the Burgas Museum and lecturer in the Department of History and Philosophy at the Faculty of Social Sciences of Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov University in Burgas. He participated in the competition with a habilitation thesis submitted for discussion under the title: *Three-Holed Stone Anchors from the Bulgarian Black Sea Coast*, Burgas 2022 (ISBN 978-619-7559-284). He also contributed 28 selected publications – studies and papers according to the attached list.

2. Martin Gyuzelev is among the young generation in Bulgarian archaeology, graduates in Archaeology at Sofia University, who enter ambitiously and with excellent preparation for the study of the past of our lands. Apart from publications, participation in excavations and scientific projects, we can trace this in his teaching activity, in the conviction that the knowledge obtained should be reproduced in care for the next generation of researchers. The range of subjects he teaches in the bachelor’s programme, full-time education – 4

courses focused on Ancient history, Thracology and Archaeology; 5 in the Master's programme, full-time and part-time, here the emphasis is extended to Historical geography of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans in cartography, and his teaching load over the years is above the standard 400 hours. Separately are the forms of out-of-classroom activities also, such as discussions with students from the "Young Historian Club" (a group of 8 students), as well as 1 successfully defended graduate student. M. Gyuzelev regularly up-dates his education programmes and for his activity he was attested with a very good evaluation in 2020.

Important for the evaluation of his activity is his participation in programmes and research projects, all clearly linked to his scientific research, which reveals him as a thorough scholar. Such is the Bulgarian-French-Romanian project "Pont Euxin" for archaeological and interdisciplinary research on the territory of Apollonia, in which he is the deputy head (since 2010); he is the co-leader of the archaeological research in the project "Route of Faith" in the town of Nesebar (2013). He is also a member of the team of the programme "Mesembria Pontica and its Ancient Territory" at the National Research Fund (2013); he is also involved in the project "Middle Black Sea Coast" for a comprehensive study of the eastern part of the Balkan Mountains at the National Research Fund. Here I would also include a long string of archaeological excavations in the area of the southern coast of the Western Pontus, especially in the territory of ancient Mesembria and Apollonia, in which he is a team member as deputy leader, co-leader or leader.

Martin Gyuzelev has presented papers at national and international scientific conferences, and as a museum member he has developed thematic and exhibition plans for temporary and permanent museum exhibitions. Among his activities are also expertise of cultural-historical valuables, field inspections, assessments and identifications for the executive and judicial authorities, in his capacity as an expert to the Burgas Regional Law-Court register.

3. In the spectrum of Martin Gyuzelev's scientific pursuits, the theme of the sea and sea-faring stands out, as well as that of the seaside centres in the archaeological research of which he is actively involved. Also on this theme is the monograph with which he participates in the competition – about a specific type of stone anchors with three holes, almost the only traces of early navigation along the West Pontic coast. The text is not voluminous, it is structured in an introduction and five chapters, at the end there is a conclusion

with some deductions and an appendix of a catalogue of the anchors and a list of the literature used (all 151 pages). The aim is the review of all known up till now artefacts and an unintentional analysis of the information about them, as stated in the Introduction. It begins with a review of the written records about the use of anchors (Chapter I), focusing on interpretation of the stone artefacts found and informative about port facilities, also. But some of the texts, as well as the data from dictionaries, are quoted at too great length, and it was not necessary to bring them together bilingually, nor were repetitions allowed, which is irritating (pp. 25-26 and 87-88). The historiographical overview (Chapter II) is very much in place to present the different approaches to the interpretation of the artefacts and their date, in relation to the seaways. The intrigue of what is written is in an unbiased analysis of what little is known about them – a reconstruction of the palaeogeographical setting (Chapter III), mainly the coastline and the situation of the anchors found in relation to it and the sea level in the past, and in relation to the archaeological setting (settlements) on land. All this is much obscure, and the preoccupations today are still in their infancy, and unfortunately few objects are known to us with their exact location. Petrographic analyses of the local origin of stones from which the anchors were made is not sufficient for their interpretation, and a specific approach to the artefact assemblages has been sought – their distribution relative to settlements and presumed harbour facilities (Chapter IV), with information from recorded artefacts and underwater archaeological survey, combined with reports of ancient observers. This refines the picture in terms of the dates of the artefacts achieved by analyses, as the antithesis of that was assumed by the idea of Thracian maritime dominance in Late Bronze Age and prior to Greek colonisation, and in this I would outline the contribution made by Martin Gyuzelev. The achievements of the study are evidenced by the conclusions in the final section – logically constructed, they provide a convincing reading of these rather enigmatic artefacts, which seem to be able to fit into any era of the long history of shipping in the Pontus. The language in which the book is written is professional, the expression is concrete. Unfortunately, I cannot say the same about the layout of the book – too unprofessional and with errors, an example are the illustrations in the catalogue – the approach is not the same to all, which creates difficulties in using it.

4. Martin Gyuzelev participates in the competition with 28 publications also: studies and papers, according to the attached list. Almost half of them (13) are published in a foreign

language in prestigious Bulgarian and foreign scientific journals and series; several (5) are published in refereed and indexed journals; half (14) are co-authored, for which he has attached a declaration in which he has defined the degree of his participation in the joint scientific work (according to §15 of the regulations); 6 are publications of archaeological research in the AOP (Archaeological Discoveries and Excavations). Here again the main theme is the sea in the culture of coastal inhabitants, mostly in the area along the western coast and south of Hemus. This is the theme of shipping and navigation through the straits in antiquity (#4); here also a historical-geographical analysis of information in the *Anaplys* of the Bosphorus by Dionysius of Byzantium (#5); as well as on the Bosphorus and the changes after the transformation of Thrace into a Roman province (#3). M. Gyuzelev also looks at the straits through the prism of religious cults and the pantheon of seafarers (#1 and #2). About shipping are two papers discussing the possibility that Lake Mandrensko was navigable for ships, which is dismissed, and with it the possibility that the colony of Deultum possessed a large seaport (#16 and #17).

Apollonia is another focus of Martin Gyuzelev's scientific research; he himself is a participant in the archaeological survey and these are reports in the AOP on excavations in the territory of the ancient city (#8, #9 and #10), also papers on the presentation of sites in exhibition catalogues (#12, #13, #14), joint publications of the research team (#26, #27, #28), and a collective paper at an international congress (#15).

Mesambria is another of the ancient Hellenistic *apoikiai*, in the archaeological study of which M. Gyuzelev is involved (#19, #20); the theme of the cities on the West side of Pontus includes a paper on the Thracian Salmydessus, in which mythographic evidence and written tradition are interpreted to illuminate one of the enigmatic Thracian settlements (#6).

I would include here a group of papers in which M. Gyuzelev continues the theme of his second doctorate on the Greek geographical tradition with a historiographical analysis of accounts of shipping along the coast of Thrace (#5, #21, #22, #23, #24). Other studies concern the distribution of the Heracleian amphora ware along the southern Bulgarian Black Sea coast (#7), or individual epigraphic monuments (#11), as well as numismatic studies of coins of Thracian rulers from the collection of the Burgas Museum (#25).

This outlines the image of Martin Gyuzelev as a profound researcher, concentrating his knowledge in the vast topic of the sea and Thrace, in which he established himself

as a specialist. Testimony to the positive response of the archaeological society to what he wrote are the numerous citations in the scientific literature (list). I have not detected elements of plagiarism in the texts, in fact I did not expect to find any.

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5. Martin Gyuzelev's activities cover the problems of ancient seafaring through the straits and along the coasts of Thrace from the 1st millennium BC to the 4th century AD. In them all he traces the economic, political, and cultural contacts of the Greeks with the Thracians and Romans in the space of South-Eastern Thrace. And he discusses this with analysis of artefacts like stone anchors, ancient texts, epigraphic monuments, and coinage. But also settlement structures, fortifications and sacred sites, road connections, burial complexes and port facilities. He analysed these with knowledge and skills of a historian, geographer, epigrapher, and before all an archaeologist. And in conclusion, I would sum up the merits of the texts proposed for discussion in the competition – they all are in clear relation, which reveals first: a large-scale approach, second: a clear scientific concept and third: professionalism. All these are the reasons for me to vote positively for the award of the academic position of **Associate Professor** to Assistant Professor **Martin Gyuzelev**, Dr.Sc., and to recommend his election by the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

October 16th, 2022

Кристиан Кавраджиев