

**СОФИЙСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
„СВ. КЛИМЕНТ ОХРИДСКИ“
КАТЕДРА ПО АРХЕОЛОГИЯ**
БЪЛГАРИЯ, СОФИЯ 1504
БУЛ. „ЦАР ОСВОБОДИТЕЛ“ 15
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STATEMENT

of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Stefanova Stoyanova, from the Department of Archeology at the Faculty of History of SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", member of the Scientific Jury, approved by order of the Rector of the SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" (RD-38-461/27.07.2022), according to a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 2.2. History and Archeology (Archaeology – Classical Archaeology), announced in State Gazette iss. 48/28.06.2022.

1. In the announced competition, organized at the request of the Council of the Faculty of History for the needs of the Department of Archaeology, the only candidate is Assistant Professor Ivan Dimitrov Valchev, PhD. His documents were accepted by a Commission appointed by Rector. The basis for his participation in the competition is the submitted certificate that he fulfills the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of Law of the Development of Academic Staff. Ivan Valchev graduated with a degree in Archeology from the Faculty of History of the University of St. Kl. Ohridski" in 2007. From the following year, he is a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Archeology with the topic of his dissertation: Extraurban Sanctuaries in the Roman province of Thrace, 1st – 4th centuries. The topic was successfully defended in 2011. In 2013, Ivan Valchev won a competition for the Assistant professor of Classical and Thracian archeology in the Department of Archaeology. In the current competition, he participated with a published habilitation thesis, with the title: The Cult of Jupiter in Lower Moesia during the Roman era. Sofia University Press "St. Kl. Ohridski", 2022. He also participated with 10 selected publications - monographs, studies and articles according to the attached list.

2. Assistant professor Dr. Ivan Valchev was among my first students, and despite the passing of many years, I can say that he is among those who stand out with their knowledge and interest in studying archeology in general and Classical archeology in particular. His interest in the religious life during the Roman era in our lands is long-lasting, starting from his student

years, as well as the defended master's thesis and doctorate in 2011. It is quite logical that the presented habilitation thesis is dedicated to Jupiter in the province of Lower Moesia. Generations of Bulgarian and foreign scientists, historians and archaeologists, epigraphers and numismatists have contributed to the study of ancient religious practices, but for me, what I have read of what my colleague Ivan Valchev wrote is an indisputable contribution and upgrade to the modern level of research in this direction. Studies that require in-depth knowledge of various aspects of the life of the ancient lives.

The teaching work of Assistant professor Ivan Valchev, is extremely active, from exercises in Thracian and Classical archaeology, to lecture readings in specialized courses in the Bachelor's program of the specialty Archeology or basic courses in Archeology (Bachelor's program in Ethnology), Mediterranean Archeology (Bachelor's program in Hebraistics), to supervision of course and master's theses (6 successfully defended master's). The active and successful teaching work is also accompanied by a commitment to summer internships in Classical Archaeology. Ivan Valchev has been a member of the team studying the ancient city of Kabyle since his student years, in the period 2014–2017 he was already deputy head, and since 2018, co-head of the studies. I cannot fail to note the active participation of Dr. Valchev in a significant number of scientific and educational projects.

The successful teaching and research career is complemented by Ivan Valchev's election to the Faculty Council (from 2019 to now), as well as his election as a member of the Management Board of the Association of Bulgarian Archaeologists (from 2021), in which he has been a member since 2015. He is also a member of the editorial board of the prestigious electronic journal of the Association (BeJA).

3. In the monograph with which Ivan Valchev participated in the competition (391 pages), an exceptionally thorough study of the cult of the supreme Roman god Jupiter in the province of Lower Moesia was made. All monuments known today are included in the analysis – altars with dedications, stone and bronze sculpture, stone and clay votive tablets, gems, lamps, etc. The disparate artefacts attesting to various aspects of the Jupiter cult are duly presented in the book's catalogue, and their images follow separately. These monuments are the basis of a thorough analysis and critical approach that can be seen from the first to the last page of the book. In the Introduction, the earlier studies are presented, the choice of the topic, the territorial and chronological scope, the structure of the study is justified. The first chapter is extremely important, introducing us to the origin of the cult in Ancient Rome and its development within the political, social and religious life of the Roman state from the archaic era to the time of Emperor Constantine I. The depth with which this development is traced,

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predetermined undoubtedly from the in-depth knowledge and understanding of the issue and the huge volume of literature related to it. The first chapter is the necessary solid foundation on which the not few, but heterogeneous in character, informativeness, and concentration artifacts can be placed in an adequate framework and analyzed in the following chapters. Thus, in the next chapter (II) Jupiter in Lower Moesia, the epithets, iconography and festivals of the supreme god are discussed. Even here I want to emphasize that the presented analysis goes far beyond the boundaries of the province of Lower Moesia, and the picture is constantly supplemented by analysis for the neighboring provinces, closer or more distant. This, in turn, makes our presented analysis even more valuable. Apart from that, it shows the exceptional competence of colleague Valchev in the issue. A third chapter, entitled Jupiter, the Emperor and the Army in Lower Moesia, deals with the dedications of Jupiter for the beneficence of the emperor and the place of Jupiter in the Roman army. The analysis of the dedications undoubtedly shows that Jupiter, along with the emperor, was conceived as the personification of the Roman state itself and that the army was the main carrier of the spread of the cult of the supreme Roman god. In the fourth chapter, Jupiter and the Civil Settlements of Lower Moesia, the manifestations of the cult in the individual centers, which had different rank and functions, as well as aggregates of population, were examined: the colony of Ulpia Oescus, Troesmis, Durostorum, Tropaeum Traiani, Novae, Capidava, Ulmetum, the vicus of sailors, Quintionis, Secundini. Here I would pay special attention to the discussion surrounding the three temples in the northern part of the forum at Oescus, one of the few archaeologically attested examples of monumental temple architecture. The discussion about these temples, as well as about other archeologically studied but incompletely published sites related to the cult, clearly shows the need for complex publications and refinement of theses. The fifth chapter summarizes the data on the different categories of consecrators – practically from all levels of society, but mostly the soldiers and veterans of the Roman army, as well as the magistrates of the rural communities. In the Conclusion, a stratified summary of the conclusions from the previous chapters is made.

4. The other publications with which Assistant professor Ivan Valchev participated in the competition illustrate the above-mentioned permanent and deep interests and knowledge in the field of religion in the lands of Thrace during the Roman era. The monograph is a

supplemented and edited edition of the doctoral thesis: *Extraurban Sanctuaries in the Roman province of Thrace (I–IV centuries)*. Sofia University Press, 2015. The two studies (appendices 3 and 4) are thematically related to the habilitation. Their printing in a refereed and indexed edition is an indisputable indicator of their quality. The topic of extraurban sanctuaries is continued in an article on the destruction of sanctuaries in Thrace and Dacia. The question of the end of pagan practices is discussed on the basis of the analysis of artifacts with the possibility of more precise dating. This approach allows the author to assume that in these places religious practices did not stop during the time of Emperor Constantine I, but continued until the time of Emperor Theodosius. In another of his works, the author dwells on the coin finds from sanctuaries in Roman Thrace (Appendix 7), which were assigned a ritual role in the votive practices within the boundaries of the temenos. In another of his works, Ivan Valchev collected the available information and artifacts about the cult centers in Kabyle (Appendix 9), as well as a coin hoard from the 4th century from Kabyle (Appendix 8), and a study was dedicated to the religious life of Nikopolis ad Nestum and its hinterland (Appendix 10). With the publication of the votive tablets found during rescue research near the village of Krepost, Dimitrovgrad district, a new shrine of the Thracian horseman was located (Appendix 11). In addition to being the author of publications, significantly more than those submitted for participation in the competition, Ivan Valchev is also the compiler and editor of several collections. He is also the organizer and participant of several scientific forums.

A large part of the publications are the result of Ivan Valchev's participation in scientific projects, local or international conferences.

All the reviewed publications outline the deep interest of Assistant Professor Ivan Valchev to the problems of Classical archeology and especially to the complex and vast matter of religious life. The accumulated citations of his publications testify to his achievements. And there can be no mention of elements of plagiarism in the essays written in an extremely professional language.

5. In conclusion of what has been said so far, I will emphasize that the presented documentation for the competition, as well as my personal observations for more than 15 years, give me reason to state that Assistant professor Dr. Ivan Valchev, is a worthy candidate, a scientist with indisputable potential and achievements, a high-class university teacher, actively involved in the scientific and administrative life of the Department of Archeology and the Faculty of History, as well as the archaeological college in our country

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and abroad. This gives me reason to confidently vote positively for the awarding of Assistant Professor Dr. **Ivan Dimitrov Valchev**, in the academic position of "**Associate Professor**".

04 ноември, 2022 г.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Daniela Stoyanova'.

Daniela Stoyanova