

## **OPINION**

by

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habilitated in professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology (History of  
Bulgaria)

on the scientific works presented for participation in a competition for the  
academic position of Associate Professor, area of higher education 2.  
Humanities, professional field 2.2. History and Archaeology, announced in  
State Gazette No. 29/12.04.2022,  
with candidate Chief Assistant Boyan Yuliev Dumanov, PhD

### **I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University**

Based on the documentation provided, the candidate Chief Assistant Boyan Dumanov, PhD, fulfils the requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor set out in the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the NBU Regulation for the Development of the Academic Staff. He is the sole candidate in the competition. In 2004 he received the educational and scientific degree of PhD after successfully defending the dissertation “Late Antiquity Jewelcrafting in the Dioceses of Thrace and Dacia (IV–VII century)” at the Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski”. After winning a competition in 2008, he was appointed as a Chief Assistant at the NBU. Therefore, this opinion will concern his publications and activities after the date of his appointment as a Chief Assistant.

### **II. Research (creative) activity and results**

In order to participate in the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, the candidate presented one published monograph (habilitation paper), another monograph on the basis of the defended dissertation, 39 studies and articles (22 in co-authorship), as well as three chapters of collective monographs.

Given the nature of the competition, naturally the greatest scientific weight is assigned to Boyan Dumanov’s habilitation paper “Archaeology of Old Iron Production in the Lower Danube and the Region of Stara Planina (Roman Imperial Period – end of XVIII century)”, NBU edition issued in 2021. The paper is 202 pages long and concerns

a scientific issue which up until then had not been the subject of a monographic study. The undoubtedly interdisciplinary approach adopted in the text can be pointed out as its main characteristic, clearly demonstrating the thorough and consistent work with archaeological, historical and ethnographic data and sources which have been combined with analytical chemistry and geoarchaeology in terms of methods and approaches. In order to produce his habilitation paper, Boyan Dumanov has also worked for many years in historical and archaeological museums in the country, exploring their rich funds and archives, without which this study would have been impossible. All of this has been instrumental in successfully achieving the initial objectives and coming to clear conclusions as a contribution to the field.

The vast majority of his other publications, which came out of print after the candidate was appointed as Chief Assistant, concern his participation in various archaeological excavations, on-site studies, investigations and explorations. This is also why 2/3 of them are produced in co-authorship. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the prolific activities of Boyan Dumanov, as well as the significant practical experience accumulated. In addition to those, however, another highlight concerns publications on issues which go far beyond the work on specific archaeological sites and finds. Among these, several aspects or thematic circles stand out: a historiographic focus aiming to present and consider certain scientific problems in a comprehensive manner; issues concerning the ethnic identity of tribes forming part of the Migration period during the Antiquity and Middle Ages; the impact of the political situation on archaeology, etc. Each of them shows a wider view on archaeology as a science and an understanding of its interaction with other sciences (humanities, social, natural, technical) and the way it is influenced by certain socio-political events and ideological considerations, thus highlighting its social significance. They also show that the candidate obviously has long-standing interests that go beyond the strict confines of the archaeological science.

It needs to be pointed out that the quotes noted and presented originate mainly from foreign authors, which is a good attestation for Chief Assistant Boyan Dumanov, PhD, and his recognizability as a researcher. A major reason for this undoubtedly has to do with the fact that a large part of his publications are in other languages (English and German).

In addition to the above-mentioned, the candidate is a member of an organisational committee on holding a national conference, has participated with reports 18 times at national and international scientific fora, including public lectures on behalf of the NBU at an invitation by international organisations or foreign universities.

During the reporting period Chief Assistant Boyan Dumanov, PhD, has been a member of the scientific team of 2 research projects with an applied science profile. He has also been the head of an interdepartmental project and the coordinator of a national scientific project, the latter being funded by the Bulgarian National Science Fund at the Ministry of Education and Science.

Last but not least, it should be noted that the candidate has also presented an ambitious research programme for 2022–2026, which includes three monographic studies, carrying out archaeological on-site investigations in less studied zones and explorations of questions regarding the extent to which the prevailing political situation, ethnic identity and belonging to a certain social group could be said to have their own archaeological aspects. Thus formulated, his future activities once again demonstrate the candidate's long-standing preferences, already mentioned above, towards the interdisciplinary approach. The research efforts and publication activities carried out thus far by Chief Assistant Boyan Dumanov, PhD, lead me to conclude that the declared research programme, albeit ambitious, will in all probability be successfully implemented.

### **III. Lecturing and teaching activities**

The candidate has the necessary lecturing and extracurricular workload, working actively with the electronic training module MOODLE. He takes part in developing and refining all Bachelor and Master programmes of the Archaeology Department, as well as their accreditation. He is a long-standing and active head of student practices and internships, mainly concerning archaeological and on-site investigations. A particularly good impression is created by the fact that the candidate has developed specific education courses for the needs of general university education at the NBU and has taught three English language courses as part of various curricula. They are all characterised by an interdisciplinary approach and in-depth view. In the last five years the candidate has been the scientific supervisor of 24 successfully defended Bachelor and Master diploma papers

(theses), has reviewed another 18, and has participated in a total of 60 committees. He has also been the scientific supervisor of a PhD candidate who successfully defended his dissertation. The special attention given to students in the History and Archaeology field at the NBU and his responsible work with them explain why the average evaluation from satisfaction surveys among students in terms of course and professor in the last 5 years (a total of 10 semesters) is an excellent 4.75 (with a maximum possible score of 5.00).

#### **IV. Administrative and public activity**

Boyan Dumanov's engagement with administrative activities starts immediately after his appointment as a professor on the NBU staff. He became the director of Bachelor and Master programmes offered by the Archaeology Department already back in the distant 2005. He held that position until 2012 when he was appointed as the head of the Archaeology Department which he still holds at present. In this capacity he served as a member of the NBU Academic Council between 2012 and 2015. The above-mentioned administrative positions held by Boyan Dumanov over the years speak of the wealth of management experience accumulated, of an in-depth view on the teaching process and an understanding of the nature of research activities carried out by scientific units at the NBU. His commitment over the years has contributed to the recognition of the Archaeology Department.

#### **V. Personal impressions of the candidate (if any)**

In the last more than 15 years when I have had the opportunity to work and interact with Boyan Dumanov, I was able to acquire a multitude of personal impressions which allow me to form my own opinion of him. Numerous qualities that he possesses could be listed but I personally believe that among them the ones related directly to the NBU and to his own work should be highlighted. I am entirely convinced in the candidate's exceptional working capacity, responsibility and conscientiousness. My overall impression is of a dedicated professional with a versed character, independent thinking and an exceptionally good general culture. Last but not least, Boyan Dumanov is a true academic who places his students at the core of all his activities, entirely dedicated to the cause of advocating, developing and refining the archaeological science at the NBU. In this regard, as the head of the Archaeology Department, he is a well-deserving guarantor

for promoting continuity after the retirement of the department's founder, professor Ivan Gatsov.

**VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the candidate's activities and achievements**

As a recommendation I could only wish the candidate never to lose his tenacity, purposefulness and motivation, given the responsibilities he has been entrusted with.

**Conclusion.** In light of the foregoing considerations, I have reached the conclusion that before the honoured Scientific Jury is a candidate possessing undisputed academic qualities, proven over the years. This allows me to give my unconditional positive evaluation that Chief Assistant Boyan Dumanov, PhD, should be elected for the academic position of Associate Professor, announced in the competition, in professional field 2.2 History and Archaeology at the Archaeology Department of the New Bulgarian University. In this regard, I propose that his application be allowed for a decision by the NBU Academic Council.

1 August 2022

Opinion given by:

(Assoc. Prof. Zhivko Lefterov, PhD)