STATEMENT

by Totko Neykov Stoyanov, professor, Ph.D., member of the Scientific Jury, appointed by order of the Director of the Institute of Balkan Studies with the Center for Thracology at the BAS No. 87 RD-16/18.09.2024, by competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" by professional direction 2.2. History and Archaeology (North Aegean Basin in the first half of the 1st millennium BC), for the needs of the Center for Thracology, announced in State Gazette no. 63/ 26.07.2024

In the announced competition, organized at the request of the Scientific Council of the IBTC-BAS for the needs of the Center for Thracology, the only candidate is chief assistant professor Dr. **Petya Velichkova Ilieva**. Her documents have been accepted by the Commission appointed by the order of the Director of the IBRC-BAS, and the reason for her participation in the competition procedure is the submitted certificate that she fulfils the minimum national requirements under Article 2b of the Law on Research and Development.

Petya Ilieva graduated in Archaeology at the Faculty of History of Sofia University "St. Hl. Ohridski" in 2000. In 2002-2005 she was a full-time PhD student at the Department of Archaeology with the topic ***"Aegean Thrace between Bistonis and Propontis (8th-6th centuries BC)".*** (defence 2006). Since 2014, after a competition, she has been a chief assistant professor at the Center of Thracology "Prof. Al. Fol" at the Institute of Balkan Studies (Research on the southern part of ancient Thrace, which is located on the territory of the modern Republic of Greece). I would add that in the period 2005-2009 Petya studied and graduated from the Master's Program in Ancient Greek Language and Literature at the Department of Ancient Greek of the Faculty of Philosophy at Aristotle University, Thessaloniki, Greece (with a successful defense of her thesis on "Thracians and Trojans in Aeschylus' Dramas and Related Scenes from Attic and South Italian Vase painting" [in Greek]). This (and her fluency in Greek) was of great importance to her scholarly pursuits in the years following her PhD defense, the support of Prof. M. Tiverios, her contacts and work with colleagues from museums in Northern Greece and colleagues from scientific missions working in this region (cf. the preface of *her competitive monograph).*

2. Petya Ilieva participated in the competition with a habilitation thesis published and submitted for evaluation under the title: ***The Late Geometric and Early Archaic North-Eastern Aegean. Through the emergence, distribution and consumption of "G 2-3 Ware.***" Berlin-Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2024, and 10 studies and 5 articles published after the thesis defense.

The object of study in the monograph is a specific ceramic group identified in the excavations of Troy by the team of K. Blegen and designated by the working name "G 2-3 Ware" (from the name of the working squares at the site where it was found in abundance), which has remained in use to this day - "homogeneous, fine pottery, of very high quality", "... easily distinguishable from synchronous pottery

groups of North Aegean origin" (p. 1). As the author points out at the very beginning of Ch. 1. *Introduction and History of Research*, the monograph presents the technological features, stylistic development and repertoire of this pottery, the production centres and distribution patterns, its chronology and use, but in fact, the main aim is to search for/reveal the people (lit.) "behind it", i.e. those who produced, distributed and used it, its function as a commodity and social sign (cf. p. 9).

The study contains seven chapters, an appendix presenting archaeometric analyses of ceramic samples, a bibliography, an index of names, and 52 plates presenting ceramic examples, the forms distinguished (with reconstructions), the samples examined (mainly with high-quality colour photographs by the author), drawings (plans and sections), and photographs of sites in which *'G 2-3 Ware'* vessels were found (212 pp. in all).

In **§.1.1** of Ch. 1. *A History of Research* , a synthesis of archaeological research and publications on the subject is presented from the first data of Dörpfeld's excavations at Troy to the 20s of this century. Conclusions are highlighted in 5 points, a starting point for the structuring of a comprehensive, exhaustive study (lacking to date) for discussion of the issues and problems highlighted. Objectives are formulated in five sections (a-e) and the research methods to achieve them (§. 1.2.).

I would underline the archaeometric studies (micro X-ray Fluorescence Spectroscopy) previously planned and carried out between 2008 and 2011 on 117 samples from 6 (out of 15) localities in the area - Thassos, Neapolis, Eion, Samothrace, Antissa and Argillos (pls. 41-43), which provide an objective database for the discussion (Appendyx XRF Fluorescence Spectroscopy).

In **Ch. 2**, the main technological characteristics (fabric; shaping; surface treatment; firing), decorative techniques (tools and techniques; ornamental system) and the chronological groups distinguished on this basis are presented: - early - 2nd half of the 8th - early 7th centuries; - developed - 1st half of the 7th century; - late series - 2nd half of the 7th century. This chapter is well illustrated in the plates.

In **Ch. 3.** *Repertory of Shapes* the 16 distinguished forms are presented, some with variants or types. In general, these are **drinking** vessels (§§ 3.1-3.7: *kantharos (3 var.)* pls. 7-14*; beaker (2 vars.)* pls. 15-16*; one-handled cup (3 types)* pls. 17*; skyphos* pl. 18*; cup/bowl* pl. 19*; bowl/cup* pl. 20*; bowl (3 types)* pls. 21-23), **for liquids** (§§ 3.8 - 3.13: *dish*; *lebes* (*2 types)* pls. 24-27; *crater* pl. 28*; jug* (*3 vars. second with 4 types)* pls. 29-35*); table amphora* pl. 36*;* among which there are more completely preserved vessels from ritual and grave contexts, whereas for those from domestic contexts the strong fragmentation does not allow a high degree of certainty in the reconstructions. Vessels whose contexts

suggest their production for use mainly in funerary rituals are distinguished (§ 3.13 *amphoriskos (2 types)* pl. 37; § 3.14 *pyxis (3 types)* pl. 38; § 3.15 *alabastron (2 types)* pl. 39). Few fragments of uncertain interpretation are separated in §. 16. *stands and* 17. *Miscelania* pl. 40.

Ch. 4. discusses *Centres of Manufacture* (§ 1), *the Distribution Patterns* (§ 2), and *the Question of Origin and Technologcal Transfer* (§ 3). In the first paragraph, data from archaeometric analyses carried out and published in the two decades of this century are commented upon, bringing the discussion (summary in Ch. 1.1) to an objective basis - 1. On materials from Troy that showed the local character of EIA ware made from "Group D clay." 2. On materials from Samothrace, showing the imported character of G 2-3 Ware. 3. On samples from Lemnos, in the case of fragments of waist ware proving in principle local production, with results confirming local production of G 2-3 Ware (contemporaneous with Grey Ware). Then, the project initiated by Petya Ilieva to investigate samples from the above-mentioned 6 localities from the area and the results obtained with the help of colleagues from the Institute for Cultural and Educational Technologies at the Athena Research Centre in Xanthi (see Appendyx, n.1 and no. 17 of the general list) is presented in details (pp. 65-66), followed by an *Archaeological Interpretation of the results (pp. 66-68).* Compositional and cluster analysis of samples from the various centers, combined with observations on fabric, surface treatment, and decorative repertory, outline an interesting and complex picture that cannot be presented in brief. The summary picture shows that while Troy and Lemnos appear as the main production centres of G 2-3 Ware, smaller scale producers with locally oriented production are present in Thassos and its Perea. Samothrace may have been the source of non-standard G 2-3 Ware vessels and of G 2-3 - Grey Ware vessels associated with a common fabric. As the examples from Samothrace, Argyllos, and Thassos show, G 2-3 Ware vessels of different origins may reach a given site, suggesting the range of distribution. The analyses also show that Grey Ware vessels with black painted decoration were produced in G 2-3 Ware workshops. Whether the different colours were deliberate or the result of poor firing is difficult to say. Examples from Lemnos and Troy with deformations suggest that in some cases at least this was the case.

The generalised observations on the *distribution mechanisms* of the ceramic groups studied in § 2 indicate that they do not follow an established pattern. Various mechanisms of exchange, including redistribution, individuals, itinerant artisans, knowledge transfer, metal searching and exchange, and small-scale local travel for various purposes, contributed to the introduction of this fine Late Geometric-Early Archaic table pottery among local communities in Northern Aegean. Lemnos G 2-3 vessels appear to have reached further afield than the Trojan vessels common in the immediate vicinity. It is likely that Lemnos communities took advantage of their island's central position in the

North Aegean exchange, establishing a transportation network. The importance of their central position can be seen in the repertoire of G 2-3 shapes showing Lemnos as uniting Anatolian and Euboean traditions. Conversely, Troy, also an important production centre, seems to have had a much more locally oriented production, but it played a key role in the emergence and initial formation of this North Aegean sub(proto)geometric ceramic group, soon followed by Lemnos.

In § 3 P. Ilieva discusses the state of the data on the *question of the origin* of the studied ceramic group. On the basis of the technological characteristics, shapes, and decorative style of G 2-3 Ware, which strongly indicate a blending of Greek (Mycenaean, Protogeometric, and Geometric) and Anatolian (Tan and Anatolian Grey Ware) ceramic traditions, it is argued that the most probable place of their appearance was Troy. There, in the strata preceding those with examples of G 2-3 pottery, earlier vessels combining Anatolian forms and production techniques with simple painted decoration have been found, and these have been interpreted as the most likely precursor of G 2-3 Ware (dated by C. Aslan to the 9th-7th centuries BC). This process was probably protracted until an organized production of the stylistically unified ceramic group was reached.

In **Ch. 5.** *The chronology* of G 2-3 Ware is discussed. The data from the new excavations at Troy, Thasos, Eion, Methone, Hephaistia on Lemnos, the reinterpretation of the stratigraphy and the chronology of P. Bernard on the early settlement of Thassos, the data from the acropolis of Antissa on Lesbos, lead to the formation of the opinion of the appearance of the ceramic group G 2-3 Ware in the second half of the eighth century BC (Early groups 2nd half of the eighth-early seventh century). Its heyday and widest use are attributed to the first half of the 7th century BC (Developed G 2-3 Ware), and its production on Lemnos continued into the second half of the century (Late Series), when it was transformed and gave rise to several ceramic groups produced in the 6th century BC.

Ch. 6. considers the *Introduction, Adoption and Consumption of G 2-3 Ware by Northern Aegean Communities* in a contextual perspective. As complexes in which G 2-3 Ware is most clearly represented, contexts of a ritual nature preceding the development of the Sanctuary of the Great Gods on Mt. Samothrace, the Kabeirion on Lemnos, the 'Western Sanctuary' at Troy, then contexts of a domestic nature (as well as those of an indeterminate or both cultic and domestic nature) and finally the less numerous examples from funerary contexts in which, however, the vessels used show signs indicating that they were produced specifically for the needs of the funerary sphere. Particular attention is paid to the analysis of the appearance of these vessels in the Thracian environment, as they are completely different from the traditional hand-made vessels. The diffusion and assimilation as technology and function of the new group of vessels was accompanied by the introduction of new

knowledge of potter's wheel handling, decoration techniques, and new firing methods, and the use of the new forms in domestic and ritual settings. As G 2-3 Ware consists of shapes for liquids - different types of cups, jugs and cauldrons (*lebetes*) the idea has been proposed that the vessels were used at gatherings of many members of the community, which included banquets associated with different occasions, both in the settlements (a major example the Thracian settlement at Limena on Thassos) and in sanctuaries outside the settlement boundaries (a major example the Sanctuary of the Great Gods on Samothrace). It is noteworthy to hypothesize that "the introduction of G 2-3 Ware on Thasos, probably by Lemnos potters," "and the beginning of its presumed local production, could be seen ... in the light of the exchange of metals with Lemnos," given the archaeological evidence of metals (iron) extraction and production in the Thracian settlement at Limena and the evidence of metalworking workshops in a residential complex at Hephestia, in the absence of metal deposits on Lemnos (p. 93).

In the concluding **Ch. 7.** *The Late Geometric and Early Archaic Northern Aegean: a Ceramic Perspective*, the results of the analysis and discussion of all of the major data sets for the G 2-3 Ware phenomenon in Chs. 2-6 are set the stage for "a next step toward a broader/freer discussion of the social, economic, cultural, and historical background of this category of ... archaeological data" "to draw conclusions beyond the purely technical facts. In the author's view, on the assumption that "Many, different people are always involved in the production, distribution, and use of ceramic vessels, a comprehensive study of ceramic vessels should at least attempt to bring/involve these people in the discussion" (p. 99). In addition to the points made in the preceding chapters, some more general and significant observations and conclusions in the final chapter are worth pointing out.

- The distribution of pottery group G 2-3 Ware indicates that mainly maritime routes were followed and here the question of the identity of the carriers - owners and crews of the ships that carried out the communications in the North Aegean basin during this early, pre-Greek period is raised. New data and observations support the thesis that the main porters who carried out shipping in the area during the period under consideration were people from the Eastern Mediterranean - Phoenicians, Cypriots, and possibly those from the southeastern Aegean, with crews probably being mixed, including sailors from other areas. A reconstruction of the maritime routes in the region is proposed, consistent with the currents of the water and air masses, starting from Lemnos, northeast to Imbros and then west to Samothrace, Thassos, the east coast of the Athos peninsula and south back to Lemnos. The leading role of Lemnos in this process has been suggested, with the spread of G 2-3 Ware probably the result of interests in metal extraction (procurement) rather than the primary cause of contact.

- It has been suggested that the spread of the cult of the Great Gods of Imbros and Samothrace was the result of the periodic docking of ships with crews from Lemnos, where cult activities in the Kabeirion were already practiced.

- Vessel combinations associated with the consumption of liquids in collective rituals, likely local differences and changes from the early to the G 2-3 Ware heyday are discussed. The problem of the function of lebetes (craters) and different types of cups is of interest in terms of the question of whether they were part of wine or beer drinking services associated with the different cultural traditions of Hellas and Anatolia (with clear examples from Phrygia). Analysis of the use of the kantharoi in local and temporal contexts suggests a variety of variants, but the more significant conclusion is that the *sessile* and *globular* kantharoi produced on the G 2-3 Ware fast wheel do not appear merely as aesthetically more attractive substitutes for a popular shape. Their introduction and adoption by local Thracian communities marked transformations in beverage consumption customs, social and cultic practices.

- The adoption of a new banquet service (for the consumption of liquids) by the Thracians of Thasos was combined with the introduction of Aegean-type cooking vessels, such as the cooking tripods. These have been found in pre-colonial residential levels in common contexts with G 2-3 and other North Aegean vessels made on a potter's wheel. This cooking device, new to the local community, perhaps indicates a change in cooking practice, organization of living space, and associated diet, in a very conservative aspect of daily household routine (pp. 108-109).

- The chronology of G 2-3 Ware shows that its production and use mainly relate to the time before the establishment of the Greek poleis in the North Aegean basin and was used by the local population - Thracians, inhabitants of Lemnos and Luwians in Troy and Tenedos.

The proposed habilitation thesis of Petya Ilieva is the first monographic study on the phenomenon of G 2-3 Ware. It is an in-depth scientific work, containing a multi-layered and multi-faceted analysis of the archaeological data accumulated up to the beginning and during the development of her research, of the direct and indirect source data, of the optimum of the available publications on the subject, the data from the aims and objectives formulated by the author of a project for the archaeometric study of G 2-3 Ware ceramic fragments from a representative group of sites from the area of origin and distribution of the ceramic group under study, carried out at the Athena Research Centre in Xanthi, which provided an objective basis for discussion of all the specific issues concerning G 2-3 Ware. The last level of synthesis (ch. 7) projects the phenomenon under study onto the cultural development (in

all its aspects) of the communities inhabiting and coexisting in the North Aegean area during the Early Iron Age, with an emphasis on the Thracian community between the second half of the eighth and the first half of the seventh centuries BC.

3. Apart from the monograph, P. Ilieva participated in the competition with 10 studies and 5 articles published after the defense of the dissertation, which are part of the total list of 34 studies and articles (1 on an electronic site) and 2 book reviews. 80 % of the studies and articles are published in English, 3 in Greek. A large part of the publications were printed in reputable journals, series, acts of scientific forums and thematic refereed and indexed publications. Eight of the studies and articles from the competitive list and seven of the publications from the general list are directly relevant to the monograph. They reflect stages of her work on particular groups of artefacts and/or problems of interpretation, as well as more general observations on particular thematic sections of her monograph. I would cite two examples. The study, No. 2 on the competition list (cf. Bulg. prelim. version No. 4), presents and discusses data from processed and published by her ceramics from the Thracian settlement (with a presumed central character) on Asar Tepe Hill (Kremasto) and Maronea's Cave, located on the southern slopes of Mount Ismar. P. Ilieva distinguishes fragments of G 2-3 Ware among the small number of examples of the fast wheel pottery from Asar Tepe, dated to the 7th-7th centuries BC. They are an important testimony to the penetration of this luxury pottery already in the pre-colonial period among the local Thracian population in the hinterland of the coast. In fact, the importance of the identification of the G 2-3 Ware fragments also stems from the fact that this type of pottery has not been recorded between Lake Bistonis and the Lower Maritza until that moment.
No. 10 from the general list is an example of a study, significant in content and volume, in which the scarce sources and the artefacts accumulated in recent decades (from here and there) have been analysed and discussed exhaustively in relation to the discussion of whether and to what extent there is evidence for the role of seafarers from the Levant in the exchanges in northern Aegean on the eve of Greek colonization, most commonly known as 'Phoenicians'. Petya Ilieva demonstrates remarkable erudition on this hard subject and convincingly argues for a positive answer, to cite it as a ready result in the appropriate place in Ch. 7, § 1. 2.

This example is a good occasion to state my general assessment of the production of the chief asst. Dr. Petya Ilieva. The candidate's publications are distinguished by exceptional thoroughness, expertise in the topics discussed, clear, strictly professional expression and style. A sign of the scientific contributions in her publications are the numerous citations in the scientific literature applied in the documentation and world databases. Knowing closely her manner of work and her publications, rather

protocol, I would add that her texts are distinguished by correctness and lack of elements of plagiarism.

In conclusion and as a consequence of the above, confirming the mentioned qualities of Petya Ilieva as a formed thorough researcher in the field of Thracian and Aegean archaeology of the Late Bronze and Iron Age, a precise field researcher, a loyal colleague and friend, I declare my confidence to vote positively for the award of the chief assistant professor Dr. **Petya Velichkova Ilieva** to the academic position of ***"Associate Professor"***.

October 31, 2024 Totko Stoyanov