

EVALUATION STATEMENT

by

Associate Professor PhD Vanya Emanuilova Dimitrova,
Vasil Levski National Military University, Veliko Tarnovo
Field of Higher Education 3. "Social, Economic, and Legal Sciences",
Professional Direction 3.7. "Administration and Management"
Scientific Specialty "Organization and Management outside the Sphere of
Material Production (Security and Defense)"

on the dissertation thesis of Kliment Minev Naydenov
entitled "GEOGRAPHIC DETERMINANTS OF SOCIAL AND
CULTURAL DYNAMICS:
REGIONAL DISCOURSES IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION
IN THE CONTEXT
OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT"
presented for the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences",
in Professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management",
Doctoral Program: "Regional Development"

1. Relevance and significance of the researched scientific problem

The presented dissertation work explores a topic of current significance both nationally and globally. It constitutes an in-depth investigation into how geographic factors influence social and cultural dynamics, especially within the realm of intercultural communication, and how this dynamic plays a crucial role in pursuing sustainable development goals. The relevance of the topic is underscored by the increasing importance of geography's fundamental functions in the 21st century. The environment we inhabit dictates our habits, worldview, and thought processes. The influence of the geographical environment on education is a key factor in personality development. The geographical environment significantly impacts the cultural development of society, and culture, in turn, influences the geographical environment. Geography affects the formation of culture by determining access to resources and creating specific living conditions. Climate, landscape, relief, and the availability of water resources dictate the characteristics of life in a region, which in turn influences the formation of local cultural characteristics. Culture, in turn, impacts the geographical environment.

The dissertation totals 685 pages and is structured into an introduction,

exposition in three chapters, conclusion, bibliography, and appendices. The literature presented includes 475 sources. The research findings are illustrated through 28 maps.

The study contributes to a deeper understanding of how physical geography (such as climate, topography, and natural resources) affects social structures and cultural practices. It enriches cultural geography by linking physical spaces with human interactions and cultural manifestations. The research provides valuable insights into how cultural and social dynamics are shaped by geographic factors. The topic encourages the development of interdisciplinary research methodologies that combine tools and theories from geography, sociology, anthropology, earth science, and communication studies. This interdisciplinary approach is crucial for addressing complex global challenges.

The dissertation is developed in accordance with the set objectives, research tasks, subject, and object of study.

Several scientific methods were used in the dissertation – methods from geography, economics, cultural studies, sociology, and earth sciences. Interviews, content analysis, interdisciplinary approach, historical approach, and cultural-landscape approach were also employed. Statistical analysis was utilized: analyzing existing datasets related to geographical factors, social dynamics, and sustainability indicators to identify trends and correlations. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) were used to analyze spatial data related to environmental factors, resource distribution, population demographics, and cultural sites.

For ease of use and clear illustration, the final results are presented in a completed form using maps.

The content of the dissertation fully corresponds to its topic. The set goals and research tasks are fully achieved.

The presented dissertation is developed logically and coherently. The author demonstrates excellent command of the terminology related to the researched issue. A rich arsenal of research and analysis methods and a significant data base have been utilized.

The volume of the dissertation is optimal in terms of the completeness and conclusiveness of the research, and from the perspective of the requirements for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences".

The abstract is developed in a volume of 128 pages and accurately reflects the content of the dissertation.

2. Evaluation of the Scientific Results and Contributions of the

Dissertation

The dissertation titled "Geographic Determinants of Social and Cultural Dynamics: Regional Discourses in Intercultural Communication in the Context of Sustainable Development" showcases clearly articulated scientific contributions. I acknowledge the contributions identified by the author with theoretical-methodological and applied character, specifically:

1. Enhancing understanding of the geographic influence on culture. The research deepens our comprehension of how geography affects cultural practices, social structures, and intercultural interactions.

2. The study contributes to theoretical advancement in cultural geography and cultural studies by examining how geographic contexts shape cultural identity and social dynamics.

3. Contribution to sustainable development practices. The research offers insights into approaching sustainable development in a manner that is sensitive to the geographic and cultural context of a specific region and/or country.

4. The study provides empirical data and theoretical frameworks that can inform public policy and planning.

5. By analyzing how geographical science impacts social and cultural dynamics, the research contributes to our understanding of how different communities perceive, react to, and adapt to climate change, which is vital for developing effective climate sustainability strategies.

6. The educational contribution is expressed in the findings and theories developed from this research, which can enrich academic curricula across multiple disciplines, promoting a more integrated and comprehensive view of geography, culture, and sustainable development.

7. In the context of international business and global cooperation, the study provides valuable information for managing and working in culturally diverse teams. Understanding the geographical influences on cultural practices can help organizations develop more effective communication strategies and management practices that respect cultural differences.

In summary, the scientific contribution of this topic is broad and impactful, enriching our understanding of the relationship between geography and cultural dynamics, advancing interdisciplinary methodologies, and providing practical knowledge for sustainable development, policy-making, and global intercultural interactions.

Essentially, the study on "Geographic Determinants of Social and Cultural Dynamics: Regional Discourses in Intercultural Communication in the Context of Sustainable Development" serves to bridge gaps in understanding between different

cultures and regions. It aims to foster a world where policies and communications are based on a deep awareness of the geographic and cultural context shaping societies, thereby contributing to a more sustainable, inclusive, and harmonious global community.

On the topic of the dissertation, the author has presented 6 scientific reports. Three of the publications are individual, and three are co-authored.

3. Critical Notes and Recommendations

The dissertation meets the requirements for such a scholarly work, and I have no critical remarks about it. I recommend that the scientific and scientifically-applied positions presented be widely disseminated through various means, with the aim of ensuring as many opportunities as possible for practical implementation. I recommend that the author continues his research on the dissertation topic in his future scientific work. There is potential for this also in the training of doctoral students under his supervision.

4. Conclusion

The dissertation and its abstract by Prof. Dr. Kliment Naydenov fully meet the requirements of the Higher Education Act, the regulations for its implementation, and the minimum national requirements for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in Professional Direction 3.7. Administration and Management.

5. Evaluation of the Dissertation

In conclusion, considering the merits of the dissertation as well as the achieved scientific and scientifically-applied results, I give my positive evaluation and propose to the esteemed members of the scientific jury the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in Professional Direction 3.7. Administration and Management, Doctoral Program "Regional Development" to Prof. Dr. Kliment Minev Naydenov.

20.02.2024
Veliko Tarnovo

Assoc. Prof. Dr.
/Vanya Dimitrova/