

OPINION

by

Prof. PhD Slavi Petrov Dimitrov - member of the scientific jury
according to the Order of the Rector of Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”

№ RD 38-327 dated 14.07.2021

This opinion is about the dissertation of Tanya Borisova Belichenova - PhD student in independent training at the Department of Socio-Economic Geography at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski” and is in compliance with the requirements of the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for the conditions and the order for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions in Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”.

Dissertation topic: „Medico-geographical analysis of the potential for balneotherapy and climatotherapy in the municipality of Velingrad as a factor for local development“.

The procedure is in the professional field 4.4. Earth sciences. Economic and social geography. (Regional and local development). Structural training unit: Department of Socio-Economic Geography, GGF, Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”.

1. Data for the doctoral student

Tanya Borisova Belichenova was born on July 29, 1950 in Velingrad. In 1974 he graduated from the Higher Medical Institute in Plovdiv, majoring in Children's Diseases. At the Medical Academy - Sofia he received a postgraduate qualification with the first specialty „Pediatrics“ (1980), and then the second specialty „Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation“ (1984).

There are several more qualifications acquired at the Medical University - Stara Zagora (1999), Medical Academy - Sofia (2000, 2001, 2005, 2006), Beauty Academy - Paris, France (2003), Spain (2003).), Italy (2011), Turkey (2012) and others. He became a licensed lecturer in new SPA and Wellness technologies (2006), Special therapies for face and body (2011) and others.

Tanya Belichenova has a rich professional career. In the period 1974-1981 he worked as an Resident in the children's ward, Regional Hospital - Velingrad; from 1981 to 1989 he was Head of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation at the Palace Hotel; in the period 1989 - 1991 he was Head of the Pediatric Office at the Resort Polyclinic; from 1991 to 2003 he was Head of the Department for Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation in the SBR of the Penitentiary - Velingrad; in the period 10.10.2003 - 01.06.2015 he was the Manager of the medical center and spa

center of the SPA hotel „Palace“; in the period 01.07.2015 - 24.09.2016 he is a SPA Center Manager at the Royal Spa Hotel; from 06.02.2017 - until now he is the Manager of the medical center „Kamena Medical“; in the period 01.11.2016 - 03.05.2018 he is the Head of the SPA Department in BALZ KAMENA; in the period August, 2018 - 01.04.2019 is the Manager and Chief doctor at SBR Panorama - Velingrad; from 02.01.2020 and until now he is a Physical Physician and Rehabilitated. medicine at the Pazardzhik Hospital.

He speaks English and Russian.

2. Doctoral data

Tanya Borisova Belichenova was enrolled by order № RD 20-899 from 02.07.2020, as a doctoral student on independent training for training in ONS „Doctor“ in professional field 4.4. Earth sciences. Economic and social geography. (Regional and local development) at the Department of Socio-Economic Geography. The term of study is three years from 01.07.2020 to 01.07.2023. Assoc. Prof. PhD Plamen Georgiev Patarchanov has been appointed scientific supervisor. The topic of the dissertation is: „Medico-geographical analysis of the potential for balneotherapy and climatotherapy in the municipality of Velingrad as a factor for local development“.

After passing the doctoral minimums and the final completion of the dissertation, the doctoral student was expelled with the right to defense according to order № RD-20-1318 from 09.07.2021. - Faculty of Geography at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski“, held on 30.06.2021 and is aimed at public protection. No violations have been established in accordance with the legal state regulations.

In the announced procedure and according to order № RD 38-327 from 14.07.2021 I was appointed a member of the Scientific Jury. By decision of the same, I have been appointed to draw up an opinion.

3. Data for the dissertation and the abstract

The dissertation of doctoral student Tanya Belichenova contains all the obligatory elements: title page, content, introduction, exposition, conclusion, bibliography and appendices.

The presented work has a volume of 206 pages, of which 171 pages are body text and 62 pages are appendices. The dissertation includes 14 figures, 20 tables and 19 appendices. The list of used sources includes 172 titles, of which 91 in Cyrillic, 69 in Latin, 12 other sources, including 38

normative, strategic and planning documents and 21 Internet addresses. The developed volume allows full development of the exhibition and presentation with sufficient graphic means.

The main methodological requirements to the scientific work are met, including - precise formulations of the goal and tasks, justification of the topicality, review of previous research on the problem, research methodology, factual situation and development of the phenomenon, and conclusion with practical results - assessments and recommendations.

The dissertation of doctoral student Tanya Belichenova is interdisciplinary with original and very current topics. The research approach of the doctoral student is effective and can serve as a model and example for other similar research.

The abstract corresponds to the content of the work and presents the most essential features of the dissertation.

4. Scientific contributions

We accept the contributions of the dissertation formulated by the author (11).

The topic of the dissertation of PhD student Tanya Belichenova is focused on current issues for our country, such as more rational use of tourist resources, opportunities for development of spa and spa tourism and building a new vision for the municipality of Velingrad. They are affected to varying degrees in previous scientific developments.

We can point out that during the development of the dissertation volumetric and heterogeneous information was collected and analyzed regarding the geothermal and ecological factors influencing the general profile of the town of Velingrad. They are systematized and analyzed scientifically, correctly, according to the methodology adopted by the doctoral student.

In addition to the standard approaches in research, the methodological apparatus of the work also contains innovative elements. The application of the interdisciplinary approach in the study of the resources for balneological and climatic treatment gives an individual look and builds a different „image“ of the municipality of Velingrad.

The detailed research and assessment of the favorable recreational impact of the available hydro-mineral resources, the composition of the mineral water and the therapeutic result contribute to the thesis of the European and world importance of the city and inclusion of Velingrad in the European thermal and ecological cluster.

The Ellipsoid of Asclepius, developed by the author, allows us to establish that sunshine, combined with a mild climate, mineral springs and clean air, have a healing effect on those suffering from lung, cardiovascular, joint and other diseases. The unification of the natural

resources of the region allows the development of tourism, prevention, spa treatment, resort medicine, spa and wellness and recreation. This emphasizes the benefits and validation of current knowledge and the correlation between traditions and history in the use of hot mineral springs, health effects on the body and future prospects and trends in the development of balneology and spa tourism and cluster expansion.

The author has practical participation in the complex development and implementation of treatment and recreation programs with a combination of mineral water, inhalations, ultrasound, interference current, therapeutic gymnastics, radon water in Velingrad, which improve overall health and support prevention, recreation and treatment of observed patient focus groups. The participation in the training of specialized staff for the recreational and spa industry in the region has an important applied aspect in the field of balneology and climatology, spa and wellness for the region and for Bulgaria.

A number of the conclusions in the research can find a place in the updating of the strategic and planning documents, both at the municipal and at the settlement level - MDA, PIDM, Strategy for development of tourism and others.

5. Publications and participation in scientific forums

On the topic of the dissertation are presented 11 publications, which meets the requirements of the Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions at Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”. They are from participation in scientific conferences and have been published in scientific journals and journals.

6. Critical remarks

The critical remarks - the recommendations refer mainly to the need for more in-depth research and clarification of the theoretical formulations in the field of regional geographical research, balneal and spa tourism.

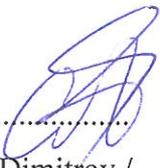
7. Conclusion

The presented dissertation of doctoral student Tanya Borisova Belichenova is a completed scientific work with original contributions, proving that the candidate has in-depth theoretical knowledge and abilities for independent research. The declared goals and objectives have been successfully completed. The dissertation, as well as the publications on it, are an independent work of the doctoral student, and meet the requirements of the normative documents.

We give our positive assessment (**YES**) and offer the members of the Distinguished Scientific Jury to vote with (**YES**) for the award of the scientific and educational degree „Doctor“ to **Tanya Borisova Belichenova** in the professional field 4.4. Earth sciences. Economic and social geography. (Regional and local development).

27.08.2021

Veliko Tarnovo

Prepared the opinion:

/prof. PhD. Slavi Petrov Dimitrov /