

O P I N I O N

by

Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi Bardarov.

Vice Dean of the Faculty of Geology and Geography and member of the scientific jury

Regarding the dissertation of Tanya Borisova Belichenova, self-study PhD student at the Department of Socio-Economic Geography at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski "

in professional field 4.4 Earth sciences. Economic and social geography (Regional and local development)

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

1. Data for the doctoral student

Tanya Borisova Belichenova was born on July 29, 1950. in Velingrad. In 1974 she graduated from the Plovdiv Medical Institute, majoring in Children's Diseases. He made a postgraduate qualification at the Medical Academy - Sofia with the first specialty "Pediatrics" (1980) and the second specialty "Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation" (1984).

In the following years, Tanya Belichenova acquired new and different qualifications, including those 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.

Tanya Belichenova has a long and very successful professional career. In 1974-1981 the period she works as an ordinator in the children's ward of Velingrad Regional Hospital. From 1981 to 1989 she is Head of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation at the "Dvoretza" Hotel. In 1989-1991 the period Tanya became Head of the Pediatric Office at the Resort Polyclinic. From

1991 to 2003 she is Head of the Department of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation in a specialized hospital for rehabilitation of NK-Velingrad, and then from 2003 to 2015 became Manager of the medical and SPA center of the SPA hotel "Dvoretsa". In the 2015 - 2016 period she became a Spa Manager at the Royal Spa Hotel. Between 2016 and 2018 is Head of the SPA Department at the Kamena Spa, and between 2018 and 2019 she is a Manager and Chief Physician in a specialized hospital for rehabilitation Panorama-Velingrad. From 2017 until now she has been Manager of Kamena Medical Center. From 02.01.2020 she is a Physician in Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine at the Pazardzhik Hospital.

She speaks English and Russian.

2. Details of the PhD procedure

Tanya Belichenova was enrolled with order № RD 20-899 from 02.07.2020, as an independent doctoral student for educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional field 4.4 Earth Sciences. Economic and social geography (Regional and local development) at the Department of Socio-Economic Geography at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski". Assoc. Prof. Dr. Plamen Patarchanov has been appointed as a research supervisor for the three years term of the doctoral program, starting of 01.07.2020. to 01.07.2023. The topic of the dissertation "Medico-geographical analysis of the potential for balneotherapy and climatotherapy in the municipality of Velingrad as a factor for local development" was determined by a vote of the department.

Both the doctoral minimum and the other exams from the individual plan have been passed successfully. The doctoral student has been awarded with the right to defense according to order № RD 20-1318 since 09.07.2021.

The dissertation was discussed at an extended departmental meeting on 30.06.2021 and a move has been made for public defense. All legal and regulatory

requirements have been met in order to be able to launch a public defense of the dissertation.

According to the order of the Rector № RD 38-327 from 14.07.2021 a composition of the Scientific Jury has been determined and a public defense procedure of the dissertation has been officially launched.

3. Data for the dissertation

Tanya Belichenova's dissertation is structured in with an introduction, conclusion, five chapters and the corresponding number of subheadings depending on the content and purpose of each chapter. Scientific contributions, bibliography and appendices are given separately.

The introduction is concise, clear, scientifically sound. The object, the purpose and the subject of the research, as well as the tasks set by the doctoral student in the development of her dissertation are very well clarified. In the separate chapters of the dissertation the author methodically and consistently solves the tasks she set for herself at the beginning. One of the most valuable merits of the dissertation is its specificity and practical application. Gradually in the chapters the theoretical and methodological bases of the research, the medical-geographical resource potential of Velingrad municipality, the current state of balneotherapy in the municipality are clarified, a conceptual model for the inclusion of Velingrad in a European thermal cluster is proposed. The main emphasis is placed on balneology and climatotherapy, as well as on SPA tourism, as a factor for the local development of the municipality of Velingrad, which is directly related to the title and purpose of the dissertation.

The submitted dissertation for review is in the volume of 206 pages, 171 pages out of which are the main text, and the rest is appendices. The dissertation contains 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, incl. 38 normative strategic and planning documents and 21 internet addresses.

The work is sustained in a high scientific style, richly illustrated graphically and meets all the requirements of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

4. Data for the abstract

The abstract fully corresponds to the content of the dissertation and presents the most important aspects of the development. The abstract meets all the requirements of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" and can be accepted in this form.

5. Scientific contributions

The contributions in the dissertation are divided into scientific-theoretical, scientific-practical and practical.

The contributions fully correspond to the content of the dissertation and accurately reflect the achievements of the author. They also confirm our belief that the dissertation has a very strong practical orientation.

6. Critical remarks

Our critical remarks are mostly related to the need to strengthen and deepen the theoretical statements in a purely geographical, spatial aspect.

7. Conclusions

In conclusion, we believe that the dissertation of Tanya Belichenova submitted for review is completed, at a very good scientific level, with an in-depth analytical element and clearly outstanding practical and applied qualities. From the performed analysis, the contributions and the conclusions, we believe that the doctoral student has successfully coped with the goals and tasks set at the beginning. The dissertation deals with very important and topical issues from the point of view of the regional development of Bulgaria.

Based on this, I propose to the esteemed jury to award Tanya Borisova Belichenova educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty Economic and Social Geography (Regional and Local Development) from professional field 4.4 Earth Sciences.

Sofia, 08/09/2021

Sincerely:

Assoc. Prof. PhD Georgi Bardarov