

Review

of dissertation work

“Urbanization and Town Planning of Bakuba”

author: architect Hassoon Allawi Hassoon Al-Mamoori

for a PhD degree. NBU – Sofia

by Prof. Dr. Arch. Konstantin Boyadzhiev

Professor Emeritus of NBU – Sofia

The prepared review is based on the selection of the departmental board of the Department of “Architecture” of the NBU from 12.07.2019 and approved by the Rector of the NBU

The dissertation is submitted in 198 pages text and illustrations (diagrams and pictures) 170 pcs, tables -10 pcs. and bibliography with 52 sources (printed and electronic)

The research was conducted according to the known methodological scheme with formulation of the purpose of the dissertation, object, scope and subject of the dissertation, as well as methodological approaches, applicability of work and possibilities for its application. These steps, representing the educational part of the doctoral degree, continue in the part of the analysis of the development of the "DIYALA" province in Iraq and Baquba, to the present day, showing the doctoral student's ability to cope with the requirements and skills to analyze the material collected.

According to the author, the relevance of the work is determined by the problems accumulated over the years in the development of the city of Baquba and its adjacent territory. The dissertation examines the growing problems of the city of Baquba and formulates the reasons for them. The incorrect way of implementing the spatial plan in terms of the development of the communication infrastructure, the population growth and the related need for restructuring on the territory of the city, necessitate a critical analysis of urban development and urban development processes. The dissertation draws conclusions about the reasons for the failure of most development plans: dependence on foreign companies such as the Greek Duxyades; relying only on engineering standards, not geographical ones; lack of competence and scientific experience in local staff planning; low level of material and financial support; development plans are limited by updating previous plans without being implemented; the inability of governmental local authorities to curb illegal construction and abuse and to limit their spread; inadequate legal framework governing the development of the territory.

The dissertation concludes that Baquba needs a new developed city center and a new transport network with ring boulevards to connect the old city center in the western part of the city and the new commercial, service and administrative buildings on the eastern part of the Diyala River, located to the main shopping street. The author of the dissertation makes a suitable proposal for a new location of the city center - on the west bank of the river Diyala. It is envisaged a site for a museum for the preservation of historical exhibits, of which the area is extremely rich, as well as a hotel and recreation areas on the river bank, along with other service functions.

The content of the work, despite its large volume and rich illustrative part, is subordinated to a maximum of three chapters as follows. The first chapter represents the historical development from prehistory to World War I. The second chapter examines the current state of Iraq. The third chapter is essentially an urban and architectural part, which begins again with a retrospection of the region and ends with conclusions and opportunities for urban development.

The first chapter is extremely interesting, though not entirely architectural, but it must be emphasized that there are separate concepts for the city, such as the concept of a central place in an Islamic city, linked to the mass of historical data.

The second chapter also presents a compulsory and useful analysis of the contemporary development of Baquba as the center of Diyala Province in order to reach the present state of a city with over 400,000 inhabitants and predominant agriculture (citrus cultivation) and the inevitable for any Arab city trade.

For the purposes of the study mentioned in the introduction, the third part is of paramount importance. The special approach in it differs with a relative return to the past of the city, considered in four stages from the nineteenth century, but in the aspect of urban planning and architecture. Of particular importance is the tracking of the different types of development plans, especially from more recent times, such as the plans from 1995, 1974, 1988, 1994, 2003, 2006.

Separation of spatial plans into a separate group is important because the specifics of the author's approach are to include fragments of historical development in all phases of his study, and in a sense, some of his suggestions as contributions also appear as separate points at different places in his exhibition. They stand out

sees when referring to the respective development plans (the new ones). On the other hand, as will be seen below in the review, contributions will be cited according to the author's texts and distributions, as he has been followed by the reviewer.

In the same chapter 3, the author has formulated five categories for forms of urban development.

Urban development is used in five categories:

1-Expansion of existing buildings.

2- Filling in certain areas that were previously unused.

3- Extension: use of land for expansion in close proximity to existing land use.

4- Linear development: Expansion is shaped by an existing circulation corridor, such as highways or metro transit lines.

5- Stretching: A standard form of external development, as shown in the figure.

The dissertation ends with practical suggestions and highlighting the functional and planned problems of the city.

One of the major problems of the city of Baquba is the disproportionate population growth in relation to the city's infrastructure. The increase in population, with the rise in the standard of living in recent years, following armed conflict, has led to a dramatic increase in the number of vehicles requiring infrastructure interventions. Lack of parking is becoming more acute, and the lack of smooth traffic, especially from the central area to the suburbs, creates great inconvenience.

The second major drawback for the city of Baquba is the lack of cultural sites truly representative of the history and development of this territory. Keep in mind that the last war in the beginning of the 21st century had consequences not only in political, military, etc. aspects, but also about culture. No less than 200 sites rich in archeological remains were discovered during the war, and much of the remains found were found transported to Europe and America, since there is no appropriate museum in the area. Another problem is the lack of public facilities that Baquba's growing population must have. There are only a few sports facilities and public gardens, but this is not enough

The reviewer accepts the contributions made by the doctoral student as formulated.

- The study also highlights the elements of contemporary Iraqi architecture, highlighting its positive and negative aspects in order to highlight the directions to be followed in the future, namely:
 - Return to traditional Arabic forms and languages art and architecture, Egyptian or elsewhere, because of its roots in different textures, roots born of cultural life, traditions, customs and local values.
 - Protecting the environment and its development (a defining element in the history of Iraqi urban planning).

With regard to urban development, the thesis provides sufficient evidence to conclude that the rapid territorial expansion of Baquba has been particularly intense over the last five decades.

For the period 1959-2017. Baquba is expanding arbitrarily in all directions, but the main expansion is in the south and west of the city, which is in violation of the existing urban development plan, since the new expansion is not planned with the necessary

infrastructure. From the plans made by the city services at different times from the development of the city, it can be seen that the elements determining its functional and territorial expansion are:

- the two rivers (Diyala and Khorasan).
- the presence of orange gardens.
- the social-class division of the population over time.

In conclusion, it should be noted that the dissertation of Arch. Hassoon Al Mamoori, prepared at the NBU's Architecture Department, is a major breakthrough in the preparation of foreign doctoral students, which, on the one hand, confirms the department's capacity for such an activity and outlines an expanding perspective in this regard. With regard to the preparation of doctoral students in general, it extends the subject in the direction of housing policy, urban housing environment, to elements of spatial planning.

As a result of the above, I propose that the Honorable Scientific Jury award the Doctoral Degree for Arch. Hassoon Allawi Hassoon Al-Mamoori.

Sofia:

19/12/2019

Prof. Dr. Arch. Konstantin Boyadzhiev:

signature: