

OPINION

By Professor Architect Stela Tasheva, PhD, University of Forestry, Sofia, Bulgaria.

for awarding the educational and scientific degree doctor,

to Hektor Vokshi,

independent doctoral student in professional direction 5.7. Architecture, construction and geodesy, New Bulgarian University, DP "Architecture of Buildings, Structures, Facilities and Details", with supervisor prof. arch. Penio Dosev Stolarov, PhD, and a

PhD Thesis titled: "Ancestral Puebloan Dwellings (Anasazi Buildings)"

The opinion was prepared on the basis of Order No. 3-RK-294 of 10.07.2024 of Prof. Plamen Doinov, Ph.D. – Rector of the New Bulgarian University.

The data required according to the law for conducting the procedure are available. The abstract correctly reflects the content of the dissertation.

The presented dissertation is in Bulgarian and English and consists of 155 pages. It is structured by an introduction, seven chapters, conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography, and a list of figures.

1. Significance of the researched problem in scientific and scientific-applied terms.

The Thesis makes use of a specific field of research, with applying cultural, historical and architectural approaches. The main focus is on historical data, reconstructions, and architectural, and media interpretations of architecture created by the Pueblo Indians before 1500.

To a large extent, the research concerns a significant issue in modern global culture - namely the search, assimilation and construction of an identity related to the historical and ethnic origin and character of an existing population. This identity is sought in the dissertation through the prism of architecture, where a number of existing buildings and complexes of the Pueblo Indians, as well as contemporary solutions executed fully or partially in the "Santa Fe" or "Pueblo Revival" style were examined.

2. Justification of objectives and tasks in the dissertation work.

The purpose of the dissertation is to derive "Anasazi dwelling types, from ancestral cultures to modern cultures." In fulfillment of this goal, a systematization of the data related to cultural monuments in the territories of the USA and Mexico was carried out, an investigation of key elements of the samples, as well as a derivation of forms of inspiration from these monuments found in modern architecture and media culture. I believe that the goals and tasks of the work are justified for the doctoral student.

3. Correspondence between the chosen approach and research methods, and the set objectives and tasks of the thesis.

A significant volume of information was analyzed, incl. in artifacts of popular culture. A stylistic comparison of the survived monuments and chosen contemporary architectural solutions was made. I find the chosen research methods consistent with the goals and tasks of the work.

4. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation work (description and evaluation), including the presence of an original contribution in science.

The conclusions made by arch. Hektor Vokshi, in relation to the cultural value and architectural potential of the heritage of the Pueblo people, is a contribution to the state of contemporary architecture research in Bulgaria, where I am not aware that this issue has ever been addressed in detail.

In addition, the provided justification of the roots of the Santa Fe stylistic features and its visual characteristics would find its application among interested designers.

Last but not least, the traced borrowings in cultural artifacts interpreting ancient architecture, incl. cinema-films and comics, in turn, can be a kind of "case study" of the distribution and modifications of the "understanding" of aesthetics and material culture inherent in individual ethnic groups. The examined long-term media exploitation reflected a number of key objects, but also revealed different forms of assimilation, simplification and/or upgrading of the found architectural solutions.

5. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation work: number, nature of the editions in which they were published.

The doctoral student declares 2 independent articles related to the dissertation in English.

6. Citation by other authors, reviews in the scientific press, etc.

No data for citations from other authors, reviews in the scientific press, etc., was presented.

7. Opinions, recommendations and notes.

The main recommendation for the future work of the doctoral student is to actively strengthen his publication activity, especially in refereed and indexed editions.

In addition, future stylistic and linguistic development of the doctoral student's texts (in relation to the adoption of more internationally accepted scientific styles of writing and choices of terminology) would be appropriate. The last specially concerns the use and versions of terms like “revival architecture”, “Revival Pueblo style”, etc.

8. In conclusion of everything said so far, I give my positive assessment of the presented work and recommend it to the esteemed jury to award the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”, in professional direction 5.7. Architecture, construction and geodesy; to Hektor Vokshi, an independent doctoral student in New Bulgarian University, DP "Architecture of Buildings, Structures, Facilities and Details", for his PhD Thesis titled: “Ancestral Puebloan Dwellings (Anasazi Buildings)”

Prof. arch. Stela Tasheva, PhD, University of Forestry, Sofia

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