

REVIEW

**By Prof. Dr. Anna Ilcheva Tsolevska, University of St. Kl. Ohridski" -
professor by professional direction 8.2. Art,
under the procedure for acquisition the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences"
in the field of higher education 8. Arts
professional field 8.2 Fine arts
to
NEW BULGARIAN UNIVERSITY**

Design Department

With candidate: Ch. Assistant Dr. Bilyana Kaloyanova

**Topic: "Primary creative and conceptual approaches in
the system of interior design in the 20th and 21st centuries"**

General notes on the dissertation

The presented dissertation consists of: an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a glossary of terms. The bibliographic reference contains 41 sources, of which 13 are in Bulgarian and 28 in English. In an appendix, 111 described images are presented, in the visual context of which the theoretical research is meaningfully developed and they are an integral part of it.

The title of the dissertation corresponds to its content. The goals and objectives formulated in the introduction of the dissertation have clarity and specificity and relate to the object of the study. The individual chapters systematically reveal the subject of the analysis, examine the author's theses and defend them with relevant theoretical and visual examples.

Part of the dissertation was published as an independent scientific study: Kaloyanova, Bilyana. Structural approach in interior design in the 20th century. Sofia, ed. author 2022, 96 pp. (ISBN - 978-619-188-800-9)

The dissertation work has been discussed and accepted for defense by an extended composition of the Council of the Design Department, New Bulgarian University. The preliminary defense was held on 08.02.2023.

Aim of the research

My first impression of this dissertation is that it is very focused and packed with the exact information needed to carry out the research in detail, but without unnecessary digressions. At the same time, it enables her theses to be developed in subsequent angles, which is a very important quality for a scientific work to be open to upgrade. In other words - to be "alive". The nice and readable language in which the dissertation is written also greatly contributes to this feeling. The author introduces us to the topic with ease. With a clear and reasoned introduction, she puts us in the context in a simple and convenient way, and thus gives us the opportunity to feel the need, to want to know what he will tell us next. What are the motives and? What goals and objectives does it want to achieve and resolve?

In the next three chapters, Kaloyanova reveals her theses to us, hinting at them even in the sub-headings. She then very thoroughly and argumentatively proves them, as well as proves the necessity of the existence of such analyses.

The subject of the dissertation is the main approaches in the field of modern interior design, and its subject is the genealogy, development, visual aspects and various concepts related to the main approaches in interior design and their movement from the beginning of the 20th century to the present day.

The main goal of this dissertation is to identify and present in a synthesized form the questions related to the classification of the main design approaches in the system of modern interior design, with each individual approach being defined and analyzed unfolding over time, tracking its development.

Emphasis is placed on the analysis of the main practices, concepts and visual language of each approach, making a connection and looking for foundations in the historical reality, against the background of which and due to the nature of which the main changes in the development of interior design occur according to the study. Of particular interest to the author are the moments in which aesthetic problems are manifested and subsequently discussed in the processes of creation, evolution and establishment of a specific design style.

Special attention is paid to the structuring and classification of the main tools of each approach and an up-to-date criteria apparatus for categorization is created regarding the specifics of the specific approaches according to their features and aspects.

Another goal successfully achieved in the dissertation is the creation of a terminological dictionary of the main definitions related to design approaches in modern interiors. The dictionary situates design in relation to the conditions of contemporary culture.

The author chooses the time limits of the study to distinguish the period from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present day, thus giving us the opportunity to present extremely polarized phenomena resulting from the same historical conditions. The author's opinion in the dissertation is well motivated and defended.

Theoretical model and methodology of the research

The study is structured in three parts:

The first chapter of the thesis deals with the '**Structural Design Approach**' which is followed in great detail and the relevant and important distinction between 'structural' and 'structuralist' is made. The skillful and clear theoretical development of this issue, for me, is one of the main contributions of the work, because it shows with great professionalism the differences between the concepts in the specific design terminology and correctly defined them. Much attention has been paid to the designation of this leading design approach, namely the structural approach. The question is asked why structural and not structuralist and moves on to a detailed explanation of the differences. Structuralism is defined as "a research method and scientific approach that examines systems through the meaning and interaction of the various elements that make up their structure." It is

explained that this is a method that arose and developed in the 20th century, that it is applicable to the field of humanities and applied sciences, and that it stands in the philosophical basis of the development of emblematic currents in art in the second half of the last century.

The present work shows the difference between design approaches through their theoretical meaning and through the influence of historical, social and cultural processes on the ways they function in creating certain suggestions through the application of visual codes. The author evaluates "structuralism" as one of the main research methods in the dissertation, but in order to distinguish it terminologically from one of the main design approaches, the approach is labeled as "structural", not "structuralist".

With an excellent knowledge of the history of design, Kaloyanova introduces us in this historical context to the functioning of the structural design approach. It tells us how it was born at the beginning of the twentieth century, how it developed, and that in the first half of the century it became predominant. It shows us through visual examples and citing names how it continues to be used today. According to the dissertation candidate, the structural approach is "one of the main design methods, as it is conceptually based on the principles of functionalism". For this approach, as well as the design resulting from it, structure, construction and functionality are of primary importance, while decorativeness is neglected and in many cases denied. This denial, quite naturally, at some points reaches an extreme. And here the author cites names such as Adolf Loos, Le Corbusier, Mies van der Rohe, for whom this approach is leading in design, who created interiors with a minimalist statement and a strong functionalist sound, with clearly distinguishable materials that are of leading aesthetic importance.

As a counterpoint to the structural approach of Mies van der Rohe and his motto of "nothing superfluous" that led to minimalism in design, appears the radical approach of maximalism, which marks the revival of the decorative approach "illustrated by the interiors of Werner Pantan, which possess in more than everything". Thus, the subject of the second chapter of the dissertation deals with "Decorative Design Approach" and the various categories of decorative design such as naturalistic, stylized, geometric, abstract, etc.

The third chapter of the dissertation pays special attention to the "Sustainable Approach" in design in the sense of design in the context of sustainable development.

Here the ultra-current topic of sustainability in contemporary design theory and practice is discussed, clarifying the concept from various perspectives. What follows is a multi-layered definition of interior design processes through the perspectives of historical events, political settings, social and cultural figures and emotional moods in societies and the discovery and definition of sustainable topos.

The developments are made and presented in a logical order that defends in a convincing way the conclusions made in the dissertation.

Research methods

For the purposes of the dissertation, three research methods were used:

The primary method used is system analysis. Each approach is considered as a system. The influences and interrelationships between the elements in the systems are investigated. The studied elements were analyzed by means of visual images. On the other hand, the considered systems are studied and presented in their relationship to the socio-cultural environment and its peculiarities within the limits of a certain historical period and the social processes functioning in it. All the influencing components regarding the formation of the "visual sign" in design as the main narrative in design (e.g. functional, conceptual, sustainable) and building the foundations of contemporary interior design are examined in detail.

Another method used by Kaloyanova is the historical-genetic method. Through this analysis, the history of formation and development of each approach is explored chronologically.

Historical moments are noted that are important for distinguishing the different approaches.

And another very important method used by the dissertation candidate is the method of comparative analysis. It examines the compositional, functional and conceptual elements of each approach.

Authenticity of the dissertation

The dissertation work was created independently by the dissertation candidate based on her constant interest in the field of design and its history and the strong and serious feeling of the need to create a classification and define the concepts and processes in this matter from the

perspective of different approaches, as as this is the best way to understand the visual states, codes and messages that interior design embodies.

Relevance and significance of the problem in scientific and scientific-applied terms

The present dissertation is presented as an accessible theorization of processes related to interior design. It explores for the first time the main design approaches in "their genesis, development and present state". With the consistency of all her work, the dissertation candidate convincingly proves to us her intention and its realization. The dissertation classifies and defines the main concepts with their characteristic visual "grammars" relating to each approach, defines and arranges their main toolkit, creates a usable and adequate criteria apparatus.

The text would be of scholarly interest to design students as well as professional interior designers and design theorists. I think it would be very useful to have it issued.

Publications

The dissertation candidate has presented publications on the topic of the dissertation, which meet the requirements in terms of number and content and show the author's permanent interest in the researched topic.

Scientific contributions

The scientific contributions of Ch. Assistant Professor Bilyana Kaloyanova are indisputable and excellently presented by her in her abstract. For me, the most important of them are:

"The dissertation enriches the theory of design by introducing into the scientific terminology the concept of design approach, in its entirety, at the same time as a conceptual foundation and a practical tool applicable in the practice of interior designers...."

The dissertation concerns interdisciplinary issues and has an interdisciplinary character, it explores the connections and interactions of interior design with modern materials science, ecology, biosystems, as well as other areas of scientific knowledge.

The dissertation uses as a source of information a wide range of unpublished scientific literature in Bulgaria. The work also interprets information that is significant in terms of volume and little touched on in the scientific literature, in the field of interior design."

Conclusion and suggestion:

My evaluation of the dissertation, the author's abstract, the scientific publications and the scientific contributions of Ch. assistant professor Dr. Bilyana Kaloyanova is POSITIVE.

The submitted dissertation meets the requirements. The achieved results give me reason to confidently propose that the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" be awarded to

Ch. Bilyana Kaloyanova, assistant professor, 8.2 Fine art.

Prepared the review:



Prof. Dr. Anna Tsolevska

31.05.2023