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The Unrealized Department Store “Na–Ma” in Trnje: Ambitions and Challenges in Expanding the Retail Network and Creating the Urban Space in Zagreb in the Early 1960s

Nerealizirani projekt robne kuća „Na–Ma“ u Trnju: Ambicije i izazovi proširenja trgovačke mreže i stvaranja urbanog prostora u Zagrebu ranih 1960–ih godina

ABSTRACT

In this article, the author analyzes the unrealized project of the department store “Na–Ma” in the neighborhood Trnje in Zagreb from 1960. Planned as a part of the new center of state–socialist Zagreb, this project offers insight into the professional context of imagining department stores as modern retail spaces and specific architectural types, as well as into the economic and social conditions that defined the processes of planning and building department stores, the modern retail network and urban space in Zagreb under Yugoslav state–socialism in the early 1960s. The author argues that the unrealized department store “Na–Ma” shows through the sphere of modern retail the ambitions and challenges present in architecture and urban planning, as well as in the decision–making and financing processes on the city level, and in this way reveals in more detail the functioning of the decentralized Yugoslav administrative and economic system in Zagreb in this period.

KEYWORDS

department store, retail, consumerism, urban planning, modernization, humanization, Zagreb, socialist Yugoslavia



- 1 A View of the Department Store
“Na-Ma” Trešnjevka, 1960
(photo: Ante Roca, source: Arhitektura
– Urbanizam, 30 (1964), 6)

Pogled na robnu kuću
„Na-Ma“ Trešnjevka, 1960.
(foto: Ante Roca, preuzeto iz:
Arhitektura – Urbanizam,
30 (1964.), 6)

APSTRAKT

U članku autorica analizira neizvedeni projekt robne kuća „Na-Ma“ u naselju Trnje u Zagrebu iz 1960. godine. Planiran kao dio novog centra socijalističkog Zagreba, ovaj projekt pruža uvid u profesionalni kontekst razmišljanja o robnim kućama kao modernim trgovačkim prostorima i specifičnim arhitektonskim tipovima, kao i u kontekst ekonomskih i društvenih uvjeta koji su definirali procese planiranja i izgradnje robnih kuća, moderne trgovačke mreže i urbanog prostora u Zagrebu u razdoblju socijalističke Jugoslavije ranih 1960-ih godina. Autorica tvrdi kako nerealizirani projekt robne kuće „Na-Ma“ kroz sferu moderne trgovine prikazuje ambicije i izazove prisutne u arhitektonskom i urbanističkom projektiranju, kao i u procesima odlučivanja i financiranja na razini grada, te na taj način detaljnije razotkriva funkcioniranje decentraliziranog jugoslavenskog ekonomskog i administrativnog sustava u Zagrebu u spomenutom razdoblju.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

robna kuća, trgovina, konzumerizam, urbanizam, modernizacija, humanizacija, Zagreb, socijalistička Jugoslavija

Introduction

On September 14, 1960, the first universal department store in Zagreb in the period of socialist Yugoslavia was opened in the center of the neighborhood Trešnjevka (Fig. 1).¹ Originally constructed in 1958 for the second exhibition in the series “Family and Household” (*Porodica i domaćinstvo*) held at the Zagreb Fair, the two-story prefabricated steel and glass building designed by the architects Stjepan Milković and Zdravko Gmajner represented one of the first attempts to find an efficient and standardized way of constructing department stores as important modern retail spaces in Yugoslav urban centers.² After the department store in Trešnjevka, the city’s main department store chain “Na-Ma” (*Narodni magazin* [People’s Department Store]) built six additional universal department stores until the end of the decade, thereby marking the 1960s as the first period of the more intense postwar development of a modern retail network in Zagreb.³ The story of the successful opening of the first Yugoslav department store in the summer of 1960, however, took place alongside another more ambitious, but ultimately unrealized project of the department store “Na-Ma” in the neighborhood Trnje. Initiated by the People’s Committee of Zagreb (*Narodni odbor grada Zagreba*), and the “Na-Ma” chain as the main investor, the 5-story department store was planned as a part of the bigger project of the new city center under the state-socialist government. Although in the end never built, the project of the department store “Na-Ma” in Trnje nevertheless offers useful insight into the professional context of imagining department stores as both modern retail spaces and specific architectural types, as well as into the economic and social conditions that framed the processes of planning, designing and building department stores in state-socialist Zagreb in the beginning of the 1960s. In this article, I argue that the unrealized department store “Na-Ma” shows through the sphere of modern retail the ambitions and challenges in architecture and urban planning, as well as in the decision-making and financing processes on the city level, and in this way reveals in more detail the functioning of the decentralized Yugoslav administrative and economic system in Zagreb in this period.

After briefly outlining the economic and political context that defined the emergence of first Yugoslav department stores in Zagreb, the unrealized project of the department store “Na-Ma” in Trnje is analyzed through a focus on the initial description of the project, as well as the subsequent commentary on the architectural competition and the awarded proposals

published in the professional journal *Arhitektura* (*Architecture*). By examining the expert discourse of architects and urban planners as important actors in urban and social planning under Yugoslav state-socialism, the project of the department store “Na-Ma” is placed both into global discussions, as well as local circumstances of architectural design and urban planning in the 1950s and 1960s. The choice of an unrealized architectural project shows its importance for illustrating the broader interconnections between the modernization of retail and urban and social transformations in the economic and political context of Yugoslav state-socialism in the 1960s.

In the Organism of the City: Developing the Retail Network in the 1950s and 1960s

In the broader context of the rapid development of socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s, Zagreb underwent significant economic, social and urban transformations that primarily encompassed the industrial sector, the construction of roads and the transport system, as well as new housing neighborhoods for the growing urban population.⁴ However, in contrast to these fast-paced developments, the modernization and expansion of the retail network remained rather slow from the late 1950s throughout the following decade.⁵ Since the development of the retail network was immensely important for a number of reasons, such as providing a sufficient supply of consumer goods, improving personal consumption, and stimulating the production and circulation of goods and services, the inadequate number and condition of retail spaces in a period of intense spatial and population growth made it a concerning problem for both the city’s economic and retail experts, as well as architects and urban planners. In order to battle the lack of retail spaces, the “Perspective Plan for Retail and Hospitality” (*Perspektivni plan za trgovinu i ugostiteljstvo*) from 1957 shows that the People’s Committee decided that the most effective way to expand the retail network was by building large department stores that could offer a variety of goods and services in one place. Unlike the more specialized shops in the city center, the idea was to build new department stores in the infrastructurally underdeveloped and peripheral areas of the city in order to single-handedly „absorb all the needs of the consumers“.⁶ This early plan illustrates that the growth of the city not only stimulated a corresponding increase in the number of retail spaces, but ideally also determined the type, position and assortment of individual stores. Under these circumstances, the department store was seen by the economic and retail experts as

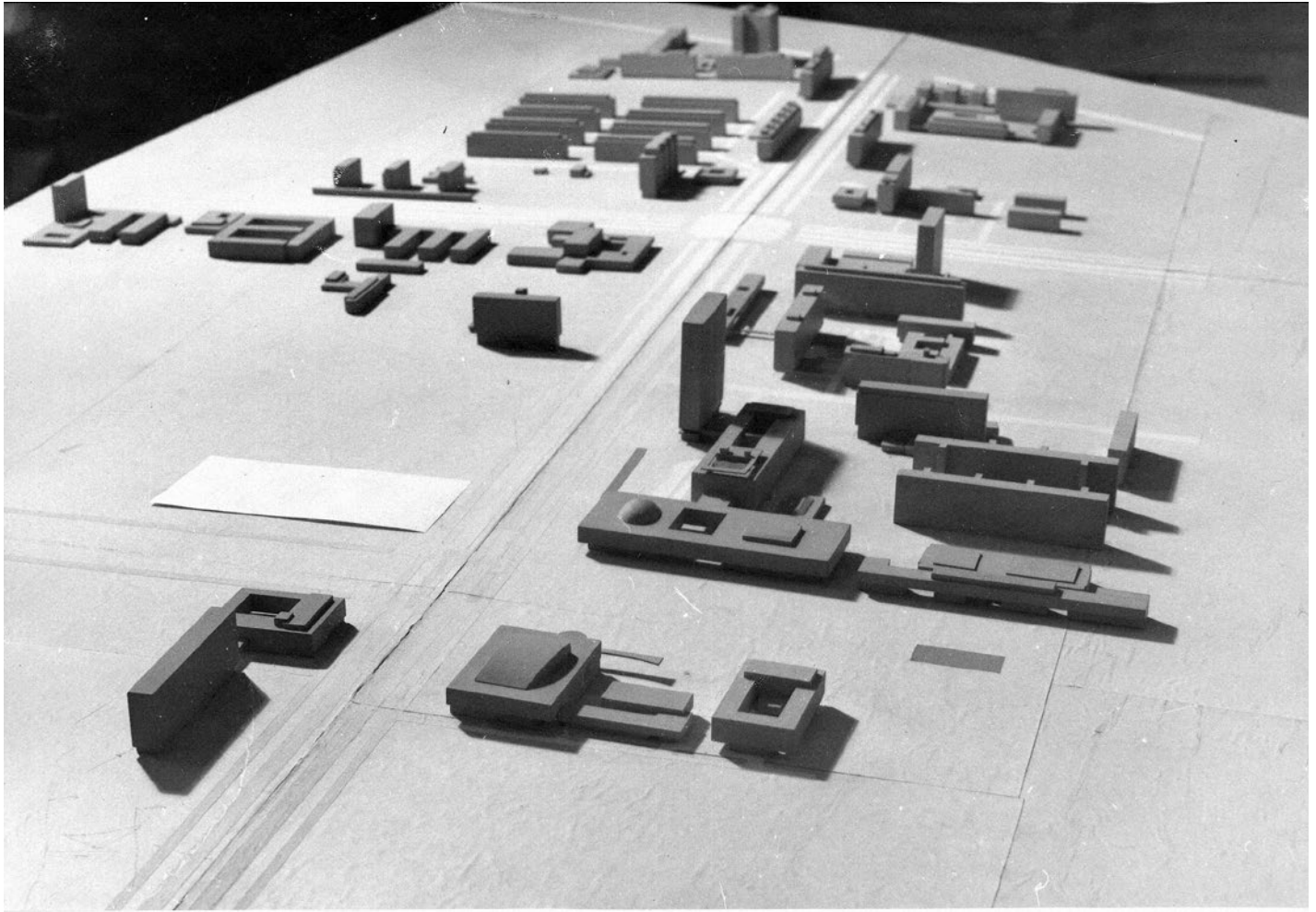
the most appropriate form of a modern retail space that could expand the underdeveloped retail network in an economical and efficient way. These tendencies were particularly important in the Yugoslav state's broader economic shift towards a decentralized, indicative approach to economic planning dominated by light industry and the production of consumer goods, as well as a general political, social and cultural re-orientation from the late 1950s that emphasized personal consumption and individual ownership as important elements of Yugoslav state-socialism.⁷

Economic and retail experts, however, were not the only professionals concerned with the expansion of the retail network. Since department stores as large retail spaces required architectural design and urban planning projects that more significantly affected the urban, as well as the social environment, the troubling dynamic of the retail network also became a topic of discussion for Yugoslav architects and urban planners. In the context of the postwar period, the increased activities in the sphere of urban planning—through new public design offices and institutes—took place as a part of a broader state-led program of improving the physical and social conditions in the urban environment.⁸ At the same time, Yugoslav architects and urban planners equally emphasized their important role in solving a wide range of issues set out by the „new socialist reality”, thereby establishing themselves as experts that engaged not only in the physical (re)constructions of the city, but also in the more encompassing social transformations in urban contexts.⁹ Therefore, in the light of the growing concern with the modernization and expansion of the retail network in the late 1950s and the 1960s, Yugoslav architects and urban planners also emerged with the first discussions on the position of the retail network and department stores in the urban space of Zagreb as a part of their own investment in urban and social planning.

Already in 1961 Zdenko Kolacio—the Director of the Urban Planning Institute in Zagreb (*Urbanistički zavod grada Zagreba*) from 1956 to 1971, and the main authority for multiple urban planning projects in this period—emphasizes the mutually defining relationship between retail spaces, economic development, urban planning and everyday life in the city.¹⁰ In Kolacio's opinion, the combined increase in the living standard and purchasing power, amount of traffic and the growth of the city determined—and was determined by—the number, organization and placement of retail spaces in old and new neighborhoods.¹¹ For this reason, as Kolacio believes, supply centers (*opskrbni centri*) held an important position in the „organism

of neighborhoods and cities, in the structure of their *raional* and *microraional* organization of life“.¹² The complex role of retail spaces in the city, therefore, had to be recognized as an important element in urban planning both by the architects and urban planners, as well as by the city's economic and retail experts. This demand was particularly important as a part of the more encompassing state-socialist agenda of improving the living standard and the everyday life of the urban population in Zagreb from the late 1950s. In reality, however, it was continuously difficult to build an adequate number of retail spaces as a result of the decentralized character of the self-management system and the increasing liberalization of the Yugoslav state-socialist economy. Unlike the spaces that were related to the communal living standard, such as schools or infirmaries, the planning and construction of more market-oriented business projects were not organized or funded by a single institution or governing body. In the case of the retail network, particularly in the case of department stores as retail spaces that required the largest financial investment, the initiative and finances for building new stores came from a range of public sources—the retail enterprises, the housing communities, the city's Department for Business Facilities, as well as other councils on the city and municipal levels.¹³ The result of this dispersed responsibility or, in other words, the lack of a single organizing body for the planning and construction of the stores made it very difficult to financially support the modernization and expansion of the retail network. Therefore, despite the public character of the institutions involved in these processes, as well as the common agreement of various professionals on the importance of significantly improving retail spaces in the city, the problem remained difficult to solve. The reason for this situation lied in the unsynchronized relationship between the various actors in the decentralized Yugoslav self-management system that were caught between the state's initiative and the increasingly market-oriented economic system.

The way that this problematic dynamic intersected the trajectories of modern retail, economic conditions, tendencies in urban planning and desired improvements of the living standard was particularly visible within the individual cases of the retail network's most representative nodes—the department stores. The case of the unrealized department store “Na-Ma” in Trnje illustrates both the early architectural conceptualizations of department stores and their imagined role in creating the urban and social environments, as well as the professional and more far-reaching



economic and administrative challenges present in the construction of the stores and the development of the retail network and the urban space in Zagreb in the early 1960s.

Towards Humanization:

Planning the New Center of State–Socialist Zagreb

The unrealized department store “Na-Ma” was originally planned as a part of one of the first important projects of architecture and urban planning in Zagreb after the consolidation of the political situation following the Tito–Stalin split—the construction of the new political and administrative city center. Placed in the neighborhood Trnje—an area that was until then covered with working-class slums and agricultural parcels—the new center intersected an extension of the downtown that dated back to the late 19th century (the so-called Lenuci or Green Horse-shoe) with a long line of representative residential and commercial buildings from the 1950s (the Street

- 2 Competition for the Conceptual Design of the Department Store in Zagreb, model of the Regulation Plan – view of the construction site from the northeast, 1960 (HR-DAZG-37. People’s Committee of Zagreb, 37.4. The Cabinet of the President, 4.7-71. Department for Urbanism. People’s Store – Department Store Trnje)

Natječaj za idejni projekt robne kuće u Zagrebu, fotografije makete regulatorne osnove – pogled na gradilište sa sjeveroistoka, 1960. (HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 37.4, Kabinet predsjednika, 4.7-71 Zavod za urbanizam, Narodni magazin – Robna kuća Trnje)



- 3 Competition for the Conceptual Design of the Department Store in Zagreb, photograph of the construction site from the roof of the City Hall – towards the southeast, 1960 (HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of Zagreb, 37.4, The Cabinet of the President, 4.7-71. Department for Urbanism. People's Store – Department Store Trnje)

Natječaj za idejni projekt robne kuće u Zagrebu, fotografije gradilišta s krova vijećnice – prema jugoistoku, 1960. (HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 37.4. Kabinet predsjednika, 4.7-71 Zavod za urbanizam, Narodni magazin – Robna kuća Trnje)

of the Proletarian Brigades). Similar processes were also characteristic for other cities in East European socialist states, where new centers emerged in the postwar period prompted by the fact that under the rapid economic, social and technological development existing urban zones became largely inadequate to physically—as well as symbolically—withhold new activities and services necessary for the everyday life in the city. Therefore, in the cases when the old city centers were to a certain extent unable to fulfill the objectives of the socialist state in the urban space, new centers emerged in areas between the pre-socialist urban environment and the newly emerging socialist housing neighborhoods.¹⁴

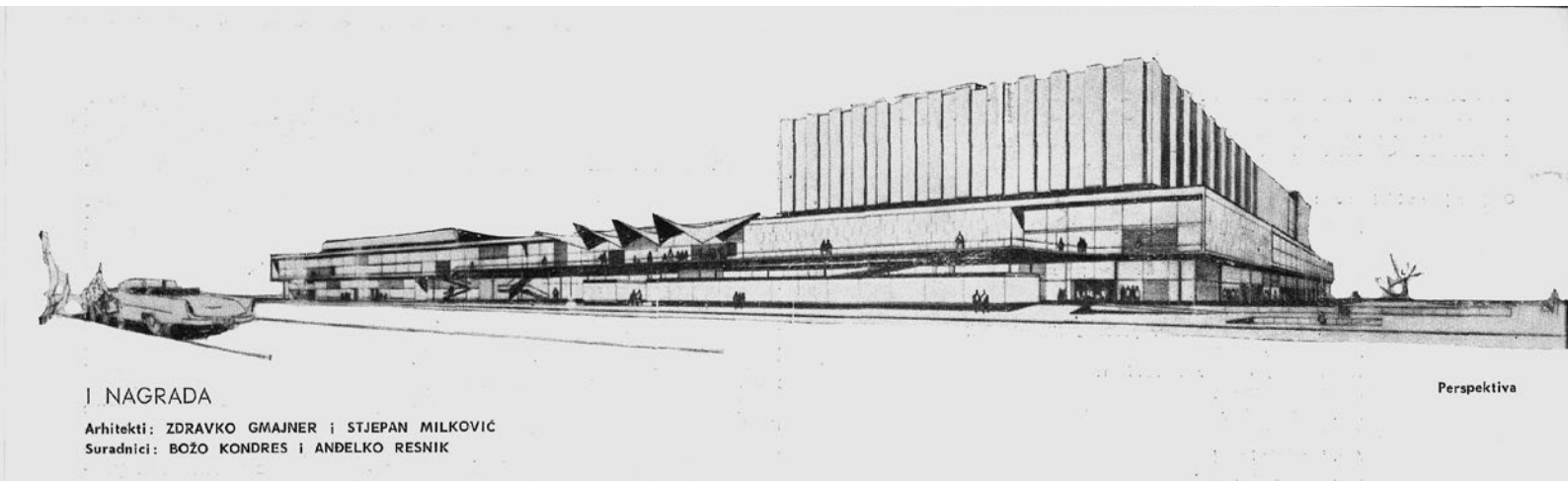
In the case of Trnje, the fact that the neighborhood was placed on the intersection of two representative streets—the new Street of the Proletarian Brigades (*Ulica proleterskih brigada*) from the east to the west, with the emerging extension of the Lenuci Horseshoe (*Lenucijeva potkova*) towards the south—determined

both the physical and the symbolic complexity of the design of the new center. In addition, the new center was supposed to encompass a variety of buildings crucial for the administrative, social and cultural functioning of the city, such as the City Hall (1955–58), the Court House (1961–67), the Lisinski Concert Hall (1958–72), the Worker’s University (1955–60) and the National Library (1988–1995), some of which were built over decades.¹⁵ In this way, through the monumental extension of the pre-socialist urban environment, the urbanization of an underdeveloped urban area, as well as a representative materialization of the various aspects of life in the state-socialist capital, the new city center was intended to reflect and contribute to the broader political, economic and social agenda of the Yugoslav socialist state.

Within this physically and symbolically complex framework, the new center was alongside the administrative, cultural and educational buildings also supposed to include a monumental commercial space—a 5-story department store “Na-Ma” with an adjoining cinema (Fig. 2 & 3). The placement of the department store in the new center points to the importance of modern retail and consumption in the core of a capital city developed within the new Yugoslav state-socialist framework from the late 1950s. At the same time, the centrality and the design of the department store described in the architectural competition demonstrates the imagined impact of this type of a retail space on the urban and social environment of the new city center within the changing global tendencies in urban planning in the 1950s and 1960s. According to the architectural competition that the department store chain “Na-Ma” launched in the early summer of 1960, the new department store was supposed to encompass not only a large retail space with a cinema, but also other facilities and services, such as a restaurant, tourist office, bank, post-office, hairdresser, laundry service, repair shops, as well as salons for fashion shows and even art exhibitions. Furthermore, the store was also expected to serve as an administrative building for the whole “Na-Ma” chain, meaning that it would include offices for the management, as well as facilities for the workers, such as a buffet, library, infirmary and a union hall.¹⁶ The all-inclusive placement of a variety of services, goods and leisure activities under one roof shows, on the one side, the full use of the economical capacities of department stores as versatile retail spaces, and on the other side, the aim of planners to provide for the employees of the department store chain, as well as more generally for the residents of the city.

The key authority for coordinating the urban planning of the new center and the surrounding neighborhood Trnje was the previously mentioned Zdenko Kolacio. In the description of the location for the new department store “Na-Ma”, Kolacio points out the important and sensitive nature of the new center as a link between the “social belt of the old city” and the “new urban environments” intended primarily for pedestrians.¹⁷ For this reason, the city’s chief urban planner emphasizes the necessity of adapting the urban environment to “the measure of man” in order to create a “humanized space”.¹⁸ This type of discourse on the pedestrian, humanized character of the city center was influenced by the discussions originating from the 8th meeting of CIAM held in 1951 in Hoddesdon near London, dedicated to the revitalization of cities after the Second World War.¹⁹ By stressing the importance of the individualized approach to urban planning and the creation of smaller urban environments adapted to local economic and social contexts, the discussions held at CIAM 8—and epitomized in the official publication titled *The Heart of the City: Towards the Humanisation of Urban Life* (1952)—represent a critique of the rigid rationality and top-to-bottom approach to urban planning of the Athens Charter. Instead, the focus on the creation of city centers shifted the emphasis to a more contextualized and humanized approach to planning that would strive to re-activate the streets and public spaces by creating pedestrian zones through the interaction with the inhabitants.²⁰ As a result, the new center as a key location for various activities in the urban space would also become the focal point of communal life in the city.

This reforming discourse on the humanization of urban space that appeared within CIAM, and later characterized the activities of Team 10, however, was not immediately accepted by Yugoslav architects and urban planners. As Tamara Bjažić Klarin points out, the fascination with functionalism and Le Corbusier—among the architects in Zagreb almost equated with CIAM—was only later in the 1960s replaced with experiments inspired by Team 10.²¹ Therefore, Kolacio’s ideas about designing the new city center as a humanized space are an early example of how the shifting global discourse on urban planning was thought about by the professionals in the context of socialist Yugoslavia. An important element in this particular vision of humanization was the significant role that the building of the department store was imagined to play in the process of humanizing the urban environment. Since Kolacio deems that the appropriate design of the ground floor—as the most important place of contact



I NAGRADA

Arhitekti: ZDRAVKO GMAJNER i STJEPAN MILKOVIĆ
Suradnici: BOŽO KONDRES i ANĐELKO RESNIK

Perspektiva

- 4 Zdravko Gmajner and Stjepan Milković, a view of the Department Store and Cinema, 1960 (source: *Arhitektura*, 3-4 (1961), 16)

Zdravko Gmajner i Stjepan Milković, *Robna kuća i kino – perspektiva*, 1960. (preuzeto iz: *Arhitektura*, 3-4 (1961.), 16)

between the pedestrians and the large surrounding buildings—was the key to adapting the urban environment to “the measure of man”, the displaying and communicative function of the department store’s ground floor proved particularly suitable for the realization of the program of humanization. In terms of design, these ideas would materialize by opening up the ground floor of the department store “Na-Ma” with large glass storefronts that would communicate with the passers-by and make the new center more attractive.²² Although a standard feature in the design of commercial buildings, by placing the emphasis on the way that the flow of people and goods would improve the surrounding visual and social atmosphere, the activities of retail and consumption that daily take place in the store were nevertheless particularly singled out as the defining features of the new urban environment.

The department store, therefore, was conceptualized both as a physical mark in the urban space, as well as an instigator of communal life in the new neighborhood that would stimulate the activities of

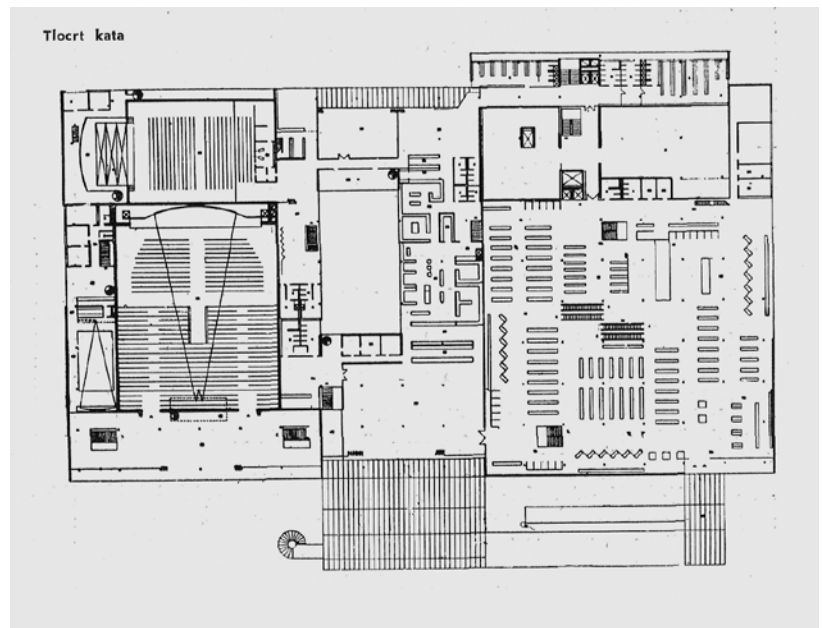
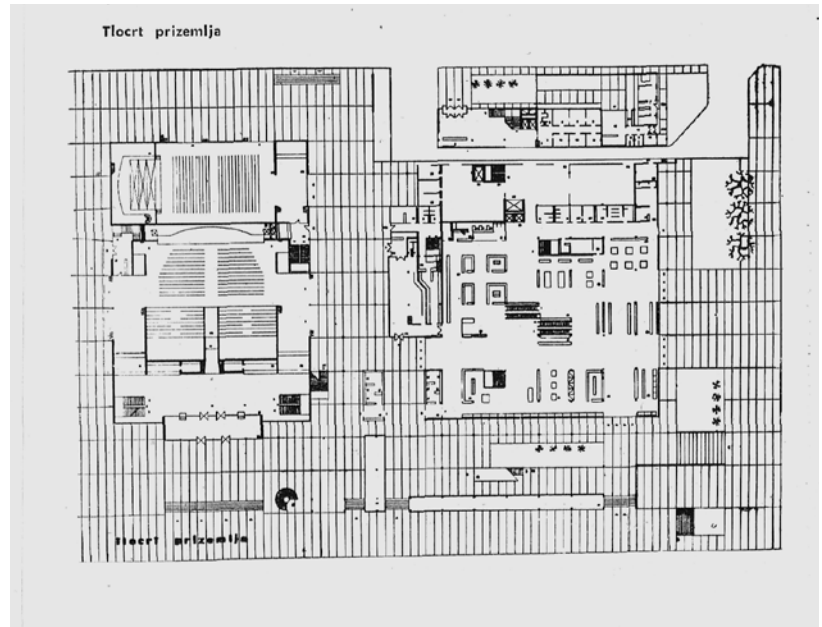
consumption, leisure and socialization. In this way, Kolacio’s description shows the significant role of the department store in the context of the new center, as well as the substantial presence of retail and consumption in the heart of the city within the new Yugoslav state-socialist agenda. Moreover, these characteristics also speak of the complex way that the experts imagined the influence of the department store in improving productivity and personal consumption, the living standard, as well as the physical and social dimensions of the urban environment. In contrast, the projects that emerged from this architectural competition, as well as the final inability to build the department store “Na-Ma” in more detail illustrate the challenges and obstacles present in the expansion of the retail network, as well as in the construction of large architectural and urban projects in socialist Yugoslavia in this period.

Complete Novelty: Competition for the Department Store “Na-Ma” in Trnje

The architectural competition run by the investor “Na-Ma” chain in the early summer of 1960 resulted with five awarded projects, whose detailed analysis written by the architect Darko Venturini and published in the journal *Arhitektura* provides insight into the various concerns present in designing department stores as specific architectural types in Zagreb at the turn of the decade.²³ According to Venturini, “... for us, the issue of large department stores (...) is still almost a complete novelty, while new cinemas (although not completely unknown as an assignment) have not been designed for a very long time”.²⁴ This completely novel situation, as Venturini describes it, consisted of

the architects', as well as the investor's unfamiliarity with the task that, together with a lack of scholarly literature, resulted in improvisation in designing the projects that consequently suffered from significant deficiencies.²⁵ Although perhaps too critical in his assessment of the complete lack of expert knowledge on department stores as architectural types, Venturini's comments nevertheless map the professional beginnings of building department stores in the context of Zagreb in the early 1960s.

Venturini's descriptions of the awarded projects point to some of the dominant ideas in the local discourse on architecture and urban planning in this period. According to his evaluation, even the most successful project — proposed by Stjepan Milković and Zdravko Gmajner, who also authored the department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka — was awarded despite the obvious formal flaws in design. Venturini, however, deems these insufficiencies as less important in comparison to the functional qualities of Milković and Gmajner's proposal, which exceeded those of the other awarded projects (Fig. 4-8). In Venturini's words, “neither the façade nor another aesthetic form that covers internal organic deficiencies should be given preference over a functionally healthier, but unimpressive, unclear or even visually burdened architecture”.²⁶ By criticizing Le Corbusier, Venturini points out that architecture “was never just a pure creation of the spirit”, but a result of various economic, technological and political circumstances.²⁷ Venturini's comment, therefore, illustrates the broader understanding of Yugoslav architects and urban planners of the complex network of conditions that primarily determine the results of architecture and urban planning projects. In addition, Venturini also more specifically demonstrates the prioritization of functional over formal and aesthetic values in architectural and urban design, thereby revealing a still very strong influence of functionalist tendencies in Yugoslav architecture and urban planning. These tendencies particularly apply to what Maroje Mrduljaš and Vladimir Kulić term “the architecture of everyday life”, or in other words the common, but almost invisible utilitarian and infrastructural buildings such as department stores, supermarkets or mass housing that form the largest part of urban landscapes.²⁸ This issue of function and form also shaped the relationship between the building of the department store and the sensitive urban environment of the new city center that was supposed to be visually dominated by the City Hall as the headquarters of the People's Committee.²⁹ The ambitious requirements for the project of the department store “Na-Ma”, however, meant



- 5 Zdravko Gmajner and Stjepan Milković,
Department Store and Cinema – plan of the
ground floor, 1960 (source: *Arhitektura*, 3-4
(1961), 16)

Zdravko Gmajner i Stjepan Milković,
Robna kuća i kino – tlocrt prizemlja, 1960.
(preuzeto iz: *Arhitektura*, 3-4 (1961), 16)

- 6 Zdravko Gmajner and Stjepan Milković,
Department Store and Cinema – plan of the
upper floor, 1960 (source: *Arhitektura*, 3-4
(1961), 16)

Zdravko Gmajner i Stjepan Milković, Robna
kuća i kino – tlocrt kata, 1960. (preuzeto iz:
Arhitektura, 3-4 (1961), 16)

that the volume of the building would outsize the City Hall, thereby creating a symbolically problematic imbalance between the architectural materializations of different functions in the space of the new center. Furthermore, the successful balancing of architectural volumes and the creation of a coherent urban space was made even more difficult by the city authorities' demand to build the center in multiple stages due to limited financial abilities. The consequent result of these demands was the fragmentation of the overall design based on the requirements and possibilities of the different investors and their chosen architectural projects.³⁰ In this particular case, although the People's Committee initiated the project of the department store, the financing was completely delegated to the department store chain “Na-Ma” as the main investor. The management of the store claims, however, that it was not able to receive a long-term loan from the state to finance the project.³¹ Despite the fact, therefore, that all involved institutions were public and connected to the city, the previously described issue of the complicated decentralized institutional framework, as well as a lack of a single source of finances made the existing economic conditions even more difficult, and finally prevented the project from ever being completed.

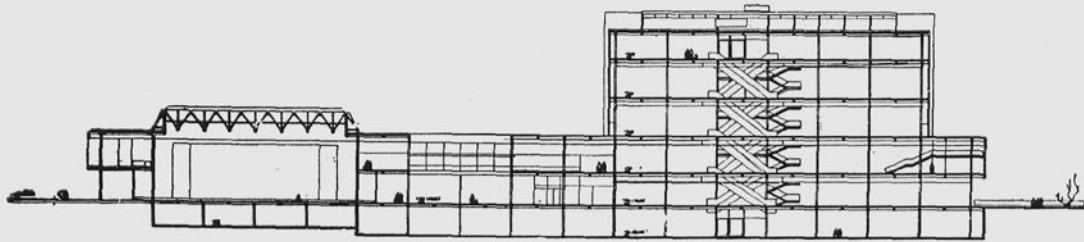
In addition to these financial issues, the unrealized department store “Na-Ma” shows that the reasons behind the slow development of the city's retail network also included the conflicting strategies and levels of expert knowledge among the various actors influential in the different aspects of city planning and managing. As the city's chief urban planner, Zdenko Kolacio's dissatisfaction with the fate of the city's first major planned retail space reflects this conflict in the accusation that the department store chain “Na-Ma” was guilty of only looking at the current state of the market and lacking a vision of future development. In Kolacio's view, however, this development would primarily be determined not by the priorities of a single retail enterprise, but by the growth of the city and the needs of its population that consequently required a more significant input from the professionals in charge of the retail network.³² In this way, Kolacio once again highlights the necessity of a more encompassing approach to city planning and managing that would take into consideration the interconnected development between modern retail and urban space guided by the physical conditions of the urban environment, the interests of the city's inhabitants and the status of their living standard, and not by a prioritization of economic profit. On the example of the expansion of the

modern retail network, Kolacio's comment, therefore, underlines social consciousness as the aim of urban and social planning, while at the same time points to the different priorities and the conflicting visions that ultimately characterized the development and management of the city in the decentralized framework of Yugoslav state-socialism.

Finally, these conflicting visions, together with the financial problems, left the project of the department store unrealized, and the new city center unfinished. This state of incompleteness, as Mrduljaš and Kulić emphasize, was more generally characteristic of architecture and urban planning projects in socialist Yugoslavia. The authors describe this situation with the concept of the “unfinished modernizations” as a perpetual state of being caught between the utopian ambitiousness of the projects and the real economic and social conditions in the Yugoslav socialist state.³³ The case of the unrealized department store “Na-Ma” more concretely points to the factors present in this clash between “utopia and reality” by illustrating, on the one side, the problems within the architectural profession in the very beginning of designing department stores as architectural types, and on the other side, the uncoordinated financing process and the different priorities among the various actors and bodies in charge of expanding the retail network and the urban space in Zagreb in the 1960s. In the end, the abandonment of the project of the department store “Na-Ma” left the city without a much-needed large, modern retail space, a significant factor in the humanization and creation of communal life in the urban environment, and ultimately a materialization of an important function in the new framework of the Yugoslav socialist state. Overall, this state of affairs contributed to the new center of state-socialist Zagreb remaining both physically and symbolically unfinished.

Conclusion

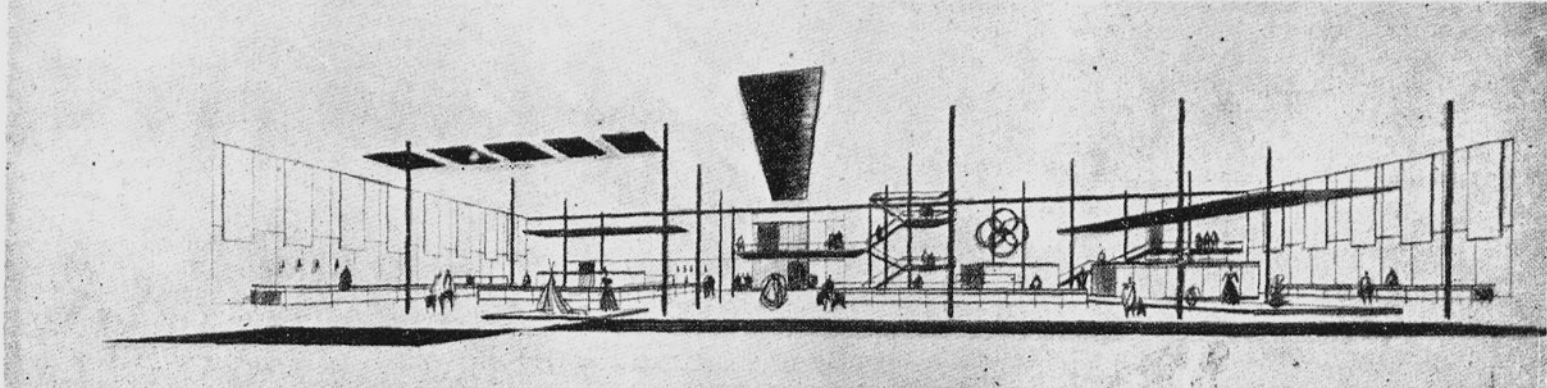
The slow rhythm of expansion and modernization of the retail network in Zagreb in the 1950s and early 1960s received a push in the summer of 1960 with two important projects of large retail spaces—the opening of the first postwar department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka, as well as the competition for the never-realized department store “Na-Ma” in Trnje. This article focuses on the project of the department store “Na-Ma” in Trnje in order to show that its unrealized status makes it a useful case-study that sheds light on the various actors, ideas and circumstances present in the first attempts of planning and building department stores as modern retail spaces,



Uzdužni presjek robne kuće i kina

Z. GMAJNER i S. MILKOVIĆ:

Unutrašnjost robne kuće



architectural types and urban institutions in Zagreb in the beginning of the 1960s.

On a conceptual level, the competition for the unrealized department store “Na-Ma” in the new city center echoes the global discussions on architecture and urban planning in the 1950s and 1960s through the idea of the humanization of urban space. The department store was envisioned in physical, social and symbolic terms as an important part of the processes of humanization, creation of communal life and improvement of the living standard as foundational dimensions of the new center of state-socialist Zagreb. In this way, the imagined design of the store and its influence on the urban environment reveal the importance of retail spaces, as well as related commercial and social activities as core parts of the city center developed under the new agenda of the Yugoslav socialist state from the late 1950s.

In more concrete terms of conceptual designs and planning, the project demonstrates that the early phase of constructing department stores in Zagreb was characterized by a lack of expert knowledge and professional experience in dealing with department stores as specific architectural types. Finally, the involvement of different actors with varied priorities and strategies in the planning and managing of the city, as well as the financial and organizational problems

- 7 Zdravko Gmajner and Stjepan Milković, Department Store and Cinema – side elevation of the Department Store and Cinema, 1960 (source: *Arhitektura*, 3–4 (1961), 17)

Zdravko Gmajner i Stjepan Milković, *Robna kuća i kino – uzdužni presjek robne kuće i kina*, 1960. (preuzeto iz: *Arhitektura*, 3–4 (1961), 17)

- 8 Zdravko Gmajner and Stjepan Milković, Department Store and Cinema – interior of the department store, 1960 (source: *Arhitektura*, 3–4 (1961), 17)

Zdravko Gmajner i Stjepan Milković, *Robna kuća i kino – unutrašnjost robne kuće*, 1960. (preuzeto iz: *Arhitektura*, 3–4 (1961), 17)

connected to the decision-making and implementation processes in the decentralized administrative and economic framework of the Yugoslav state prevented the realization of the project. By moving away from the simplified clash between utopia and reality, the case of the unrealized department store “Na–Ma” in Trnje, therefore, in more detail shows through the intersection of modern retail and urban transformations both the concrete demands, as well as obstacles present in the entangled and often conflicting processes of planning, designing, financing and building modern architectural and urban institutions in the decentralized context of Yugoslav state-socialism in the late 1950s and 1960s.

* This article stems from the research done for my MA theses in Art History and Comparative Literature at the University of Zagreb (2017, thesis supervisors: Maša Grdešić, assistant professor and Dragan Damjanović, professor), and in Comparative History at Central European University (2018, thesis supervisor: Marsha Siefert, associate professor). I would like to thank everyone who has helped me in this work throughout the years, as well as to the two anonymous reviewers for their immensely useful comments. Finally, I would also like to thank Henry Blood for the help with proofreading and editing.

NOTES

- 1 ZVONIMIR MILČEĆ, SANJA MARĐETKO KUREČIĆ, ŽELJKO VUKELIĆ, NAMA: monografija [NAMA: A Monograph], Nama, Zagreb, 1997, 63.
- 2 Held at the Zagreb Fair in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the three international exhibitions “Family and Household” (Porodica i domaćinstvo) dealt with acute issues of organizing family and communal life in the context of the growing industrialized and urban society in socialist Yugoslavia. The first department store “Na–Ma” was exhibited as a part of the final section of the exhibition titled “Industry and Retail”. This section specifically dealt with the imagined role that modern department stores and the self-service system had in accelerating the Yugoslav state’s economic and social development. Državni arhiv u Zagrebu (HR-DAZG), 1172. Zagrebački velesajam, 2312. Propaganda uz prateći sadržaj – 1958 [The State Archives in Zagreb, HR-DAZG-1172 Zagreb Fair, 2312. Propaganda and Additional Materials – 1958].
- 3 In scholarly literature in English, “Narodni magazine” is also sometimes translated as “National Department Store”. However, since other terms such as “Narodna fronta” and “Narodni odbor” are commonly translated as “People’s Front” and “People’s Committee”, the same rule is applied here. Moreover, since the department store chain officially changed its name to “Na–Ma” in 1965, this article also mainly uses the shortened version. In the 1960s, the “Na–Ma” chain opened department stores in the following neighborhoods in Zagreb: Trešnjevka (1960), Kustošija (1962), Volovčica (1965), Dubrava (1965), Trnsko (1966) and on Kvaternik Square (1968). In this period, the chain also opened department stores outside of Zagreb, in Kumrovec (1962), Sisak (1968) and Bjelovar (1969).
- 4 For this reason, the historian Igor Duda terms the period from 1955 to 1961 as the “Yugoslav economic miracle”. IGOR DUDA, U potrazi za blagostanjem. O povijesti dokolice i potrošačkog društva u Hrvatskoj 1950–ih i 1960–ih [Looking for Affluence: The History of Leisure and Consumer Society in Croatia in the 1950s and the 1960s], Srednja Europa, Zagreb, 2005, 46. For more information on the economic and urban development of Zagreb in the 1950s and 1960s, see IVO GOLDSTEIN, Novo lice grada [New Face of the City], in: Povijest grada Zagreba: knjiga 2.: 20. i 21. stoljeće [The History of Zagreb: Volume 2: 20th and 21th Century], (eds.) Ivo Goldstein and Slavko Goldstein, Novi Liber, Zagreb, 2013, 174–240.
- 5 “The Proposal for a Perspective Development Plan” (“Prijedlog perspektivnog plana razvitka”) from 1957 in more detail describes the state of retail in the immediate postwar period, which was characterized by uncoordinated retailing systems, fragmented retail enterprises, an uneducated workforce, an inadequate retail network, outdated technology and a general lack of organization. Državni arhiv u Zagrebu (HR-DAZG), 37. NO Grada Zagreba, 37.5 Opći odjel, 360. Prijedlog perspektivnog plana razvitka – 1. razrada, Zagreb, srpanj 1957. [The State Archives in Zagreb, HR-DAZG-37 People’s Committee of Zagreb, 37.5 General Department, 360. The Proposal for the Perspective Development Plan – 1st Elaboration, Zagreb, July 1957]. Moreover, the minutes of meetings, reports and development plans from the supply, trade and economic councils in Zagreb from the late 1950s demonstrate that the lack of retail spaces was a prevalent and extensively discussed issue among the city’s economic and retail experts. Državni arhiv u Zagrebu (HR-DAZG), 37. NO Grada Zagreba, 37.3. Sjednice izvršnih vijeća, 3.8–31. Zapisni sjednica za robni promet [The State Archives in Zagreb, HR-DAZG-37 People’s Committee of Zagreb, 37.3 Sessions of the Executive Councils, 3.8–31. Minutes of Meeting of the Trade Council].
- 6 HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba [People’s Committee of Zagreb], 37.3, 3.8–31. In addition to department stores, from 1957 the first supermarkets also emerged in Zagreb. However, due to their size and versatility—described with the common expression of holding “everything under one roof”—retail experts considered department stores as more cost effective retail spaces. This opinion is nicely summed up in a calculation from the Trade

- Council's minutes of meeting from March 1958, that said that 500 million dinars are needed to build 100 shops in one municipality, but only 300 million dinars to build one department store that could replace these 100 shops. HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba [People's Committee of Zagreb], 37.3, 3.8–31.
- 7 For more information on these economic transformations, see JOHN B. ALLCOCK, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, London, C. Hurst, 2000, 73–76. For analyses on the emergence of the Yugoslav consumer culture from the late 1950s, see studies by IGOR DUDA (note 4), and PATRICK HYDER PATTERSON, *Bought and Sold: Living and Losing the Good Life in Socialist Yugoslavia*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2012. Although not the main topic of this article, the emphasis on personal consumption and the development of the Yugoslav consumer culture is inevitably intertwined with the modernization of retail and the emergence of first department stores in Zagreb.
 - 8 For more information on the state of Yugoslav architecture and urban planning from 1945 to 1955, see VLADI BRALIĆ, *Arhitektura [Architecture]*, in *Refleksije vremena 1945.–1955. [Reflections of Time 1945–1955]*, (ed.) Jasmina Bovoljak, Zagreb, Galerija Klovičevi dvori, 2012, 146–153.
 - 9 The role of architects and urban planners as influential actors in both the physical and social transformations under state-socialism was early on expressed in the manifesto-like article published on the occasion of the 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1948. *** *Povodom Petog kongresa Komunističke partije Jugoslavije [On the Occasion of the 5th Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia]*, *Arhitektura [Architecture]*, 8–9 (1948), 3–6.
 - 10 Although Kolacio's comments are important with regards to the postwar modernization of retail in the context of the urban expansion of Zagreb in the 1950s and 1960s, similar ideas of socially conscious and encompassing urban planning strategies were expressed even in the interwar period with the accepted, but never realized “Regulation Plan for Zagreb” (“Regulatorna osnova Zagreba”) (1932–38). Developed by the architects Vlado Antolić, Josip Seissel, Stjepan Hribar and Antun Urlich, the Regulation Plan represented a socially sensitive model of urban planning aimed at improving the living standard of the new industrial population in the growing city. These tendencies were particularly characteristic in the case of Vlado Antolić, who was influenced by CIAM and the Soviet architects of the 1930s, and continued to work after the war on the new Regulation Plan from 1949. For more information on Antolić's ideas regarding urban planning, see VEDRAN IVANKOVIĆ, *Arhitekt Vladimir Antolić – zagrebački urbanistički opus između dva rata (Architect Vladimir Antolić and his Urban Plans of Interwar Zagreb)*, *Prostor: znanstveni časopis za arhitekturu i urbanizam [Space: Scholarly Magazine of Architecture and Urban Planning]*, 17 (2009), 268–283.
 - 11 ZDENKO KOLACIO, *Opskrbni centri [Supply Centers]*, *Arhitektura*, 3–4 [Architecture, 3–4] (1961), 3–4. In official retail and architecture terminology, the supply center represents a combination of the department store with other related spaces that form a more complex urban unit in housing neighborhoods. In practice, however, supply centers were mostly never built. PAVLE NIKŠIĆ, *O nekim organiziranim oblicima maloprodaje [On Some Organized Forms of Retail]*, *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin” [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”]* (July 1964), 6–7.
 - 12 ZDENKO KOLACIO (note 11), 3.
 - 13 HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba [People's Committee of Zagreb], 37.3, 3.8–31.
 - 14 F. E. IAN HAMILTON, *Spatial Structure in East European Cities*, in: *The Socialist City: Spatial Structure and Urban Policy*, (eds.) R. A. French and F. E. Ian Hamilton, Chichester, New York, 1979, 232–234.
 - 15 For more information on the architectural and urban characteristics of the individual buildings in the new center and the neighborhood Trnje, see Eve Blau and Ivan Rupnik, *Project Zagreb: Transition as Condition, Strategy, Practice*, Actar D, Barcelona & New York, 2007, 182–201.
 - 16 HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 37.4. Kabinet predsjednika, 4.7–71 Zavod za urbanizam. *Narodni magazin – Robna kuća Trnje*. [HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of Zagreb, 37.4. The Cabinet of the President, 4.7–71. Department for Urbanism. People's Store – Department Store Trnje].
 - 17 HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba [People's Committee of Zagreb], 37.4, 4.7–71.
 - 18 HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba [People's Committee of Zagreb], 37.4, 4.7–71.
 - 19 KONSTANZE SYLVA DOMHARDT, *From the “Functional City” to the “Heart of the City”: Green Space and Public Space in CIAM Debates of 1942–1952*, in: *Greening the City: Urban Landscapes in the Twentieth Century*, (eds.) Dorothee Brantz and Sonja Dümpelmann, University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville & London, 2011, 133.
 - 20 KONSTANZE SYLVA DOMHARDT (note 19), 148.
 - 21 TAMARA BJAŽIĆ KLARIN, *CIAM networking – Međunarodni kongres moderne arhitekture i hrvatski arhitekti 1950-ih godina [CIAM Networking – International Congress of Modern Architecture and Croatian Architects in the 1950s]*, *Život umjetnosti*, 99 (2016), 53.
 - 22 HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba [People's Committee of Zagreb], 37.4, 4.7–71.
 - 23 The winners of the architectural competition were: Zdravko Gmajner and Stjepan Milković (first prize), Miro Begović, Vladimir Ivanović, Grozdan Knežević and Mirko Maretić (second prize), Jaško Vidić and Duško Rakić (third prize), Mila Poletti and Spomenka Maretić (fourth prize), and Boris Magaš (fifth prize). DARKO VENTURINI, *Natječaj za idejnu skicu robne kuće i kina u Zagrebu [The Competition for the Preliminary Sketch of the Department Store and Cinema in Zagreb]*, *Arhitektura [Architecture]*, 3–4 (1961), 15.
 - 24 DARKO VENTURINI (note 23), 15.
 - 25 DARKO VENTURINI (note 23), 15. Venturini's comment on the limited number of available literature on the design of department stores, as well as information on the competitions for this architectural type outside of socialist Yugoslavia are perhaps too severe since already from the early 1950s journals such as *Arhitektura* reported on activities and projects in the global architectural context. For example, in issue 5 from 1952, there is an article that describes Victor Gruen's and Elsie Krummeck's Milliron Department Store near Los Angeles from 1949.
 - 26 DARKO VENTURINI (note 23), 15.
 - 27 DARKO VENTURINI (note 23), 17.
 - 28 MAROJE MRDULJAŠ, VLADIMIR KULIĆ, *Modernism in-between: the mediatory architectures of Socialist Yugoslavia*, Jovis, Berlin, 2012, 167.
 - 29 DARKO VENTURINI (note 23), 15.
 - 30 DARKO VENTURINI (note 23), 15.
 - 31 ZDENKO KOLACIO (note 11), 4.
 - 32 ZDENKO KOLACIO (note 11), 4.
 - 33 MAROJE MRDULJAŠ, VLADIMIR KULIĆ, *Unfinished Modernisations: Between Utopia and Pragmatism*, in: *Unfinished Modernisations: Between Utopia and Pragmatism*, (eds.) Maroje Mrduljaš and Vladimir Kulić, Croatian Architect's Association, Zagreb, 2012, 7–10.

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37. *NO Grada Zagreba*, 37.5 Opći odjel, 360. Prijedlog perspektivnog plana razvitka – 1. razrada, Zagreb, srpanj 1957. [37. *People's Committee of Zagreb*, 37.5 General Department, 360. The Proposal for the Perspective Development Plan – 1st Elaboration, Zagreb, July 1957].
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SAŽETAK

Nerealizirani projekt robne kuća „Na-Ma“ u Trnju: Ambicije i izazovi proširenja trgovačke mreže i stvaranja urbanog prostora u Zagrebu ranih 1960-ih godina

Usprkos općenitom ubrzanom ekonomskom, društvenom i tehnološkom razvoju Zagreba tijekom 1950-ih i 1960-ih godina, gradsku trgovačku mrežu karakterizirala je znatno sporija stopa ekspanzije i modernizacije. Kao rješenje za problem manjka trgovačkih prostora, gradski stručnjaci za privredu, trgovinu i opskrbu kasnih 1950-ih godina donijeli su plan proširenja trgovačke mreže izgradnjom robnih kuća u starim i novim gradskih zonama. Analiza primjera jednog od prvih, ali nerealiziranih projekata robne kuće najvećeg gradskog lanca „Na-Ma“ iz ljeta 1960. godine detaljnije ukazuje na aktere, ideje i okolnosti koji su odredili pionirske procese planiranja i izgradnje robnih kuća te proširenja trgovačke mreže i urbanog prostora u Zagrebu početkom šezdesetih godina.

Zamišljena kao dio novog središta socijalističkog Zagreba iz 1950-ih i 1960-ih godina, robna kuća „Na-Ma“ u Trnju bila je koncipirana kao značajan faktor u procesu humanizacije urbanog prostora inspiriranog novim globalnim promišljanjima izgradnje gradskih središta i urbanističkog planiranja u razdoblju nakon Drugog svjetskog rata. Istovremeno, na lokalnoj razini ovaj je nerealizirani projekt ukazao na, s jedne strane, prvotnu neupućenost arhitektonske struke u projektiranje robnih kuća kao specifičnog arhitektonskog tipa te, s druge strane, na šire organizacijske i financijske probleme u planiranju većih trgovačkih i drugih objekata u sklopu decentraliziranog sustava jugoslavenskog samoupravnog socijalizma. Unatoč tome, izgradnja robnih kuća zamišljena je kao ključni proces ne samo za razvoj trgovačke mreže, već i za unapređenje materijalne i socijalne dimenzije starih i novih gradskih prostora, te iz tog razloga njezina analiza pomaže rasvijetliti važnu međusobnu povezanost između modernizacije trgovine te transformacija urbanog prostora, životnog standarda i svakodnevnog života u Zagrebu u okviru jugoslavenskog socijalističkog sustava ranih 1960-ih godina.

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