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Architectural Representation of the Socialist Consumerist Society: "Department Store Belgrade" in the Self-Governing Socialism

Abstract

The research is based on an examination of the emergence and development of the socialist consumerism in Yugoslavia which coincided with the political - economic strategy of the state by opening to the cultural codes of the West. Historic milestone in socialist Yugoslavia, in the process of shaping mass consumption in socialist society, coincided with the introduction of self-management in the 1950s. Idea was to use the mechanisms of the capitalism, within the socialist political system in order to create a modern consumer who enjoys shopping.

Yugoslav modernist ("alternative") architecture super markets and shopping departments, during the late fifties and sixties, is conceived as a place of ambient visual experience. As a consequence, came a necessity for Yugoslavian trade companies to treat their sales areas (places) always updated with the contemporary tendencies in accordance with the latest architectural trends.

One of the main goals of the research is to examine the role that architecture of department stores had after the economic reforms 1965th, and how it represented the market and social spending in socialist Yugoslavia. At the same time, paper would review the concept of organization and functioning of department stores, and to research whether the area of trade development within self-managed socialism, operated under a system agreed economy or market economy.

The phenomenon of socialist department stores during sixties and seventies of the twentieth century, will be explained and explored using the example of enterprise "Robna kuca Beograd"(Department Store of Belgrade). The idea of their existence

was focused on the Yugoslav socialist consumerism, because under socialism there was an awareness that the market system should be introduced, but that does not grow in the consumer capitalist ideology. The task of this research is to demonstrate how the architecture of department stores contributed to the formation of consciousness consumer society in socialist Yugoslavia and how this architectural symbol of trade promoted socialism as established social - political order.

Key words: department stores, socialism, consumerism, self-government, shopping;



1. Introduction

Consumer culture is a hallmark of social, political and especially economic global system of the 20th century when consumerism became dominant in trade consumption. The cultural production of consumer society was manifested by introducing modern retail stores with a new concept of shopping culture which was offering a new activity - free personal choice of consumers in the private sphere of everyday life.

In the late 1950s and during the 1960s, the most important and modern forms of retail sales, such as supermarkets and department stores were built and started to develop in Yugoslavia, and in the 1970s those were hypermarkets, discount houses, shopping centers, convenience store, etc... A common feature of modern retail stores was that they offered a wide range of goods in the same place, lower prices, quality sales service and a range of commercial services. Thanks to these offers, consumers saved time, and commercial enterprises had only one goal - purchase had to become a pleasure.

The structure of the research was designed to use several distinct notions of consumer culture and examine the formation and strengthening of the cultural geography development in SFR of Yugoslavia, which was caused by the wide use of capitalist models of consumer ideology.

The idea of department stores' development was focused on the Yugoslav socialist consumer, and Yugoslav policy promoted the introduction of the market system that was not intended to become a consumer ideology.

The task of the research is to examine how the architecture of department stores contributed to the formation of consciousness of consumer society in socialist Yugoslavia, i.e. how it promoted the socialist consumerism as an established social and political order.

Historical reconstruction of the architecture of department stores, through the analysis of its archetypal purchase space, can clarify the basic principles of socialist consumer society. The analysis of the selected period of time through the examples of modern retail space had the tendency to review their current level of development in the Serbian post-socialist society. In fact, Mark Patterson, in his book "Consumption and Everyday Life: The New Sociology", advised that "consumerist spaces and everyday life" and their transformation were seen throughout history, and that might give us the answer to the questions of how and where we buy at present. (Paterson, 2006, p:170)

The research is devoted to the shopping culture of socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s, which is observed through the formation of the first architectural spatial concepts of department stores in self-governing socialism. The phenomenon of socialist department stores will be revisited through a case study in the example of the management of Department Stores "Belgrade", and an analysis of its architecture will be conducted on one of its buildings - the store in Zemun.

2. Department stores in socialist Yugoslavia: political economy and socialist consumer culture

Inevitable interpretative tendencies in contemporary western theories on socialist consumer society see Yugoslav development of retail market structures through capitalist practice that applies the concepts and features of capitalist mass culture and values.

In his article, Patrick Hyder Patterson stated that business managers and planners in the socialist world of Eastern Europe believed that retail stores could be instruments of unquestionable communist distribution system which suited the East European political norms and values. (Patterson, 2012, p: 116)

As he further stated, the nature and consequences of the capitalist trading concept of Eastern Europe were particularly oriented to consumption in socialist countries.¹ (Patterson, 2012, p: 116) The question arises whether Patterson's attitudes are justified in the Yugoslav example. Did Yugoslavia manage to create an alternative socialist consumer system using the experience of Western European countries in terms of economic and trading principles? Did the development of trade and market economy in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have socio-cultural values and how did it influence the formation and development of the Yugoslav consumer culture?

Economic development and economic policy of the Yugoslav society largely indicated the dynamic nature of market environment at retail. In terms of self-governing socialism, commodity production and market affected the stability of free labour exchange, business and economic independence of commercial entities. (Lovreta, 1979, p: 25)

Therefore, the Yugoslav modernization project was linked to foreign sources of capital. However, within the process of trade liberalization and the relocation of decision-making on investment and fiscal policy from the federal to republic i.e. the local communities, Yugoslavia turned to a growth strategy based on export. In the 1970s, the economic strategy of the market system in Yugoslavia was increasingly directed to decentralization of trade i.e. the retail market network. (Žitkov, 2012)

Till 1965, the development of the retail network in Yugoslavia was mostly spontaneous and unplanned. In the plans of economic development, no importance was given to trade and its functions in the process of social reproduction, because the economic policy was exclusively focused on production. (Lovreta, 1979, p: 25)

With the adoption of economic and social reform in 1965, the primary task of trade became faster development in order to create the basic preconditions for stabilizing the economy. The reform particularly emphasized the necessity for faster development of the retail network, its modernization, regarding the introduction of new contemporary forms of retail stores as major prerequisites of the retail trade to

adequately perform its function of linking the final stages of social reproduction. (Lovreta, 1979, p: 49)

„... in community development plan of Yugoslavia for the period 1966-1970, the trade was given great importance from the standpoint of its contribution to speeding up the reproduction process, targeting production to market needs and in general, achieving better market supply with consumer goods.“ (Lovreta, 1979, p: 49)

According to Stipe Lovreta, the professor of the Faculty of Economics, the changes in the economic system and economic policy created favorable conditions for making profit in trade. (Lovreta, 1979, p: 49)

Trade organizations represented labour-intensive and tertiary activity which was of greater social importance and with its help, producers became connected with many consumers. (Lovreta, 1979, p: 26)

While planning physical distribution flows between trade, manufacturers and consumers, evident spatial development of the retail network occurs particularly in a specific area, which includes the selection of location for positioning the object and the typology of contemporary retail, which will be shown in the example of the development and construction of the chain of “Department Stores Belgrade” building in Zemun in the period 1962 - 1968.

Department stores in Yugoslavia became the main representatives of the new concept of sales through self-service and self-choice of potential consumers. This contemporary understanding of retail space, whose benefits were reflected in the spatial and functional terms and assortment of goods, were formed into a harmonious offer which allowed optimal meeting of the needs, thus attaining a high turnover with improved financial performance. (Sudec, 1985, p: 10)

With widespread adoption of modern forms of retail space, department stores became a place where the risk of disruption of “reliable” socialist cultural values was emphasized. Despite this, the authorities of the self-governing socialism sought to promote a new concept of trade, with modest costs seen as a legitimate economic model of retail trade in the socialist system. The adopted form of business concept was based on capitalist ideas, and department stores were participants in the social and cultural production, i.e. they created and imposed new cultural values. (Patterson, 2012)

These changes required a review of the relationship between the self-governing socialism and western business models, analyzing not only the examination of the relations of producers and distributors, but also the trading interactions with customers.

In the following section, the case study will further show the Yugoslav department store through the example of a successful retail chain of “Department Stores

Belgrade", whose golden age of business success and development is related to the beginning of the '60s up to the late '80s of the 20th century in the socialist Yugoslavia. While building a new department store, the fundamental question of choosing areas in the broader markets and locations arises, having in mind the size of the store in accordance with the size of the market, the number of consumers and buying power of consumers in that place.

3. Historical development of the trading company "Department Stores Belgrade"

Trading company "Department Stores Belgrade" was founded on January 1, 1966 in Belgrade, by merging well-known Belgrade trading enterprises such as "Belgrade", "Nama", "Gramag" and "Modna Kuca (Fashion House)". From its inception until its collapse in 1992, the trade giant was the largest system of retail trade in the Balkans for the retail sale of goods. After the merging, the chain of "Department Stores Belgrade" started the business with nine department stores with the total area of 22,235 m² office space, and in 1992, it reached the number of 43 department stores with modern equipment in the very centers of 32 cities (in Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina) and with more than 300,000 m² of office space in its property.²(Andjelic, 2003, p: 9)

In the first year of business, "Department Stores Belgrade" (DSB), under the leadership of the newly appointed general manager Cedomir Jelenic, started the development of a long-term work and business program, which was based on similar business strategies as in the department stores "Kaufhof" in the Republic of Germany, the department store "Turiz" from Sweden and other similar systems in the west. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 9)

According to Luka Andjelic, radical changes that the "Department Stores Belgrade" put into its commercial business from technology to the change of goods and services assortment, were the result of the analysis of organization and business operations of similar systems in developed countries. Similarly, the appropriate structures of employees in "Department Stores Belgrade" toured facilities and achieved an insight into the functioning of large systems of department stores in Europe, the USA and Japan. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 9)

Based on that experience, appropriate technology was elaborated and applied in construction, organization and work of "Department Stores Belgrade". (Andjelic,

² During the 40 years of existence and work of "Department Stores Belgrade", its status was often changed: at first it was an enterprise, then a work organization, again the enterprise, and after 1997, it received the status of a company. As pointed out by the author, in the period 1969 – 1998, the enterprise worked on several jobs, and employed nearly 10,000 workers. They cooperated with around 2,000 different companies whose goods they sold in its facilities at the best prices and terms of sale. Анђелић, Лука (2003). Успон и пад гиганта : Робне куће "Београд". Belgrade: Мрљеш.

2003, p: 9)The company also became a member of IASCDS (International Association of Socialist Countries' Department Stores), so it was able to develop cooperation in the field of economy, commerce, organization and construction of commercial buildings. In addition to innovations in the retail sale of goods, DSB introduced a set of practical measures related to general issues and position of trade in the economic system of the country. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 18)

During the period 1971 – 1980, "Department Stores Belgrade" carried out two five-year plans when 14 new department stores were built and the existing 7 reconstructed. Along with the increase in capacity, turnover was also increased, which influenced the increase of supply and expansion of goods and services assortment. During this period, "Department Stores Belgrade" defined its business policy, especially established for the area of each republic and autonomous province. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 17)

In a twenty-year long period, i.e. since the establishment of an integrated trading company "Department Stores Belgrade" to 1985, the number of department stores rose from 9 to 40 newly built and reconstructed. Thanks to the results achieved in the business, "Department Stores Belgrade" received numerous recognitions and awards for its business success and was elected the holder of economic development, because in the period 1966 - 1985, its development reached international proportions. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 19)

Many production organizations in the field of textile, wood and metal industry of Serbia placed almost their entire annual production through DSB. In the period 1981 – 1983, the difficulties that occurred in the economy did not miss DSB. Investment activity was reduced, and for those three years, only three new department stores were built. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 17)

From its establishment and up to 1992, the company was changing the look of its department stores. The changes were based on the adoption of new organizational solutions both in business and architecture, and under the influence of modern technologies for equipment and exhibition of goods. Chronology of the development of this trading company showed constant upward trend. General characteristics of trading activities were the following: the concentration of goods and dispersion were the most efficiently implemented through universal department stores, and that was actually the trading giant of DSB. Collection of a wide range of consumer goods produced in different areas of SFR Yugoslavia was enabled. (Andjelic, 2003, p: 20)

Immediate contact with goods was a great advantage that modernly organized trade offered to consumers. The principle of self-choice and self-service proved to be a powerful initiator of sale because it allowed each consumer to evaluate utility value of displayed goods without hurry, and to make a decision about the purchase without a seller.

4. The idea and spatial concept of the "Department Store Belgrade" in Zemun (DSB XII)

Henri Lefebvre in "The Urban Revolution" and David Harvey in "Paris, Capital of Modernity" talk about the development of a shopping city in the example of Paris in the 19th century as transformation of the city caused by industrialization and formation of a consumer society - a new urban society. They also talk about the spatial and functional transformation and typological structure change of urban space.

Department store was introduced as a marker of capitalist society present in the life of the metropolis (city) and the working middle class. Department store, as the model of capitalist economic system, was based on the exchange of goods for profit. The newly created model of modernized trade was characterized through the principles of turnover speed, constant circulation of goods, customers and profits, trade and quick restoration of capital in the form of goods. (Andjelic (Анђелић), 2003, p: 20)

Department stores appeared as an independent structure in central parts of the cities and represented the dominant point of the trade center which was built in main squares or crossroads with well-defined microuban and commercial structure. The complexity of its functional and representational needs also complicated its architectural conception. Department store, as a defined economic model, took the role of the busiest urban city point and became the centralized attraction of trade market.

Observing the establishment period of the first post-war department stores in the self-governing socialism and their urban context, they had a well-thought political and economic strategy in the development of modernist trading companies as central points of a trade network in larger developed cities in socialist Serbia.

Need for the construction of a new universal "Department Store Belgrade" in Zemun occurred due to high population and underdevelopment of the trade network. Assembly of the Municipality of Zemun planned the construction of a department store in the social development plan of its territory for the period 1961 – 1965. Construction of the trading object with mixed goods fitted the perspective development plans of Zemun Municipality and the city of Belgrade, because its construction solved the basic concept for development and promotion of the trade network. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 3)

One of the goals of the perspective development program, which was represented by the Assembly of the Municipality of Zemun, was the construction of retail capacities and it planned more economic architectural solutions where the predicted capacities were in accordance with the actual needs. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 3)

On May 18, 1964, "Department Stores Belgrade" concluded a contract (No. 9000) with the Municipality of Zemun on construction of the universal department store at the corner of Marshal Tito Street (today the main street) and Dubrovacka Street.

From the geographical point of view, Zemun was an inner-city area which had the complete settlement on its entire territory. The populated city area of Zemun

developed in the vicinity of Belgrade, "which built its own special character and acquired specific characteristics of a small town". (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 6)

Based on the justification analysis for building a universal department store and in administrative and economic sense, Zemun was treated as a unique Belgrade area, and comparing to the other Belgrade municipalities in the sixties, it was more developed in all aspects of social and economic life. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 7)

Zemun market showed the tendency of rapid development, although it was located near Belgrade market which made an influence in terms of attracting a large number of consumers. However, Belgrade area did not affect much the development of the retail trade network in Zemun, because besides its population, it also supplied a large number of transitory customers from New Belgrade and the neighbouring villages of the near and far area of Srem.³ (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 7)

The trade network of that time was characterized by other shortcomings, such as small retail space and inconvenience in placing the stores that were mostly located in buildings with no purpose and undeveloped technology. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, pp: 8/9)

Presented picture of the trade network state in the Municipality of Zemun proved to insufficiently meet the needs of consumers, and it did not even provide the minimum conditions for introduction of modern work organization in the presentation and sale of goods.⁴ (Andjelic (Анђелић), 2003, p: 17) Since the statistical data from 1965 predicted expansive development of this municipality, the trade network of that time was the main economic anomaly of Zemun. (Andjelic (Анђелић), 2003, p: 17)

Based on the above reasons, the Municipality of Zemun initiated the construction of a universal department store located in the central part of the city, thus stressing the

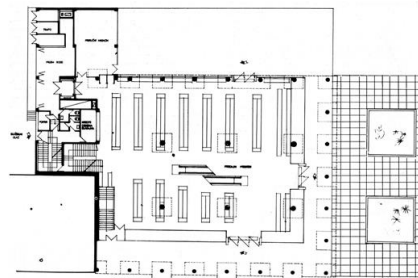
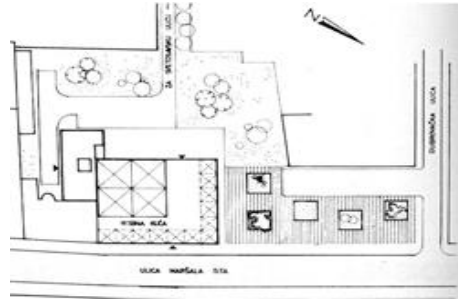
³ A very important factor in the survival of the Zemun commercial market was the number of consumers, and according to the National Statistics Office, in the early sixties, Municipality of Zemun had about 124,000 residents and at that time was the largest of all other Belgrade municipalities. In Zemun, in 1965, the number of employees in the public sector reached the figure of 34,000. A large percentage of employees in Zemun industry lived in other municipalities of Belgrade, and a large number of people who lived in the municipality of Zemun had a place of employment outside their place of residence. The apparent frequency of the population, especially in the morning and afternoon hours, influenced the trade market to a large extent.

Gross domestic product of the total economy of social sector in 1965, according to the National Statistics Office, was made in the amount of RSD124,3 billion, representing an increase of 15.1%, compared to the previous year. The total GDP of the industry went over 75%, and compared to the absolute value, it clearly showed a very strong economic activity of the municipality of Zemun. As a result, the purchasing power became strong, which could be seen from the average net salary per employee. In Zemun, on September 30, 1964, the average net salary per employee was RSD36,617, while it amounted to RSD39,989 in Belgrade and all its municipalities, i.e. something was below average. In 1965, Zemun market, i.e. its trade, did not have sufficient selling capacity, and for this reason it was prevented to perform its role in the process of social reproduction. Archive of the trading company "Department Stores Belgrade", Investicioni program za izgradnju Robne kuće "Beograd" in: Robnakuća „Beograd“ u Zemunu 1968 - 1992 (RKB XII), Belgrade, p.7

necessity for building modern forms of retail. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 17)

5. Department store "Belgrade" in Zemun: architectural context

In the old Austro-Hungarian part of the city of Belgrade, the modern trading house – "Department Stores Belgrade" was built by the architect Dusan Milenkovic in 1968. Architect Milenkovic designed a brutalist, moderately-modernist architectural building that defied its neighborhood in spatial solution and thus, with its visual strength, lured potential customers - fascinated victims of "bureaucratic society dictated by consumption". (Lefebvre), 1973, p: 17)



[pic.4] ground floor

FIG 1 – The Department store "Belgrade" in Zemun 1962 – 1968, architect Dusan Milenkovic. Source: <http://www.beobuild.rs/forum/viewtopic.php?f=13&t=790>; site plan Source: Miloš Besaraba. „Robna kuća u Zemunu“, *Arhitektura Urbanizam* (Beograd) br. 53-54 (1969), p. 62; The DSB in Zemun back side of the building; ground floor, Source: Miloš Besaraba. „Robna kuća u Zemunu“, *Arhitektura Urbanizam* (Beograd) No. 53/54 (1969), p. 62

Under the influence of purchase technology and customer needs, "Department Stores Belgrade", as a universal contemporary form of retail space, affected the creation of architecture. Subordinated to the complex functional organization and imposed location, its massive rectangular-basis space had an area of 5686.42 m². It represented a complex commercial building that was functionally connected as a single unit, and consisted of a basement, ground, first and second floor and the roof

terrace planned to become a restaurant location.⁵ (Archive “Department store Belgrade”, 1968/1992, p: 9)

Due to economic limitations, skeletal structural system was applied whose mushroom-shaped columns, placed under a heavy panel, released the ceiling for the combination of installation channels and at the same time, formed a single-unit sales space and undivided ceiling. (Fig.1)

Simplified decorative simulation of the outer part of the building was in the parterre pillars narrowing at the bottom and as such, they were in direct contact with asphalt, thus forming a colonnade along the whole object that held the upper floor and which was covered by a monumental facade of flat and solid surfaces. (Besaraba, 1969, p: 63) In the upper end of the facade, there was a continuous straight line that wrapped the roof terrace.

Strictness of the facade rhythmically breaks along the main street which tends to follow its continuity, i.e. follows the line of the Zemun city silhouette. Concrete facades cover the above ground flat levels, which rely on the colonnade as a prominent elevation of the department store facade which is in the level line of the entire street. (Besaraba, 1969, p: 63) Thus, the ground glass part remained drawn in comparing to the flat surface of the whole street, while the background facade followed its continuity with its surface. Proportional analysis of glass surface combined with the raw concrete in rough wall paneling conveyed the message of time and place of its origin. (Besaraba, 1969, p: 63)

Narrow horizontal glass bar appeared on the same facade, as well as a small glass *bite* that had a purpose to break the continuity of concrete, sealed, monumental flat surface of a side facade. According to that, the two neighboring street facades were representing the layer of the same volume object space - new retail space, and the street facade was represented as a glass panel and its sides as monumental concrete walls. (Besaraba, 1969, p: 63)

In spatial and functional terms, the drawn in ground floor of the building had three entrances positioned on all three sides of the department store building. The entrances were set up in a way that when a consumer entered the store, he or she had a clear view of unique open space, where escalators were set in the middle, leading directly to the upper floors of retail space and supermarket in the basement

⁵ Spatial arrangement with the areas:

- retail space	3.293 m ²
- warehouse area	873 m ²
- communication (lifts, windscreens and stairs)	359 m ²
- manipulative corridors - passages	134.35 m ²
- offices	116 m ²
- canteen for the needs of department store	579.07 m ²
- total	5.686,42 m ²

Archive of the trading company “Department Stores Belgrade”, Investicioni program za izgradnju Robne kuće “Beograd” in: Robnakuća „Beograd“ u Zemunu 1968 - 1992 (RKB XII), Belgrade.

area. Entrances to the department store were planned from Marshal Tito Street and the square. Sufficient width of entrance-exit allowed a large flow of customers. Vertical communication was solved by escalators and stairs in the best way, in order to allow the shortest link from the main entrance along with a good overview of retail space during climb and descent, and the most rational use of the given space. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 10)

Each floor could directly enter the zone where the office of the department manager was, and their spatial position was such that they could also lead to the administrative area. For that reason, the administrative and organizational units were created with the vertical plan pressed against the retail space (fig. 2).

As it was highlighted in the Investment Program, Zemun Department Store of primary importance had well-placed horizontal and vertical communications. This department store had maximum principle that communication enabled easier and more efficient movement of consumers, as well as a good overview of the goods, respecting the principles of economy. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 10)

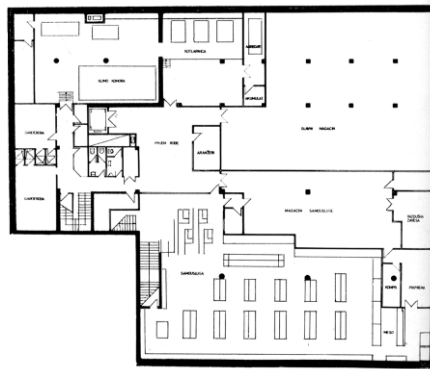


FIG 2 – Basement with space of supermarket. Source: Miloš Besaraba. „Robna kuća u Zemunu“, *Arhitektura Urbanizam* (Beograd) No. 53/54 (1969), p. 62

The movement of goods was carried out in a way that goods arrived through the yard of the department store, was unloaded at the front door, and then transferred to the elevator which descended it directly into the recipient department. Unpacking and inspection of goods was done in the reception area and then carried to certain warehouses. The receiving elevator which carried goods to the warehouse was used for sending goods to the basement and at the same time, it was used for the needs of the restaurant. Goods that were further sent to the sales department were transferred by the elevators, located next to the receiving elevator entrance. In that way goods circulated in one direction so that the one entering the warehouse could not meet and mix with the goods coming out of the warehouse. Based on this information, the conditions for a good organization of goods handling were asked, so the movement of goods to the retail space proceeded quickly and without difficulties. (Archive "Department store Belgrade", 1968/1992, p: 11)

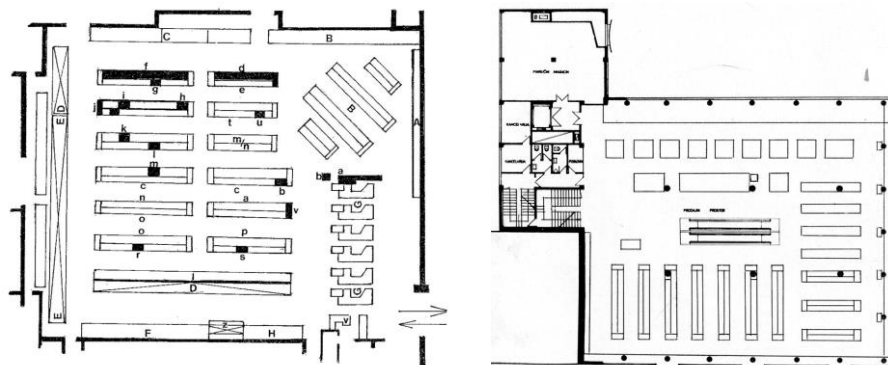


FIG 3 – Floor of supermarket – American Model, Source: V. Vukas. „Strategija izlaganja u američkom supermarketu“ *Supermarket* (Zagreb), No 3/4 (1985), p.17; First floor of the DSD in Zemun (Belgrade), Source: Miloš Besaraba. „Robna kuća u Zemunu“, *Arhitektura Urbanizam* (Beograd) No. 53/54 (1969), p. 62

In the basement of the building, in 1969, the supermarket was opened in the place of the previous warehouse, as it had been planned in the original project. The planned supermarket was conceived as an American model of contemporary forms of self-service places for selling food products. (Fig.3)

Versatility in the department store was seen in the area where the restaurant for the needs of the staff was positioned and it comprised of a canteen with kitchen, but it was also used as a meeting hall and social club for the department store's employees. Social nutrition was organized in all the department stores and each employee could use meals. Canteens were designed and organized in a modern way of that time and were not falling behind the most modern restaurants of that type. (Анђелић, 2003, p: 25)

Although the project planned the restaurant to be located on the last floor of the building within the roof terrace, at the request of the “Department Stores Belgrade” (Department of Organization and Economy), it was converted into an exhibition space for furniture sale, while the planned space for the restaurant kitchen was restructured into a cafeteria.

In order to completely determine the architectural practice in the self-governing socialism, it was necessary to create a research system with a range of comparative analysis of the architectural patterns of all major department store chains in socialist Yugoslavia. Therefore, the occurrence of Yugoslav architectural expression and the presence of the high Yugoslav modernism (moderate modernism) from the early 1960s should be identified and clarified. It was carefully attempted to determine what socialist aspect was really there in the retail practice of socialism by observing the examples of department store chains, or any other form of modern retail store.

The whole concept of department store was systematically neutral compared to the examples from western countries and members of the commercial management in the the socialist zone tended to believe in that idea.

Business practice of the modern department store opened the possibility to reduce socialism's social and cultural goals. The source of this risk was based on the capitalist principles of sale and generally concepts of the functioning of retail space, which eventually happened, and it was permeated with the Yugoslav specific culture of everyday life. Architecture of the trade medium of modernized department stores was potentially between the adopted western values and popular socialist culture.

6. Conclusion

According to the previously mentioned information, it is clear that modern retail stores in the Socialist Republic of Serbia developed rapidly, applying the Western European model of business as "modern," "progressive" and "rational" trade. They were given such a treatment, and to be more precise, this happened because the responsible socialist creators essentially advocated for the system to be a neutral commercial technique. (Patterson, 2012, p: 116)

Permeating of mass culture in Yugoslavia which had already become a side effect of the liberal socialist consumer society in the early sixties, was manifested through dominant architectural moderate modernism. Department store, as a post-war common phenomenon and architectural space, was on the margin of the permeation of mass culture and the art of moderate modernism. Modest economic architectural product was both rational and functional or, in aesthetic terms, a brutalist *form that stemmed from the function*.

Primary role was given to the economic value of the architectural object that the Yugoslav aesthetics of retail space stemmed from.

Department stores, in its overall purpose, did not differ in the Yugoslav socialist society, but that did not mean that the architecture of the retail space in conceptual and typological sense did not represent a unique form of Yugoslav retail space examples. (Patterson, 2012, p: 133)

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