

**Mirrors of the City:  
Department Stores, Urban Space and the  
Politics of Retail in Socialist Yugoslavia  
(1950s – 1960s)**

By

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## Abstract

In this thesis, I examine the development of the leading Yugoslav department store chain “Na-Ma” in Zagreb in order to show the significant way that department stores as modern retail spaces both reflected and contributed to the economic, social and urban development in Socialist Yugoslavia in this period. By drawing on a wide range of sources, from minutes of meetings of various city councils, economic development plans, as well as opinions of retail experts published in the “Na-Ma” chain's official newspaper, I argue that through the introduction of the self-service system, department stores served as principal vehicles for improving retail, supply, production, as well as personal consumption as the main economic and social tasks of the Yugoslav state from the late 1950s.

Furthermore, by analyzing architectural projects, as well as discussions of Yugoslav architects and urban planners published in various professional journals, I place these economic and social contributions in the urban context of Zagreb. In this way, I show the significant role that department stores had in improving the urban and social environment by increasing the living standard and creating new spaces for communal life in the rapidly growing city. Finally, I also analyze the transnational exchanges between Socialist Yugoslavia and “the West” in the realm of retail, as well as in architecture and urban planning in order to demonstrate the important transnational dimension in the development of Yugoslav department stores. Therefore, by focusing on the department store as both a modern retail space and an urban institution under state-socialism, I connect and develop the history of retail, urban planning and transnational exchange in Socialist Yugoslavia in the early Cold War period.

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## Introduction

On February 15, 1968, thousands of people entered the newly opened department store “Na-Ma” (“*Narodni magazin*” [People's Department Store]) on Kvaternik Square in the western side of Zagreb.<sup>1</sup> The numerous visitors, including many important political figures such as the mayor Josip Kolar, approached the large, 9-story building covered in white Istrian stone and entered through the extensive glass storefronts. From the ground floor, they either took the escalator to the basement to visit the supermarket or have coffee and cake in the cafeteria. Or they went to the two floors upstairs, to examine the various domestic and imported consumer goods, have their clothes fixed in the repair shop, discuss holidays in the tourist office or enjoy a more substantial meal in the restaurant. After cutting the ceremonial ribbon, Franjo Balen – the director of Zagreb's largest department store chain – greeted the visitors and proclaimed that the chain of modern retail spaces around the city is now finally completed.<sup>2</sup>

The department store on Kvaternik Square was the largest, as well as the last retail space that the department store chain “Na-Ma” opened in Zagreb in the 1960s, a decade that was marked by the emergence of first Yugoslav department stores, as well as a more intense expansion of the retail network. The described scene of the store's opening certainly evokes the image of the “good life” and affluence of the consumer culture that was emerging in Socialist Yugoslavia from the late 1950s.<sup>3</sup> However, the story behind the store's realization,

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<sup>1</sup> In scholarly literature in English, “Narodni magazin” 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”, I have decided to apply the same rule here. Moreover, since the department store chain officially changed its name to “Na-Ma” in 1965, I also mainly refer to this shortened version.

<sup>2</sup> \*\*\* “Zadovoljstvo potrošača” [“Satisfaction of Consumers”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], January-February 1968, 2.

<sup>3</sup> These expressions are commonly used in literature on Yugoslav consumer culture. For example, see Patrick Hyder. Patterson, *Bought and Sold: Living and Losing the Good Life in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), and 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*]



similar to other examples from the decade, speaks of a long and challenging process of planning, financing and constructing the city's department stores, that often remains unexplored when these institutions are analyzed primarily as spaces of consumption.

Alternatively, I suggest that by approaching department stores as retail spaces reveals different aspects of their composite role in contributing to the economic, social and urban development under state-socialism. Behind the decorated storefronts and the carefully displayed consumer goods, department stores were powered by a network of professionals working on a number goals – to modernize retail, improve personal consumption, affect productivity, supply the citizens, advance the working conditions, lessen the burden of household work, beautify the urban environment, and form international contacts. The way that these actors, features and processes were brought together by the institution of the department store is illustratively described in an interview with Slavko Mrđa – the “Na-Ma” chain's head of personnel – who stated that “‘Na-Ma’ is like a big house with a high turnover – like a big factory – that has a complex organization and a large number of employees.”<sup>4</sup> By comparing the department store to one of state-socialism's symbolic locations, this statement points to the complex role of department stores in connecting the shifting economic, political and social circumstances under the umbrella of Yugoslav state-socialism.

In this thesis, therefore, I explore the interaction of the space of the department store with the space of state-socialism through the multiple aspects present in planning, constructing, developing and giving meaning to department stores in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s. By focusing on department stores planned and built in Zagreb – a growing administrative and commercial center, whose “Na-Ma” chain emerged as one of the state's

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in the 1950s and the 1960s] (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005) and *Pronađeno blagostanje. Svakodnevni život i potrošačka kultura u Hrvatskoj 1970-ih i 1980-ih* [Affluence Found: Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in Croatia in the 1970s and the 1980s] (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> \*\*\* “Uspjeh ovisi o stručnosti” [“Success Depends on Expertise”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], January 1965, 2.

leading retail enterprises – I analyze how department stores both mirrored and constituted the various economic, social and urban changes in Socialist Yugoslavia in the early Cold War period. I assess the influence of department stores in relation to their role in the advancement of retail, production and consumption, planning the physical and social dimension of the city, as well as in transfers of knowledge and technology from “the West.” Although seemingly separate, in this thesis I argue that these different spheres overlapped and transformed in relation to the department store as a space of their intersection.

In order to examine these interactions, the thesis is conceptually structured as a “walk” through and around the space of the department store. After the theoretical and methodological discussions, in chapter 2 I focus on the processes that take place within the space of the store – the modernization of retail, technology and spatial design through the introduction of the self-service system, its impact on production and consumption, and finally its broader social role in the Yugoslav self-management system. Taken together, I argue that these factors demonstrate the way that the department store as the primary location for modern retail in varying degrees affected different aspects of economic and social development in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s.

In chapter 3, I move to the exterior space of the store in order to analyze how the realized and unrealized projects of department stores affected both the urban and social environment in Zagreb in the 1960s. I show how the simultaneous increase yet constant lack in the number of department stores affected the urban space and the living standard. After engaging with the issue of the uneven expansion of the retail network, I zoom in on three different case studies of department stores in order to illustrate their role in physically and symbolically creating central zones in existing and new neighborhoods. Similar to retail experts in chapter 2, I argue that Yugoslav architects and urban planners – as the main

protagonists of urban and social engineering under state-socialism – emphasized the role of department stores as vehicles of communal and social life in the Yugoslav city space.

Finally, in chapter 4 I analyze how the department store functioned as a space of transnational transfers of expert knowledge and technology from the United States and Western Europe in the case of both domestic business practices, as well as architecture and urban planning. By analyzing the material, together with the symbolic dimension of these transfers – that refers to the Yugoslav reflection of concepts taken from the capitalist space of “the West” – I illustrate the dynamics of professional networks within and across the borders of Socialist Yugoslavia. More importantly, I argue that department stores in Socialist Yugoslavia emerged and developed primarily thanks to the implementation of Western know-how and technology, but were nevertheless critically conceptualized as state-socialist institutions whose main goal – in the words of “Na-Ma”'s director Franjo Balen – was not to “achieve material success, but to primarily meet the needs of the community.”<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, this thesis shows that in the context of the self-management system and the increasing liberalization of the Yugoslav economic and political framework, the role of department stores as vehicles of economic and social development – through the improvement of retail, urban space, living standard and practices of everyday life – was continually conceptualized as having a broader societal significance. In turn, the analysis of department stores as modern retail spaces – and a less common point of reference in studies on state-socialism – connects and adds to the history of retail, urban planning and transnational transfers under state-socialism by revealing in more detail the complex interconnection of the various economic, social and urban changes in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s, the transnational dimension of these processes, as well as their overall role in the formation of Yugoslav state-socialism in the early Cold War period.

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<sup>5</sup> \*\*\* “Neposredni zadaci” [“Immediate Tasks”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], March 1966, 1.

## 1. Under One Roof: Intersections of the Economic, Social and Urban in the Space of the Department Store

The study of department stores as primary locations for the improvement of retail, personal consumption, as well as the urban and social environment under state-socialism is inevitably linked to analyzing space as a specific topic of historical inquiry. Under the influence of French theoreticians such as Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau, from the 1960s and the 1970s space was no longer understood merely as a passive material entity, but as an active force in the production of meanings, identities and practices.<sup>6</sup> These theoretical developments allowed both new ways of understanding space in history, as well as new ways of understanding the past through space. The Lefebvrian notion of the social production of space was particularly significant for showing the influence of space in maintaining and transforming political, economic and social conditions and agendas.<sup>7</sup> The connection that this theory formed between the material and symbolic dimensions of space, social formations, practices and identities are crucial for shedding light on the active role of the space of the department store in different historical processes.

As Heinz-Gerhard Haupt points out, the majority of recent research analyzes department stores as spaces of consumption mainly from a cultural-historical perspective that highlights their role in cultural processes, practices and identity formations.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, by understanding department stores primarily as retail spaces, in this thesis I shift the focus to their configuration between multiple political, economic and social spheres. Analyzing department stores in this way helps understand how the economic conditions are printed onto

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<sup>6</sup> Barney Warf and Santa Arias, "Introduction: The Reinsertion of Space into Social Sciences and Humanities," in *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Barney Warf and Santa Arias (New York: Routledge, 2009), 3-4.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph Kingston, "Mind Over Matter: History and the Spatial Turn," *Cultural and Social History: The Journal of the Social History Society* 7 (2010), 114.

<sup>8</sup> Heniz-Gerhard Haupt, "Small Shops and Department Stores," in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Consumption*, ed. Frank Trentmann (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 185.

the urban and social environment, as well as how the spatial dimension is present in economic and social development. In addition, within the state-socialist framework, this complex role also has an added dimension of existing in a system that is seemingly hostile to the department store's capitalist implications. The department store is in this case marked both by the specificities of state-socialism, as well as by the characteristics of a specific state-socialist system. Furthermore, it is also defined by the relationship of the state-socialist space of “the East” to the capitalist space of “the West”, as the place of origin of the department store's material and symbolic values.

In order to grasp how the department store incorporates these different aspects “under one roof”, this thesis is historiographically and theoretically framed by literature and concepts that primarily address the political, economic and social aspects of department stores, as well as related topics of retail, consumption, architecture, urban planning and transnational relations under state-socialism.<sup>9</sup> I engage with the existing body of literature on three main topics – retail and consumption, urban space and transnational transfers – in order to examine how the thesis both negotiates and departs from these works. In this way, I show that the analysis of department stores as important retail spaces in the state-socialist context links together the history of retail, urban planning and transnational relations in Socialist Yugoslavia in the early Cold War period.

### **1.1 The Politics of Retail and Consumption**

The vast body of historical literature on department stores in Western Europe and the United States is accompanied by a significantly smaller number of works on retail spaces in state-socialist Eastern Europe. This academic scarcity was caused primarily by Cold War

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<sup>9</sup> For more analysis on the important feature of department stores in offering everything “under one roof”, see section 2.2 in chapter 2.

historiographical tendencies and thematic interests that ignored or negatively assessed topics such as retail, trade and consumption under state-socialism.<sup>10</sup> The situation changed, however, in the 1990s, when the new availability of archival sources, as well as strong theoretical influences of the so-called cultural and linguistic turns, resulted in what Sheila Fitzpatrick terms the “new cultural history” in Soviet historiography.<sup>11</sup> The newborn interest in topics related to culture and everyday life in the Soviet Union and, subsequently, the Eastern Bloc, influenced the emergence of scholarship on consumption under state-socialism. From the early 2000s, this growing body of literature aims to release the study of consumer phenomena from the confining notions of “scarcity”, “shortages” and “queues” that it was previously held in.

By showing the differences in manifestations, practices and spaces of consumption between various state-socialist countries, these studies commonly demonstrate the complex position of consumption within state-socialist societies. As Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger point out, the concept of consumption was connected not only to a wide range of goods and services, but also to broader social identities, categories and practices. Moreover, it was both promoted and problematized by the state, as well as negotiated and appropriated by socialist citizens.<sup>12</sup> In this regard, the department store as a crucial setting for consumption and other related practices under state-socialism was inextricably connected to wider political, social and cultural formations, thereby playing an important role in the process of “building state-socialism.”

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<sup>10</sup> For more information, see Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger, “Introduction,” in *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, ed. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4-5, and Paul Betts, “The Politics of Plenty: Consumerism in Communist Societies,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, ed. Stephen A. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 424-425.

<sup>11</sup> Sheila Fitzpatrick, “Introduction,” in *Stalinism: New Directions*, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), 9.

<sup>12</sup> Bren and Neuburger, “Introduction,” 6.

This broad function of department stores is demonstrated by Majorie L. Hilton in her study on the State Department Store (GUM) in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. Hilton argues that the department store was the central institution that the state used to promote mass retail. In order to contribute to socialist economic plans, the capitalist connotations of the department store, however, had to be actively transformed through emphasis on rationality, efficiency and order as more fitting Soviet ideals.<sup>13</sup> In a similar way, I show the significance of department stores in economic development in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s, as well as expand the analysis by including an important social and urban dimension. I argue, however, that in the Yugoslav case self-service department stores were seen as value-neutral intuitions, whose characteristics were already in line with the agendas of the Yugoslav state because consumption, individuality and personal ownership were interpreted as broader social rights, and thereby important elements of Yugoslav state-socialism.

This relationship between the state, economic system and consumption – named by Matthew Hilton and Martin Daunton as “the politics of consumption” – encompasses both the influence of the state in shaping the economic system and the marketplace in accordance with certain political agendas, as well as the agency of consumers in politicizing consumption practices.<sup>14</sup> In the case of centralized economies of state-socialist countries, the practices of consumption were even more closely related to the state's ability to produce, import and supply consumer goods, as well as organize commerce and retail.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, the analysis of department stores in this thesis is influenced by the notion of the political and ideological dimension present in economic planning, retail, trade and consumption under state-socialism. However, instead of focusing primarily on consumption as the dominant element in this

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<sup>13</sup> Majorie L. Hilton, “Retailing the Revolution: The State Department Store (GUM) and Soviet Society in the 1920s,” *Journal of Social History* 4 (2004), 940-941.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew Hilton and Martin Daunton, “Material Politics: An Introduction,” in *The Politics of Consumption: Material Culture and Citizenship in Europe and America*, ed. Martin Daunton and Matthew Hilton (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 8-9.

<sup>15</sup> Bren and Neuburger, “Introduction,” 6.

complex system, I position retail – or what Haupt terms “the politics of retailing” – as the main topic of inquiry in analyzing the diverse influence of department stores in economic, social and urban transformations.<sup>16</sup>

Due to the decentralized and more liberal economic situation in Socialist Yugoslavia, the role of department stores in these processes is determined by federative, city and municipal decision-makers, as well as by retail experts in department store chains, such as “Na-Ma”. Their interactions are examined by closely looking at the minutes of meetings from various councils in city and municipal assemblies, as well as the published “Social plans” (*društveni plan*), that offer insight into the official discussions and final decisions regarding retail and other economic and social measures undertaken in Zagreb in the 1960s.<sup>17</sup> Additionally, opinions of retail experts who managed the “Na-Ma” chain – and also took part in these councils and assemblies – are analyzed based on the interviews and articles published in the “Na-Ma” chain's official newspaper, a monthly that the enterprise issued primarily for its employees from 1961 until 1997. The analysis of these sources helps understand department stores as complex economic and social institutions shaped by multiple and often conflicting factors, that determine their role in reflecting state agendas and serving as important elements of state-formation.

## 1.2 Materialization of the State in the Urban Environment

Alongside the described scholarship on consumption, department stores also emerge in architectural and urban histories that primarily deal with visual elements and technological

<sup>16</sup> Haupt, “Small Shops and Department Stores,” 181.

<sup>17</sup> The People's Committee of the City of Zagreb existed from 1949 until 1963, when it was transformed into the City Assembly of Zagreb after the new Constitution. In addition, every municipality also had its own Committee, and later on an Assembly. The “Social Plan for Economic Development” (*Društveni plan privrednog razvoja*) was the title for Socialist Yugoslavia's official socio-economic plans.



innovativeness of department store architecture.<sup>18</sup> More significant for this thesis, however, are historical studies on space, architecture and urban planning that – influenced by the previously discussed spatial turn – emphasize the role of space in constructing social and cultural processes, meanings and identities. In the context of space under state-socialism, David Crowley and Susan E. Reid's study is significant for its emphasis on the way that architecture, urban planning and public spaces in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe were inextricably linked to the state apparatus. This situation referred not only to monumental buildings and public spaces, but also to spaces of everyday life – such as those devoted to consumption or leisure – that equally became terrains of ideological inscription.<sup>19</sup>

The political and ideological mobilization of these urban environments – a concept that defines buildings and urban space as both material reflections and constitutions of social values and relations in the city – was carried out by architects and urban planners, who were seen by the state – as well as by themselves – as important factors of social change.<sup>20</sup> Their role was to design the urban environment in a way that would incite transformations of social relations and everyday life in accordance with the ideological postulates of state-socialism.<sup>21</sup> Due to its material and public character, the urban environment in this way functioned as an explicit and powerful element of reflection and formation in the process of state-building. However, as Virág Molnár rightfully argues, the materialization of the socialist state should not be seen as a unified, coherent or even repressive process, but as a “fluid and variable” political and ideological construction of the urban environment.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> For example, see Anca I. Lasc, Patricia Lara-Betancourt, Margaret Maile Petty (ed.), *Architectures of Display: Department Stores and Modern Retail* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), and Louisa Iarocci, *The Urban Department Store in America, 1850-1930* (London and New York: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>19</sup> David Crowley and Susan E. Reid, “Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc,” in *Socialist Spaces: Sites of Everyday Life in the Eastern Bloc*, ed. David Crowley and Susan E. Reid (Oxford: Berg, 2002), 4-5.

<sup>20</sup> Elizabeth Keating, “Discourse, Space, and Place,” in *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, ed. Deborah Tannen, Heidi E. Hamilton, and Deborah Schiffrin (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 247.

<sup>21</sup> Virág Molnár, *Building the State: Architecture, Politics, and State Formation in Post-war Central Europe* (London: Routledge, 2013), 3.

<sup>22</sup> Molnár, *Building the State*, 10-12.

By applying similar ideas in the Yugoslav context, Brigitte Le Normand analyzes the urban planning of New Belgrade in order to demonstrate the adoption and transformation of late modernist urban planning and its emphasis on the spatial creation of social equality and stability as important features of Yugoslav state-socialism.<sup>23</sup> More importantly, however, Le Normand also shows how Socialist Yugoslavia's shift towards consumption in the late 1950s affected the concepts of urban planning by moving the focus from egalitarianism and rationality to individualism and abundance.<sup>24</sup> These transformations, as Maroje Mrduljaš and Vladimir Kulić argue, were primarily related to the architecture of everyday life because most of the realized projects included apartment buildings, urban infrastructure and retail spaces, mainly department stores that were described as symbolic sites of Yugoslav consumer culture.<sup>25</sup>

Following the lead of Le Normand, Mrduljaš and Kulić, I expand their arguments by changing the focal point from urban planning and housing to the construction and urban placement of department stores as retail spaces. In order to assess their effects on the transformations of urban environment in Zagreb in the 1960s, I carefully analyzed architectural projects of realized and unrealized department stores, as well as articles published in leading Yugoslav scholarly journals and professional magazines – *Arhitektura* [Architecture], *Čovjek i prostor* [Man and Space] and *Arhitektura-urbanizam* [Architecture-Urbanism] – that provide commentary on the architectural projects of department stores, as well as their function in the city space and the community in Zagreb in the 1960s.<sup>26</sup> Since my

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<sup>23</sup> Brigitte Le Normand, *Designing Tito's Capital: Urban Planning, Modernism, and Socialism* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), xxi.

<sup>24</sup> Le Normand, *Designing Tito's Capital*, 102.

<sup>25</sup> Maroje Mrduljaš and Vladimir Kulić, *Modernism In-between: The Mediatory Architectures of Socialist Yugoslavia* (Berlin: Jovis, 2012), 167, 174.

<sup>26</sup> The professional and scholarly journal *Arhitektura* was published every 2 (and after 1960s every 6 months) by the Yugoslav Association of Architects from 1947 until 1996, and then by the Croatian Association of Architects from 1996 until 2008. The same Associations also published the monthly magazine *Čovjek i prostor* from 1954 until today. *Arhitektura-urbanizam* was the official magazine of the Serbian Association of Architects, Urban Planners and Designers, published from 1960 until 1988.

analysis is based on written accounts and not visual representations or built architectural projects, the spatial dimension in this case is perceived as a “discursive terrain” consisting of the architects and urban planners' expert discourse on the way they imagined the role of department stores in the urban and social environment.<sup>27</sup> By comparing their ideas to the discourse of retail professionals, this approach helps more clearly understand department stores as spaces that intersect architectural and urban, as well as economic and social plans, together with the practices of everyday life that shape – and are shaped by – the agendas of the socialist state.

### 1.3 Transnational and Transsystemic Formation

Finally, the configuration of department stores in relation to economic, social and urban planning is also seen as a result of various processes that occurred in dialogue between Socialist Yugoslavia and “the West”, primarily the United States and Western Europe. The analysis of department stores in this thesis, therefore, is framed by a transnational perspective, understood as an investigation of movements of people, goods and knowledge across the borders of nation-states.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, in the context of the geopolitical and ideological mapping of Europe in the early Cold War period, these transfers happened not only in relation to state borders, but also with regards to “the Iron Curtain”, that made them, as György Péteri argues, transsystemic.<sup>29</sup> As a result, transnational processes included both a literal, as well as a symbolic dimension of translating concepts between the different ideological systems.

The concept of translation represents an important feature in the studies on consumption under state-socialism. Entangled in the processes of transfer, comparison and

<sup>27</sup> Keating, “Discourse, Space, and Place,” 245.

<sup>28</sup> Constantin Iordachi and Péter Apor, “Introduction – Studying Communist Dictatorships: From Comparative to Transnational History,” *East Central Europe* 40 (2013), 18-19, 22.

<sup>29</sup> György Péteri, “Nylon Curtain – Transnational and Transsystemic Tendencies in the Cultural Life of State-Socialist Russia and East-Central Europe,” *Slavonica* 2 (2004): 113-123.

competition, the material and symbolic relationship to “the West” determined the conceptualizations and manifestations of Eastern products, services and spaces. In the context of Socialist Yugoslavia, “the East” and “the West” dichotomy was further complicated by Yugoslavia's placement outside, but still in contact with the Eastern and Western spheres of influence. For this reason, the scholarship on consumption in Socialist Yugoslavia, such as Patrick Hyder Patterson's study on advertising and Igor Duda's analysis of tourism and housing in the 1950s and the 1960s, emphasizes the hybrid or in-between character of Yugoslav consumer culture. In a similar way, Radina Vučetić writes about the Americanization and Westernization of Yugoslav popular and consumer culture, as well as everyday life in the 1960s as a process that merged Yugoslav state-socialism with capitalist tendencies.<sup>30</sup>

This hybrid character, according to Patterson, enabled the Western-influenced Yugoslav consumer culture to act independently from the restraining socialist economic relationships and ideological values.<sup>31</sup> In the case of department stores, Patterson more closely analyzes the process of Westernization on examples from several Eastern European countries, including Socialist Yugoslavia, that show how retail experts imported Western business practices and tried to adapt them, at least theoretically, to state-socialism.<sup>32</sup> Patterson argues, however, that the Westernized and, more importantly, capitalist spaces of department stores could not be cleaned of their original implications and ultimately only reinforced the unattainable consumer paradise that had a destructive effect on the state-socialist system.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Radina Vučetić, *Koka-kola socijalizam: Amerikanizacije jugoslovenske popularne kulture šezdesetih godina XX. veka* [Coca-Cola Socialism: The Americanization of Yugoslav Popular Culture in the 1960s] (Beograd: Službeni glasnik, 2012), 31.

<sup>31</sup> Patterson, *Bought and Sold*, 12-13.

<sup>32</sup> Patrick Hyder Patterson, “Risky Business: What Was Really Being Sold in the Department Store of Socialist Eastern Europe,” in: *Communism Unwrapped: Consumption in Cold War Eastern Europe*, ed. Paulina Bren and Mary Neuburger (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 117.

<sup>33</sup> Patterson, “Risky Business,” 135.

Conversely, by analyzing reflections on participations in international business trips and conferences, as well as reports on Western European department stores published in “Na-Ma” chain's newspaper, together with similar accounts from architectural and urban planning magazines, I argue that the Yugoslav state-socialist framework did not, in fact, ideologically restrain consumption as much as consumption actually became an integral feature of Yugoslav state-socialism. In addition, I demonstrate that different experts saw department stores as value-neutral Western models that could be interpreted in accordance with the state-socialist framework as institutions contributing to the society instead of to the individual interest. In a symbolic way, therefore, these experts perceived department stores as being in line with Yugoslav state-socialism, while in a material sense they adapted them to the actual economic and social conditions in the Yugoslav state rather than to an abstract notion of state-socialism.

The analysis of these various transnational impacts, therefore, shows that Yugoslav department stores emerged from both national specificities and transnational transfers, that cannot be reduced to the oversimplifying concept of the Americanized or Westernized character of Yugoslav state-socialism.<sup>34</sup> In this way, understanding the transnational dimension in economic, social and urban formation of Yugoslav state-socialism helps more accurately place Socialist Yugoslavia in the geopolitical and ideological context of the early Cold War period.

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<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, as Maria Todorova shows, the concept on the “in-betweenness” is not new to Socialist Yugoslavia, but was already present in discourse on the Balkan Peninsula from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 16-20.

## 2. Inside the Store: Department Stores and the Advancement of Retail, Production and Consumption in the Self-Management System

In the first Five-year Plan issued by Socialist Yugoslavia in January 1947, “Narodni magazin” (“Na-Ma”) was described as the country's most respectable retail enterprise, whose mission was to lead the modernization of state retail with big department stores.<sup>35</sup> In the harsh conditions of the immediate postwar period, with most of the factories destroyed and the population still largely rural, such a goal seemed far from reachable.<sup>36</sup> Yet even in this first, Soviet-modeled plan that focused primarily on heavy industrialization, department stores were unequivocally given an important role in the future development of retail and economy. Their significance was even further emphasized in the stream of political and economic changes that Socialist Yugoslavia went through in the 1950s and the 1960s following the Tito-Stalin split and the abandonment of the Soviet model in 1948.

In order to show what made department stores such an important element in the advancement of retail, as well as in the state's general economic development, in this chapter I analyze investment plans and expert discourse of professionals who worked in the “Na-Ma” chain. In this way, I illustrate how the experts and planners envisioned the role of department stores in the modernization of retail, consumption, as well as production in the Yugoslav economic system. Moreover, I also analyze how the retail experts used the connection between this economic impact and related social practices in the self-management system in order to characterize department stores as influential elements in resolving broader societal challenges in Yugoslav state-socialism.

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<sup>35</sup> AJ-163 Ministarstvo trgovine i snabdevanja vlade FNRJ, 49. Državna trgovačka preduzeća, trgovačke radnje i zadruge [AJ-163 Ministry of Trade and Supply FPRY, 49. State Retail Enterprises, Retail Stores and Cooperatives].

<sup>36</sup> For more information on the postwar conditions in Socialist Yugoslavia and the characteristics of the first Five-year Plan (1947-1951), see Bruce McFarlane, *Yugoslavia: Politics, Economics, and Society* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1988), 104-107.

I begin the chapter by outlining the shifting political and economic context in Socialist Yugoslavia in the late 1950s and the 1960s, with particular emphasis on the creation of the self-management system and the liberalization of the market in the Yugoslav state-socialist economy. I argue that the conflicting relationship between the Yugoslav state, its different levels of governing bodies, as well as economic liberalization at the same time both improved and confined the development of department stores, as well as the degree of their impact on the Yugoslav economy and society.

Afterwards, I use the example of the “Na-Ma” chain in order to analyze this development through the introduction of the self-service system as the most important model of modern retail from the late 1950s. In this chapter, as well as throughout the thesis, the “Na-Ma” chain is taken as an exemplary case study because it emerged as the city's leader in expanding and modernizing the retail network with new department stores.<sup>37</sup> For this reason, although “Na-Ma” was not the only department store chain in Zagreb, the fact that by the mid-1960s it became the largest retail enterprise in the Socialist Republic of Croatia, and one of the largest in Socialist Yugoslavia in general, meant that its activities were largely synonymous with the general development of department stores in this period.<sup>38</sup>

The most important feature in this process of development was the self-service system because of its significant impact on retail and economy, as well as practices of everyday life, particularly in the context of new housing communities as important self-management units in Socialist Yugoslavia. Together with the Yugoslav state's new political program from the late 1950s, that officially recognized consumption and individual ownership as important rights of Yugoslav citizens, these transformations turned the department store not only into

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<sup>37</sup> Although it was founded immediately after the war, the rise of the “Na-Ma” chain began in 1952, when it was transformed into an independent retail enterprise. Ante Gavranović, ed. *NAMA – 25 godina* [NAMA – 25 Years] (Zagreb: Na-Ma and Vjesnik, 1971), chapter 1, unpaginated.

<sup>38</sup> \*\*\* “List 'Rad' o poslovanju 'Na-Me', najveće robne kuće u zemlji” [Newspaper “Rad' on 'Na-Ma', the Largest Department Store in the Country”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], July 1964, 4.

the main location of modern retail and consumption, but also into a significant institution for the economic and social development within the framework of Yugoslav self-management.

## **2.1 Managing Yugoslavia's Way: The Self-Management System and Economic Reforms in Socialist Yugoslavia, 1950s-1960s**

The abandonment of the Soviet model following the complex series of events known as the Tito-Stalin split, that led to Socialist Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Cominform in 1948, instigated a series of political and economic transformations within the Yugoslav state-socialist system. Although initially troubling, the exit from the Soviet sphere of influence allowed Socialist Yugoslavia to develop a new formula for state-socialism, on whose success the legitimacy of the state ultimately depended. The subsequent series of reforms in the 1950s and 1960s were defined by a tight, but at times contradictory relationship between economic and political trajectories, that formed the shaky basis of the development and legitimization of Yugoslav state-socialism. These shifting and unstable foundations, as I demonstrate, defined – and were defined by – the emergence and function of department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s.

The backbone of Yugoslavia's state-socialist model, as well as the primary framework of its economic and political activities in the postwar period was the system of self-management. Succinctly defined as a “system in which productive property is managed by non-state bodies, collectives or 'groups of associated labor’”, self-management initiated the trickling down of state functions from a single organism to a network of – ideally – self-associated and self-directed individuals in multiple levels of governing bodies, as well as enterprises and other institutions.<sup>39</sup> In addition, after the constitutional reforms in 1953, the Commune (*općina*) – a social-economic community of people living in a certain area –

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<sup>39</sup> McFarlane, *Yugoslavia*, 148.



became another principal organization in the Yugoslav self-management system.<sup>40</sup> The interaction between these different levels of self-governing bodies, that at times both overlapped and conflicted, defined the implementation of various agendas in the economic and social development plans, including the modernization of retail and construction of retail spaces. For this reason, the self-management system significantly determined the development of department stores, as well as the scope of their influence on the economic, social and urban conditions in Zagreb in the 1960s.

In turn, by introducing the self-service model as the main method for modernizing retail and consumption as both economic activities, as well as practices of everyday life, the department store also contributed to the development of the self-management system on a societal level by improving the self-governing potential of housing communities (*stambena zajednica*) as smaller units in the Commune.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, in contrast to John B. Allcock's argument that the self-management system was primarily a political phenomenon with certain economic relevance, I argue that department stores demonstrate both the large economic, political, as well as social significance of the self-management system in defining Yugoslav state-socialism from the 1960s.<sup>42</sup>

In a strictly economic sense, the introduction of the self-management system was intertwined with the shift in Socialist Yugoslavia's planning system from the centralized, command economy to the decentralized, indicative approach to economic planning, that was most clearly expressed in the second Five-year plan adopted in 1957.<sup>43</sup> This gradual move to light industry, the production of consumer goods and, eventually, a market-oriented, but state-

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<sup>40</sup> John B. Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia* (London: C. Hurst, 2000), 77.

<sup>41</sup> The neighborhood (*stambeno naselje*) as an urban unit should not be confused with the housing community (*stambena zajednica*) as a socio-economic unit assigned to govern the neighborhood in the self-management system. After the new Constitution in 1963, the housing community was transformed into the local community (*mjesna zajednica*).

<sup>42</sup> Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 68.

<sup>43</sup> Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 75.

socialist economic system was facilitated by a considerable amount of financial support from the United States, an increase in domestic production, as well as in Western imports after the Soviet embargo.<sup>44</sup> The result was both a substantial economic growth, paralleled with improvements in the living standard and level of personal consumption, as well as an explicit re-orientation of the Yugoslav state in prioritizing these factors as foundations for further economic and social development.

The official affirmation of these tendencies was *The Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia* (*Program Saveza komunista Jugoslavije*), published after the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress held in Ljubljana in April 1958. In the chapter on Socialist Yugoslavia's socio-economic system, the program stated that “[t]he League of the Communists of Yugoslavia believes that the right of the individual ownership by citizens of various objects of consumption and use, on which a more varied and more comfortable life of citizens depends, is also an essential personal right and incentive to creative personal initiative.”<sup>45</sup> Moreover, since it stemmed from work and not from exploitation, individual ownership was a social right instead of a special privilege. Therefore, despite its seemingly alienating character, individual ownership actually represented a process of returning “the individual to society.”<sup>46</sup> This process was particularly important in the overall agenda of Yugoslav state-socialism, that aimed to satisfy “as much as possible human needs, activities, tastes, desires” as a part of its concern both with individual human happiness, as well as the general social progress.<sup>47</sup>

In this way, the mutually defining relationship between personal consumption and the living standard as the right of every Yugoslav citizen was interpreted through a socialist lens that reformulated these individualistic activities as collective processes integral to the

<sup>44</sup> John R. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History. Twice There Was a Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 265.

<sup>45</sup> The League of Communists of Yugoslavia, *Yugoslavia's Way: The Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia* (New York: All Nations Press, 1958), 132. From now on, I use the abbreviated form the LCY.

<sup>46</sup> The LCY, *Yugoslavia's Way*, 133.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

Yugoslav state-socialist society. In turn, such an interpretation of personal consumption and individual ownership also influenced the official discourse on the corresponding practices and spaces of supply, retail and trade. Therefore, although these service and activities were supposed to cater to the personal satisfaction of individual consumers, they were still envisioned as a contribution to the general economic and social progress of the Yugoslav state.

Satisfying the individual needs and activities of every Yugoslav citizen, however, meant that the Yugoslav state, despite the decentralization and liberalization of the market, was actually required to have substantial control over the economic system in order to synchronize market forces with this overarching state agenda. Therefore, although the economic reform from 1965 emphasized the releasing of Yugoslav economy from administrative measures and leaving it to the “more free operation of objective economic laws”, the Yugoslav state nevertheless often intervened in order to fix the reoccurring economic instabilities.<sup>48</sup> In this way, as Allcock also concluded, despite its apparent market character, the Yugoslav economic system was actually marked by an interventionist character common for other Eastern European state-socialist countries.<sup>49</sup> The fact that the state was fragmented in the decentralized system of self-management only made the trajectories that determined the economic situation more complex and eventually difficult to control.

For Allcock, the contradiction between the liberalized economic system and the intervening tendencies of the Yugoslav state was essentially a clash between modernization and the anti-modernist forces of the self-management system.<sup>50</sup> Seen in its basic form as an opposition to modernization, Allcock argues that the anti-modernist character of self-

<sup>48</sup> HR-DAZG-945 Skupština općine Remetinec, 10. Zapisnici zajedničkih sjednica Općinskog vijeća i Vijeća radne zajednice [HR-DAZG-945 The Assembly of the Remetinec Municipality, 10. Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council and the Council of the Working Community].

<sup>49</sup> Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 87.

<sup>50</sup> Allcock, *Explaining Yugoslavia*, 69.

management manifested in the politicization of economy as a method of resolving economic difficulties with political decisions, that ultimately constrained the otherwise modernizing activities of industrialization and economic liberalization.<sup>51</sup> Putting aside the fact that all economic activities are to a certain degree politicized, I use the example of department stores to suggest that the self-management system enabled to a greater degree the development of Yugoslav state-socialism by allowing experts in various enterprises – defined as “professionally qualified individuals” – an opportunity to shape and negotiate different political and economic decisions.<sup>52</sup> By advocating the use of modern know-how and technology, the experts both in the realms of retail, as well as architecture and urbanism, greatly contributed to the development of retail services and spaces.<sup>53</sup> These improvements in retail and urban space, however, were important not only for economic reasons, but for explicitly affecting the living standard and everyday life of Yugoslav citizens in the 1960s.

The development of department stores, therefore, demonstrates the contradictory character of the self-management system, whose decentralized features, on the one side, gave more leverage to experts in stimulating economic and social progress, while, on the other side, caused the irregular pace of this process in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s. These characteristics, nevertheless, illustrate the significant way that the role of department stores as both retail enterprises and urban institutions was envisioned to greatly transform retail,

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid. In other words, Allcock does not actually provide a more complex reflection of the anti-modernist concept. For more information on the possible definitions and implications of anti-modernism, see Sorin Antohi and Balázs Trencsényi, “Introduction: Approaching Anti-modernism,” in *Discourses of Collective Identity in Central and Southeast Europe 1770–1945, Vol. IV.: Anti-modernism: Radical revisions of Collective Identity*, ed. Diana Mishkova, Marius Turda and Balázs Trencsényi (New York: Central European University Press, 2014), 1-44.

<sup>52</sup> Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen, and Stefan Wiederkehr, “Expert Cultures in East Central Europe – The Industrialization of Knowledge and the Transformation of Nation States Since World War 1 – Introduction,” in *Expert Cultures in East Central Europe – The Industrialization of Knowledge and the Transformation of Nation States Since World War 1*, ed. Martin Kohlrausch, Katrin Steffen, and Stefan Wiederkehr (Osnabrück: Fibre Verlag, 2010), 10.

<sup>53</sup> A similar conclusion was previously made by John Lampe, who argues that professionals in urban institutions and enterprises significantly contributed to the economic and social advancement of Socialist Yugoslavia, as well as to its integration in global processes. Lampe, *Yugoslavia as History*, 291-292.

consumption and practices of everyday life in Zagreb in the 1960s in line with the idea of Yugoslav state-socialism.

## **2.2 Self-Service and Self-Management? Department Stores and Modern Retail in the 1960s**

Since their appearance in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, department stores were central places for innovations in retail and technology that aimed to provide the growing number of consumers an efficient way of buying a wide range of consumer goods. In comparison to traditional smaller shops, that catered to the neighborhood clientele and nurtured a familial working atmosphere, department stores represented a more progressive, scientific and modern form of retail.<sup>54</sup> Interestingly, a similar set of adjectives was highlighted by Patrick Hyder Patterson as being characteristic to the way that retail experts perceived department stores in Eastern European state-socialist countries in the postwar period.<sup>55</sup> This similarity points to the continuity of the role that department stores had as innovative retail spaces in different historical periods and political systems.

What made department stores such important institutions for Yugoslav state-socialism was the fact that retail experts saw these characteristics as important for stimulating several spheres of economic and social development in the 1960s. By focusing on the modernization of retail through the introduction of the self-service system, I demonstrate in the following sections the material importance of department stores in improving retail, production and consumption, as well as the living standard and family life in housing communities. Furthermore, by illustrating the way that the self-service model corresponded to certain ideas

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<sup>54</sup> Haupt, "Small Shops and Department Stores," 270-271.

<sup>55</sup> Patterson, "Risky Business," 116.

in the self-management system, I argue that department stores also had a broader societal role in specifically contributing to Yugoslav state-socialism.

### 2.2.1 Bridge Between Producers and Consumers: The Challenging Position of Modern Retail in the Yugoslav Economic System

Theoretically, the conditions in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s and the 1960s, particularly in Zagreb as a growing capital, were perfectly suitable for the emergence of department stores. In contrast to their general decline in Western Europe and the United States already from the interwar period, an underdeveloped retail network with a traditional retailing system meant that Socialist Yugoslavia had plenty of room for introducing modern retail spaces.<sup>56</sup> The rapid increase of the urban population and the city space, coupled with the increase in the production and import of consumer goods, even further necessitated a fast and effective way to expand the retail network.<sup>57</sup> Department stores with an integrated supermarket – both based on the self-service model – proved to be the perfect solution for several reasons.

One of the main advantages of the department store-cum-supermarket combination – the dominant type of large retail space in Zagreb from the 1960s – was its ability to offer various types of food and other consumer goods in a single space.<sup>58</sup> This feature was so important that the expression “everything under one roof” became a reoccurring image in the discussions on Yugoslav department stores, and eventually entered into the official definition

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<sup>56</sup> Haupt, “Small Shops and Department Stores,” 272.

<sup>57</sup> “The Proposal for a Prospective Development Plan” from 1957 in more detail describes the state of retail in the immediate postwar period, that was characterized by uncoordinated retailing systems, fragmented retail enterprises, an uneducated workforce, an inadequate retail network, outdated technology and a general lack of organization. HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 37.5 Opći odjel, 360. Prijedlog perspektivnog plana razvitka – 1. razrada, Zagreb, srpanj 1957. [HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of the City of Zagreb, 37.5 General Department, 360. The Proposal for the Prospective Development Plan – 1<sup>st</sup> Elaboration, Zagreb, July 1957].

<sup>58</sup> As Haupt points out, the inclusion of supermarkets into department stores merely means that one part of the department store's sales area is specialized for food and similar products. For this reason, although all the analyzed department stores in this thesis technically also included a supermarket – with both spaces based on the self-service model – I will only refer to them as department stores. Haupt, “Small Shops and Department Stores,” 275.

– proposed by the Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores in 1964 – that required department stores to have 12 000 m<sup>2</sup> of retail space under one roof.<sup>59</sup> In the situation where the population and its needs were rapidly outgrowing the number of retail spaces in the city, this aspect of department stores meant that a single retail space was enough to satisfy the various needs of consumers in a particular neighborhood. In addition, the process of building one store was also much more economical and realistically achievable for the retail enterprise, as well as for the city authorities.<sup>60</sup>

This economical character, however, was not taken at face value. As it was pointed out in an article from the “Na-Ma” chain's official newspaper, the fact that department stores saved time and money for the producers, retailers and the consumers – in other words, for multiple actors in the state-socialist supply chain – gave their economizing effect a much more meaningful societal significance.<sup>61</sup> This description points to the way that retail experts used the Yugoslav state's interpretation of seemingly individualized actions and processes as being beneficial for the whole society in order to both legitimize and further strengthen the importance of department stores from the late 1950s.

The full potential of department stores, however, could only be reached by replacing the traditional, prewar retail system with the self-service model. Invented in 1917 in a small grocery shop in the United States, the self-service system became the prevalent form of modern retail in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Unlike the traditional styles of selling, that required a

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<sup>59</sup> AJ-694 Poslovna zajednica robnih kuća Jugoslavije, Organi i tela poslovne i radne zajednice, Q-3 Zapisnici i materijali sa sednica Upravnog odbora [AJ-694 The Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores, Organs and Bodies of the Business and Working Community, Q-3 Meeting Minutes and Materials of the Board of Directors].

<sup>60</sup> The Trade Council's minutes of meeting from March 1958 nicely sum up this calculation, by saying 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, 37.3 Sjednice izvršnih vijeća, 3.8-31 Zapisi sjednica za robni promet [HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of the City of Zagreb, 37.3 Sessions of the Executive Councils, 3.8-31. Minutes of Meeting of the Trade Council].

<sup>61</sup> Drago Dilj, “Prodaja u svijetlu nabave” [“Selling in the Light of Purchasing”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], June 1964, 7.

salesperson to serve every customer, self-service shifted the activity of consumption almost entirely to the consumers. The benefits of such a system were the reduction in the workforce and, accordingly, the costs for the retailing enterprise, as well as savings in time and money for the consumers.<sup>62</sup> Retail experts in Eastern European countries, as Patterson shows, also listed economic efficiency, productivity gains and labor and time-savings as the main traits of the self-service model.<sup>63</sup> This similarity once more demonstrates that the transfer of the self-service model between different geographical, temporal and systemic frameworks did not necessarily alter the way it was perceived by retail experts. What made the self-service department store specific in the Yugoslav state-socialist system, however, was the emphasis that retail experts placed on its wider importance for different processes in the society.

This broader impact of self-service department stores partially referred to their obvious economic benefits. Listed in the official materials published by the Yugoslav Federal Chamber of Commerce relatively late in 1968, these advantages included an increase in circular capital funds and the rational use of technical equipment, as well as the decrease in bottlenecks and commodity surplus.<sup>64</sup> Expectedly, for the federal body officially in charge of retail and trade, the primary focus was placed on the effects of self-service in improving the economic potential of retail, and thereby its position in the economic development of the Yugoslav state.

This economic potential, as the investment plan for the first Yugoslav department store in Zagreb from 1958 illustrates, lied in the stimulation of Yugoslav industry. Not only did the plan for the future department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka contain a detailed list of all the

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<sup>62</sup> Tracey Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise: Gender, Politics, and American Grocery Stores in the Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 53. For more information on the invention of self-service, see Susan Strasser, *Satisfaction Guaranteed: The Making of the American Mass Market* (New York: Pantheon, 1989), 203-251.

<sup>63</sup> Patrick Hyder Patterson, “Making Markets Marxist? The East European Grocery Store from Rationing to Rationality to Rationalizations,” in *Food Chains: From Farmyard to Shopping Cart*, ed. Warren Belasco and Roger Horowitz (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 201.

<sup>64</sup> \*\*\* “Samoposluživanje 1” [“Self-service 1”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], June-July 1968, 16.



food products and consumer goods that could potentially be sold in the store, but it also connected these groups of products to the Yugoslav factories and enterprises that produced them.<sup>65</sup> In this way, the plan concretely demonstrated the function of the department store in gathering all the fruits of Yugoslav labor in one place and bringing them to consumers. At the same time, by importing and selling the consumer goods that the Yugoslav agriculture and industry were still not making, the department store was envisioned to affect production plans by illustrating the popularity of certain products that were still missing in domestic production.

Despite these detailed descriptions and calculations, however, the relationship between retail and production in Yugoslav state-socialism nevertheless remained a topic of contention throughout the 1960s. Retail experts continued to emphasize that retail is a bridge between producers and consumers in order to stimulate as well as legitimize the constantly insufficient development of Yugoslav retail.<sup>66</sup> In addition, by focusing primarily on the needs of consumers, retail experts also explicitly criticized the Yugoslav state's prevalent prioritization of the industrial sector. The director of the “Na-Ma” chain Franjo Balen was particularly critical that most investments went to industrial enterprises even though retail directly brought the consumers in the touch with the produced goods. Moreover, instead of simply selling what the industry was producing, Balen also believed that retail should have a stronger influence on production plans in order to actually adapt them to the wishes of the consumers.<sup>67</sup> Therefore, although retail experts insisted that retail connected the industry and

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<sup>65</sup> HR-DAZG-1122 Zbirka građevne dokumentacije, 2594/3061. Trešnjevački trg – NAMA robna kuća [HR-DAZG-1122 Building Documentation, 2594/3061. Trešnjevka Square – NAMA Department Store].

<sup>66</sup> M. Markuš, “Da li možmo (uvijek) biti sortirani?” [“Can We (Always) Be Sorted?”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], February 1965, 5.

<sup>67</sup> Franjo Balen, “Unaprjeđenje komercijalnog poslovanja” [“Improving Commercial Business”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], May 1964, 3.

the consumers, they also stressed that this connection was not a one-way street, but a sphere of dialogue between different sectors in the Yugoslav economic system.

Unlike other state-socialist countries that primarily saw retail only as a handmaiden to industry, the decentralized Yugoslav state was actually unable to make a stronger connection between the industry and the retail sector.<sup>68</sup> This inability included both synchronizing the needs of retail with production, as well as making more substantial links between agricultural, industrial and retail enterprises. During a discussion on this problematic situation at the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress of the LCY in March 1969, Smilja Harambašić – a representative from the “Na-Ma” chain – stated that retail was still being treated as a necessary evil instead of a natural continuation of production. But, as Harambašić emphasized, it was exactly this inherent relationship that made retail important not only for the economy, but for the society as a whole.<sup>69</sup>

Harambašić's comment once again points to the way retail experts used the mutual dependence between economic and social development in the state-socialist system in order to give department stores a broader societal role, and in this way legitimize their development. The fact that retail experts were still demanding recognition a decade after they started to more intensely improve the retail sector, and almost five years after the Yugoslav state tried to liberalize the economy, demonstrates the confusion that existed in a system where economic development equally depended on market forces, as well as the state's initiative. For this reason, despite the initial suggestions in investment plans for department stores, the attempt to use modern retail in order to explicitly steer production plans largely remained unsuccessful, and indicated the problematic structure of the Yugoslav economic system.

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<sup>68</sup> Patterson, “Making Markets Marxist?,” 199.

<sup>69</sup> \*\*\* “Uloga i mjesto trgovine u privrednom sistemu” [“The Role and Position of Retail in the Economic System”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], February-March 1969, 3.

### 2.2.2 All About the Details: The Role of the Interior Space of the Store in Yugoslav “Cultured Trade”

On the other end of the supply chain, introduction of self-service into department stores left a far more significant mark on the stimulation of personal consumption. Most investment programs for individual stores, such as the first department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka, pointed out that the self-service system enables a more time-effective, hygienic, as well as pleasant experience of consumption, without being rushed or exploited by intrusive salespeople.<sup>70</sup> The benefits of self-service, therefore, included both the purely pragmatic advantages, as well as a means of creating consumption as an enjoyable experience.

In order to achieve these goals through the introduction of the self-service system, the existing methods of organizing and designing the interior space of the store required significant alterations in order to facilitate the consumption process that radically increased the agency of consumers. These alterations affected the placement and display of food and consumer goods, the furniture and equipment used for showcasing and storing the products, as well as the design of the interior space in general. Since at the beginning of the 1960s Yugoslav industry did not produce almost any of the technical equipment needed for the implementation of the self-service model, the first department stores, such as the “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka, were completely furnished with equipment imported from West Germany and Italy as Socialist Yugoslavia's most important trading partners in this period.<sup>71</sup>

By the end of the decade, however, the Yugoslav state started to produce most of the previously imported machinery and furniture, so that the last department store “Na-Ma” built in 1968 on the Kvaternik Square had almost all domestically produced furniture and technical

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<sup>70</sup> HR-DAZG-1122 Zbirka građevne dokumentacije, 2594/3061 Trešnjevački trg – NAMA robna kuća [HR-DAZG-1122 Building Documentation, 2594/3061 Trešnjevka Square – NAMA Department Store].

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

equipment.<sup>72</sup> This situation shows that to a certain degree, at least in the case of technical modernization, department stores had an effect on the domestic production of new technology and machinery necessary for self-service based retail. Furthermore, it also demonstrates the importance that technological transfers from Western Europe had for modernizing Yugoslav retail, that I analyze in more detail in chapter 4.

In addition to adequate furniture and technical equipment, the placement of goods and the organization of aisles in the store were equally important aspects of implementing the self-service system. Since self-service required consumers to almost single-handedly manage the consumption process, with only a minimal assistance of the staff, the consumer goods had to be easily accessible and logically placed according to similarities between the groups of products. In addition to these practical necessities, self-service was also a very visual way of shopping that required the interior space to aesthetically make the goods attractive in order to stimulate consumption. As Ivica Krobot – the assistant director of the “Na-Ma” chain – explained, “to apply the self-service systems means to turn the store into an exhibition space.”<sup>73</sup> Therefore, the creation of the interior space, particularly the sales area, was both a scientific and an artistic process of designing all the elements in such a way that would put the consumer goods in the spotlight. As Ante Antonić, the head of the flagship “Na-Ma” store in the city center put it, self-service was all about the details – the material of the floors, height of the shelves, placement and number of cash registers, decorations, shop windows, lighting, signs and prices – “[a]ll these details were composed into one unit called the modern department store.”<sup>74</sup> These descriptions show that designing the interior space of the store was

<sup>72</sup> \*\*\* “Zadovoljstvo potrošača” [“The Satisfaction of Consumers”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”], January-February 1968, 2.

<sup>73</sup> Ivica Krobot, “Robne kuće” [“Department Stores”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”], July 1965, 7.

<sup>74</sup> \*\*\* “Modernizacija je otvorila nove perspektive” [“Modernization Opened New Perspectives”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”], March 1965, 1.

not merely a matter of pragmatism in introducing the self-service model, but a need to create a full and elated experience of consumption.



**Figure 1.** The Interior of the Department Store “Na-Ma”, Trešnjevka, 1960.

In order for this strategy to work, however, the consumers had to become accustomed to the self-service system because until the late 1950s it was a completely unfamiliar model of retail in Socialist Yugoslavia. The interior space of the store once again had an important role in familiarizing consumers with the self-service system. This function is nicely illustrated by the investment plan for the department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka, that emphasizes how the space should be designed in such a way as to guide the consumers through the shopping process. In order to do this, the interior space should be completely open, with a centrally placed entrance that would allow the consumers to immediately have a clear view over the entire store. After taking the baskets in the front, the consumers would then enter the sales

area on the left and circulate until they would reach the cash registers on the right.<sup>75</sup> The spatial ordering of the interior, therefore, had an instructional purpose to define the movements of the consumers in an almost choreographed way, thereby unconsciously teaching them how to use the self-service system, as well as to ultimately reject traditional retail models.

All of these descriptions demonstrate that the goal of self-service department stores was both to increase personal consumption as an important economic task of the Yugoslav state, as well as to offer consumers an enjoyable experience of consumption, that was sometimes referred to as “cultured trade.”<sup>76</sup> The notion of “cultured trade” actually stems from the Soviet discourse on retailing in the 1930s, that referred to the creation of an enhanced shopping experience in decorated and large retail spaces, with educated salespeople and a range of consumer goods as the ideal model for Soviet retail.<sup>77</sup> The same goal was proposed by Yugoslav retail experts, in this way turning an essentially consumerist experience into a matter of general cultural and social development of Socialist Yugoslavia.

Reaching the ideal of “cultured trade”, therefore, became a sign of modernization and state-development, that made retail the “mirror of the whole city (...) the level of culture, economic development and behavior of a certain area.”<sup>78</sup> In this way, modern retail – represented by the self-service department store – not only contributed to the Yugoslav state's economic progress, but actually shaped, as well as reflected the overall social and cultural development of Socialist Yugoslavia.

<sup>75</sup> HR-DAZG-1122, 2594/3061. Trešnjevački trg – NAMA robna kuća [HR-DAZG-1122, 2594/3061. Trešnjevka Square – NAMA Department Store].

<sup>76</sup> HR-DAZG-1122, 1640. Tržni centar – Volovčica - Ivanićgradska [HR-DAZG-1122, 1640. Market Center – Volovčica - Ivanićgradska].

<sup>77</sup> Julie Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 198. For more information on the “Soviet cultured trade”, see Hessler, *A Social History of Soviet Trade*, 197-247, and Amy E. Randall, *The Soviet Dream World of Retail Trade and Consumption in the 1930s* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 17-43.

<sup>78</sup> \*\*\* “Zagrebački Velesajam i 'Na-Ma'” [“The Zagreb Fair and 'Na-Ma'”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], September 1965, 2.

### 2.2.3 Managed by the Citizens: Self-Service Department Stores and the Communalization of Household Work in Housing Communities

The self-service model was not only important for the creation of “cultured trade”, but its participatory character – that “draws the customer into the selling process” – was also more specifically suitable for the implementation of the self-management system and improvement of everyday life in housing communities in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s.<sup>79</sup> As I described in the beginning of the chapter, the Commune – and its smaller unit the housing community – represented important institutions in the Yugoslav self-management system. Defined as the “self-management of working people in the basic cells of society”, the Commune as an administrative territorial unit was supposed to in time become a political and social formation of people “manag[ing] the common affairs of society”<sup>80</sup> The self-management system, therefore, was not envisioned only as a matter of several political bodies or enterprises, but as a defining characteristic of the Yugoslav state-socialist society that embodied the Yugoslav version of the concept of “withering away of the state.”

In order for the Commune to go through this transformation, different economic and social aspects of everyday life had to be adapted in such a way as to enable the complete implementation of local self-governing. In the case of retail, the program of the LCY from 1958 explicitly stated that “[a] substantial part of the supply and service network for the population should gradually become services managed by various self-governing organs of citizens.”<sup>81</sup> This statement illustrates the way that the Yugoslav state envisioned the development of the retail network, including the self-service department store, as an important contribution to the implementation of the self-management system as the main feature of Yugoslav state-socialism. At the same time, the fact that the self-service model increased the

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<sup>79</sup> HR-DAZG-1122, 879. Robna kuća Na-Ma Dubrava [HR-DAZG-1122, 879. Department Store Na-Ma Dubrava].

<sup>80</sup> The LCY, *Yugoslavia's Way*, 168, 177.

<sup>81</sup> The LCY, *Yugoslavia's Way*, 177.

agency of consumers in the process of consumption demonstrated the way this modern retail system already perfectly suited the self-governing ideal of the Yugoslav society.

The function of the participatory character of self-service in the Yugoslav self-management system was most obviously evident in the role that the Yugoslav state gave to self-service department stores in the concept of “communalization of household work.” One of the main self-governing processes in the housing community, the communalization of household work represented the process of distributing the activities of individual households onto the entire neighborhood as a part of the self-management agenda that required every individual to be responsible for the functioning of the whole community. In addition, the communalization of household work was also more specifically advocated by the Union of Women's Societies of Yugoslavia (*Savez ženskih društava Jugoslavije*) as one of the ways to deal with the issue of “the double burden”, that prevented women from more actively participating in social and political life.<sup>82</sup> In this way, the concept of communalization represented both a solution to a specific and gendered problem in the Yugoslav society, as well as a means of strengthening the self-management system in housing communities.

The way that the Yugoslav state imagined the self-management system to function in housing communities was best represented in a series of exhibitions titled “Family and Household.” Held at the Zagreb Fair in 1957, 1958 and 1960, the “Family and Household” exhibitions were organized by the Union of Women's Societies of Yugoslavia, together with other social and economic organizations, in order to provide practical solutions for organizing family life in new housing communities built for the rapidly growing urban population.<sup>83</sup> One of the main intention of the exhibitions, as the information leaflet for the 1958 exhibition

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<sup>82</sup> For more information on the activities of the Union and Yugoslav women's organizations in general, see Jelena Tešija, “The end of the AFZ - the end of meaningful women's activism?: rethinking the history of women's organizations in Croatia, 1953-1961” (master's thesis, CEU, 2014), and Chiara Bonfiglioli, “Women's Political and Social Activism in the Early Cold War Era: The Case of Yugoslavia,” *Aspasia* 8 (2014), 1-25.

<sup>83</sup> HR-DAZG-1172 Zagrebački velesajam, 2312. Propaganda uz prateći sadržaj – 1958 [HR-DAZG-1172 Zagreb Fair, 2312. Propaganda and Additional Materials – 1958].



stated, was to “resolve the issue of relieving the family through the communalization of household work.”<sup>84</sup> In this way, the guiding concept of organizing modern family life in housing communities was the communalization of household work as an important part of the self-management system.

The 1958 exhibition was particularly important because it also explicitly demonstrated the function of department stores in the process of communalization, as well as more generally in improving the economic and social life in the housing community. Through five smaller parts – “Housing Community”, “Services and Childcare Facilities in the Housing Community”, “Individual Household”, “Housing and Housing Construction” and “Retail and Industry” – the exhibition demonstrated that the communalization of household work could only be achieved if, in addition to apartment buildings, the housing community included a range of communal facilities such as department stores, supermarkets, restaurants, laundry services, cleaning and repair stations. Moreover, these facilities had to be based on the self-service model, whose efficient and participatory character was necessary in order to fully realize the task of transferring household work from an individual person or family to the entire self-governing community without any additional assistance or waste of time and money. This intention was most aptly demonstrated at the exhibition by displaying two life-sized and functional models of department stores that instructed the visitors on how to use modern retail spaces based on the self-service model.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Both of the department stores were later on incorporated into the city space. Belonging to the textile enterprise *Standard konfekcija* (*Standard Clothes*), the department store specialized for clothes was placed in the empty lot of the former synagogue in Praška Street in 1960, where it worked until it accidentally burned down in 1980. The department store with a supermarket that became the “Na-Ma” store in Trešnjevka is analyzed in more detail in chapter 3.



**Figure 2.** Department store at the exhibition “Family and Household”, 1958.  
Also the future department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka.

The “Family and Household” exhibitions, therefore, illustrated how the characteristics of the self-service model were going to be used in facilitating the communalization of household work as one of the main features of modern family life in housing communities in Socialist Yugoslavia. The fact that department stores introduced self-service, as well as in most cases also gathered all the additional services in a single building, further demonstrated their important role in improving retail and everyday life in housing communities in line with the self-management system. However, as I also show in chapter 3, because the same self-management system was characterized by an unsynchronized interaction between the various self-governing bodies, the realization of new neighborhoods with department stores and other facilities was an extremely difficult task to achieve. For this reason, the concept of the communalization of household work was never fully implemented in Yugoslav housing communities, while the self-service department stores never completely fulfilled their role in the Yugoslav self-management system.

In this chapter, I nevertheless demonstrated the significant influence of self-service department stores in several aspects of economic and social development in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s. Thanks to the engagement of retail experts in the “Na-Ma” chain

and the city councils, the introduction of the self-service system notably altered existing forms of retail and consumption, stimulated the production of new technical equipment and furniture, and developed the design of the interior space of the stores. Furthermore, although the self-service system was introduced into different types of retail spaces, the fact that department stores also included supermarkets made them a more appropriate location for the development of retail, as well as a more economical – and preferable way – to expand the retail network.

In addition to improving the work of retail enterprises, the development of retail through self-service department stores was not an end in itself, but a process that affected both Yugoslav industry and production, as well as personal consumption. Although less successful in the first case, in the second case self-service department stores managed to stimulate the increase of personal consumption by enhancing the shopping experience in both pragmatic and psychological ways. This was particularly important in the context of the late 1950s, when the Yugoslav state explicitly positioned seemingly individualistic phenomena such as personal consumption and individual ownership as collective processes integral to the Yugoslav society.

Alongside the envisioned role of self-service in fully implementing the self-management system in housing communities, this situation allowed the retail experts in the “Na-Ma” chain to emphasize their important contribution not only for the economic, but also for the social and cultural development of Yugoslav state-socialism. I argue that this interpretation points to the socialist character of self-service department stores, whose characteristics as retail spaces otherwise remained the same as outside of the state-socialist context. Furthermore, the particular connection of self-service department stores to the self-management system also shows that they were not only important institutions for the state-socialist context, but even more specifically for the Yugoslav state-socialist system.

### 3. Outside the Store: The Role of Department Stores in Transforming the Urban and Social Environment

The “Report on the State of Construction and Modernization of Business Spaces for Trade” – published in 1966 by the city's Economic Council – illustrates the extent of growth that Zagreb went through in the postwar period. The report shows that in comparison to the 125 591 people that lived in the 64.47 km<sup>2</sup> area of the city in 1936, exactly 30 years later Zagreb numbered 551 124 inhabitants in the area of 351.50 km<sup>2</sup>. The significant increase of population and urban space following the Second World War, however, was starkly contrasted by a significant decrease in the number of retail spaces – from 3654 stores in 1939 to 2676 stores in 1965.<sup>86</sup> This severe lack of satisfactory retail space, coupled with the ever growing needs of the city and its population, made the intense expansion of the retail network a priority for the city's retail and economic experts in the 1960s.

Led by the department store as the most representative and economical retail space, this process of expansion encompassed a number of complex issues that went beyond the questions of adequate supply and consumption. As I demonstrate in this chapter, the changes in the amount of retail spaces correlated to the transformations of the urban environment and living standard in different neighborhoods in the city. By focusing on this relationship between the retail network, urban space and everyday life, I analyze the role that department stores – the design of the buildings, as well as their placement in the city – had in developing the urban and social environment in Zagreb in the 1960s.

This development of department stores, as well as the retail network in general, was both powered and framed by the different actors and their varying agendas present in the processes of planning and construction within the self-management system. For this reason, I

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<sup>86</sup> HR-DAZG-948 Skupština Grada Zagreba, 1. Zapisnici sjednica Gradskog vijeća, 178. Zapisnici sjednica Privrednog vijeća [HR-DAZG-948 The City Assembly of Zagreb, 1. Minutes of Meeting of the City Council, 178. Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council].

first map the reports, plans and discussions of retail experts, as well as architects and urban planners on the emerging issue of expanding the retail network. The spatial concept of the network serves as a guide in analyzing the simultaneous emergence and lack of retail spaces throughout the decade as an influential factor in defining the urban and social environment. These discussions are then further concretized through the analysis of individual realized and unrealized projects of department stores that focuses on their physical and symbolic central position in the neighborhoods of the city.

By using the concepts of the network and the center, I argue that the representative role of department stores as vehicles of economic and social progress cannot be understood without taking into consideration the spatial and urban dimensions of their development. Both the appearance, as well as the lack of department stores were in different ways influencing – and influenced by – the material transformations of the urban environment in existing and new neighborhoods. At the same time, department stores also significantly affected the living standard and everyday life in the city in line with the vision of the Yugoslav state-socialism in the 1960s.

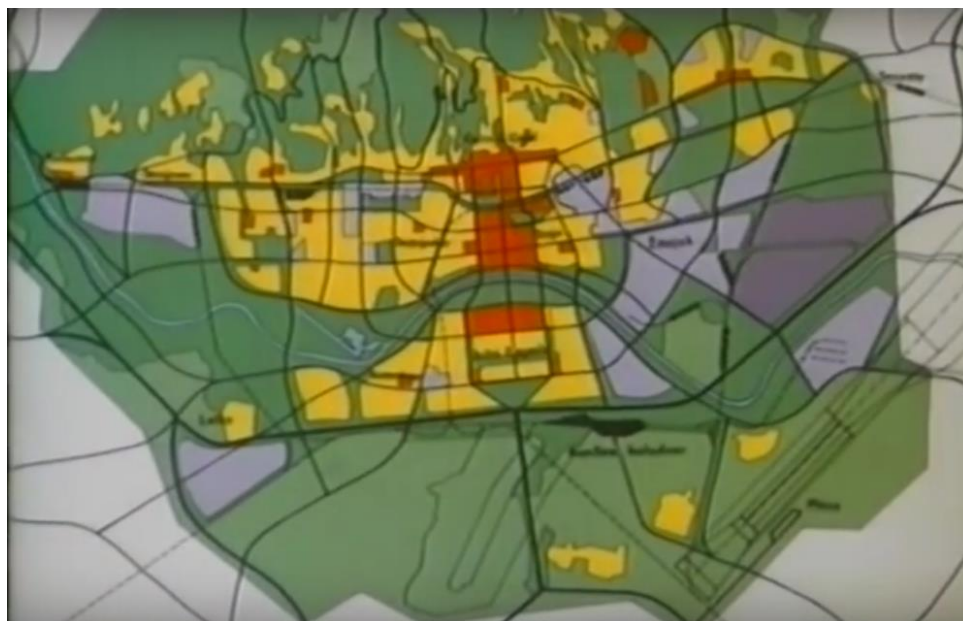
### **3.1 The Retail Network: The Problematic Dynamic of Retail Spaces**

From the beginning of the 1950s, Zagreb as the capital of the Socialist Republic of Croatia underwent a process of rapid economic, urban and social development, that primarily encompassed the industrial sector, such as textile and food industry, as well as the construction of roads, the transport system, and new neighborhoods for the growing urban population.<sup>87</sup> In contrast to these circumstances, the minutes of meetings, reports and

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<sup>87</sup> 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: 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup> Century], ed. Ivo Goldstein and Slavko Goldstein (Zagreb: Novi liber, 2013), 174-240.

development plans from supply, trade and economic councils in Zagreb show the slowly paced realization of the retail network from the late 1950s throughout the following decade.



**Figure 3.** Zagreb in the late 1960s.  
Red: the city center, yellow: housing areas, blue: industry.

For the experts in these councils, the expansion of the retail network was important for a number of economic reasons – adequate supply, improvement of retail and personal consumption, as well as stimulation of production and circulation of goods and services. The fact that the city suffered from an insufficient number of retail spaces meant that all of these processes, and thereby the overall economic development of the city, were made considerably more difficult. As one member of the city's Trade Council illustratively stated, “[t]here is enough of consumer goods, but we cannot put them [on the market].”<sup>88</sup> The reason for this inability was the fact that there was actually nowhere to put the goods. The problems of retail, trade and supply, therefore, were not primarily caused by a shortage of consumer goods, but

<sup>88</sup> HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 37.3 Sjednice izvršnih vijeća, 3.8-31 Zapisi sjednica za robni promet [HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of the City of Zagreb, 37.3 Sessions of the Executive Councils, 3.8-31. Minutes of Meeting of the Trade Council].

by the shortage of spaces where to store and sell them. This situation early on indicated the important role that space had in the development of retail and trade.

From the very beginning, the expansion of the retail network proved to be an extremely difficult issue to solve. On the one side, the existing shops in the city center from the prewar period were mostly too small and outdated to fit the needs of modern retail and supply. On the other side, however, municipal People's Committees and supply councils were nevertheless resisting the emergence of new retail spaces. Fearing that large department stores would destroy small, specialized stores, as well as the otherwise intact, predominantly 19<sup>th</sup> century urban environment, they halted the decision to replace the city's central market place with a new department store.<sup>89</sup> The fact that in the end it was never built, demonstrates to what extent the expansion of the retail network depended on the conditions of the existing urban environment.

In order to battle the lack of retail spaces, the “Perspective Plan for Trade and Hospitality” (1957) shows that the city's People's Committee nevertheless decided to expand the retail network by predominantly building large department stores that could offer a variety of goods in one place. Unlike the more specialized shops in the city center, however, the new department stores would be opened in the periphery of the city in order to single-handedly “absorb all the needs of the consumers.”<sup>90</sup> These early plans, therefore, illustrate that the growth of the city stimulated a corresponding increase in the number of retail spaces, as well as affected both the position and the assortment of individual stores. At the same time, however, the city's rapid spatial and demographic expansion also made the lack of retail spaces a more concerning problem.

The cause of the city's continuing inability to realize an adequate number of retail spaces lied in the combination of the decentralized character of the self-management system

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

with the increasing liberalization of the Yugoslav economy. Unlike the spaces that were related to the communal living standard, such as schools or infirmaries, the planning and realization of more market-oriented 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 sources – the retail enterprises, the housing community, the city's Department for Business Facilities, as well as other Councils.<sup>91</sup> 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 expansion of the retail network.

After the economic reform in 1965, this situation was made even worse by the sudden shift of responsibility to retail enterprises that were unable to single-handedly finance the projects for new stores. Since the circular capital funds of retail enterprises such as the “Na-Ma” chain were too small to finance a more significant number of new stores, they largely depended on loans from the state that by the end of the decade became significantly more restricted.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, although the retail experts recognized the severity of the problem, they were unable to completely solve it because the expansion of the retail network depended on a variety of factors in the Yugoslav self-management system that were caught between the state's initiative and the troubling economic system.

Therefore, despite the “dynamic, forced and synchronized” construction of new retail spaces, their development ultimately always lagged behind the growing needs of the city and its population. For this reason, the debates surrounding the planning of the retail network, as

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> \*\*\* “Daljnji razvitak – ali kako?” [“Further Development – But How?”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”*], September 1966, 1-2.



well as the slow pace of the realization process remained the same throughout the 1960s.<sup>93</sup> In the eyes of the retail experts, the rapidly growing city was a lacuna of tertiary services that needed to be filled with an expanding retail network, while the inability to do so significantly constrained the city's economic and social progress. The fact that the economic projections for the first half of the 1970s still emphasized the adaptation, modernization and expansion of the retail network as priorities in the city's economic agenda shows that this problem largely remained unresolved.<sup>94</sup>

### **3.2 Building the New Socialist Reality: Retail and Urban Planning in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s**

Retail experts, however, were not the only professionals concerned with the expansion of the retail network. Since department stores as large retail space required architectural and urban planning projects, as well as more significantly affected their surrounding urban and social environment, the troubling dynamic of the retail network also became a topic of discussion for Yugoslav architects and urban planners. In the state-socialist context, where architects and urban planners worked mainly as engineers in charge of fulfilling the wishes of the state, these discussions illustrate the criticism of the Yugoslav state's general lack of awareness of the mutually transformative relationship between retail spaces, urban growth and socio-economic development.<sup>95</sup>

The fact that Yugoslav architects and urban planners were aware of this relationship was a result of the role that architecture and urban planning had as influential agents of both

<sup>93</sup> HR-DAZG-948 Skupština Grada Zagreba, 1. Zapisnici sjednica Gradskog vijeća, 178. Zapisnici sjednica Privrednog vijeća [HR-DAZG-948 The City Assembly of Zagreb, 1. Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council, 178. Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council].

<sup>94</sup> HR-DAZG-948 Skupština Grada Zagreba, 1. Zapisnici sjednica Gradskog vijeća, 183. Zapisnici sjednica Privrednog vijeća [HR-DAZG-948 The City Assembly of Zagreb, 1. Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council, 183. Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council].

<sup>95</sup> Molnár, *Building the State*, 70.

the material and social transformations under state-socialism. In the Yugoslav context, this “combative and educational role of architecture” was for the first time expressed in the manifesto-like article published on the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1948. The article emphasized the important aims of architects and urban planners in solving the wide range of issues set out by the “new socialist reality.”<sup>96</sup> In this way, architecture and urban planning were from the immediate postwar period established as professions that engaged not only in the physical construction of the urban environment, but in the more encompassing spatial construction of the state-socialist society.

The formal and conceptual means of materializing these tendencies was most aptly carried out through late modernist architecture and urban planning of the 1950s and the 1960s. Discussed at the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the *Congrès internationaux d'architecture moderne* (CIAM) in Athens in 1933 – and later embodied in Le Corbusier's famous Athens Charter (1943) – late modernist urban planning centered around the idea that the economical and rational construction of urban space results in the production of ordered and egalitarian societies. In the circumstances of the postwar world that was in dire need of both physical reconstruction of urban space, as well as the spiritual reconstruction of society, late modernism spread throughout the globe as the dominant form of architecture and urban planning.

In the case of Socialist Yugoslavia, the early abandonment of socialist realism after the Tito-Stalin split in 1948 made late modernism the defining element of the urban landscape already from the early 1950s. The influence of political, ideological and economic changes in the late 1950s and 1960s, however, significantly altered the main objectives of architects and urban planners. As Brigitte Le Normand argued in her study on New Belgrade, the improved economic conditions, together with the explicit shift towards consumption in the late 1950s, led architects and urban planners to abandon the idea of the economical, rational and

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<sup>96</sup> \*\*\* “Povodom Petog kongresa Komunističke partije Jugoslavije” [“On the Occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia”], *Arhitektura* 8-9 [*Architecture* 8-9], 1948, 5-6.

egalitarian construction of the urban environment. Instead, the primary aim in urban planning became the creation of diverse neighborhoods with increased building quality and living standards.<sup>97</sup> For Le Normand, this transformation was apparent in the fact that the emphasis on the administrative role of New Belgrade was replaced with the need to design the state capital as a representation of the affluent, good life in Socialist Yugoslavia.

The comments of architects and urban planners, together with the plans for department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s, however, demonstrate that this shift of focus did not merely entail an emergence of a strong consumer culture or the abandonment of the Athens Charter model in the urban space under Yugoslav state-socialism. Although it went against the main postulates of the Athens Charter, the new emphasis on consumption from the late 1950s actually transformed the concept from the inside. The urban planning in this decade, therefore, was still marked by the formal and social dimensions of late modernist architecture and urbanism defined, however, by the Yugoslav state's plan to improve personal consumption and economic conditions in the urban space.

In this context, Yugoslav architects and urban planners emerged with the first discussions on the position of the retail network and department stores in the urban space of Zagreb. Published in the scholarly and professional journals for architecture and urbanism, these comments were primarily intended for other professionals in the field. The fact, however, that the most notable of them were written by Zdenko Kolacio – the Director of the Department for Urban Planning in Zagreb from 1956 to 1971, and the main authority for multiple urban projects in this period – means that to a certain extent the ideas of architects and urbanists had an effect on the direction of urban planning in Zagreb in the 1960s.

Already in 1961 Kolacio recognized the mutually defining relationship between retail spaces, economic development, urban planning and everyday life in the city. The combined

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<sup>97</sup> Le Normand, *Designing Tito's Capital*, 102.

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.<sup>98</sup> For this reason, as Kolacio believed, 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.”<sup>99</sup> The complex role of retail spaces in the city, therefore, had to be recognized as an important element in the process of urban planning both by the architects and urban planners, as well as the city's retail experts.

In official terminology this complex influence of retail on urban planning was termed “commercial urbanism.”<sup>100</sup> Commercial urbanism connected the “politics of retail” to the “politics of urban design” in order to determine not just how the existing urban environment affected the design and organization of department stores, but also how the stores defined the neighborhood center, the flow of traffic, as well as the placement of infrastructure and other facilities.<sup>101</sup> The influence of department stores and the retail network, therefore, was not only physical and spatial, but also social – it improved the quality of life in the neighborhood by securing an adequate supply of consumer goods, lessening the traffic jams and providing additional content in the neighborhood centers. These discussions show that Yugoslav architects and urban planners early on understood the influence that the increasing number of retail spaces had on transforming the urban and social environment.

In turn, these experts were also more conscious of the negative effect that the absence of retail spaces had on the living standard in existing and new neighborhoods in the city. In

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<sup>98</sup> Zdenko Kolacio, “Opskrbni centri” [“Supply Centers”], *Arhitektura 3-4* [Architecture 3-4], 1961, 4. In official retail and architecture terminology, the supply center represented a combination of the department store with other related spaces, that formed a more complex urban unit in the neighborhood. In practice, however, supply centers were mostly never realized. 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, 7.

<sup>99</sup> Kolacio, “Opskrbni centri” [“Supply Centers”], 3.

<sup>100</sup> Lidija Podbregar-Vasle, “Trgovački urbanizam – novi pojam trgovačkog oblikovanja” [“Commercial Urbanism – A New Concept in Commercial Design”], *Arhitektura-Urbanizam 30* [Architecture-Urbanism 30], 1964, 53.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

the case of urban planning, the previously described insecure financial resources for retail spaces meant that new neighborhoods could not be completely realized. Unlike apartment buildings that were fully financed by the housing fund, the construction of infrastructure, primarily retail spaces, had a much more precarious status. The result was that the rapid expansion of urban space actually only encompassed new apartment buildings without any additional facilities necessary for the everyday life in the housing community.

The severity of this problem prompted the state committee called “Family and Household” – formed after the exhibition of the same name that was discussed in chapter 2 – to hold a plenum in April 1964 that was dedicated to the issue of facilities in neighborhoods. Singling it out as a major problem of Yugoslav urbanization, the architect Aleksandar Đorđević argued that the problematic lack of retail space in new neighborhoods was the result of incomplete realization of urban plans that predominantly financed housing, but did not provide a network of tertiary services.<sup>102</sup> This network, however, was crucial for allowing the otherwise burdened working people to have a pleasant free time. The construction of retail spaces, therefore, was not only a matter of economic development or urban planning, but also of the quality of everyday life of Yugoslav citizens. For this reason, Đorđević claimed that the level of development of the network of tertiary services equaled to the general level of urbanization.<sup>103</sup> Moreover, rapid urban expansion was not merely a sign of economic progress, but actually a condition for further economic development. For this reason, urbanization had to be coordinated by taking into consideration the complex relationship between retail, urban expansion and the living standard in the housing community. In other

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<sup>102</sup> Aleksandar Đorđević, “Prateći objekti u izgradnji novih i rekonstrukciji postojećih naselja” [“Facilities in the Construction of New and the Reconstruction of Existing Neighborhoods”], *Mesna zajednica 5* [Local Community], May 1964, 13.

<sup>103</sup> Đorđević, “Prateći objekti u izgradnji novih i rekonstrukciji postojećih naselja” [“Facilities in the Construction of New and the Reconstruction of Existing Neighborhoods”], 12.

words, this meant that the construction of the retail network had to be included in, as well as fully financed by, the general plans for urban and social development in the 1960s.

By acknowledging how the increasing presence, as well as the chronic lack of retail spaces pervasively influenced the urban and social environment in the city, Yugoslav architects and urban planners both recognized the intertwined relationship between retail, urban space and living standards, as well as offered a concrete solution for the more successful expansion of the retail network. The economic reforms of 1965, however, went in the opposite way, causing the retail spaces to significantly lag behind the growth of the city, and ultimately showing the limited influence of Yugoslav architects and urban planners in transforming the city within the self-management system.

### **3.3 Focal Points of Urban Energy: Department Stores and the Creation of City Centers**

The way that this problematic dynamic intersected trajectories of economic development, urban planning and improvements of everyday life was more obviously visible on the individual cases of the retail network's most representative nodes – the department stores. Spreading at an irregular pace through the urban space of Zagreb from the end of the Second World War, the retail network received its first significant push on September 14, 1960. This date marked the opening of the first department store in postwar Zagreb, built in the center of an older, primarily working-class neighborhood Trešnjevka on the western side of the city. Belonging to the city's dominant department store chain “Na-Ma”, the new department store in Trešnjevka was the first of the altogether 6 stores that the chain opened in the city until the end of the decade.<sup>104</sup> The majority of these department stores were erected on central locations

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<sup>104</sup> 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 Kvaternik Square (1968). In this period, the chain also opened department stores outside of Zagreb, in Kumrovec (1962), Sisak (1968) and Bjelovar (1969).

either in existing or new neighborhoods built by the socialist government. In this way, the influence that these department stores had on their surrounding urban and social environment was determined by the centrality of their position in the urban space.

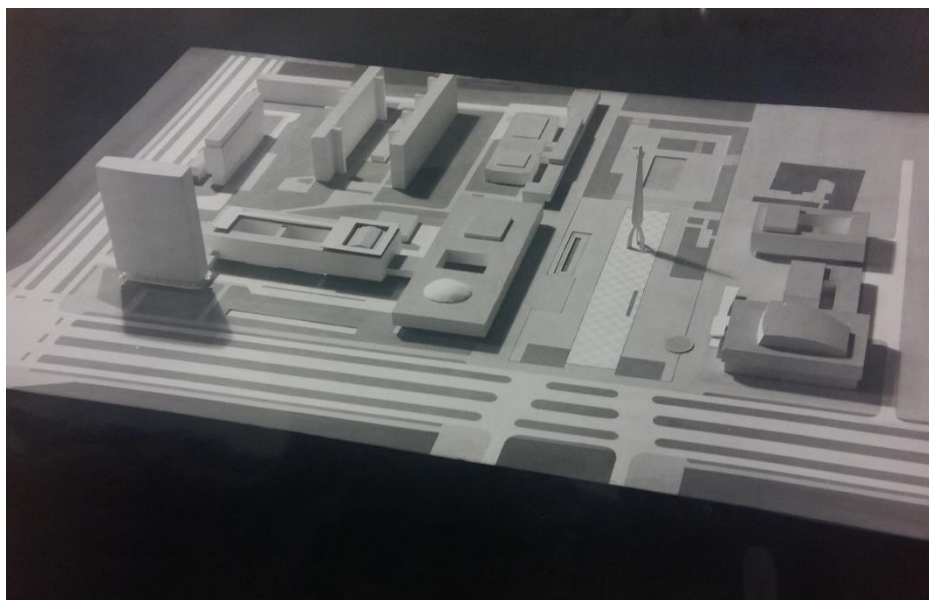
The placement and (re)construction of old and new city centers were related to the wider transformations in structuring and expanding urban space under state-socialism. In the seminal sociological work on cities and urbanization in Eastern Europe, F. E. Ian Hamilton describes the different zones in socialist cities, ranging from historic cores to completely new neighborhoods, together with transitional spaces where the socialist structures entered into the pre-socialist urban environment.<sup>105</sup> In the context of the rapid economic, social and technological developments in the postwar period, the existing urban zones, however, were largely inadequate to withhold new services necessary for the everyday life in the city. In the case of city centers, the central locations in existing neighborhoods were either reconstructed or interpolated with new structures, thereby becoming zones of urban and ideological transition. In contrast, the peripheral areas received completely new centers as parts of the emerging neighborhoods built by the socialists. By analyzing three key projects of department stores “Na-Ma” in Zagreb in the 1960s, I suggest that the physical buildings of department stores constituted the cardinal points in renewing old and constructing new city centers, as well as that the centrality of their position determined their impact on the neighborhood's urban and social environment.

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<sup>105</sup> F. E. Ian Hamilton, “Spatial Structure in East European Cities,” in *The Socialist City: Spatial Structure and Urban Policy*, ed. R. A. French and F. E. Ian Hamilton (Chichester: New York, 1979), 227.

### 3.3.1 The New Center of Socialist Zagreb: The Unrealized Project of the Department Store “Na-Ma” in Trnje (1960)

One of the first important architectural and urban projects in Zagreb after the consolidation of the political situation following the Tito-Stalin split was the construction of the new political and administrative center. Placed in the neighborhood Trnje – an area that was by then covered with agricultural parcels – the new center intersected an extension of the lower part of the city that dated back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century with a long avenue of representative apartment buildings from the 1950s. The new center gathered buildings crucial for performing different functions of the city, such as the City Hall (1955-58) and the Court House (1961-67), as well as other cultural and civic institutions, like the Lisinski Concert Hall (1958-72) and the Worker's University (1955-60). In this way, the function of the new city center was to representatively materialize the various aspects of life in the socialist capital.<sup>106</sup> Moreover, it also demonstrated how the socialist zone of the city modernized and monumentally extended the preexisting urban environment.



**Figure 4.** New City Center – Project, 1960.

<sup>106</sup> 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* (Barcelona & New York: Actar D, 2007), 182-201.



Despite the many erected buildings, the project of the new city center, however, was never actually finalized. In addition to the administrative, cultural and educational buildings, the center was also supposed to include a monumental retail space – a 5-story department store “Na-Ma” with an adjoining cinema. In addition, the new department store was designed to encompass 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 envisioned as the administrative building for the whole “Na-Ma” chain, meaning that it would also have offices for the management, as well as facilities for the workers, such as a buffet, library, infirmary and a union hall. The all-inclusive placement of a variety of services, goods and leisure activities under one roof showed both the full use of the economical capacities of department stores as versatile retail spaces, as well the ambitiousness of planners in providing for the residents of the city. In addition, the numerous envisioned facilities for department store employees also revealed the state of care for workers in retail and tertiary services.

The key authority for coordinating the architectural and urban planning of the new center, as well as the surrounding neighborhood Trnje, was once again Zdenko Kolacio. In the otherwise imprecise requirements for the architectural and urban design of the department store, the city's chief urban planner emphasized that the guiding concept for shaping the urban environment was the creation of “humanized space.”<sup>107</sup> As I will explain in more details on the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb, the idea of humanizing the urban environment – by creating pedestrian zones adapted to, as Kolacio described it, “the measure of man” – frequently appeared in urban planning projects towards the end of the 1960s. Lead by all the more common criticisms of late modernist functionalism, the humanization of urban space

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<sup>107</sup> HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 4.7-71 Zavod za urbanizam. Narodni magazin – Robna kuća Trnje. [HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of the City of Zagreb, 4.7-71 Department for Urbanism. People's Store – Department Store Trnje].

sought to move away from the rigidity of rational urban planning towards the creation of more pleasant and individualized urban environments.<sup>108</sup>

As this and the following examples show, in the case of Zagreb in the 1960s, the leading element in this process of humanization was the building of the department store. The department stores were envisioned to both physically mark old and new urban environments, as well as to serve the role of instigators of communal life in the neighborhood through the activities of consumption, leisure and socialization. In the case of the department store “Na-Ma” in Trnje, this was manifest in the design of the ground floor, that was supposed to be opened up with glass storefronts in order to communicate with the passer-by and make the new center more attractive.<sup>109</sup> 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 consumption that daily take place in the store were envisioned as the defining features of the new urban environment. In this way, Kolacio's descriptions show the dominant role of the department store in the context of the new center, as well as the significant presence of consumption in the core of the socialist city. At the same time, however, these characteristics did not only speak of a growing consumer culture in the state-socialist framework, but of the complex way that the professionals imagined the department store's effect in improving productivity and personal consumption, living standards of the working people, as well as the material and social dimensions of the urban environment.

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<sup>108</sup> This criticism of the Athens Charter was officialized at the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of CIAM in 1952 near London. Titled “The Heart of the City”, the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting focused on the revitalization of cities after the Second World War by emphasizing the individualized approach to urban planning and the creation of smaller urban environments adapted to local economic and social contexts. For more information, see Leonardo Zuccaro Marchi, “CIAM 8 – The Heart of the City as the Symbolical Resilience of the City,” in *International Planning History Proceedings 2, 17<sup>th</sup> IPHS Conference, History-Urbanism-Resilience*, ed. Carola Hein (Delft: TU Delft Open, 2016), 135-144.

<sup>109</sup> HR-DAZG-37 NO Grada Zagreba, 4.7-71 Zavod za urbanizam. Narodni magazin – Robna kuća Trnje. [HR-DAZG-37 People's Committee of the City of Zagreb, 4.7-71 Department for Urbanism. People's Store – Department Store Trnje].



**Figure 5.** Department Store “Na-Ma” – Project, Trnje, 1960.

The project of the department store “Na-Ma” with the adjoining cinema, however, was never realized. Although the final architectural project – designed by architects Stjepan Milković and Zdravko Gmajner – was chosen after a competition in summer 1960, the undefined investors and subsequent financing problems resulted in its abandonment. In this way, the case of the department store in Trnje serves as a concrete example of the issues described in the previous section on the expansion of the retail network. In this particular case, although the People's Committee of the City of Zagreb initiated the project of the department store, in the end the financing was exclusively delegated to the department store chain “Na-Ma.” The management of the store claimed, however, that they could not receive a long-term loan from the state to finance the project.<sup>110</sup> This example, therefore, illustrates the complexity and perplexity of financing and realizing large-scale retail, as well as other architectural and urban projects in Socialist Yugoslavia.<sup>111</sup> Kolacio himself was particularly critical of the fate of the city's first major retail space by accusing the department store chain “Na-Ma” of only looking at the current state of the market and lacking a vision of future development. This particularly referred to the growth of the city and its needs, that in Kolacio's opinion required a more significant input from the city's retail experts.<sup>112</sup> In this

<sup>110</sup> Kolacio, “Opskrbni centri” [“Supply Centers”], 4.

<sup>111</sup> Presented in Mrduljaš and Kulić's edited volume *Unfinished Modernizations: Between Utopia and Pragmatism* (Zagreb: UHA, 2012), this concept of incompleteness, or being trapped between the ambitiousness of utopian projects and the realistic economic and social conditions, was according to the editors the defining feature of Yugoslav architecture and urbanism. Although relatively useful, this concept nevertheless blurs the variety of influences and circumstances behind the projects that cannot merely be reduced to the clash between utopia and reality.

<sup>112</sup> Kolacio, “Opskrbni centri” [“Supply Centers”], 4.

way, Kolacio's comment illustrates the more encompassing approach of architects and urban planners in understanding the retail network by taking into consideration the interconnection between retail and urban space, as well as the way it affects the social environment in the city.

In the context of Zagreb in the 1960s, this close relationship between department stores, urban space and economic development, however, was moving in the rhythm of growth and stagnation. This rhythm was primarily determined by the organizational and financial problems behind the projects, as well as the involvement of different actors with varied levels of knowledge and understanding of all the aspects in planning the retail spaces. Therefore, both the successful and unsuccessful realizations of these projects were always a result of an entangled and sometimes conflicting processes of planning, designing, financing and building. In this particular example, the project of the new socialist center of Zagreb remained permanently unfinished, lacking a humanized space embodied in the never-realized building of the department store.

### 3.3.2 The Modernize and Beautify: The Department Store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka (September 1960)

The summer of 1960 was eventually still marked by the construction of the first department store in postwar Zagreb. Built in the neighborhood Trešnjevka, the history of the store began already in the municipality's “Social Plan for Economic Development” from 1957. Due to the rapid, but unequal economic growth, the principal aim of the plan was to invest into sectors that most directly influence the living standard, primarily the increase of personal consumption. The fact that only a handful of largely inadequate retail spaces supplied the 62 000 inhabitants of Trešnjevka led the local People's Committee to put an important emphasis on the expansion of the retail network. The process of the expansion was to be led by the

project of the new department store “Na-Ma” placed on the neighborhood's central Square of the October Revolution.<sup>113</sup>

Before its opening in September 1960, however, the building of the department store was actually constructed two years earlier for the second exhibition in the previously described series “Family and Household.” Held at the Zagreb Fair in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the three international exhibitions dealt with acute issues of organizing family and communal life in the context of the growing industrialized and urban society in Socialist Yugoslavia. For this reason, the “Family and Household” exhibitions had a strong economic, as well as educational character.

The department store was exhibited as a part of the final section of the exhibition titled “Industry and Retail.” This section specifically dealt with the role that department stores and the self-service system had in changing the habits of Yugoslav consumers as a part of the Yugoslav state's economic development.<sup>114</sup> By showing the future of retail spaces in Yugoslavia, as one of the members of the Zagreb Fair's Board of Directors stated, the department store was early on positioned as the leading factor in modernizing retail and expanding the retail network, as well as in improving supply and personal consumption in line with the Yugoslav state's economic and social agenda from the late 1950s.<sup>115</sup>

Closely connected to the economic aspect was the educational function of the exhibited department store. According to the leaflet published by the Zagreb Fair's Department for Propaganda, in the context of the general transition in the Yugoslav society from the patriarchal and rural to the modern and industrialized family life, the most important aim of the exhibition was to focus on different aspects of urban family life – such as housing,

<sup>113</sup> HR-DAZG-909 NOO Trešnjevka, 9. Zapisi sjednica Općinskog vijeća [HR-DAZG-909 People's Committee of Trešnjevka Municipality, 9. Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council].

<sup>114</sup> HR-DAZG-1172 Zagrebački velesajam, 2312. Propaganda uz prateći sadržaj – 1958 [HR-DAZG-1172 Zagreb Fair, 2312. Propaganda and Additional Materials – 1958].

<sup>115</sup> HR-DAZG-1172 Zagrebački velesajam, 963. Upravni odbor – zapisi sjednica [HR-DAZG-1172 Zagreb Fair, 963. Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors].

work and consumption – in order to demonstrate the advantages of modernization in facilitating household work and family life in the community.<sup>116</sup> In order to clearly represent the advantages of modern retail to the consumers, the exhibited department store was completely functional, serving both as an exhibit, as well as an exhibition space in itself. The visitors could walk around the store and accustom themselves to the effectiveness of the self-service system. In this way, before the actual store was even built, the department store was used as an exemplary retail space in order to educate and shape consumer habits in accordance with the economic and social aims of the Yugoslav state.

The final goal of the exhibition, however, was to implement the acquired experience into the economic practice of the city. For this reason, the project of the department store was two years after the exhibition incorporated into an existing urban environment – in the center of the neighborhood Trešnjevka. The store's investment plan stressed that the central placement of the store was important for strengthening its role in offering a wide range of consumer goods in one place. This would allow the consumers to both save time and money and at the same time give them a more hygienic alternative to the nearby market place. Furthermore, the department store could also provide additional services – such as clothing repair and laundry services – that would facilitate household work in the community.<sup>117</sup> In this way, the department store had a versatile role in improving retail services and achieving economic effectiveness, as well as in facilitating communal life in the neighborhood.

In addition to these aspects, the investment plan also emphasized that constructing the store would “beautify the square with its architectural design.”<sup>118</sup> This demonstrated how,

<sup>116</sup> HR-DAZG-1172 Zagrebački velesajam, 2312. Propaganda uz prateći sadržaj – 1958 [HR-DAZG-1172 Zagreb Fair, 2312. Propaganda and Additional Materials – 1958]. The term “propaganda” here is actually used as a synonym for advertising. For more on the discussion of the advertising terminology in Socialist Yugoslavia, see Patterson, *Bought and Sold*, 50-51.

<sup>117</sup> HR-DAZG-1122, 2594/3061. Trešnjevački trg – NAMA robna kuća [HR-DAZG-1122, 2594/3061. Trešnjevka Square – NAMA Department Store].

<sup>118</sup> HR-DAZG-909 NOO Trešnjevka, 9. Zapisi sjednica Općinskog vijeća [HR-DAZG-909 People's Committee of Trešnjevka Municipality, 9. Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council].

alongside new city centers, the department store also became the main element in revitalizing existing urban environments, and thereby increasing the living standard in older neighborhoods. The department store's main asset in this process was the architectural design of the building, as well as the construction technology, that offered an efficient and attractive way of constructing new retail spaces in areas with undeveloped retail networks.



**Figure 6.** Department Store “Na-Ma”, Trešnjevka, 1960.

The building of the store – designed by previously mentioned architects Stjepan Milković and Zdravko Gmajner – was a one-story prefabricated steel building consisting of two superimposed cuboids opened up with glass storefronts. Although generally typical of late modernist architecture, these characteristics also echoed the dominant, highly functional way of designing department stores in this period, that was described in one of the chapters in the booklet *Department Stores* issued by the Yugoslav Federal Chamber of Commerce in 1962. This booklet offered general information and instructions on department stores, including suggestions on the architectural design and placement of stores that were inspired by examples from Western European countries. The extensive use of glass was emphasized as a method of visually connecting the inner and outer space of the department store in order

to attract visitors, while the projecting first floor was needed for weather protection.<sup>119</sup> Furthermore, the use of the prefabricated steel structure was a common example of time-saving and economizing constructions that were very important in the context of the rapid industrialization in Socialist Yugoslavia in this period.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, the aesthetical and highly functional design of the department store building demonstrated an implementation of foreign models into the restricted material conditions in the local context.

The first Yugoslav department store in Zagreb, therefore, was configured through the negotiation between various influences in an attempt to find a standardized way of constructing department stores as novel retail spaces in Socialist Yugoslavia. Before its final realization, the store served as an exceptional educational model in transforming the behavior of Yugoslav consumers, as well as promoting communalization in older neighborhoods. After the store was opened in the Square of the October Revolution, it both renewed the material conditions, as well as transformed the practices of everyday life in an existing urban environment. The department store “Na-Ma” in Trešnjevka, therefore, demonstrated for the first time in practice the department store's effect in intersecting retail development, revitalization of urban space and increasing the living standard in the urban space.

### 3.3.3 Humanizing Urban Space: Department Store “Na-Ma” in Trnsko (February 1966)

Besides the centers of older neighborhoods, the new department stores were also built in the emerging zones of the city developed by the socialist government. The most notable example of urban expansion in this period was the construction of New Zagreb (*Novi Zagreb*), a complex of neighborhoods intended for the intensely growing urban population without

<sup>119</sup> Milutin Janković, *Robne kuće* [Department Stores] (Beograd: Privredni pregled, 1962), 15-18.

<sup>120</sup> \*\*\* “Zagrebački Velesajam” [“Zagreb Fair”], *Čovjek i prostor* 82 [Man and Space 82], January 1959, 4.



appropriate housing. Initiated by Zagreb's vigorous mayor Većeslav Holjevac, the project of New Zagreb expanded the city to the non-urbanized southern side of the river Sava, thus enabling the construction of a completely new urban environment that could be defined by the agenda of the socialist state from the late 1950s.



**Figure 7.** Neighborhood Trnsko, New Zagreb, 1966.

Led once again by Zdenko Kolacio, the preliminary urban plan for New Zagreb from the late 1950s depicted the new area as a large orthogonal grid, intersected with wide avenues and rectangular-shaped neighborhoods. Under the influence of the functionalism of the Athens Charter, New Zagreb was divided into 25 neighborhoods with zones dedicated to different urban functions, such as housing, work and leisure.<sup>121</sup> However, as the example of the first department store in New Zagreb demonstrates, the final result significantly differed from the initial urban and economic plans for the new urban area. The department store “Na-Ma” – opened in the center of the neighborhood Trnsko in February 1966 – illustrates both

<sup>121</sup> For more information on the urban planning of New Zagreb and, in particular, the neighborhood Trnsko, see Kristian Strukić, “Zagreb prelazi Savu - počeci Novoga (Južnoga) Zagreba” [“Zagreb Crosses the Sava – the beginnings of New (South) Zagreb], in *Pola stoljeća Trnskog - priča jedne generacije* [*Half a Century of Trnsko – the Story of a Generation*], ed. Kristian Strukić (Zagreb: Muzej grada Zagreba, 2010), 11-19.

the troubling process of constructing the retail network, as well as how the final realization of the project was imagined to determine the urban and social environment under Yugoslav state-socialism.

The department store “Na-Ma” in Trnsko appeared in the development plans for the Remetinec municipality in New Zagreb already in 1960. However, the fact that almost five years later the department store was nowhere near in sight turned it into a dominant topic of discussion in the local Municipal Assembly.<sup>122</sup> The minutes of meetings from different sessions in 1965 echo on a local level the preoccupation with the inadequately expanding retail network that was dominating the meetings of the City Assembly. In this case, however, the local officials were even harsher in their criticism because the lack of tertiary services more seriously affected the residents of a developing neighborhood in the periphery of the city. For this reason, supplying the residents of New Zagreb became the principal problem that the housing community dealt with in the first half of the 1960s. Similar to discussions from 1957, the problem of supply was once again not caused by an insufficient production of consumer goods, but by the lack of space where to store and sell them.<sup>123</sup> This comment demonstrates the extent of the influence that retail spaces had in affecting the economic conditions and living standard in urban areas.

In the case of New Zagreb, the living standard was primarily affected by the rapid, but incomplete character of the urban expansion. The fact that its development was predominantly defined by the construction of apartment buildings, but not additional facilities and communal infrastructure, led one official to characterize New Zagreb as a city with the characteristics of

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<sup>122</sup> HR-DAZG-945 NOO Remetinec, 15. Zapisnici sjednica Savjeta za društveni plan i financije [HR-DAZG-945 People's Committee of Remetinec Municipality, 15. Minutes of Meeting of the Council for Social Planning and Finances].

<sup>123</sup> HR-DAZG-945 Skupština općine Remetinec, 5. Zapisnici sjednica Općinskog vijeća i Vijeća radne zajednice [HR-DAZG-945 The Assembly of the Remetinec Municipality, 5. Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council and the Council of the Working Community].

a village.<sup>124</sup> The difficulty of the situation even prompted the councils to suggest that an apartment is finished and livable only when it has adequate additional facilities such as stores and schools.<sup>125</sup> In terms of the living standard, therefore, the intense growth of the city paralleled with a significantly slower development of the retail network was most strongly felt in New Zagreb, particularly in Trnsko that became an example of how not to build new neighborhoods.

The cause of this problem was the previously described “decentralization of funds”, that resulted in a constant lack of financial support for the retail network. In contrast, the number of apartment buildings and their residents was constantly rising, thereby even more obviously increasing the gap between the residential and other zones in the neighborhood. This gap became even harder to bridge after the economic reform in 1965, when the responsibility for the finances was redirected solely to the retail enterprises that were, however, largely unable to invest into new projects.

Therefore, when the department store “Na-Ma” was finally finished in February 1966, hundreds of people gathered to witness the opening of the first large retail space in New Zagreb. The event was described in an article published in the chain's official newspaper under the combative title “Na-Ma – In the First Line of Battle to Modernize the Supply of Citizens.”<sup>126</sup> The evoked metaphor describes the activities of the department store chain in the typical state-socialist language of struggle and modernization. The new department store, however, affected much more than the status of supply in the new neighborhood. Placed in the central square of Trnsko, the representative two-story building – with the upper part done

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> \*\*\* “Na-Ma’ u prvim redovima borbe za modernizaciju opskrbe građana” [“N Na-Ma – In the First Line of Battle to Modernize the Supply of Citizens,” *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”*], February 1966, 6.

in white concrete blocks and the ground floor completely opened with glass storefronts – defined the material and symbolic characteristics of the neighborhood's center.



**Figure 8.** Department Store “Na-Ma”, Trnsko, 1966.

The building was designed by Aleksandar Dragomanović – one of the Socialist Yugoslavia's main architects for department stores – whose habilitation thesis from 1972 represents a useful source for analyzing how the Yugoslav architects imagined the complex role of department stores in changing the urban and social environment.<sup>127</sup> Since Dragomanović's department store in Trnsko emerged under the influence of similar models from Western Europe, it examine it in more detail in chapter 4. However, it is still important to note here the influence that the store had in the earlier mentioned concept of humanizing the urban environment.

As I previously described, by emphasizing the reduction of size and individualization of urban environments, the concept of humanization emerged as a critique of the large-scale

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<sup>127</sup> For more information on the architectural and technical characteristics of Dragomanović's department stores, see Alen Žunić and Zlatko Karač, “Robne kuće i opskrbni centri arhitekta Aleksandra Dragomanovića” [“Department Stores and Shopping Centers of the Architect Aleksandar Dragomanović”], *Prostor: Časopis za arhitekturu i urbanizam* 23 [*Space: A Scholarly Journal of Architecture and Urban Planning* 23] (2015), 276-303.

and rigid late modernist urban planning. This shift towards creating small-scale and more intimate urban environments, however, was not so much a criticism of the “civilizing mission of the Athens Charter”, but rather of the way it had so far materialized.<sup>128</sup> The need to humanize urban space, therefore, was still marked by the notion of spatial ordering propagated by the Athens Charter, according to which the urban environment can shape human behavior, social relations and everyday life in a specific context. In addition to monumental buildings and public spaces, this process particularly referred to facilities, infrastructure and urban technology that formed the background of everyday life in such a way that they appeared almost invisible.<sup>129</sup> Dragomanović's department store, built as a part of the larger social center of the neighborhood, represented a combination of the ideas of spatial ordering and the concept of the humanized urban environment.

As his habilitation thesis shows, Dragomanović equally believed that modern urbanism affects human psychology. This characteristic was particularly suitable for planning peripheral urban areas, where people could form new humanized neighborhoods by leaving the chaos of the city.<sup>130</sup> Dragomanović also believed that the humanizing character of urban space primarily refers to the creation of small-scale, pedestrian zones that constitute the physical and social centers of new neighborhoods. For Dragomanović, these centers should be defined by the representative building of the department store as the “focal point of urban energy.”<sup>131</sup> In turn, by forming new centers as spaces for leisure, socialization and recreation in the neighborhood, the department store would lose its conventional “aggressive

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<sup>128</sup> Le Normand, *Designing Tito's Capital*, 210.

<sup>129</sup> Mikael Hård and Thomas J. Misa, “Modernizing European Cities: Technological Uniformity and Cultural Distinction,” in *Urban Machinery: Inside Modern European Cities*, ed. Mikael Hård and Thomas J. Misa (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2008), 8.

<sup>130</sup> HAZU-HMA Ostavština Aleksandra Dragomanovića. *Problematika robnih kuća na primjerima Trnsko-Zagreb, Novi Sad, Vinkovci*. Habilitacijski rad. [HAZU-HMA: *The Legacy of Aleksandar Dragomanović. The Problems of Department Stores on the Examples Trnsko-Zagreb, Novi Sad, Vinkovci*. Habilitation Thesis].

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

commercial character.”<sup>132</sup> In this way, the concept of the “social centers in commercial urbanism” could become the dominant element in planning new neighborhoods.<sup>133</sup>

Similar to other Yugoslav architects and urban planners, therefore, Dragomanović thought that the creation of urban space should not be defined only by the demands of retail, but by the complexity of human life in the city. For this reason, although department stores should be in the center of new neighborhoods, they were not supposed to act only as spaces of consumption or even retail spaces, but primarily as the central axis in both physically and symbolically creating the communal life in the neighborhood. This interpretation shows that Yugoslav architects and urban planners, similar to retail experts in chapter 2, gave seemingly individualized activities and processes embodied in the institution of the department an all-encompassing societal role in the development of Yugoslav state-socialism. In this way, despite their potentially commercializing character, department stores could become leading elements in forming the urban and social environment of new neighborhood centers in line with the agendas of Yugoslav state-socialism.

In this chapter, I demonstrated that, in contrast to the constant prioritization of the increase in the number of retail spaces, particularly department stores, the discussions and reports on the progress of expansion revealed a continuing inability of the city to actually catch up with the growing needs of its population. Despite the fact that the self-management system enabled a more significant input from both the retail experts, as well as architects and urban planners in the city, at the same time the conflicting relationship between the various self-governing bodies and the liberalized economic system caused the absence of a single organizing body and a source of funds responsible for the planning and construction of the retail network.

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

The severity of this problem was recognized both by the city's retail experts, as well as by Yugoslav architects and urban planners as the main protagonists of urban and social engineering under state-socialism. Their discussions in professional journals, alongside the unrealized and realized projects of department stores, illustrate in more detail the mutually defining relationship between the expansion of the retail network, urban planning, as well as the living standard in existing and new neighborhoods. Moreover, the three examples of department stores “Na-Ma” in Zagreb also demonstrate how department stores occupied the central locations in neighborhoods, as well as how Yugoslav architects and urban planners envisioned their central role in revitalizing the urban environment and creating a better communal space for retail, consumption, socialization and leisure. This situation shows that the urban space in Zagreb in the 1960s was evidently affected both by the appearance and the lack of new stores, whose communal role in the eyes of Yugoslav architects and urban planners represented a continuation in interpreting the impact of department stores as a part of the broader social development of Yugoslav state-socialism.

#### 4. Looking Through the Storefront: Planning and Building Yugoslav Department Stores in Transnational Perspective

“Becoming familiar with the experiences of others, especially positive ones, always comes in handy.”<sup>134</sup> With these words, a floor manager from the department store “Na-Ma” described a business trip that the chain undertook in spring 1969. By spending a week visiting different department stores in West Germany, the purpose of the trip was to introduce employees to business practices of a country that had one of the most developed retail services in Europe. After the trip, the employees' impressions were published in the department store chain's official newspaper, stressing the valuable lessons that were learned and the ways to implement them.

This business trip was one the many that the “Na-Ma” chain organized in the 1960s. By sending employees to analyze and discuss business practices of department stores in countries with more developed retail services, the primary aim of these trips was to acquire expert knowledge and use it in the local context. In addition, Yugoslav architects and urban planners were equally under the influence of transnational trends in architectural and urban practices. This impact refers to the general global dimension of late modernist architecture, as well as more specifically to direct contacts between Yugoslav architects and their colleagues from Western Europe.

By focusing on the micro level of knowledge and technology transfers – that encompasses interactions of enterprises, organizations and individuals – between Socialist Yugoslavia and “the West”, this chapter examines the transnational dimension in the processes of planning and building department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s.<sup>135</sup> In this regard,

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<sup>134</sup> \*\*\* “Zvonko Zajc – Velike robne kuće izvan gradova” [“Zvonko Zajc – Big Department Stores Outside of the City”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], May-June 1969, 18.

<sup>135</sup> In contrast, the macro level refers to general global developments, while the intermediate level points to relationships between nation-states. For more information, see Sari Autio-Sarasma and Katalin Miklóssy,



I analyze the literal, material imports of Western practices and technology, as well as the ideological transformations of concepts moving across the borders between different political systems. Both aspects of these transfers are equally important for understanding the configuration and development of department stores and modern retail under Yugoslav state-socialism in the 1960s.

I begin the chapter by analyzing the exhibition of an American supermarket in Zagreb in 1957 in order to demonstrate how the import of an explicitly Western retail space marked the beginning of modern retail in Socialist Yugoslavia. After that, I look more closely into the transnational dimension of the activities of the department store chain “Na-Ma” in the 1960s. Firstly, I examine the reports on business trips and representations of Western business practices published in the department store chain's official newspaper. Afterwards, I analyze the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb in order to trace the transnational dialogues in Yugoslav architecture and urban planning. By focusing on the presence of these different transnational influences, I argue that department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s were configured both through the diverse and often conflicting processes within Socialist Yugoslavia, as well as under the influence of transfers between Socialist Yugoslavia, United States and Western Europe.

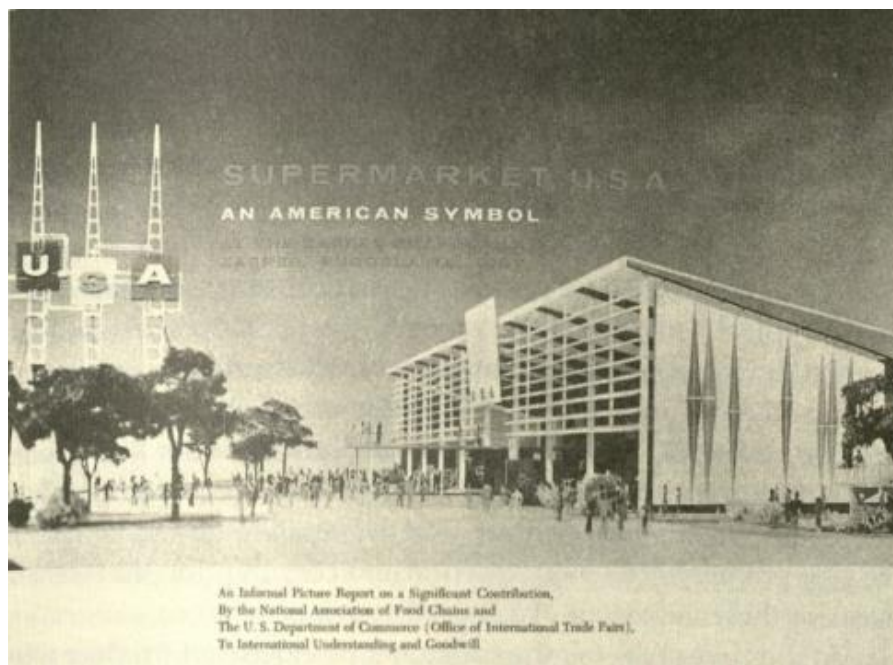
#### **4.1 The Matter of our Socialist Retail: Importing the Self-Service System into Socialist Yugoslavia**

Although the first self-service shop in Socialist Yugoslavia technically opened in 1956 in a small town in northern Croatia, the more far-reaching introduction of the self-service system in the Yugoslav context was marked by a very specific and characteristically Cold War event

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“Introduction: Cold War from a New Perspective,” in *Reassessing Cold War Europe*, ed. Sari Autio-Sarasma and Katalin Miklóssy (Oxon & New York. Routledge, 2011), 9.

– an exhibition of an American supermarket at the Zagreb Fair in 1957.<sup>136</sup> As the most important retail space in the United States for the development of the self-service system, the exhibition of the supermarket was also an influential moment for department stores in Zagreb because they applied the self-service system on a larger scale, as well as included supermarkets as a part of their sales area specialized for food products. The exhibition of the American supermarket, therefore, shows the transnational origin of the implementation of the self-service system and its contribution to the development of department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s.



**Figure 9.** Cover of a souvenir brochure, Zagreb Fair, 1957.

The transnational dimension of this exhibition was determined by the fact that it took place in the context of the Zagreb Fair. Ever since its re-opening ten years earlier, the Zagreb Fair became one of the central places for the promotion of domestic and international industry

<sup>136</sup> Opened in December 1956 in a small town called Ivanec, the first Yugoslav self-service store was an initiative of local retail professionals, who even designed the technical equipment for the store that was at that point unavailable in Socialist Yugoslavia. However, the store represented more of a local curiosity, while the described exhibition at the Zagreb Fair had a larger impact on the popularization of the self-service system and the supermarket in the Yugoslav context.

and trade. The annual Spring and Autumn Fairs were particularly significant for displaying and selling a wide range of products from both sides of the Cold War spectrum, and beyond. As a result, the Zagreb Fair also inevitably became a battleground for various competitive forces in the early Cold War period.

The potential of the Zagreb Fair as a propaganda platform was used by the United States during the Autumn Fair held in September 1957 in order to stage a spectacular exhibition that, among other things, showcased a typical, 9500 m<sup>2</sup> large American supermarket. Around the million visitors that came to the Fair that year could walk around the aisles and even touch the 4000 displayed goods, while the assistants demonstrated how they were packaged and stored.<sup>137</sup> In the end, the success of the exhibition prompted the Yugoslav authorities to plan 60 similar supermarkets throughout the country, while an almost identical one was first opened in Belgrade in 1958.<sup>138</sup>

The importance of the American exhibition in 1957 led to its extensive historical analyses that focus on the multiple dimensions and effects of the exhibited supermarket in the Cold War context. Historians such as Tvrtko Jakovina and Robert H. Haddow examine the supermarket's role in Cold War diplomacy and American propaganda, particularly the way it played out in the specific geopolitical context of Socialist Yugoslavia that was more open to Western influences.<sup>139</sup> The exhibition was actually staged as a part of the “People's Capitalism” campaign, that was developed to show the superiority of the American capitalist system by projecting an idealized image of a white, middle-class, happy consumerist life in the United States.<sup>140</sup> The supermarket served as a perfect tool in this type of propaganda

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<sup>137</sup> Tvrtko Jakovina, “Narodni kapitalizam protiv narodnih demokracija: Američki supermarket na Zagrebačkom velesajmu 1957. godine” [“People's Capitalism versus People's Democracies: The American Supermarket at the Zagreb Fair in 1957”], in *Zbornik Mire Kolar-Dimitrijević [Essays in Honor of Mira Kolar-Dimitrijević]*, ed. Damir Agičić (Zagreb: FF Press, 2003), 473-475.

<sup>138</sup> Vučetić, *Koka-kola socijalizam*, 366-367.

<sup>139</sup> Jakovina, “Narodni kapitalizam,” 469-479, and Robert H. Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty: Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1997), 38-69.

<sup>140</sup> Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty*, 52.

because, as Tracey Deutsch notes, the modern, sleek space of the supermarket effectively created an alluring image of the freedom of choice and affluence.<sup>141</sup> By offering what was supposedly unattainable in state-socialist systems, the American propagandists saw the supermarket – including the one exhibited in Socialist Yugoslavia – as a means of capitalist subversion in the state-socialist countries of Eastern Europe.

The anti-communist utilization of postwar consumerism was closely intertwined with the Americanization of European – including Eastern European – culture, that Radina Vučetić describes in detail in her study on the “Cocacolonization” of Yugoslav popular culture and everyday life in the 1960s. For Vučetić, the exhibited supermarket, together with other exhibitions in the American pavilion at the Zagreb Fair throughout the 1960s, were important examples of spreading the American influence on economy and politics, as well as culture, behaviors and value systems on a global level.<sup>142</sup> In the case of state-socialism, the appeal of American consumerism embodied in the space of the supermarket was supposed to radically move the socialist value system closer to the American capitalist democracy. This belief was based, as Patrick Hyder Patterson also notes, on the notion that, despite their utilitarian function, technology and institutions such as supermarkets and grocery stores, still held strong cultural connotations that were impossible to erase when imported into the state-socialist system.<sup>143</sup> The exhibited supermarket, therefore, functioned as a transmitter of American capitalist – and therefore anti-communist – values, while its popularity and subsequent implementation into the Yugoslav society supposedly signaled that the Americanization process was successful.

Although Vučetić and Patterson's analyses of the supermarket's cultural dimension are undeniably relevant, they nevertheless oversimplify the effect of importing Western

<sup>141</sup> Deutsch, *Building a Housewife's Paradise*, 192.

<sup>142</sup> Vučetić, *Koka-kola socijalizam*, 27, 360.

<sup>143</sup> Patterson, “Making Markets Marxist?” 198.

institutions, technology and expert knowledge into state-socialist countries. Despite its impact on creating consumer culture, the supermarket still primarily needs to be considered for its basic function as a means of retail and economic development. Even the “People's Capitalism” campaign, despite its strong political and ideological dimension, was partially devised by businessmen seeking to expand the American market on a global level.<sup>144</sup> In addition, the Yugoslav authorities also initiated the exhibition of the supermarket as a means of using modern retail to industrialize Yugoslav production and distribution of food. As Shane Hamilton rightfully argues, focusing on the supermarket as a primarily technological system that impacts both retail, as well as broader systems of production and distribution, offers a more complex view of the effects it had on the country of import.<sup>145</sup> This understanding of the supermarket's economic and social influence then shows different layers in the seemingly uniform process of the Americanization of state-socialist countries.

By focusing on the influence of the exhibited supermarket on Yugoslav farming and food production, Hamilton concludes that the “supermarket revolution” failed because it did not transform and industrialize the country's agricultural economy.<sup>146</sup> In contrast, Hamilton's description of the supermarket's effect on retail in Socialist Yugoslavia actually illustrates the substantial amount of American influence on stimulating the import of supermarkets and – more importantly – the self-service system. After making plans for opening 60 supermarkets, American retail experts came to help set up the first supermarket in Belgrade in 1958. Furthermore, the United States also sold all the exhibited – and until then unavailable – technology needed for running the self-service system, such as wrapping machines and refrigerators, while the Yugoslav enterprise Jugoelektra continued to import other equipment

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<sup>144</sup> Haddow, *Pavilions of Plenty*, 39-41.

<sup>145</sup> Shane Hamilton, “Supermarket USA Confronts State Socialism: Airlifting the Technopolitics of Industrial Food Distribution into Cold War Yugoslavia,” in *Cold War Kitchen: Americanization, Technology, and European Users*, ed. Ruth Oldenziel and Karin Zachmann (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2009), 137, 142.

<sup>146</sup> Hamilton, “Supermarket USA,” 154.

from American companies.<sup>147</sup> At the same time, the publicity, high attendance, as well as the participation of important political figures – including Tito himself – in the exhibition made the import of the supermarket and the self-service system in Socialist Yugoslavia a highly public and visible process, that officialized the self-service system as the main model for modern retail. In the case of retail development, therefore, the exhibited American supermarket in 1957 demonstrates the influence of transnational transfers of technology and expert knowledge from “the West” in stimulating the modernization of retail in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s.

Three months after the exhibition, the official magazine of the Advertising Bureau of Croatia (*Oglasni zavod Hrvatske*) published a commentary on the self-service system that illustrates the way it was conceptualized by retail experts in the Yugoslav context. By characterizing it as a rational retail model, self-service was described as system interesting not only for “capitalist countries with mad economic competition”, but also for socialist retail.<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, since the conditions for the effective implementation of the self-service system required experienced retail enterprises and a well-designed organization of work that were, according to the article, characteristic primarily for state-socialist systems, self-service was seen as the perfect system for the development of retail in Socialist Yugoslavia. In this way, although it was pointed out in the article that the self-service system was taken over from the United States, the state-socialist system was presented as being a more suitable environment for its operation.<sup>149</sup>

The emphasis in the article on the rational character of the self-service system also echoes Patterson's claim that the general tendency in state-socialist retail was to treat modern

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<sup>147</sup> Hamilton, “Supermarket USA,” 147, 152.

<sup>148</sup> \*\*\* “Samoposluživanje – racionalan oblik maloprodaje” [“Self-service – A Rational Form of Retail”], *Naš publicitet* 3-4 [Our Publicity 3-4], December 1957, 11.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

retail models and spaces as neutral categories.<sup>150</sup> For this reason, the American origin of the self-service system – similar to a later description of the department store at the 1958 exhibition “Family and Household” – was emphasized, but not reflected on.<sup>151</sup> Therefore, in the case of retail, the self-service system and modern retail spaces were not seen as ideologically problematic concepts in need of symbolic legitimation in the state-socialist framework.

In fact, by stressing rationalization and productivity, the state-socialist economy was actually interpreted as being more suitable for the development of the self-service system. This interpretation challenges Patterson's argument that the import of inherently capitalist spaces of department stores and supermarkets carried with them subversive elements that destabilized the state-socialist system from the inside. Although Patterson also acknowledges that department stores could be accordant with state-socialist principles, and therefore not exclusively capitalist spaces, he argues that they nevertheless engendered a consumer culture that was incompatible with state-socialism.<sup>152</sup> However, the case of Socialist Yugoslavia, particularly the Program of the LCY from 1958, shows that elements such as the importance of personal consumption and individual ownership, satisfaction of individual needs and activities, freedom of choice, and even economic competition and business efficiency, were represented by the state as integral parts of the Yugoslav state-socialism even before the popularization of the self-service system and the flourishing of consumer culture. For this reason, the self-service system and modern retail spaces such as department stores did not bring capitalist features in the state-socialist system, but were seen as a means of enhancing what the Yugoslav state-socialism already promised. In conceptual terms, therefore, although

<sup>150</sup> Patterson, “Risky Business,” 116.

<sup>151</sup> The article said: “One of the biggest pavilions – a prefabricated “Supermarket” based on the American model – will be later placed on the Trešnjevka Square, in a similar way as the modern store in Praška Street.” \*\*\* “Jesenski Velesajam – pola svjetske izložbe” [“The Autumn Fair – Half of the World Exhibition”], *Narodni list* [People's Newspaper], September 4, 1958, 2.

<sup>152</sup> Patterson, “Risky Business,” 134.

the retail experts recognized its American origin, the self-service system was not perceived as a capitalist phenomenon, but as a neutral model that could significantly contribute to the development of modern retail in Socialist Yugoslavia.

#### **4.2 The Experience of Others: Transfers of Expert Knowledge and Business Practices from Western Europe to the People's Department Store**

This material aspect of the transnational transfers of expert knowledge and technology from “the West” to Socialist Yugoslavia had an important and acknowledged impact on the development of modern retail spaces in the 1960s. In general, as Patterson notes, the transfers of “Western know-how”, business models and technology actually presented a common occurrence in more-consumer oriented Eastern European countries such as East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, as well as Socialist Yugoslavia.<sup>153</sup> The result of these frequent transfers was a strong transnational dimension in modern retail, that influenced the development of department stores in Eastern European state-socialist countries.<sup>154</sup> The different business trips and associations that the employees from the department store chain “Na-Ma” took part in illustrate in more detail the micro level of these processes, as well as their effects on the formation of Yugoslav department stores and modern retail in Zagreb in the 1960s.

The contacts between the “Na-Ma” chain and Western European department stores were regularly reported in the chain's official newspaper. These included mainly business trips to West Germany, that were taken both by the store managers, as well as other employees from different working units. The “Na-Ma” chain's retail experts took explicit pride in the fact that the chain was “developing by using its own [experience], but without neglecting the

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<sup>153</sup> Patterson, “Risky Business,” 125.

<sup>154</sup> Patterson, “Risky Business,” 134.



experience of others.”<sup>155</sup> This experience, however, had to be placed into a “realistic framework” that took into consideration different factors, primarily the material conditions, in order to form a stable basis for further development.<sup>156</sup> Therefore, the import of business models and know-how from role-model countries such as West Germany were explicitly acknowledged by the retail experts from the “Na-Ma” chain as formational elements for the development of department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s.

The main actors in the processes of import and implementation were the employees, who were expected to learn and critically use the acquired knowledge in order to improve the practices of the department store chain.<sup>157</sup> In general, business trips to Western European countries, such as West Germany, Austria, England and Italy were part of the education process that the “Na-Ma” chain organized in order to perfect the expertise of its employees and stimulate the advancement of retail.<sup>158</sup> In this way, the employees represented, as it was described in an article on a business trip to West Germany in 1962, “agitators for modern retail.”<sup>159</sup> What turned the employees into agitators, however, was the impressive state of department stores in West Germany that easily convinced them of the importance of modern retail. By describing the employees of the department store in the state-socialist language of agitation and propaganda, retail experts compared their activities with the usually more prioritized industrial work that, as I show in chapter 2, the retail sector had to compete with. The impetus for the employees' work, however, came directly from business practices and conditions of retail in Western Europe. This complex metaphor, therefore, illustratively points

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<sup>155</sup> \*\*\* “Zvonko Zajc – Velike robne kuće izvan gradova” [“Zvonko Zajc – Big Department Stores Outside of the City”], 18.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> \*\*\* “Uspjeh ovisi o stručnosti” [“Success Depends on Expertise”], 3.

<sup>159</sup> \*\*\* “Koristan put” [“A Useful Trip”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”], May 1962, 7.

to the presence of different, both local and foreign influences in shaping department stores in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s.

Comparisons between the “Na-Ma” chain and Western European department stores by the end of the decade, however, became less metaphorical. Although generally positive, the impressions published after the trip to West Germany in 1969 reveal that the employees did not see the business practices in department stores such as the Hertie chain in Frankfurt and Munich as significantly different from those applied in their own enterprise. Perhaps more widespread in West Germany, the assortment of goods according to size or the use of closed instead of open storefronts were nevertheless being increasingly used by the retail experts in the “Na-Ma” chain under the influence of foreign models.<sup>160</sup> Therefore, despite the emphasis on the superiority of the West German organization of work, the employees were generally affirmative about their own practices and optimistic about improving them by following more developed retail models. These frequent business trips, together with the comments made by the employees, show that by the end of the 1960s the “Na-Ma” chain was already strongly in tune with retail developments in Western Europe.

In addition to importing business practices, the retail experts in the “Na-Ma” chain also more actively participated in the activities of department stores on a European level. This participation was maintained and facilitated primarily thanks to larger associations of department store chains established in the 1960s. In the case of Socialist Yugoslavia, the most important was the Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores founded in September 1963 by 9 of the largest department store chains, including the “Na-Ma” from

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<sup>160</sup> \*\*\* “Štefica Turčić – Unutrašnja dekoracija – važan element u kupovanju (prodaji)” [“Štefica Turčić – Interior Decoration – An Important Element in Buying (Selling)”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”*], May-June 1969, 16. \*\*\* “Branko Merkša – Dekoracija podređena robi” [“Branko Merkša – Decoration is Subordinated to Goods”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People’s Department Store”*], May-June 1969, 17.

Zagreb.<sup>161</sup> The goal of the association was to coordinate the business practices of Yugoslav department store chains, as well as to strengthen their position in the global market. In 1978, the Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores also joined the Soviet-based International Association of Socialist Department Stores (*Mezhdunarodnoye obshchestvo sotsialisticheskikh univermagov – MOSU*) in order to more effectively cooperate with similar retail enterprises in other Eastern European state-socialist countries.<sup>162</sup> These associations illustrate the importance of mutual cooperation both within and across the borders of Socialist Yugoslavia, as well as the trajectories of forming transnational networks in the sphere of modern retail and department store chains in state-socialist Eastern Europe.

In addition to these associations, retail experts from the “Na-Ma” chain also participated in various international meetings. One example was the International Conference of European Department Store Workers held in Budapest in the beginning of 1962. Socialist Yugoslavia was one of the 16 Western and Eastern European countries that participated in the conference, including Austria, France and Switzerland, as well as Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Romania. In addition to establishing contacts with department store chains in Hungary, the main topic of discussion was related to working conditions in department stores. However, as it was reported in an article published in the “Na-Ma” chain's newspaper, issues such as strengthening of unions, reduction of working hours, increase in payments, equal wages for female workers, health protection and pension rights, were problems of capitalist, but not

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<sup>161</sup> The 9 department store chains were: “Beograd”, “Na-Ma”, “Gradski magazin” and “Crvena zvezda” from Belgrade, “Na-Ma” from Zagreb, Ljubljana and Sarajevo, “Skopje” from Macedonia and “Titograd” from Montenegro. The Association, therefore, included department store chains from the capitals of all the federative republics in Socialist Yugoslavia. Franjo Balen, “Poslovno udruženje robnih kuća” [“Business Association of Department Stores”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], November 1963, 2.

<sup>162</sup> AJ-694 Poslovna zajednica robnih kuća Jugoslavije, Međunarodna saradnja, Q-12 - Q.14 – Aktivnost Poslovne zajednice u okviru MOSU [AJ-694 The Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores, International Cooperation, Q-12 - Q-14 Activity of the Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores in MOSU].

state-socialist countries.<sup>163</sup> According to the article, therefore, in contrast to the predominant image of “the West” being more advanced than “the East”, in the case of worker's rights and working conditions in the retail sector, state-socialist countries such as Yugoslavia to a certain extent resolved the issues that still existed in the Western European retail sector.

Similar remarks on the working conditions in Western European department stores could be found in the regular column of “Na-Ma” chain's retail expert Pavao Vogin called “Department Stores Abroad.” In addition to comparing various business practices, such as the organization of work, the assortment of goods, architectural design, decorations and advertising, Vogin also commented on the working conditions in the stores. For example, in the report on the Galeries La Fayette in Paris, Vogin pointed out the burden of additional administrative work, the long working hours, as well as a lack of work breaks and chairs for resting.<sup>164</sup> Alternatively, although the department store Kaufhof in Köln, for example, had a Workers Council, its function was much more limited and only focused on social work.<sup>165</sup> Even in the seemingly ideal working conditions in Amsterdam's De Bijenkorf, the department store actually suffered from a chronic lack of workers.<sup>166</sup> Vogin's comments, although not explicitly condemning working conditions in Western, capitalist countries, nevertheless juxtaposed successful business practices with overburdening working conditions and a lack of worker's organizations. The issue of labor and worker's rights in department stores, therefore, constituted a sphere where the retail experts in the “Na-Ma” chain argued that the

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<sup>163</sup> \*\*\* “Konferencija radnika evropskih robnih kuća” [“The Conference of European Department Store Workers”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], December 1962, 12.

<sup>164</sup> Pavao Vogin, “Robne kuće u inozemstvu – Galerie La Fayette, Pariz” [“Department Stores Abroad – Galeries La Fayette, Paris”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], October 1964, 2.

<sup>165</sup> Pavao Vogin, “Robne kuće u inozemstvu – Kaufhof, Köln” [“Department Stores Abroad – Kaufhof, Köln”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], January 1965, 5.

<sup>166</sup> Pavao Vogin, “Robne kuće u inozemstvu – De Bijenkorf” [“Department Stores Abroad – De Bijenkorf”], *Na-Ma: Informativni list kolektiva “Narodni magazin”* [*Na-Ma: Informative Newspaper of the Collective “People's Department Store”*], January 1966, 6-7.

conditions in Socialist Yugoslavia were to a certain degree better in comparison with Western European countries. This situation illustrates different aspects present in the layered process of transnational transfers in developing modern retail and improving the practices of department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s, that were formed both in dialogue and argumentation with their Western counterparts.

#### **4.3 Lend Each Other a Hand: Transnational Exchanges in Planning the Department Store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb**

The transnational dimension in configuring department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s did not encompass only transfers of expert knowledge and business practices necessary for managing department stores. Yugoslav architects and urban planners also participated in transnational networks and exchanges by organizing study visits and lectures, as well as through reports published in magazines *Arhitektura* (*Architecture*) and *Čovjek i prostor* (*Man and Space*). The global presence of late modernist architecture and urban planning, as well as the transnational influence of architectural design of department stores was already discussed in chapter 3. This section, however, in more detail illustrates the implementation and reflection of the transnational influence in conceptualizing and designing department stores in the 1960s on the example of the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb.

Designed by the Yugoslav architect Aleksandar Dragomanović, the department store “Na-Ma” was inspired by the shopping street the Lijnbaan in Rotterdam authored by the Dutch architectural duo Jaap Bakema and Jo van der Broek in 1953. This influence was both a result of the globalizing tendencies of late modernist architecture, as well as professional exchanges between Bakema and Yugoslav architects and urban planners in the mid-1960s. In order to illustrate how the Lijnbaan model was imported and reflected in the Yugoslav context, the story of the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb is followed by tracing the

conceptualizations behind the planning and construction of the Lijnbaan, the professional discussions and exchanges during Bakema's visit to Zagreb in 1965, and finally in Dragomanović's implementation of the Lijnbaan model in the framework of Yugoslav state-socialism.

#### 4.3.1 Consumption in the Heart of Postwar Renewal: The Lijnbaan in Rotterdam (1953)

Due to severe bombings during the Second World War, Rotterdam was one of many European cities in need of extensive postwar urban reconstruction. Laid out for the first time in the Reconstruction Plan of 1941 and, afterwards, in the Basic Plan of 1946, the rebuilding of Rotterdam was envisioned as a process of rational urban planning contrasted to irrational war destruction.<sup>167</sup> The shopping street the Lijnbaan emerged in 1953 as one of the most successful realizations of this reconstruction program. Influenced partially by the architecture of American shopping centers and partially by a revision of late modernist architecture and urban planning propagated by the Athens Charter, the Lijnbaan embodied new urban and social ideas in renewing Western Europe after the destruction of the Second World War.

The Lijnbaan constituted a part of Rotterdam's city center in the form of a pedestrian promenade flanked by six blocks of two-story high shops. The strong horizontal accent of the layout was additionally emphasized by the simplicity of the design, with elongated concrete cuboids opened up with large glass storefronts. As Bakema and van der Broek emphasized, flexibility was the guiding idea behind the choice of the construction material and layout, since the blocks of shops could be easily partitioned and adapted to the owners' wishes.<sup>168</sup> In addition, the visitors were accommodated by porches running parallel with the shops in

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<sup>167</sup> E. R. M. Taverne, "The Lijnbaan (Rotterdam): A Prototype of a Postwar Urban Shopping Center," in *Rebuilding Europe's Bombed Cities*, ed. Jeffry M. Diefendord (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1990), 146.

<sup>168</sup> Jo van den Broek and Jaap Bakema, "The Lijnbaan at Rotterdam," *The Town Planning Review* 27 (1956), 24.

order to protect them from the weather. Street furniture such as benches and flowerbeds were also placed alongside the promenade to create a “welcoming and intimate” environment.<sup>169</sup> This atmosphere was, however, primarily achieved by the fact that the Lijnbaan was completely sheltered from automobiles and other vehicles. In fact, the separation of pedestrians from traffic was the main guiding idea in planning the Lijnbaan.<sup>170</sup> The result was a secluded promenade in the center of the city where people could both shop and socialize. In this way, the commercial space of the Lijnbaan was also an urban oasis for leisure and socialization developed on the ruins of war destruction.



**Figure 10.** The Lijnbaan, Rotterdam, early 1950s.

The main ideas behind the Lijnbaan's design stemmed from the architects' – primarily Bakema's – attitude towards the relationship between people, architecture and the urban environment. In November 1965, the magazine *Arhitektura* published a translation of Bakema's article on the social role of architecture from the Austrian magazine BAU in order

<sup>169</sup> Van den Broek and Bakema, “The Lijnbaan,” 26.

<sup>170</sup> Van den Broek and Bakema, “The Lijnbaan,” 21.

to commemorate the architect's visit to Zagreb. Titled “Let the Buildings Lend Each Other a Hand Again”, the article – written almost in the form of free-verse poetry – emphasized the role of architecture in expressing the relationships between people. In order to do that, the architectural measures had to fit the human scale, allowing people to identify with the newly created urban environments.<sup>171</sup> As I described in chapter 3, planning more intimate, individualized urban spaces was part of the concept of the humanization of the urban environment that developed in the 1950s and the 1960s. Although different from the rationalizing and rigid urban planning of the Athens Charter, this concept was nevertheless still tied to the idea that people are shaped by their urban surrounding.

In Bakema's opinion, however, people also played a more active role in defining the urban space. In contrast to the idea that architecture and urban planning produce orderly societies in a top-to-bottom trajectory, Bakema instead stressed the role of people in creating and individualizing the space that surrounds them. Therefore, although Bakema still emphasized the social role of architecture and urban planning, he replaced the strongly rational and scientific tendencies with the need to create more humanized urban environments that engender healthy and balanced societies. The Lijnbaan is an example that, in addition to the small-scale and pedestrian character, the commercial dimension also formed an important part in the humanized urban space.

This important role of commercial functions in designing urban spaces came from another source – the suburban shopping centers in the United States. Possibly as a result of Jo van den Broek's trip to the United States in 1948, the American shopping centers conceptualized and designed by the Austrian émigré Victor Gruen represented an influential

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<sup>171</sup> Jaap Bakema, “Pokušajmo učiniti da zgrade ponovno jedna drugoj pruže ruke” [“Let the Buildings Lend Each Other a Hand Again”], *Arhitektura* 89 [Architecture 89], November 1965, 35-37.



model for the Lijnbaan.<sup>172</sup> In Gruen's vision – that was also influenced by the notion of the social role of architecture – the postwar reconstruction of the urban environment in the United States consisted of the economically and technologically efficient design of shopping centers.<sup>173</sup> Placed in city suburbs, these shopping centers would enable people to satisfy all of their needs in one location, and allow them to spend their free time shopping and socializing while sheltered from the weather and the city traffic. Therefore, as Gruen himself emphasized in a design for an ideal shopping center already in 1943, the shopping center as a commercial site would also become the community's social and cultural center.<sup>174</sup> In the context of the United States after the Second World War, that was marked by the strong development of a postwar consumer culture – the shopping center as envisioned by Gruen was supposed to be the guiding light in the construction of new suburban communities driven by the ideals of a capitalist society. Similar ideas were also present in the design of the Lijnbaan as the new commercial center of postwar Rotterdam completely devoted to pedestrians and consumption.

The Lijnbaan also shows that postwar urban renewal entailed both material and social reconstruction. In this way, the seemingly uniform late modernist architecture and urbanism played an important role in postwar state-building that was marked by the need to produce a specific type of society after the Second World War. In the context of Western Europe – and particularly the United States – the basis for this society was consumer capitalism, together with the shopping centers and department stores as its primary locations. In this way, the humanization of urban space included a strong commercial dimension in designing department stores and other retail spaces where individuals could happily spend their free time shopping and socializing. In contrast, the implementation of these ideas in the case of

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<sup>172</sup> Taverne, “The Lijnbaan (Rotterdam),” 149. Even Gruen himself pointed out that the Lijnbaan is reminiscent of American suburban shopping centers. Victor Gruen and Larry Smith, *Shopping Towns USA: The Planning of Shopping Centers* (New York: Reinhold Publishing Corporation, 1960), 272.

<sup>173</sup> Timothy Mennel, “Victor Gruen and the Construction of Cold War Utopias,” *Journal of Planning History* 2 (2004), 118.

<sup>174</sup> Mennel, “Victor Gruen,” 119.

the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb demonstrates how this central role of department stores in creating new urban environments was changed within the framework of Yugoslav state-socialism.

#### 4.3.2 Where all the Residents Meet: The Department Store as the Center of Communal Life in New Neighborhoods

Thanks to transnational contacts, the potential of the Lijnbaan as an example of using department stores to solve the issue of designing new city centers was recognized in Socialist Yugoslavia in the mid-1960s. The magazine *Čovjek i prostor* reported on a study trip that the professors and students from the Faculty of Architecture in Zagreb took in July 1964 in the Netherlands. The aim of the visit was to become familiarized with Dutch architecture and urbanism in order to analyze the solutions for problems in urban planning in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. In this regard, Bakema and van den Broek were singled out as particularly innovative architects, while the different sites that were visited also included the Lijnbaan, as well as other department stores and buildings designed by the Dutch architectural duo. This study trip demonstrates that Yugoslav architects and urban planners in the 1960s were very well acquainted with and inspired by architectural and urban trends in Western Europe through direct professional contacts, as well as reports in architectural magazines.

The study trip to the Netherlands was followed by Bakema's visit to Zagreb in February 1965, when the architect held three lectures at the Faculty of Architecture. On this occasion, the magazine *Čovjek i prostor* published a conversation that several Yugoslav architects and urban planners had with Bakema. They discussed both his general attitude towards creating urban environments, as well his proposals for solving specific issues in urban planning of New Zagreb. This conversation provides good insight into the exchange of

knowledge that occurred between the professionals from the capitalist space of Western Europe and the state-socialist space of Yugoslavia.

In general, Yugoslav architects and urban planners were enthusiastic about Bakema's visit and impressed by his ideas. At the same time, they were also well aware of the differences between their respectful contexts. One architect commented that, “[h]e [Bakema] is a man from the West, from the top, who came here and is interpreting us. (...) It is interesting for us how much Bakema's projection applies to our space. That he would understand our time, that was guaranteed, but that he would understand our space, our concrete problems, that was not entirely certain.”<sup>175</sup> This comment points out that Yugoslav architects and urban planners were reflective of the differences between architectural and urban practices, as well as spatial and temporal characteristics in Western Europe and Socialist Yugoslavia.

Despite this awareness, however, the professionals nevertheless appreciated the useful insights that they gained from Bakema. Zdenko Kolacio pointed out that because urban problems connect different contexts, “we [the Yugoslavs] are always willing to change our ideas within, as well as beyond the borders of our country.”<sup>176</sup> In a significant way, Kolacio's comment demonstrates that since certain issues in architectural and urban planning were common to the whole European urban space, transnational exchanges of ideas were helpful for improving the creation of urban environments regardless of their location. Similar to the retail experts from the “Na-Ma” chain, Kolacio also emphasizes the openness of Yugoslav professionals and their willingness to gain expert knowledge across national borders.

This overwhelming enthusiasm, however, did not prevent Yugoslav architects and urban planners from being critical of Bakema's work, that they felt primarily mirrored his own

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<sup>175</sup> S.G., “Povodom posjete J. Bakeme Zagrebu” [“On the Occasion of J. Bakema's Visit to Zagreb”], *Čovjek i prostor* 152 [Man and Space 152], November 1965, 2. Although the article is signed with initials, the author is probably Sena Sekulić-Gvozdanović.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

geographical and spatial context.<sup>177</sup> The strongest criticism, however, came from the Yugoslav architect Sena Sekulić-Gvozdanović and was directed at the Lijnbaan. According to Gvozdanović, the idea of the Lijnbaan as a social center where people could meet in the midst of a bustling city ultimately failed. The reason for this was the fact that, unlike the fully realized commercial aspects, the social aspects were not completed, meaning that the Lijnbaan as a whole remained unfinished. As a result, the imagined collective space of the Lijnbaan was only a gathering place of unrelated individuals. As Gvozdanović pointed out, “[t]he idea of the Lijnbaan is revolutionary for postwar construction. However, as long as the Lijnbaan remains only two rows of parallel storefronts, people will always turn their back to each other.”<sup>178</sup> Gvozdanović's critique, therefore, was targeted directly at the core of the idea of the Lijnbaan and similar projects in Western Europe and the United States. In contrast to the notion that the commercial function of shopping centers and department stores would incite socialization and revitalize society, Gvozdanović's comment emphasized that commercial functions were actually not enough to forge relationships between people. Although not explicitly critical of Western consumer capitalism, Gvozdanović nevertheless stressed the importance of creating collective spaces with social usage that goes beyond consumption and leisure. In this way, her comment points to the ideological aspirations present in conceptualizing late modernist urban projects in Yugoslav state-socialism.

Gvozdanović's criticism is necessary for understanding that, despite certain similarities in architectural and urban design, the Lijnbaan and the department store “Na-Ma” were conceptually different models. Finished in February 1966, the department store “Na-Ma” was part of a bigger project of the social center of Trnsko in New Zagreb, that Aleksandar Dragomanović worked on with architects Radovan Nikšić and Edo Šmidihen. In a direct way, the impact of the Lijnbaan on this project was a result of the fact that all three architects were

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

at some point in contact with Bakema and the Dutch late modernist architecture in Rotterdam. Nikšić spent 6 months of professional training in Bakema and van den Broek's architectural bureau already in 1956, while Šmihel and Dragomanović also took several study trips to the Netherlands in 1959, 1961 and 1964.<sup>179</sup> These frequent contacts demonstrate the opportunities that Yugoslav architects and urban planners had in travelling abroad and gathering professional experience that they could use in their own contexts.



**Figure 11.** Department Store Na-Ma, Trnsko, 1966.

In a strictly formal sense, the department store “Na-Ma”, alongside the larger complex of the neighborhood’s center, shared similarities with the Lijnbaan, as well as with the general tendencies in late modernist architecture in the 1960s. As I previously described, the department store was a two-story high building made out of steel, large amounts of glass in the ground floor and concrete blocks in the upper part. Moreover, again in the style of Lijnbaan, it was linked to other facilities in the center with a wooden porch. In general, the

<sup>179</sup> Žunić and Karač, “Robne kuće i opskrbni centri arhitekta Aleksandra Dragomanovića” [“Department Stores and Shopping Centers of the Architect Aleksandar Dragomanović”], 282.

cuboid shapes, use of materials such as concrete, steel and glass, as well as the clean and simple style were common to late modernist architecture. With variations in the quality of design and construction, on the surface these features dominated the European urban landscape in the 1950s and the 1960s. The differences between them, however, existed in the realm of conceptualization – as well as the material characteristics that reflected it – of the role of architecture and urban planning for the state and its society.

In the case of the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb, its concept and design were defined by the social agenda of architecture and urbanism in the formation of Yugoslav state-socialism. As I previously noted, Dragomanović also shared the common view that architecture and urban planning have a crucial role in creating not only urban environments, but also the people that live in them. The same idea applied to his department stores, that Dragomanović saw as necessary elements in the centers of new neighborhoods. However, the crucial difference was that for Dragomanović and other Yugoslav architects and urban planners, the emphasis was not on commercial functions, but on the idea of the department store as “the organizer of life” in the neighborhood.<sup>180</sup> In this way, the department store's design had to be pushed beyond its role as a retail space towards becoming the central point of organizing the communal life in new neighborhoods.

In contrast to the “aggressive” shopping centers in the United States, as well as the exaggeratedly large department stores in France and Italy, Dragomanović believed that the Lijnbaan represented the best role model for designing department stores in the centers of new neighborhoods because of its “human” size and pedestrian character.<sup>181</sup> In this way, Dragomanović was able to import the same architectural model from the West into the state-socialist context, but re-conceptualize it by advocating the social instead of the commercial

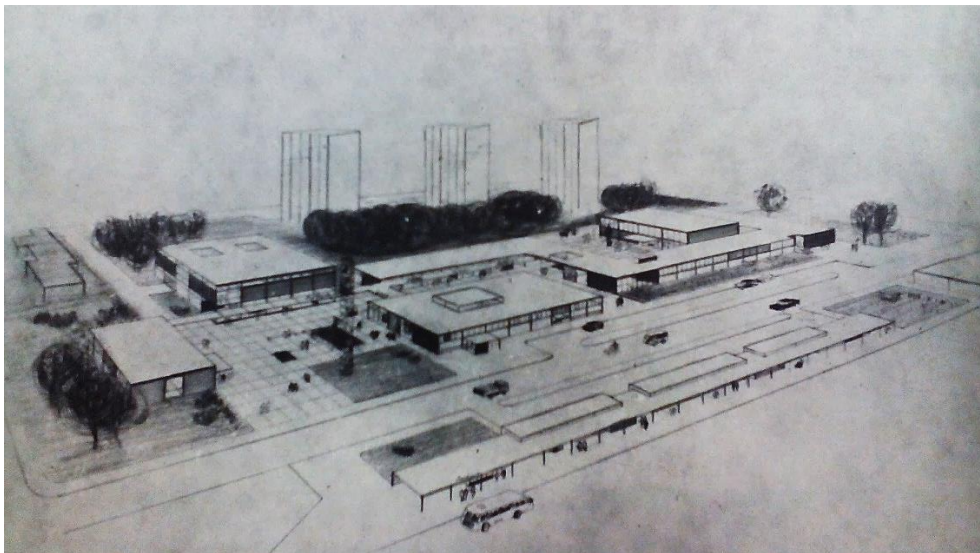
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<sup>180</sup> HAZU-HMA: Ostavština Aleksandra Dragomanovića. *Problematika robnih kuća na primjerima Trnsko-Zagreb, Novi Sad, Vinkovci*. Habilitacijski rad. [HAZU-HMA: *The Legacy of Aleksandar Dragomanović. The Problems of Department Stores on the Examples Trnsko-Zagreb, Novi Sad, Vinkovci*. Habilitation Thesis].

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

role of department stores. In this way, Dragomanović's conceptualization demonstrates the importance of the collective and communal aspects in architecture and urban planning, that defined the impact of department stores in humanizing the urban environment in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1960s.

In the specific case of the department store “Na-Ma”, its communal role was carried out by placing the building as a part of the larger social center of the neighborhood. Although Dragomanović was aware of the economic importance of retail, as well as the effect that the growing number of retail spaces have on urban planning, he nevertheless believed that their design should take into consideration other various aspects of the life in the neighborhood.<sup>182</sup> For this reason, the department store – although the dominant architectural element – actually formed a larger complex that included other smaller shops, a restaurant, a local community center and an infirmary. Furthermore, all the parts of the complex were linked together by porches, as well as by paths that connected the social center to the surrounding apartment buildings.



**Figure 12.** Social Center of Trnsko – Project, 1966.

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<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

More importantly, the whole complex was also completely separated from the road in an attempt to, as Dragomanović put it, “take people away from the large features of automobile traffic and bring them to the world of pedestrians, the world of human footsteps, where all the residents of the neighborhood meet.”<sup>183</sup> The department store, therefore, had the leading role in gathering the community by enhancing retail with other social activities in a pedestrian urban setting. The emphasis on the ideals of collectivity, socialization and communal practices and services were, therefore, both expressed and constituted by the department store as the central architectural point in the urban environment in New Zagreb. This situation once again explicitly demonstrates the pervading tendency to interpret individualistic phenomena as having a collective benefit for the whole Yugoslav state-socialist society.

The case of the department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb is particularly illustrating because Dragomanović eventually turned it into a prototype for different locations in Socialist Yugoslavia in order to offer an efficient and economical solution for building new department stores.<sup>184</sup> By repeating the “Na-Ma” prototype in Vukovar and in two locations in Novi Sad, Dragomanović's project showed how an architectural model from Western Europe was imported and re-conceptualized in the context of Yugoslav state-socialism, and then dispersed throughout the Yugoslav urban space. The department store “Na-Ma” in New Zagreb, therefore, revealed the role of the urban environment in materializing the agendas of Yugoslav state-socialism, and serving as an important means of both reflecting and constituting the Yugoslav socialist state. Moreover, it also shed light on the transnational dimension in the process of mobilizing architecture and urban planning for state-building through the local interpretation of the otherwise uniform late modernist architecture and urbanism.

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.





**Figure 13.** Department Store “Zvezda”, Novi Sad, 1968.

In this chapter, I illustrated the role of department stores in Zagreb in the 1960s in transnational exchanges between Socialist Yugoslavia and “the West”, primarily United States and Western Europe. This transnational dimension encompassed both the material and symbolic processes that affected the development of department stores in Zagreb, as well as the framework that the department store offered for various experts in creating professional networks across the borders of Socialist Yugoslavia.

As I showed, the development of modern retail, as well as late modernist architecture and urban planning were significantly influenced by the import of Western technology and expert knowledge. Despite their Western origin, retail experts saw the self-service system, as well as other business practices and know-how related to department stores not only as neutral systems, but as phenomena suitable for the state-socialist context, particularly as a means of contributing to the Yugoslav state's agenda, that proclaimed the satisfaction of personal needs and individual ownership as rights of Yugoslav citizens. In a similar way, Yugoslav architects and urban planners were equally keen to import Western European architectural models for designing department stores, but were at the same time more reflective of their potentially dangerous commercial aspects that had to be transformed by enhancing their societal role in becoming the leading elements of communal life in new neighborhoods.

## Conclusion

From entering the first department store “Na-Ma” on the Square of the October Revolution, crossing the river to visit the “Na-Ma” store in the pedestrian oasis of New Zagreb, and finally existing through the 9-story building on Kvaternik Square, in this thesis I depicted the different protagonists, activities and influences that defined the development of department stores as retail spaces, as well as the degrees of impact that this development had in defining the economic, social and urban conditions in Zagreb in the 1960s. Therefore, by focusing on the department store as a less obvious location under state-socialism, I explored and connected the history of retail, urban planning and transnational exchange in the formation of Socialist Yugoslavia in the early Cold War period.

In the context of the new political and economic framework of the Yugoslav state from the late 1950s, in chapter 2 I demonstrated that department stores through the introduction of the self-service system in different degrees served as main vehicles for improving retail, stimulating domestic production and, more importantly, increasing personal consumption as one of the main economic agendas of the Yugoslav state. These changes brought by the self-service system affected both the interiors of department stores through new furniture, technical equipment, arrangement of goods and spatial design, as well as the urban environment that the department stores occupied. In chapter 3, I showed that thanks to their central position in the urban space, department stores revitalized old and improved new neighborhoods in the city. These impacts, however, encompassed a material, as well as a social dimension because self-service department stores also facilitated the supply of consumer goods, increased the agency of consumers, improved the hygiene, efficiency and cost of shopping, increased personal consumption and the living standard, as well as created new locations for socialization and leisure in the growing city.

The main protagonists in these processes were the professionals – from retail experts to architects and urban planners – who worked in and for the department store chain “Na-Ma”, as well as in other governing bodies and institutions in the city. By navigating through the complex political and economic situation in Socialist Yugoslavia – that was defined by the different units in the self-management system such as assemblies, councils, enterprises and housing communities, as well as by an economic system characterized by simultaneous increase in market liberalization and state intervention – these experts managed to rapidly implement the self-service system, plan new department stores, and in that way significantly improve the otherwise underdeveloped retail sector.

Moreover, as I showed in chapter 4, these processes were also stimulated through the contacts of the experts with their Western counterparts, primarily from Western Europe, and to a certain degree the United States, that enabled the import and subsequent implementation of Western models into the local context. By seeing them as neutral categories, these experts to a large degree used Western technology and know-how in retail, architecture and urban planning in order to improve their own practices. At the same time, however, the retail experts, as well as the architects and urban planners, acknowledged the specific importance of department stores for the Yugoslav socialist state. By recognizing the role that self-service department stores have in contributing to the development of the different sectors in the Yugoslav economic system, as well as in improving the conditions in the urban and social environment, these experts emphasized the societal significance of department stores in advancing Yugoslav state-socialism. In this way, department stores contributed both to the “personal happiness of man”, as well as to the “general social progress”, that the Program of the LCY from 1958 characterized as being the primary aims of socialism.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> The LCY, *Yugoslavia's Way*, 133.

The “walk” through and around the space(s) of the department store(s) in Zagreb in the 1960s, therefore, was a long journey among many aisles, counters and showcases that offered a view into the various strategies and challenges that were present in planning and building the “mirror(s) of the whole city” under state-socialism.<sup>186</sup> Many more spheres were also left unexplored – the question of labor in the retail sector under state-socialism, the briefly mentioned issue of gender in relation to women as both consumers and workers, exchanges between Socialist Yugoslavia and other Eastern European state-socialist countries, for example, through the International Association of Socialist Department Stores in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the subsequent history of Yugoslav department stores in these drastically different decades, and in other spatial contexts within Socialist Yugoslavia. All of these topics are left in the storeroom of the department store in expectation of future research to put them on display.

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<sup>186</sup> \*\*\* “Zagrebački Velesajam i 'Na-Ma” [“The Zagreb Fair and 'Na-Ma”], 2.

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F 37 NO Grada Zagreba (People's Committee of the City of Zagreb)

37.3 Sjednice izvršnih vijeća (3 Sessions of the Executive Councils)

3.8-31 Zapisni sjednica za robni promet (Minutes of Meeting of the Trade Council)

37.5 Opći odjel (General Department)

360. Prijedlog perspektivnog plana razvitka – 1. razrada, Zagreb, srpanj 1957 (The Proposal for the Prospective Development Plan – 1<sup>st</sup> Elaboration, Zagreb, July 1957)

4.7-71 Zavod za urbanizam. Narodni magazin – Robna kuća Trnje (4.7-71 Department for Urbanism. People's Store – Department Store Trnje)

F 909 NOO Trešnjevka (People's Committee of Trešnjevka Municipality)

9. Zapisni sjednica Općinskog vijeća (Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council)

F 945 NOO Remetinec (People's Committee of Remetinec Municipality)

15. Zapisnici sjednica Savjeta za društveni plan i financije (Minutes of Meeting of the Council for Social Planning and Finances)

F 945 Skupština općine Remetinec (The Assembly of the Remetinec Municipality)

5. Zapisnici sjednica Općinskog vijeća i Vijeća radne zajednice (Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council and the Council of the Working Community)

10. Zapisnici zajedničkih sjednica Općinskog vijeća i Vijeća radne zajednice (Minutes of Meeting of the Municipality Council and the Council of the Working Community)

F 948 Skupština Grada Zagreba (The City Assembly of Zagreb)

1. Zapisnici sjednica Gradskog vijeća (Minutes of Meeting of the City Council)

178. Zapisnici sjednica Privrednog vijeća (Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council)

183. Zapisnici sjednica Privrednog vijeća (Minutes of Meeting of the Economic Council)

F 1122 Zbirka građevne dokumentacije (Building Documentation)

879. Robna kuća Na-Ma Dubrava (Department Store Na-Ma Dubrava)

1640. Tržni centar – Volovčica - Ivanićgradska (Market Center – Volovčica – Ivanićgradska)

2594/3061. Trešnjevački trg – NAMA robna kuća (Trešnjevka Square – NAMA Department Store).

F 1172 Zagrebački velesajam (Zagreb Fair)  
963. Upravni odbor – zapisi sjednica (Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors)  
2312. Propaganda uz prateći sadržaj – 1958 (Propaganda and Additional Materials – 1958)

HAZU-HMA: Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti – Hrvatski muzej arhitekture  
(Croatian Academy of Science and Arts – Croatian Museum of Architecture)  
Ostavština Aleksandra Dragomanovića. (The Legacy of Aleksandar Dragomanović)  
*Problematika robnih kuća na primjerima Trnsko-Zagreb, Novi Sad, Vinkovci*. Habilitacijski rad (*The Problems of Department Stores on the Examples Trnsko-Zagreb, Novi Sad, Vinkovci*. Habilitation Thesis)

AJ: Archives of Yugoslavia (Arhiv Jugoslavije)

F 163 Ministarstvo trgovine i snabdevanja vlade FNRJ (Ministry of Trade and Supply FPRY)  
49. Državna trgovačka preduzeća, trgovačke radnje i zadruga (State Retail Enterprises, Retail Stores and Cooperatives)

F 694 Poslovna zajednica robnih kuća Jugoslavije (The Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores)  
Q-3 Organi i tela poslovne i radne zajednice – Zapisnici i materijali sa sednica Upravnog odbora (Organs and Bodies of the Business and Working Community – Minutes of Meeting and Materials of the Board of Directors)  
Q-12 – Q-14 Međunarodna saradnja – Aktivnost Poslovne zajednice u okviru MOSU (International Cooperation, Q-12 - Q-14 Activity of the Yugoslav Business Association of Department Stores in MOSU)

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