In SEARCH OF TRANSPARENCY
Furtive Maneuvering Behind Star Architect’s Project for Belgrade

by Ljubica Slavkovic

Megan o beogradskog projekta studija Zaha Hadid

Ub putraz za transparenzijom

Tution of Belgrade was established. In the 1980s it was renamed the Publishing and Graphics Institution of Belgrade (Beogradski izdavacki grafički zavod) BIGZ, the name by which the building is known today. In 1992 it was declared a cultural monument and was placed under the protection of the City Institute for the Protection of Monuments, the building fell into ruin during the 1990s as the BIZ publishing house gradually went bankrupt. In this period parts of the building began to be rented by different occupants; it was used as a warehouse and by small businesses, art studios etc. The building was then sold in 2007 to a private company which originally planned to renovate the entire building and turn it into a five-star hotel. However, the planned reconstruction has still not begun and the space continues to be rented for various purposes, which has transformed the former print-shop into a self-styled center of Belgrade alternative culture. Even though the building is in increasingly bad shape, the creatives it now houses include independent artists and alternative bands, famous clubs, art workshops, a radio station, a circus and a theatre lab.

Perhaps the building as it is used today - squatted and the inner spaces transformed into artist and music studios - is a true but belated response to the social conviction of Modernist architecture – to make space for groups excluded from the dominant system. And in doing so this building has expanded its discourse to incorporate another key notion of modern architecture.

1 "Zaha Hadid Regenerates Belgrade", B92 http://www.b92.net/kultura/art_durbin.php?nav_category=1210&nav_id=665066

ложен око београдског пројекта студија Захе Хадид

У потрази за транспаренцијом

"Изградњом савременог комплекса на месту некадашње текстилне фабрике Беко, који је дизајнирали Заха Хадид, биће настањен модерни развој Београда који је био нагло прекинут осамдесетих година прошлог века. Нова мултифункционална грађевина код Калемегдана пробудиће београдску дух "модерн""карактеристичан за главни град Србије тридесетих, педесетих и седамдесетих година." 1

Можда је данашњи начин коришћења објекта (једна врста сквотирања и пренамена у просторе креативних радионица) прави, мада закаснели, одговор на један од друштвених задатака модерног покрета – да реши проблеме оних група које су угложе у односу на доминантни систем.
На овај начин у домаћој штампи најављено је идејно решење Беко манипулација који је израдио стидо Захе Хадид (Zaha Hadid Architects). Проектовани архитект у срцу Београда од стране домаћих медија дочеће се са неприхватним одсуством и у апсолутно позитивној конотацији. Већина текстова у медијима, вероватно писана на основу исхватања са овогодишње београдске недеље дизајна (Belgrade Design Week) чији је циљ да „истакне предности пројекта“, делује наручен из стране пројектанта или инвеститора. Домаћи медији фокусирали су се, без искаке уштаци, на клучне речи које инвеститор жели да пласира: напредак, савременост, јединственост Београда у региону и позиционирање на светској мапи (ангажовањем популарног архитектурског студија), нови животни стандард итд. Уследиле су и шаренолике реакције, како шире и стручне јавности. Сам дизајн објекта, односно планински висок архитектонски елеменат дизајна је разнолик. Од одсуствовања, истичућа авангардности дизајна и критиковања неприхватности узастопношћу односно и повратком на компанију која је ова иницијатива реализовала и створила достигнућа широм света. Стварно, по архитектури и реализацији овог објекта чини као слику успешности и потенцијала, њено активирање, као и уклањање ошаруних објекта из ближег окружења. Негативне критике односе се на неприхватност јаке културне и историјске природе објекта најстаријем градском језгру, табарите и положај комплекса у односу на Калемегданску тврђаву, третирање околног окружења једног од најважнијих наслеђа Баната, као и његове некутича зижа и претрпавање неприхватности од стране домаћих медија. На прелазу, дистрофија и ошаруна објеката из ближег окружења, негативне критике могу да ошарују објект у свом ближком окружењу. Негативне критике архитектуре и објеката из ближег окружења могу да вреднују објект у свом ближком окружењу.

Важна карактеристика успеле архитектонске реализације тиче се прилагођености интервенције контексту - просторном, историјском итд., што након презентовања овог пројекта јавност највише и доводи у питање.

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successful designing of contemporary objects in the vicinity of historical sites as well as for pushing the boundaries of architecture and urban design. "Still, most criticisms concerned the choice of the location and how well the project is adapted to the environment, these include comments that such a project is welcomed but would be more appropriate on the other side of the river Sava. How is it that a project of such dimensions has come to be planned for this location? What mechanisms and actors have been included in this process and what degree of influence have citizens been able to exert in terms of their right to a city? These issues were raised by the initiative WHO Builds The City as a part of the round table discussion The Feud of Kalemegdan. 4

The Feud of Kalemegdan was organised as a response to the amendments made to the City of Belgrade Regulative Plan concerning the aforementioned construction site between Dunavka street, Tadeus Koscusko and Vojvoda Bojovic boulevard where the former BEKO factory is situated. The key issues discussed by the round table concerned the limited possibility for citizens to become included in the making of any such amendments, and that this inclusion should be early on in the overall process by which amendments to the city plans are made. It was discussed that the public should also be made aware of the projects which the amendments consequently enable, as well any decisions made by public institutions which, in the opinion of round table participants, did not serve the public interest. The general conclusion was: "the problem is not a lack of observance of procedures and norms, but the lack of transparency of the reasons behind decisions made by public authorities."

In 2007 the Board of Trustees sold the real estate previously belonging to the bankrupt BEKO to the Greek company Lamda Development, registered in Serbia as 'Property Development', for a price of 55.8 million Euros. In November 2008 this company concluded a contract with a private company The Centre for Planning Urban Development (CPUD) which designs urban plans. They launched an initiative to amend the City Regulation Plan – that regulates the entire aforementioned bloc the major part of which had been purchased by Property Development. The City Secretariat responded and sought the opinion of relevant public enterprises such as the Institute for Monument Protection, the municipality of Stari grad, the Urban Planning Institute etc. Having received them, it forwarded these opinions to the Belgrade City Planning Commission. The Commission forwarded the Draft for an Amendment to the City Plan to the City Assembly for implementation.
A year later, in December 2009, the Assembly's decision was published in the Official Gazette, but it is only then that the general public was acquainted with the fact that there had been an amendment to the City Plan concerning the aforementioned bloc near the Belgrade Fortress. The decision published in the Official Gazette stated that the CPUD had drafted the amendment to the City Plan and that this had been financed by the company Property Development. The initiative WHO BUILD THE CITY drew attention to the fact that the law states the first thing to do when making an amendment to a city planning document is to ascertain the public interest. It also alerted the public to the fact that, paradoxically, a private investor had financed the drafting of an amendment to the City Plan, and how can this serve the public interest.

Proper procedure requires that the CPUD should have first made a preliminary draft plan, to be forwarded to the Planning Commission and the Stari grad municipality. As a result, in summer 2011 the state organized a public hearing concerning the amendment. They were deliberated by city planning documents. She claimed that the CPUD had previously worked on making the draft decision of the City Plan for this bloc given the fact that all former or present CPUD employees were still employed by the investor so that ambiguous plans and a project design team should make an amendment to a city planning document. She also alerted the public to the fact that, paradoxically, a private investor had financed the drafting of an amendment to the City Plan, and how can this serve the public interest.

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