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SLAVONIA HOTEL SYSTEM

PLANNING AND PROGRAMME STARTING POINTS, ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT
AND REALIZATION (1974-1982)

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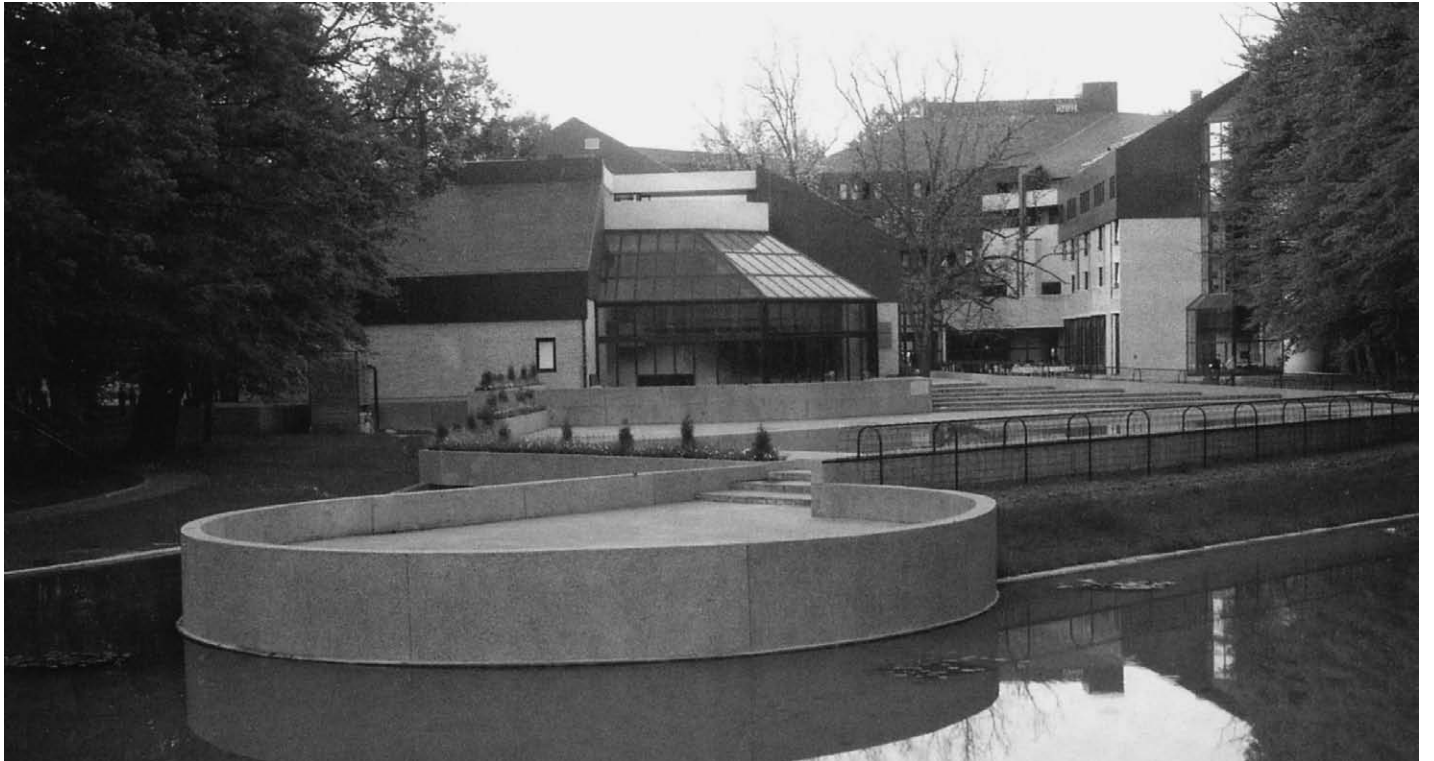


FIG. 1 SHS: THE TERMAL HOTEL IN DARUVAR, 1975 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1976-1979 COMPLETED PROJECT (PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AFTER CONSTRUCTION)

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SLAVONIA HOTEL SYSTEM PLANNING AND PROGRAMME STARTING POINTS, ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT AND REALIZATION (1974-1982)

CONSTRUCTION OF TOURIST FACILITIES
CROATIAN TOURISM
HOTEL ARCHITECTURE
SALAJ, MATIJA
SLAVONIA HOTEL SYSTEM (SHS)

A project that stands out among Croatian hotel architecture of the second half of the 20th century is the unique Slavonia Hotel System (SHS), designed in the mid-1970s by a team of experts from the Urban Institute of Croatia and headed by architect Matija Salaj. The SHS project was based on the principle of standardization in terms of spatial-functional organization, architectural design, interior design, furnishing and visual communication elements as well as operation and market penetration, and was envisaged as the driving force behind continental tourism development in Slavonia and Baranja. This paper examines the planning framework, program specifica-

tions, and urban-architectural design of the hospitality and tourist facilities of the SHS (including a city hotel model in two variations, a spa hotel, and a motel) by utilizing sources from Salaj's estate and archival documentation from the Urban Institute. Notably, it includes Salaj's explanations of the SHS project and his perspectives on the features of hospitality and tourist facility architecture, as presented in professional journals and conference publications. These aspects are complemented by a review of tourism development trends in the 1970s and the characteristics of hotel architecture in market economy.

INTRODUCTION: POST-1970 TRENDS IN TOURIST FACILITY CONSTRUCTION AND ARCHITECT MATIJA SALAJ

In the architectural output of the Yugoslav socialist era, hotel architecture particularly stands out due to its high-quality design solutions and the diversity of authors' approaches. Starting in the 1970s, the architecture of hospitality and tourist facilities experienced significant growth, influenced by global architectural trends and the expansion of international tourism.¹ Similarities between certain domestic and international accomplishments in hotel architecture highlighted the development trends in Yugoslav and Croatian architecture. Concurrently, trends in the tourism market, expectations of foreign guests, and the tourism potential for generating a steady inflow of foreign currency required that the hotel industry and the construction of tourist accommodation align with international standards (Antešević, 2022: 425-430). Backed by international loans, tourism emerged as one of the country's development objectives. The period from 1965 to 1975 is referred to as the golden age of tourism in Croatia, as nearly 70% of all basic accommodation facilities available in the country by the end of the 1980s were constructed during this time (Vukonic, 2005: 153-154, 156). Years of investor preference for tourism investment along the coast caused the continental regions, particularly cities, spa towns, and mountain areas, to fall behind in tourism development. Although the potential of continental areas for tourism was

acknowledged in the early regional plans that were initially developed for these regions (such as the 1958 Krapina District Regional Spatial Plan; the 1963 Spatial Plan for the Development of Tourism and Recreation in the Catchment Area of the Zagorje Main Road; and the 1966 Regional Spatial Plan for the Development of Slavonia Tourism and Recreational Centres), the Adriatic coast remained more attractive for investment, leading to a concentration of tourist facilities in that area. In the planning documents for Slavonia, the largest continental region, tourism was designated as only the third developmental priority, following agriculture and industry. Consequently, this paper investigates how tourism development in Slavonia was perceived through planning-program concepts, spatial plans, and architectural projects at the regional level, as well as whether this approach led to the realization of built architecture. The core of the research relies on identifying spatial plans and architectural projects located in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb, newspaper articles, and other relevant literature, aiming to gain insights into the spatial and architectural solutions of that era.

When designing tourist architecture, architects were increasingly guided by the question: *What impression and experience should hotel architecture provide its users with?*² The hotel was viewed as an object of consumption that needs to find its way to users, and to achieve that, architects did not shy away from irrational design solutions.³ With the weakening of modernist influences, city hotel architecture, which had a foothold in

¹ After the Second World War, the concept of socially planned tourism development was employed not only in Yugoslavia but also in the neighbouring Central and Eastern European socialist countries. For more, see the recent literature: Stefan, 2022 (Romania); Rosenbaum, 2015 (Soviet Union); Bachvarov, 1999 (Bulgaria); Balcerzak, 2021 (Poland); Light et al., 2020 (post-war changes in tourism development in Central and Eastern Europe), and others.

² For more details on the modern tradition of Croatian tourist architecture and hotel architecture on the Adriatic see: Mrduljas, 2011: 33-45; Kulić, Mrduljas, Thaler, 2012; Mrduljas, Kulić, 2012; Mrduljas, 2013: 171-207; Šerman, Mrduljas, 2016: 1056-1062; Mrduljas, 2018a: 164-189; Mrduljas, 2018b: 78-83.

³ Architect Boris Magas, explaining the concept of the hotel building, says that the functional organization of the hotel consists of three basic components (accommodation-individual tract, social-public tract and service-administrative tract), whose mutual relations form the structural scheme of the hotel, and in that regard we distinguish the following basic types of hotel facilities: a vertically developed facility on a horizontal tract and its horizontal variant, atrium, terrace, pavilion and block hotel (Magas, 1997: 604).

⁴ With the purpose of exchanging experiences and discussing issues in the realization of hotel architecture from all republics, expert meetings or symposia were occasionally organized.

5 Over time, some architects specialized in the design of hospitality and tourist facilities and became leading experts and consultants in the field, such as Ante Rožić, Matija Salaj, Julije De Luka, Zdravko Bregovac, Boris Magas, Andrija Cicin-Sain, Lovro Perković, Miroslav Begović, Žarko Vincek, Rikard Marasović, Jerko Rošin and others.

6 **Matija Salaj** (Vukovar, 15 December 1932 – Zagreb, 5 June 2014) attended elementary school in Zagreb (1943), secondary school (Real School) in Vukovar (1951), and graduated from the Faculty of Architecture and Civil Engineering of the University of Zagreb (1958). He wrote his graduation thesis on the topic of hotels in Zadar under the mentorship of Professor Mladen Kauzlaric. From 1958 to 1962, he worked in the project bureau *Suradnik* in Makarska; from 1962 to 1991 he worked in the Urban Institute of Croatia in Zagreb, first as an independent designer (1962-1982), then as an advisor and director of the Institute for Detailed Planning and Architecture (1984-1988). He was the head of the tourism centre since June 1976. Since 1986, he was a lecturer at the postgraduate study Economics of Tourism at the Faculty of Economics of the University of Zagreb. He served as director of the Institute for Spatial Planning at the Ministry of Environmental Protection, Spatial Planning and Construction of the Republic of Croatia on two occasions, 1991-1999 and 2004-2006. After a series of engagements at the *Suradnik* bureau, which entailed work on urban and architectural solutions, mainly hotel, residential, business and administrative buildings, tourist zones and resorts, he intensively worked at the Urban Institute of Croatia on the development of (regional) spatial plans and tourism development programmes (for Slavonia, Istria, Pula, Makarska, the island of Cres, the Vrbas estuary, Sara and Prokletije), general urban plans (of Makarska, Baska Voda, Tucepi, Slavonska Orahovica and others), detailed urban plans for several cities and towns, most often for central city zones or for the construction of individual buildings or complexes, special studies (Slavonia Hotel System), and programmes, detailed urban plans and projects for tourism and recreation complexes (Makarska, Poreč, Mali Lošinj, Trogir, Imotski, Vukovar, Daruvar, Lipik Decani, Brezovica, and Egypt and Tanzania in Africa). He is the author and equal co-author of several conceptual solutions, competition projects and detailed designs for tourist accommodation and hospitality facilities (hotels, auxiliary buildings, motels, restaurants) in Makarska, Brela, Podgora, Omis, Zadar, Poreč, Dubrovnik, Zagreb, Virovitica, Vukovar, Daruvar, Beli Manastir and elsewhere, as well as other buildings for residential, business, administrative, cultural and sports purposes in Makarska, Borovo, Zagreb, Samobor, Vukovar and elsewhere. Some of Salaj's most significant realizations are: sports centre and school DTO Partizan in Zaostrog (1961); Mirna hotel pavilion in Brela (1963), co-authors J. De Luca and A. Rožić; Vučedol restaurant in Vukovar (1963); Maestral hotel in Brela (1965), co-authors J. De Luca, A. Rožić and B. Bernardi; cinema theatre in Borovo (1966); Franciscan Grammar School in Samobor (1969), co-author E. Sersić; church in South Zagreb (1971-81), co-author E. Sersić; Mediteran Hotel in Poreč (1971); Termal hotel in Daruvar and Dunav hotel in Vukovar (1979), co-author of the preliminary design Z. Krznarić; Galijot hotel in Poreč (1981); reconstruction of the Mimara Museum in Zagreb (1987), co-authors M. Kranjc, I. Piteša and B. Serbetic. From 1959 to 1990, he participated in about twenty public and invitational architectural and urban planning competitions. He won several awards and professional recognitions. This summary of M. Salaj's biography was compiled on the basis of Salaj's autobiography, list of works and bibliography from January 1989, kept as the family legacy in Zagreb (MSL).

7 The newly emerged social and economic conditions led to the establishment of the Community of Interest for the Development of Hospitality and Tourism for Slavonia and Baranja in 1973.

functionalist rationality for much longer due to characteristic urban conditions, gradually acquired postmodernist features during the 1970s, expressed through form associations, spatial conceptions and new materialization possibilities (Antešević, 2022: 479-495, 553-570). City hotel architecture thus started abandoning conventional functionalist models of hotel amenity organization, giving way to form-refined functionalism or aestheticized regionalism.⁴ Many investors, having found a foothold in congress tourism, adapted their programmes for the construction of city hotels to new functional needs, including more commercial amenities.

A prominent name among Croatian architects who actively designed tourist facilities as well as contributed notably through professional articles, analyses and conference papers on aspects and problems of the construction of tourism facilities⁵ is that of Matija Salaj (1932-2014), with hotel architecture as his specific area of expertise (Fig. 2).⁶ Salaj worked for three decades at the Urban Institute of Croatia, where he either led or participated in the development of numerous spatial and urban plans for tourist areas in Croatia and other former Yugoslav republics (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro), and was also the author or co-author of architectural projects of several hotels, motels and catering facilities in Croatia. Notable realizations of hotel facilities on the Adriatic, of which he was either the main designer or one of the authors, include the Maestral Hotel in Brela with its annexes Mirna and Marina and hotels Mediteran and Galijot in Poreč. However, the project that stands out is the complex and comprehensive project for the Slavonia Hotel System (SHS), a chain of hotels that Salaj conceptually designed and developed together with his colleague Zvonimir Krznarić (1938-2011). Before the creation of architectural projects of established types of SHS hotels and motels for designated locations, a study was made to analyse programme indicators and basic models of the system and accommodation capacities.

Starting from the new market-oriented organizational forms in tourism and hotel industry, as well as the spectrum of resources for tourism development in the continental part of Croatia, which was neglected compared to the Adriatic coast, the Urban Institute of Croatia, in cooperation with the Interest Community for the Development of Hospitality and Tourism for Slavonia and Baranja⁷, launched at the end of 1973 activities for designing the SHS project with the goal of developing a network of tourist accommodation facilities in Slavonia according to the established priorities of tourist development. The Resolution

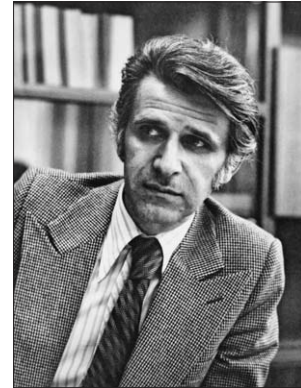


FIG. 2 ARCHITECT MATIJA SALAJ (PHOTOGRAPH FROM 1970S)

TABLE I OVERVIEW OF ACCOMMODATION FACILITIES OF THE SLAVONIJA HOTEL SYSTEM

No.	Name of the hotel	Location	Project Year	Type/ model	Number of beds	Realization	Floor Plan
1	—	Dakovo	1977	GH	100	no	compact
2	—	Slavonski Brod	1978	GH	300	no	compact
3	„Dunav”	Vukovar	1979	GH	100	yes	compact
4	„Slavonija”	Vinkovci	1979	GH	100	yes	compact
5	„Park”	Nasice	1980	GH	100	yes	compact
6	—	Beli Manastir	1975	TR	60	no	dispersed
7	—	Satnica/Valpovo	1975	TR	50	no	compact
8	„Sava”	Jasenovac	1977(?)	TR	50	yes	dispersed
9	„Borik”	Donji Miholjac	1979	TR	50	yes	dispersed
10	„Termal”	Daruvar	1976	LH	250	yes	dispersed
11	„Lipik”	Lipik	1978	LH	250	yes	dispersed
12	-	Sredanci	1976	M	100	no	dispersed

City hotel (CH); Tourism and recreation hotel (TR); Spa/healthcare hotel (SH); Motel (M)

on Economic Policy and Measures for Further Implementation of the Social Development Plan of Yugoslavia from 1966 to 1970 gave certain priority to investments in economically underdeveloped republics and regions (AY, 130-748-1206).⁸ With the adoption of amendments to the constitution, followed by the change of the SFRY⁹ Constitution in 1974, numerous economic functions previously held by the federal government were transferred to the republics, autonomous provinces and local governments, leaving it up to them to decide on the pace and direction of tourism development (Mandarić, 1965: 3; Nešić, 1972: 112).

PLANNING AND PROGRAMME
STARTING POINTS FOR THE REALIZATION
OF THE SLAVONIA HOTEL SYSTEM

Activities of the Urban Institute of Croatia for the planning and programming of tourism and hospitality development and construction in Slavonia and Baranja date back to the 1960s, when the Institute was in charge of drafting the long-term Regional Spatial Plan for the Development of Slavonia Tourism and Recreational Centres (1966).¹⁰ This higher-level plan has since become the basis for the development and processing of individual tourist sites and the basis for adopting medium- and short-term development plans. Tourism in Slavonia, based on continental resources such as nature, gastronomy, sports, mountaineering, spa resorts, cultural heritage, etc., was planned as an additional activity at the local and regional level (Kranjčević, Stober, 2023: 650, 653-654). Analyses showed that Slavonia did not have a primary tourist area where a higher concentration of tourist facilities could be built in one place

(Stipancić et al., 1975: 59). With the development priority given to agriculture and industry, tourism was a tertiary area and the supply was poor. Looking to approach the planning of tourism and hospitality industry in Slavonia and Baranja in more detail, preparations were soon underway for the Plan and Programme for Tourist Development of Slavonia and Baranja Priority Sites from 1971 to 1975. After this Plan and Programme was adopted, further steps were taken regarding specific realizations aimed at improving the tourism supply. Not only did transit routes and economic centres of the region generally lack adequate facilities to accommodate tourists, but they also lacked tourist capacities and city amenities for the local population, to meet the needs of internal or “low-intensity tourism” as it was also called.

Based on the experience in preparing fundamental planning documents for the development of tourism and individual urban projects initiated and led by the Urban Institute, the need for a complex “reconstruction” was recognized, not only regarding the tourist offer of Slavonia and Baranja, but also regarding the role, tasks and operation of the hotel industry in such an area (EMS, Salaj, 1982). Under the Regional Spatial Plan for the Development of Slavonia Tourism and Recreational Centres, the region was divided into three basic areas – districts (Posavina District, Mountain District and Danube-Drava District). For each district, distribution was made in line with its tourist potential – tourist recreation centres; spas and health tourism centres; transit points; and hunting and fishing points (Kranjčević, Stober, 2023: 654). Optimal placement of tourist facilities emerged as one of the special problematic aspects of tourism planning in the spatial scope of the receptive region (Čomic, 1983: 55-65).¹¹ If there is an area that requires all

8 AY, 130-748-1206: Information on submitting a request for a loan to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Belgrade, October 15, 1969.

9 Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

10 The legal basis for the preparation of spatial plans and the implementation of regional development projects in Croatia was the Urban and Regional Spatial Planning Act, first adopted in 1961, with later amendments, the most important of which were amendments from 1966 and 1969. According to the provisions of the Act, regional and urban plans were drawn up for a period of at least twenty years, subject to revision every five years, due to the variable nature of social development plans. See in: Urban and Regional Spatial Planning Act, Official Gazette of SR Hrvatska, No. 21 from 1961. For more details on the position of tourism in regional development and spatial planning, see: Andrić, 1977: 11-28; Kranjčević, 2021: 1183-1207.

forms of human activity to be harmonized with natural potentials, it is the planning of spatial and economic development of tourism (Kiš, 1977: 44). Therefore, choosing the right place for the construction of a tourist facility was considered as one of the first prerequisites for the appropriateness and success of an investment venture and a series of qualities (Mitrovic, 1970: 2). Fedor Kritovac, an architect and architecture critic, said in the early 1970s that the design of tourism, viewed as an organized system, provides an opportunity to realize, at least to an extent, the vision of shaping the entire environment when designers opt for an integrated approach (Kritovac, 1971: 18).

Led by the fact that hospitality and tourism facilities are a fundamental and characteristic receptive factor of every tourist area, influencing tourism types and forms and its economic effects, a team of experts from the Urban Institute, headed by Matija Salaj, designed the Slavonia Hotel System model¹², based in essence on the international hotel chain concept in terms of operation and market penetration as well as in terms of design, furnishing and amenities of accommodation and hospitality facilities. Designing a hotel chain¹³, initially for one region, but with a view of expansion on the national and international markets alike, stems from the Urban Institute's experience in tourism development planning and from observing changes on the tourist market in the social planning domain. Transformation of hotel companies was one of the outcomes of the global expansion of tourism in the 1970s, and the SHS project represented a current solution for the timely introduction of new forms in hotel operation and offer. For the SHS, a significant role was played by the Regional Spatial Plan, the 1973 Spatial Plan of the Socialist Republic of Croatia – Tourism Economy and the Ba-

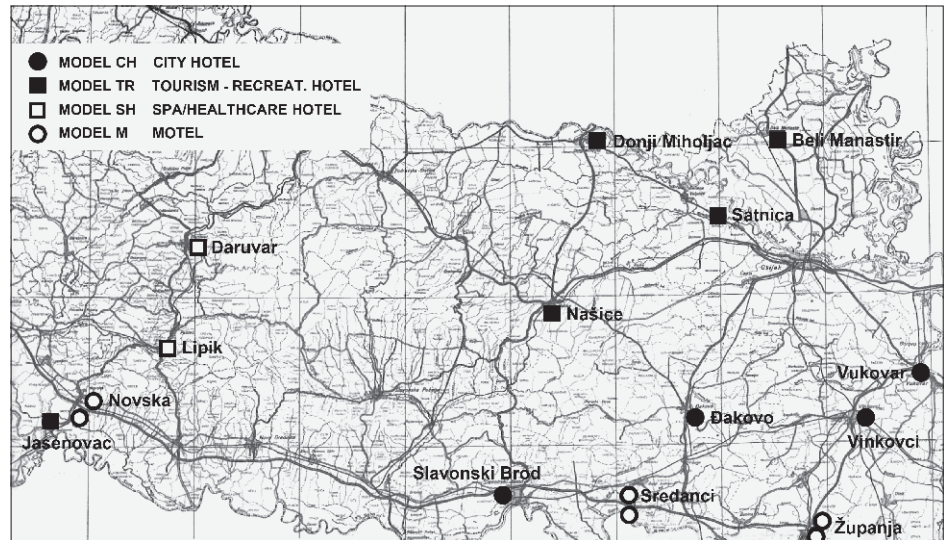


FIG. 3 MAP OF SLAVONIA AND BARANJA WITH THE DISPOSITION OF BASIC HOTEL MODELS BY TOWNS, 1974

sic Aspects of Long-Term Tourism Development in Yugoslavia. The defined starting points served as the basis for determining macro-locations and the capacity of facilities within the Slavonia Hotel System which was the first case of hotel and hospitality organization integration at the regional level in Yugoslavia (Fig. 3).¹⁴ Authors of the project believed that a hotel system like this was important for domestic construction enterprises, equipment manufacturers and trade networks of a number of complementary activities.

SLAVONIA HOTEL SYSTEM FACILITIES ARCHITECTURAL CONCEPT AND THEIR CONSTRUCTION

While a more active construction of tourist facilities in Yugoslavia began at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, proper investment experiences were gained, according to architect Jerko Rošin, only from the mid-1960s, when tourism in Yugoslavia took on the contours of modern international tourism (Rošin, 1977: 372). Such a status inevitably raised the question of tourist architecture range and scope, for its goal was no longer simply to provide accommodation and basic services during a holiday, but also to create an atmosphere, an intimate human environment, a lucid rationality in the use of space, and in particular a connection with the landscape (Rošin, 1977: 374). Hotel architecture, built as the result of the planned construction of tourist facilities and extensive investment programs, gained special importance, balancing between global architectural practice and regional characteristics adapted to tourist presentation. For that reason, typological changes had to be introduced so that the amenities of new tourist

¹¹ A receptive region was considered to be a planning-programme polarized tourist-geographical region in which tourism is dominantly represented.

¹² Ante Stipancic and Boris Vukonic, both holding a master's degree in Tourism, participated in the elaboration of the project along with architects M. Salaj and Z. Krznaric.

¹³ A hotel chain represents a technologically and organizationally uniform and market-affirmed hotel company, with a recognizable business style and brand that operates on the domestic or international market (Svorcan, 2009: 57).

¹⁴ The framework programme for the development of project and investment documentation was determined during meetings held on December 12, 1973 in Osijek and January 11, 1974 in Vinkovci, while the final definition of capacities, especially in terms of transit needs along the Belgrade-Zagreb highway section, was discussed at meetings held on January 23 in Slavonski Brod, and later on January 30 and February 11, 1974 in Zagreb (Salaj et al., 1975: 16).

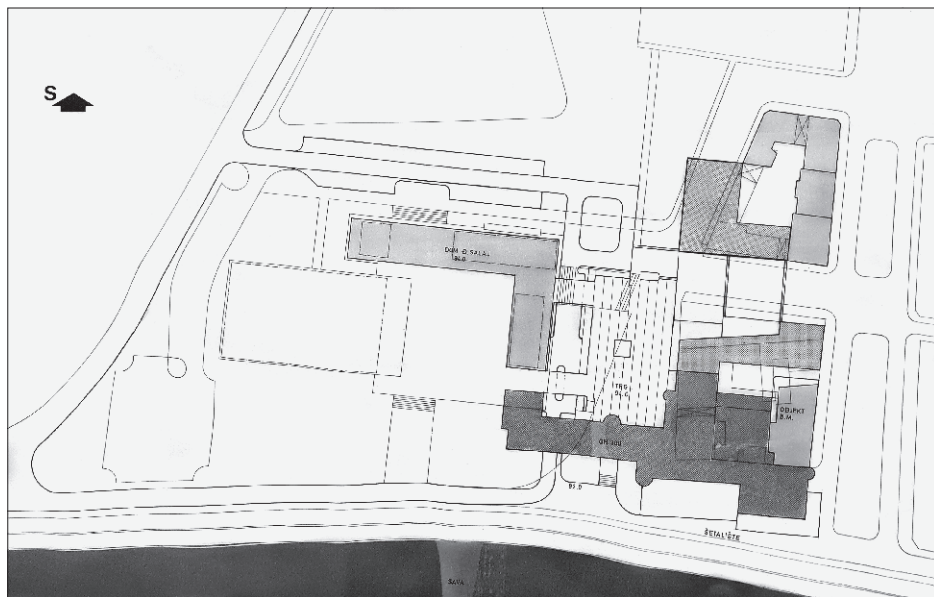


FIG. 4 SHS: HOTEL IN SLAVONSKI BROD (SECOND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN), 1978, SITUATIONAL PLAN

facilities would meet the individual needs of tourists and give them an adequate choice of places for holiday. Salaj believed that the architecture of tourist facilities should, through its design concept, spirit of form, and attention to detail, radiate joy and a sense of abundance. It should foster a connection with the heritage of its surroundings and provide an ongoing sense of novelty and unexperience. Only when understood in this manner does it acquire a new quality function within the context of the new functionalism of leisure usage, specifically the aesthetic-perceived function (psychofunction) of a space intended for relaxation (Salaj, 1982b: 10).¹⁵

The typological conception of SHS tourist facilities was impacted by the heterogeneous demand on the Slavonia and Baranja tourist market, evident through four groups of services – for business visitors, residential visitors, transit visitors and medical tourism. The authors, accordingly, proposed three basic facility models for the SHS: 1) a city-type hotel in two variants – a city hotel (CH) and a tourism and recreational hotel (TR) for business and residential visitors; 2) a spa/health-care hotel (SH) – located in well-known spa centres of Slavonia, complete with medical facilities; 3) a motel (M) – located on transit traffic routes, for visitors to stop and rest during their journey.¹⁶ Following a market study, prepared using the three facility models, three groups of accommodation capacities were determined: 1) 60-80 beds; 2) 100-120 beds; and 3) 250-300 beds (Stipancić et al., 1975: 43b-61; Salaj, 1982c: 21).¹⁷ Originally, the SHS project should have included 16-18 locations – most of them for city hotels and tourism and recreational hotels, followed by

motels and two locations for spa hotels (Salaj, 1982c: 22). From 1975 to 1977, conceptual architectural projects were prepared for the following 13 locations: city hotels and tourism and recreational hotels in Slavonski Brod (1975), Beli Manastir (1975), Donji Miholjac (1975), Jasenovac (1975), Satnica Fishpond (1975), Vukovar (1976), Đakovo (1977) and Našice (1977), spa-type hotels in Daruvar (1975) and Lipik (1977), and motels on the Zagreb-Belgrade motorway (double motels near Vinkovci and Županja – 1975 and at the Sredanci location near Slavonski Brod – 1976) (Milas, 1997: 171-205).¹⁸ For the hotels in Vinkovci, Beli Manastir and Daruvar, and the typical motel on the motorway, which were taken as typical examples, mock-ups were produced and their photographs were presented in the SHS basic model study (Stipancić, Salaj, Krznarić, 1975). Of the entire investment and construction plan, five facilities were built from 1977 to 1982, namely: spa hotels Termal in Daruvar (1976-1979) and Lipik in Lipik (1978-1982) and city hotels Borik in Donji Miholjac (1979), Dunav in Vukovar (1979-1980) and Slavonia in Vinkovci (1979-1980).¹⁹ In 1978, new conceptual design was prepared for a city hotel in Slavonski Brod, also within the SHS, but probably at another location – by the promenade along the Sava in the central city zone, to complete that space urbanistically and architecturally (Fig. 4). The partially interpolated hotel building was meant to complete part of the unfinished block of historicist architecture with the Brlic House and create a connection with the Đuro Salaj Memorial House, built behind on a wider area to a design by Zagreb architects Marijan Haberle and Minka Jurković (Haberle, 1976: 78-82).²⁰ Building on the ur-

FIG. 5 SHS: BORIK HOTEL IN DONJI MIHOLJAC, 1975 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1979 COMPLETED PROJECT, INTERIOR OF THE HOTEL BAR



¹⁵ One of the first architectural competitions in which Matija Salaj participated as a young architect, in a team with colleagues Emil Seršić and Ljubica Seršić, was the competition for a city hotel in Virovitica, announced in 1965. The internal competition in the second phase, after the evaluation of projects received during the public competition, ended with Salaj and Seršićes in the first place. In addition to a series of shortcomings, spatial-urbanistic qualities of their project were highlighted, manifested in the possibilities of dialogue with the environment (Rakić, 1965: 60, 62). The hotel was opened in 1971 under the name Slavonia. Salaj is also the author of the project for the development of the Vucedol tourist and recreation zone close to Vukovar, within which a restaurant was built by the Danube in 1963 according to his project. Two years later, Salaj also worked on the conceptual design of the Vucedol hotel in Vukovar.

¹⁶ Construction of tourist accommodation establishments was usually defined by a network plan divided into three main phases: the first consisted of the preparation of a pre-investment study, the second of the preparation of a directive programme, preliminary design, investment programme and project documentation (main project and detailed design), while the third phase included the selection of a contractor,

ban setting of the memorial house, designed in the high modern architecture, Krznarić and Salaj formed a smaller square between the memorial house and the hotel and connected it with the main city square.

Basic characteristics of SHS accommodation and hospitality facilities should have been visible in their typification and unique market penetration. In the organizational-functional and form-architectural sense, this implied certain common features – location, architectural processing, interior design, furnishing of public spaces and rooms (furniture, lighting fixtures, textiles, ceramics), technological equipment, visual communication standards (logo, typography, colour, etc.), service standards and types of food and beverage served. All models of SHS facilities, architecturally designed by taking into consideration the characteristics and conditions of a specific location (height regulation, dimensions, volume fit into the existing urban fabric or natural environment), have many common elements and form-spatial solutions stemming from the established standards. The design features of the SHS are visible in the consideration of regional characteristics and the application of identical or similar architectural elements, the applied constructive grid, spatial-functional organization, arrangement and furnishing of interior spaces, public amenities' relation to landscape and urban space, design of installations and typification of rooms in terms of dimensions, equipment and the finishing treatment. Describing the basic principle in designing modern hospitality and tourism facilities, as well as the role of the architect in that process, Matija Salaj emphasized that “to build spaces and facilities for rest and leisure obliges architects as par-

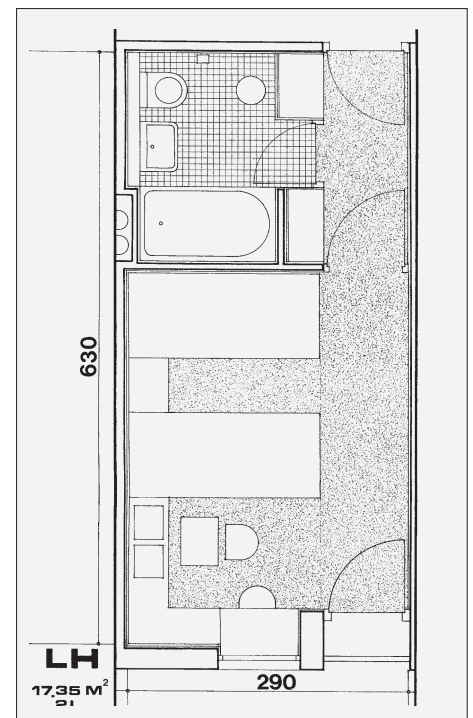
ticipants in that construction to fulfil two conflicting requirements: for the hotelier, to create a functional-technological plant-factory, a machine that will work and for the tourist, to create an environment in which they will feel more beautiful, better and wealthier than in their own home, a space humanized and stimulating for new experiences, meetings and relaxation” (Salaj, 1982a: 85).

The main design element, characteristic of all SHS facilities, is the pitched roof – a typical motif of Slavonia and Baranja's regional architecture, born from the specific climatic conditions of the area and functional needs. The dark tones of the roof covering, made of Eternit panels which were used in most designs also for the last floor in the form of a vertically lowered roof, were meant to be integrated into the environment, either into the existing urban settlement or the natural landscape, as well as to create an impression of smaller dimensions (Fig. 1). The roof motif complements the design principle of organizing amenities in a loose dimension. This affected the overall form and the elaborate appearance of the facades. To that end, but also to make the construction rational, in certain SHS buildings, except for larger or more compact hotels with a smaller capacity (Vukovar, Vinkovci, Slavonski Brod, Daruvar, Lipik, Satnica Fishpond, Našice), the accommodation tract was designed as a separate unit to avoid the problem of the service floor (Beli Manastir, Donji Miholjac, Jasenovac, motel on the motorway). Since public space amenities were located at different levels, by function and manner of use, the experience of an integral space was visually accentuated by smaller groups. The visible roof structure of interior spaces with public and service functions enabled many variations for individual groups/ensembles (Stipančić et al, 1975: 8). Monotonous spaces were thus avoided and certain motifs and elements accentuated (Fig. 5). For the facades, amber and red facade bricks were chosen, being a typical and traditional building material of the Pannonian Region. Entrances to buildings are artistically emphasized with stripes, and circular perforations are also used in wall panels (Fig. 6). One of the characteristics of the architectural concept is the integration of the landscape or urban space with public spaces and facilities, primarily hotel facilities, to emphasize, according to the author, “the humane component of the man-space relationship” (Stipančić et al., 1975: 7). In designs, this was solved by penetrating the green areas inside the building and by guiding views towards a more picturesque and high-quality outdoor space. In addition, the water element on the ground floor, right next to the building, was



FIG. 6 SHS: THERMAL HOTEL IN DARUVAR, 1975
CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1976-1979
COMPLETED PROJECT, FAÇADE SEGMENT

FIG. 7 SHS: DOUBLE ROOM MODEL FOR THE SPA
HOTEL IN DARUVAR, 1975



execution of works, supervision of works and a handover – technical inspection and acceptance of the building (Carevic, Simić, 1988: 288).

17 Number of beds: city hotel – 60, 100, 300; tourist-recreational hotel – 25, 50; spa hotel – 250; motel – 50, 100.

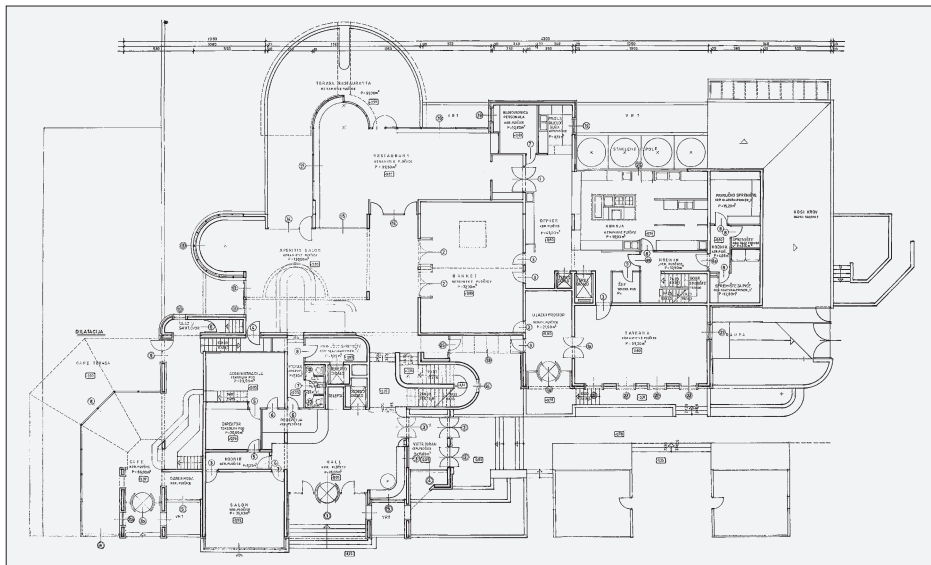
18 Although, according to the programme, a hotel was also planned for the location in Valpovo, there is no record of conceptual design for it, neither among the archival documentation, nor in the 1989 list of Salaj's works. Given that Satnica Fishpond is very close to Valpovo, it is possible that a project was prepared only for the hotel at Satnica Fishpond, and the plan for a city hotel in Valpovo was abandoned.

19 The Sava Hotel in Jasenovac (second half of the 1970s) and the Park Hotel in Našice (1980) were built in a somewhat modified form compared to the SHS project concept. Architect Branka Bek joined M. Salaj and Z. Krznarić as the co-author of the project for the hotel in Lipik. Detailed design for the hotel in Vinkovci was made by architects Nebojša Čalić and Marija Bošnjak.

20 The memorial house was officially opened in January 1972, almost a decade after its construction began (1961).



FIG. 8 SHS: DUNAV HOTEL IN VUKOVAR, 1976 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1979-1980 COMPLETED PROJECT. PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AFTER CONSTRUCTION (UP); GROUND FLOOR PLAN (RIGHT).



introduced to refine the space and achieve a better ambience.

The principle of standardization represented by the project was also applied in the organization of public amenities, by introducing typical blocks for certain functional groups – a hotel hall with a reception and an aperitif bar, a restaurant, a block of space for rent (banquet hall) and service areas (tavern, coffee bar, snack bar). Accommodation tracts were designed in a construction grid that cor-

responded to the basic module of the accommodation unit of 2.90 m in width, while depth depended on the model/facility type, which is why three variants existed (for a city/tourist hotel – 4.5 m and 5.4 m; for a spa hotel – 5.4 m and 6.9 m; for a motel – 4.5 m). The functional organization of the accommodation unit – the room was adapted to the facility's basic purpose, that is, to its guest profile and structure. Rooms were designed in two variants – single with a French bed and double

FIG. 9 SHS: LIPIK HOTEL IN LIPIK, 1977 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1978-1982 COMPLETED PROJECT, HOTEL APPEARANCE (RIGHT)

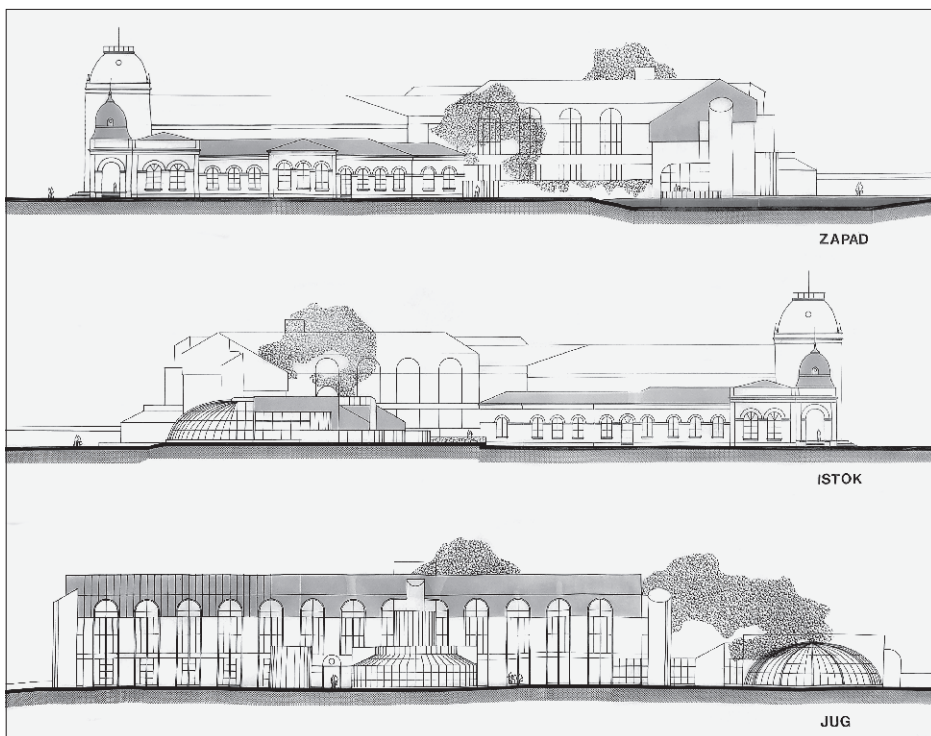


FIG. 10 SHS: SLAVONIA HOTEL IN VINKOVCI, 1976 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1979-1980 COMPLETED PROJECT; PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN DURING CONSTRUCTION (DOWN)



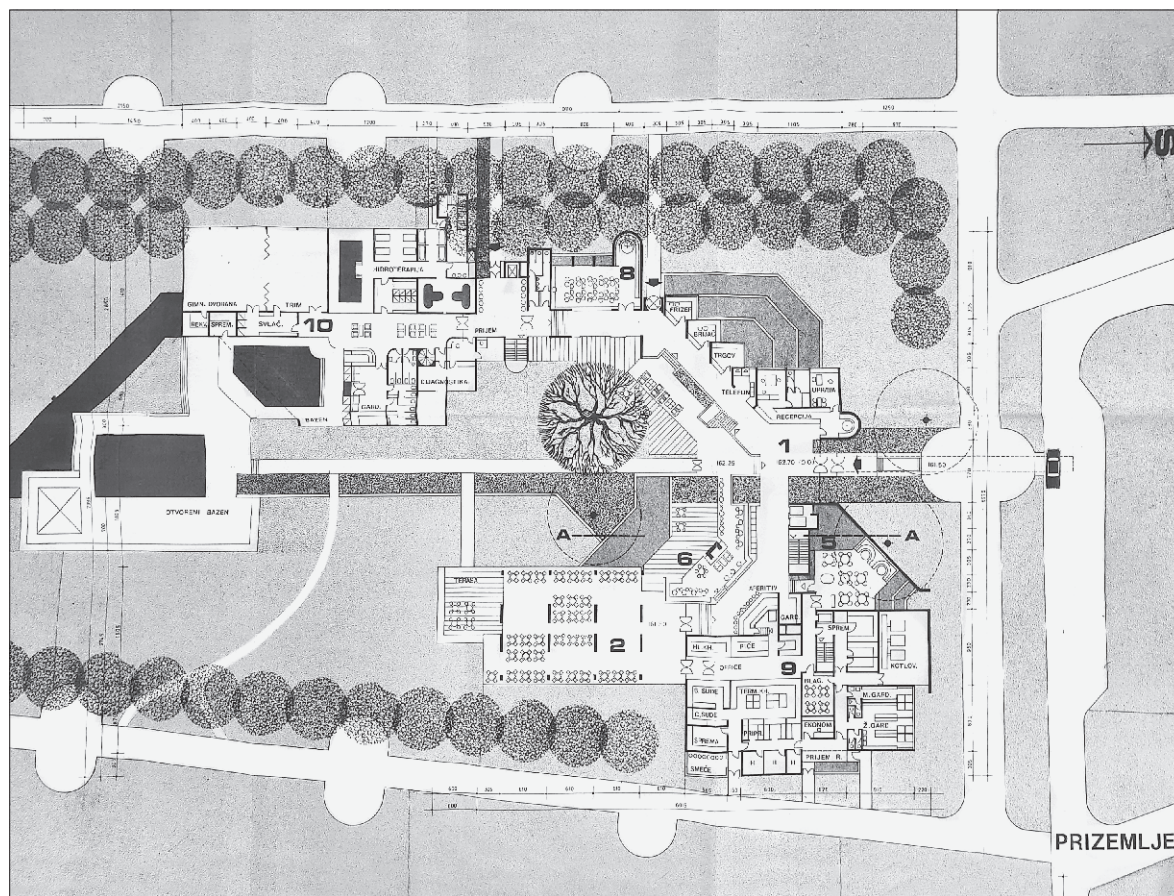


FIG. 11 SHS: THERMAL HOTEL IN DARUVAR, 1975 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1976-1979 COMPLETED PROJECT, GROUND FLOOR PLAN

(Fig. 7). A module of 30, 60 and 90 cm was used to furnish the rooms. For all room models, a typical bathroom was provided in the form of an installation block, which was built in a workshop and installed as semi-prefabricated. To present the project, prior to the start of construction of the first SHS facility, models of all room types together with furnishing were built in a 1:1 scale. In addition to custom-designed furniture for accommodation units, the project also envisaged standards for other interior equipment and inventory, to serve as visual identification and a basic design characteristic of the SHS.

Hotels that were built, in the city and spa type, show the conceptual characteristics of the SHS architecture. The Dunav Hotel in Vukovar, whose investor was the city's agro-industrial conglomerate, was built at the confluence of the Vuka and the Danube in the northwestern part of the city's main square, following the 1972 urban development plan for the centre zone by Matija Salaj. The hotel's position, dimensions and composition, with an indented annex with a horizontal layout (wide foot) and a seven-floor accommodation volume, show that the hotel was conceived as an architectural benchmark of the

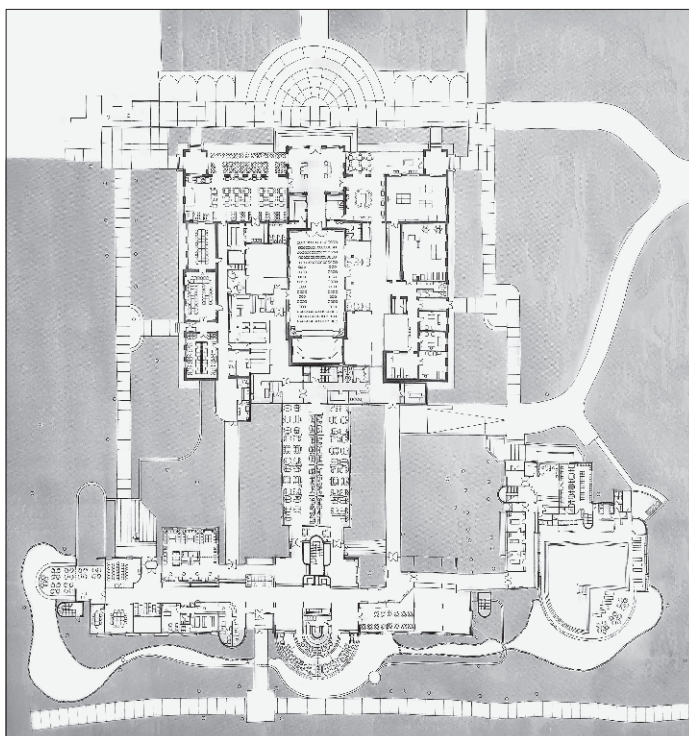


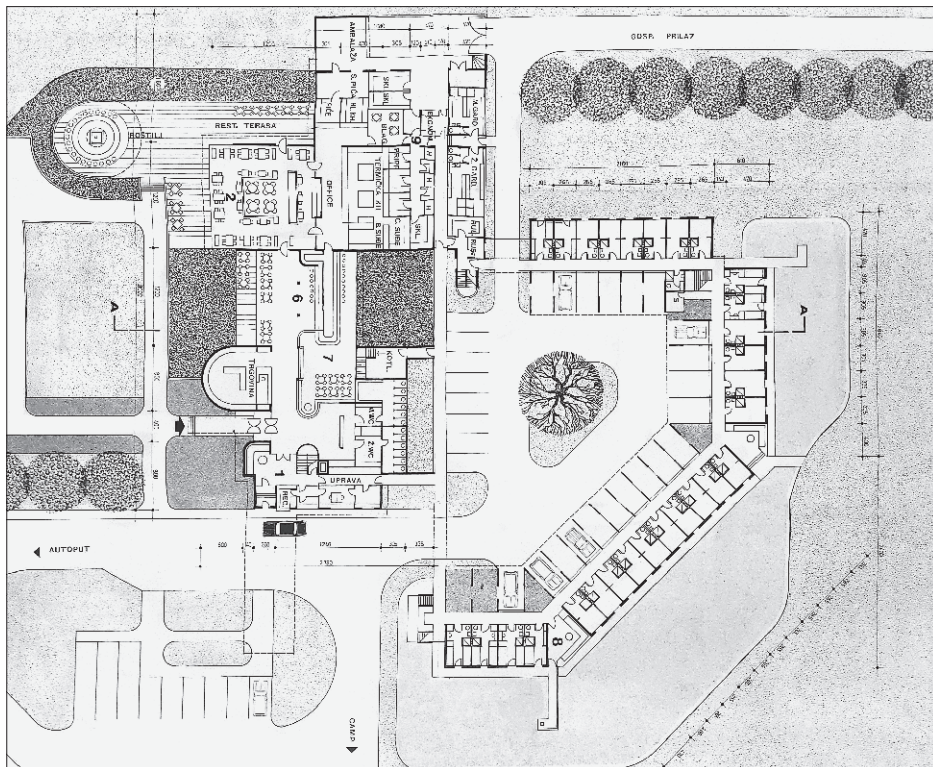
FIG. 12 SHS: LIPIK HOTEL IN LIPIK, 1977 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, MAIN PROJECT AND 1978-1982 COMPLETED PROJECT, GROUND FLOOR PLAN



FIG. 13 SHS: MOTEL FOR THE SREDANCI SITE ON THE ZAGREB-BELGRADE MOTORWAY, 1976 (PHOTOGRAPH OF A MOCK-UP)

square, while social and public functions were treated as an extension or addition to the urban public space – the entrance hall and cafeteria face the city square and the promenade along the Vuka, while the aperitif bar and restaurant with a terrace open towards the Danube on the other side (Fig. 8). In addition to many design aspects characteristic of the described SHS concept, such as pitched roofs, brick use, paraphrases of certain traditional elements such as bay windows and interior decoration, the architectural design of the Vukovar city hotel also

FIG. 14 SHS: MOTEL FOR THE SREDANCI SITE ON THE ZAGREB-BELGRADE MOTORWAY, 1976, GROUND FLOOR PLAN



bears a local feature, which is the design interpretation of the nearby water tower (Fig. 8). The hotel in Vinkovci was also designed with similar architectural features and an organizational scheme (*Exhibition of project documentation for a department store, hotel, underpass*, 1976; Fig. 10). A different approach was used for the spa hotel in Daruvar, whose meandering layout resulted from adaptation to the natural environment (Fig. 11). The hotel was located along the northern edge of a lawn, lined with an avenue of hornbeam trees and valuable oak specimens. Tall black walnut trees were kept and became the main compositional motif around which the south-facing hotel amenities were grouped. Unlike this spa hotel, whose layout and dimensions were influenced by location characteristics, the benchmark for the design and position of the hotel in Lipik was the existing Kursalon (spa salon) building, which had been built in the well-known spa complex at the end of the 19th century in the spirit of historicist architecture of Neo-Renaissance to a design by Budapest architect Gustav Rath to house a restaurant, a coffee house, a ceremonial hall and several salons (Puhmajer, 2010: 45-61). The new hotel design, in fact, included an extension and adaptation of the Kursalon building (Fig. 9). Semi-open spaces between the three parallel arms connected by the main tract (inverted letter E shape at the base) were closed and integrated into a single space for the hotel's public amenities (lobby, restaurant, bar, multifunctional hall, halls for various gatherings; Fig. 12).

The architectural concept of the motel, which was not built in any of the planned locations along the Zagreb-Belgrade motorway, resulted from the intention to find a functional motel type whose design would fit logically into the plains landscape and suit the architectural tradition of the region (Fig. 13). The authors wanted the motel design to be reminiscent of a Slavonian farm. In the design process, this idea meant that main amenities – service and accommodation – would be separated into two zones with inserted green areas in the form of atriums, courtyards, and planters. The first zone, closer to the road, consisted of the ground floor, emphasized by differently shaped roofs, and contained service facilities, while accommodation units were placed in the meandering tract in the background to protect the passengers in the rooms from noise (Fig. 14). This tract was positioned in the way that enabled rooms to have views of the landscape, and the area in front of it to have a vehicular access and a car park.²¹

²¹ For more details on the architecture of motels in Yugoslavia from 1955 to 1990, see: Antešević, 2022: 268-273, 373-391, 503-510.

Hotels of the tourist and recreational type in Donji Miholjac and Našice were built slightly more modestly, but they did have the main SHS design features (Fig. 16), especially the interior of the hotel in Donji Miholjac, built on the outskirts of the town next to the Drava reservoir (visible roof structure, amber brick, wood). In addition to the conceptual design of the hotel in Beli Manastir, made in 1975 as part of the SHS project, Matija Salaj and Branka Bek created in 1987 a new conceptual design of the city hotel to be built by the Agro-industrial Conglomerate Belje on a plot across the main square, which remains unbuilt to the present day (Beli Manastir Hotel, 1987; EMS). Compared to the first design, conceived as a tourist and recreational hotel, which implied wide-ranging dimensions divided into public amenities and an accommodation tract, the new preliminary design, although not belonging to the original SHS project, was conceived after bigger city hotels designed for Vukovar and Vinkovci, as visible in a series of design solutions, especially the roof and openings (Fig. 15).

CONCLUSION: THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SLAVONIA HOTEL SYSTEM FOR CONTINENTAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN CROATIA

The Slavonia Hotel System project, conceived as a chain of hospitality and tourist facilities of specific organizational form types, was meant to provide better opportunities in the hotel business and tourist offer of Slavonia and Baranja (exploitation, profitability) through standardized services, harmonized architectural processing and internal space organization and to be the driving force behind faster tourism development. The SHS accommodation and hospitality facilities, with a total capacity of about 2,000 beds, were designed for the B category. However, one of the most significant contributions to rationalize the SHS construction was to reduce the net area per bed compared to the average square footage for that category, at the expense of commercial and service facilities (Salaj, 1982c: 22). Although the SHS model did not come to life and did not produce desired results, especially in terms of organizational form and joint marketing, it showed the tourism industry's aspirations to modernize its operations and, in particular, emphasized Salaj's role in putting forward new concepts and architectural solutions. Salaj was of opinion that the traditional functional scheme of the hotel must be transformed into a more modern form as the hotel industry continued to develop, with an increase in receptive spaces and simplicity in expression, and primarily in terms of treating



the modern tourist – user (Salaj, 1982a: 94). Based on previous design experiences, programme capacities and economic aspects of the SHS project were more elaborate due to the rationalisation factor, while the architectural concept, based on regional construction characteristics, included more standardised elements and spatial solutions.

Orientation towards the user was also one of the basic characteristics of postmodern architecture. Because of its pronounced tendency to accept new aspirations in architectural practice, as well as its reliance on tourism development trends, it could be said that hotel architecture announced post-modern tendencies during the 1970s. Those at its forefront insisted on communicativeness of architecture as the basic principle of behaviour, so post-modernist tendencies also emphasized the process of “participation” in design (Čaldarović, 1980: 57). The affirmation of the generation of architects to which Salaj and Krznarić belonged was primarily influenced by new creative ideas and attitudes arising from the conditions of practice and what it provided. Architects of that generation, who learned from the modernists, were committed to overcome modernist limitations and determined to face social reality (Dženks, 2016: 36). One of the basic characteristics of postmodern architecture was manifested in the liberation of architectural design from its ideological and universalistic concept (Delalle, 1980: 45). This encouraged the affirmation of regional characteristics, which is why many hotel and tourist facilities designed at the Urban Institute, including the SHS project, aspired to find ways for achieving a dialogue with “the genius loci”, as well as to establish higher standards of construction practice (Salaj, 1987: 87). Compared to Salaj's designs of hotels at the Adriatic coast,

FIG. 15 HOTEL IN BELI MANASTIR (SECOND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN), 1987, HOTEL APPEARANCE

FIG. 16 SHS: PARK HOTEL IN NAŠICE, 1977 CONCEPTUAL DESIGN, 1980 COMPLETED PROJECT (PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN AFTER CONSTRUCTION)



when he worked at the Suradnik Bureau and the Urban Institute (independently and as a co-author), the proposed models of accommodation facilities within the SHS project are individually less innovative in terms of design, but in terms of the programme they represent a fully harmonized system that underwent certain changes in some of its parts.

Believing that designers and planners must use tourism resources in the best possible way for the construction of tourist facilities to take on appropriate forms instead of the desire for quick profit and quick revival of underdeveloped regions (Salaj, 1989: 69), Salaj always acted first and foremost as an urban planner, aware of social interest, but completely unburdened by socialist demagoguery, as also confirmed by his need to persevere in preserving space, to change what is bad, and to draw lessons from tradition, without being trapped by it (Rošin, 2023: 311-312). Salaj and Krznarić received an award for the programme and conceptual design of the Slavonia Hotel System project at the 11th Zagreb Salon: architecture and urban planning in 1976 (** 1976a: 20), and later, at the 17th Salon held in 1982, they presented their hotels built in Vukovar and Daruvar (** 1982: 69). With the breakup of Yugoslavia in 1990, which also marked the end of the socialist system in which hotels operated as organizations of associated labour within hotel and hospitality companies, the fate of the SHS built hotels was twofold – while some were devastated during the war and continued to deteriorate after the war due to unresolved property-legal relations (Vukovar, Jasenovac) or were demolished having suffered significant damage (Lipik), others were privatized and continued to operate as hotels (Daruvar, Našice, Donji Miholjac), but because of the renovation and modernization, they underwent mostly inadequate interventions and adaptations that were not based on valid design interpretations of the original architecture.²² The Termal Hotel remains the best preserved and maintained one, owing to the attractiveness of the Daruvar Spa, as well as to the position held by services in the health-care system.

[Translated by Zdenka Ivković]

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²² On the concept of the cycle of using tourist facilities and the technical-technological aspects of the renovation of hotel facilities due to accelerated obsolescence in tourism, see: Butler, 1980: 5-12; Mrinjek Kliska et al., 2019: 310-321; Antešević, 2023: 132-145.

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ARCHIVE SOURCES

AY – Archives of Yugoslavia, Belgrade: Fund 130 – Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia (1953-1992).
 CSA – Croatian State Archives, Zagreb: Fund 2039 – Urban Institute of Croatia, box 907 – Slavonia Hotel System; 1073 – Hotel in Vukovar; 914 – Hotel in Slavonski Brod.
 CMA – Croatian Museum of Architecture, Zagreb: Architect Matija Salaj.
 EMS – Estate of Matija Salaj (the Salaj family), Zagreb: list of works and projects, written works, documentation and projects of SHS facilities, tourist architecture projects in Croatia.

ILLUSTRATION SOURCES

FIGS. 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13 EMS
 FIG. 3 SALAJ, 1987: 81
 FIG. 6 CMA: Matija Salaj (hotel in Daruvar)
 FIGS. 8 CMA: Matija Salaj (hotel in Vukovar)
 FIGS. 11, 14 CSA: Fund 2039, box 907 – Slavonia Hotel System

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