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“From Kragujevac to Kilimanjaro”: Imagining and re-imagining Africa and the self-perception of Yugoslavia in the travelogues from socialist Yugoslavia

Abstract: The article examines travelogues about Africa from a philosophical geography point of view, and compares them to other contemporary representations of Africa. It contextualizes the travelogues both within Yugoslavia and the tides of afro-optimism and afro-pessimism as well as numerous other Cold War phenomena. It also uses the travelogues to establish an auto-representation of Yugoslavia vis-a-vis Africa

Key words: travelogues, Africa, socialism, Yugoslavia, imagology, anti-colonialism, non-alignment, Cold War, philosophical geography

The South Slavs had relatively limited contact with and knowledge of Africa. Information that they got was filtered through a prism of Western education and philosophy. A good example of an early image of Africa amongst the South Slavs is seen in a text of a Serbian reformer, first minister of education and rationalist Dositej Obradović. Casting a view of the world of his time, Obradović warns his compatriots to turn to Europe, and he divides the world in the light of the movement of enlightenment: “If the Europeans had not dared to correct their way of thinking, and enlighten their mind with reason, they would have stayed in the aboriginal stupidity and barbarism, and would have been like the accursed peoples of Africa”.¹ Further, rare adventurers

¹ Obradović, Dositej, *Život i priklučenja*, (1783) quoted in: Bracewell, Wendy, “The Limits of Eastern European Travel Writing”, in: Bracewell Wendy, Drace Francis, Alex, *Under Eastern Eyes. Eastern European Travel Writing in Comparative Perspective*, 2, CEU Press 2008. (Further: Bracewell, W, “The limits...” p. 91.

and servants of colonial powers wrote the first travelogues in the beginning of the 20th century; following the tradition of the western travelogue.²

Stojan Novaković, a Serbian politician and historian, published in the calamity of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (1908) a text called “Balkan peninsula or Central Africa” where he states: “...The Balkan peoples never would have dreamed that they could have been dealt with like this. We know that this is the way in which the blacks and wild races in Central Africa are dealt with...”³ Further on, in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, information about Africa was rare and the travelers even rarer. One of the “privileged” travelers from the upper class of the Kingdom, Rastko Petrović, a modernist writer, traveled for 4000 kilometers through Africa, from Guinea to Sudan, and in 1930 he published the most influential travelogue about Africa amongst the South Slavs to date. He too, a francophone, adopts the colonizers voice and says: “The Africans are incapable of any analytical or deductive endeavor”.⁴

All these examples serve to illustrate the contacts of the South Slavs and Africa 1783–1945. We can conclude that the contacts were rare, and the image of Africa was formed on a Western European pattern. This pattern was made of stereotypes of Africa as a dark continent, derived of humanity and progress, synonymous to danger and failure; the Africans themselves were perceived as children, savages or people on the lowest rank of the human hierarchy.⁵ The dichotomy Europe – Africa; one as a pinnacle of civilization and the other as a backward, unknown continent, is noticeable in the writings of the South Slav intellectual elite.⁶ The “shadow” of Europe and the

² Dr. Kosta Dinić was a doctor in the service of King Leopold I of Belgium and wrote a column in the Serbian press called “Serbian letters from Congo” in the end of the 19th century. Milorad Rajčević author of the book “Iz žarke Afrike” in the beginning of the 20th century was an epitome of an adventurer-explorer of his time. See more in: Sretenović, Dejan, *Crno telo, bele maske*, Muzej afričke umetnosti. Zbirka Vede i dr Zdravka Pečara, Beograd 2004. (Further: Sretenović, D., *Crno telo...*)

³ Quoted in: Ковић, Милош, “Невесела слика Европе”, *Вечерње новости*, 18.12.2015. http://www.novosti.rs/dodatni_sadržaj/clanci.119.html:582081-Nevesela-slika-Evrope (visited 25.02.2016)

⁴ Petrović, Rastko, *Afrika*, Novi Sad 2008, str. 205.

⁵ About the image of Africa up until the Second World War consult: Curtin, Philip, *Image of Africa. British ideas and action 1780–1850*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1972. I-II; Derricourt, Robin, *Inventing Africa. History, Archeology and Ideas*, Pluto Press 2011; Ćirjaković, Zoran, *Globalna Afrika*, Beograd, 2013; Todorov, Cvetan, *Mi i Drugi. Francuska misao o ljudskoj raznolikosti*, Beograd, 1995.

⁶ Criticizing one of the most influential works of literature about Africa (*Heart of Darkness*, Joseph Conrad, 1902) Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe claimed in the late 1970s that “there is a desire in western psychology to portray Africa as a negative of Europe.” He further claims that this novel, like many other representations of Africa represent the continent as an “Other world”, in: Achebe, Chinua. “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s ‘Heart of Darkness’”, *Massachusetts Review*. 18. 1977. Rpt. in *Heart of Darkness, An Authoritative Text, background and Sources Criticism*. 1961. 3rd ed. Ed. Robert Kimbrough, London: W. W Norton and Co., 1988, pp. 251–261 <<http://kirbyk.net/hod/image.of.africa.html>> (visited 13.6.2015) (further: *Chinua, A*, “Racism...”)

"boogeyman" of Africa permeate the texts from Obradović to Petrović.⁷ The writers and politicians position the South Slavs as closer to Europe and see Africa as the "Other". In this, local discourse, the pioneers of research of the image of Africa in Yugoslavia highlighted the patterns of transfer, that is, the "extension" of the West, via Yugoslavs identifying with the "Western" social roles (travelers, researchers, moral philosophers, collectionner), and concluded that the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and its predecessor states belonged to the "western colonial system" – if only in the cognitive sense.⁸

In the period of 1945–1991 the contacts between Yugoslavia and Africa will see an amazing expansion, and the image of Africa will drastically change; and the image of Africa through travelogues in the era of Cold War is the subject of this article.

The Yugoslav discovery of Africa

With the end of World War Two and the revolution in Yugoslavia there was a thorough change of state and society. The period of 1945–1953 was filled with anxiety and great problems in politics, both internal and foreign. The death of Stalin, intensifies the Yugoslav search for a firmer position in the international scene. The danger of USSR, the main radical "Other",⁹ and of too close relations with the West,¹⁰ pushes Yugoslavia, "in a desperate need", to the Third World.¹¹ Asia and Africa become "ideal allies", the "Third world" the "only arena" of active international politics and

⁷ It is in this sense that Dositej Obradović warns Serbs, that if they do not turn to Europe, they will be no different than Africans. Quoted in: Bracewell, W. "The limits...", p. 91; Petrović has a hypertext of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* in his travelogue, and Zoran Milutinović finds that Rastko in his view of Europe sees Africa through "European eyes" and shares their myths of Africa – hyper sexuality, cannibalism, and the reduced ability of the "negro". Petrović finds his "hero" that is a lot like Conrad's, in an elderly Swiss count, whom he uses to illustrate the differences between Europe and Africa, in: Milutinović, Zoran, "Oh, to be a European! What Rastko Petrovic learnt in Africa." In: Bracewell Wendy, Drace Francis, Alex, *Under Eastern Eyes. Eastern European Travel Writing in Comparative Perspective*, 2, CEU Press 2008.

⁸ Ana Sladojević especially notes the centers of education of the Yugoslav elite, which were all in Western Europe. In Sladojević, Ana, *Muzej afričke umetnosti. Konteksti i reprezentacije*, Beograd 2014, str. 61–63 (further: Sladojević, A, *Muzej afričke umetnosti...*); Dejan Sretenović as a marker of colonial discourse notes the products with racist representations of Africa In: Sretenović, D., *Crno telo...*,

⁹ Jović, Dejan *Yugoslavia: A state that withered away*. London, Purdue University Press 2007, p. 207.

¹⁰ See more in especially interesting comments in Tito's diary, in: Simić, Pero, *Titov dnevnik*, Beograd 2011; A renown historian of nonalignment, Dragan Bogetić, notices that Western Europe was "much further away", "and a much greater threat [...] than the Asian and African vastness", in: Bogetić, Dragan, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike 1954–1961*, Beograd 2008, str. 8. (Further: Bogetić, D, *Nova strategija...*)

¹¹ Bogetić, Dragan, "Tito i nesvrstani. Iskušenja na stvaranju asocijacije", in: *Tito- Viđenja i tumačenja*, ed. by Olga Manojlović Pintar, Beograd 2011, str. 407.

the new states and nations become, as Yugoslav president Tito said in his speech for the first time, after his “epic” trip to India and Burma in 1954/1955: “true allies... and real friends”.¹²

After this trip, Yugoslavia will work incessantly on further economic, cultural, political and other ties to the Third world. Discussions about the new political concept will last for a very long time.¹³ The most important consequence of these actions is that Yugoslavia had “tied herself” to “far and unknown countries” with ties without precedent in the history of the South-Slavic space. The basis of cooperation with the Third world countries, and especially Africa, were searched for in the past (similarities of the “roads traveled”, that is of freedom struggles), and the future (the politics of non-involvement with the Blocs).¹⁴

In Africa especially, Yugoslavia was seen, as “sufficiently small”, “unconnected with the colonial age”, and “honest enough in cooperation” and was received very well by a vast majority of the countries.¹⁵ Diplomats, soldiers, technicians, workers, writers, journalists and others went to Africa in ever greater numbers. At the same time African students, guerillas, statesman and workers came to Yugoslavia. Add to that the great number of new media, institutions and manifestations which served to familiarize Yugoslavia with Africa; there we find a great field of research of the image of the “Other”. Yugoslavs also dabbled in what Larry Wolff called „philosophical geography“¹⁶ and filled in a largely blank space in Yugoslavia’s imaginary world map.

Yugoslav travel writers and their travelogues

Debbie Lisle claims that travelogues can be as useful as archival documents, and as a plus they are widely read.¹⁷ They supposedly “document” the world, when actually they organize it in multiple discourses.¹⁸ Travelogues map the “global imaginary” and arrange the world in “textual zones”, more ideological and mythical,

¹² Jakovina, Tvrtko, “Tito’s Yugoslavia as The Pivotal State of the Non Aligned”, in: *Tito – Videnja i tumačenja* p. 390; Rubinstein, Alvin, *Yugoslavia and the Non Aligned World*, Princeton University Press, 1970. (у даљем тексту: Rubinstein, A, *Yugoslavia...*) p. 64; Petković, Ranko, *Subjektivna istorija jugoslovenske diplomatije 1943–1991*, Beograd, 1998, str. 34; Bogetić, D, *Nova strategija...*, str. 43.

¹³ For discussions about nonalignment see: Rubinstein, A, *Yugoslavia...*, pp. 65–74, 207–208, 211, 219–228.

¹⁴ Bogetić, D, *Nova strategija...*, str. 169.

¹⁵ Jakovina, Tvrtko, *Treća strana hladnog rata*, Zagreb, 2011, str. 447. (Further: Jakovina, T., *Treća strana...*)

¹⁶ Wolff, Larry, *Inventing Eastern Europe. The map of civilization in the age of Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press 1994, p. 4.

¹⁷ Lisle, Debbie, *Global politics of contemporary travel writing*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 1. (Further: Lisle, D, *Global politics...*)

¹⁸ Lisle, D, *Global politics...*, p. 13.

than geographical.¹⁹ In Eastern Europe the culture of travelogues spreads more on a north-south than a west-east basis, notices Alexis Drace Francis. He notices the exponential growth of travelogues from the second half of the 19th century in this part of the world.²⁰

A general lack of works addressing the mental mapping of the world from Yugoslavia is noticed by Predrag Marković.²¹ Some specificities of the Yugoslav travelogue can be found in the works of historians and literary historians.²² The theme of Africa was of particular interest to Zoran Milutinović and Dejan Sretenović in the aforementioned articles and books. They used travelogues from the interwar era. Travelogues from the socialist era were not a subject of any studies.

We can use travelogues from Eastern Europe of the Cold War era as pointers for this study. Czechoslovakian writers, for an example, did not look at India as the "Other" but used a lens of "vulgar Marxism". Latent colonialism is, however, present in the fact that they want to "ideologically colonize" India.²³ In a comparative manner, we can see the similarities of narrative strategies that the Czechoslovakian writers use to enhance solidarity. In such a manner the ways they build their imaginary connections with China ("us versus them" discourse, creating the past-future dichotomies, highlighting the geographical distance but ideological closeness, and the intentional avoidance of exoticism in favor of proletarian internationalism, viewing socialism as a world process) in many ways reminds me of Yugoslav discourse towards Africa.²⁴ However, Yugoslavia, with its exceptionality, non-involvement in the colonial experience, successful struggle for freedom and authentic revolution, special model of socio-economical and state order and finally the special role in the Non-Aligned movement, had its specific views of the whole of the Third world,

¹⁹ Lisle, D, *Global politics...*, p. 138,186.

²⁰ Drace Francis, Alex, "Toward a Natural History of East European Travel Writing", in: Bracewell Wendy, Drace Francis, Alex, *Under Eastern Eyes. Eastern European Travel Writing in Comparative Perspective*, 2, CEU Press 2008. pp. 22,26.

²¹ Marković, Predrag, *Trajnost i promena. Društvena istorija socijalističke i postsocijalističke svakodnevice u Jugoslaviji i Srbiji*, Beograd 2012, str. 128.

²² Vučetić, Radina, „Amerika u jugoslovenskim putopisima. Pogled kroz gvozdenu zavesu“, *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju*, 1, 12, 2005; Naumov, Milica, „Potraga za Istokom. Egipat u putopisima srpskih žena u prvoj polovini XX veka“, in: *Egipat u sećanju Srbije*, ed. by Epštajn, Emilia, Beograd 2011; Rebronja, Nadija, „Slike mediteranskih zemalja u putopisima za decu I mlade“, *Detinjstvo: Časopis za decu i mlade*, 39, 2, Beograd 2013; Rakić, Tamara, „Stereotipi o arapskom svijetu usrpskim putopisima“, *Književna istorija*, 38, 130, Beograd 2006.

²³ Gafraik, Robert, "Representations of India in Slovak Travel Writing during the Communist Regime (1948–1989)", in: *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on post-communist literatures and culture*, ed. by Dobrota Pucherova et. al. Brill-Rodopi 2015, p. 283, 292.

²⁴ Slobodniak, Martin, "Socialist Anti Orientalism: Perceptions of China in Czechoslovak Travelogues from the 1950s", in: *Postcolonial Europe? Essays on post-communist literatures and culture*, ed. by Dobrota Pucherova et. al. Brill-Rodopi 2015, pp. 300–313.

including Africa. This, in short, would be the “geographical anchor”²⁵ from which Yugoslavs viewed the world.

Travelogues were not widely written in Yugoslavia, said Nobel prize winner Ivo Andrić in an introduction to a travelogue in 1958, but they were always interesting to the general public.²⁶ Perhaps the best description of Yugoslav travel writers and their travelogues was given by an editor, Fadil Hadžić, in a collection of travelogues published in 1961, where about one hundred travel reportages by some fifty Yugoslav travel writers were published. He says that the “new travel writer” has “nothing else to explore in the geography of the world”. He also notes that travelogues “politically orient us and paint the world – still not free of colonialism and discrimination”, continuing that “Yugoslav travel writers enter the forbidden zones of international relations and exit with a fat notebook which quite often had the tragic history of some small, backward people. To the neuralgic points of the world... he brings the pen of his young socialist homeland...from the little African village to the biggest metropolis...against those who consider war of the Blocs the only perspective”.²⁷ Here we can see a good illustration of the mindset of most of these writers; their writings are indeed a reflection of the politics of their socialist homeland. It is for this reason also that travelogues are additionally useful to us. As Zdravko Pečar said, criticizing a British report on the situation in one of the colonies:

*“I read all of this. But I still decided to come to Nyasa to try to find out, on the spot, how things are, and not to make my opinion based on another man’s opinion [...] This is how us, communists, Yugoslavs, approach the problems of the world in general. This is what our new moral dictates.”*²⁸

Yugoslav travel writers went out to Africa to bring the “truth” to the world. This “mission” is a very dominant motive, especially during the 1950’s and 1960’s. The authors also tried to confirm the righteousness of the Yugoslav foreign policy and its new ties to “friends from Africa”. How far they went in *seeking similarities*, we can see in the example of renouncing of their own race. In this sense we have Oskar Davičo, a famous writer, naming the first chapter of his travelogue “Former white man” while simultaneously pointing out that the Yugoslavs were “slaves for centuries themselves”.²⁹ The authors constantly felt “ashamed” and the “guilty” for their own race, and constantly mixed this discourse of whiteness with the discourse

²⁵ The term Debbie Lisle uses to signify the “viewpoint” of travel writers, in: Lisle, D., *Global politics...*, p. 137

²⁶ Džumhur, Zuko, *Nekrolog jednoj čaršiji*, Beograd 1958, *Intorduction* by Ivo Andrić, p. 6.

²⁷ Hadžić, Fadil (ed.), *Put oko svijeta*, Beograd 1961, p. 4–7 (further: *Put oko svijeta...*)

²⁸ Pečar, Zdravko, *Afrika*, Beograd, 1964, p. 210. (further: Pečar, Z, *Afrika...*)

²⁹ Davičo, Oskar, *Crno na belo*, Beograd 1962, p. 20. (Further: Davičo, O, *Crno...*)

of the subaltern.³⁰ This was a way to show the Yugoslavs free of any colonial past and future pretensions. Pretty directly they expressed another wish: to show to Africans there are "different white people."³¹ In this sense, the Yugoslav travel writers saw themselves as the first impartial witnesses of African reality and first Europeans without prejudices.³²

Old myths and the extension of the West

Although the Yugoslav writers mostly ridiculed, renounced and tried to rectify old myths about Africa, some of them remained part of their travelogues. It should be said that Africa is perhaps the least adequately represented continent.³³ "In most cases and most times" wrote Claude Levi Strauss, "people wanted to see in Africa some kind of monstrosity and scandal".³⁴ It has been a victim of generalizations, simplifications of history and prehistory, stereotyping and inventions from ancient to contemporary times.³⁵ Travelogues were immensely important in „mapping Africa“ from the earliest times of Arab cartographers³⁶ to the end of the 19th century.³⁷ But at the same time, travelogues were the expression and the producer of new stereotypes.³⁸

³⁰ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara do Mjesečevih planina*, Zagreb, p. 86 (Further: Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara...*); Vitorović, Nikola *Crne suze Konga*, Beograd, 1961, str. 112. (Further: Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*)

³¹ Vitorović, N, *Crne suze...*, p. 114; that this was the "desired image of Yugoslavs" we can also see in a statement that a Yugoslav diplomat gave to historian Alvin Rubinstein in the late 1960s: "Yugoslavs are most highly valued whites in Africa" In: Rubinstein, A., *Yugoslavia...*, p. 213.

³² Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 9; Vitorović, N, *Crne suze...*, str. 196.

³³ Keim, Curtis, *Mistaking Africa. Curiosities and Inventions of the American mind*, Westview Press 2013, p. 3; For representations of Africa also see: Achebe, C, "An image..."; Addas, Michael *Machines as the Measures of Men. Science, Technology and the Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Cornell University Press 1989; Curtin, Philip, *Image of Africa. British ideas and action 1780–1850*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1972. I-II; Novikova, Irina, "Imagining Africa and blackness in the Russian empire: from the extra-textual arapka and distant cannibals to Dahomey amazing shows-live in Moscow and Riga", in: *Social identities: Journal for the study of Race, Nation and Culture*, 19, 5, 2013; Hoskins, Linus, "Euro centrism vs. Afro centrism: A Geopolitical Linkage Analysis", in: *Journal of Black Studies*, 23, 2; Diawra, Manthia, *In search for Africa*, Harvard University Press 2000.

³⁴ Levi Stros, Klod, *Rasa i istorija. Rasa i kultura*, Beograd 2010, str. 36

³⁵ Derricourt, R., *Inventing Africa...*, p. 7.

³⁶ Keim, C, *Mistaking Africa...* p. 32–48.

³⁷ Curtin, Philip, *Image of Africa. British ideas and action 1780–1850*, University of Wisconsin Press 1972, I-II

³⁸ See more in: Franey, Laura, *Victorian Travel Writing and Imperial Violence*, Palgrave McMillan 2003; Van Den Bergh, Erik, "Dutch Images of South Africa Reflected in Travel Diaries", *Ecumenical Advice and Research Center on South Africa*, june 2000; Lofsdottir, Kristin, "Shades of Otherness: Representation of Africa in 19th century Island", in: *Social Anthropology*, 16, 8, 2008; Guelke, Leonard; Guelke, Jeanne Kay, "Imperial Eyes on South Africa: Reassessing Travel Narratives", *Journal of His-*

“Colonial clichés”³⁹ were repeated in some travelogues. Writers started out with these kind of passages: “It was a land of unrest, people with dark skin, camels, bananas, caravans and mosquitoes. All in the fires of the exotic.”⁴⁰ In some cases this was simply in the service of describing their “epic” journeys: “The far Kilimanjaro and the unknown Africa, land of the exotic flora and fauna, deserts, the river Nile and pyramids, lured us on the road.”⁴¹ However, usually in the very first pages, authors renounced these views as prejudices, inherited from literature and films seen in their youth.⁴²

Apart from sporadic exoticistic passages, Yugoslav writers were sometimes keen on representational clichés via the visual materials. We find many photographs of “tribal” dances, naked women, crying children etc. These are all, it is clear, more than stereotypical representations of Africa.

Geographical stereotypes were present also. Robin Derricourt says that „the tendency to divide the „real“, „black“ Africa south of the Sahara from the north, less „black“, more Mediterranean or Middle Eastern Africa is against, not only the “political realities of past and present, but also against genetics.”⁴³ Yugoslavs mostly used this divide such as: “This is my first time in “real” Africa. And the “real”, “black” Africa is the one south of the Sahara.”⁴⁴ Authors tended to differentiate between the „shore“ and „hinterland“. This division is closely linked to the equalizing of civilization with western technology.⁴⁵ More than once authors asked: “Am I in Africa?” if the facades looked too European.⁴⁶ In search of an “authentic Africa” they went into the depths of the continent repeating the explorer myths of the 19th century. Like in western travelogues, anything that was “tainted” with modernity would be considered dismissed.⁴⁷ “Authentic Africa” was searched for and found in national parks and “wilderness”, which were both idealized and further used for pointing out

torical Geography, 30, 2004, pp. 11–31; Carthage Troche, Andres, “The Representation of Africa in National Geographic”, *Supporting Cultural Differences Through Research*, Monograph Series 2011.

³⁹ Lisle, D., *Global politics...*, p. 24.

⁴⁰ Milić, Živko, *Koraci po vatri*, Beograd 1956, str. 9. (Further: Milić, Ž., *Koraci...*)

⁴¹ Šekler, Bogdan, *Džambo Afriko*, Beograd 1975, str. 5. (Further: Šekler, B., *Džambo...*)

⁴² Even the 1950s television and movies were a new source of prejudices for the Yugoslav travel writers, being that they mostly viewed American products, and American products were then imbued with stereotypes. See more in: Keim, Curtis, *Mistaking Africa...*, p. 15–18.

⁴³ Derricourt, R. *Inventing Africa...*, p. 2.

⁴⁴ Milašin, Nada, *Afrička pisma*, Beograd, str. 5; “To Black Africa, under the Sahara!” In: *Put oko svijeta*, p. 364. “Straight to Juba, to the real, black Africa!” in: Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, p. 81.

⁴⁵ Lisle, D., *Global politics...*, p. 161; this is done even by Pečar, a well-informed traveler, in: *Put oko svijeta*, p. 369.

⁴⁶ Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*, p 26; Sometimes this was enough to take out whole countries out of Africa like Šekler when he says: “Kenya is not the face of Africa” In: Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, p. 122.

⁴⁷ Keim, C., *Mistaking Africa...* p. 81.

the negative aspects of modernity such as: "The dirt here is not the same as the dirt of the civilized parts of the world – the pollution and filth."⁴⁸

Antiorientalism

If I was to loan this term from Martin Slobodniak, we could see that it is very useful. Because, the authors were only in a lesser sense perpetuating the myths of Africa; indeed they tended to question and rectify these stereotypes. Even in late travelogues from the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, a certain distance can be sensed in the texts; Yugoslav authors do not always follow the stereotypes closely.⁴⁹ The writers from socialist Yugoslavia "defended" Africa from "western prejudice" using multiple narrative strategies.

First and most dominant one was an imaginary polemic with a chosen western travel writer. The classic example is that of Boža Milačić who reads John Gunthers "Inside Africa" and then writes:

*"We have read about Africa by John Gunther [...] Libya is a crate of sand, a child [...] Libya is not a child who is learning to walk, it is a grown up, stronger and richer every day..."*⁵⁰

The authors, even if they read other travelogues, especially when Western visitors are mentioned, denounced them, and their ability to see the real Africa and claimed that the West "simply cannot comprehend (Africa)".⁵¹ Even when they read western materials, authors are very critical to them and use local, African authors to compare their claims.⁵² Often, there is a criticized metatext present in the whole of travelogue or some chapters. Davičo uses Petrović's book to reverse his "colonial views". Štambuk, in his chapter about Congo, inverts and develops a critique of a book by an Italian author Beloti, called *Congo Favoloso*. There was not a limitation to western travelogues; Pečar used to begin many of his books with an imaginary polemic with Hegel, whom he considered to personify the misinterpretation of Africa.⁵³ Being that the Yugoslavs were well acquainted with the western (especially British and French) travelogues they used them to dismiss their assumptions. Sometimes, specific subjects were picked, such as Ivanka Bešević's choice to ridicule "the myth

⁴⁸ Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, p. 42; See Vitorović traveling into Congo hinterland in: Vitorović, N., *Kongo*, p. 146. and further.

⁴⁹ Naumov, M., *Potruga za Istokom ...*, str. 58.

⁵⁰ Milačić, Božo, *Sunčana putovanja i bijele noći, Zapisi sa putovanja od Islanda do Sahare*, Zagreb, 1963, str. 45.

⁵¹ Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*, str. 196.

⁵² Štambuk most adequately uses Jomo Kenyatta's "*Facing Mount Kenya*" to counter the British propaganda about Kenya. See more in: Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 142, 156.

⁵³ Pečar, Z., *Afrika...*, str. 13; Zagorac, Veda, Pečar, Zdravko, *Republikanski Egipat*, Beograd, 1955, str. 5.

of a dark, inhospitable Africa... of danger and places with bad reputations.”⁵⁴ Perhaps the greatest difference between Yugoslav and Western travelers was the fact that the Yugoslavs were more open for other people’s opinion, did not claim the “authoritative voice” and were not paramount to their conclusions. They never claimed that they were an undisputed authority for Africa.⁵⁵

The second often used narrative strategy is a polemic with a western traveler. For an example, mimicking both Rastko Petrović and Joseph Conrad, Davičo finds his own European in Africa. Davičo enters a polemic with a Swiss traveler on a plane to Africa, after the Swiss calls some Africans “natives”, and says: “Natives? Next time I’m in Switzerland I’ll look for a native.”⁵⁶ Later the discussion develops on the subject of socialism, Yugoslav credits and Africa. What motivates all of these discussions are Yugoslav views of Africans as “natural socialists”. The Yugoslavs view the world, especially in the 1950s and 1960s through the glasses of Marxism, and the “us versus them” discourse is created. The Yugoslavs, based on class, that is the supposed classlessness in Africa, believe to be closer to Africans than even African-Americans.⁵⁷ Summing up this imagined cordiality Davičo concludes: “We are brothers. We are comrades.”⁵⁸ Before I continue to examine the travelogues it should be noted that these texts were written from one perceived periphery, describing the other.⁵⁹ The two “boogeyman of Western culture”⁶⁰ – Balkans and Africa were gazing at each other.

A Yugoslav mirror

“The Superpowers have a tendency to view Tito as Africa views him, and that goes for the other way around.”⁶¹

It should be said that these travelogues are not just a source of positioning Africa on the global mental map but also of Yugoslavia. The image of the “Other” is

⁵⁴ *Put oko svijeta*, str. 385–392.

⁵⁵ Pratt, Mary Lois, *Imperial eyes. Travel writing and transculturation*, Routledge 2007. pp 217. (Further: Pratt, M., *Imperial...*)

⁵⁶ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 79.

⁵⁷ Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*, str. 11, 204

⁵⁸ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 23.

⁵⁹ On the imaginary position of the Balkans see more in: Todorova, Maria, *Imagining the Balkans*, OUP USA 2009; Goldsworthy, Vesna, *Inventing Ruritania. Imperialism of the imagination*, Oxford University Press 2012; Bakić Heyden, Milica “Nesting Orientalisms, The case of former Yugoslavia”, in: *Slavic Review*, 54, 4, 1995.

⁶⁰ Ćirjaković, Zoran, *Globalna Afrika*, Beograd, 2013, p. 63. (Further: Ćirjaković, Z., *Globalna...*)

⁶¹ Unnamed African ambassador serving in Belgrade quoted in: Rubinstein, A, *Yugoslavia...*, p. 186.

closely tied to the image of the "Self".⁶² It can be even said that we can understand Yugoslavs and their national "Self", better by understanding the national "Other".⁶³ Certainly, we can use these travelogues to determine the change of self-perception of Yugoslavia.⁶⁴

Firstly, Yugoslavia was through these travelogues positioned firmly on the Mediterranean. Instead of the Balkans, or Eastern Europe, which both in those times have a negative connotation, we see Yugoslavia on a sea that is an epitome of civilization. It is in this sense that we can read: "Libya is not a far country."⁶⁵ All the North African countries are in this sense shown as neighbors of Yugoslavia: "Alexandria – how ever attractive is still in the neighborhood and nearby."⁶⁶ Yugoslavs are regularly found in North Africa in large numbers.⁶⁷ All of the authors do not linger on the North African coast and one says: "this is the coast of our sea".⁶⁸

Secondly, Yugoslavia was shown to be more known, larger, more powerful and more "European" than ever. One early "geography lesson" goes like this: "it is the land of Marshal Tito and there are no Russians there, but there are Muslims."⁶⁹ From this lesson in 1954, Yugoslavia became supposedly universally known: "They value our country highly in Sudan"⁷⁰ and: "He praised Marshal Tito and our country and we were surprised that people in the heart of Africa know us and value us..."⁷¹, and: "Everybody repeats Tito, Tito!"⁷² Zdravko Pečar finds a belief in Tanzania that "Yugoslavia is gigantic".⁷³ Yugoslav "feats" are also supposedly well known. An Algerian commissar has only three books in his library – one of them is the biography of Marshal Tito!⁷⁴ Patrice Lumumba, under house arrest, reads the Yugoslav constitution!⁷⁵ In this discourse Yugoslavia has the role of a selfless aid giver and Africa's "vastness" serves to magnify Yugoslav "successes".⁷⁶

⁶² Leersen, Joep, *Imagology: History and method*, <http://www.imagologica.eu/pdf/historymethod.pdf> p. 17.

⁶³ Quinn, Slobodian, "Jurisdiction Leap, Political Drain and other dangers of transnational history", in: *New Global Studies*, 4, 1, 2010, p. 3.

⁶⁴ Van Den Bergh, Erik, "Dutch Images of South Africa Reflected in Travel Diaries", in: *Ecumenical Advice and Research Center on South Africa*, June 2000, p. 462.

⁶⁵ Milačić, B., *Sunčana putovanja...*, str. 58.

⁶⁶ Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, str. 14.

⁶⁷ Džumhur, Z., *Pisma iz Evrope i Afrike...*, str. 131.

⁶⁸ Milašin, N., *Afrički...*, str. 3.

⁶⁹ Milić, Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 34.

⁷⁰ Štambuk Z., *Od Zanzibara...*, str. 290.

⁷¹ Štambuk Z., *Od Zanzibara...*, str. 309.

⁷² Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, str. 18.

⁷³ Pečar, Z., *Afrika...*, str. 113.

⁷⁴ Pečar, Zdravko, *Alžir*, Beograd, 1959, str. 57. (Further: Pečar, Z., *Alžir...*)

⁷⁵ Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*, str. 57.

⁷⁶ "It was really pleasant, so far from homeland, deep in Africa, in a foreign world, to hear that our youth and workers, who perhaps didn't know anything of Tanganyika, nor did they knew what

It can be said that they were using Africa to place themselves more firm in the grounds of Europe. So we read: Us Europeans, us from Europe... There is still some ambiguity, so when he talks about Yugoslav cigarettes, Davičo says they are good in Yugoslavia, even in Europe.⁷⁷ Perhaps it can even be said that because the European image of Balkans/Yugoslavia was known to be mostly negative, some of these qualities were projected to Africa from Yugoslavia⁷⁸,

Rarely, authors used travelogues about Africa to point to problems in their own country: there were examples of censorship,⁷⁹ complaining of censorship,⁸⁰ and some authors complained they were “attacked” in the press for reporting “the truth”.⁸¹ Disunity of Yugoslavs abroad was also presented, especially in the 1980s.⁸²

All of this points me to a conclusion that, like in economy, where Africa and Asia were just a “solid base for a triumphant return to Europe”.⁸³ Africa was a “mirror” in which the reflection of Yugoslavia was the most important thing: The Yugoslav “altruism”, the one true way of peaceful coexistence and non-alignment, and Yugoslavs as the only “white man” who benefited Africa. Africa came in second. It was constantly defended from the “Western” depictions yet it was constantly positioned by Yugoslav imagination, to suite Yugoslavia’s needs in the world.

their friend would become, made an impression with this advanced young man a nice impression of our country, our heart, our hospitality. It is quite obvious that for a great foreign policy you not only need a great leader but also a great people, capable of understanding, supporting and following, every day, persistently, everywhere, even there where the state does not suppose foreign policy is lead.” In: Pečar, Z. *Afrika...*, str. 176.

⁷⁷ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 121.

⁷⁸ This was the case in Island at one point. Lofsdottir, Kristin, “Shades of Otherness: Representation of Africa in 19th century Island”, in: *Social Anthropology*, 16, 2, 2008, p. 173.

⁷⁹ The author claims he was forbidden reporting on the situation in Greece. (Šelkler, B., *Džambo...*, str. 12.)

⁸⁰ The author claims that the fact that no visa was given for Uganda, and the accompanying problems, was reported on by him, but news was prevented from reaching Yugoslavia by the leader of the expedition and the Yugoslav ambassador in Sudan. (Sekulić, Dušan, *Putokaz za jug*, Beograd 1982, str. 107. (further: Sekulić, D., *Putokaz...*);

⁸¹ The author was “attacked” for his reporting of the coup in Nigeria by “journalists, diplomats and an academic painter!” In: Miklja, Dušan, *Putopisi po sećanju*, Beograd 2001, str. 91. (Further: Miklja, D., *Putopisi...*).

⁸² Milašin, N., *Afrička...*, str. 52; For a more detailed account of how Yugoslav home squabbles reflected on African Yugoslav Diaspora see the memoirs of Čedomir, Štrbac, Yugoslav ambassador to Gabon, *Afrički zapisi*, 2013.

⁸³ Bogetić D., *Nova strategija...*, str. 154.

Anticolonial struggle or re-living the partisan myth – the 1950s and the 1960s

“To get to Algeria from Yugoslavia you need to go to Tunisia and then cross the border to the Algerian territory. Naturally, without a French visa, because for this trip you need a visa of Free Algeria. And I was given this visa by my armed escort – Algerians shot on the French position on the border gave us our visas – our seals of Freedom!”⁸⁴



Photo 1. A historian and a prolific travel writer, Zdravko Pečar saluting the Algiers flag in the camp of the FLN, summer, 1958.⁸⁵

The 1950's and 1960's, two tumultuous decades in Africa, brought Yugoslav travel writers mostly to East and North Africa.⁸⁶ For Europeans, the whole Third

⁸⁴ Pečar, Z., *Alžir...*, str. 26.

⁸⁵ Arhiv Muzeja afričke umetnosti (MAU), Zbirka Vede i dr Zdravka Pečara, Foto grada

⁸⁶ Africa went through large changes in this period. It was a time of “great expectations” for Africans See more in: Meredith, Martin, *Fate of Africa. A history of Continent since independence*, London 2011. pp 10. (Further: Meredith, M., *Fate...*); Africa went through an “astonishingly fast” decolonization

World was new, full of life, exciting, but also seen as poor and incapable.⁸⁷ Regarding the rest of the world and Africa, the official “metropolitan code” from the 1950s onward was that of “dehumanization, triviality and rejection”, and especially in the 1960s and 1970s the metropolitan writers were faced with the “gaze of Others” who “demanded to be recognized as subjects of history”⁸⁸

The two aforementioned regions of Africa were the battlefields of colonial and anticolonial powers. Like other interested parties, Yugoslavs chose these areas because of the ongoing struggle.⁸⁹ From these areas, authors went into still “colonized” territory. These were territories that were watching “everything that was Yugoslav with doubt.”⁹⁰ Africa was, in the words of Yugoslav travel writers, putting itself on the “timetable of history” and claimed “Africa to the Africans”!⁹¹ Authors were more ideologically indoctrinated than later on and considered capitalism “deteriorating”.⁹² A sense of a world on the verge of conflict, a chain revolution is also present.⁹³ They were acting, at the same time, totally in line with state policy, being that President Tito marked decolonization, along with disarmament, as the main problem of the world.⁹⁴ This is also explained by their composition; most of them were politicians and journalists of the party newspaper “Borba”.⁹⁵

and the fight between the Blocs shifted towards the continent see more in: Westad, Odd Arne, *Global Cold War. Third world interventions and the making of our times*. London 2007. p 123–139. (Further: Westad, O., *Global Cold War...*)

⁸⁷ Westad, O., *Global Cold War...*, p 143; Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations. People's history of the Third world*, The New Press 2008, p. 9.

⁸⁸ Pratt, M., *Imperial eyes...*, p. 220.

⁸⁹ The Revolution in Egypt (1952) drew many travel writers. See more in: Meredith, M., *The Fate...*, pp 18–26; The war in Algeria (1954–1962) was a popular front for reporters see: Meredith, M., *Fate of...*, pp. 26–42; The Mau Mau in rebellion in Kenya gained many Yugoslav witnesses. See: Meredith, M., *Fate of...*, 47–52; Marung, Steffi, “Peculiar Encounters with the ‘Black Continent’: Soviet Africanists in the 1960s and the expansion of the discipline”, in: *Self-Reflective Area Studies*, edited by Matthias Middel, Leipzig 2013, p. 103–134 .

⁹⁰ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 14.

⁹¹ *Put oko svijeta*, p. 364; Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 284.

⁹² Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 328.

⁹³ Milić, Živko *Koraci...*, str. 73.

⁹⁴ Mišković, N. et al., *Non aligned movement...*, p. 13.

⁹⁵ Vaso Gajić was a member of the Ministry of Agriculture; Dušan Timotijević was the director of the Journalistic School in Belgrade; Živko Milić was a journalist of *Borba* and *Politika*; Zdravko Pečar was a journalist of *Borba* and a secret party envoy to the FLN; Đorđe Radenković was a *Politika* journalist; Nikola Vitorović was a journalist of *Borba*; Oskar Davičo was a writer, but also a party member who often published in *Borba*. His travelogue was published parallel with Tito's famed journey to Africa in 1961; Finally, Zdenko Štambuk, an ambassador to Ethiopia would later become chief of staff to the Yugoslav president.

From the first travelogue to be published⁹⁶ Africa was divided to "colonized" and "free". When authors go to Ethiopia, it is the epitome of freedom.⁹⁷ The main thing that Ethiopia is supposedly "famous" for is its independence in the "freedom loving world".⁹⁸ Ethiopia is particularly interesting because of many of the 1950's travel writers it was a "jumping board" for the rest of Africa. Especially the Ethiopian struggle against the "fascist invader" was discussed at length. As in politics, similarities, not dissimilarities were sought.⁹⁹ Already in the 1950's one author noticed that the connection of Yugoslavia and Ethiopia is peculiar:

*"In our country, sympathies for Ethiopia were expressed in countless ways and were, apart from serious, naïve and even comical."*¹⁰⁰

While staying in colonized countries, authors search for any sign of "resistance" in "the forbidden zones" as they called them. While he is staying in Kenya, Vaso Gajić, immediately starts speaking of the Mau Mau movement. Gajić is most pleased when he hears that they, the Yugoslavs, are staying "under the authority of 35 members of the Mau Mau". He comments this as being logical, portraying Yugoslav delegation as the standard-bearers of freedom. Another author, Zdenko Štambuk, arrives to Nairobi also in 1954, and presents it as „a city of Indians and Europeans, besieged by black Africa, Africa that wants bread and liberty“.¹⁰¹ In the following years, visiting the Mau Mau was almost like a pilgrimage for Yugoslav travel writers. The Mau Mau became a favorite of Yugoslav writers and they used its "freed territories" and "islands of resistance" (reminiscent of the authors partisan youth) to show the "real Africa" – which was supposedly seen only in freedom in the wooded areas of Kenya, from which "forest people" (*šumski ljudi!*) emerged. The affirmation of the anti-colonial struggle, says Olga Manojlović Pintar, was a logical move of the Yugoslav communists whose central position in their country relied on the constant revival of the tradition of antifascist struggle in World War Two.¹⁰²

⁹⁶ Gajić, Vaso, *Utisci sa puta kroz Afriku*, Sarajevo 1954. (Further: Gajić, V., *Utisci...*)

⁹⁷ Dušan Timotijević, *Etiopija juče i danas*, Beograd, 1954. str. 2, 14 (furthermore Timotijević, D., *Etiopija...*); Ethiopia and its history are of particular interest to the image of Africa. Even the acclaimed author Martin Meredith makes a large mistake saying that Ethiopia was once ruled by "the legendary Pester John", in: Meredith, M., *Fate...*, p. 8.

⁹⁸ Gajić, V., *Utisci...*, str. 35.

⁹⁹ The same similarities were discussed at length in the top political conversations of Tito and Haile Selasie. See more in: Arhiv Jugoslavije, SIV, 130, 217–252, *Izveštaj o poseti druga predsednika Etiopiji*, Sednica Saveznog izvršnog veća 19.1.1956.

¹⁰⁰ Timotijević, D., *Etiopija...*, str. 123; It is also important to note that emperor Haile Selassie was the first foreign head of state to visit Yugoslavia after the Informburo crisis. See more in Jakovina, T. *Treća strana...*,

¹⁰¹ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara* ..., str. 12.

¹⁰² Manojlović Pintar, Olga, *Predgovor* In: Sladojević, A., *Muzej afričke umetnosti...*, str. 7.

Lengthy pages were dedicated to describing not nations, but tribes.¹⁰³ “Areas of the Kikuyu” and examples, such as “the tribe lives in their own world”, in other travelogues testify to the authors’ intention to disregard the “colonial” borders of “artificial nations”.¹⁰⁴ The “denouncing” of “colonial” borders becomes a regular thing to do.

The atmosphere differs in the “two worlds”, authors noticed, and it is quite clearly shown: “the unpleasant and dreary African colonial environment, hostility in which we as foreigners barged from the cheerful and cordial mood of Addis Ababa.”¹⁰⁵ Excursions into “forbidden zones” of colonies such as Belgian Congo or Kenya are used to describe the difference between the two worlds. Štambuk, for an example, meets an Ethiopian who complains of the lack of liberty in Kenya and then they both reminisced about the “free and beautiful Ethiopia.”¹⁰⁶

North Africa was the most “popular” front of the 1950’s. In 1956, a journalist visits Algiers and asks himself: “Where do I find Africa?” He then “finally” finds it in a “green poster with black letters” calling Algerians to a struggle against the colonizers.¹⁰⁷ Not seeing the struggle himself, he conjures it from his imagination: “from all sides of Algeria...lonely riders...to an oasis in the desert...light a fire...guards in circles...let the Free Algeria live!”. He is only disillusioned when his Algerian guide says that the desert cannot be a meeting place – the Legion Estranger would never allow such “romance”.¹⁰⁸ It can be said that authors were even more emotional toward the North Africans; the quoted author “cries” in the end of his travelogue: “for these people that can be a brother to any poet”.¹⁰⁹

When imagination turned into reality in Africa, Yugoslav travel writers were on the spot. One of the most interesting travelogues is “*Algeria*” by Zdravko Pečar. It was made by Pečar in 1958, while he was with the FLN.¹¹⁰ He describes his days

¹⁰³ Although the wide use of the word “tribe” is also criticized by: Keim, C., *Mistaking Africa...*, p. 114–128; Meredith seems to agree by saying that “tribes were mostly imagined by colonizers” Meredith, M., *Fate...*, p. 87–90.

¹⁰⁴ *Put oko svijeta...*, str. 371; Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*, str. 149; Pečar, Z., *Afrika...*, str. 23–47; An acclaimed historian Martin Meredith writes that “colonial borders were drawn provisionally...some antagonistic kingdoms were grouped together, some divided...Muslims and non-Muslims combined” all so that the colonial management can be easier, in: Meredith, M., *Fate of...*, str. 6.

¹⁰⁵ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, p. 23.

¹⁰⁶ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, p. 121.

¹⁰⁷ Milić, Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 13.

¹⁰⁸ Milić Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 23; Another author visited Egypt in 1953, but published his travelogue in the 1960s. He also imagined, together with the Egyptians the coming struggle. He is satisfied to note: “I’m guessing, this is not news, this did not happen. But...the wanting, weird, war stories are gathering about the feats of Egyptians and humiliations of the English.” In: Đorđe Radenković, *Pustinja i ljudi*, Beograd 1963, str. 61.

¹⁰⁹ Milić Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 30.

¹¹⁰ Pečar, Z., *Alžir...*, p. 139. This is a highly detailed account, complete with the full organizational description of FNL and chronology of the fight in Algiers, along with a travel itinerary by Pečar who

with the guerilla, prophesying their victory and following their little islands of resistance. Many of these authors, such as Pečar, proclaimed that they wanted to bring the truth to the world, which was "misinformed".¹¹¹ Pečar is the best example of the travel writers of this age. With a special party "mission"¹¹² to follow and analyze the liberation movement in Algeria, in which Yugoslavia had invested much material and prestige, he sent out regular "propagandistic" reports of the FLN struggle, and was often in life-threatening situations.¹¹³ What Pečar personifies is the early Yugoslav travel writer, reporting almost in real time, always on the side of the Africans, always in a mission for liberty, always persecuted by the colonials.

Apart from visiting the "islands" of people who the authors described as "brothers" and "free", authors described the "islands" of "radical Others", most equated with white colonists. The Portuguese colonies were the biggest unknown. The mandates of Mozambique and Angola were seen as the most conservative and ruthless.¹¹⁴ "Slave work still goes on down south." authors would comment.¹¹⁵ They often circumvented these "dark places" in travel routes: "we move past Mozambique", and described them as evil, and inhumane, cementing Yugoslav official anti-racist position.¹¹⁶ The "Others" from Yugoslavia are former collaborators and landowners. Their downfall is shown as an almost karmic affair. In this sense we can hear that some former Ustashi, met by an author in Algiers, "later died in the poisonous rivers of Indochina"¹¹⁷ and that a former Vojvodina landowner is "I hear, now ruined, although the emperor helped him".¹¹⁸ There can be no success for Yugoslavs, except as part of the great Yugoslav experiment, we can understand.

South Africa presented the biggest "Other" on the continent and was described as such: "The white slave-owners, who distinguish themselves with their hate against UN and the whole of advanced mankind in which they rightfully see an enemy of

fought and documented the war in the summer 1958, with the battalion of Abdurrahman Bensalem. See more on Pečar in: Radonjić, Nemanja „Bubnjevi revolucije: Zdravko Pečar i Veda Zagorac“/Drums of revolution: Zdravko Pečar i Veda Zagorac “ in: „40 Years of Museum of African Art Belgrade“, ed. Sladojević, Ana, Epštajn, Emilia, Museum of African Art Belgrade (to be published in 2017).

¹¹¹ Pečar explicitly claims that the "purpose of this book is to inform Yugoslav public what is going on in Algeria" In: Pečar, Z., *Alžir...*, str. 7;

¹¹² "I had the special party assignment to follow the flow of the Algerian revolution" In: Arhiv MAU, Dokumentacija, br 35, *Transkript emisije o Muzeju afričke umetnosti*, Televizija Beograd, 26.5.1980, p.20.

¹¹³ Pečar found himself, with his Algerian battalion surrounded on three sides by the French when the French aviation started dropping napalm on them. The battalion had to get close to the French soldiers to survive the attack and then made a daring escape, in: Pečar, Z., *Alžir...* str. 98.

¹¹⁴ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 45.

¹¹⁵ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 163.

¹¹⁶ *Put oko svijeta*, str. 363; About Yugoslav legislative antiracism see Jovanović, Jadranka, *Jugoslavija i Savet bezbednosti 1945–1985*, Beograd 1989.

¹¹⁷ Milić Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 67.

¹¹⁸ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 171

their policy, will stay alone on the Black Continent.”;¹¹⁹ With great bitterness authors informed the Yugoslav public of “the infamous color bar”.¹²⁰ Solidarity with the South African people and the defamation of the regime of South Africa was, like the rest of the Eastern Europe, pegged “more important than material help”.¹²¹ In Yugoslavia, there were some prejudice toward Africans, and some part of the population had problems with African, especially black students, not unlike the situation in USSR, but this was an exception not a rule.¹²² Yugoslav travel writers staunchly propagated, not unlike East German officials, that racism is “geographically and temporally” far.¹²³ In this case it was placed in South Africa or periodically in the West.¹²⁴

With the advent of the 1960’s Yugoslav writers went out once again to map the new, liberated countries. This time they headed to West and Southeastern Africa, following “the struggle”.¹²⁵ The 1960’s, were also marked by an even wider anticolonial struggle. The latter part of the 1960’s was already marked by the fight against neo-

¹¹⁹ Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 75. It was viewed as a country with “crazy politics.” and “land of fear!” In: *Ibid.*, p. 74; The regime of *apartheid* was legalized in 1948, growing ever more repressive, and the fighters of African National Congress and their leader Nelson Mandela spent 40 years trying to bring it down. See more in: Meredith, M., *Fate of...*, pp. 67–73, 177–187. 256–270.

¹²⁰ *Put oko svijeta*, str. 366; Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 239; Apart from the whole countries as Others, places such as “colonial buildings”, “Western embassies”, “paratrooper headquarters” were marked as something threatening to Africa. The other side is always scorned so writers like to finish the chapters with cynical remarks – “this is a portrait of a colonial prime minister.” In: Milić Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 37; The same goes for Joseph Mobutu of Congo after a visit – “this is how the dictator spends his Saturday evening” In: Vitorović, N., *Crne suze...*, str. 70; When they do visit the other side they tend to paint them dark. Only one room in one camp of the Legion Estranger, of 20 people is enough for Milić to get “the image of the Dark that pressed the whole of our continent for five years”, in: Milić, Ž., *Koraci...*, str. 58; Also where there are white colonists there are always problems, we are told In: Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara ...*, str. 173

¹²¹ Shubin, Vladimir, Traikova, Maria, “There is no threat from the Eastern Bloc” In: *South African Democracy Education Trust*, Vol II, p. 1066.

¹²² Milorad Lazić researched some problems of African students in Yugoslavia. See: Lazić, Milorad, “Neki problemi stranih studenata na jugoslovenskim univerzitetima sa posebnim osvrtom na afričke studente” In: *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju*, 16, 2, 2009; For comparison with the USSR see: Hessler, Julie, “Death of an African student in Moscow. Race, politics and Cold War.” In: *Cahiers du Monde Russe*, 2006/1, 47.

¹²³ Quinn Slobodian “Introduction” In: *Comrades of Color. East Germany in the Cold War World*, edited by Quinn, Slobodian, New York-Oxford, Berghahn Books, 2015, p. 15. (Further: Quinn, S., “Introduction...”)

¹²⁴ A noted Yugoslav scholar Ranko Petković noticed in his memoirs that South Africa and Israel were represented in Yugoslavia as “mortal enemies”, in: Petković, Ranko, *Subjektivna istorija...*; Unlike the Soviet discourse of Africa Yugoslavs were not as keen on describing America as “a racist paradise”, so they mostly placed racism in colonies and South Africa. About the Soviet views see: Charles Quist-Adade, “From paternalism to ethnocentrism: Images of Africa in Gorbachev’s Russia”, in: *Race and Class*, 46, 4, p. 81.

¹²⁵ Pečar, Z., *Afrika...*, str. 64.

colonialism.¹²⁶ At the same time, the 1960's were the crucial decade for the African image. Following the discovery of Africa as the „cradle of mankind“¹²⁷ came the founding of African studies as a serious discipline: 1960 in Great Britain and 1968 in the USA, 1960 in Leningrad and Moscow.¹²⁸ The works of Basil Davidson, Franz Fanon, Jean Paul Sartre, Edward Said soon made the „western hegemonic eyes“ to reposition themselves.¹²⁹ Still, many prominent authors such as Jacques Derrida or Hannah Arendt were not able to face the colonial experience.¹³⁰

Congo was a new neuralgic point and *Borba* reporter Nikola Vitorović wrote his passionate "*Black Tears of Congo*" during a two month stay in 1960.¹³¹ At this point, the decolonized states became the central Cold War battlegrounds.¹³² In this case, Vitorović, as did Pečar, made the countries shot Prime minister Patrice Lumumba a martyr and a „Lionized Other.“¹³³ Both in Vitorović's and in the book of Oskar Davičo "*Black on White*", it is noticeable that the authors now accented pigments. The travelogues now pitted the "whites" against the "blacks" (like the "reds" against the "whites"), of course always being on the side of the "blacks".

When West African countries were proclaiming their independence, a famous Yugoslav writer, Oskar Davičo visited them.¹³⁴ Davičo goes into numerous altercations with his African and Belgian companions and criticizes the "radiation of SSSR", the "African enthusiasm for China",¹³⁵ reflecting his ideological stance, but most of all the divide of the world between the Blocs.¹³⁶ He notes that he is connected with the

¹²⁶ Samantha Christiansen and Zachary Scarlett (ed.), *The Third World in the global 1960s, Protest, Culture and Society*, New York-Oxford, Berghahn Books 2015, p. 6.

¹²⁷ Meredith, M., *Fate of...*, p. 79.

¹²⁸ Davidson, Apollon, Filatova, Irina, "African History a view from the Kremlin Wall", in: *Russia in Africa. Africa in Russia*, ed. by Matushevich, Maxim, Africa World Press 2006, p. 116–119.

¹²⁹ For an excellent review of the changing image of the Third world see: Young, Robert, *Post colonialism. A historical introduction*, London, 2001.

¹³⁰ Ćirjaković, Z., *Globalna Afrika...*, str.72.

¹³¹ With the independence on 30. June of 1960. Congo was to see one of the most brutal and tense decolonization in Africa. With the confrontations of the countries parties, Belgian and superpower meddling, Congo went into a spiral of violence that left the country in a state of civil war (1961–1965) after which Lumumba's former chief of staff Joseph Mobutu took power, in: Meredith, M., *Fate of...*, p. 53–66

¹³² Bradley, Mark Philip, "Decolonization, the Global South and Cold War", in: *The Cambridge history of the Cold War. Vol. I*, edited by Odd Arne Westad, Cambridge University Press 2010, p. 465.

¹³³ A term used by Quinn Slobodian in his book *Comrades of Color* to describe the "uncritical heroic cults" that the Eastern European governments made of African freedom fighters. See more in Quinn, S., *Introduction...*

¹³⁴ The year 1960, the year of Africa, saw the following countries proclaim independence: Senegal, Mali, Cote D'Ivoire, Togo, Upper Volta, Niger, Chad, Nigeria, Gabon, Dahomey, Cameroon, Central African Republic

¹³⁵ The "Yellow danger" reached its peak when Zou Enlai visited Africa in 1963, according to Meredith

¹³⁶ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 97–122.

“African man”, although there are numerous obstacles (history, geographical distance, “all sorts of things”) through “Marxist terminology” spanning “8000 miles”.¹³⁷ Authors are again most happy to find guerrillas and rhetorically support their struggle.¹³⁸ Davičo incorporates Africa in a wider vision of the mankind, highly ideological.

For Davičo there are no sides of the world: “Why the West? Call the cat black, there is socialism and capitalism, not parts of the world.”¹³⁹ After liberation, the populations of these countries are described as incredibly enthusiastic. Upon visiting Guinea he notes that everyone is happy.¹⁴⁰ These travelogues tried to be the most “actual”, “real time”, sketching new countries fast.¹⁴¹ When African countries were liberated, Yugoslav authors payed no heed to their borders which become “not hard to pass, even unnoticeable.”¹⁴² They express their support for federations of new countries, immediately find supporters of federations and pan-African unification.¹⁴³ They quote African leaders, where convenient, such as Sekou Toure: “... The highest interest: Unity of Africa, condition of our independence!”¹⁴⁴ We find this feeling even a decade later, when Africa was not closer to a pan-African unification.¹⁴⁵ This too, was only logical in the Yugoslav worldview being that only in the federation of Yugoslav republics, progress, but foremost security, was searched and in many ways found.¹⁴⁶

The early 1960’s were actually the most popular time for travel writing about Africa in Yugoslavia. Yugoslavs were, of course, not apart from the rest of the world and it can be said that these travelogues were influenced by the “tides” of “afro-optimism” and “afro-pessimism”.¹⁴⁷ Two important travelogues came out in the mid 1960’s which once again focused on the guerilla groups and new nations, but also

¹³⁷ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 123.

¹³⁸ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 134.

¹³⁹ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 90.

¹⁴⁰ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 86.

¹⁴¹ Bogdanović, Žika, *Kilimandžaro: Zemlja drhti. 100 dana u Tanganjiki, Keniji, Ugandi, Zanzibaru* 1962. In 1962–1963 these East African countries became independent: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi,

¹⁴² Štambuk, Z., *Od Zanzibara...*, str. 218.

¹⁴³ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 122.

¹⁴⁴ Davičo, O., *Crno...*, str. 332.

¹⁴⁵ Bret, Benjamin, “Bookend to Bandung: The New International Economic Order and the Antinomies of the Bandung Era.” In: *Humanity: An international journal for Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development*, 6, 1, 2015, p. 36. (Further: Bret, B, “Bookend to Bandung...”)

¹⁴⁶ The unification of Africa was an ideal many of the less radical leaders of Africa renounced seeing that before decolonization it consisted of around 10.000 political units and 40 colonies. See: Meredith, M., *Fate...*, p.6; The organization of African unity was to prove to be with too much different agendas. See more in: Meredith, M., *Fate...*, p. 81.

¹⁴⁷ Derricourt, R. *Inventing Africa...*, p.122–143.

saw the continent as "taken by the tides of socialism".¹⁴⁸ The lack of travelogues past 1965 can be connected with the slowing down of decolonization and the coups and other happenings that confused even party leadership in Yugoslavia.¹⁴⁹ This phenomenon left the first leaders of free Africa (*Big Men*), and steadfast allies of Yugoslavia dethroned (Nkrumah 1966, Ben Bella 1965, Nasser 1970).¹⁵⁰

In conclusion it can be said that the authors first "mapped" independent and recently independent states as "real Africa". In case of visiting the "colonial empires" they mapped islands of resistance, tracing their enlargement – whether guerrilla groups or syndicates or rebellious tribes. When the country was liberated they immediately proclaimed them "peace loving", the populace was happy and incorporated into their own world. After that, they found supporters of ideas of regional federations, and in the end of pan-African unification, deleting the colonial borders once more. When the geographers of the 19th century explored Africa, they started replacing "elephants with cities" in the words of Philip Curtin.¹⁵¹ Certainly the best description of the 1950's and 1960's in Africa, in regard to the Yugoslav "philosophical geographers", was given by Zdravko Pečar who said that the Yugoslav travel writers went to the places where they found signs "Hic Leones", but not in the sense of "white marks" on the globe but in the sense of giving them a new meaning: "here live fighters for the freedom of the black continent".¹⁵² In all of this, the authors, almost all former partisans, reconstructed their own history. First they suffered in the prisons and in hiding places, then the war started and they created little islands of resistance; the inevitable victory over a stronger enemy followed. Upon liberation, a federation was to be made and socialism was right around the corner. After reconstructing their own path on the grounds of Africa, which can be called an ethno-centric view, Yugoslav travel writers focused on development and the movement that was seen to keep the feared great powers, the Blocs, in check. Non-aligned and the question of development became the next focus points of Yugoslav travel writing on Africa, reflecting Yugoslavia's own troubles and hopes.

¹⁴⁸ These travelogues were *Afrika (1964) and Afrička kretanja (1965)* a two part series published by "Naprijed" from Zagreb that covered the whole of the continent and were based mostly on Pečars travels in 1959–1961 and his analytical work 1962–1964. See more about the tides of socialism: Pečar, Z, *Afrička kretanja...*, str. 9, 12.

¹⁴⁹ A high party official, Svetozar Vukmanović Tempo mentions the confusion in the Foreign Service of Yugoslavia about the coups in Africa, in: Vukmanović, Tempo, Svetozar, *Memoari I*, Beograd-Zagreb, 1985, str. 273.

¹⁵⁰ Meredith, M., *Fate...*, p. 92–109; from the first military coup in Togo in 1963, Africa suffered some 40 coups until the early 1980s showing signs of increased fragility. For a detailed map of the coups, insurrections and conflicts see: *The Times History of the 20th Century*, edited by Overy, Richard et.al. Times Books London 2000, p. 138.

¹⁵¹ P. Curtin, *Image of Africa...*, p. 204.

¹⁵² *Put oko svijeta*, str. 381.

Non-aligned Africa – the 1970s

“... *A continent of non-aligned countries...*”¹⁵³



Photo 2. Zastava vehicles under the Kilimanjaro, 1975¹⁵⁴

The 1970's brought new passion for the non-aligned movement. After the III conference of the Non-aligned in Lusaka, the movement was revived.¹⁵⁵ In the political discourse of Yugoslavia non-alignment gained new power¹⁵⁶ and travelogues reflect this also. Instead of “guerillas”, „workers” become key identifiers. Instead of the armed struggle for liberation, a “bloody struggle” for development ensues.¹⁵⁷ Most of the travelogues now somehow revolve around the Non-alignment movement. The Non-aligned movement relativized and problematized the dominant divide of the world to East and West, to countries of capitalism and socialism.¹⁵⁸ Authors visit Non-aligned countries such as Zimbabwe and repeat the “enthusiasm”, this time for a Non-aligned Africa.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵³ Šekler, B., *Dzambo...*, str. 121.

¹⁵⁴ Forum Autoslavia

<<http://www.autoslavia.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/ekspedicija-kragujevac-kilimandzaro-cover-1050x500.jpg>> (visited 29.11.2015)

¹⁵⁵ Jakovina, T., *Treća strana...*, str. 70–81.

¹⁵⁶ Sladojević, A., *Muzej afričke umetnosti...*, str. 79.

¹⁵⁷ The problem of the “idea vacuum” with the passing of the tide of anticolonialism is noticed also by Meredith, M., *Fate...*, str. 87

¹⁵⁸ Meredith, M., *Fate...*, str. 5.

¹⁵⁹ “There we were of all races and colors. We came in the name of two billion six hundred million people of the developing countries, of which 800 million lacks basic education, about 1 billion suffers from hunger and malnutrition, and 750 million lives from 50 dollars a year. This is an image of the earth which comes to about 70% of today’s mankind from which multinational companies in 1974 extracted 62 billions of dollars. All the rest went into those fortresses of world economic power of the

Writing from a conference in Tunisia, Aleksandar Vitorović claims it could have been: "Delhi [...] or any other non-aligned country. Whatever! Any of these non-aligned countries would mean the same. The goal is overcoming the consequences of Bloc division."¹⁶⁰ Africa was, from various reasons, a suitable region to demonstrate "unity" of the majority world. It was indeed a "fortress of the non-aligned".¹⁶¹ Sudan is a country that is a good example of what authors wanted of Africa. It is described as the "friendliest country" because it "opened the roads to the socialist development, and found itself with the non-aligned and freedom loving nations of the world."¹⁶² Again, we find travelogues in unison with the official Yugoslav ideology and the general idea of "giving the global South a voice".¹⁶³

The most important travelogue of the 1970's is "Džambo, Afriko!" written by Bogdan Šekler. He was a member of an expedition „Kragujevac Kilimanjaro“ which, in 1975, was to go from the socialist factory of „Red Flag“ in Kragujevac, Yugoslavia, to the mountain Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. The goal was to try out the new „Zastava 101“ car, a Yugoslav product assembled „from all parts of our country“. The expedition was marked by the „red banner of self-management“. The setting of the flag on Kilimanjaro was not presented only as a victory over the harsh environment; the expedition itself was a chain that connected Non-aligned countries and bonded them tighter. The flag, the red banner of self-management, presented a victory not of a country, but of an idea.¹⁶⁴ "We come from Non-aligned Yugoslavia" says the author.¹⁶⁵ The expedition was also in large part a demonstration of Yugoslavia's success story and a commercial for the self-management system.¹⁶⁶ Africa, here, degenerated. It only served as a harsh background against whose "whimsy" the Yugoslav system must be tested.

Closely tied to Non-alignment was the discourse of development. African states were, already in a "quest for development".¹⁶⁷ However experts estimated that "there is no single grand solution to the dilemma posed by Third world industrial

countries that, for an example, got their GDP over 6.600 dollars per capita." In: Vitorović, Aleksandar, *Putopisi i susreti*, Beograd 2006, str. 23.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, str. 24.

¹⁶¹ Croatian historian Tvrtko Jakovina calls his chapter about the African affairs of the Non-aligned – "Africa – fortress of the Non-aligned" In: Jakovina, T., *Treća strana...*, str. 477.

¹⁶² Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, pp 76.

¹⁶³ Mišković N., et al., *Non aligned movement...*, str. 8.

¹⁶⁴ Šekler, B., *Džambo...*, str. 150–156.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. p. 141.

¹⁶⁶ The automobile expedition was by no means original. The same was done by the French "Citroen" in the 1920s and by the Czechoslovakian "Škoda" in the 1940s.

¹⁶⁷ Addas, Michael *Machines as the Measures of Men. Science, Technology and the Ideologies of Western Dominance*, Cornell University Press 1989, p. 417.

development”.¹⁶⁸ Speaking about this Bockman says: “The Non Aligned Movement, in cooperation with the socialist world, sought to break with the colonial world economies and their bilateral relations between colony and metropolis. In place of these relations, they forged economic connections with wide varieties of countries, emphasizing cooperation and solidarity”.¹⁶⁹ It seems that the Yugoslav travel writers were in line with what Ajiz Ahmad calls “an ideological formation which redefined anti-imperialism not as a socialist project to be realized by mass movement of the popular classes but as a developmental project to be realized by the weaker states of the national bourgeoisies in the course of their collaborative competition with the more powerful states of advanced capital.”¹⁷⁰ In this sense we can read:

*“We think about the poor in Lodvar. This is an Africa that is backward but liberated. This is Africa that is the other, terrible face of this world, mark on the conscience of mankind, but now already a continent that became its own master; a continent of non-aligned countries, that will defeat hunger and poverty, like the colonizers were defeated.”*¹⁷¹

As we can see, this writer does not doubt African development. Globally the 1970s “witnessed utopian aspirations for the developing world”.¹⁷² Even Yugoslav party elite had an “overly optimistic attitude towards African development from the early age”.¹⁷³ However, Yugoslavs nevertheless do the same thing critiqued by Chinua Achebe in his famous essay, published in the 1970s, they cast a look at Africa to see how far “we have advanced”.¹⁷⁴ Indeed, Yugoslav travel writers of this decade seemed to have “evolutionist” ideas of development,¹⁷⁵ plus a linear understanding of history, and considered Africa, as a whole, to be where Yugoslavia was in 1945. What is specific in the Yugoslav case is that they place the blame for the underdeveloped exclusively in the former metropolis. It is noticeable that maps of “non-aligned” and “underdeveloped” are the same as the former “oppressed”.

With the transfer of travel writing to mostly journalists¹⁷⁶ it can be noticed that a discourse of „civilization“ appears. Even some high Yugoslav officials considered,

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, pp 418; the end of 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s brought economists such as Andrew Carmark to conclude that “for most of Africa, the economic future could be bright”, in: Meredith, M, *Fate...*, p. 80.

¹⁶⁹ Bockman, Johana, “Socialist Globalization against Capitalist Neocolonialism: The Economic Ideas behind the New International Economic Order”, in: *Humanity, an international journal for human rights, humanitarianism and development*, 6, 1, 2015, p. 43

¹⁷⁰ Bret, B, “Bookend to Bandung...”, p. 37.

¹⁷¹ Šekler, B., *Dzambo...*, str. 121.

¹⁷² Bret, B, “Bookend to Bandung...”, p.33.

¹⁷³ Bogetić D., *Nova strategija...*, str.155.

¹⁷⁴ Achebe, C., “An Image...”, p.12.

¹⁷⁵ Keim, C., *Mistaking Africa...*, p. 86.

¹⁷⁶ Bogdan Šekler was a journalist of *Večernje novosti*; Dušan Sekulić was a journalist of *Ilustrovaná politika*; Aleksandar Vitorović was a journalist of *Politika*.

and talked about „Africa, Asia and Latin America“ as the „uncivilized world“.¹⁷⁷ Authors pretty much chart all of inner Africa as uncivilized, and mimic some “colonial” views. Perhaps not incidentally this discourse appears parallel to the discourse of development. Seeing Western technology or technology as civilization, and nature, especially African nature, as something opposite, was a common stereotype.¹⁷⁸

The authors are amazed at the differences there are in their world. The members of the expedition “Kragujevac-Kilimanjaro” could see „the terrible contrast of human inequality“.¹⁷⁹ If the previous author divided the world to “fortresses of economic power” and the rest, Šekler divides it to “The rich world”, “the rich developed world” and the rest. Africa was now “liberated Africa”. Children are especially used to differentiate two worlds – the rich and the rest.¹⁸⁰ Dušan Sekulić, another member of the “Kragujevac-Kilimanjaro” expedition calls Africa an „unhappy continent, discovering itself via problems“.¹⁸¹ He calls the rest of the world “richer and happier”.¹⁸² Sekulić also uses children, asking “What can they hope for?” and explaining that their” misfortune is to be born on the black continent, black not because of the blacks live there, but because their destiny is black”.¹⁸³ Here we can see that Yugoslav travel writing is approaching the popular “metropolitan” of the time, with the discourse of pity.¹⁸⁴ It can be said that in the 1970’s there is a small “degeneration” in the quality of the travelogues and they are much more alike the representations of Africa in the West – becoming what a famous writer critiqued as: “Europeans seeing only the veneer of Africa”.¹⁸⁵ This can be tied to the fact that the authors of the 1970’s were professional journalists, unlike diplomats, writers and even Africanists of the previous decades, and that their fervor for defending Africa, already began to diminish. However, this is most tied to the general global trend of that age – especially for the late 1970’s and disillusion of the decolonization.¹⁸⁶ The economic troubles of Yugoslavia from 1963/4 onward were also a spark to the authors imagination and it is noticeable that they are worried about the economic fortunes of their own country, as well as Africa.

¹⁷⁷ Jakovina, T., *Treća strana...*, str. 171.

¹⁷⁸ Keim, C., *Mistaking Africa...*, p. 91.

¹⁷⁹ Šekler, B., *Dzambo...*, str. 32.

¹⁸⁰ Šekler, B., *Dzambo...*, str. 85, 74, 25; Sekulić, Dušan, *Putokaz...*, str. 86–90.

¹⁸¹ Sekulić, D., *Putokaz...*, str. 66.

¹⁸² *Ibid.* p. 65; Here he uses the same mechanism as Eastern German writers, in: Quinn, S., “Introduction...”, p. 6.

¹⁸³ Sekulić, Dušan, *Putokaz...*, str. 89.

¹⁸⁴ Lisle, D., *Global politics...*, str. 135. In such manner we see the American writer Robert Kaplan present “the whole of West Africa... as underdeveloped, wasteland, uncivilized.” In: *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹⁸⁵ Ryszard Kapucinski cited in: Van Den Bergh, Erik, “Dutch Images of South Africa Reflected in Travel Diaries”, *Ecumenical Advice and Research Center on South Africa*, 2000, p. 459.

¹⁸⁶ Derricourt, R. *Inventing Africa...* p. 122–143; Bret, B, “Bookend to Bandung...”, p. 34.

Balkanization of Africa. Africanization of Yugoslavia/Balkans – the 1980s and beyond

*I see years of balkanization of Africa which were followed by this,
africanization of the Balkans.¹⁸⁷*

Yugoslav travelogues from the later decades were mostly written by correspondents of the state news agency TANJUG.¹⁸⁸ These travelogues show a confusing continent, even for the authors. The 1980's globally brought increased fears and disappointment. This was the era of afro-pessimism.¹⁸⁹ The main focus and anxiety of travelogues globally was terror.¹⁹⁰ It is the same in the Yugoslav travelogues. It is not just the case of the military-political situation of Africa. Environmental issues are also in focus.¹⁹¹ Rampant crime is shown.¹⁹² Another short visit to South Africa is used to locate the most repressive regime in the world.¹⁹³

But the most important points in this decade are the mapping of the failure of the African regimes and encroachment by the "imperial" power upon African borders (mainly USA). The USA did in fact have a role in many African processes.¹⁹⁴ The role of the USA increased through developmental aid, but the IMF was also seen as its tool.¹⁹⁵ But some authors, mainly Dragan Milosavljević, are too influenced by what happened in the Balkans. What should be noted is that these travelogues were written mostly during/after the 1990s, after a time in which Yugoslavia disappeared and a view of the West was changed, especially pertaining to the USA. If Western developmental experts placed the blame for the development failure on African nation states,¹⁹⁶ Yugoslav travel writers placed the blame exclusively upon "imperial" factors which was, as Jakovina claims, a longtime code of speech for – the USA.¹⁹⁷

Like in other travelogues, Yugoslav travelogues of this time are dominated by coups, mercenaries and endless surveys of civil wars, with weird anecdotes and trivial stories. However, failures of some African regimes, such as that of Nigeria, and reporting of it, brought one travel writer "endless" problems in Yugoslavia with

¹⁸⁷ Milosavljević, Dragan, *Harmatan*, Beograd 2011, str. 171, 283. (Further: Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*)

¹⁸⁸ Dragan Milosavljević was a TANJUG correspondent; Dušan Miklja was a TANJUG correspondent; Nada Milašin was an ambassador's wife; Zuko Džumhur was an artist.

¹⁸⁹ Derricourt, R., *Inventing Africa...*, str. 91.

¹⁹⁰ Pratt, M., *Imperial eyes...*, str. 227.

¹⁹¹ Miklja, D *Crni Sizif...*, str. 151–159, Milašin, N. *Afrički...*, str. 23–67.

¹⁹² Miklja, D *Crni Sizif...*, str. 169, Milašin, N. *Afrički...*, str. 72–74.

¹⁹³ Miklja, D *Crni Sizif...*, str. 132–142.

¹⁹⁴ Meredith, M., *Fate...*, p. 203.

¹⁹⁵ Keim, C, *Mistaking Africa...*, p. 116.

¹⁹⁶ Keim, C, *Mistaking Africa...*, p. 445.

¹⁹⁷ Jakovina, T, *Treća strana...*, str. 173.

"famous journalists and diplomats". This, incidentally is the first time we can say we hear an opinion different from the main political line.¹⁹⁸ The same author, Dušan Miklja also shows the failure of Kenya, calling the local golf club "citadel of the whites" and uses African sources to show the white settlers of Kenya as "Others."¹⁹⁹ The time of mapping the Mau Mau resistance is over. Kenya actually becomes a metaphor of a failed Africa.²⁰⁰ Authors reminisced their polemics with Westerners who claimed that Kenya is the "the best country in Africa" while they (Yugoslavs) didn't even consider Kenya African, because the white minority held power.²⁰¹ It is almost a full circle, seeing a travel writer talk with a Yugoslav worker in Kenya in the 1980's who talks about the Africans and the English:

*"They (Africans) love us, and respect us, but they listen to the English... they are the colonizers, and we (Yugoslavs) are just humans like them (Africans)"*²⁰²

Instead of colonial headquarters, now country clubs become the "citadels" of the "Other." The guerrillas the travel writers once supported now became presidents, in those countries such as Angola and Mozambique, and authors were now honored guests. Angola, Mozambique finally were on the map of travel writers, but predictions of a "positive" future were non present.²⁰³ Far more generalizations are present, and travel writers try to come to conclusions about the whole of Africa. Coups are lumped together, and the "dream of African unity" is the past.²⁰⁴

Instead of "non-aligned" or "developing" these countries are mapped more and more as "poor countries".²⁰⁵ The world is now divided on the North-South axis, and this is the main reason for African problems in some travel writers opinions. Like some experts, authors consider the continued dependency on the "North" the main failure of Africa.²⁰⁶ The travel writers do not call for action, like before; they now only document what is happening:

*"Logs go to the developed north, and the brushes are left to the underdeveloped south for fires under the cauldrons".*²⁰⁷

Instead of countries, travel writers now again began to use "ex English colonies"²⁰⁸ French soldiers in West Africa are for the authors an opportunity to ridicule

¹⁹⁸ Miklja, D, *Putopisi...*, str. 15–17.

¹⁹⁹ Miklja, D, *Crni Sizif*, str. 148, 151.

²⁰⁰ Miklja, D, *Putopisi...*, str. 201.

²⁰¹ Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan*, str. 24.

²⁰² Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 50.

²⁰³ Miklja, D, *Putopisi...*, str. 67–82.

²⁰⁴ Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 216.

²⁰⁵ Miklja, D, *Putopisi...*, str. 45, 186.

²⁰⁶ Bret, B., "Bookend to Bandung...", p.38.

²⁰⁷ Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 80.

²⁰⁸ Miklja, D, *Putopisi...*, str. 156.

the phrase “Africa to Africans”.²⁰⁹ Politicians and the very politics of non-alignment was now ridiculed and questioned. Countries are now ironically called “friendly, non-aligned Uganda”,²¹⁰ and African leaders are named “Tito’s orphans”.²¹¹ A generally positive attitude towards Africa was retained but somewhere it was seen as a staging ground to what happened to Yugoslavia.²¹²

It can be said that this was not actually an alternative geography, but Yugoslavs were mapping the failure of Africa as an exclusively American affair, reflecting their thoughts on the disintegration of Yugoslavia. USSR was mentioned, but it was seen as a benevolent hegemon, more funny and grotesque than dangerous. Even before, USSR was only rarely mentioned, and then mainly because of its great successes of the 1970s in Angola and Ethiopia.²¹³ Nevertheless, the main point is a defeat by an “imperial geography”. The “free”, “non-aligned”, “developed”, “peace loving” Africa is now turned on its head by the authors.

Conclusion

It seems that the factor I called “Yugoslav mirror” is actually the most important factor in representing Africa. Although they shared some views and even prejudices about the imagined geography of Africa with the West, Yugoslav “socialist” travel writers were dedicated mostly to mapping the alternative geography of Africa and debunking some “colonial” myths, while at the same time projecting the unique Yugoslav experience to Africa.

Throughout these four decades of Cold War, Yugoslav travel writing, and textual mapping of Africa followed closely the official state policy. However, the travelogues do not lack depth and understanding of the African affairs. In truth, in many cases Yugoslav travel writers were very well-informed, and their writings of Africa approached the heights of such names as Ryzsard Kapucinski.²¹⁴

²⁰⁹ Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 82.

²¹⁰ Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 6.

²¹¹ Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 248.

²¹² “Going through my notebook in which there are writings from African killing fields, I wonder, could we, looking at the unfortunate continent without the glasses of consciously grown illusions on the correctness of leaders and justness of peoples, learn something? Because, “taming” countries with a civilization and economic blockade and turning a “no” into a “yes” is already tried out on our black friends on the start of the decade in which the Balkan tribal clashes were prepared.... Today when I open my notebook I would discard none of the texts. I see years of balkanization of Africa which were followed by this, africanization of the Balkans. Milosavljević, D., *Harmatan...*, str. 290.

²¹³ Deffoses, Helen, “USSR and Africa.” In: *Journal of Opinion*, 16, 1, 1987, p. 3.

²¹⁴ See more on the famed journalist and travel writer described as “one of the best writers on Africa” and simultaneously published in both Blocks In: Domosłowski, Artur, *Ryzsard Kapucinski. The Biography*, London 2012.

The travel writers of the 1950's, journalists and officials, all former partisans, all communists, projected their own youth onto Africa. It is easy to recognize in the figure of colonial officials, the once hated clerks and gendarmerie of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Then as the struggle for liberation began, travelogues charted little islands of resistance, rather than the hated colonial dominions, which were painted like occupied territory. The “partisan myth” of Yugoslav World War Two was repeated throughout the 1950's and 1960's, and it was logical because the writers got their power through the liberation struggle. The victory and liberation of African countries posed a new dilemma? Where now? Without a hint of doubt the authors predicted, and even recommended to Africans firstly regional federations, and then a pan-African unification, with socialism looming around the corner, but non alignment being a “first step”.

When the 1970's came and Africa, but perhaps even Yugoslavia, didn't actually come to where it was supposed to be, authors asked questions. They pointed exclusively at the developed world and the maps were identical to the former “oppressors” and the “oppressed”. The “non-aligned geography” served as an umbrella for hopes of development and peace.

The disappointment of the 1980's and 1990's turned previous alternative geographies on their heads, and travel writers were left to scribe down the list of defeats. Balkans and Africa were one in their eyes and the failure to defeat “the Empires” and the imperial geography of “africanization” and “balkanization” resonates throughout the texts.

All of this however, can show us why the authors were so keen on changing the dominant views of world geography and providing an alternative. Their imaginary geography was pointed against the “dominant” geography, of world Blocs, of world empires, old and new. Both Yugoslavia and Africa were “targets” of previous world empires, rather than hearts of Empires themselves, so any geography where “Balkans” or “Africa” were used as objects, was indeed the most dangerous geography. Becoming “actors” and charting the world geography themselves, socialist Yugoslav travel writers tried to “defend” their own place in the “world imaginary”.

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Резиме

Немања Радоњић, МА

„Од Крагујевца до Килиманџара”: Измишљање Африке и самоперцепција Југославије у путописима социјалистичке Југославије

Југословенски путописи о Африци имали су своју дозу „изузетности” баш као и сама Југославија. Управо тај специфични положај Југославије у Хладном рату пројектован је на афрички континент преко путописа. Тај положај, периферан и лиминалан давао је, међутим, и прилику да се југословенски путописци одвоје од доминантних дискурса и остваре своју, ма колико ограничену на југословенску публику, сферу утицаја. Повезаност путописа и државне политике само је на моменте ометао путописце, у томе што би можда још нешто рекли, али свакако је добар део њих сматрао да сведочи „искреном” и „истинском” покрету за бољи свет. Африка је најпре „брањена” од колонизатора, затим је испуњавања новим државама, са надом да ће ускоро цео континент постати слободан и на концу, социјалистички. Када крајем 1960их Африку није то постао, постао је несврстан, и тако је и осликаван. Тек разочарења крајем 1980их, и у Африци и у Југославији, донела су дисонантне гласове незадовољника, који су *ex post* тврдили да је Африци и Југославији подарена иста зла судбина. У свему томе, приметно је да никада, од самих почетака раних 1950их, на Африку није гледано искључиво стереотипно, са висине или са подсмехом. Југословени су се са Африканцима идентификовали у томе што су у њима видели природне савезнике у борби против светских империја. Путописи остају сведочанство невиђене експлозије контакта Балкана и Африке, Југославије и Африке и посебног, алтернативног гледања на светску географију, историју и будућност, где је са једне европске периферије често бацан поглед симпатије и солидарности на светску периферију.

Кључне речи: путописи, Африка, социјализам, Југославија, имагологија, анти-колонијализма, несврстаност, Хладни рат, филозофска географија