Representative portrait of the childhood in the Socialist Yugoslavia

FIERY GREETINGS

Representative portrait of the childhood in the Socialist Yugoslavia

ANA ADAMOVIĆ
Fiery Greetings, Six channel video installation
(363 photographs and texts from photo-albums sent to Tito from 1945 till 1980,
from the archive of the *Museum of Yugoslav History*)


SALE

PLAMENI POZDRAVI

Ana Adamović

Socijalistička Jugoslavija dugo je bila poznata kao zemlja «socijalizma sa ljudskim likom» i važila za najliberalniju državu nekadašnjeg Istočnog bloka. Njen identitet građen je na idejama narodnooslobodilačke borbe svih njenih naroda u II svetskom ratu, ideji bratstva i jedinstva, raskidu sa Staljinom i Sovjetskim Savezom 1948. godine, na jedinstvenom modelu samoupravljanja i politici nesvrstanosti, ali i na jakom kultu ličnosti njenog doživotnog predsednika – Josipa Broza Tita.

Glavni ideolozi druge Jugoslavije socijalizam su videli kao period tranzicije koji vodi komunističkom društvu budućnosti. U novoj Jugoslaviji nastaloj nakon II svetskog rata, zapravo su samo deca bila *tabula rasa*, glina koju je društvo moglo da oblikuje po svojim potrebama. Ispravnim i kontrolisanim odgojem oni su trebali da postanu istinski graditelji i građani hrabrog novog sveta koji će biti ostvaren u budućnosti.

Posmatrajući reprezentativne fotografije koje su svake godine predsedniku, kao «najdražem drugu», slate za rođendan zajedno sa čestitkama, posvetama, pesmama i literarnim radovima, nije teško identifikovati promene u jugoslovenskom modelu socijalizma, ali i zvanični ideološki okvir u kome su generacije nekadašnjih Jugoslovena odrastale.

Josip Broz Tito umire 1980. godine. Njegova zemlja i kult nadživeli su ga nešto malo više od decenije. Svet je ulazio u period dramatičnih promena, a proklamovani ideali jugoslovenske države počeli su da deluju kao bezsadržajna forma. 1989. godine pao je Berlinski zid. Dve godine nakon toga Jugoslavija ulazi u dug proces raspada i ratova. Jugosloveni koji su od najranijeg detinjstva učeni da čuvaju bratstvo i jedinstvo kao «zenicu oka svoga» našli su se na suprotnim zaraćenim stranama. Projekat konstrukcije srećnog socijalističkog detinjstva i budućeg čoveka nestao je zajedno sa svim ostalim projektima jugoslovenskog socijalizma.

Danas je Jugoslavija pre svega poznata po svom raspadu – najsurovijem i najdužem oružanom sukobu na evropskom tlu nakon kraja II svetskog rata. Pored mrtvih, raseljenih i razaranja, konflikt i ratovi za sobom su ostavili i sasvim suprotstavljena sećanja i tumačenja neposredne prošlosti i karaktera same države među njenim nekadašnjim građanima. Jugoslavija se danas uglavnom percipira kao država u kojoj nijedna nacija nije mogla biti zadovoljna, kao utopija, njen prosperitet i modernizatorski kapacitet kao ništa više od mita, država čiji je raspad bio neminovan i neizbežan. Dominantni javni diskurs u svakoj od država nastalih na njenom tlu nameće izvesnu vrstu kolektivne amnezije u odnosu na decenije koje su sada razdvojeni narodi proveli živeći zajedno.

Jedan mogući način da se period druge jugoslovenske države razume i dekonstruiše, jeste i istraživanje i promišljanje reprezentativnih vizuelnih dokumenata koji su iza nje ostali – fotografija.

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The Socialist Yugoslavia was believed to be the most specific country of the former Eastern Bloc, known for decades as a country of the "socialism with a human face". Its founding principles were ideas of the brotherhood and unity, anti-fascist struggle of all Yugoslav people during the WWII, a break-up with the Soviet Union and Stalin in 1948, its unique model of self-governing socialism and the politics of non-alliance combined with a strong personality cult of its eader – Josip Broz Tito.

Main ideologists of the second Yugoslavia saw the socialism as a transition period leading to a communism of the future. In the new Yugoslavia after the WWII, only children were *tabula rasa*, the clay system could have shaped. With a correct and control ed upbringing they were to become real architects and citizens of the brave new world, a project realized in the present but to be achieved in the future. By looking at the numerous photographs that were sent every year as birthday presents to the "most loving friend" together with greetings, dedications, poems and literary works, both paradigmatic shifts in the Yugoslav socialism and the ideological frame in which generations of Yugoslavs were growing up could easily be identified.

Josip Broz Tito died in 1980. His country and his cult outlived him for a bit more than a decade. The world was entering a period of dramatic changes and proclaimed ideals of the Yugoslav state were taking a meaningless form. In 1989 Berlin Wall fell. Two years a er Yugoslavia entered into a long process of disintegration and wars. The Yugoslavs who were taught to cherish the brotherhood and unity among the count y's nations from their ea liest age found themselves on the opposite sides of the war. The long lasting project of creating a happy socialist childhood together with all the other projects led by the Yugoslav socialism, failed. The state ended in the longest and the most violent conflict in Europe after the end of the WWII. The dead, displaced, and utterly conflicted memories and understanding of the past among its former fellow citizens were left behind.

Today, Yugoslavia is more often than not perceived as a country in which no nation could have been satisfied, as an utopia, its prosperity and modernity as nothing more than a myth, a country whose disintegration was inherent and unavoidable. The dominant public discourse in every newly formed successor state is imposing a kind of collective amnesia about decades that now divided nations spent living together.

One possible way of understanding the period of the socialist Yugoslav state and of reconstructing its dominant models could be achieved through a research and interpretation of representative visual documents that the country left behind – photographs.

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

ŠKART
WHAT DO YOU ASK AND WHEN NOBODY ASKS?
(Bed-made theatre stories)

...esto ležaja -
kamen

svakom
jednak

znam da
ne patim
dovoljno

plačem
jer nemam
kamen

turam
temperaturu

doktor: na pauzi

vratili
me kući

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

ANA ADAMOVIĆ

FIERY GREETINGS

In mid 2011, Katarina Živanović, at that time Director of the Museum of Yugoslav History in Belgrade, invited me to look at the photo albums Josip Broz Tito received from Yugoslav citizens for more than thirty years, period in which he was lifetime president and undisputed leader of this country. Photo albums were sent by official institutions, organizations, city administrations, municipalities, sport and art collectives, but there are also albums sent by individuals from around this country which doesn't exist anymore. These photo albums are actually just a fraction of the rich collection kept at this Museum, probably the only one of its kind in the entire region of the former Yugoslavia. For a long time, they were the part of the Museum's archives that was least accessed, studied and displayed, and even not long ago in 2011, digitalization of this valuable segment of its collection was still pending. When the Museum invited me, the intention was to examine and curate this part of its collection, in cooperation with contemporary artists, and to present it to the public. In Serbia, the cooperation between cultural institution such as museums and contemporary artists is rather seldom, and when it does happen, the initiative usually comes from the artists, not from the institutions. During three years spent on studying and working on this project, the curators at the Museum of Yugoslav History kindly dedicated their time and invested their knowledge into this project, and one of the first initiatives that came from the Museum's new director, Neda Knežević, was to digitalize this segment of the collection, task that was successfully completed in mid 2014. Without this cooperation, the project *Fiery Greetings* would have never been possible.

The collection at the Museum of Yugoslav History includes around 2,300 photo albums given as gifts to President Tito. Most of them are albums with photographs, but there are also several hundred albums containing only drawings, literary essays, press clippings, urban development plans, diplomas and certifi-

cates of honour. Among them, there are 260 photo albums Tito received from primary schools, pioneer organizations and other children institutions around Yugoslavia. These albums were the focus of our research.

One of the first albums that I had in my hands was the one Tito received for his birthday in 1951.[1] The album was sent by pupils from the First Girl School for Manufacture, for schoolgirls aged 14 to 18. From the dedication written in it, we get to know that most of them were either war orphans or came from extremely poor families. With those photographs sent to Tito, the girls wanted him to see their life at that school where school officials looked after them like their parents would. That's what new socialist state and, needless to say, Tito himself, provided to them. Along with best wishes for Tito's birthday, the pupils from the First Girl School for Manufacture in Belgrade also sent him "fiery greetings". And it was not only in 1951 that he received such "fiery greetings" sent by children from all around the country. Although it was not used that often, this expression appears in dedications in many photo albums sent from all the republics over decades. In one of the pictures from the albums, these words are seen on a giant banner displayed above the stage on a ceremony held in Varaždin when the Baton of Youth passed through that town in Croatia.

What kind of system was it when children were expected to send fiery greetings to the President? What kind of future could such a country and such a system have? And is that really the only picture of that country? Or perhaps there were different paradigms which plainly coexisted in that "country of socialism with a human face" in parallel, side by side? How do we remember our childhood and the country in which we grew up? What was that country (really) like? And, lastly, what meaning does it have today, if we can even think about the country beyond the box of the notions of territory and nation? These questions provided the starting point for the work on the project *Fiery Greetings*, with cognizance of the fact that none of them can be answered.

The first albums President Tito received from children of Yugoslavia via school, pioneer, sport, cultural and other institutions responsible for taking care of children date from 1945, and were sent from recently liberated territories. Among the first was the album sent to Marshal of Yugoslavia from Slovenia, from the Home of Bosnian Children in Kamnik. Children on the photographs were war orphans from Bosnia – Serbs, Croats and Muslims who, in the words of Raif Nikić, Pioneer Battalion Commissar, written to Tito, loved each other like brothers, and were united by blood that their parents shed for their country's freedom. The last album from the archives of the Museum of Yugoslav History dates from

1982, and it was sent from the town of Kragujevac. At that time, Tito was dead for two years already, yet the albums were still pouring in to celebrate the Yugoslav Pioneer Games which after Tito's death were held under the slogan *Let's Grow up under Tito's Flag*. In the period between those years, Tito received 260 photo albums that show the activities of Yugoslav children. They include several thousand photographs and hundreds of messages. Today, it is almost impossible to figure out how decisions were made about who was to make such albums, when was the time for a school or other children institution to send them to the President, or if there was a particular model of album-creation applied by these institutions. Likewise, it remains a moot point how many of these albums were made but never sent or received.

Just like most of the gifts now kept at the Museum of Yugoslav History, these albums given as presents to Tito for the most part arrived on the occasion of May 25th, when Tito's birthday and the Youth Day were celebrated. From the very beginning, the albums stuck to a fixed scenario which was, more or less regularly, repeated in all of them, year in year out. The albums almost invariably open with a dedication or a birthday greeting to the President, followed by a photograph of the institution sending the album, group photographs of teachers and schoolchildren (when album-sender is a school), and photographs of diverse activities, classes, events, sport contests. Photographs are usually accompanied with short texts giving description of the scene on the picture. Sometimes they are written in the form of slogans ("The first task we have is to learn."), but oftentimes they are written in a warmer, more intimate fashion ("Empty playground – we went for a walk." or "After fresh air, tasty lunch does good."). Meticulously composed, these albums definitely give a representative picture of institutional growing up in Yugoslavia after World War II. The photographs are addressed to the President, composed to conform to his point of view, his judgment and his opinion. At the same time, they possess a much more intimate quality of family photo albums which are sent to the father in the hope that he would leaf through them in serene evening hours, tenderly smiling at the pictures of his children.

These photographs are representative documents of an era, but what distinguishes them among thousands of others kept at the Museum of Yugoslav History, and at many archives throughout the former country, is the fact that their authors are for the most part anonymous amateurs, such as school staff, instructors who teach technical skills and the children themselves. Namely, in Yugoslavia, in most of the schools extra-curricular activities included courses in photography, so it is very likely that a good deal of the photographs from these albums

were taken by schoolchildren who took photography classes.[2] Therefore, these photographs are not only a portrayal of the institutional world of childhood in socialist Yugoslavia, but in like manner of the institutional world of children as seen from children's perspective. Hence, we can assume that, under the watchful eye of teachers who were (probably) responsible for the concept and the final layout of these albums, it was children themselves who shared responsibility for deciding how to present themselves in the best possible way to their undisputed leader – to show their work, creativity, assiduousness, strength, ingenuity, togetherness, achievements. They show him how children play, learn, work, dream about future. They are the architects of socialism, peace and brotherhood between all the people. They believe in justice and freedom, they live in a free country created by heroes who gave their life for it, where it is "wonderful to be young". They are pioneers, they sing in choirs, they march on parades. Best part of the scenes on the photographs will be familiar even to those born in Yugoslavia in the last years of Tito's life, those who never made nor sent such albums. For the former Yugoslavs born prior to the 1980s, it is an easily recognizable world, the world of his/her childhood spent at school, various sections, excursions, visits to places that commemorate important events from the national liberation struggle, children resorts around the former country. It is a well-known world of children who have faith that the promises the adults made about the future might come true.

Once Yugoslavia started falling apart, the ideology of Yugoslav socialism was jettisoned as a lie which kept the people of that country enslaved for many decades. Representative photographs of childhood that are part of the albums sent to Tito have been interpreted as evidence that from the earliest age children underwent ideological indoctrination by a sinister, totalitarian, communist regime. New countries and new social systems have been established, while Yugoslavs from these and similar photographs had to realize that they grew up in a lie, and to accept apparently new values of that free world they were about to join – to be hard-working, honest, diligent, to foster solidarity and unity, to protect the environment, to invest their free time in the community. As if they hadn't known it all before, as if they weren't taught all that in that country which was progressively disappearing from the face of the earth, as if so many photographs from these albums sent to Tito provided no evidence to the contrary. Personal experiences of citizens from the former Yugoslavia have been slandered as being tainted by the totalitarian regime and the cult of personality, and no credit was given to the modernizing, emancipating aspect of that country which was crumbling and being consigned to oblivion. Tito's portraits that hung

on the wall in every classroom and rather bizarre rallies that celebrated his birthday overshadowed all other aspects of sociability, education and everyday life of Yugoslav children and Yugoslav society.

However, there are many people now who retrieve and look into these and similar photographs, documents, models and practices carried out in socialist Yugoslavia. Apparently, it is not because nostalgia for the past times is so strong, but rather because the present is so lacking in ideas, so wrong, so bad. Perhaps the aim is not only to find the breaking point when everything started going downhill, but also to look for the questions about a more just society that have never been properly answered. Not to find the lost socialist utopia, but to regain the possibility to think up a positive future for the present society. That was the intention behind the project *Fiery Greetings* that prompted us to research the photo archives, and more specifically the photographs related to the construction of childhood, bearing in mind that it is primarily into children that society instills its idea of future. We believed that the picture of institutional childhood in socialist Yugoslavia is precisely the sphere where one can see what that country wanted and strived to be. And it seems to us, it was not only Yugoslavia, but the whole world in the wake of the World War II. And it makes manifest what both have failed to become.

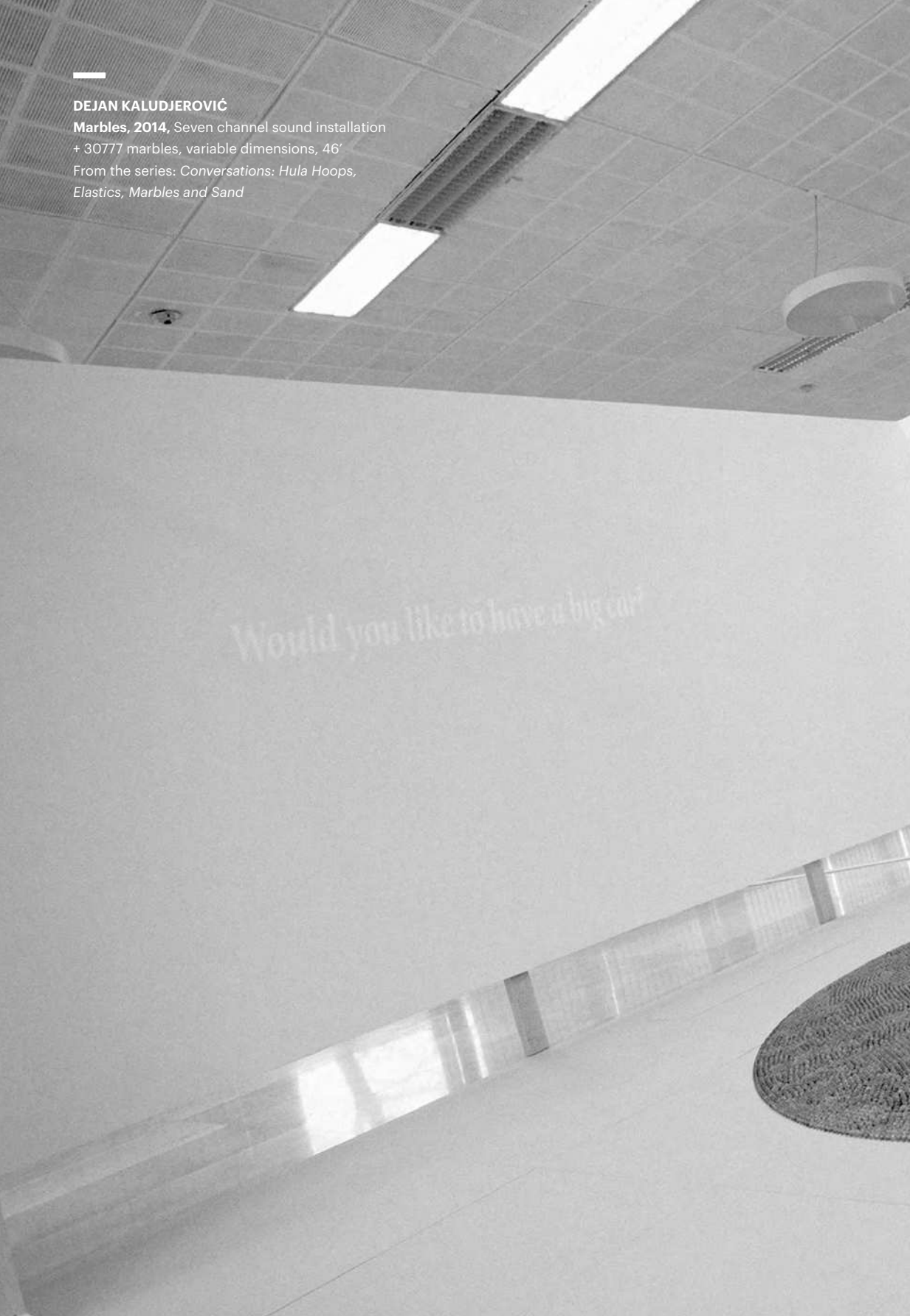
The project *Fiery Greetings* has been conceived as a reexamination of the socialist Yugoslavia, its structure, character and legacy, through the prism of construction of socialist childhood, which is revealed on the photographs from albums sent to Tito. The first stage of this project, the exhibition *Fiery Greetings*, which was held at the Museum of Yugoslav History in March-April 2015, presented works made by nine artists from the region of the former Yugoslavia. Their works were either created through research of Museum archives or exhibited in direct dialogue with those archives, with the aim of examining the character and the contents those pictures have at present moment. The second stage of the project involved historians, anthropologists, culturologists, art historians, and writers from the region whose texts paint the historical context necessary to analyze the childhood in socialist Yugoslavia, while at the same time they give a perspective on the legacy of socialist Yugoslavia different from the usual, binary, simplified view, which is all too often encountered in works dedicated to this matter. In their works and their thinking, all of these authors provide a valuable contribution to artistic research of archives, which underpins the whole project *Fiery Greetings*, thus making room for a new and distinctive reading and interpretation of the socialist Yugoslavia.

1 Tito's birthday was celebrated on May 25th, and starting from 1957 this date became one of the major public holidays in Yugoslavia, called the Youth Day. The Youth Day, with the accompanying Relay of Youth, when the pledge baton was carried around Yugoslavia and the central ceremony held at the Yugoslav People's Army Stadium in Belgrade, was celebrated until 1987, seven years after Tito's death.

2 The names of the authors appear only in a few of these albums, at the end, like an imprint, and they were always schoolchildren. Yet, although it cannot be corroborated, judging by some technical characteristics of these photographs, and the profusion of photographs showing schoolchildren taking classes in photography, it is plausible to assume that a mass of these photographs were taken by children.

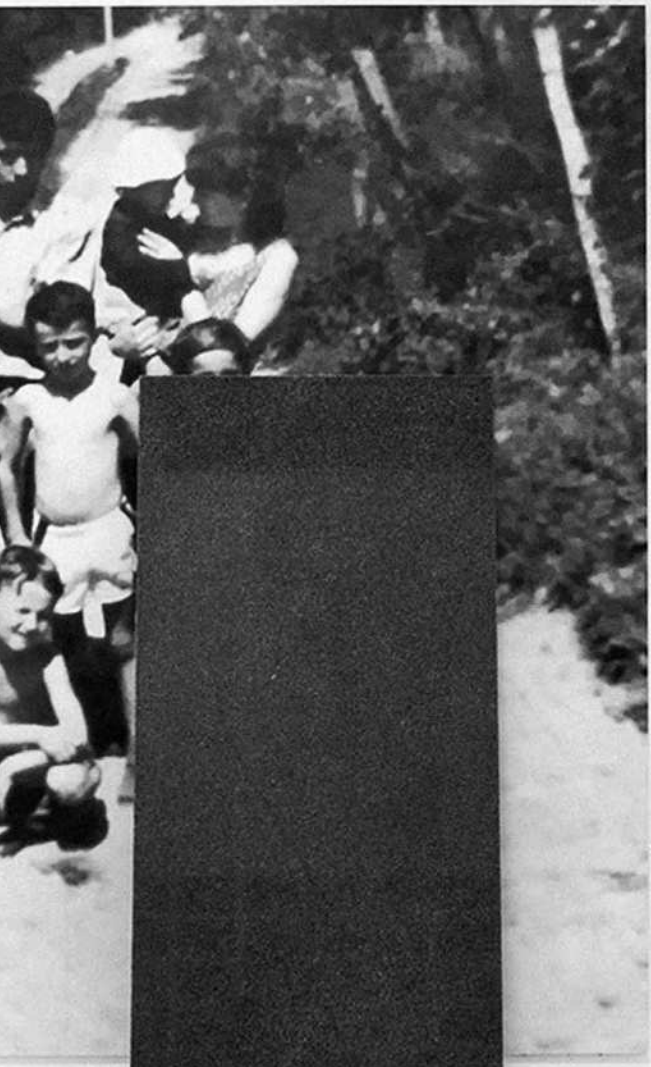
ANA ADAMOVIĆ

Fiery Greetings, Six channel video installation
(363 photographs and texts from photo-albums sent to Tito from 1945 till 1980,
from the archive of the *Museum of Yugoslav History*)



DEJAN KALUDJEROVIĆ
Marbles, 2014, Seven channel sound installation + 30777 marbles, variable dimensions, 46'
From the series: *Conversations: Hula Hoops, Elastics, Marbles and Sand*

MLADEN MILJANOVIĆ
Lightness of Memory and Weight of Experience, 2015
Installation - granite panel, photographs, dimensions variable
(Photographs from the archive of the Museum of Yugoslav History and artist's archive)



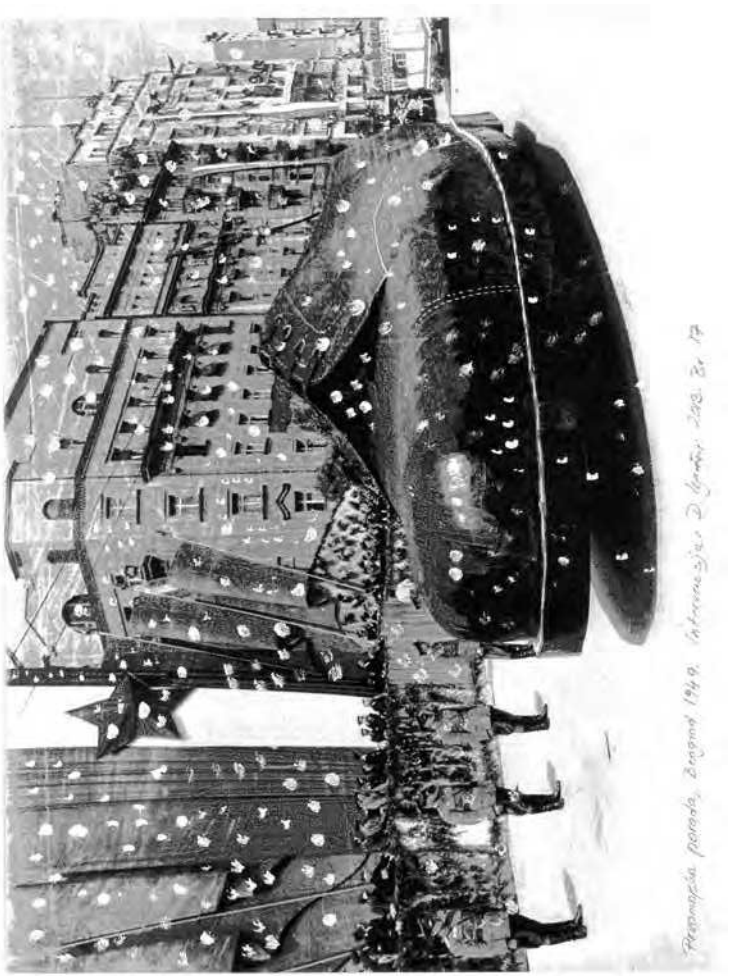
MLADEN MILJANOVIĆ

Lightness of Memory and Weight of Experience, 2015

Installation - granite panel, photographs, dimensions variable

(Photographs from the archive of the Museum of Yugoslav History and artist's archive)

DUBRAVKA UGREŠIĆ AND ANA ADAMOVIĆ



Conversation
(Amsterdam-Belgrade, April 2015)

A.A.: In your essay "Početnica za nepismene" ("A Primer for the Illiterate") I found the following sentences: "In 1991, when Yugoslavia was falling apart, when the war broke out which would efficiently finish off its disintegration, I had by chance stumbled across a primer which could have easily been the one I learnt from judging by its year of publication (1957). Leafing through it, I was upset deeply. Suddenly two worlds appeared before me: the former, forgotten world of the primer, which promised a happy future, and the other world, real and present, which brutally denied that future." In your opinion, what was the socialist utopia? What was that future supposed to be and has it ever been possible?

D.U.: In this story about the socialist utopia there is one important fact that is always blatantly omitted: namely, the very end of the World War II. It is a moment that we can barely imagine. After four years of fear, extermination, chaos, destruction, after the Holocaust during which six million Jews were killed, after many more millions of dead people altogether, came a better world and life in peace. I think that this faith in a better future, that is, simply a future with no war-waging, gave an incredible boost of energy to everyone, everywhere. Anyhow, for long time, popular Yugoslav partisan movies strengthened the Yugoslavs in their belief that fascism would not return ever again, while, it is worth mentioning, films which would strengthen their belief that communism is about to come were far more rarely encountered. Yugoslavia was on the winning side, which was extremely important for the self-confidence of a small and insignificant player on the European stage. The new era was symbolically represented by the victors - Tito and the partisans. Why do I say *Tito and the partisans*? Because it seems to me that this mythologem was embedded in the "Yugoslav identity" more firmly than the mythologem of communism, which shows that antifascist side of the Yugoslav story was much stronger than the communist

one. Anyhow, at that time there were very few people who used the word *communism*. Even the members of the Communist Party used the word *socialism*. Because it was a common belief that it was Russians who had communism, whereas we, Yugoslavs, we had socialism. Having spent one year during my studies in the Soviet Union, I am rather inclined to believe in this proposition.

For the last twenty years, since many former Yugoslavs started to suffer from the false memory syndrome, things have turned around. From then onwards, many people speak about *communism*, about *Tito's dictatorship*, communist *repression* and so on. Why? Is it only because people have suddenly discovered the truth? No, apparently it is because everyone would like grist to their own ideological mill, so a majority of Croats see the war that took place in the former Yugoslavia some twenty years ago as a heroic battle they waged against communism/Yugoslavianism/Serbian aggression (because, supposedly, only Serbs were *commies*, *Yugoslav bugbears* and *aggressors*). On the other hand, Serbs want grist to their own mill, so for the most of them, Tito was in the first place a Croat, then a villain and a commie, who got the poor Serbs infected with the virus of communism. So then it appears that Croats and Serbs actually did not fight for the freedom to plunder communist goods and for the restoration of the *Ustashe* and *Chetnik movements*, but rather against communism, mind you!

Had the Yugoslavs ever really fought against communism, there would have been some evidence of it. Russians, Poles, Czechs, Hungarians all have voluminous documentation about their struggle against communism. In their countries there was a long-lasting culture of resistance, cultural and political underground, which is attested by thousands of pages written, as well as films, exhibitions, books, and testimonies. In Yugoslavia there was no such thing, there are barely two or three names that are proudly referred to for so many years, Djilas, Mihajlov, together with several movies banned and books prohibited. So, Yugoslav communism was either the most repressive in the whole world or there was no repression, and unlike Russians, Hungarians, Poles, Checks, the Yugoslavs were great political cowards and compromisers? So which of this is true? And where are all those new historians who will give a relatively reliable and verifiable picture of the life in Yugoslavia and transmit it to younger generations?

But let's go back to the future (sounds nice, back to the future, doesn't it?). There was an incredible boost of futurist energy brought about by the fact that the World War II was over, and that Yugoslavia was on the winning side (paying for it with a great number of casualties, indeed!), as well as the fact that in the wake of the war Yugoslavia quickly managed to free itself from Stalin's deathly grip (once again, with more casualties!), and there was also a boost by

the socialist ideology, so the futurist enthusiasm fed on all that together. Namely, the everyday life in socialism was really getting better on day-to-day basis (I can remember this personally!), most of the people lived increasingly better, people went to school, they started travelling, building houses, roads, factories, people bought their first refrigerators, first cars, first TV sets. Just like in many Western European countries, life was getting better every day. And then, at one moment, stagnation began.

A.A.: How do you see the position of post-Yugoslav societies toward the idea of future? And related to this, what is the prevailing attitude on the future in present-day, supposedly post-ideological societies? Do we need the notion of utopia at all or is it perhaps time to think the future and the new sociality in a new framework?

D.U.: I think that today there is no idea of future. An exciting future does exist, I suppose, in science, medicine, architecture and similar disciplines, but it has completely disappeared from the horizon of political ideas. And this applies not only to the post-Yugoslav societies. It suits someone to be that way. Now that all the power is in the hands of few people, they will do anything to convince us that this is the best of all the worlds. I find it interesting that in the post-Yugoslav societies everyone supports the religious utopia, no one has anything against it, quite contrary. The word *utopia* denotes an imaginary place with perfect laws, social conditions and government; "utopia" is the very act of conceiving of a social system that should be better than the existing one. How come suddenly this caution and unwillingness regarding the attempt to even think a different and a better world?! Personally, I get both intellectually and emotionally excited about any attempt to conceive of a more just world, ranging from the movie *Avatar* to new monkey movies. Judging by those movies, it turns out that thinking about the social organization of a community is more distinctive of apes than it is of humans.

Let's ask ourselves what is offered by religious ideological systems that have become a parallel authority in post-Yugoslav societies? Instead of the red star and Tito's picture, there is a Catholic crucifix hanging above the entrance door in hospitals and many other institutions in Croatia. What does the Church offer? Is it reality or utopia? Anyway, wasn't it Franjo Tudjman who proclaimed Croatia a *paradise on earth*? What did he offer to abruptly democratized Croats: was it reality or utopia? How come that all post-Yugoslavs, instead of building a shared socialist future for all (which turned out to be "utopia"), opted for a life in the hereafter, in Paradise?! After all, the new post-Yugoslav "democratic"

Prvomajska parada, Beograd 1949. Intervencija: D. Lipo

Foi 2013. Bl. 11

governments lavishly support the Church as their supplementary ideological powerhouse, as if they were telling us: we have robbed you and turned you into our slaves, and we shall continue to rob you, there is no future for you, but the Church is there for you, it warrants a future for you after your death, it sells tickets for the paradise.

A.A.: Is nostalgia really a bad word, a retrograde emotion of privileged and idle people, kitschy sentiment, or could it have a creative capacity, emancipating power by calling into question the accepted truths of the present-day?

D.U.: Nostalgia is a word whose meaning is constantly evading. Nostalgia has no goal of its own, it is difficult to curb it, use it, employ it, and moreover, it is most often an unreliable guide. Let's suppose that you are nostalgic for a given moment in your private or collective life, and there's a Comedian up there in Heavens who decided to fulfill all your wishes. I think that everything would repeat itself as a farce. It is hard to imagine that such moment can be completely reconstructed and nostalgia satisfied, that is, done away with. However, this vague, elusive feeling can incite people to investigate moments from the past, and it can have emancipating power.

Nostalgic interest for a given period may appear when that period is not properly "buried", which is what happened with Yugoslavia: new governments did not give people time to grieve over the old homes left behind, to be happy for leaving, to pack their things and decide what to take with them. Everything was brutal, bloody and criminal, and it goes on until present-day.

A.A.: And what about Yugo-nostalgia? And why do you think that when Yugoslavia is talked about, it is almost without exception that people refer to the second Yugoslavia, while disregarding the Yugoslav idea that took shape in the 19th century?

D.U.: For as long as historians, sociologists, artists and political scientists fail to perform the "burial ritual" properly, the sole mentioning of Yugoslavia will prompt strong emotional reactions, either positive or negative. However, it is unlikely that the corpse is going to have a decent burial by the killers. And the "Yugoslav idea" is left out unmentioned because the word *idea* itself implies that its realization is always (and again) possible.

A.A.: Do we now have memories of the real country that used to exist and was called Yugoslavia, which fell apart in the most violent way, or do we actually think of some imaginary Yugoslavia?

D.U.: Don't forget, the word Yugo-nostalgia was coined by the media and used as a sort of political accusation, especially in Croatia. To be accused of being **Yugo-nostalgic** meant being an enemy of the new regimes. Yugoslavia has become increasingly imaginary, you are right about that, simply because there is a lack of substantial intellectual verve that would direct people from various professions (historians, sociologists, culturologists, etc.) to engage in the Yugoslav period. Why is it so? Perhaps it is because people are afraid of questions and answers. One very simple question to ask would be: what kind of country was the one destroyed by the people and their representatives, and what kind of countries they have built in its place? Is this thing they have built worth all the lives lost? The next questions follows: and what exactly have the people built in the place of the former Yugoslavia? I believe that it is because of such and similar questions that Yugoslavia and Yugo-nostalgia are seen as a "minefield" to be kept away from or even fenced with high barbed wire. In Croatia, this kind of moral panic, and refusal to deal with it is still in effect. Yugo-nostalgia has been banished, but the nostalgia for the Ustashe is burgeoning, finding many forms to fulfill itself: souvenirs, insignia, uniforms, Nazi salutes, pictures of Pavelić, Thompson, politicians and political flirting with the Independent State of Croatia (NDH). The same thing is, I suppose, going on in Serbia: nostalgia for Chetniks is welcome, Yugo-nostalgia is not.

A.A.: Recently I came across the information that Koča Popović was the architect of the May Day Parade held in 1949 in Belgrade, which is when that photograph that you performed *intervention* on was made. Why the intervention and why that particular photograph? Why the children technique of complementary drawing, painting and coloring-in, supplementary envisioning and imagining, and why is it applied to this particular picture?

D.U.: That photograph emanates a surrealist enchantment (as if it was Koča Popović himself who stood behind the camera!). All of my foreign friends, who have never seen a May Day Parade in their life, think that this photograph is a surrealist retouch. I find that photograph particularly dear because of certain ambiguity in it: the scene on the photograph actually takes all the graveness away and turns it into a farce. People in uniforms salute to the Shoe, a symbol. On the other hand, the photograph displays faith, symbolic and/or real: people show respect for work, for masters-shoemakers, for workers. There is a wonderful English nursery rhyme that I like very much, and it goes: *There was an old woman who lived in a shoe*. That song is also embedded in the semantic field determined by my choice.

Finally, books for coloring and drawing and similar techniques are categorized as children techniques, the ones that we learnt in early childhood and first days at school. By making interventions on this recurring motif, a shoe, I wanted to stay within the scope of children techniques, those meant for practice, for developing drawing skills in the little draughtsman. Likewise, my choice was also determined by my fascination with things belonging not to me, but to the times when I was born (at the time when this photograph was taken I was only one month old!). It was a time that had king-size ambitions and reaches, it was a time not only of gigantic shoes but gigantic steps as well. Don't forget, it was a time of trips to the Moon! Although none of us have ever set our foot further than the next one-horse town, we all followed the dog Laika fly to the Moon! Is there a real event that now seems more surreal than this?! As a small girl, I was absolutely convinced that any time soon I would buy me a ticket to the Moon too. Today, you can't even take the train to the seaside, while on the horizon that we gaze at there is no firmament and bright future anymore. Our futurist horizons have been overshadowed by the buttocks of Kim Kardashian and Severina and the likes, and the faces of our politicians.

By the way, in my book *Reading Forbidden* there are two photographs taken at this same parade, showing gigantic books passing by the soldiers who are saluting and paying respect to the efforts made by writers and publishers. The books are not emblazoned with the names of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Tito, if that's what first occurred to you, but the titles: *textbooks*, *literature* and similar. If today someone would make us organize such a parade and pinpoint the publishing achievement of such magnitude at this moment, the prize would go, truth be told, to *Fifty Shades of Grey*.

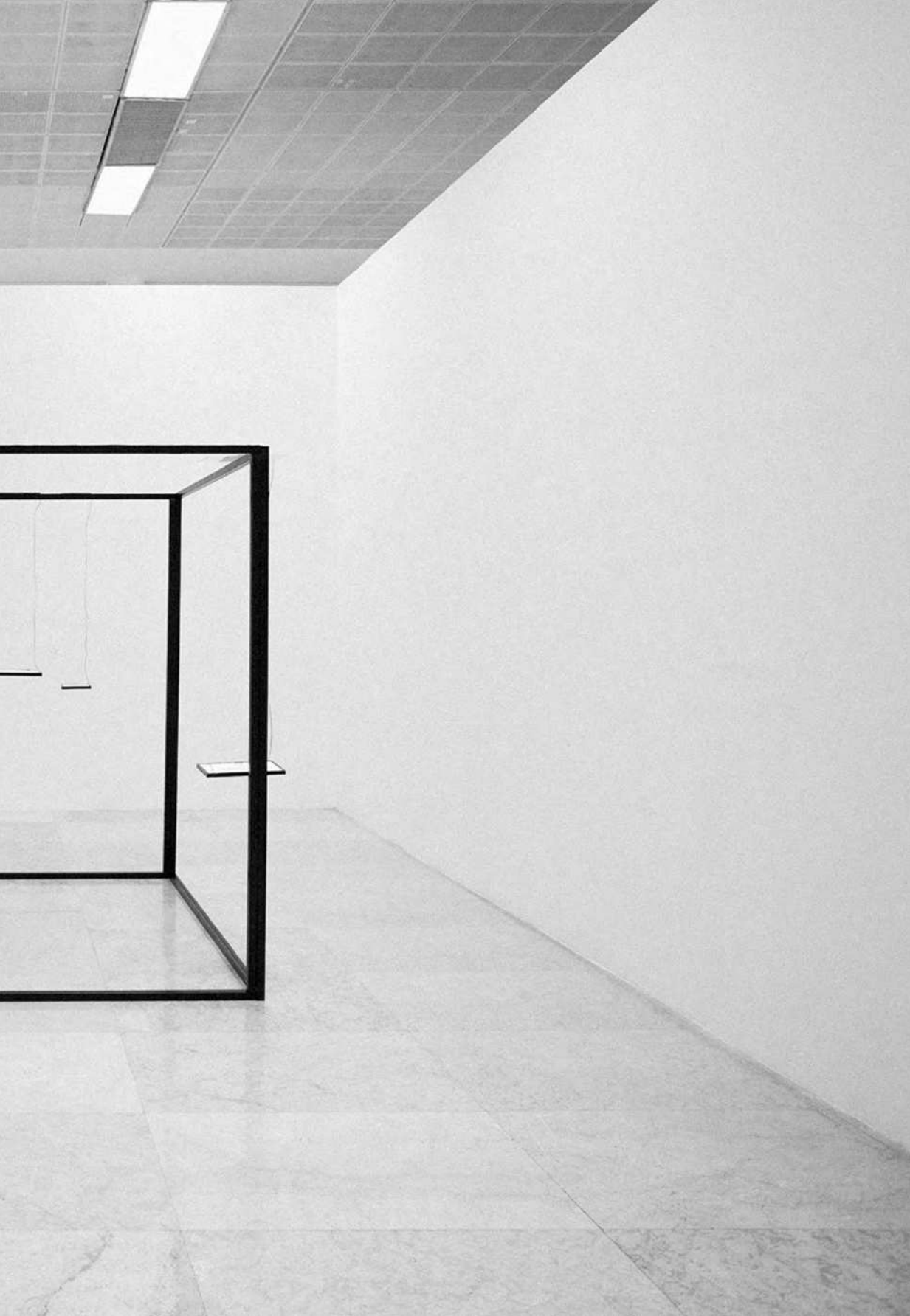
A.A.: Once again, in your *Primer for the Illiterate*, you write: "Copy-drawing could, just like transcribing, be a ritual of some deeply internalized penance." Why penance and what is it for?

D.U.: It is some kind of penance and respect indeed; that is how, in the age before Guttenberg, Medieval monks treasured their manuscripts and made libraries. *Copy-drawing* and *transcribing* can be one of the techniques employed, a ritual that we conduct on ourselves in order to comprehend our own history. There is a funny verse by the Russian avant-garde poet Alexander Vvedensky, whom I often cite, so I have "overcited" it by now, which goes like this: *Čto by stalo vse ponjatno, nado nachat' žyt' obratno*. In other words, in order to understand everything, we should start living in reverse. Which is precisely what you did with the exhibition *Fiery Greetings* – for an instant, you lived in reverse so

as to comprehend a given moment in your life. That means struggling against imposed discontinuity. And let us repeat this once more, both the governments and the obedient voters in the new countries established in the place of the former Yugoslavia are afraid of; they are afraid of continuity, of historical knowledge, of a comparison with the earlier times and consequent evaluation. That is why they hold their citizens as hostages, just like drug cartels in Mexico hold the inhabitants of some towns as their hostages. Maybe it is precisely this – the freedom to face one's own socialist childhood, as achieved by young artists in their works of art – that attracted so many people to your exhibition.

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

IRENA LAGATOR PEJOVIĆ
Freedom Security Progress, 2015
Installation



ANA ADAMOVIĆ
46 Plant Pots, Installation, 2015

WE LIVE AND GROW UP
IN A FREE COUNTRY.

OUR CHILDHOOD IS
JOYFUL AND HAPPY.

WE ARE SMALL BUT WE KNOW
WHICH WAY TO GO.

WE PLEDGE TO
LEARN AND WORK
AS FAITHFUL CHILDREN
OF OUR HOMELAND.

WE ARE GOING TO BE
THE GENERATION THAT WILL
GLORIFY OUR COUNTRY,
WHEREVER WE LIVE,
LEARN AND WORK.

LEARNING AND WORKING,
WE WILL BECOME
THE ARCHITECTS OF SOCIALISM.

OUR VOICES ARE HEARD
FAR AND WIDE, RESOUNDING
INTO A HAPPY FUTURE.

Children in the kindergarten, Jajce, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1953
(album no. 270, Present from the Society "Friends of Jajce Children")

Children in the kindergarten, Skopje, Macedonia, 1955
(album no. 1024, Present from the Skopje kindergartens)

Children in the kindergarten, Croatia, 1945
(album no. 783, Present from the Ministry for Social Care, National Republic of Croatia)

The choire, Nikšić, Montenegro, 1962
(album no. 957, Present from the Pioneers of Nikšić)

Admission to the Pioneers' organization ceremony, Belgrade, Serbia, 1967
(album no. 947, Present from the "France Prešern" elementary school from Belgrade)

Public performance celebrating the admission of the youngest ones to the Pioneers' organization,
Prnjavor, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1964
(album no. 1176, Present from the Pioneers and Youth of Prnjavor)

The youngest pioneers after the admission to the Pioneers' organization ceremony,
Bosanski Brod,Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1966
(album no. 983, Present from the Pioneers and Youth of the "Drago Vidošević" elementary school from Bosanski Brod)

OLGA MANOJLOVIĆ PINTAR

SIX THESIS
ON GROWING UP IN SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA

It is a very delicate position for a historian to turn herself the subject of her own research. Speaking about the pioneers I find myself precisely in the role of a person who is trying to keep her distance from the subject matter of her analysis, while at the same time being unwillingly overwhelmed by extremely strong emotions. Explaining the process of child's socialization, speaking about the pioneers and their position and importance in socialist Yugoslavia, is precisely such experience for me. It takes me back to the long-gone days in December 1973, when, together with my friends, I took the Pioneer's Oath, whose words I remember to this day:

"Today, when I am becoming a pioneer, I solemnly promise that I shall study and work diligently, respect my parents and my seniors and be a faithful and honest friend who keeps her word of honour, that I shall follow the path trodden by best pioneers, and cherish the glorious deeds of partisans and progressive people of the world who strive for freedom and peace, that I shall love my homeland, all of its brotherly peoples, and build a new life, full of joy and happiness."

This text is the fourth official formulation of the Pioneer's Oath. The first Pioneer's Solemn Oath sworn immediately after the war in 1946 was somewhat more succinct: "I give my word of honour before the pioneer flag and before my comrades pioneers that I shall learn and live as a faithful son of my homeland – Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia. I give my word of honour that I shall protect the brotherhood and unity of our nations and the freedom of our homeland acquired by blood of our best sons. For homeland with Tito – Onward!"

1. In the aftermath of the World War II and the socialist revolution, the motive of the youngest generation to take part in the National Liberation Struggle (NOB) was constantly spelled out in the public space. This was particularly emphasized in the speeches given by high-ranking party and state officials, while Josip Broz Tito himself described it in the following manner: "When it is people who

go to combat, when it is the army formed by the state (...) that is their duty to their homeland (...) but when it is children 12, 14, 15 or 16 years of age who are not conscripted, who voluntarily go to combat, knowing that they would be killed, then it is more than paying debt to the homeland, then it is superhuman heroism of those young people, who sacrifice themselves, although they barely started to live their lives, for the future generations to be happy."[1] The march *Pioneers*, which was meant to be performed by the youngest pioneers, reflected the identical notion in the following verses: "We are young pioneers, we're partisans too, we're fighting for the better days that'll come true."

In the wake of the war, children participation in partisan military units was echoed in legal regulations. Namely, on April 18 1945, the Serbian Ministry of Internal Affairs decided that the right to vote was granted to all active combatants, regardless of their age, which meant that electoral register included persons who were active combatants under 18 years of age. They were registered on the electoral roll with military units, but the Commission of Internal Affairs passed the decision that they were granted to vote even upon their release from the army.[2] The Ministry for Constituent Assembly approved this decision and consented to put persons minor of age who were combatants on the electoral roll.

At the same time, the newly formed state emphasized that children were of the greatest concern. Children who were left without parental care, those socially vulnerable and the children of fallen soldiers were given symbolical prominence to as the most important members of the society, and it was emphasized that it was a priority for the state to take care of them. When the war was over, the state had to face that there were, as stated in one official report, 1,388,456 socially vulnerable children and as many as 103,165 children of fallen combatants, who were taken care of by the Ministry of Social Policy of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia.[3]

The state assumed the obligation to provide clothes for the children of fallen combatants twice a year, to pay their tuition and school supplies, and to give them financial assistance in the amount of 300-500 dinars per child.[4] Over time, the Fund for the Education of Children of Fallen Combatants was established with the Central Committee of the Federation of Veterans Associations of the People's Liberation War (SUBNOR), which was allocated additional funds by the Federal Executive Council starting since 1957.[5] Their situation was undoubtedly of utmost importance, yet it was not in contrast with general rules that were gradually being set.

In the days immediately following the country's liberation, due to organizational problems regarding orphanages, children were provided accommodation in foster homes, while on October 16 1945, the Ministry of Social Policy of the Democratic Federal Yugoslavia prescribed, based on reports sent by respective ministries of social policy, that "the settling of children with foster families (there must be supervising staff) is to be carried out before winter". Places and families were selected based on their capability to provide accommodation to vulnerable children, and it was particularly stressed that children ought to be educated in the spirit of the National Liberation Struggle. The fact that there were lots of homeless children, who were malnourished and in poor health, affected the organization of the ward system, as well as summer resorts and nursing centres for children. In time, this kind of care provision was further improved, as evidenced by various handbooks that served to instruct teachers on how to work with children. These handbooks generally dealt with practical issues such as fighting mosquitoes, organizing excursions and so on, yet they did not fail to suggest that it was also necessary to read Vladimir Dedijer's, Jovan Dučić's and Vladimir Nazor's diaries to children in their moments of leisure.

2. Working with pioneers became one of the priorities of the new socialist community. Through numerous celebrations and festivities, patriotic holidays were established, and such celebrations were also carried out among the youngest generations because, as pointed out, "they leave an impression on pioneer's character in his development".[6] It is interesting to note that three of the holidays celebrated at schools were part of a series of dates from the history of international labour movement – Women's Day on March 8th, Workers' Day on May 1st, and Victory Day on May 9th, while others had all-Yugoslav or local character (celebrations of the day of school, or the pioneer troop, or the liberation of a place, etc.). On these events symbols were actively employed as well, whenever it was possible. Symbols served to present pioneers as recognizable members of the community, from scarfs and *titovka* caps, to blue-and-white uniforms. Special insignia were worn by reciters, choir members, boy and girl scouts, rangers but it was the pioneer's uniform that was crucial in the process of bringing together children who had different spheres of interest and different capabilities.

The new ideology treated children as equal members of the community, insisting on their participation in the armed forces as the most shining example of heroism. At the same time, by insisting on examples of cold-blooded executions of children which were part of obligatory school readings that abounded with

cruel stories, the heroic narrative was given a martyrdom aspect. By presenting partisan troops as a safe house for many children who were left without parents, the all-embracing character of the antifascist movement was emphasized as almost family environment where everyone is on an equal footing.

On Kozara a child I see
Hello comrade, she says to me.
Hi there, my partisan friend!
Is my mum alive or dead?
Oh, dear child, she's gone for good
Jerry slit her throat in wood
Don't you weep, don't shed a tear,
In our troop you'll never fear.
Now we'll bear your mummy's name
And with our troop it'll rise to fame.

3. Without any doubt, the central figure in a range of symbols that communicated to younger generations was Josip Broz Tito, who was presented as a paradigm of the entire community and its endeavours.[7] His busts were placed in large numbers, along with sculptures and portraits of national heroes and historical figures that schools were named upon, in classrooms and lecture rooms and in easily visible places in various children institutions. Getting young generations acquainted with Tito's life was the most unequivocal way to instruct them in the desirable model of behaviour. The process of making Tito's character affable was consolidated through visits organized to his birthplace and by means of children stories that provided a channel for personal identification. On the first day of excursion trips from Serbia to Kumrovec, the itinerary included staying overnight in Vinkovci, where pioneers met children with whom they already communicated by letters for some time. The second day was planned for a stopover in Zagreb, where they got to see places of importance for the development of the revolutionary movement and those relevant for the life of Josip Broz Tito. On the third day they were taken to the summit of the hill Sljemen, after which they spent the night in Gornja Bistra. The fourth day was dedicated to a brief fraternization coupled with physical exercises, while on the fifth day they went on a trek to Bistričke Toplice and the linden tree of Matija Gubec. The sixth day was planned for a sightseeing hike to the Trakošćan castle and finally on the seventh day they arrived to Kumrovec, where they had obligatory outing to the river Sutla. Writing greeting cards to Josip Broz Tito was taken to be one of the most delightful moments of the whole journey.[8]

Insisting on Tito's humble social roots provided a framework for many stories that were part of obligatory school readings. Stories from Tito's childhood presented him as a mover, organizer and a quick-witted child, which inevitably turned him into a hero for the new generations. For instance, the book *360 Stories about Comrade Tito* was a kind of *One Thousand and One Nights* that was meant to serve as bedtime reading for children. Surrounded with children, his face smiled from the covers of alphabet books and other textbooks, presenting him as someone amiable for the pioneers and turning him into a father figure.[9]

Face of stone with a look so bold
But deep inside his brawny chest
He has fatherly heart of gold,
That's our comrade Tito, Tito.[10]

After him came a legion of heroes of war and revolution, whose bravery set a role model for the new generations. Persons who were presented to children as ideal figures included "Lola Ribar, Vukica Mitrović, Savo Kovačević, Marija Bursać, Sirogojno, and others".[11] Pedagogues liked to emphasize that it was essential to popularize pioneers' heroic deeds in the war in order to infuse the children with a desirable model of behaviour: "It is necessary to make these figures appear amiable and kind, to let them live through such tragic experiences together and grasp the beauty and grandeur of their deeds and their sacrifice."[12] They were singled out as national heroes, their martyrdom for the sake of their community was celebrated as an essential aspect of promoting warlike tradition, and a precondition for a life in peace. There was an instrument befitting every age group, ranging from picture books, proselytizing stories and comic books, to adventure partisan movies and novels.[13] Likewise, virtual, imaginary heroes and characters from comic books, such as Mirko and Slavko, the most famous of them all, served to make heroism constantly present in the day-to-day life of the younger generations.[14]

4. Children were initiated into pioneer and youth organizations in places that had mythic war and revolution significance, such as Sava Kovačević's grave in Tjentište, which served to establish direct link between the revolution and their life in peace. Moreover, the initiation into the Union of Pioneers of Yugoslavia and the League of Socialist Youth of Yugoslavia, as an act of initiation of the youngest generation and their introduction into the community on an equal footing, had a significance of a rite of passage:

"At that moment, our community, all of us adults, let a seven-year child know that we officially take him to be a member of our social collective. By means of this act, the adults symbolically initiate the child into the social life, and in a specific way, via children organization, into the sphere of rights and obligations, they introduce him into the sphere of self-government, the sphere of collective work and life, where general achievement is dependent on the activities and abilities of every single individual... where every single individual can find and acquire elements that bring him happiness and joy within our community."[15]

From child's perspective, it was a day to remember. The Pioneer's Oath remained etched in their memory. Moreover, the unity of the pioneers, the youth and the revolution fighters was entrenched and maintained through the initiation ceremony that every generation of pioneers regularly took part in, not only as active participants, but as spectators and witnesses as well.

5. Ceremonial gatherings and the swearing-in most often took place at monuments or memorial parks. It is no wonder that in the wake of the war, it was decided that one of the monuments to be built had to be dedicated to the pioneers-fighters, to pay homage to the share they had in the struggle. Although this idea was soon abandoned in that form, Stevan Bodnarov's sculpture *Partisan Messenger* was placed in Krupanj in 1955. The terms *messenger* and *bomber* became almost synonymous with pioneers' participation in the war, so it is indeed no wonder that two most important memorials to the partisan children were dedicated to the unknown messenger, and some time later to the well-known and celebrated bomber Boško Buha.

Boško Buha Memorial compound, built on the exact spot where he died, near the village of Jabuka, in the vicinity of Prijepolje, on the border between Serbia and Montenegro, served to instil new identity into the youngest generation.[16] Although he was recognized as a hero while still alive, and was one of the most celebrated war heroes in the 1950s and the 1960s, Boško Buha was singled out when his memorial park was built on the mountain Jabuka and further entrenched through *Pioneers' Meetings* organized annually since 1975.[17] The new memorial was built upon announcement of competition for conceptual design which was open to children from primary schools. The selected work was sent by a girl from Gornji Milanovac whose proposal was to make a sculpture of a young bomber standing on an open alphabet book, holding a rifle and an apple: The idea successfully blended the need to popularize education and to safeguard the revolutionary spirit of the younger generations. Warlike ardour

and readiness to fight to the bitter end were the characteristics of a hero that were instilled in children. That moment was exalted in a children song in the following manner:

He threw a grenade at Jerry,
Didn't waver or feel scary.
For his people he bravely fought,
But didn't dodge another shot.
He stood up and threw a bomb,
A true hero now in his tomb.
To fight for country and freedom,
He proudly stayed, like a beacon.
His great deed lives on in glory,
He's remembered in song and story,
He gave his life, a trumpet call,
Paragon of virtue, all in all.

The memorial compound dedicated to Boško Buha was actually a reorganized brigadier village, built in a time when Belgrade-Bar railway was constructed (1971-1975). Capable of accommodating some 14,000 brigadiers, the centre continued to host events which were renamed *Meetings of Namesakes on Jabuka*, gathering pioneer troops which were named after Boško Buha. On 18 February 1977, the Union of Pioneers of Yugoslavia decided that the event should have all-Yugoslav character. Boško Buha Memorial was surrounded by eight busts of pioneers from all republics and provinces, and the first inter-republican meeting on Jabuka was held under the name *Brotherhood and Unity is our most treasured possession, and I will cherish it like the apple of my eye, as one of Tito's pioneers, I give my word of honour*. The whole concept of memorial's organization and the event itself highlighted the requirement of establishing socialist patriotism by means of schooling and education, and testified to the endeavour to establish collective identification based on ideology of weak central government and strong socialist consciousness.

Just like most of the memorial compounds built in the 1960s and the 1970s, this memorial also had a museum as part of it, where exhibits on display were actually gifts and presents sent by children from primary schools. Exhibits included children's handiwork, as well as gramophone records, textbooks, books, paintings and graphic prints. Thus, the memorial compound was only one of the elements of the revitalization of revolutionary sentiment, which manifested itself in

a revived popularity of youth work actions, pioneers' and youth outings on the trails trodden by partisan troops, pioneers' games, pioneers' bivouacking, organizations of boy scouts, as well as rangers and popular technical skills, community work, Great Public School Classes held in Kragujevac, Sutjeska, Petrova Gora, Kozara, Pohorje, Jasenovac, Kumrovec, etc.

6. The priorities espoused through children's schooling and education system in the 1970s were arranged in the following hierarchical order: first came adherence to the working class and its revolutionary thought, followed by adherence to the idea of brotherhood and unity and national equality, internationalism, cultivation of active creative attitude toward society and relationships in it, and promotion of ethical values created through socialist revolution.[18] The memorial compound dedicated to Boško Buha was established precisely on these principles. Divided in troops, pioneers and the youth built campfires and organized pioneers' parties where they danced to the Kozaračko kolo folk dance and made friends. Talking to surviving fighters, the children revived episodes from the World War II in their imagination. Once the pioneers arrived to the mountain Jabuka, parties were organized under the slogan *Pioneers, Boys and Girls, Lately Famous Partisans and Messengers*, whereby lyrics of the popular song served to additionally emphasize the heroic legacy in the children and youth education.

Liberalization of the society which characterized the early 1970s prompted one part of the political elite to find new forms to communicate to the youngest generations. At the same time, liberalization led to resistance and dissent. Faced with the ideology of pop and rock culture which "attempted to poison our youngest generation with the bourgeois ideology and other antisocialist influences that are contrary to self-government, and to lead our youth astray from our revolution and its ideals", the conservative forces strived to reaffirm warlike narratives as a way to reunify the community anew.[19]

1 Dragoslav Ognjanović, *Detinjstvo koje to nije bilo*, Republic Committee of the Union of Associations of National Liberation War Veterans of the SR Serbia, Belgrade 1974.

2 The Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond Ministarstvo za Konstituantu, AJ 3-1-1.

3 See: Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond antifašistički front žena Jugoslavije, AJ: 141-33-183; Divna Mirković Lebl, *O pionirskim družinama*, Biblioteka za rad

sa pionirima, Belgrade 1957; *Letnji rad Saveza pionira*, Biblioteka pionirskog rukovodioca, NOPOK, Belgrade 1946; Anka Milanović (ed.), *Ručni rad i fiskultura u pionirskoj organizaciji*, Glavni odbor Narodne omladine Srbije, Belgrade 1946; Sanja Petrović Todosijević, *Za bezimene: delatnost UNICEF-a u Federativnoj Narodnoj Republici Jugoslaviji, 1947-1954*, Institute for Contemporary History of Serbia, Belgrade 2008.

4 The Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond antifašistički front žena Jugoslavije, pali borci, AJ, 141-33-183.

5 The Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond Savezno izvršno veće – SIV, AJ, 130-17-317.

6 Holidays celebrated at school included November 29th as the Day of the Republic, December 22nd as the Day of Yugoslav People's Army, December 27th as the Pioneers' Day, March 8th as the Women's Day, May 1st as the International Workers' Day, July 4th as the Uprising Day, as well as Day of Liberation (of respective places), day of the school, pioneer troop, etc. Recommendations given to the pioneer leaders stressed that holidays were not to be celebrated in the same way. „Frequent repetition are boring, in particular to young people", they stated, adding that „special charm is to be found in organizational preparations – the planning of celebrations". Therefore, it was reiterated that the physical appearance of participants at celebrations was very important too. Schoolchildren were usually initiated as pioneers on the Pioneers' Day, or the Day of the Republic, when celebrations were held commemorating many pioneer messengers and bombers who fell in the National Liberation Struggle. It was recommended to read the books like *Pioneers in Combat*, and to learn poems such as *Little Heroes*, *We Are Little Pioneers*, *Who's That Coming*, *Who's That Treading*, *Little Pioneers*, and *Pioneer Scarf*. Much attention was paid to carefully organize the performances and set the rules for these celebrations: how the stateroom should look like, how the choir must perform, songs to be sung, recitations and excerpts from diaries from excursions and summer holidays to be read, music program, rhythmic exercises, selection of the choir. See: Vera Vučelić, *Proslava patriotskih praznika u pionirskim organizacijama*, Savremena škola 1958; Emil Paravina, *Kako da pripremimo svečano primanje u Savez pionira*, Handbook sent to all pioneers' troops in SR Croatia, as well as to boards of pioneers' troops, school boards, school administrations, and societies "Naša djeca" ("Our Children").

7 See: Olivera Milosavljević, "Otac-genije-ljubimac, Kult vladara – najtrajniji obrazac", *Srbija u modernizacijskim procesima XIX i XX veka. 4, Žene i deca*, Latinka Perović et al., Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Serbia, Belgrade 2006, pp. 188-292.

8 See: Vera Vučelić, *Proslava patriotskih praznika u pionirskim organizacijama*, Savremena škola 1958.

9 France Bevk's *Knjiga o Titu* (*The Book about Tito*) was part of the obligatory reading list for the schoolchildren at elementary schools around the country, and

it was printed in all the languages, including the Braille alphabet, and achieved a record number of editions. Apart from this book, obligatory readings included the books: Milivoj Matošec, *Dječak sa Sutle* (*The Boy from the River Sutla*), Zagreb 1986 (sixth edition), Miroljub Jevtović, *Priče o Titu* (*Stories about Tito*), Gornji Milanovac 1981, Zvonko Štaubringer, Milivoje Popović, *Od Kumrovca do slobode. Priče o drugu Titu* (*From Kumrovec to Freedom. Stories about Comrade Tito*), Gornji Milanovac 1982. The above authors also edited the book *360 priča o drugu Titu* (*360 Stories about Comrade Tito*). On the occasion of Tito's 80th birthday, the Boško Buha theater, together with many other theaters for children in Yugoslavia, staged the performance *Stories on Comrade Tito*, which was actually the whole edition adaptated for stage. Josip Broz Tito saw this performance on stage on 29 November 1974 in Kumrovec.

10 Vladimir Tomerlin, *Zapevajmo pioniri, pionirske, partizanske i narodne pjesme*, Zagreb 1956, p. 44.

11 Vera Vučelić, *Proslava patriotskih praznika u pionirskim organizacijama*, Savremena škola 1958, p. 3.

12 Ibid., p. 4.

13 *Književna zadruga Drugari* from Sarajevo, for instance, published three series of picture books that presented the most important events from the National Liberation Struggle (first series: the Republic of Užice, the Battle for the Wounded, Sutjeska, the Raid on Drvar, the Igman March, Kozara; second series: the Republic of Bihać, Petrova Gora, Partisans in Srem, the Pohorje Battalion, the Bogomil Crusade, the Partisan Navy; third series: Kragujevac, Partisan Air Force, Grmeč Mountain, the Harvest in the Sanica Valley, Slavonija, Jajce). However, nothing could be compared with the popularity of comic book characters Mirko and Slavko, who were authentic comic book heroes, mighty boys who were partisan messengers. On 25 November 1958, Dečije novine from Gornji Milanovac, under the number 23 of the series, launched the comic strip *Nikad robom* (*Never Enslaved*). In no time, the whole series became famous for the partisan messenger boys Mirko and Slavko. Desimir Žižović Buin was the cartoonist and the creator of many other characters, who was later joined by Žika Atanacković, Branko Plavšić, Nikola Mitrović Kokan, etc. From 1963, the comic started to come out in separate publications, at first once a month. In time, its print run rose to as many as 200,000 copies, and new numbers were published on weekly basis. The *Never Enslaved* series covered all parts of the SFRY and its history, yet Mirko and Slavko were the most widely-known of all its characters, so starting from 4 April 1969, the whole series was published under the title *Never Enslaved – Mirko and Slavko*. In the 1970s, abridged versions were published in the children magazine *Tik-tak*, also published by Dečije novine, because the comics were categorized as trash and subject to additional taxing. The last number of this comic came out on 25 August 1979. Zoran Janjetović, *Od "Internacionale" do komercijale. Popularna kultura u Jugoslaviji 1945-1991*, Institute for Contemporary History of Serbia, Belgrade 2011.

14 Apart from the comic book which was published for many years by Dečije novine from Gornji Milanovac, there was also the eponymous movie directed by Vladimir Tori Janković which was made in 1973.

15 Emil Paravina, *Kako da pripremimo svečano primanje u Savez pionira*. The handbook *How to Prepare the Ceremonial Enrolment to the Union of Pioneers* sent to all pioneers' troops in SR Croatia, as well as to boards of pioneers' troops, school boards, school administrations, and societies "Naša djeca", p. 4.

16 When competition for the conceptual design for the memorial was publicly announced in children papers, around 6,000 proposals flooded in, and the design proposed by Jadranka Berić, a pioneer from Gornji Milanovac, was eventually selected.

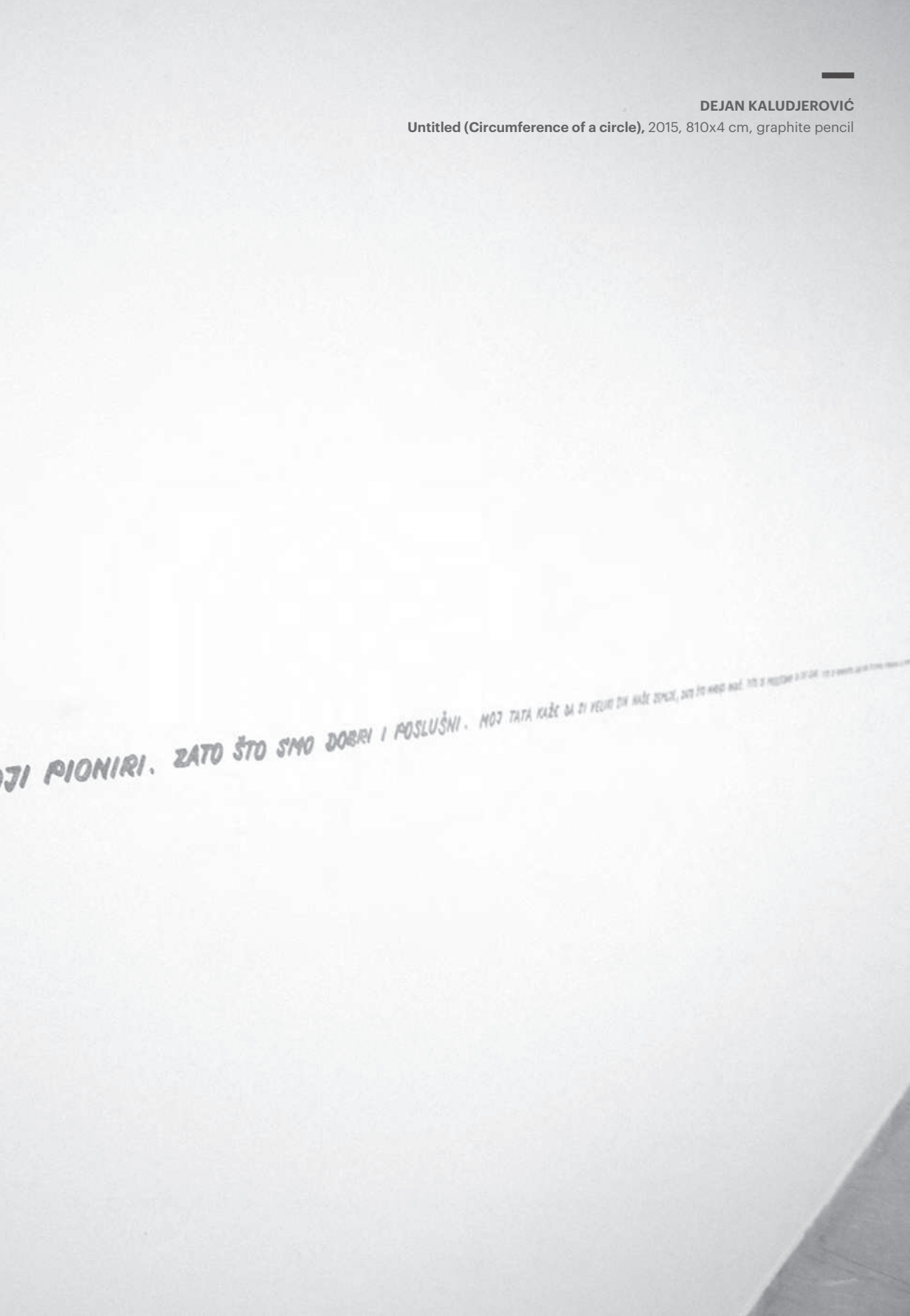
17 *Susreti imenjaka na Jabuci. Manifestacije pionira Jugoslavije*, League for the Socialist Education and Protection of Children of SR Serbia, Belgrade 1978.

18 Rada Prelić, Savez pionira u negovanju jugoslovenskog socijalističkog patriotizma i revolucionarnih tradicija, *Patriotizam i revolucionarne tradicije, Zbornik radova sa savetovanja održanog u Beogradu 11 – 13. decembra 1975. godine na temu: Negovanje jugoslovenskog socijalističkog patriotizma i revolucionarnih tradicija u oblasti vaspitanja i obrazovanja*, Journalists' Association, Belgrade 1976, pp. 49-55.

19 Kosta Nadj, Patriotizam i njegove tradicije, *Patriotizam i revolucionarne tradicije. Zbornik radova sa savetovanje održanog u Beogradu 11-13. decembra 1975. godine na temu: Negovanje jugoslovenskog socijalističkog patriotizma i revolucionarnih tradicija u oblasti vaspitanja i obrazovanja*. Journalists' Association, Belgrade 1976, pp. 7-12.

TITO VOLIŠ DECU, ZATO ŠTO SMO TVO

DEJAN KALUDJEROVIĆ
Untitled (Circumference of a circle), 2015, 810x4 cm, graphite pencil



THE FIRST TASK
WE HAVE IS TO LEARN.

COMPETING AND HELPING
EACH OTHER OUT,
WE ACQUIRE
NEW KNOWLEDGE.

WE DON'T MIND
HAVING LACK OF RESOURCES.
WE CREATE THEM
OURSELVES.

WE HAVE BEEN TAUGHT TO
LOVE WORK AND TO ENJOY
WHAT WE DO.

WE STRIVE TOWARDS
NEW FORMS OF EXPRESSION.

WE ARE DILIGENT AND EVERYTHING
WILL BE SHINY.

OUR LIFE IS FULL OF
USEFUL WORK AND HAPPINESS.

First grade children, Zagreb, Croatia, 1958
(album no. 1390, Present from the "Krešo Bakić" Pioneers' troop of the "Trnjanska cesta" elementary school from Zagreb)

First grade children, Belgrade, Serbia, 1957
(album no. 943, Present from the Students of the "Vuk Karadžić" elementary school from Belgrade)

Younger grades students, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1960
(album no. 1060, Present from the Pioneers of the "Pavle Goranin" elementary school from Sarajevo)

Older grades students, Kučevo, Serbia, 1969
(album no. 1141, Present from the Pioneers of Kučevo)

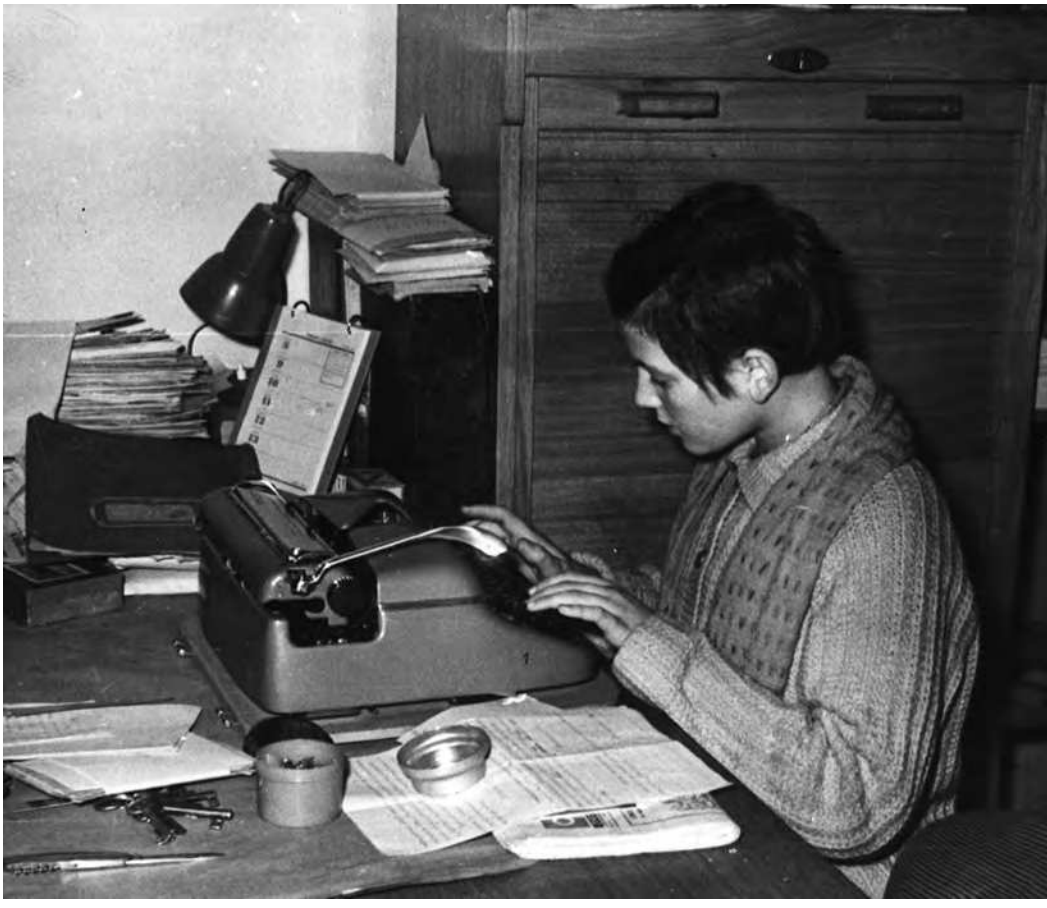
Students cleaning their classroom, Novi Sad, Serbia, 1961
(album no. 2167, Present from the "Djordje Natošević" elementary school from Novi Sad)

Students working in the school kitchen, Bohinjska Bistrica, Slovenia, 1960
(album no. 966, Present from the Pioneers of Bohinjska Bistrica)

Students making textile toys, Niš, Serbia, 1962
(album no. 984, Present from the "Maršal Tito" elementary school from Niš)

Students creating educational tools, Begejci, Serbia, 1961
(album no. 1139, Present from the elementary school in Begajci)

Modelers, Zagreb, Croatia, 1960
(album no. 379, Present from the Pioneers of Zagreb)



“Dečije novine” editing room, Gornji Milanovac, Serbia
(album no. 1009, Present from “Dečije novine” editorial stuff)

Music class, Zagreb, Croatia, 1960
(album no. 379, Present from the Pioneers of Zagreb)

Pioneers' theater, Rijeka, Croatia, 1955
(album no. 1990, Present from the Pioneers of Rijeka)

The Choir, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina
(album no. 1060, Present from the "Pavle Goranin" elementary school from Sarajevo)

RADINA VUČETIĆ

DONALD DUCK
WITH A PIONEER'S SCARF
(Socialist Childhood in the American Way)

In the socialist Yugoslavia, a great deal of attention was paid to educating the youth in the spirit of communism and cherishing the traditions of the National Liberation Struggle (NOB) in most diverse forms, from the politicization of education to the planning of leisure time. As soon as they enrolled the first grade of the elementary school, on the Republic Day, all the schoolchildren became members of the pioneer organization, before even learning all the letters of the alphabet, taking the ritual Pioneer's Oath and receiving their pioneer cards which were red coloured, just like the Party cards. Tito, the Party, partisans and the revolution, as the symbols of the Yugoslav reality, were kept alive in the names of schools, in textbooks, in the school readings, curriculum, etc.[1] To the ideologizing of childhood testifies the fact that, for instance, in the alphabet book the letter M symbolically stood for mom, while the letter T often symbolically stood for Tito and not for dad[2].[3] In general, the cult of Tito was introduced into diverse segments of childhood, which is manifest in the texts from children publications.[4] Even excursions were strongly tinted by the ideology, so most often they were organized following the "paths of brotherhood and unity" and the "path of revolution", and trips were made to Kumrovec, Tito's birthplace, as well as to Jajce, Jasenovac concentration camp, the mountains of Sutjeska, Kozara, Kadinjača, etc. Unbreakable bonds between children and the legacies of the National Liberation Struggle led by the partisan movement were highlighted on every occasion.[5] The viewpoints of the youngest ones, who are, generally, rather specific and marked by curiosity and an investigative spirit, were thus adjusted to and squared with the strictly framed points of view of the adults, that is, of those in power.

Even in such situation, in a situation of sacralization of war, revolution, renewal, construction and creation of a new man, coupled with closely controlled ed-

ucation and privacy, there were still ways to "escape" to childhood out of party-imposed order, thanks to a specific position that Yugoslavia had as a country between the East and the West.

Children around Yugoslavia played Partisans and Germans, as well as Cowboys and Indians, under the influence of Western movies and comics. Huge influence exercised by movies and comic books also made Tarzan a role model for many boys, who climbed trees trying to imitate the sound of the legendary yell of Johnny Weissmuller. Hula hoop, another American novelty from the 1950s, was twirled, while boys pulled up girls' skirts shouting victoriously "pictures from America", and the girls played Chinese jump rope, singing along "Emma-essessa-essessa-peepeeyah". Although only a small number of those singing this counting rhyme is aware of it, it was in fact a strange form of Americanization, that is, American influence, because this counting-out actually spelled the word Mississippi (in the correct way of spelling, it should have been "M-i-s-s-i-s-s-i-p-p-i"), came to Yugoslavia maybe thanks to some of the songs brought by the American soldiers during the war. The writer Vladimir Arsenijević recollects that the "Emma-essessa" was one more American craze that came "together with Truman's eggs, cinnamon-flavoured bubblegum, rice from South Carolina and the first jazz records".[6] Games like Cowboys and Indians, or Tarzan, as well as hula hoop, and the counting rhyme "Emma-essessa" showed that the process of Americanization applied to the youngest ones too, reaching its high points and leaving profound traces in the Disneyfication of socialist everyday life of children in Yugoslavia.

In their upbringing, children are always influenced by the parents and the society, and through them by the dominant ideologies.[7] In socialist countries, for that reason, the communist ideology faced no competition. Of course, in communist countries there were inevitably also parents who held strong anticommunist beliefs, but it is questionable who among them dared to "re-educate" their children with regard to what was inculcated into them by the society and the schooling system. In Yugoslavia, however, thanks to its permanent balancing between the East and the West, and its permanent leaning toward the West, especially when popular culture is concerned, the situation was different. Namely, the children who took the Pioneer's Oath and wore red pioneer's scarves and "titovka" caps also had a childhood coloured with Disney's magic which introduced them into another reality and the world of fantasy, and, as it would eventually turn out, into the world of capitalism too.

Walt Disney, the creator of the legendary heroes Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck, is surely one of the American, as well as global icons of the 20th century. His enormous production included movies, comics, publications, television, Disneyland, toys and "accompanying iconography" consisting of notebooks, pencils, badges, posters and stickers, and all of that reached different parts of the world, which made Disney convenient medium for spreading American propaganda.

Apart from being one of the symbols of America, Walt Disney was also one of the symbols of consumer society, thanks to products galore offered by his company. Theorists who dealt with the Americanization, American cultural imperialism and globalization particularly emphasize that the general narratives in his comic strips reflect an imperialist point of view, and that his works promote capitalist values.[8] One of the most significant studies on this topic is *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology of the Disney Comic*, published in Chile in 1971, in which the authors Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart showed that the smiling faces of Disney's heroes hide capitalist ideology and capitalist and imperialist values, that Donald Duck is a kind of weapon of the American imperialism aimed at the Third World and underdeveloped countries in general.[9]

Through his general narratives and characterization of his characters, Walt Disney propagated ideas about the American way of life while Donald Duck, as an ideal hero, going from one situation to another, lived the American dream which reached children all around the world, by means of cartoons, comics, books and toys. This Donald Duck, promoter of the American dream, quickly found his place in the post-war Yugoslav region too. Disney came with Donald Duck to communist Yugoslavia in February 1951, when the magazine *NIN* started publishing comics about him on weekly basis. In the same year, the Party-controlled daily *Borba* published a version of *Alice in Wonderland* in comic strip, while in 1952 Donald Duck reappeared on the pages of the daily *Politika,* where he also used to "live" in the period of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.[10] On January 5th 1952, Disney facilitated the re-launching of the children's magazine *Politikin zabavnik,* which was now published in completely different political and ideological circumstances.[11]

Examining the daily *Politika*, one of the most widely read daily print media in Yugoslavia, it is evident that in the 1960s Disney made his presence felt in this newspaper on daily basis through Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and the column

"Čuda prirode" ("Natural Wonders"). Under slightly different title "Nepoznata priroda" ("Unknown Nature"), this column was also published on daily basis in Zagreb in the daily *Vjesnik*. In addition to publishing Disney comics in daily papers and the weekly *Politikin zabavnik*, starting from November 1966, children's magazine *Mikijev zabavnik* started to be published every Thursday.

In addition to their presence in the press, Disney's works started to be published in Yugoslavia early on also in the form of picture books and comic books. The first Disney picture book in the post-war period was published in 1951 in Zagreb. It was *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* published by the *Pionirska zastava* ,[12] which was followed by the Belgrade-based publishing house *Duga* which launched a series of Disney comic books and picture books.[13] In the period from 1951, when the first Disney book was published, until 1970, there were altogether 204 Disney books, picture books and comic books published in Yugoslavia.[14] In the 1960s, Disney book *Svet prirode* (*The World of Nature*) was advertised as a "best-seller of Yugoslav publishing production". To the demand for this book and its popularity testifies the fact that there were "three editions with 150,000 copies which went out of print in record time".[15] Likewise, great popularity was enjoyed by Disneyland series, as part of which "books from the kingdom of Disney imagination" were published, such as: *Disneyland*, *Merry Poppins*, *Wheels, Machines, Engines*, *From Icarus to Cosmonauts* and *From Rafts to Nuclear-Powered Ships*.[16]

In addition to newspaper stands, libraries, bookstores and movie theatres, in the 1960s Walt Disney also entered the growing media – television. *Disneyland* series started to be broadcast in September 1966, and Donald Duck was immediately singled out as the most positive hero, and it was remarked that "Donald Duck oftentimes shows more human character, humaneness, than many living persons whose faces swarm our homes every single night over TV screens".[17] American cartoons, not only those from the Disney production, became part of children's everyday life in Yugoslavia, as testified by a number of headlines in the media. So, for instance, in 1967, readers were informed that "standard American cartoons" would continue to be part of the broadcast programming, which was totally different from the situation in other Eastern European countries. The term "standard" suggested that in a way it was taken for granted, and that such movies were part of the current TV broadcast programming.

Popularity and respect enjoyed by Walt Disney in Yugoslavia were evidenced on the occasion of his death in 1966, which was widely publicized by the entire Yugoslav press, which published obituaries and texts about him, written by many

eminent artists such as Oscar-winning animator Dušan Vukotić, painter Pedja Milosavljević, poet Dušan Radović and many others.[18] The death of this American icon served to the Yugoslav side to call the attention of the public to the Yugoslav *Kekec* award, which was given to the American "master of fantasy" in 1955.[19]

Through Walt Disney's presence in Yugoslavia, the process of Americanization gained in magnitude, because, along with the Disneyfication of the everyday life of the Yugoslav childhood and the pluralisation of children's point of view (Kumrovec together with the Duckburg, the Seven Enemy Offensives along with the Snow White and the seven dwarfs), it ensured that the Americanization, taken in the political sense and bringing political messages, spread over all generations of the population. The adults saw the *American way of life* in the movies and TV series, while the children saw the same thing in the adventures of Donald Duck and his nephews. Furthermore, through his presence in Yugoslavia, Walt Disney also confirmed the uniqueness of Yugoslav socialism compared to other countries from the socialist world, and just like everything else that the Americanization stood for, it also provided gains in foreign policy.

In a like manner as Disney did, American comics swarmed Yugoslavia. The comics were yet another "American" product, whose range increased tremendously in the 20th century, and apart from Walt Disney, conducive to this were comic books on Tarzan and a series of new super-heroes, whose adventures were published by the most famous American publishers of comic books.[20]

According to Marshal McLuhan, comics belong to the world of games, the world of models and the transferring of situations from one place to another.[21] Children and young people in Yugoslavia predominantly accepted the American models, coping with the challenges of transferring situations from one place to another, because their favourite comic book heroes facilitated them to reach the Wild West or some other fantastic landscapes and cities in the real or the imaginary America.

Soon after Tito's conflict with Stalin, American comic book heroes pervaded the Yugoslav market. Bearing in mind that comic books are the first reading experience of children throughout the world, it can be concluded that with their first reading experiences, through comic books, children in the Yugoslav socialist society were exposed to the American influence and induced to accept the American popular culture, as well as capitalist way of life, which was manifest in most of the American comics.

However, American comics started to spread much earlier. Comics are another phenomenon of the American popular culture which made its presence in the Yugoslav region way back in the times of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. Already in the 1930s, many daily papers, as well as many specialized papers dedicated to the "ninth art" published comics about Buck Rodgers (the first American SF comic), Betty Boop, The Katzenjammer Kids, Secret Agent X-9 (the most famous detective comic) Jungle Jim, The Phantom, Flash Gordon, Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Popeye, Superman, Tarzan, etc.[22] *Politikin zabavnik*, which was first published in the period from 20th February 1939 through 4th April 1941, published Mickey and Donald from the very first number, and the favourite comic heroes at the time also included Jungle Jim, Brick Bradford, Popeye, etc.[23]

Perhaps precisely owing to their popularity in the pre-war Yugoslavia, comics remained present also during the war, among the partisans, when short satirical messages about Hitler were published, accompanied with the note "read and spread the word".[24] New times and new ideology, established in the aftermath of the World War II, at the beginning certainly did not show much sympathy, due to its absolute leanings toward Moscow, for the American popular culture, so many of its products, including comics, suffered blows. As early as 1945, three numbers of the comic *Tri ugursuza za vreme okupacije* (*Three Mischief-Makers during the Occupation*) were banned "for grave moral offenses and instigating criminal behaviour".[25] At that time, comic book heroes Flash Gordon and Mandrake the Magician were fiercely animadverted upon, but local authors of comics managed to wangle their way, so in order to keep the "ninth art" alive, they made comic strips such as *Ratko-udarnik, čelični partijac* (*Ratko the Shock-Worker, Iron-Willed Party Member*), whose character was created precisely in the tradition of the condemned American super-heroes, only reframed as desirable ideologized contents.[26]

The new situation caused by the split with Moscow opened the Yugoslav market for comics, which after a short period of banishment, reappeared in the early 1950s. The comic returned to Croatia in 1950 with a gathering of cartoonists and a few Western-style stories by Andrija Maurović.[27] The daily *Vjesnik* from Zagreb wrote about the comics as early as 1951.[28] And in 1952 this publisher launched *Vjesnikov zabavnik* the first magazine that brought comic strips to Croatia, which ceased to exist pretty soon, followed by short-lived magazines *Petko* (1952-1953) and *Miki strip* (1954). However, the real thriving of the comics in Croatia came with the magazine *Plavi vjesnik* (1954-1973). This periodical published Disney comic strips, *Prince Valiant*, *Brick Bradford*, *Robin Hood*, *Flash*

Gordon, *Tarzan*, as well as many other comic strips by American, English and Italian authors. In addition to these, at the time when *Plavi vjesnik* was at the height of its popularity, comic strips were created by local authors too, such as brothers Norbert and Valter Nojbauer, as well as the "father of the Croatian comics" and, in many critics' opinion, the most important Yugoslav author of comic strips, Andrija Maurović.[29]

In 1951, Serbia also saw the publication of the first comic strip magazines – *Naš strip* and *Strip: ilustrovani zabavnik u stripu*. In the late 1950s, Yugoslav comics were further popularized when the periodical *Dečije novine* was established in 1957, the same year that the daily *Borba* published the first number of the comic strip *Kekec*. Although it is difficult to determine the scope of political influence on the development of comics in Yugoslavia, yet there is one episode in the history of comics that testifies to the indirect impact that was exercised and desirable models that were to be implemented. Namely, when *Kekec* was about to be launched, in the year of Soviet Union's triumphant space-exploration accomplishments (*Sputnik* spacecraft and the dog Laika that was sent to space), the founder's idea was to name this children magazine *Laika* after the dog. However, the idea met strong disapproval from the political leadership, so the magazine was renamed to *Kekec* before the first number was published.[30] Many comic strips by foreign authors were published in *Kekec*, among others Disney's *Lady and the Tramp* and *Peter Pan*, as well as *Prince Valiant*.[31]

Obviously, in the 1950s the Yugoslav authorities wavered between criticizing and accepting the comics, just like in so many other things with regard to the West. Bogdan Tirnanić affirmed that in this period, one of the first assignments he got at the GKNOJ[32] in Belgrade was to write "a classified opinion, useful to internal purposes, about Flash as publicity agent of the Pentagon", and when he refused to do so, he was offered to write "a lampoon against the Katzenjammer Kids". Tirnanić turned down this offer too, and soon after that, in his own words, "an overwhelming wave of democratization" followed, when comics "slowly but surely started to earn their place in the sun".[33]

In the 1960s, comics also appeared in specialized magazines, and in almost all Yugoslav print media, so that is another reason why 1960s are taken to be the golden age for comics in Yugoslavia. Such publications had a print run that reached incredible numbers taking into consideration the population of the country, because comics were published in more than 12 million copies.[34] Apart from specialized magazines dedicated to comics, as well as numerous

pioneer and youth magazines, daily and weekly papers published comics too. The magazine *TV novosti* published comic strips in every number (*Maverick Brothers*, *Texas Jack*, *Love in Las Vegas*, *Tom* Mix, etc.), while the magazine *Ilustrovana politika* dedicated one of its pages to comic strips. Many daily papers also published comic strips on daily basis. In 1966, for instance, *Politika Ekspres* published *Modesty Blaise*, the "comic of the year", on daily basis, and the case of this comic, whose publication by *Politika Ekspres* was also facilitated by the factory "Zavodi Crvena Zastava" from Kragujevac shows that the publishing of comics had its commercial and marketing aspects.[35] In the mid 1960s, *Mikijev almanah* published editions of "slim-volume imported comics" of the American company *Marvel Comics*, before it was published in some countries of Western Europe such as France, which "defended" itself from the Americanization by imposing an embargo on the import of comics from the USA.[36]

Foreign, mostly American, comics were further promoted by the *Lale Biblioteka editions*, which published *Robin Hood*, *Three Musketeers*, *Tarzan* and *Red Ryder*, and by the end of the 1960s it was the Marvel super-heroes who took the leading role in them.[37] The magazines *Zenit* and *Panorama* (launched in 1965) also published mostly British and American comics, and *Panorama* was, in Vasa Pavković's opinion, the "best comics periodical in Yugoslavia".[38]

For the fans of comic books, the year 1968 defined one of the crucial moments in the history of comics in Yugoslavia, when the daily *Dnevnik* from Novi Sad launched two important comic book editions, namely *Zlatna serija* (1968-1992) and *Lunov magnus strip* (1968-1993), which published *Tex Willer*, *Zagor*, *A Boy in the Far West (Un ragazzo nel Far West)*, *Lun, King of Midnight*, etc. Although it was mostly Italian authors' comics that were published in these editions, it was nevertheless a case of particular, "indirect" Americanization, just like the Spaghetti Westerns, because the story in these comics mostly took place in the Wild West or the North America (*Captain Miki*, *Zagor*).[39] Likewise, similar, "indirect" Americanization took place later on, particularly with the Italian comic book *Alan Ford*, which was set in New York.[40]

Likewise, the famous movie and comic book hero Tarzan came to movie theatres and newsstands across Yugoslavia, and eventually in the 1960s to bookstores and libraries too. His adventures were published in as many as five books by E. R. Borroughs, all published in luxury binding by *Epoha* from Zagreb. It was possible to buy these books even on credit in ten instalments, just like the most valuable books written by the masters of world and Yugoslav literature, and they were of-

fered to all generations, with a recommendation that "the favourite of the youth around the world", in print version, will be a "treasured gift for your children, while providing pleasant moments of amusement and distraction for you".[41]

In no time, the comics, just like the movies, just like almost everything else that represented Americanization and the leanings toward the West, started working to the benefit of communism – the *Agitprop* authorities approved that official youth papers published comics because otherwise without the comic strips no one would have bought them.[42] Allowing American comics to act as decoy for local political contents, the government seemingly showed that it firmly believed in its politics and ideology and their supremacy. As early as the second half of the 1950s, comic books in Yugoslavia inundated diverse pioneer and youth papers, as well as army papers. The government balanced such situation by encouraging the creation of local comics, comics that dealt with local topics. Thus, in the early 1956, the periodical *Narodna armija* (*People's Army*) announced a competition for best comic strips, with topics defined in advance: "popular liberation struggle, our history and scenes from a soldier's life", while the periodical *Krila armije (The Army Wings)* published the comic strip *Diverzanti (Saboteurs*).[43] The periodical *4. jul* , official bulletin of the National Liberation Struggle fighters, gave space for comic strips made by Ivo Kušanić *Majstorije druga Srećka* (*Comrade Srećko's Tour de Force*) and Ivica Koljanin *Nesalomljivi* (*The Unbreakable*).[44] The bond between the government and comics and the government's need to have comics work for the system and to promote certain values are evidenced by the competition announced in 1960 by the periodical *Plavi vjesnik,* when the first prize awarded for the best piece on a "story from youth life" amounted to no less than 100,000 dinars.[45]

Stories from the National Liberation Struggle, as one of propaganda leverages of Yugoslav socialism, by way of using "American weapon", as in the case of rock'n'roll and even more "partisan Western", abounded in Yugoslav comics until mid 1980s. The 1950s and 1960s saw the publication of comics that aimed to popularize the legacy of the National Liberation Struggle, such as *Doživljaji Nikoletine Bursaća* (*The Adventures of Nikoletina Bursać*), *Skojevci iz male luke* (*Young Communists from the Little Port*), *Kurir pete čete* (*The Fifth Troop's Messenger*), *Partizanske priče* (*Partisan Stories*), *Život za slobodu* (*A Life for Freedom*), etc.[46] It all culminated with the comic *Mirko i Slavko* (*Mirko and Slavko*) by Desimir Žižović Buin,[47] whose protagonists were two boys, partisan messengers, who bravely fought against the Germans. At first, this comic strip came

out as part of the series of comics *Nikad robom (Never Enslaved)* (1963-1979), which published comic strips with subject matters from different periods of Yugoslav history. Thanks to great popularity of its protagonists Mirko and Slavko and the fact that its print runs reached as much as 200,000 copies, from 1969 this comic started to come out as a special eponymous edition.[48] The price of these comic books is perhaps the best evidence of the importance of such way of promoting the legacy of the National Liberation Struggle. The comic *Nikad robom* was sold at 60 para (60/100 dinar) a piece for years, which testifies to the privileged status enjoyed by comic books, although they were oftentimes labelled as "trash literature".

Taking American form to "wrap" socialist contents, comics went even further than, for instance, "partisan Western" movies, because the images of Mirko and Slavko, just like popular comic book heroes in America, were printed on t-shirts, notebooks, covers of textbook and schoolbags, and in 1973 movie director Branimir Tori Janković even made a feature motion picture *Mirko and Slavko*.

A specific "Disneyfication" of Yugoslavia during the 1960s completed the general perspective on the children's everyday life, pointing out two sides of Yugoslav childhood, as well as Yugoslav society in general. It was possible for the children and the youth to be in pioneer organizations or the Socialist Youth Union, to take part at youth work actions and parades on the occasion of Tito's birthday, while at the same time watching American cartoons and reading Disney comics. Thus, the upshot of it all in Yugoslavia was a strange hybrid of Americanized childhood, which was at the same time a socialist childhood.

1 R. Vučetić, *Život u socijalizmu 1845-1980*, Belgrade 2011, pp. 18-19; M. Jovančić, "U lavirintu tradicija: od 'Sv. Save' do 'Mitraljete' i 'Ćićka' (Savremeni nazivi osnovnih škola u Srbiji)", *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju*, IV, 1 (1997), pp. 101-103.

2 *Translator's note:* In Serbian language, the word for dad, *tata*, and Tito's name begin with the same letter *t*.

3 R. Vučetić, "ABC Textbook and Ideological Indoctrination of Children: 'Socialism Tailor-made for Man' or 'Child Tailor-made for Socialism", *Childhood in South East Europe: Historical Perspectives on Growing Up in*

the 19th and 20th Century (S. Naumović, M. Jovanović, eds.), Belgrade-Graz 2001, 254.

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5 S. Petrović-Todosijević, "Na tragu bezbrižnosti pod plaštom bezimenosti: deca i detinjstvo između trajnog i novog", *Privatni život kod Srba u dvadesetom veku* (M. Ristović), pp. 235-236.

6 V. Arsenijević, "Ema esesa", *Leksikon YU mitologije*, Belgrade 2004, p. 127.

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9 A. Dorfman, A. Mattelart, *How to Read Donald Duck: Imperialist Ideology of the Disney Comic*, New York 1991, p. 11.

10 P. Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada 1948-1965*, Belgrade 1996, p. 477.

11 V. Pavković, *Naš slatki strip*, Belgrade 2003, p. 110.

12 *Katalog knjiga na jezicima jugoslovenskih naroda 1868-1972*, volume III, Belgrade 1975, p. 575.

13 *Miki, Šilja i crni biseri, Miki i Aladinova lampa, Paja Patak i blago Vikinga, Mali Hijavata i priča plemena Apača*, Ibid., pp. 570-573.

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15 *Politika* daily, December 11 1966, p. 36.

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18 D. Vukotić,, "Sećajući se Volta Diznija"; P. Milosavljević, "Jednostavno: Volt Dizni"; D. Radović, "Diznijeva pouka", *Politika*, December 18 1966, p. 17.

19 D.A., "Umro Volt Dizni", *Politika*, December 16 1966, p. 11.

20 R. Snel (ed.),, *Leksikon savremene kulture*, Belgrade 2008, p. 648.

21 M. Makluan, *Poznavanje opštila – čovekovih produžetaka*, Belgrade 1971, p. 219.

22 S. Dragičić and Z. Zupanc, *Istorija jugoslovenskog stripa 1*, Novi Sad 1986. On-line edition: http://www.rastko.rs/strip/1/zupan-dragincic_1/index_l.html (December 18 2010); V. Pavković, *Naš slatki strip*, Belgrade 2003, pp. 109-115.

23 V. Pavković, *Naš slatki strip*, Belgrade 2003, p. 109.
24 S. Ivkov, "60 godina stripa u Srbiji" <http://www.rastko.rs/strip/60godina/60gstripa_03html> (January 9 2011).

25 Ibid.

26 P. Marković, *Beograd izmedju Istoka i Zapada*, p. 476.

27 "60 godina hrvatskog stripa", <http://comics.cro.net/hrtstr2.html> (January 8 2011).

28 Tvrtko Jakovina, *Američki komunistički saveznik*..., p. 459.

29 "Plavi vjesnik", <http://www.stripforum.hr/leksikon/magazain/plavi-vjesnik/#2> (January 6 2011).

30 Z. Zupan, *Strip u Srbiji 1955-1972*.

31 V. Pavković, *Naš slatki strip*, p. 116.

32 City Committee of the People's Youth Yugoslavia.

33 B. Tirnanić, *Ogled o Paji Patku*..., p. 9.

34 S. Tomić, *Strip: poreklo i značaj*, p. 10.

35 *Politika*, August 4 1966, p. 17.

36 S.Ivkov, "60 godina stripa u Srbiji"...

37 V. Pavković, *Naš slatki strip*..., p. 123.

38 Ibid., pp. 129-135.

39 See: <http://stripovi2.tripod.com>, <http://sr.wikipedia.org/sr/Lunov_Magnus_Strip>, <http://www.leksikon-yu-mitologije.net/read.php_id=901> (January 5 2011).

40 In Yugoslavia, *Alan Ford* was launched in 1972, published by the daily *Vjesnik* from Zagreb.

41 Advertisement for the *Tarzan* books, *Politika*, June 6 1965, p. 32.

42 P. Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada...*, p. 477.

43 Z. Zupan, *Strip u Srbiji 1955-1972*...

44 S. Ivkov, "60 godina stripa u Srbiji"...; the periodicals *4. jul* and *Vjesnik* simultaneously published the comic strip *Nesalomljivi*.

45 "Plavi vjesnik", <http://www.stripforum.hr/leksikon/magazain/plavi-vjesnik/#2> (January 6 2010).

46 S. Ivkov, "60 godina stripa u Srbiji"...

47 Paradoxically, Desimir Žižović Buin, the creator of *Mirko i Slavko*, the most celebrated „partisan comic", was himself a member of the Ravna Gora Movement and a cartoonist for the periodicals *Mladi Ravnogorac* and *Ravnogorski borac*.

48 Z. Zupan, *Strip u Srbiji 1955-1972*...

WE ARE HAPPY FOR
THE WONDERFUL YOUTH,
BUT WE ARE NOT FORGETFUL
OF THE MAJOR TASKS
BEFORE THE NEW GENERATION.

WE ARE AWARE THAT
ONLY THROUGH WORK
WE CAN IMPROVE
THE STANDARD OF LIVING.

WE LEARN TO WORK, TO RESPECT
LABOUR,WE ARE PREPARING
OURSELVES FOR LIFE. THAT IS
HOW WE BECOME HUMANS.

WE LEARN TO LOVE MANKIND.
WE LEARN TO LOVE LIFE.

THE FEATS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY
PAST TEACH US TO LOVE,
UPHOLD AND DEFEND
OUR SOCIALIST HOMELAND.

WE SHALL CULTIVATE
THE BEST AND THE NOBLEST
PART OF HUMAN CHARACTER.

WE SHALL OVERCOME
ALL DIFFICULTIES
BECAUSE WE KNOW THAT
NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE.

WE WANT ALL THE CHILDREN
IN THE WORLD TO BE HAPPY
AND JOYFUL LIKE
THE CHILDREN IN YUGOSLAVIA.

Young medics, Maribor, Slovenia, 1952
(album no. 959, Present from the Pioneers of the "Ivan Cankar" elementary school from Maribor)

"United Nations" school group having a converstation about the current situation in Cuba,
Novi Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1961
(album no. 1130, Present from the "Moša Pijade" elementary school from Novi Travnik)

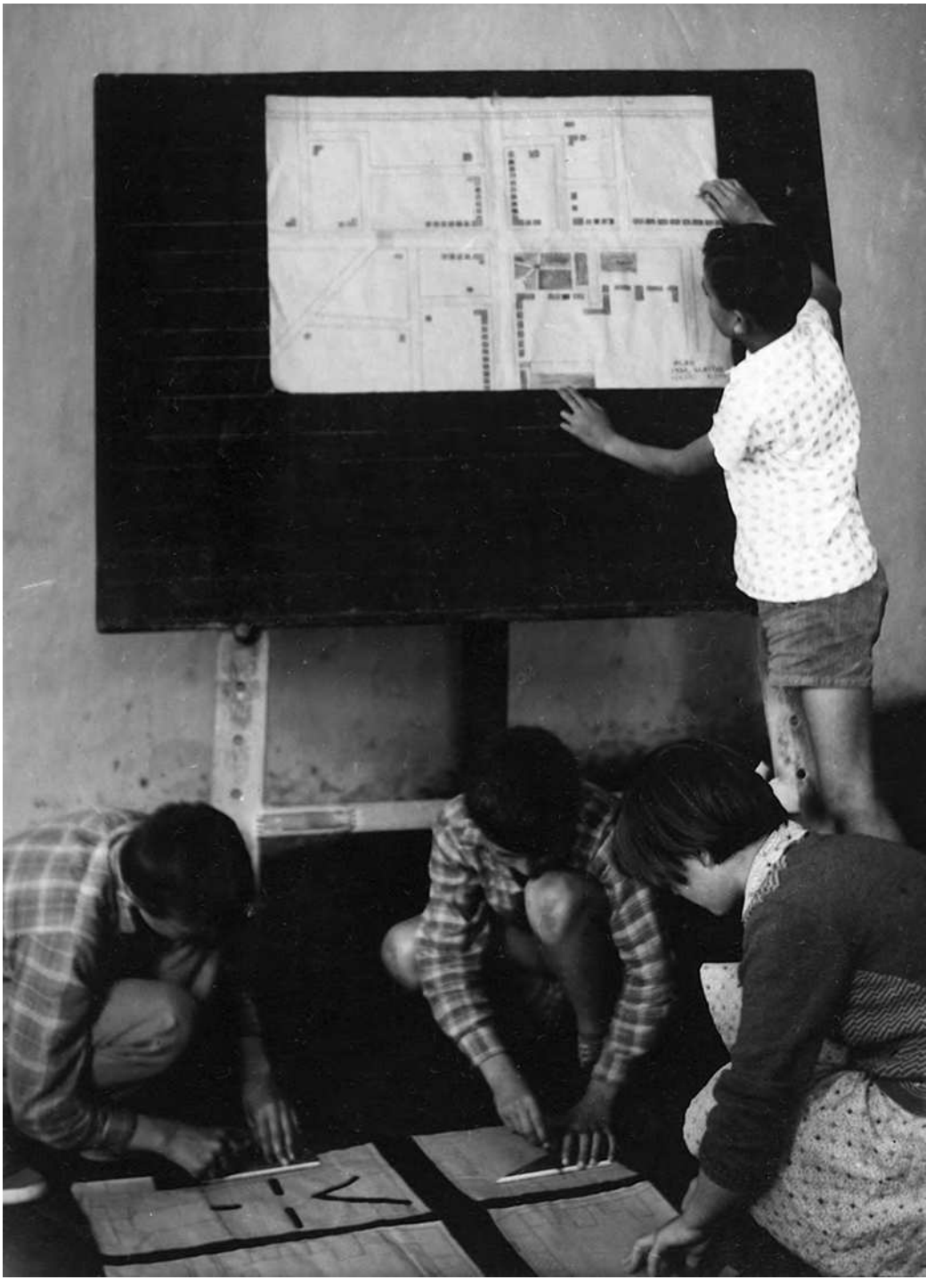
Students reading pioneers' press, Niš, Serbia, 1962
(album no. 984, Present from the "Maršal Tito" elementary school from Niš)

Students collecting donations for people in India, Belgrade, Serbia, 1966
(album no. 1004, Present from the "Bratstvo-Jedinstvo" elementary school from Belgrade)

Students in front of a commemorative plaque listening about the history of National Liberation Struggle,
Begejci, Serbia, 1961 (album no. 1139, Present from the Pioneers of elementary school in Begajci)

Pupils visiting workers' families, Belgrade, Serbia, 1957
(album no. 943, Present from the "Vuk Karadžić" elementary school from Belgrade)

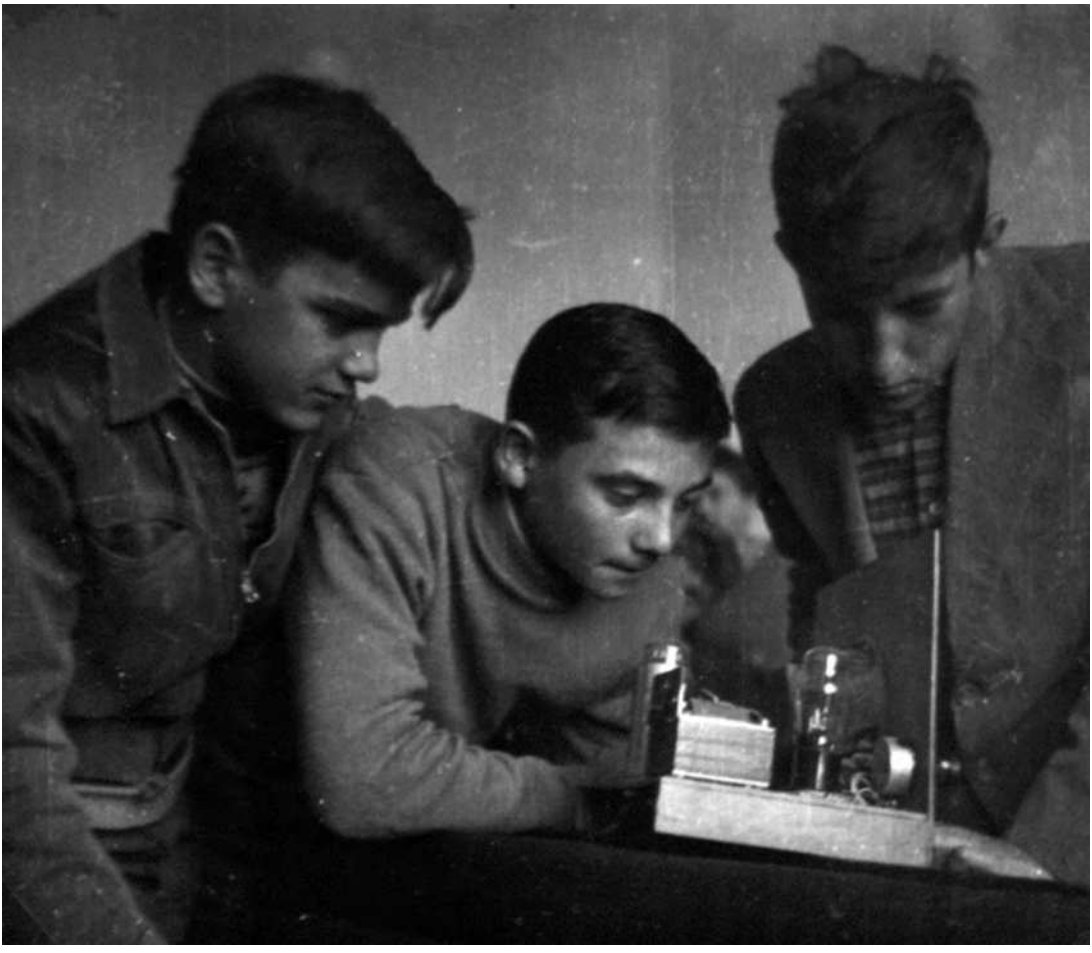
Students building sport facilities, Zagreb, Croatia, 1961
(album no. 1039, Present from the elementary school of Kruge and Trnje Municipality in Zagreb)



Young builders, Podravska Slatina, Croatia, 1962
(album no. 1066, Present from the "Boško Buha" Pioneers' troop from Podravska Slatina)

Students in the school workshop, Belgrade, Serbia, 1967
(album no. 1380, Present from the "22. decembar" elementary school from Belgrade)

Radio-amateurs, Podravska Slatina, Croatia, 1962
(album no. 1066, Present from the "Boško Buha" Pioneers' troop from Podravska Slatina)



Young electrical technicians, Pula, Croatia, 1961
(album no. 1236, Present from the Pioneers and Youth of the Italian elementary school in Pula)

Photo-amateurs, Bačko Petrovo Selo, Serbia, 1963
(album no. 1091, Present from the Pioneers of Bačko Petrovo Selo)

Kino-amateurs, Belgrade, Serbia, 1967
(album no. 1275, Present from the "Bratstvo - jedinstvo" elementary school from Belgrade)

Students whose both parents are employed spend their free time in the day-care facillities provided by the school, Belgrade, Serbia, 1967
(album no. 1380, Present from the "22. decembar" elementary school from Belgrade)

IGOR DUDA

BIG ENOUGH
NOT TO BE SMALL

The year 1976 saw the publication of the first in a series of children's novels written by Hrvoje Hitrec about smoggers, inhabitants of large smog-soaked cities, in this case unmistakably recognizable as present-day Zagreb. By the end of 1980s, novels *Smogovci i strašni Bongo* (*Smoggers and the Fearsome Bongo*) and *Zbogom smogovci (Goodbye, Smoggers)* were published as a sequel to the novel *Smogovci* (*Smoggers*), while at the same time, starting from 1982, this extraordinary popularity enjoyed by the numerous family Vragec, their neighbors and friends, was further ensured by the Zagreb Television, which filmed 23 episodes of a television series that achieved a major success in the Yugoslav Radio-Television network, and was even aired in a number of countries abroad.[1] The novels and the TV series are an indispensable part of the mosaic of the growing-up in late socialism in Croatia and its surroundings, as much for the viewers who have grown up in the meantime, as for many historical references based on which description can be given of the practices of the everyday life at that time caused by social, economic and cultural situation in the Yugoslav federation.

Namely, some of the smoggers live in a dilapidated family house, and later in a newly built one, in Naselak street in Zagreb, which modernization and urbanization have passed by, while others live in a skyscraper nearby, and others yet further away, where they make a swimming pool in their garden, trying to create at least a tiny bit of the luxury life they had seen in the American soap opera *Dynasty*. Some of them have regular earnings, some depend on income they sporadically make, while others spent many years abroad where they earned and saved money which is now melting away, and others yet conceive petty larcenies and rip-offs in order to make the ends meet and to make the living somewhat easier. They all feel the burden of rising prices, and strive to keep their living habits within check of their ongoing earnings, while some of them

turn to growing their own vegetables and raising their own pigs, and some of them even win prizes at *Kviskoteka* game show, and others yet search for oil in the Adriatic seabed, trying to quickly make a fortune that way. They live in a city which is growing due to the fact that it hosted the World Student Games. The fascination with modernization goes much further, so they become interested in computers, robots and extraterrestrials. Down there on Earth, they eat meat patty, Zdenka cheese, bologna, sausages, ćevapčići and pancakes filled with walnuts, they drink Coca-Cola, Nara and Cockta soft drinks, as well as spritzer, beer and Lipički studenac mineral water. They try to build holiday cottages, while driving around in beaten-up Topolino and Dyane cars and riding Pony bicycles. Depending on whether they are small or adult, they read comics, *Sprint*, *Start*, *Tina* and *Večernji list*, they listen to Tina Turner and George Harrison, they follow the victories of Martina Navratilova and Björn Borg, they know who smurfs and E.T. and Superman and Masters super heroes are. They are aware of the danger of recently discovered AIDS and the newly opened Krško Nuclear Power Plant. In their school bag, first-graders carry exercise books in Croatian, mathematics and nature and society, textbooks *Moj dom i zavičaj* (*My Home and Homeland*) and *Zlatna lađa* (*Golden Boat*), magazine *Radost* (*Happiness*), pencil box and pencils, ruler, OHO glue and slippers. Together with other pupils, they collect used paper, they say *comrade* when addressing their teacher, and tell her *hello*. They spend several days celebrating the First of May, they walk through the Street of Socialist Revolution and the Square of Republic in Zagreb, and do their military service in the Yugoslav People's Army in far-off Macedonia.

However, little smoggers never get to become pioneers nor do they ever assume this role which was inevitable for all the children from the first to the seventh grade in primary schools. The Union of Pioneers of Yugoslavia most often became visible on the occasion of celebrations and other similar events, but its purpose was much more serious: to devise and to organize the leisure time of elementary-school pupils, and to construct the role model for the child who will cherish the tradition of the struggle for national liberation, respect Tito and love the socialist Yugoslavia.[2] In spite of numerous historical references, there were no pioneers among the smoggers, which can be interpreted either as author's intention or just accidental subversiveness, but perhaps it is a reflection of a deeper change in circumstances in which the children were growing up in late socialism: "Over time, the ideological disguise was gradually wearing off, and purely children's contents, free of ideology, became dominant, so that in the eyes of the last generations, those who became pioneers after Tito's death, the fact of being a pioneer became part of a nostalgic image of Yugo-childhood,

whose frame of reference – due to given chronological circumstances – still represented socialism, however, at least for them, it appeared as a toothless shape. [...] Therefore, their childhood and early youth, from the sociocultural perspective, have a character that is more hybrid than what is manifest in other periods of Yugo-socialism."[3] It is unlikely that in this hybridism pioneers could ever become completely obsolete, yet the smoggers' childhood was actually completely de-ideologized, although their surrounding was pretty real and clearly determined by social context. Thus the smoggers never got to wear pioneer's cap and scarf, and yet, even without it, their childhood is so imbued in the Yugoslav everyday life of the 1980s in every way possible. One of the most famous sentences from the whole series of novels – "they're small but they're big... I mean, they're not small anymore, but they're big enough not to be small..."[4] – could well be applied to the socialism of that day: it was weak and yet strong, that is, it was strong enough not to be weak. And so it was until smoggers eventually became a little bit bigger and finally outgrew childhood, and socialism and Yugoslavia became weak enough not to exist at all.

1 See: Igor Duda, "S Bucom i Bongom protiv krize. Hitrecovi smogovci, djetinjstvo i svakodnevica kasnog socijalizma"; *Historijski zbornik*, 2014, 2, pp. 401-418.

2 See Igor Duda, "Djeca socijalističke domovine. Izgrađivanje pionirske tradicije u Hrvatskoj 1950-ih godina", *Socijalizam na klupi. Jugoslavensko društvo očima nove postjugoslovenske humanistike*, eds. Lada Duraković and Andrea Matošević, Central Europe, Jurja Dobrila University in Pula, Book Fair(y) in Istria, Pula and Zagreb, 2013, pp. 75-101.

3 Ildiko Erdei, "Odrastanje u poznom socijalizmu - od pionira malenih do vojske potrošača", *Devijacije i promašaji. Etnografija domaćeg socijalizma*, eds. Lada Cale Feldman and Ines Prica, the Institute of Etnology and Folklore, Zagreb, 2006, pp. 217, 225.

4 Hrvoje Hitrec, *Smogovci*, Mladost, Zagreb, 1976, p. 72.

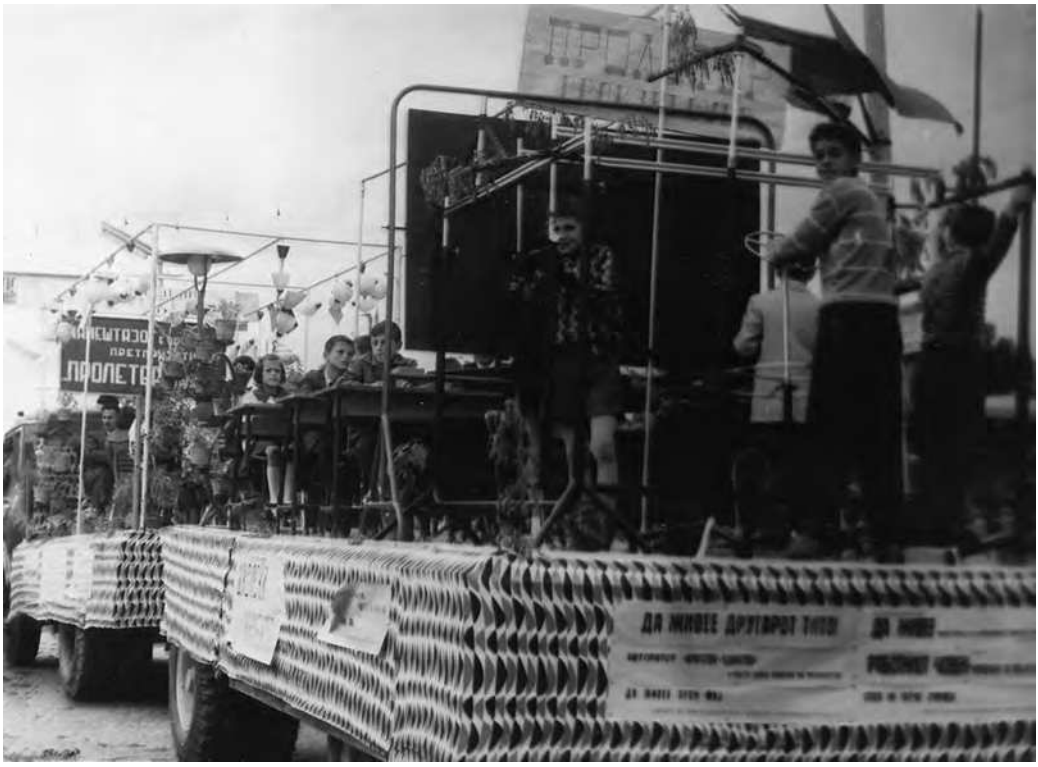
WE ARE BUILDING
OUR HOMELAND IN FREEDOM,
AND THAT IS WHY IT IS STRONG
AND BEAUTIFUL.

IN OUR YOUTHFUL DANCE,
WE FORGE THE BROTHERHOOD
AND UNITY OF OUR NATIONS.

WE SHALL MAKE EVERY EFFORT
WE CAN TO MAKE OUR COUNTRY
HAPPY AND ITS PEOPLE CONTENTED.

WE ARE THE FUTURE GUARDIANS
OF OUR NATIONS.
WE ARE THE FUTURE
PROTECTORS OF SOCIALISM.

Parade, Skopje, Macedonia
(album no. 1235, Present from the "Goce Delčev" Pioneeers' troop from Skopje)



May Day Parade, Prilep, Macedonia, 1961
(album no. 946, Present from the "Mirče Acev" Pioneers' Home from Prilep)

Pioneers' Baton Parade, Rijeka, Croatia, 1955
(album no. 1990, Present from the Pioneers of Rijeka)

Pioneers' Baton, Prilep, Macedonia, 1961
(album no. 946, Present from the "Mirče Acev" Pioneers' Home from Prilep)

Youth Day Parade, Tetovo, 1957
(album no. 985, Present from the Pioneers of Tetovo)

Pioneers, Vršac, Serbia, 1960
(album no. 1243, Present from the Pioneers and Youth of Vršac)

Youth Day Celebration, Novi Travnik, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1961
(album no. 1130, Present from the "Moša Pijade" elementary school from Novi Travnik)

Public performance celebrating the admission of the youngest ones to the Pioneers' organization,
Bosanski Brod, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 1966
(album no. 983, Present from the Pioneers and Youth of the "Drago Vidošević" elementary school from Bosanski Brod)

NENAD VELIČKOVIĆ

ALBUMS, SKETCHES

Before me, on the screen, scanned in a resolution not very attentive to details, are pages from old leather-bound photo-albums, with rustling sheets of transparent paper inserted between grey cardboard pages; all of them have similar content, filled with works of schoolchildren, texts, photographs and drawings, on the mission of delivering birthday greeting cards sent to Josip Broz Tito. *Tito shows the day...*
(Albums are kept in the Museum of Yugoslav History in Belgrade.)

Contrary to expectations, Yugo-nostalgia is not a feeling Tito's grey-haired pioneer gets while leafing through the albums. Nor is it melancholy feeling from the same pathetic register. It is rather anger, at times even rage. Indeed, he is confused by his own inability to stay benevolent, paternal and teacherly before such childish fits of loyalty. It makes him sick to see parrot-like intelligence resolutely eager to grow into cowardice and thuggery, quite in the image of his teachers and tutors.

This premonition, exaggerated just as any other premonition, is the flip side of the pedagogic helplessness that faces its own miserly vocation. These albums, akin to scores of marches and lullabies, explain, better than all hindsight analyses, the reasons for the downfall of Yugoslavia. *The milk from her breast* was a lie, milked in thousands of classrooms with Marshall's picture hanging above the blackboard.

1
Dear comrade Tito
This first letter I write is addressed to you because I love you.
We heard that you went to India and Burma
sailing on your flagship Galeb[1]*. You left*
to fight against war in
the world. We are all looking forward to your return.
Many greetings from the pioneers from

Pantovčak school, but most of all from your Slavka
Macerol
(flag plus bouquet)

Comrade Tito (exclamation mark, a flower)
I often look at you on the photograph. I wish to see you
live. That is why I'll be
waiting for you on Saturday.
Pioneer Mirjana

Flag, five-pointed star, flag
Dear comrade Tito!
This first letter I write is addressed to you.
We heard that you went on the ship "Galeb", escorted by destroyers
"Biokovo", "Dinara" and "Triglav", all the way to India and Burma.
You left on that toilsome journey to fight for peace.
All of us pioneers are eagerly looking forward to your return.
We want you to come to visit us.
Greetings from your pioneers, and most of all from your
Riffert Mladen

Dear Tito!
Comrade Tito now I want to
write this letter.
I would like to see you
in Belgrade. On the New Year's Eve
I remembered you
When I decorated the Christmas tree.
Faithfully yours,
Krušlin Jasenka

Comrade Tito! (a star)
I am happy for my comrade
Tito. I am eagerly wait
ing for you. Greetings
from pioneer Gas
Vlada
(a flower, a star, a flag)

Comrade Tito!
You came to see us. I live
in the villa Weiss. I watched
you standing a bit to the side. I took delight
in that sight.
Pioneer Zlatica
(a little house on a hill)

Dear comrade Tito,
Comrade Tito I love you
so much. How was your
departure for India.
Many greetings from
pioneer Jasminka
Jurjević (three flowers in a flowerpot)

(a ship)
Dear comrade Tito!
Comrade Tito, my pare
nts taught me to
love you so dearly.
I wish you much
happiness and a long life. I'm sen
ding you my love,
Cuculić Jasna

Tito dear
I greet you and
wish you all the best.
I love you so very much, so I
will be a good fighter.
Much love from your Mirko
(a small ship) *Dujmić*

Comrade Tito!
I live far away. However, I will
be waiting to see you.
Pioneer Amčica Komiš

(Album no. 1430, Pantovčak Elementary School)

2.
Comrade Tito!
*We, the pioneers, from the village DEREZE, remembering the hardships and misfortunes from the past war and the slaughter of our parents, brothers and sisters, wish **YOU** good health and a long life, because **YOU** were able and you avenged the blood shed in Dereze and around our homeland, because you gave us happy and bright future. Therefore, we wish that you live long, protect our homeland and our childhood in peace and happiness!*
Pioneers from the village Dereze
(Album no. 2089, Pioneers from Croatia, 1961)

3.
Comrade Tito sometimes pays a visit to his birthplace Kumrovec. Then he takes a walk through streets and over fields so familiar to him, where he used to play long time ago. Kumrovec has changed in appearance. There are but a few old houses that look like Kumrovec did before. There are many new buildings. The town has changed, but the people have remained the same, kind and hospitable.
Kovačević Sanda IVb
(Album no. 2273, Jovan Jovanović Zmaj School, Subotica, 1977)

4.
We, the pioneers from the city of Niš, compete in exercises and other things, in pioneer's work. One day, when factory owner Peić was on trial, we had no work to do.

Dear comrade Tito,
We want to let you know that we are in good health. When you liberated us, the House of working youth was immediately opened. We, when we began going to work, we found it hard because everything was destroyed, and now it is easier for us.

On the tomb of people's hero Stevan Sindjelić... we swear...

we the pioneers from the House of working youth also send a word that we are happy in our new state. And we thank you for standing up against hateful fascism and its tyranny and after 4 years triumphantly taking off the shackles from our people. (...) and we are happy in our common home, and in our new Democratic federal Yugoslavia...
(Album no. 2350, Niš, 1945)

Once I held in my hand, in a bundle of toilet paper, a human fetus, a few months old. That's how I look at these albums now, standing in the future in which they are only a hymn to miscarriage. And in them I see present-day schoolchildren in Niš, Podgorica, Subotica, Bar, Maribor, on the island of Krk... They wear no red scarves and no blue and white pioneer caps, they make no drawings with tricolor flag, flower bouquets, little houses on a hill, flowerpots, five birds, colored-feathers, with olive branches and flower budding leaves (*For the peace in the world*), clovers, poppies, tulips, violets, carnations, ruins in heaps of torn electric wires, *comrade Tito and Moša Pijade jailed in Lepoglava*, kolo dance, accordionists and a Christmas tree with a five-pointed star on its top, surrounded Jerries and dead partisans, blood shed from their bullet-riddled chests, flooding the fertile land with freedom. Equally precocious and monkeylike, the grandchildren of these well-wishers are now drawing opanak peasant shoes, chessboard flags, suns, triglav, lovćen, počitelj, smederevo and the like, fire steels, u-letters, two-headed eagles, glagolotic alphabet, crosses, gusle[2], sickle without hammer, mosques, churches, our ladies, copper waterpots, and so on.
Thus, for two centuries now, patriotism is inculcated through education to undermine the enlightenment: as graceful as a bulldozer, patriotism serves to level children's brains, blessed with the blissful mammalian arrogance of their parents imbued with the same lie.

Leather-bound photo-albums, with rustling sheets of transparent paper inserted between grey cardboard pages, filled with works of schoolchildren, texts, photographs and drawings, on the mission of delivering birthday greeting cards sent to Josip Broz Tito, mass graves of dried pressed thoughts.

1 Peace Ship Galeb was used as Tito's official yacht. Its name means Seagull.

2 Serbian traditional single-stringed instrument.

OUR LIFE
IS GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL.

HAPPINESS, JOY, LEARNING
AND PLAY MAKE THE BRIGHT,
SUNNY DAYS OF
OUR CHILDHOOD.

WE ARE LIKE
SPRINGTIME.

WE LOVE SPRINGTIME,
SINGING, PLAYING -
WE LOVE LIFE.
WE ARE ALWAYS HAPPY.

Young seamstress, Maribor, Slovenia, 1952
(album no. 959, Present from the Pioneers of the "Ivan Cankar" elementary school from Maribor)

Students in the dinning room, Šabac, Serbia, 1957
(album no. 1020, Present from the Pioneers of Šabac)

"Janko Padežnik" Pioneers' troop, Maribor, Slovenia, 1959
(album no. 1328, Present from the Pioneers of the "Studenci II" elementary school from Maribor)

Students with their birdhouses, Boljevac, Serbia, 1965
(album no. 1019, Present from the elementary school in Boljevac)

Children of the "Ribiška" kindergarten celebrating President Tito's birthday,
Maribor, Slovenia, 1967 (album no. 2363, Present from the children of the "Ribiška" kindergarten from Maribor)
We picked flowers for You – We are celebrating with You – Our teacher is telling us about You

Young cooperative workers of the "Petar Drapšin" elementary school in Turija, Serbia, 1968
(album no. 969, Present from the Students of Srbobran, Turija i Nadalj)

Students with their diplomas, Srbobran, Serbia, 1968
(album no. 969, Present from the Students of Srbobran, Turija i Nadalj)

ŠKART

(poems from the collection **what do you ask and when nobody asks?)**

stone

skinny
and good-for-nothing

the same height as

sister
half my age

mom: gets our underwear mixed up

dad: tells us apart

dog: woof!

doctor: on his lunch break

i was left
in the hospital

with a book
about partisans

poor
partisans

a stone
instead of a bed

the same
for everyone

i know
i don't suffer
enough

i cry
because i don't have
a stone

i ward off
fever

doctor: on his lunch break

they took me back
home

mom: sorting out the underwear

dad: tells me apart

dog: woof! woof!

here I am
here

mask

there's one party
and one
tv channel

presenters in black and white
rehearsing
the day of mourning

we are all waiting
for the newsreading ladies

their haircuts
aping
the bravest of all

the neighbor-girls

they borrow
hairspray
from my mom

and sleep in their seats
all set
to go far away

the hairiest of them all
became
runner-up to tuzla's beauty queen

brana's uncle
went
the farthest

to germany

brought an
anti-glare
screen filter glass

green yellow blue

when intermezzo is on
the grass is green
the sky is blue

when a newsreader is on
we all admire
her green blouse

yellow neck

and blue
ears

guide

women's syndicate

from railway vehicles
factory

run by bus
to
paths of revolution

my mom
the guide

of the trip

on execution sights
after
crying
there's no
regretting

charge!
at the hotel restaurant

on the battlefield

the aim is to steal
as many
teacupssshashashashtrays
sssssssssss
and
not to get caught
by the waiter
rrrrrr

ruler

wash my hands

i'm not from here

hygienist
of school-room
community

a chart
drawn
before an army of schoolchildren

on the same day

handshair
shoes
overallimpression

plusminus
plus

we would have been
a better class
if it hadn't been

for those

minusminus
minus

comrade
teacher

correcting
grades

plusplus
plus

she says
you can't make those minuses
as if drawn with a ruler

she says
they're peasants
children of miners

she says
their hands are clean
calluses are yellow

she says
we are all
one and the same

but
it's not
all the same

lavatory

garbage,
ready
to be thrown away,
grandpa,
secretly,
at night,
fumbles
again

who knows

maybe
something

when
the nazis
brought him
before the firing squad,
all the hubbub with counting
100 for one,
100 workers,
proletarians,
for one
aggressor dead,
he took cover
in a railcar lavatory,
locked himself
from the inside
with a hex key,
waited for
the night

5,000 for 50

maybe
someone

since then
he's looking for something

maybe
somewhere

WE SHALL SAIL THE SEAS
AND THE OCEANS.

WE SHALL TAKE WINGS
AROUND THE GLOBE
AND GREET THE WHOLE WORLD.

WE SHALL PRESENT
NEW GIFTS
TO THE HUMANKIND.

WE SHALL SPREAD
THE WORD OF PEACE.

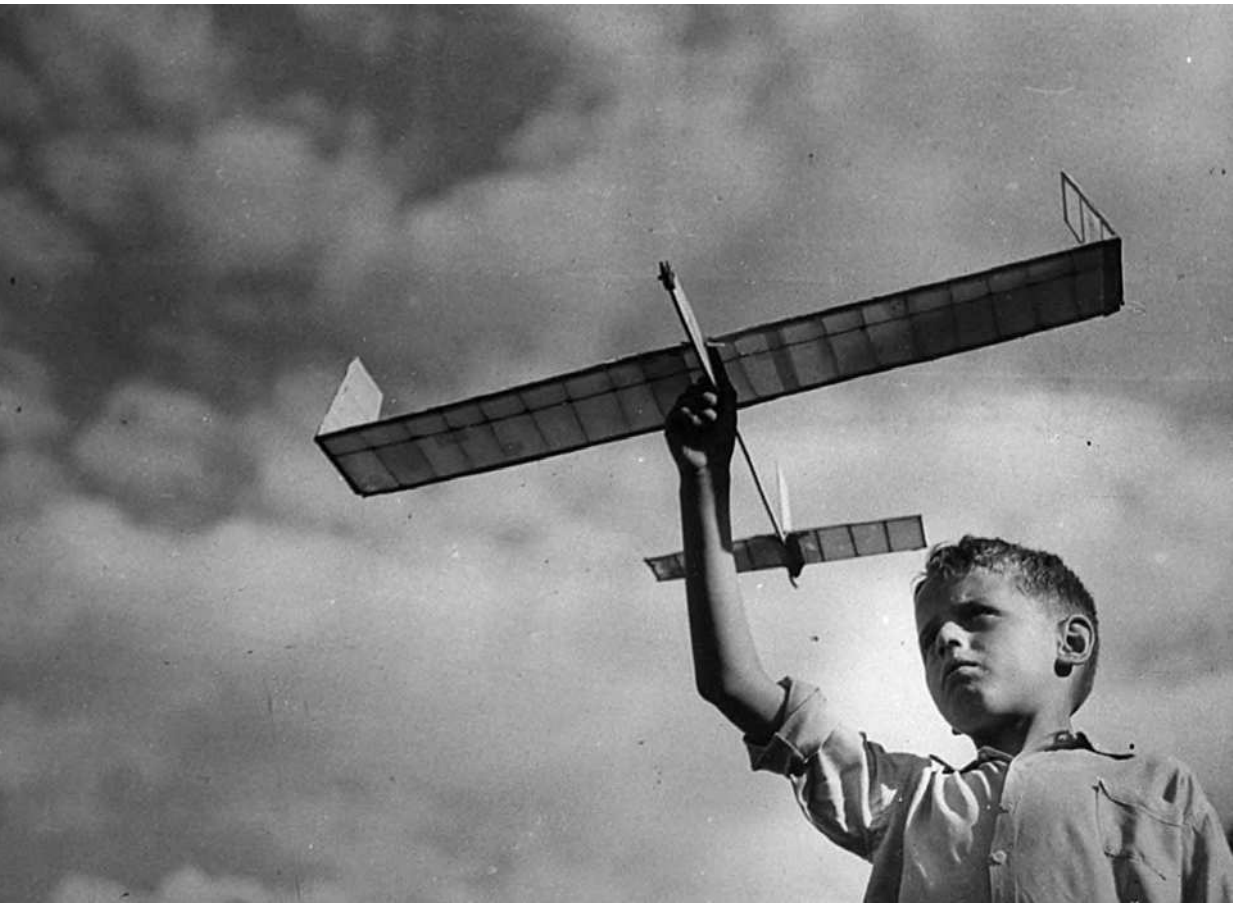
Aircraft modelers, Rijeka, Croatia, 1955
(album no. 1990, Present from the Pioneers of Rijeka)

Aircraft modelers, Zagreb, Croatia, 1960
(album no. 379, Present from the Pioneers of Zagreb)

Aircraft modelers, Begejci, Serbia, 1961
(album no. 1139, Present from the elementary school in Begajci)

Aircraft modelers' Festival, Čačak, Serbia, 1959
(album no. 1218, Present from the Pioneers of Čačak)

Aircraft modelers' Festival, Čačak, Serbia, 1959
(album no. 1218, Present from the Pioneers of Čačak)



Young modeler, Tetovo, Macedonia, 1958
(album br. 985, Present from the Pioneers of Tetovo)

Aircraft modelers, Smederevska Palanka, Serbia, 1961
(album no. 987, Present from the "H. I. Muker" elementary school from Smederevska Palanka)

MARTIN POGAČAR

CHILDHOOD'S END:

What happened to socialist childhood utopia and what can nostalgia do about it?

When does childhood end? What defines adulthood and what is it that separates it from childhood?
Responsibility?
Having children?
A job?
Well, or is it that the dividing line between adult and childhood is in that older people, having exchanged wonder for routine, simply know more? Or do they?
So, what is the role and where is the place of childhood in adult life?
What is the symbolic capital of childhood? (Utopia)
And, finally, what does it mean to live as an adult who left their childhood not only in another time (as it is normally the case) but rather in another country altogether? (Nostalgia)

For someone who was born long ago enough to have caught a glimpse of life in the last years of Yugoslavia, childhood has a bit of a special status. In light of the fact that that same someone was still born too late to have a first-person account of that period, the mind set, the vagaries of the everyday, childhood in 1980s Yugoslavia is radically cast off into another time and space. Still, it is so lingeringly present.

Let's have a look at the issue of childhood from post-Yugoslavian perspective. Let's look through the legacies of World War II, the Yugoslav Wars and the formation of new states in the aftermath of the country's demise. At that we have to take into account the ideological mechanics behind the new socio-political scenography, which attempted to cut off much links to the pre-1991 period. Post-Yugoslav 'transitional' socio-political engineering largely fed on expounding Yugoslav totalitarianism, overall human rights problematic and built its credibility on negative historic referentiality. The time before the onslaught of 'transition' was symbolically, geopolitically and biologically increasingly distanced and de-

nied much legitimacy. This, among other cases of contesting socialist legacy, is apparent for instance in recent devaluation of the 1 May, the International Workers' Day, the legacy of which seems to be increasingly loosing appeal and relevance in post-Yugoslavia. In light of global changes, this is predominantly attributable to the holiday being reframed as the legacy of socialism. As problematic legacy, it is deemed unfit for the time that, paradoxically, is increasingly devaluing the importance of human investment in labour. As children of socialism we were told that work is a value; as adults in post-socialism we can see that workforce is more often than not seen as cost rather than investment.

As I was going to the *Fiery Greetings* evening talk at the end of March 2015, I had an interesting conversation with the taxi driver. My request to take me to the Museum of Yugoslav History immediately caused confusion, which only exacerbated when I told the late-40s driver the address. It all cleared up when I mentioned the House of Flowers and we were speeding down the streets of Belgrade to what used to be known, to the driver as well, as the Museum of 25 May. A bit perplexing, but that's what you end up with when history changes and the past is hastily 'cleaned up'. As soon as I started explaining where I was going, what I do for a living I felt a dam had opened. He went on and on about how his post-socialist dream of a better life had shattered, how he struggles to make ends meet and save a bit to school his kids. He explained how prohibitively expensive life has become and how he dares not think about an unexpected larger expense. Behind the veil of small talk and everyday complaining, this nevertheless revealed a deeper sense of unease and disappointment. Throughout the conversation broken promises, bruised knees, first romances, skiving, running away from home simmered unsaid under the lid of the torrent of words. Far more explicit was the realisation that history should not have been discarded wholesale in exchange for a dystopian future.

It is, then, no wonder that the generations born towards the end of Yugoslav years find that horrid totalitarian state fascinating enough to still want to remember, to collect and re-design artefacts, create videos, listen to the music and, not least and increasingly so, create exhibitions. There must be something terribly wrong with them to not fully embrace the life in the bright future and to refuse to buy into the comparison of the flawed realities of socialism with the unrealisable ideals of market capitalism, trickle down, the mysterious free hand, etc.

But is it at all possible to embrace life when the historical context of one's childhood (and one's country) has been ideologically and politically rendered unbecoming?

And, hold on, is the present we're living in today really the bright future we were dreaming about? The bright future when, yes, the socialist man will live in peace and prosperity, brotherhood and unity, in solidarity with fellow citizens, workers, teachers, farmers, scientists and engineers?

Was this bright future merely untruthful communist propaganda that we, the children of socialism, were fed? Or was it, rather, the European post-war dream? The post-war dream is an important legacy of the Second World War and children, quite clearly, were the first and most ready population to be invested with the idea of a better future. But, as Pink Floyd sang in *The Final Cut*: "Should we shout, should we scream, What happened to the post-war dream? What happened indeed?"

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Childhood is a recurrent topic that at various speeds, degrees and intensities pervades and invades the everyday, ideas, thoughts, feelings and affects, individual and collective, but also media and political discourses, popular culture, subcultures, music, cinema, social media, and, not least, academic research. Looking at the Yugoslav past from the Yugoslav unpremeditated future, looking at socialist and post-socialist periods, it becomes clear that – in the aftermath of the processes that started in the early 1980s and culminated in 1991 when the country disintegrated politically, economically, socially and culturally – the politico-economical changes radically transformed landscapes of institutional, state and non-state interactions.

The seminal event in recent history of post-Yugoslavs, the demise of the state constitutes a temporal and spatial axis in the experiential reality and divides the historical space-time into two realities: socialism and post-socialism. Unlike what this suggests at face value, the cut was not clear-cut, and the post-1991 realities remain decidedly shaped by the more or less contested legacies of Yugoslav socialist period. Key reasons for this lie in the entanglement of the everyday and mediated life. Notably, the mediatisation of life and indeed the digitisation of everything eerily coincide with the collapse of Yugoslavia and Eastern bloc in general. And the role of media is crucial here.

It was the media that decidedly shaped our understanding of World War II and it is the media, this time participatory, democratic (?) and digital that profoundly influence, and let us influence, how the collapse of Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav period are understood. True, the comparison with the World War II is perhaps a

bit stretched, but in terms of mediation it does reveal some interesting aspects. As Keith Lowe shows in his *The Savage Continent, Europe in the Aftermath of World War II*, Europe in 1945 was demolished, physically and symbolically, destroyed on the level of individual and the community, the continent was 'a story of the descent into anarchy', a *chaotica moralis*. This situation was characterised by forced migration, expulsion, mass killings, rape and starvation.

The consequences, clearly, are here to be seen even 70 years later, the ambiguity apparent in rising neo-fascism and epitomised by the refusal to attend the 2015 Moscow celebration of the end of the war by more or less entire EU nomenclature. And, as Ervin Hladnik Milharčič notes, the ambiguity is clearly present in the phenomena such as Italy is celebrating the end of fascism and some people in Slovenia paying respect to Nazi collaborators.

Yet, against all odds, Europe emerged as a continent of opportunity, of welfare state, human rights and prospects of a better future. In different forms and to different extents, a positive or emancipatory construction of the future was a tenet across European post-war politics and cultures, at least declaratively. As such it was built into the curricula, political discourses and ideologies and into the everyday, and symbolically completed by the Nuremberg trials and the start of creating the European union.

Importantly, as the post-war world was increasingly entering the age of mass mediation, the positive legacy of the World War II was built into literature, music and cinema, as the most obvious and also efficient choices. The media contributed enormously to the retouching of the history and legacy of WWII as a good and an emancipatory war, which put forward and celebrated the human, the collective, solidarity, fraternity. This meant radical, and retrospective, adjusting the picture and turning it into a powerful narrative of positive futurism, of progress of humanity, unstoppable technological advances and scientific discoveries. The future was painted bright. One might, however, ask, whether the European post-war myth was fuelled by the war, as much as it was by its aftermath.

But what does this mean for the new post-Yugoslav countries? The demise of Yugoslavia and the ensuing wars likewise were accompanied by ethnic cleansing, bureaucratic genocide, forced migration, incarceration, physical devastation. Trauma hardly abides 20 years after Dayton (which puts into perspective the generally spread idea of the abrupt end of World War II on 9 May 1945) and

continues to permeate post-Yugoslav nations, politics and cultures. It turns out, however, that, as compared to the World War II, the trauma was not reframed in a positive prospect of future. Instead the global realities of encroaching rent capitalism, eroding welfare state, human rights exchanged for security, precarious work, austerity measures, etc., paint a much bleaker future. In this light, the global shifts in cultural and social spheres were aligned by the processes of 'transition' and the rising elites urges to purify, re-nationalise and de-socialistise the past and the future; and uncritically adopt (not adapt) guidelines, advice and instructions of the 'democratic European other'.

And here lies the crux of the problem with the post-socialist condition in general and the post-socialist present of children of socialism: the reinvention and purification of the past necessarily included cutting out, deleting or even annihilating large chunks of 'historical tissue' in exchange for the non- indigenizable or poorly translated 'western' patterns, solutions and traditions. Their uncritical implementation expectedly failed and rendered the present radically disempowered. And far more critically so the future.

On the other hand, it was the advances in the technology of communication and the ensuing mediation of the everyday that prevented the emergence of radical anno zero, Jahre Null, Year Zero. Instead these advances allowed for intensive permeating of post-socialist realities by media sources and content from the now contested period. This largely contributed to severe difficulties or even outright failure of the new regimes to successfully devise and implement a cohesive, all-encompassing and all-pervasive new system that would even remotely be able to offer a viable alternative to the socialist period. In other words, the outlived model of nation building could not be applied to a different historical time and context. Consequently, and despite or perhaps because of blossoming historical revisionism, the collective devotion to the potential of new, post-socialist world order just didn't catch on as expected.

The post-socialist condition, thus, is essentially marked by the crisis of the future, as Berardi suggests. The new elites, caught in subservience to the elusive financial markets and the demands and conditions imposed by the international community have self-castrated their pasts as a pool of values, knowledge, inspiration and even heroism, no matter how problematically mythologised. But the amputation of the past, or rather a very specific portion of it, spliced with flawed invention of a more decent one, utterly generated a society incapacitated to think the future, to create and implement a positive vision of the future.

Recently Slovenian national TV broadcast a documentary *Vrnitev demokracije* (The return of democracy). The title alone begs the question: Which democracy? The democracy of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, or perhaps the democracy of the Habsburg Empire. Such and similar interventions aim to position the collapse of Yugoslavia in 1991 as the way forward. Yet, such attempts render socialist Yugoslav past inadequate, the present crippled and, in the next turn, any alternative to the present condition, i.e. potential future, collectively unimaginable, as Tony Judt remarked. One of the crucial differences afforded by this comparison of dealing with the legacies of war's aftermath (not necessarily of the war itself), is the active problematization and denial of any kind of utopia.

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Where does this position Yugoslav socialist childhood in 2015 perspective? As it turns out, children are a fertile ground for utopia and grand ideals. In late Yugoslav socialism we were dreaming about becoming astronauts, engineers, scientists. In mid-1980s, I was playing computer games on Commodore 64, signing letters at school in support of world peace and was equally shocked by the images of the exploding Challenger and terrified by the invisible radiation after the disaster in Chernobyl.

Looking back to the period from 2015, Yugoslav visions of the future as presented and propagated to the youth are in stark opposition to the post-Yugoslav realities marked by the disillusionment with the present. In effect this is a time when it is clear that the socialist Yugoslav utopia invested into children has gone awfully awry. In the time after the future, in the time of Berardi's Dystopian Kingdom, when the future only exists as a temporal category and no longer a moral one, the question arises of what to do not only about the future, but also about the past.

It seems that the discourse of 'real-dystopianism' – if I may thus call the narrative that takes the 'reality' as-is and responds with 'that's the way it is' to any kind of questioning or opposing it – actively discourages any kind of alternative and, yes, utopian thinking. This provides fertile ground for looking back to the past for answers and inspirations. It gave rise to nostalgia that not necessarily calls for the restoration of the past or the Yugoslav regime, but rather reflectively uses it to comment on the present. Yugonostalgia, thus, is a practice of reclaiming the past and reinstating the coherency of history. It is in a way a struggle to reendow the present, and the past, and the future, with a sense of normalcy.

Childhood and memories in this view prove to be the symbolic and biographical topic that in the post-Yugoslav contexts, decidedly entangled in global crisis and highly volatile local political and social situations, present a link to the lost, off-limits past, intimacy and personal pool of experience. It is difficult not to think about childhood in Arsen Dedić's words: "Maybe we would have gone farther, never to come back, but the chains tied us down so well. Like ships, we were moored to the warm shore of childhood, all our life". ("Možda pošli bismo dalje, da se ne vratimo nikad, ali dobro su nas čuvali ti lanci. Za toplu obalu djetinjstva bili smo vezani ko ćamci, život sav.") It could be that the chain that ties us to the coast is in fact the failed transition, the unresolved and unbecoming past that continually attracts and binds.

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Thinking about the symbolic capital of childhood presents a point to rethink a multi-layered complex of questions regarding the mediatisation of life, politicisation of popular culture and history and the political mobilisation and exploitation of memories. Uses of the past in media, as was the case with World War II, prove the power of media to change how we think about the past and what we think (and know) really happened. Childhood in Yugoslavia, or rather mediated images of it, are similarly being curated and edited in a way to portray childhood as a period and an experientiality where childhood hardship are presented as a romantic addition to climbing trees and playing in the courtyard. Such attempts could be dismissed as retro-utopia that skews the 'real' history. But what is the real history in the time of incessant and instant mediation?

More crucially still, what to make of history if the future has gone dystopic? One answer to this would be that one should seize the opportunity offered by the utopia-driven retrospective (nostalgia) and not turn to the past for answers only, but for questions that were already asked in the past, but then forgotten along with answers. Usually it is children who ask, unendingly, the most irritant questions. Children of socialism have grown up, but they still ask questions. Yet the important thing is what questions will today's children ask about their past and what answers will they dare give to their children.

Franco Berardi, *After the Future*, AK Press, 2011.
Ervin Hladnik Milharčič, 'Živela Italija', *Dnevnik*, 30. april 2015, https://www.dnevnik.si/1042712181/mnenja/kolumne/zivela-italija.
Keith Lowe, *The Savage Continent, Europe in the Aftermath of World War II*, 2012.
Igor Mandić, Mitologija svakidašnjeg života, O. Keršovani, 1976.
Pink Floyd, 'The Postwar Dream', The Final Cut, 1983.

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

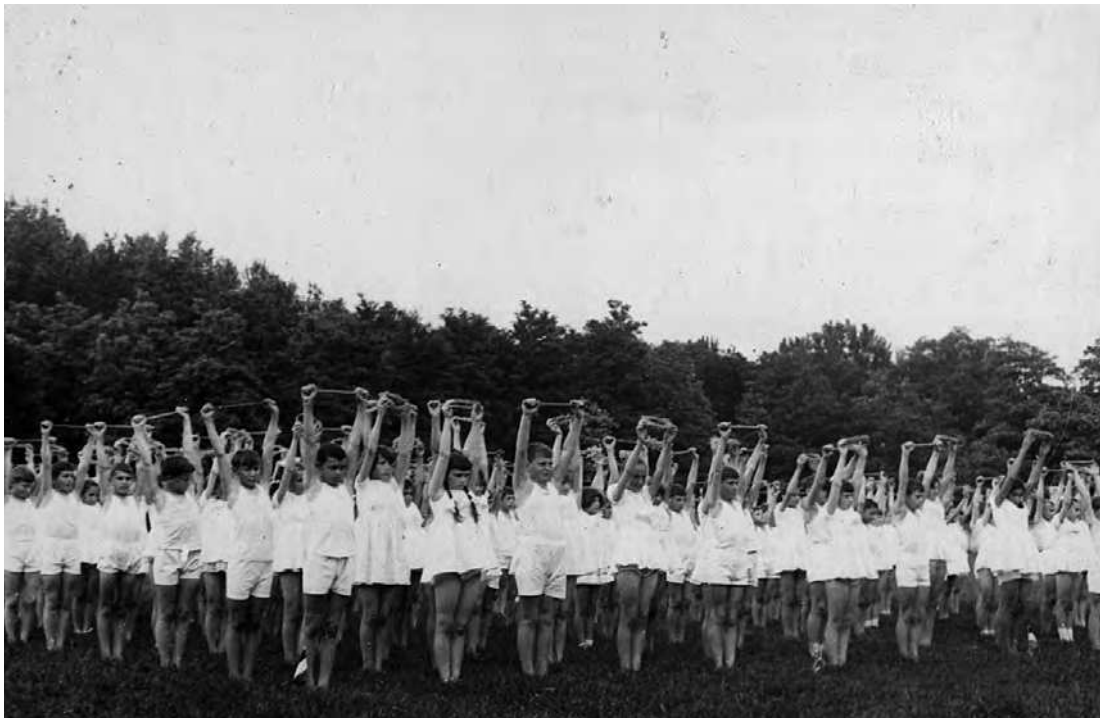
WE ARE THE GENERATION
WORTHY OF THE GREAT HEROIC
FREEDOM-FIGHTERS.

WE ARE YOUNG
AND FULL OF VIGOR.

WE LIVE THE LIFE
OF SPRINGTIME,
HAPPY CHILDHOOD.

IT IS WONDERFUL TO BE YOUNG
IN OUR HOMELAND.

Young gymnasts, Slovenian coast, 1961
(album no. 91, Present from the Youth of Italian ethnic group from the Slovenian coast)



Youth Day Celebration, Srbobran, Serbia, 1968
(album no. 969, Present from the Students of Srbobran, Turija i Nadalj)

Physical education class, Kučevo, Serbia, 1969
(album no. 1141, Present from the Pioneers of Kučevo)

ANA HOFMAN

HAPPY SINGING SOCIALIST CHILD?

We are infantilized. Socialism is infantilized. How should we remember our childhoods?

The picture of the school choir portrays cheerful youngsters in uniforms, with raised heads; widely open eyes and mouths, enthusiastically singing in "one voice." This can be seen as the paradigmatic image of socialist singing child's "collective ideological socialization" through arts and music in Yugoslavia. The main protagonists of this scene should demonstrate devotion to the ideals of revolution and socialism, to Josip Broz Tito as the marshal and president in a particular combination of "merry," "childish" singing form with serious ideological content. Such a combination has been seen as one of the most powerful tools of the state social control of children in the Yugoslav society after the breakup of the country. Participation in the artistic activities and choirs are seen as an "ideological indoctrination" and youth control that happened not just through the formal socialist institutionalized practices (such as Pioneer organization) but also in a more indirect, informal and seductive (yet not less innocent and less dangerous) way. They are embodiment of the official politics of building new social relations, a new "man," "woman," and "child." Choirs have become an epitome of systematic monitoring of childhood.

Yet can we think of socialist childhood beyond state regulatory practices? Which possible childhoods were produced in socialist Yugoslavia? In which ways culture activities help us to think of them and remember them? Can the image of choir as a collective artistic practice challenge the existing accounts and interpretations of socialist childhood? We should discuss about social and cultural construction of childhood away from esentializations and beyond dichotomies state/ individual, socialism/capitalism, or ideology/everyday life.

Choirs are about collectivity, both its representation and production. They act as important practices of shaping childhood as a social and cultural category. Yet choirs are not just about unity and sameness but also about differences – they negotiate between geographical locations, ethnic, gender and class identities while revealing society's contradictions and complexities. It is one of the first moments in schooling when one regularly meets schoolchildren from other grades and other generations. The first time one travels beyond a place of living. Choirs are thus about mobility – social and geographical. The importance of choirs lies in simultaneously disciplining bodies and voices but also gathering children beyond their different cultural, educational or political backgrounds through enjoyment in collective singing as particular social bonding. They also show us what is "missing" in the representational strategies of socialist childhood: the daily practices, experiences, emotions, and sensations.

Choirs are also about "staging" childhood: marching and singing in chorus were seen as the main techniques through which socialist state "stage" childhood in the same way as it staged events from the heroic past in socialism. Staging implies fakeness, a kind of performance that is "unauthentic," "dishonest," "pretending." Did children portrayed on the school choir picture pretend? What was happy socialist childhood?

Post-Yugoslav perspectives often want to convince us that this happiness was just a fake self-performance, an act of making-up gray socialist realities imposed by authoritarian state and party officials. Or even worse – that such "fake pretending" was learned behavior that children internalized. They want to claim that enthusiasm and believe in better future were just echoes of fake reality that happy peasants, happy workers or happy children learned to perform.

To reclaim the "authenticity" of socialist childhood is not a question of past or memory but of the ability to reclaim authenticity of our current neoliberal realities in post-Yugoslav societies: claim that public culture in (particularly late) socialism was mere performance, without real believe in ideals, is a symptom of inability to imagine system or society which produce happiness and enthusiasm today.

Amateurisms and Enthusiasms

Measuring the levels and manners of state social control of children through various institutional practices is dominant approach in discussing childhood in socialist Yugoslavia today. Portraying the socialist institutions and the mass

organization that were to care for children, that "watched over children day and night" as a main regulator of their behavior in every possible context. The field of leisure and artistic activities also aimed at "channeling" spontaneous behavior of children and sending it in the 'right direction.'

Such "paternalistic-state" views neglect socialist modernization as a real emancipatory project. The concept of amateurism (*amaterizam*) was the most important feature in the creation of the new model of artistic activities, as Rudi Supek writes, as a spontaneous collective expression and a basic necessity of each individual subject in the aspiration to be part of the 'wider social community' (Supek 1974: 8, 9). It was conceptualized as the shared cultural activity with voluntary character and a symbol of the new enthusiasm: "Amateurism connected volition and creativity with the new ideology and the true belief in a better future" (Đorđević 1997: 230). On the ground, such concept was often applied controversially and changed in accordance with the overall socio-economic transformations of Yugoslavia. Yet the dedication to the "cultural development" enabled creating a strong cultural infrastructure: culture houses and centers, theaters, orchestras, music schools and libraries. Artistic activities for children were stimulated (children's literature, children's movies), and children by themselves were encouraged to engage in different art forms. Establishing music schools and other music-related institutions in both cities and villages proved that state's aspiration to invest in the proper upbringing of children as the future of the society was not just a declarative goal. Particularly in rural areas establishing of cultural infrastructure proved to bring most visible impact in the field of culture and artistic activities. Yet amateurism is not just about building infrastructure and access to the sources; it is deeply (self) emancipational project.

Leisure – a key moment of emancipation

Singing in the choir is not just improving of singers' musical skills, learning about music and broadening her musical subjectivities but also part of personal emancipation. Collective music making in choir increases the individual's capacities to act and to practice co-operation, commons, solidarity, comradeship. So choir is not just about institutional activity; it is also about a leisure activities.

State-organized leisure activities in socialist Yugoslavia are proclaimed as one of the main points of the repression by socialist state. Model "8 hours of work/8 hours of culture /8 hours of rest" is seen as state colonizing of "private sphere" of an individual. During collective summer vacations or excursions, scouts' organizations or summer camps, the organization of time and activities children

had to sing anthem every morning, raising flag or compete in various fields. If we look from another point of view on the social contexts and structures that set the limits in which a variety of childhoods were constructed and its expectation were generated, not just work but also leisure is the key points of emancipation in socialism. Because of that, a "care" of leisure time is a key moment in thinking about potentialities of experiences of socialist childhood today.

If neoliberalism brought about changing working conditions, patterns and rights, precarisation, (self)exploitation, about work-life misbalance, what changes it brought in the field of leisure? Predominant focus on labour in discussions of neoliberal capitalism put in the shadow another important issue – leisure, which is in neoliberalism colonized by erasing the line between work and leisure. In socialism, leisure is the space of creating new paradigm, concepts and practices and a turning point of thinking. In that way, socialist concept "cultured leisure time" can be seen as a counter response to current absence of "care" of leisure in the culture production of capitalist corporative state. Based on privatized and deeply individualized and consumerist patterns, recalling socialist amateurism and "care" of leisure can be used as a new polygon of (self)emancipation and practicing of engaged stance, self-organization, co-operation and collective decision-making and solidarity. In post-Yugoslav context, the concept of amateurism as an emancipatory project died out and its legacy is necessary to be revitalized, particularly when considering present and future childhoods.

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

ILDIKO ERDEI

THE CHOIR

I was convinced that the school choir performance, which was the first thing that occurred to me regarding the topic of "representative portrait of childhood in the socialist Yugoslavia", took place in 1980, just before Tito died. It had to be that way, I thought to myself. Otherwise, why would we, as the photograph shows, dressed the way we were (blue skirts and trousers, t-shirts in blue, white and red) depict the Yugoslav flag, turning our bodies and clothes into a recognizable and powerful ideological symbol, in a time that I mostly remember for comic books, popular music and other things that young people usually find interest in.

My Yugoslav childhood, as I remember it, was largely free of any ideological impact. I started going to school and enrolled in the Pioneers' organization in 1972, at a time when the project of "happy socialist childhood" was largely normalized, and I grew up during the decade when "consumerist socialism" was at its peak. The contents of popular culture already pervaded the day-to-day life, shaping the children's world more and more. In addition to magazines, books, films and TV series coming from the European West and America, there was also a growing local production of popular culture and other stuff for children. Surely, my analytical Self spoke out, this performing of symbols of ideological and political allegiance was a result of a delicate historical moment – it must have been March or April (municipal contests, as qualifications for performing on higher level, were usually held at that time of year) and the Leader's body was slowly withering away at the Clinical Center in Ljubljana, so our staged music performance could be understood as one of many acts of symbolical support, which swarmed the public over the course of the following days, weeks and months.

In this explanation I somehow managed to "smuggle in" a memory I have of that occasion, when at the last moment we made some changes in the set list that we had been rehearsing for a long time, and instead of a polyphonic composition which was undoubtedly more complex to perform and therefore would have more impressed the jury, our teacher and conductor, Dragica Veljković,

decided that we were to sing in two voices Milutin Popović Zahar's song "Yugoslavia", which was very popular at the time. This simple tune, which had a folklike pitch, underlined by the accompanying sound of accordion and tambourine, was starkly different from the usual choir setlists, and it inevitably reduced our chances to achieve high ranking and to go through qualifications. So why would we do such a thing, unless there was something more important to it, a vital symbol or value that stood out of the usual order, which had to be reinvigorated and strengthened symbolically? Alexei Jurchak describes these fundamental elements of ideological discourse as meta-symbols, whose development and embodiment, as well as their performative enactment, forms the basis of societal order. Tito's cult of personality is one of the meta-symbols of the ideology of Yugoslav socialism, so it is quite logical that in the moments of crisis (such as Tito's illness), his cult would be consolidated in a performative way, even if it took place in a period of advanced cultural liberalization in his country, such was the conclusion I finally reached concerning my initial dilemma and the discrepancy between the memory of personal history and the memory of collective life and its public events. Or is it really so?

When I found the photograph, and started to examine more closely the moment in time immortalized on it, which until then I had only thought of and scrutinized the memories I had of it, I got surprised. Comparing several photographs which showed our choir's performances on municipal festivals, I quickly realized that the photograph of the choir-flag dated from an earlier period, from the early stages of "higher grades" of my elementary school, and that it was taken sometime in spring 1977. So the idea of intensive evocation of ideological symbols in the moments of crisis went down the drain. The second photograph showing me with the tambourine, singing in the choir accompanied by accordion, was taken in 1980, and most probably it does show us singing Zahar's "Yugoslavia"; however, we were dressed in plain, navy-blue and white clothes (without pioneer scarves), not an unusual way to get dressed for such formal occasion. The mental image I initially had of that event evidently exemplified "the work of memory", which shaped the past in accordance with mnemonic limitations and subsequent insights and experiences, erasing some parts of it, rewriting and amalgamating others, in a singular imaginary picture of the world as it once was and myself in it. However, the factuality of this and some other photographs that I had a chance to see in the meantime, shows that the ideological discourse was very much alive in the 1970s, even until the mid 1980s, and that it influenced youth cultural public events, such as school performances, contests, meetings, which on the face of it had nothing to do with ideology. On the other

hand, a short archeological research into the musical history that I undertook in my parents' apartment showed me what music we used to listen at that time and what was available on the Yugoslav market, because the same year I got several record singles for my birthday, including songs by the Rolling Stones, the Beatles, Bob Dylan, and the winner song from the Eurovision contest.

Obviously, the growing-up of my generation, the last Yugoslav generation, was largely in harmony with the flows of Western culture, although it did differ from it to a certain extent. It is characteristic of the period of childhood and youth in the socialist Yugoslavia that throughout the entire socialist period there was always a two-fold identification process going on. Although its character did change in the course of several decades of its existence, the pioneers' organization never ceased to exist and the enrollment ritual was never abandoned since the end of the World War II until 1989. Even though it underwent significant transformation over decades, at least it never lost the strength of its formal framework in which children were socialized. At the same time, the popular culture exercised significant and unquestionable influence on the growing-up of Yugoslav generations. Much has been written about each of these two spheres of identification – one that was public, openly ideological, formal, authoritarian, institutional, ritual, and the other related to the private, popular, informal, hedonistic, non-institutional, non-structural. The thing that has been slipping our attention, the thing that was faulty in my reasoning about the photograph mentioned above, is how to relate and to connect these two spheres.

As pointed out by Alexei Jurchak in his analysis of cultural practices of the members of the last Soviet generation, the creation of new meanings and gradual social transformation are not solely the result of the adoption of diverse elements of the Western culture, which foster the creation of alternative forms of practice, thinking and another value system, which eventually prevails. Jurchak (2005)[1] analyzes the way new values are created within the existing institutions and practices of the socialist society. He speaks of performative shift, which made authoritarian discourse – made up of speech, phrases, images, scenes, rituals, ordinary routines of mass organizations – "deterritorialized", and rendered the production of signifying rhetoric and practices routine, halfhearted enterprise, which consequently undermined the signified, allowing new meanings to be created within the official institutions. This means that the actors are to be seen not as victims of an ideology or its helpless objects, nor as its radical opponents (dissidents), nor as its zealous protagonists (activists), but rather as persons who were mostly dedicated to creating a "normal life" and

its practicing, and who took different stands in regard to the ideology and the ethics of socialism. Jurchak's insights, it seems to me, provide an adequate description of my personal experience, and maybe even collective experience of the members of the last Yugoslav generation, born between 1960 and 1970, who spent their formative years during the late 1970s and 1980s, in the period of late socialism, on the eve of and immediately after the death of Josip Broz Tito, who was a significant political figure and one of the most important signifiers in the Yugoslav authoritarian discourse. During this period, with even more intensity than during the previous one, child subjectivity was also shaped within a number of collective practices at schools and school rituals, within a network of diverse influences exercised by the family, age-peers, media, music, film, which dominated the private life, and within spaces that crossed the boundaries between the private and the public. In other words, the children and the youth for the most part routinely participated in the performative acts of the reproduction of the social order, which did not necessarily mean that they were indoctrinated or manipulated, unaware of the ideological workings. Moreover, in particular during the 1980s, there were so many cases where there was evident critical stance on such ideological discourse, which in some cases, such as jokes, had more subtle forms, while in others, such as satire, aphorisms and youth subculture, it had overtly ironical forms. The influences stemming from official and unofficial discourses intertwined, complemented, expanded and confirmed each other, yet they could also differ, diverge, contest and even oppose one another, while gaps (as time went by, they were becoming more frequent) that opened up between performative reproduction of the order and real predilections of young generations provided space for new values and new meanings to be created, often within the existing frameworks, yet exceeding them and "re-territorializing" the emerging culture, forms of sociability, relations, solidarity.

It is interesting to examine the way children lived their lives within institutions, including the Pioneers' organization, turning to some other contents that were non-ideological or very vaguely ideological, and how the institutions were transformed through these contents, and perhaps even more important, how meanings and practices were created out of the normative framework of the given ideological order. A good example of this can be found in pioneers' homes which were in fact small children cultural centers, and that is what they simply turned into once the socialism crumbled. In the Pioneers' Home in Pančevo, where I used to go to during my primary school, in the late 1970s and during the 1980s, there was a Pioneer Opera Studio. It was a unique institution in Yu-

goslavia at that time, where we rehearsed and performed operas for children by famous composers, including *The Little Sweep* by Benjamin Britten. At the same time, pioneer excursions and courses for pioneer instructors were organized at the same place. Furthermore, the existing infrastructure and institutional network of pioneers' homes and pioneer events were used to organize visits and performances. This provided significant experience to the performers, and subsequently enabled many people from this musical company to go on with professional engagement in music later in life. Youth houses, youth papers, youth theaters, amateur rock band competitions, even Marxism study groups in some schools with younger and more progressive teachers – all of these are examples of places and institutions that were part of the system and which existed thanks to the system, but over time also provided frameworks and driving forces for the generation of new meanings, new societal forms that exceeded the existing order.

Instead of the idea that one of these contiguous and overlapping realities had to be false, and instead of interpreting socialism in binary categories characteristic of the Cold War epistemology – (uncritically) believing in the ideology of Yugoslav socialism or refuting it entirely, either in public or in private – why not consider, as proposed by Jurchak, the possibility that performative preservation of order was synchronous with its gradual transformation through new contents and meanings generated in the space that simultaneously existed both within the structured order and out of it? Perhaps then it would be easier for us to understand why, not unlike in the Soviet Union, the collapse of socialism in Yugoslavia came seemingly out of the blue, and yet no one was too surprised. Such a view could bring heterogeneity into the conceptualization of socialism, provide a perspective less parochial and essentialist, and instead of dwelling on the exoticization of this order, focus on comparative investigation of diverse forms of modernity in the world in the second half of the 20th century. Last but not least, judging by the example I gave at the beginning of this essay, it could facilitate connections between personal memories and the social history of this period.

1 Alexei Jurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More*, Princeton University Press, 2005.

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

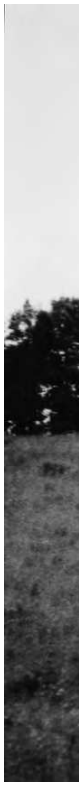
SAŠA KARALIĆ

THE SQUARE

The project *Square* begins with the rediscovery of a black and white photograph from 1981 showing a group of people gathered on the hill around big white letters "Tito". The photograph was made with my first photo camera, a rudimentary Zenit, and for years it was kept in my family album. I'm also on it as 11 year-old participant of a community voluntary project. The project of building the landmark "Tito" was initiated by the youth organisation of Ivanjska, a village in the northwest Bosnia, and its aim was to honour the then recently deceased president Josip Broz Tito. It was made out of stones painted in white on the steep side of the hill Kik and, for its position and size, it was visible from a big distance. The letters "Tito" were later framed with a five-pointed star.

Community actions like this one were common in the former Yugoslavia, especially in the early 1980s, just after Tito's death. Landmarks were appearing everywhere ("88 trees for Tito" were particularly popular) as an expression of loyalty to the *socialistic path* - partly out of collective habits, partly out of fear from the uncertain future without Tito. The landmark on the hill Kik was unique since it was initiated not by the government but a small group of young people who honestly believed in the ideas of socialism and collectiveness – participation was voluntary and the costs were covered by inhabitants of the surrounding villages. The landmark was regularly painted and maintained until the end of 1980s when it lost its social and political function and slowly got overgrown with bushes and trees.

In July 2012, 31 years after the first landmark was created, I initiated a project on the same location. The land on the hill was cleared and stones of the old landmark were found, dug out and used for the construction of another sign. I proposed a new sign – a simple form of square - as a political sign with no predefined ideological agenda. Its function is to be determined by those who build it. Again, the participation in the project was voluntary. People who answered the call were now middle-aged participants of the first project, people of the older generation and a small group of youngsters. During three hot days of July, the hill was cleared and a 30x30 meters sign was constructed. The process of the construction was documented and turned into a short documentary film



Square. Many people from the surrounding villages attended the inauguration of the square in July 2012 and the screening of the documentary in August 2013. By reconfiguring symbols and reaffirming collective work, the project *Square* touches upon the current question of political self-organisation. The memory of collectiveness as it once was – clearly defined by socialist ideological framework – served as a base for the project but not as its aim: the open form of the square is an invitation for new forms of political thinking. Even though the old landmark stands both physically and symbolically in the foundation of the new sign, it doesn't define it politically – the square is conceived as an open political space, the space for politics that is yet to be collectively activated. This is the biggest challenge of the project: the political self-organisation is one of the most demanding questions in the current climate of ideological vacuum and political disillusion in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The discussions that participants engaged in during the construction of the square touched upon nationalism and nostalgia ("The square should be Serbian but it should respect the partisan tradition"), optimism and resignation ("The square will unite people but nowadays nobody wants to work for free") and the ever-present problem of identity and belonging ("This is our sign but we don't want to offend the others with it") – the discussions showed the current political state of mind and marked the limits of collective political engagement. The optimism present in the collective work was confronted with a more complicated process of formulating an independent political discourse. The new symbol was not offered as a solution but as an outlined empty space in which everything is yet to happen – through its simplicity and fragility (the square can be quickly and easily taken apart), it invites future revisions and reconfigurations.

Three years after its construction, the square is still in its place – people paint and maintain it regularly. The initial idea to inscribe the Serbian national symbols in it was later replaced with the idea to construct big letters that spelled Kik, the name of the hill on which the sign stands. The location became a gathering place – there are tables and benches above the sign together with a 7 meters high flagpole with a large flag fluttering on top of it. There is even a Facebook page "Kik" and on Google Earth one can clearly see the strange presence of the sign in the mountain range. The costs for the maintenance of the location are covered through individual contributions while the registration of a citizens' association is on its way. For now, the square exists through the collective work and investment and its future depends on its social functionality and usefulness.

IRENA LAGATOR PEJOVIĆ

FREEDOM SECURITY PROGRESS

The act of putting the words freedom, security and progress in the title of this work, the words that the work makes visible on the photographs showing the names of factories and corporations in public ownership in the socialist Yugoslavia, constitutes a critical and poetical act which aims to shed light on both the universal dimension of human activities and presence and their particular and local instantiations.

Today, when we witness growing insecurity, destabilization of many aspects of freedom, and a rising number of humanitarian crises and natural disasters around the world, the question of *freedom* can be thought about from various historical and cultural, global and regional perspectives. If we talk about the region of socialist Yugoslavia, thematization of the question of freedom is manifest in the stance taken on the events and circumstances that began developing back in the time of student protests in 1968, which was a planetary phenomenon, when freedom of expression, thought, conviction had to be regained once again, which is what we are fighting for, in a new way, at this present moment, as well as on the events which followed after 1989, when, contrary to the notion of freedom apparently flourishing in the rest of the world after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall, freedom in the territory of the SFRY started to be modified to such an extent that it became, once more, unfulfilled longing, hope and a dream.

On the other hand, *security* as a process and a feeling is one of those aspects of reality that is slowly disappearing on the global scale right before our eyes. However, compared to the Yugoslav region and considered from the perspective of an eyewitness of a succession of several forms of social system, the per-

manence of the security has been steadily reducing, and now it remains to be one of general social goals and aspirations and unavoidable day-to-day topics.

Progress, as an expected state of things to be attained or an aspiration to be fulfilled, is nowadays mostly perceived as something related to individual ambitions, disciplines or professions, contrary to the way this notion was understood in the socialist Yugoslavia and, although we are witnessing the appearance of global trends and the inclusiveness of cultures, nothing is different in the scope of this new apprehension and creation of reality as compared to the question of progress in general.

What is different now with regard to the language, the system or the society in the SFRY is the fact that we can no longer talk of freedom, security or progress as something common, or as processes that concern the majority, the collective, the community. The scope in which these notions, processes or experiences are applied, sustained or lived through is presently reduced to personal, individual needs, feelings or goals.

The decision to use personal archive for this work, in addition to the photographs which show the names of factories and corporations that are public property, and those from the archive of the Museum of Yugoslav History, arose from memories of the time when believing in the accomplishment of *freedom*, *security* and *progress*, and the spreading of the idea of togetherness was shared by both the old and the young generations. Photographs from the personal archive are here meant to serve as documents of one's physical presence, i.e. participation in the Gatherings of Brotherhood and Unity in 1981, and collective visits paid to the monuments to the victims of the World War II, as well as real experience of a time that is, from the present-day dystopian perspective, perceived of as utopia.

Thus, horizontal use of the *image* activates the questions of ephemerality and memory, turns into space-time and the carrier of a constructed reality shaped by the object of desire: freedom, security, progress.

Through dichotomies between personal and communal, individual and social, local and global, the work *Freedom Security Progress* aims to explain the paradox of "risk society" in which we are living. Namely, just like the society created in the socialist Yugoslavia in the name of freedom, security and progress not only failed to make them sustainable, but rather disappeared itself, in the pres-

ent-day world of global market capital, financial crises and climate changes on global scale, the same questions of freedom, security and progress are changing the way in which we think about the contemporary society, and it doesn't seem that they have been successfully established or realized on the personal, individual or local level, as insisted upon, while to certain extant they even acquire completely new or unknown dimensions.

If the need for security now pervades our freedoms, while the need for progress overrides both, perhaps it is art that constitutes the sphere in which their reconfiguration and different semantic contextualization can serve to create responsible participation in the production of reality, the "here and now" of the freedom, security and progress.

MLADEN MILJANOVIĆ

LIGHTNESS OF MEMORY AND WEIGHT OF EXPERIENCE

(Photographs from the archive of the *Museum of Yugoslav History* and artist's personal archive)

— The work is conceived as an installation with the selection of 112 black and white photographs from the archive of photographic albums that children from all around Yugoslavia were sending to president Tito.

— On the opposite wall from the photographs from the Museum's archive positioned is a color photograph 2x2 m large from the artist's personal archive featuring a group portrait taken during his childhood in socialism.

— The black granite panel leans onto the printed color photograph. Dimensions of the panel are 55x180x3 cm and its weight 91kg, the same as the artists' current weight.

— A multitude of the group portraits from the Museum's archive makes a parallel to the portrait from the private archive as an equivalent of collective and the personal memory.

— In her novel *Patterns of the Childhood* Christa Wolf wrote: "Past is easier to invent than to remember". This sentence could also be expressed in a way that the past is more difficult to bear as a fact than it is to remember!

Puppet Theatre Little Red Riding Hood: "We can not be seen but can be heared"
(from the album no. 1241, Present from the little patients with bone TB from Rijeka, Croatia, 1957)

WHAT DO YOU ASK AND WHEN NOBODY ASKS?

(Bed-made theatre stories)

*What do you ask and when nobody asks?**, poetry book about the childhood in Yugoslavia was written back in 2000. It was 15 years ago, we were far away from the divided and ruined country, isolated in a decadent baroque style winter castle of the Academy Schloss Solitude situated in the woods on the outskirts of Stuttgart. Music was composed** for some of the poems and they were performed by *Horkeškart* choir in schools, villages and cities around the (ex-YU) region.

In addition to those marks of our Yugoslav socialist childhood we turned into poems, we collected childhood marks of our friends*** from all around the country, who were growing up at the same time. Their stories are presented as miniature stages of potential "bed theaters"****, as mini sketches for some future scenes of some future forms. The rest of the stories we still collect will be presented some other time.

For a new chance of the new Yugoslavia in the new socialism!
škart group, Belgrade, February 2015

* the first samizdat-samodat edition was published by Remont gallery in 2005
** Radivoje Rašković – Raša (Group as such)
*** Dušica Parezanović, Sabina Sabolović, Nataša Zavolovšek, Zagorka Aksentijević, Ivana Bogićević, Ivana Momčilović, Neli-Kristin Todorović, Davor Mišković, Marina Gava, Sanja Stamenković.
**** see the photograph of the children's hospital room, "planted" by Ana Adamović, which served as an inspiration


BOLNIC
TATA
VIDI, KA
I JA SAM
LETOVANJ
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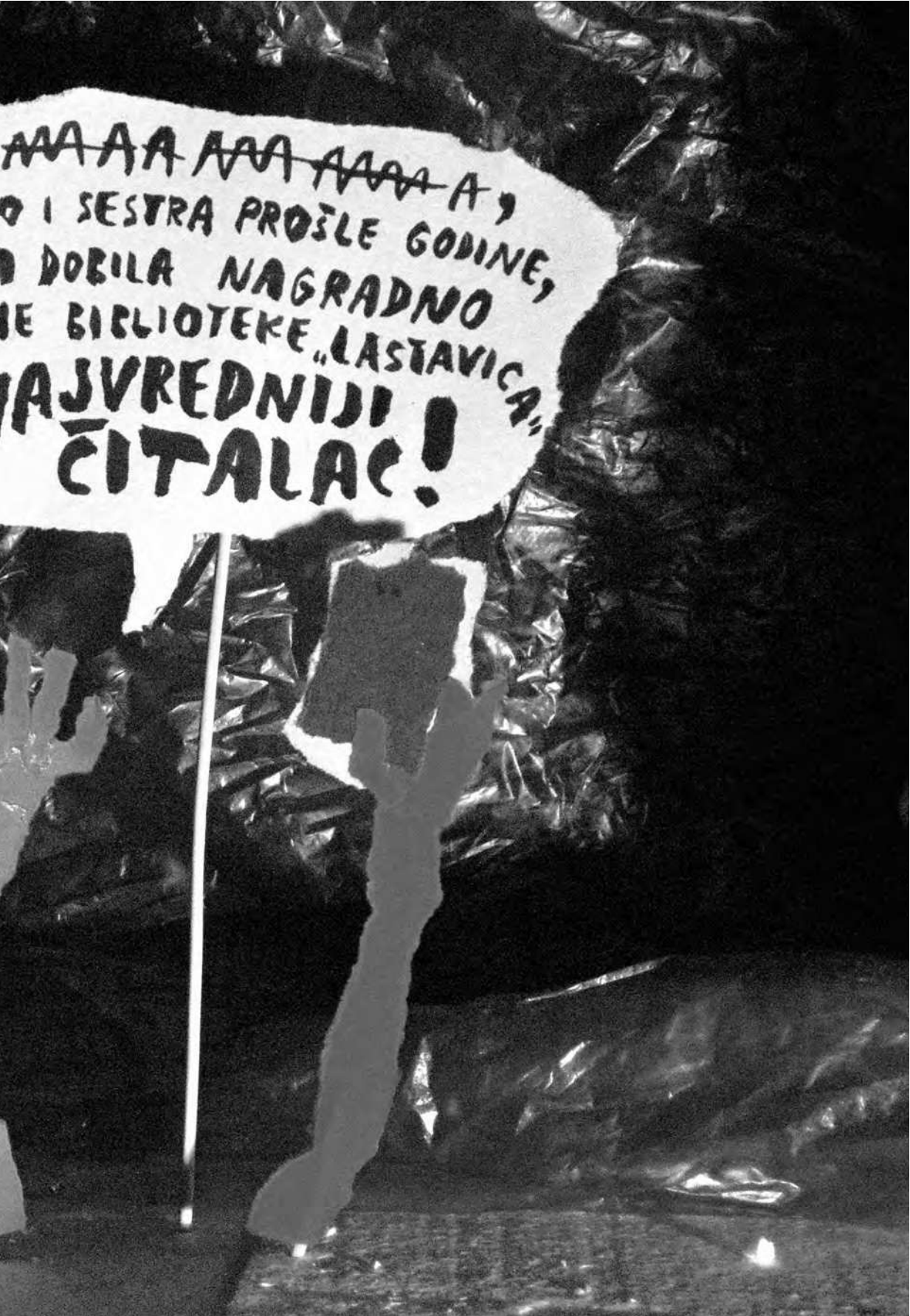
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O I SESTRA PROŠLE GODINE,
DOBILA NAGRADNO
IE BIBLIOTEKE „LASTAVICA"
NAJVREDNIJI
ČITALAC!

MILICA PEKIĆ, BRANISLAV DIMITRIJEVIĆ AND STEVAN VUKOVIĆ

Transcript of the panel discussion held on 9th April 2015, as part of the exhibition *Fiery Greetings* at the Museum of Yugoslav History

Milica Pekić: For some time now, in art practice it is not uncommon to turn to research of archives, and subsequently to incorporate archival pictures into the structure of artworks. Recently, it is often a picture which makes direct reference to the times of socialist Yugoslavia. It might be interesting now to focus on that phenomenon.

Branislav Dimitrijević: There is a number of issues which might appear interesting. I find it interesting to see the way – and this exhibition would then fall under that history – the way that history of interest for Yugoslavia developed in the sphere of contemporary art, and the way contemporary art actually became one of the platforms for research on socialist Yugoslavia. The whole story about archives in contemporary art is in fact part of what is called "artistic research", term which started to be used in the past twenty years or so, term that our academic circles use in utterly inaccurate way. Artistic research is a form of non-disciplinary research, research that can establish a specific relation, but it is really not subject to any existing scientific methodology applied in social sciences such as sociology, history and the like. In my opinion, the use of archives is a byproduct of such work.

How did it come to pass in case of Yugoslavia? That country is gone for 25 years now, and from the moment when it disappeared, Yugoslavia became a stage in history that artists came to be engrossed in. I would distinguish perhaps three stages in these studies that might be symptomatic. The first stage in studies on Yugoslavia, which took place in the 1990s, the way that artists of that period dealt with Yugoslavia, was a stage in which Yugoslavia was actually treated as a ruin. What remained of Yugoslavia were some sort of material artifacts, the kind that can be found on a flea-market, if I may say so, which the artists either incorporated into their works or displayed them in some other way as ready-mades, like Mare Kovačić did in Slovenia, or Dragan Srdić and Dragan Papić in Serbia, in their own way. Or, for that matter, Pedja Nešković, whose

work on flea-markets made him already conversant with such approach. So, dealing with Yugoslavia in the 1990s meant dealing with ruins, with rarities of socialism, so to say, which went in parallel with some notion of Disneyfication of socialism, which was in many countries carried out as a cultural process in the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall, which was a time when museums opened that in a similar vein examined communism as a ruin. Today many of these museums are decaying.

The second stage is the one when artists discover the emancipatory potential of Yugoslavia, when they actually discover a potential within that sphere to explore certain events from socialism, both in terms of its contents and its form, which can enable us to perceive the Yugoslav project and all the aspects of the Yugoslav project as something contingent which can have some possible effect upon us. For instance, if we want to single out several artists who dealt with Yugoslavia in the late 1990s, it is impossible not to mention Milica Tomić, as well as Marko Lulić. In some of her works from the late 1990s, Milica Tomić referred to the moments that relate the revolutionary sequence to the social circumstances which testify to the specific place Yugoslavia had and its specific role which could become a subject matter of contemporary studies. Or, for that matter, Marko Lulić's examining of socialist modernism, such as his exhibition at the Salon of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade, held back in 2001, entitled *Modernity in YU*. That was a very interesting exhibition because it opened a space that many people are now engaged in, that is, the significance of monumental plasticism that essentially showed certain potential in the form itself and the theorizing of that form. Or in that respect, David Maljković, the artist who first took up specific formal exploration of the socialist and modernist legacy, and he was followed by many others. Or the Škart collective which, dealing with the topics regarding Yugoslav socialism, found its emancipatory aspects that are now easily identifiable and can be used as specific tools in social struggle.

And, finally, there is this third stage, so to say, the third generation, which I would call the "picture generation", to quote Douglas Crimp, who used this term to denote the post-conceptual artists from the 1980s. That generation is fascinated with the possibility to discover things that are in some way unknown or hidden, things that are not part of dominant discourses, and to do it, precisely as this exhibition does, through research of archives, primarily pictures. I will give you a rather vulgar and materialist reason why that generation deals with childhood – I think it is the generation that experienced Yugoslavia precisely at that given time, I think it is the generation whose memories of Yugoslavia are inseparably connected with the pioneer experience, they are connected with an ambivalent time of childhood in socialism, and endeavors are made to give

adequate form to that time. By means of these images, attempts are made to find some "objective" picture of ideological symptoms of that time. I think perhaps now is the time to enter the fourth stage, so when we talk about research, we should be talking about that sort of mental research. I believe that now we can focus our attention more on the exploration of Yugoslav thinking.

Recently I read Borislav Mikulić's latest book which is a collection of texts mostly dealing with the Praxis school, which affirm the historical significance of this philosophical school while at the same time looking at it with a critical eye. In this book, he claims something which is true indeed, namely that everyone knows about the Praxis, everyone heard about it, everyone knows that its philosophy had a role to play, but it all ends there. So when we see books about Yugoslavia, for example, Igor Duda's book about the consumerist society in SFRY, all the authors will acknowledge the Praxis' existence, but no one will dig deeper, although there are facts which could be very useful for us to think through certain contemporary repercussions of the collapse of humanist socialism. Instead of Yugoslavia that casts its spell through which we look at a vast number of pictures, it is Yugoslavia that is a place where certain intellectual concepts are generated, which of course is not unlike the procedure in the conceptual art. That is actually the way to treat the thinking which was constitutive in the Yugoslav phenomena. For instance, the exhibition *Political Practices of the Yugoslav Art*, which was curated at this Museum by Jelena Vesić together with the WHW, provides one example of such exploration, and now even art practices resort to seemingly marginal practices, yet it is precisely through these practices that a given mode of thinking is revealed.

In my opinion, there is a considerable potential in it: regardless of the effects that any of the above stages in the studies on Yugoslavia may have had in arts, the sphere of contemporary art is one of the most prospering spheres that deal with Yugoslavia. And that is, in my opinion, the essential value of this exhibition and of the work carried out by this Museum. Because we are in a situation when this topic is practically neglected by academic institutions, so it is these social groups, this Museum, the artists, who perform the function of self-education, and the point is that Yugoslavia is still a space where we have a lot of room to educate ourselves further.

Therefore, regardless of many things that we believe we know well, things that we believe we have already experienced, things that we believe have become run-of-the-mill, Yugoslavia still has an incredible potential to tell us more about the present. I think that is of major importance, since contemporary art should always speak primarily about the present, even if it deals with archives, because dealing with archives is not for the sake of past, it should rather serve to cope with situations and problems we face but cannot handle in our own

lives, and to tackle a certain scarcity of ideas in the political sphere, so contemporary art does provide a space for such exploration.

Milica Pekić: I think that it is important here to mention the process of digitalization of archives, which makes the files easily accessible, in fact it raises a number of questions, as is the case of the exhibition *Fiery Greetings*. I believe this exhibition is an example of a certain kind of exploration of the picture of childhood, whose aim is to understand the process of construction of the ideal social body, the body of the socialist Yugoslavia as an ideal society, which is constructed through the education and schooling system, that is, the principles of education and schooling that Yugoslavia tried to implement through its diverse activities on its agenda. Moreover, questions are raised about the way that socialist mankind is to be created, and what were the norms that served as the foundation for the education of that future mankind, the education of the generation that would bring forth that modernizing socialist project. I think that in such context research into the photo albums from the Museum's collection is of vital importance, and that it raises a vast number of issues. It is important to bear in mind that this is a case of representative picture, a picture that represented institutions of that system before the supreme authority, the father of the nation. The albums that were the subject matter of the research presented at this exhibition are part of the collection of gifts given to Tito during his lifetime, which, as a matter of fact, shed light on the model of the ideal picture within which ideal representation of childhood is constructed.

Stevan Vuković: Given that Branko already gave a periodization of artistic research into the socialist Yugoslavia's past, and mentioned some positive examples, in the shape of works of art, I would assume the role of the devil's advocate and focus on negative aspects such research might have. Namely, what characterizes many works dealing with the former Yugoslavia, in the first place works made by artists who turn to Yugoslavia in an intimate and nostalgic way, is the fact that they are constituted based on memories of backsliding childhood that has been wiped out. It is uncertain whether that idealization was only and exclusively connected with the childhood as a protected period in life, and if it was in touch with objective social conditions of life in that country and the ways that the existing social structure at that time enabled the citizens of SFRY to have some kind of emancipatory pro-active attitude.

In recent years we are witnessing a wave of video and movie projects in a genre that, in analogy with *sexploitation* and *blacksploitation* movies, could be labeled *yugosploitation*. In a denotative sense, that points to the exploitation

of emotionally-charged and highly professional instances of representations of collective rituals in the former Yugoslavia, while a present lack of social cohesion is fetishistically compensated for by images of extreme social cohesion from past times. The biggest trouble with such approach lies in the fact that the recovered images are treated as documents, whereas in fact they are highly stylized and choreographically staged events which were orchestrated, just like the footage of such events, by people who were exceptionally competent professionals. The reality on those images, which were constructed on several levels, is taken for granted as a natural reality which disappeared because there were some conflicts that were incited from abroad and which were purportedly unrelated to the antagonisms existing within the society itself with all the incidents which led to its collapse. So there is the problem of "naturalistic fallacy" in the treatment of images, because the material from the archives at the Radio Television of Serbia or taken from blockbuster movies made to fit the models of American war epics is taken as the reality of the former Yugoslavia. However, what is portrayed by such material is a product of cultural industry, on the one hand, and the industry of political consensus, on the other; it is not a document about life in a given society. So the works that aim to provide a critical analysis of these issues should definitely emphasize this point, yet it is always somehow passed over in the structure of their narrative which those images are dovetailed into.

Milica Pekić: Are you saying that those images and that material are taken in an indiscriminate manner, that this picture is further distributed in a wider context as the reality of that era?

Stevan Vuković: Exactly, and that is pretty naïve and utterly pathetic. I agree with what Branko just said about the need to think in a way that is up to date with the processes of cultural production, which is somehow related to the thinking of that era. Then again, if we go back to the Praxis school, which was already mentioned here, it proved to be a rather broad framework for the ideas that equally gave rise to the ideas of the civil right-wing politics, such as those advocated by Mihailo Djurić, and those of the civil left-wing politics, such as those advocated by Miladin Životić. However, I am not sure at all that a serious perspective of emancipation has been devised based on the thesis formulated by young Marx as incarnated in the Praxis school, leaving aside the fact that Louis Althusser contributed a paper for the Praxis journal, which was rejected because the author was seen as a young Stalinist from France.

Praxis is also being romanticized, just like children soldiers are being ro-

manticized. Renata Poljak referred to her childhood and the actor Slavko Štimac and his roles of child soldier. However, those roles of child soldier were tailored within the so-called red wave, which was supposed to supersede the so-called Yugoslav black wave cinema, that is, to cover all those "anti-social tendencies in the movies" with some idealized picture of national liberation struggle which would glorify the antiquated youth and childhood of the leadership that showed the way for the society, and to use movies to somehow pacify social antagonisms that became apparent in the Yugoslav films from the 1960s. To get a picture different from the one presented in the films such as *Wintering in Jakobsfeld* or *Sutjeska* which starred Slavko Štimac, one can take a look at some other movies. Let's go back to the year 1967, and analyze films such as *Little Pioneers* by Želimir Žilnik, a documentary depicting the life of homeless children in socialist society, or *Playing Soldiers* by Bahrudin Čengić, which sheds light on the situation of orphans in the aftermath of the war. Namely, in Čengić's film, for which screenplay was written by Mirko Kovač, a new kid arrives to an orphanage in 1945, which used to be a monastery, and the children see that he is somewhat different from them, because he had civil education and he doesn't understand the songs they are singing, but eventually they get to know that he is orphan too, only his father is a German officer. Near the end of the movie, the children execute the kid, after sentencing him by court-martial, since they are little soldiers, which is how the chief manager of the orphanage calls them. They perpetuate the trials and tabulations of war by settling scores with those whose background, even if only biological ancestry, links them to those who were enemies in the World War II. On the other hand, Žilnik's film, the full title of which is *Little Pioneers, We're an Army for Real, Growing Up Steadily like Leaves of Green Grass* portrays the lives of street children in the late 1960s – they definitely make a *real army*, children who are sexually abused, who sleep wherever they can, in parks and abandoned houses, who are totally ill-adapted to the social system. And it is a system which aspires to attain general social inclusion. The point of these examples is that if we recur both to the ideas from the former Yugoslavia and the ideas embodied in the images of the former Yugoslavia – in fine arts, movies and some other forms of art – I think that it is not quite appropriate to recur only to such idealized images, utterly ingenuous, whose aim was to entertain and to neutralize, to pacify the population. Why wouldn't we go back to those films that showed real social antagonisms while at the same time they were officially presented at festivals in the country and abroad, where they represented the cultural production from the SFRY. Perhaps the greatest value that society had was the fact that it openly debated many problems that were put off the agenda in many other socialist countries which were more authoritarian.

Milica Pekić: It is important to determine what are the things that we perceive as emancipatory ideas and the way we interpret those ideas now. The way we treat that heritage, the way we can accept certain results that can be implemented and further improved, and the way to avoid looking back with such idealization, which is often the case with various interpretations. Whether that heritage makes us see some emancipatory ideas of the socialist Yugoslavia which would facilitate the process of finding the authentic left for our time, of formulating an alternative to the present liberal capitalist system that we all are so critical of.

Branislav Dimitrijević: The whole story about Yugo-nostalgia and the fascination with some sort of consumerism that existed in socialism, that fascination-as-discovery – like, people lived well back then, there were some nice products – but beneath all this is a lurking need to resist the unisonant renunciation of socialism that took place in the 1990s and its consigning to the dustbin of history, when it was trumpeted that it was all a historical delusion, when the anticommunist discourse had the upper hand. So now there is a sort of reflection on this matter, yet the reflection goes to the opposite extreme. It is the extreme of an idealization which does not necessarily have to be an open idealization. Still, if you take all the most influential books over the past decade dealing with the former Yugoslavia, you realize that all those books touch upon the consumerist society in one way or another, all those books largely focus on the fascination with consumerism, as if they actually aimed to prove the falsity of the anticommunists endeavour to present it as some totalitarian prison where life was horrible for everyone, where life was so gloomy. I always see it primarily as a reflection on this topic, as the first instance of criticism of anticommunism, formulated in a very prudent, liberal way, which refuses to see the real processes going on within socialism, only acknowledging that it was not as dogmatic and gloomy as described in anticommunist discourse. However, we are now aware that this discourse has been exhausted too, and now the aim is to find out how the Yugo-nostalgic discourse gave rise to the genre that Stevan rightfully dubbed *Yugosploitation*, and the film *Cinema Komunisto* is really the best example of this style. In fact, a serious cultural policy of the given country is turned into cultural industry, while presenting it as if it was Tito who devised all of it, as if the system was pyramidal from top to bottom. And we know very well that it was not like that, we know very well that it was characteristic of the Yugoslav socialism that some things happened no matter what Tito thought about it. The same year when Tito gave a speech at the factory "Ivo Lola Ribar", and then another one in the early 1960s, when at one point he lambasted modern, abstract art as art coming from the decadent West – he did this only after he

visited Khrushchev to please the Soviets, but let's put this issue aside now – it was exactly at that moment that the construction of the Museum of Contemporary Art began, which was to become a center of activities he criticized so harshly. So it is sufficient evidence that there was no causal connection with the authoritarian or obligatory point of view held by Tito himself. In the film *Cinema Komunisto*, for instance, Veljko Bulajić is both the subject of the movie and the interpreter of the movie. In this film, the entire heritage that Stevan spoke of was erased, the entire Yugoslav black wave which also produced "war movies" such as *The Ambush* by Žika Pavlović, not to mention the films from the 1950s, when Yugoslav movies industry was expanding. There is this immense heritage which was thrown away as something marginal, in spite of its lack of effectiveness. And here I tend to include Praxis school too, although I agree with Stevan that Praxis really was harmless, and just like any other philosophical concept, it was not meant to have any direct effect, it was for the sake of thinking itself. And this incompatibility with the ideas advocated by that philosophical school, which in terms of ideas was closely akin to the conceptual art, which Praxis members were absolutely unmindful of, and so on. Yet, on the other hand, it is interesting that even in those books dealing with consumerist society Praxis is left almost unmentioned, although Praxis in fact formed the very nucleus of criticism of consumerism.

Milica Pekić: I believe that the heritage of the former Yugoslavia is treated in emotionally charged way, and there is no doubt that all the aspects of that rather complex society are to be reexamined. Precisely for this reason, I believe that digitalization of archives has tremendous importance, just like the opening of museums' collections and archives to researchers and the public. Some 10 or 15 years ago, the situation was far less favorable and the institutions were much more closed. Of course, there is a reason why it was so, but I think that now the atmosphere has changed significantly. I would say that historical, artistic and other research is very important for the construction of a more objective picture of the past. I think there is a role for the museum in this and I believe that the museum as an institution has a potential to transform into an open platform for research, to make room for a much more dynamic communication of the collection and the material kept and treasured at the museum. The museum as an institution can play a vital role in the democratization of the heritage, which should become available to as many people as possible, and thus to become open to a number of different interpretations.

DEJAN KALUDJEROVIĆ
AND ANA ADAMOVIĆ

Conversation, Vienna, May 2015

A.A: In the *Fiery Greetings* project, we examine the image of childhood, so I believe it is inevitable to think over different projections of the future. How do you see your work with respect to these questions?

D.K: I always thought that in my work I was not examining childhood, but rather representation, the image of children. Examining the representation of children through photographs that I came across in public space, I always tried to analyze the world and the society that surrounds me. Starting from those first works I made in the late 1990s, such as drawings on toilet paper or works from my first exhibition *Atlas*, in which I go back to the past via collective memories in order to raise some questions or try to find some answers. For instance, on the pictures from the *Atlas* series, I used templates that I found in children's coloring books, products that we grew up with, such as *Eva* canned sardines and *Najlepše želje, Braco* i *Seka* chocolates, and family photo albums, while that picture was always related to the fact of growing up in a particular system, that is, socialism in the former Yugoslavia.

I started to make art while wars were being waged around me, when I was also personally coming to grips with myself, trying to ascertain or getting to know the politicalness that was given to me at that time, so the question of responsibility, my personal question of responsibility became very important. In a situation when you are constantly confronted with media manipulations and forced to read everything that goes on through images and words, it was important for me to raise certain questions. Probably the most evident and the weightiest question for me in that period of war was the stance taken by the society toward children, the concern for the future shown by the society, in terms of spreading information and education. The question of how a person is being shaped, on individual level, and consequently the collective thinking as well. So the question of children, that is, thinking of social issues focusing on children, became exceptionally important for me. And this question became important also because the question of childhood is closely related to the past of a particular society, to personal, individual past, and therefore the future.

A.A: Whenever socialist Yugoslavia is talked about, the notions of market and consumerism are brought up as something that set us apart from other countries of the Eastern bloc. Do you think that maybe we cling to those ideas too much, while we neglect some other ideas that Yugoslavia was built on?

D.K: All those products certainly did leave a trace on our growing-up, and I think that is why we cling to that idea. Likewise, we as a society cultivated certain self-satisfied, narcissistic view about our exceptional status with regard to the *Others* who were "behind the curtain", firm in our belief that we were not over there, although our country did have certain characteristics of a closed society. And that input of "capitalist" products was important at that time because it singled us out in a certain sense – the fact that we had what *They* did not have, that is, we had the possibility to have what the others did not have. And on the one hand, it was true indeed. I believe we all remember the stories about Romania, or for that matter, probably any other country "behind the curtain", how it was impossible to buy a pair of jeans there, while we made Levi's jeans in our country. Those products were very important and in our formative years they determined the way that, perhaps unconsciously, we thought about the future. It was really important whether you had a pair of 501 Levi's jeans or All-Stars.

However, the crucial difference lies in the ideology, that is, in the source that particular values stem from, capitalist and communist alike. For instance, if we take two photographs dating from that period, one of a physical education class in a Yugoslav school and the other from a physical education class in an American school, we would easily spot a number of differences, because we are familiar with respective emblems. Nevertheless, all that would appear more or less the same, or pretty similar. However, if we draw comparisons between the generations that grew up in socialist Yugoslavia with those that grew up in America in the same period, or those that grow up today, I believe that we would see huge differences. It seems to me there are substantial differences in education, that is, what we, both as individuals and as societies, held to be our imperatives. We really were brought up to be good, to listen to our parents, to respect our seniors, to learn, to be diligent, to work. And that's alright, that's how children were probably brought up in American schools too. However, I think that there is a difference in terms of ideology. I think that, at the end of the day, American child was taught to believe that money and wealth are the essential measure of fortune and worthiness, that success is about how much money you make, how well-off is your family. That was the basic assumption for any further reasoning, the way how one formed his perspective on life and future and the view of himself.

Of course, there were differences within our system too, but what I mean

right now is that probably 80% of the population lived and grew up like that, that certain things were definitely considered not important. Other things, the capitalist values, were always present and in a way important, but only up to a certain degree, they inevitably took specific shape. I remember, for instance, that in the 1980s it was quite normal that you open the classifieds pages in the daily *Politika* or any other newspaper and swap your condo apartment in New Belgrade Block 45 for one of the same size located in downtown Belgrade. The only thing that mattered was whether you thought its size was convenient for you. Of course, some people knew the catch, so they did swaps so as to take apartments in downtown Belgrade knowing that in the future such real estate would be much more valuable, but they were a minority. On the other hand, that person who thought it was irrelevant whether he lived in New Belgrade Block 45 apartment or downtown – he even might have preferred to live in Block 45 because the apartment was in a newly built tower block, it was better and needed no refurbishing, there's also a river nearby – at the same time thought it was important to have, say, a pair of Levi's 501 jeans. From the present-day perspective, I see such things and situations quite paradoxical.

A.A: For many generations, we were taught that future was a place that we were building ourselves and that it could only be better. Then something collapsed globally and it appeared that no one believed anymore it could get better. After all, it seems to me that huge differences can easily be perceived in the way we bring up our children, what we teach them, how we protect them and exempt them from any responsibility. As if the society is not even expecting the children to ever grow up and have a role to play in the community.

D.K: Well, there is only one role for a child to play now, which is to be a consumer. To work for someone else and to spend that money straight away, in advance, and that's it. There is no progressive social idea behind it.

On the other hand, that system in which we grew up was naïve in a way. We all thought that in the future it will be better, that's what we were taught, I guess, but no one actually thought about the ways that future would be better. And now one is faced with that future which has arrived, and not only that it isn't better, it is utterly depressing, and it takes you back to the past and prompts you to reexamine the convictions you had back then, which were naïve, one could say even utopian. When you look at the generation of our parents, most of them in fact did not dwell on the future, speaking in material terms.

A.A: But if you think about Yugoslavia after the World War II, that future did appear better to many generations. Just contrast the way we grew up with the

way our parents grew up – there was more development, more order, the social system was better, there was more money. Then came a point in time when all that crumbled.

D.K: It became much worse because the resources were distributed differently. It remains a moot point how it would have been had the country not collapsed the way it did, had it not sold itself so cheaply. So we're back to the question about what kind of system we want to live in.

Formally speaking, we still live in a world where good triumphs over evil, where we educate children to share with others, to be good and honest. That is the formal picture of the world, although it is questionable if we truly believe that. It seems to me that our parents did believe in what they taught us, so we took it for granted and believed it all. Why did they believe? Because the future was bright, and because it always appeared better than the present, and because it was believed that it would continue to be so, that the future would only get better more and more. When the future ceased to be better, there was someone else who was held responsible. In general, we all have the same or similar positive convictions and we educate our children to be good, smart, responsible, unselfish. But what we mostly tend to forget is what kind of lives we live and hence what examples we set.

It is lamentable that we still get surprised and refuse to accept things that should be indisputable, that someone who is Jewish or Roma or homosexual is no less human, and should not be subject to abuse. Those are the "values" that surely should be beyond doubt, but they are not, so I always come back to the issue of personal responsibility.

We are constantly struggling with ourselves unconsciously, or perhaps not, trying to resist certain weaknesses and influences of the system which seemingly offers us so much, considering that we live wonderful, easy-going lives, full of superbly designed products. However, by and large, it destroys that very picture of the future. It is necessary to constantly reexamine each and every step that determines us, since we have been deprived of the collective, utopian picture of future. We simply do not believe in it anymore, we think that picture of the future is dead, but we fail to understand that it cannot be dead if we sustain it and feed it all the time. Notwithstanding the fact that we all live that same consumerist life, we have not been deprived of the possibility to decide to ceaselessly fight, as individuals, against that consumerist system. If I start on the individual level, it is to make a decision to gain some ground, a fraction of time, which will allow me to engage in things I believe important, which can be something quite simple or banal, just to enjoy life and be mindful of it. And never to lose ground to be critical toward everything that I do too.

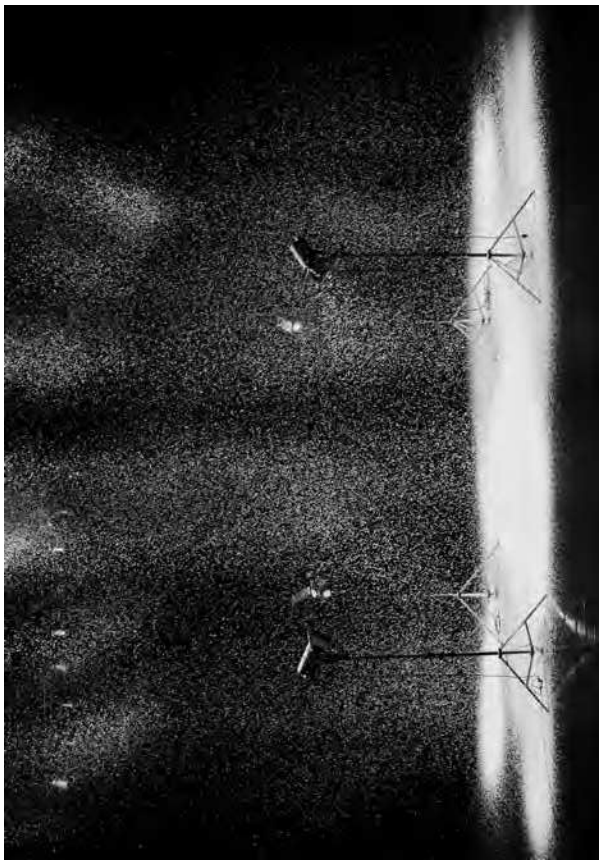
Well, politicians are honest people I guess,
they like to help, honest, good.

ALEKSA, 8 years old, SERBIA

I always dreamt of becoming as famous as Novak Đoković
for example or some other singers like Željko Joksimović.
So I thought I might compose a song and so I become
famous for it.

IVA, 7 years old, SERBIA

RENATA POLJAK
AND ANA ADAMOVIĆ



Conversation, Zagreb-Belgrade, May 2015

A.A.: Judging by the photo-albums president Tito was receiving over the course of thirty years from schools and other children institutions, Yugoslavs were taught to share the same values, to respect each other, to be proud of their country, only to decide at one moment that all that was a pack of lies that had to be sorted out by conflict. And then, when the war was eventually over, any vision of a better future was finally lost. Maybe it is by re-examining that county, by looking into these images and ideas, that we are trying to find some constructive, emancipating potential for our time.

R.P.: I think that people today lack that faith in a better future. The future is completely uncertain and that is the only thing we are all sure of. And here I don't mean only Croatia (where it seems that things can get only worse, in both political and cultural terms) or the neighbouring countries, but rather the global insecurity in the entire capitalist world that we are living in.

When I was a kid, I believed in Yugoslavia and back then it seemed to me that everyone believed in it. I thought they all believed that things could only get better for us. Progress was rather palpable, so I think that this idea of progress certainly ended with the war. Since the war, there is no progress anymore, we are only going backwards.

Personally, it took me quite some time to understand why ever since I was 17 (which is how old I was when the war broke out) I had to start believing in something completely opposite of everything I was taught in my childhood and all values that I held dear in my formative years. All of that suddenly ceased to be relevant and became wrong in the new Croatia, just like the history I was taught unexpectedly became false. In a word, I had to realize that I had lived a "false" childhood.

But let's go back to what you said. Even though I fully understand what you meant by saying that, I doubt that we can make something constructive by going back to those images and ideas of Yugoslavia.
It took me twenty years after the disintegration of Yugoslavia (even a few years

more) to accept this "new" reality, to get accustomed to it and to start to function in it. Twenty years! Today I am pleased that this period is behind me and that I am in "peace" with my personal past and thereby with the Yugoslav past too. History and the system of that country have always been very palpable in my work, so my artistic practice helped me to clarify this relation.

All this resulted in the work *Staging Actor/Staging Beliefs, Homage to Slavko Štimac*, which was presented at the *Fiery Greetings* exhibition. It seemed to me that Slavko Štimac "wonderfully" exemplified afore mentioned situations – a man who was a big movie star in Yugoslavia, and then the country in which he could have been a star was simply not there anymore, it was physically gone. That country simply ceased to exist, so he was not a movie star anymore, he lost the role of his life.

I had a feeling that we all had the same lot in life, we got stuck and remained there for twenty years (except for the war profiteers and people with dubious morals). Therefore, I wanted to make a homage to Slavko Štimac, but also to all the actors who "staged" our reality in the times of Yugoslavia, reality which was served to us and which we believed in, at least us who were children at that time.

For that reason, the snow is silently falling over an empty stage, so peace and quiet would "fall" on them, and on me too, so I could come to terms with that "lot in life" and finally accept it. Because it is the only way I can move on, even if twenty years later.

Of course, snow is falling also as a reference made to the film *Train in the Snow,* which taught us how to behave, what to believe in, how we ought to be, that we should share everything, that we can rescue the train from the snow only when we all work together.

A.A.: More and more, we come across the term *imaginary Yugoslavia*, which implies that this country that we all talk of so much, remembering it in either positive or negative light, actually never existed at all, whereas each of us remembers it in her own way and in that way we create it anew. Perhaps our generation really was too young while Yugoslavia existed, and we remember it as seen through the prism of our childhood, we romanticize it.

R.P.: I think that it is practically undeniable. When I was about to graduate from faculty, I had a boyfriend who was thirteen years older than me. He was (and still is) a renowned intellectual in Croatia, and he didn't like Yugoslavia at all. For him, who was about thirty years of age, when the war broke out, for him, Yugoslavia stood for repression, it was a country without freedom of expression. He and his generation were the ones who first put me in the picture (without me

reading about it in the papers or interviews). So I'm not sure whether we – you and I – and a large part of our generation are actually attached to those ideals because they belonged to that really fabulous period of (safe) childhood, which back in Yugoslavia was very safe indeed, free of envy and competition. That is a big difference between me and my French and American friends, we don't share the same films and books that we grew up on, and that's where we misunderstand each other, since we don't share the same "childish" idea that we all should have the same – they were always competing, vying for more and better. So I do think that we are romanticizing it, but that's what we do quite often when we speak about the past in general, it always seems that music used to be better back then, and so on. Of course, I do think that even now.

A.A.: I think that we actually do not romanticize the fact that we were not brought up in the spirit of constant mutual competition and matching one against another, the fact that we were taught to be modest, not to be boastful about material possessions, to share with each other. It seems that such traits, such value-system, have been jettisoned together with Yugoslavia and its system?

R.P.: Exactly, I completely agree with you. We were brought up like that, and now when we tell that to these "new kids" they think we're crazy. Because what is important today is to make money, no matter what (so, for instance, when you swindle someone, it is taken as your entrepreneurial skills which shows that you know how to make the most of it), and that is the sole measure of success. It is not important at all how you make that money, and I personally find it horrible, because the ethical and moral values have been undermined, or to rephrase it in more precise way, they have changed completely.

When I spoke to children from different secondary schools in Zagreb, I had a chance to witness those new values. To them, money is the only measure of success. Likewise, it is interesting to note that a vast majority of them wants to leave Croatia in order to have a "normal" and fulfilling life. In their vocabulary, the word "abroad" means possibilities, money and fulfilment, finding work without "pulling some strings". It is paradoxical that they are quite conservative in their moral principles, they are against people who are "different", those who are not like them, those whose religion, colour of the skin or sexual orientation is different, in fact against those who are "abroad". It really isn't easy to be a teenager nowadays, especially in a country as divided as Croatia, where you really don't know what is good and what is deemed to be good.

As for Yugoslavia, they heard something about it through the grapevine, and most of them told me that it was bad, that they had no interest in it at all, in those past times, Boško Buha and other "ridiculous things" that I grew up with.

As if they felt sorry that I had to go through all that, that's the impression I had talking to them.

And then, a totally different story in the Islamic Secondary School in Zagreb, everyone is tolerant, speaks several languages, Yugoslavia was a fantastic country, from what they heard from their parents, a country where people didn't hate others for belonging to a different religion etc. In fact, they are the "other" in Croatia, and they often suffer because of that, but compared with the places they came from, for them Croatia is "abroad" and they feel that here they can change something and contribute to the development of society. I must say that I found it quite interesting to do that survey among children from high-schools. For instance, in one class of third-graders, when I asked them "what do you believe in?" many answered they believed in Church, God. For me, who grew up in Yugoslavia, that was pretty surprising – though it shouldn't have been – I should have known that. In one class of second-graders in that same school, when I asked them the same question, the entire classroom – otherwise a rather noisy place, where everyone cuts each other short – just fell silent, no one knew what to say. What do they believe in nowadays?

A.A.: Does it ever occur to you that all that engagement with memories through art, engagement with your personal memories of a traumatic period such as disintegration of the country in which you were born, is actually a kind of therapy?

R.P.: Yes, it definitely is a kind of therapy. I think that it is only because I do art (so I hope) that I am more or less "normal", because I let myself think about certain things more (also in terms of time) than other people who in fact have no choice. They just live their lives accepting whatever new circumstances and new histories come their way, and they call it life.

DUŠICA DRAŽIĆ
AND ANA ADAMOVIĆ

Conversation, Belgrade, May 2015

A.A: During our work on the exhibition *Fiery Greetings*, we tried to focus on the representative picture of childhood, not on personal memories of growing up in the socialist Yugoslavia. However, do you think that, after so many years since Yugoslavia fell apart, we, who were born in that country, are able at all to look on that era and that country objectively? How does socialist Yugoslavia appear to us today?

D.D: I'm not able to do it, that's one of the things I realized. While we were preparing the exhibition, I couldn't help but compare those photographs from the archives with certain personal memories and photographs of mine, with stories that I was brought up with.

My memories of childhood in Yugoslavia are hazy, mixed with stories told by my parents, determined by my surroundings, influenced by all the things I read, but they are also the fruit of a strong intimate urge to remember my childhood. It is difficult for me to clearly spell out the standpoint I have on my childhood, actually that standpoint is constantly changing. For instance, I remember that feeling of guilt I had as a child when playing games. There were some games such as Chinese jump rope when you had to stand inside a rubber band circle, while children around kept asking the question: "Who has a liking, who has a liking?" And then someone would say, for example, "Who has a liking for strawberry cake?" So if you happen to like it, you stay inside that rubber band circle. It is a game in which everyone reacts automatically, instinctively, even before hearing the question. I remember that Tito's name would come up every single time we played this game, although he was already dead for quite some time. And just like now, I found it difficult to spell out my standpoint on him because I was unfamiliar with Tito's character, since my parents didn't talk about him. I remember feeling confused every time, not knowing whether I liked him or disliked him or felt absolutely indifferent about him. But if by any chance you jumped out of the circle, which meant that you didn't like Tito, children would storm at you, shouting: "How can you not like him, everybody loves him, you must love him!"

I am aware that my memories are a construct. When Yugoslavia fell apart, I was 12 years old, but it was already clear to me, by some childish inference, that it was a failed country, because otherwise there would have been no war. I had no strong emotional attachment to Yugoslavia. I did love that country, I definitely loved Yugoslavia more than the country where I lived in the 1990s or the country where I live now. Even if it is fictitious, for me that past serves as a benchmark for the future.

Now when I see the remnants of that past, such as those left in the urban architecture, I see achievements that stand as very positive examples. In my opinion, parts of New Belgrade are successfully designed. Everything carried out there was planned for the future generations, it was not meant to be temporary solution whose sole purpose was to produce instant effect. The future was thought over. It is worth noting that we can detect an ideological motive that functions as an important driving force, and maybe the power structure of that time manifested itself in one way through these projects that have survived to the present-day. The additional value of those projects is the fact that they always included shared spaces, which were transformed many times over, yet they survived it all by finding new non-commercial uses: art galleries, clubs, associations, and the like, although their number has reduced.

If we compare the early New Belgrade, that vision of the future that we speak about, with the way it is today, it seems that the thought-out potential has been achieved in certain aspect, but only several decades after its implementation. It was the moment when the green became green, when everything reached its maximum. Maybe it means that the process of collapse began.

However, I cannot examine those projects in isolation, within Yugoslavia only, but rather as projects that drew heavily on modern trends in architecture and urbanism. Indeed, I do not see Yugoslavia as a unique case, isolated from all the rest. We really were part of globally modern trends.

Recently I talked to French people who came to see New Belgrade, and its architecture reminded them of the projects from Paris outskirts which were developed under Le Corbusier's influence. It is interesting that they stressed there was huge difference though, that New Belgrade was seemingly constructed entirely according to plan, greenery areas, playgrounds, parks included, whereas in France it was not the case, and there is no greenery, everything has been asphalted, the project has not been fully realized. I wasn't familiar with that parallel. It is always interesting to hear another opinion. It is also interesting that such description sounded much like what our city is today: projects that are now implemented are not fully implemented; they are not implemented according to plan and project, but only up to a point, when certain financial objectives, which are often personal, are met.

My work *Modulus* is closely related to the architecture and the construction from that era, which successfully outlasted several systems. On the other hand, the work reveals impermanence, not easily perceptible, of those seemingly stable structures, which is what Yugoslavia in a way used to be.

Should we talk about unrealized future or a future that at one moment just fell apart? Our generation maybe still hoped that certain projections of future that we were taught would be realized. Today, with the new generation taking the stage, it seems to me that this disruption is irreversible, because a vision of future, or a vision of utopia, is not there anymore, so we cannot teach the children visions that are gone.

Maybe those times of socialist Yugoslavia, while it lasted, were actually brief, and maybe that is the reason why the "Yugoslav project" has not taken root. Today, everything that was built up to the 1990s has been wiped out, and the traces of all that are slowly disappearing. Previously, people who held certain positions were experts in their respective field of knowledge. They didn't think just locally, in the confines of Yugoslavia, so their expertness didn't have local character, it had relevance on the global level. I think that is precisely what facilitated diverse professions to flourish. People believed in progress. But forty years was obviously not enough time for good practices to become a principle. And the times when people believed in progress are gone, and this change did not take place only on local level.

A.A: Likewise, there has been a change in the attitude toward children, maybe even genuine faith in children's potential to make the society better.

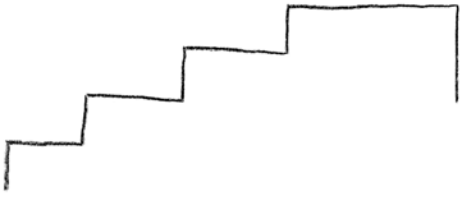
D.D: As part of that general picture, children used to be taken much more seriously, they were believed to have greater potential than it is held today. Today they enjoy a limited space, and they are not given sufficient responsibility. I think that children used to be given more freedom, they were trusted to make independent decisions and recognize where the danger lurks. And children were free to express themselves individually and creatively. They were not forced to fit the mould. There was no final goal that they had to achieve, and they were encouraged to cultivate their intuitiveness and self-understanding. It's primarily children up to seven years of age that I have in mind. If we only take a look at the playgrounds and the toys on photographs, we see abstract forms which prompt us to discover space, relations, size and other hidden elements in a creative way, which they are intuitively familiar with. Amusing themselves on climbing frames, seesaws, rockets and other playground equipment, children were taught to play together, but also that it was necessary to share the space and to cooperate for the equipment and the game to be functional. And they

were taught to share some kind of responsibility. I remember that I had absolute freedom to move around space the way I liked, to experience that space and use it in my own way.

On the other hand, there were moments when we were expected to behave according to strictly defined rules. For instance, if you happened to be in school when sirens blared to commemorate the day of Tito's death, you had to stand up and observe a moment of silence on your feet, next to your classroom table. I remember that once someone said something funny so some of us laughed, and the teacher dressed us down, once the moment of silence was over and we took our seats.

A.A: It seems to me that the world actually changed while Yugoslavia was falling apart, so that notion of future also collapsed in the meantime. Utopia is something that has no substance anymore, and therefore we, as a society, are maybe already doomed to failure.

D.D: I think that a day will come when this time and this model that we are living in will come to dust. I'm not sure that this system, such as it is, can survive. That, I believe, is the natural course of events in civilization, which is in fact inevitable. I think that we might have witnessed such a collapse of civilization, in the events that took place in the 1990s, on a micro-level. I think that in a near future the same thing that happened to us will happen on a global level. Maybe that's why I don't see the end of the Yugoslav era as something tragic in itself. Historically speaking, at one point, civilizations reach their peak, which is followed by gradual decline. Every system, every ideology eventually had to collapse. Evidently, there comes a point of satiation, when we reach such extreme which is contradictory to the inherent logic of life. I recently read a text – unfortunately, I cannot remember the name of its author – which dealt with a media phenomenon: a man performed freefall from the edge of space down to the Earth and the whole world paid attention. The author described that event as a paradigm of present-day society which admires the fall, and goes on to compare that event to the times when we admired men who rose, soared, went to the Moon, and conquered new, unknown territories in every sense. I think that we are now on that downward slope, we are falling down, and we cannot see further ahead than this very moment we are in. We are witnesses to media sensations that fail to inspire us in any uplifting way, that fail to motivate us to search on. So we move backwards instead. The only thing we can do is try to recreate the path that led us to this fall, to try to find the breaking point. Maybe that's the only logical course to take in the given moment in time.



DUŠICA DRAŽIĆ
Modulus, 2015, 315cmx250cmx300cm

Pioneers, Maribor, Slovenia, 1981
(album no. 2217, Present from the "Bratov Polančičev" elementary school from Maribor)

Admission to the Pioneers' organization ceremony, Malmo, Sweeden, 1980
(album no. 1372, Present from the Yugoslav supplementary school in Malmo)

MAJA PELEVIĆ
AND VUK PELEVIĆ

RED STAR CIRCUMSCRIBED BY GOLD

the only thing i can attest to is the fact that i was born in 1981 in belgrade, one year after tito died, and that from 1986 to 1989 i lived in new york with my family. i can also confirm that i went to american public school, while on the weekends i went to the so-called yugoslav "supplementary" school, which was formed by the local yugoslav community. in 1989 we returned to belgrade. in 1991 yugoslavia started falling apart. my brother vuk pelević was born in 2004, one year after the federal republic of yugoslavia ceased to exist. this text is made from fragments of my recollections and talks i had with him in 2015. for my brother vuk, yugoslavia could only be an imaginary country, just like for myself, after all. now, in retrospect, i am not sure if it was an advantage or a drawback. and i still ask myself if and how can a new civilization be built upon imaginary foundations.

text:
vuk pelević
yugoslavia and the european union

once upon a time, there were 6 boys from different countries. one from serbia, one from croatia, one from slovenia, one from bosnia and herzegovina, one from montenegro and one from macedonia. the boy from serbia was called nikola, stipe was from croatia, janez from slovenia, novo from bosnia and herzegovina, savo from montenegro, and trajiče from macedonia. their parents brought them together because they knew that one day they would get to know about yugoslavia and that they would try to assemble it. after 21 years, when their fathers passed away, their mothers agreed to tell them the story about yugoslavia. as soon as they heard about it, they wished for yugoslavia to be put together. janez didn't want that because the slovenian president dismissed the idea of slovenia being part of yugoslavia. the slovenian president eventu-

ally agreed and yugoslavia was assembled. when the germans heard this, they wanted to break it apart again. but when yugoslavia was put together, french and russian soldiers didn't want it to fall apart, so they protected it and yugoslavia was again part of the planet earth. when yugoslavia became the european union, the euro was so big it was bigger than the pound. but the brits wanted the pound to be the biggest currency, not the euro. they demolished yugoslavia so much that it turned into the poorest country of all. the god got so angry that he interchanged yugoslavia and england, so yugoslavia became the richest country and england the poorest. meanwhile, nikola, stipe, janez, novo, savo and trajiče became prime ministers of yugoslavia, and england regretted having attacked yugoslavia because of money, and everybody who was and was not in the european union laughed and said: they're so dim-witted, the war won't make the pound bigger than the euro. everyone was pleased and happy ever after, while the brits ate only apples picked from the trees for breakfast, lunch and supper 1 apple per meal.

flag:

maja: i remember that at school in new york we all had lunchboxes and on my lunchbox i had stickers of the yugoslav flag and vučko, the symbol of the 1984 olympic games in sarajevo. when my school friends asked me what it was, i told them it was the god tchoo-tchoo and that back in yugoslavia we worshipped tchoo-tchoo. many of them told me that there is no such religion, some recognized it but decided to remain catholics, while few of them started believing in tchoo-tchoo, which i saw as my exceptional accomplishment.

vuk: i imagine yugoslavia as an enormous paradise! there are big cities. when i look at the serbian flag, i think to myself: wow, man, it must have been great when there was yugoslavia, and what a flag it was! i think that we had a nicer flag back then. when i see the serbian flag red blue and white with no star on it, there's nothing yellow, and in yugoslavia it was red star circumscribed by gold, awesome.

i don't know why the flag had a five-pointed star on it when there were six states in yugoslavia, the coat of arms had six flames on it, so i wonder why not a six-pointed star. when yugoslavia was falling apart and there was only serbia and montenegro remaining, i saw that there was no two-pointed star. it wouldn't look okay anyway.

i think that yugoslavia was poor because all the countries in the SFRY region are poor, and serbia is one of these poor countries, and i really hate this

country, i mean, i'm making a big thing of it now, i don't hate this country, but i wish all the countries that yugoslavia was made of to join together and make a great kingdom, so very rich.

tito:

vuk: tito was the president or the prime minister of yugoslavia, and i think that he really was a faithful man who loved his country and i know that he lived from 1894 until 1980, which means he lived 86 years, so he really lived to the max. i think he was a good man and he was so old that he died at work. he was real good to serbia and yugoslavia but it's a pity he hadn't lived to see how things are in serbia today. surely it's much more peaceful than it was in yugoslavia, because he survived both world war one and two.

maja: i remember that grandma had a framed photo of me that she kept in a cupboard next to tito's. it looked like i was waving at him. when my grandpa died, grandma put his photo over tito's, and moved it another place, so now i don't wave at anyone.

breakup:

maja: when we came back from america in 1989, i felt like my parents had deceived me. it was not the country that i used to come to for summer holidays, it was not the country inside my mind, it was a completely different country. for many years, i reproached them for taking me away from one country and bringing me back to another one. they were and still are to blame for my wasted childhood. i remember they always thought i exaggerated in this, just as in everything else.

vuk: i think that yugoslavia fell apart because the germans started attacking, because they didn't want yugoslavia to be one country, and i'd like to see with my naked eye yugoslavia and the flag of yugoslavia and the license plates of yugoslavia and tito's grave and everything.

childhood:

vuk: in yugoslavia everyone was the same. everyone had the same telephone, although back then there were no telephones. everyone had the same clothes, the same sneakers, it goes without saying, the same jackets and staff like that,

because yugoslavia was a poor country, so there wouldn't be a question of who was rich and who was poor.

i think they went outside every single day and played football and basketball with balls that were not so hard as these balls today but rather well-inflated.

i think it would be awesome if we were all the same again. there's no one poorer or richer than the other to run around and boast about and shout "i got twelve trophy cups from novak djoković, he gave it all to me" while there are some black children who have no clothes and nowhere to wash themselves, they walk the streets looking for food. that ain't the same at all.

today many people wear eyeglasses because they stare at all these computers and cellular phones and tablets. i think that now everyone must go somewhere outside and get some fresh air. when they go out in the open, my friends only play games on their tablets and cellulars. and that's a shame for us.

last summer holiday i talked to my friends and i asked them if they knew of yugoslavia and they said they knew and i asked them: "guys, do you want yugoslavia to exist again?" and they said: "no, we don't" and one of them said: "i don't want us to be yugoslavia because i don't want to live with the albanians" and i said: "well, albania never was yugoslavia" and he said: "no, no, no, i don't want to be with the croats, they're evil" and then i said: "guys, what are you saying?". and when i heard they all thought like that, that croats call us names, and one of my friend's mum told me the same, then i stopped being a fan of yugoslavia. and now i'm a fan once again. and then i learned that croats are good. they're not evil. they made it all up in order not to bring back yugoslavia. and so the germans wouldn't later attack us.

maja: i remember this drawing. i made it in 1987 at the yugoslav school. its title is fortress yugoslavia.

freedom:

maja: i remember i loved yugoslavia so much and i cried and screamed every time i had to go back to new york when summer holidays were over. i remember the feeling of absolute freedom in yugoslavia and absolute lack of freedom in america. i remember there they had to put children on a leash in a supermarket because there was a kidnapper lurking in every alleyway. i remember that my mum used to put me on that leash, although she claims she did not.

i remember parks whose gates were locked at night and which looked like cages and there was no sand in them because sand is a breeding ground for germs. i remember that in yugoslavia i could play alone in front of my building and that quite often, if not always, i was dirty. i remember feeling absolutely carefree while i ate my icecream picked up from the floor.

i remember that in new york parents made me and my best friend nikola speak serbian, but behind closed doors we would switch back to speaking english. serbian was boring for play. i remember that in yugoslavia i never wanted to speak english, even when they spurred me. i remember i hated being called the american girl, which is how they called me when i returned to belgrade. i remember i was always fighting against that and in the end i won.

vuk: freedom means that the whole country is free, there are no concentrations camps, no dungeons, no jails, i mean, there are jails for those who disrespect their country, but all the people who are good must live their life in yugoslavia with no concentration camps, no dungeons, no jails.

there must be balance on this planet earth. we don't want some asteroid to hit the planet and push it further away from the sun, which is what happened to our ancestors dinosaurs.

show:

maja: at our yugoslav school we became pioneers, celebrated the day of the republic and the youth day. i always thought none of it was stately enough, that somewhere else everything was much better, more beautiful and statelier. that over there the letters would never be scotchtaped on the board where they could easily fall down from during the show and cause a disaster.

YU and 12 stars:

vuk: when i heard of yugoslavia, i mean i heard of the european union first, and when i heard it's croatia, i mean now i like croats, but back then i didn't really like them because i thought they are not quite alright, but when i heard that it became european union, i wished that serbia immediately would join the european union, and then when i grew to like croats i heard that before croatia and serbia used to be together and also bosnia and herzegovina and macedonia and montenegro and slovenia and the country was called yugoslavia and i thought it was okay to write the title "yugoslavia and the european union" because i felt sorry to write only european union when i love yugoslavia or only yugoslavia when i love european union too, so that's why i chose this title.

i wanted yugoslavia back and then to try immediately to become the european union, and then 7 years later the license plates would read YU and 12 stars above.

i think that the capital has to be belgrade and just the second capital would be zagreb. of the whole union. yes, the whole.

in SFRY, social federal republic of yugoslavia, or something like that, i know that dinar was the currency. i wish we had euro instead of dinar. euro is hundred times bigger than dinar, although right now it's even bigger, so then i could say, for example: "this glass costs 5 euro, instead of 500 dinars".

i remember:

maja: i remember the first poem i wrote when i returned to belgrade. i went to third grade of the elementary school, i remember the teacher put the poem on the board. i remember the poem went like this:

in yugoslavia it's always sunny
freedom is defended by our army

we don't want to see any war
in our country never more

comrade tito is the guiding light
we'll keep him forever in our heart

i remember the poem had two more lines, but i don't remember it that well.

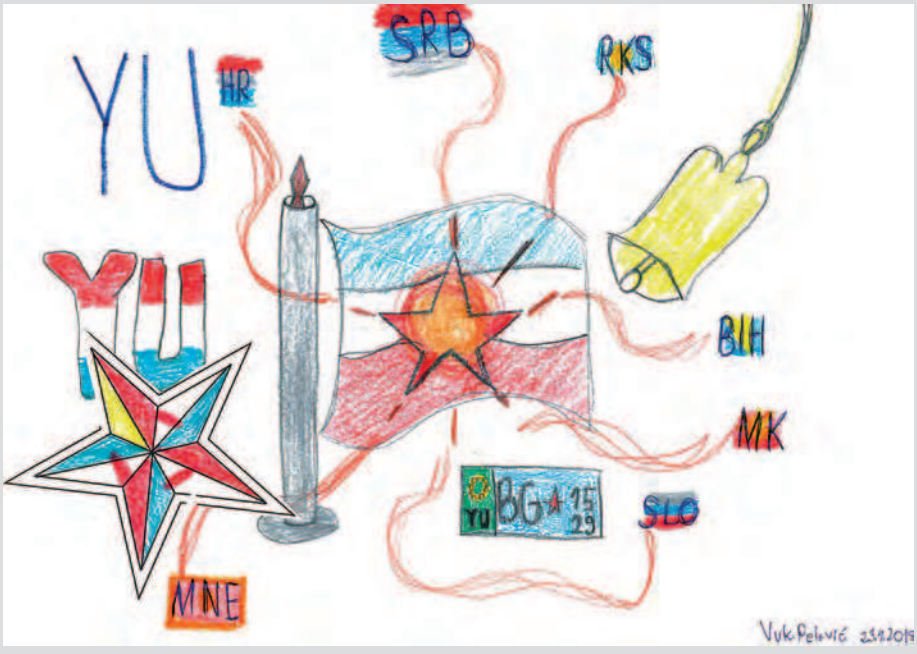
red sun:

vuk: for me, yugoslavia means a new place. so, it's not just one country, but six states within one country, so we'll be bigger. and then, when we travel to greece, we only pass through our country and arrive to greece. i think we must be yugoslavia again because if we united we'd be bigger than great britain. i calculated that england has 243 thousand square kilometers, so yugoslavia would be bigger than england because it has 255 thousand square kilometers.

yugoslavia is a state with six states in it, and serbia is a state with only one state in it.

yugoslavia must be brought back for all of us to be equal, so no one would be either black or shiny white. i believe everyone should be just as they should be.

i would like the new flag to be blue white and red, as it used to be, in a giant golden bubble, like real gold, and spangled with a bit of silver, like glitter dust. and i would like a giant star to be on it and giant stars falling down on this big star, like the sun was turning into this red star. red sun.



SOCIALIST YUGOSLAVIA CHRONOLOGY

1941

April 6th – With the attack of German and Italian armies on Yugoslavia, the so-called April War began. Belgrade and other cities were bombed, the army of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia capitulated, King Petar II and members of the government were evacuated from the country, while the Independent State of Croatia (Nezavisna država Hrvatska NDH) was established. Thus, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia practically ceased to exist.

July 4th – A decision to stage an uprising was made at the meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

1942

December 27th – The Union of Pioneers of Yugoslavia was founded.

1943

November 29th – 30th – The Second Session of the Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ) was held in Jajce (Bosnia and Herzegovina). AVNOJ was declared supreme legislative body; the National Committee of Liberation of Yugoslavia, which acted as the government was formed; it was decided that Yugoslavia should be constituted as a federation; King Petar II was banned from returning to the country until the final decision had been made on the form of government.

1945

November 29th – After the elections, held on November 11th, where according to official results, the People's Front led by Tito won over 90% of the votes, the Constitutional Assembly adopted the declaration on the promulgation of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia – FPRY.

1946

January 31st – The first Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia that defined the state as a federal union of equal Yugoslav peoples with a republican form of government was adopted and formally ratified.

May 22nd – A Youth Baton presented to President Tito by Yugoslav youth was handed over to him for the first time, on the occasion of his birthday.

1948

June 28th – The Cominform Resolution on the situation in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was passed, condemning Yugoslav communists as defectors from the united international Socialist front. The following day, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia refuted all the accusations made in the Resolution.

1949

October 25th – The diplomatic relations between the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia and USSR were severed.

December 29th – 30th – The Third Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was held. It marked the moving away from the Soviet model of the state and society and offered a new understanding of the construction of socialist Yugoslavia, primarily in terms of ideology, culture and education.

1951

January 6th – An urgent assistance agreement between the governments of the U.S. and Yugoslavia was reached.

1953

January 13th – The federal law regulating the basics of the social and political system of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was adopted, basing the entire social order on the principles of self-management.

1955

May 26th - June 3rd – During the official visit of a Soviet delegation led by Nikita Khrushchev, the so-called Belgrade Declaration was signed. It called for the observance of sovereignty, independence, integrity and equality in bilateral relations and relations with other countries. The Moscow Declaration on inter-party relations between the League of Communists of Yugoslavia and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which recognized the existence of different paths in the building of Socialism was signed the following year, during Tito's official visit to the USSR. This resulted in the thawing of relations between the two countries severed in 1948.

1956

July 18th - 19th - A meeting of the leaders of three countries not involved in the Cold War confrontations, Tito, the president of Egypt, Nasser and the Prime Minister of India, Nehru was held on the island of Brijuni. The Brijuni Declaration was signed, following the discussions about the principles of the policy of peaceful coexistence, disarmament and assistance to underdeveloped countries. The commitment to these principles, already affirmed at the conference in Bandung in 1955, provided the foundations of the future Non-Aligned Movement.

November 11th – A day after the Soviet intervention had put an end to the revolution in Hungary, Tito criticized these developments at a rally in Pula, which led to another shift in the just-established relations between Yugoslavia and the USSR.

1961

September 1st - 6th – The First Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries was held in Belgrade, where a declaration was signed highlighting the need for abandoning the policy of war as a means of settling international disputes, affirming the commitment to the policy of peaceful coexistence and promoting the significance of non-alignment, as an alternative to the division into blocs that was in itself a threat to world peace.

1963

April 7th – The new federal Constitution changing the name of the country to Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) was adopted.

1964

December 7th - 13th – The 8th Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was held in Belgrade, announcing an economic reform along with a shift towards market economy.

1966

July 1st – The Fourth Plenum of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, held on the island of Brijuni, discussed the situation in the State Security Service, namely, the accusations regarding tapping Tito's personal premises. After the accusations had been made, Aleksandrar Ranković, head of the Service and Vice-President of the Republic, resigned from all positions.

1968

June – A student protest broke out in New Belgrade at student halls of residence (Student City). The students demanded that social differences should be reduced, solutions for the issues of unemployment and bureaucratization of the society found and a reform of the University carried out.

August 23rd – The Tenth Session of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was held, at which the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops was condemned.

1971

November 23rd – December 3rd – The students at the University of Zagreb went on strike, demanding more rights for the Socialist Republic of Croatia. Leadership of the Republic of Croatia, that supported the strike, was dismissed in the following days.

1972

October 21st – The dismissal of the leadership of the Socialist Republic of Serbia, the so-called "Serbian liberals".

1974

February 21st – The new Constitution of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was proclaimed. It defined the principle of statehood of the republics, through which "the voluntarily united peoples and ethnic groups" executed their rights and expressed their will. Moreover, it envisaged the right to self-determination, including the right to secession. The requirement that the decisions should be passed by a consensus of the republics and autonomous provinces was also introduced, reducing the responsibilities of the federal government in the process. Thus, the country set on the course of federalization.

1979

September 3rd - 9th – The Sixth Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement was held in Havana. That was Josip Broz Tito's last big foreign policy success. Namely, as the movement's last remaining founder, he managed to defend its original principles from the attempts of Cuba's president Castro, aimed at bringing the movement closer to the position of the Soviet Union.

1980

May 4th – Tito passed away. Seven days of national mourning were declared and millions of Yugoslavs followed the journey of Tito's remains from Ljubljana to Belgrade. The funeral was attended by eighty state and sixty party delegations. Margaret Thatcher, Leonid Brezhnev, Hua Guofeng, Helmut Schmidt and the UN Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim were among the many heads of state and government who were present.

1984

February 8th – The opening ceremony of the 14th Winter Olympic Games was held in Sarajevo.

1986

September 24th – The excerpts from the Memorandum of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, a draft document analysing the social and political situation and the position of the Serbian people in Yugoslavia, appeared in the Belgrade daily *Večernje novosti*.

1987

February – The Ljubljana-based *Nova revija* magazine published the article *Prispevki za slovenski nacionalni program* (Contributions to the Slovenian National Programme).

September 23rd - 24th – The Eighth Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Serbia was held in Belgrade, after which Slobodan Milošević became President of the Presidency of Serbia.

1988

May 25th – The celebration marking Youth Day was held for the last time.

1989

November 29th – The Union of Pioneers of Yugoslavia induction ceremony was held for the last time.

1990

January 20th - 22nd – The 14th (and last) Extraordinary Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia was held in Belgrade. After the demands of the Slovenian delegation to reform the party were rejected, Slovenian and Croatian delegates left the congress, which practically marked the dissolution of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia.

August – The Serb rebellion in the Krajina region began.

December 23rd – A referendum was held in Slovenia, where 86% of the electorate voted for independence.

Towards the end of the year, multiparty elections were held, for the first time, in all Yugoslav republics. The winners of the elections were parties with a national agenda.

1991

May – Armed conflicts in the Republic of Croatia began.

June 25th – The parliaments of Slovenia and Croatia adopted acts on secession from the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and declarations of independence.

June 27th – Ten-day armed conflicts between the Yugoslav People's Army and the Territorial Defence of Slovenia broke out, ending in an agreement on the retreat of the Yugoslav People's Army to the barracks.

November 27th – The UN Security Council adopted the Resolution 721 on the need of deploying peacekeeping forces in Yugoslavia.

Fiery Greetings, exhibition view
Museum of Yugoslav History, March-April 2015

BIOGRAPHIES

Ana Adamović is dealing with issues of identity and memory, both personal and collective by working on the long-term photography and video projects. Since 1999 her work was exhibited on numerous solo and group exhibitions in Serbia and abroad. She graduated at the department for the World Literature at the Belgrade University and studied photography at the Art Institute of Boston. She is a PhD in Practice candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vienna. She is founder of Belgrade based Kiosk - Platform for Contemporary Art.

Branislav Dimitrijević, PhD, is art history and theory professor, curator and writer publishing essays on contemporary art and social issues. He teaches at the School of Art and Design and at the New Academy as well as at the course on Curatorial Practices at the University of Arts, Belgrade. His main research interests are art and social history of socialist Yugoslavia.

Ildiko Erdei, PhD, is an Associate Professor at the Department of Ethnology and Anthropology at Belgrade University. Her research interests range from politics of time and space in contemporary political rituals, relations between media and rituals as symbolic systems and creators of "universe of meaning", to problems related to childhood and growing up during socialism. Her most recent research focuses on cultural and symbolic aspects of economy, with a particular interest in reflexive and nostalgic narratives and practices related to Yugoslav socialism. She has published two books - *Antropologija potrošnje* (Anthropology of Consumption) in 2008 and *Čekajući Ikeu: potrošačka kultura u postsocijalizmu i pre njega* (Waiting for Ikea: Consumer Culture in Post - socialism and before) in 2012, as well as articles and chapters in numerous journals and publications.

Dušica Dražić is an artist, born in Belgrade. The issues that Dražić explores within her art practice deal with the ambivalent interrelationship of the citizen and the city, their mutual support and protectiveness, but also their isolation and destruction. Dražić searches for spaces of irregularity, difference, flexibility rethinking them at the level of cultural continuity, symbolic irregularities and individual actions. She looks for, works with and collects traces that show how culture is constantly being negotiated, redefined and transformed.
Beside her artistic practice, Dražić also initiates and curates collaborative projects and exhibitions.

Igor Duda, PhD, is an assistant professor at the Department of Humanities and a researcher at the Centre for Cultural and Historical Research of Socialism, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula. He graduated in History and Croatian Language and Literature at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb. He earned his MSc (2004) and PhD (2009) degrees in History from the same university. His research fields are social history and the history of everyday life of the second half of the 20th century, history of leisure and the history of consumer society. He is the author of two volumes (in Croatian): *In Pursuit of Well-Being. On History of Leisure and Consumer Society in Croatia in the 1950s and 1960s* (2005) and *Well-Being Found. Everyday Life and Consumer Culture in Croatia in the 1970s and 1980s* (2010). He is the co-founder and was the first head of the Centre for Cultural and Historical Research of Socialism in the year 2012.

Ana Hofman, PhD, an ethnomusicologist, is associate researcher at the Institute of Culture and Memory Studies of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts in Ljubljana and lecturer at the Faculty of Humanities of University of Nova Gorica. Her research interests include music in socialist and post-socialist societies, music and gender, music and cultural memory, applied ethnomusicology and music in neoliberalism, all related to former Yugoslavia and post-Yugoslav societies. She has published a number of book chapters and articles. In 2011 she published the monograph *Staging socialist femininity: Gender Politics and Folklore Performances in Serbia,* Balkan Studies Series, Brill Publishing, and in 2015 *Music, Politics, Affect: New Lives of Partisan Songs in Slovenia*, monograph dealing with the afterlife of partisan songs in Slovenia and the role of music and sound in political mobilization and participation, the potentials of musical alliances and musical self-organization in neoliberalism.

Dejan Kaludjerović was born in Belgrade. For his achievements in the visual arts, Kaludjerović has been granted honorable Austrian citizenship. He is currently a PhD candidate at the Academy of Fine Arts, in Vienna. He gained his MFA in Visual Arts at the Academy of Fine Arts in Belgrade, in 2004. Since the beginning of his career in Belgrade, Kaludjerović has been exploring the conjunction between consumerism and childhood, in order to analyze identity formations and the stability of representational forms. Most of his paintings, drawings, objects, videos and installations, use the processes of recycling, copying and re-enacting, thus creating patterns that simulate mechanical reproduction, and criticize homogeneity embedded in popular culture.

Saša Karalić was born in Ivanjska. He has studied language and literature at Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad, Yugoslavia. In 1992, he moved to Amsterdam where in 1997 graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and continued his art studies for two more years at Royal Collage for Fine Art in Stockholm. He currently lives in Amsterdam and teaches multimedia arts at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy. He is the founder and the head of the *Art in Context – integrated art and theory* program. Karalić works predominantly with video and photography and often organizes his work around staged public events and collective actions. His work focuses on the issue of collectiveness and how collectively constructed interpretations and agreements effect social contexts and create public discourses. Besides his art practice, Karalić occasionally organizes and curates group exhibitions. His work was supported by the Netherlands Fondation for Visual Art, Design and Architecture, Mondriaan Foundation, Swedish Institute and Prins Bernhard Foundation.

Mladen Miljanović was born in Zenica in 1981. After the secondary school he attended the Reserve Officer School where he earned the rank of sergeant. As a sergeant he trained 30 privates. After completion of the military term he enrolled at the Academy of Arts (Department of Painting, BA - MA) in Banja Luka. Lives and works in Banja Luka.

The work of the Montenegrin artist **Irena Lagator Pejović** deals with the issues of social, public and personal space, perception and social responsibility. By recreating social phenomena she is developing critical and poetic questions that can be summarized under her concept of the *Society of Unlimited Responsibility*. Soliciting the interaction of the viewer,

her installations, videos and photographs reflect on topics like art as social strategy, inclusion of cultures, the perception and understanding of reality, individual and collective identity and the responsibility of society, directing the view, thought and feeling of the viewer towards the social issues that have universal values.

Milica Pekić graduated at the Department of Art History at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, and currently working on her PhD thesis at the same University. From 2004 till 2007 she worked as the chef curator of O3ONE gallery in Belgrade, where she realized more than 60 exhibitions, public lectures and workshops involving artists from Serbia and abroad. She is one of co-founders of Belgrade based Kiosk - Platform for contemporary art where she curated more than 20 projects. Since 2013 she is a program director of Gallery 12HUB in Belgrade. Her texts were published in numerous journals, readers and exhibition catalogues in Serbia and abroad.

Maja Pelević graduated at the Faculty od Drama Arts in Belgrade, and received PhD in Theory of Arts and Media at the University of Arts in Belgrade. She is a member of the New Drama Project. Maja Pelević is author of numerous plays, among them *ESCape*, *Out of Gear*, *Lady for a Day*, *Belgrade – Berlin*, *Orange Peel*, *Me or Somebody Else*, *Skočidjevojka*, *Hamlet Hamlet Eurotrash* (with Filip Vujošević), *Fake Porn and Fakebook* (group of authors), *Maybe we are Mickey Mouse*, *Strange Affections*, *Consequences*, *Very Brief History of Serbia* (with Slobodan Obradović). Together with Milan Marković, in 2012 she realized the project *They live – In Search of Text Zero*. She received *Borislav Mihajlović Mihiz Award* for achievement in playwriting, *Slobodan Selenić Award* for the best graduation play, *The Sterijino pozorje Award* for the best original play and *The Sterija Award* for the best contemporary play in 2010.

Olga Manojlović Pintar, PhD, is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institue for Recent History of Serbia in Belgrade. She received her Ph.D at the Belgrade University, Faculty of Philosophy, Department of History in 2005. In the year 1995 she had received the M.A. degree at the Central European University in Budapest. Her fields of interest are the individual and the collective memories and different ways of staging and performing the past in the public space. Recently she had published the book *The Archaeology of Memory, The Monuments and the Identities in Serbia 1918–1989*, UDI, Čigoja štampa, Belgrade 2014.

Martin Pogačar, PhD, is a researcher at the Institute of Culture and Memory Studies of the Slovenian Academy of Science and Arts in Ljubljana. His research focuses on the intersections of media and memory studies, digital memorials and archives, heritage of Yugoslav popular and material culture of industrialization and modernization.

Renata Poljak is a visual artist coming from Split, Croatia. Her body of work is composed of different medias: photos, neon, installation, videos and film. Renata's work has been exhibited widely, on solo and group shows, biennales and film festivals. She received several awards among witch the *Golden Black Box* Award *for Best Short Film* at the Black Box Festival in Berlin 2006 and THT Award from Zagreb Contemporary Art Museum in 2012.

ŠKART *(rejects/ausschus/scarto)* group was founded in 1990 in an abandoned print-studio of the Architecture Faculty in Belgrade, Serbia-Yugoslavia. Survives as a collective which, together with various collaborators and through permanent inner conflict is questioning and mixing architecture, graphic design, publishing, music, theatre, alternative education and social activism. First 10 years the group was developing *self-publishing-self-distributing* strategy of street actions (*Your shit = Your responsibility, Survival Coupons, Nothing for Beginning,* ...). Next 10 years the group launched a long-term process of initiating and developing new collectives and networks (choirs *HORKEŠKART*, *PROBA/rehearsal, + children-choirs: DECA SA MESECA/moon-children, ApriZMAJun/aprildragonjun*, youth-pensioners choir HOR-RUK, anti fashistic choir UHO/ear, female and male embroidery groups, poetry festivals *POETRYING/Pesničenje*, kids poetry+music shows, schools poetry class-attacks-performances, workshops and shows). ŠKART performed, workshopped, exhibited and lectured in Europe, America and Asia. In 2011 ŠKART participated in Venice Bienial of Architecture with SEE-SAW / PLAY-GROW (polygon of dis-balance).

Over the past three decades, **Dubravka Ugrešić** has established herself as one of Europe's most distinctive novelists and essayists. Following degrees in Comparative and Russian Literature, Ugrešić worked for many years at the University of Zagreb's Institute for Theory of Literature, successfully pursuing parallel careers as both a writer and as a scholar. In 1991, when war broke out in the former Yugoslavia, Ugrešić took a firm anti-war stance, critically dissecting retrograde Croatian and Serbian nationalism, the stupidity and criminality of war, becoming a target for nationalist journalists, politicians, and fellow writers in the process. Subjected to prolonged public ostracization and persistent media harassment, she left Croatia in 1993. In an exile that has in time become emigration, her books have been translated into over twenty languages. She has taught at a number of American and European universities, Harvard, UCLA, and the Free University of Berlin among them. Ugrešić lives in Amsterdam.

Nenad Veličković is an associate professor in the Department of Slavistics in the Faculty of Philosphy, University of Sarajevo and one of the most socially engaged writers in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2010 he completed his PhD thesis on *Ideological Instrumentalisation of literature in Bosniak, Croat and Serb textbooks*. His research interests focus on the use of

literature in education and the critique of postmodern nationalistic discourse. He has edited more than 20 books of local and foreign authors for the publishing house Omnibus, which he co-owned from 1999 - 2007. He initiated and edited several magazines and publications (*Vizija*, *Omnibus*, *Alčak*, *FAN, Književni žurnal*). Veličković is author of numerous stories, plays, essays and novels *Konačari*, *Otac moje kćeri*, *Sahib*, *100 zmajeva*. He received several awards for radio plays and in 1995 his story collection *Djavo u Sarajevu* received the award for the best fictional work. He has been a guest lecturer at the universities of Belgrade, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Novi Sad, Skopje, Vienna, Berlin, Heilldelberg, Halle, Leipzig, Gdanjsk, Vroclav, Trieste, Solun, Istanbul, Plovdiv and others.

Stevan Vuković studied philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, where he received his BA. He attended postgraduate studies at the Jan van Eyck Akademie in Maastricht, at Bauhaus in Dessau and at the Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis and Interpretation. He is publishing texts on contemporary art since 1992, since 1996 works as an independent curator, and since 2004 he is the visual arts program director in Student Cultural Centre in Belgrade. Vuković realized more than 20 exhibitions and projects involving artists from Serbia and abroad. He received the *Lazar Trifunović* Award for the best art criticism published in Serbia in 1998, as well as the Association of Art Historians award for the best realized exhibition in Serbia in 2003 (with Zoran Erić).

Radina Vučetić, PhD*,* is an Assistant Professor of General Modern History, Department of History, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. She has published books *Koka-kola socijalizam. Amerikanizacija jugoslovenske popularne kulture šezdesetih godina XX veka* (2012), *Evropa na Kalemegdanu*. *„Cvijeta Zuzorić" i kulturni život Beograda 1918-1941* (Belgrade 2003), *Vreme kada je narod govorio: Odjeci i reagovanja u Politici, 1988-1991* (co-author with Aljoša Mimica, Belgrade 2008), and numerous articles relating to Yugoslav history. Her areas of research interest include Yugoslav modernization in the 20th century, cultural history and history of everyday life. She is a member of the editorial board of the *Annual for Social History*. She took part in various projects in Serbia and abroad.

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FIERY GREETINGS
(A Reprsentative portrait of the childhood in the Socialist Yugoslavia)

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Ana Adamović

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Dušica Dražić, Dejan Kaludjerović, Saša Karalić, Irena Lagator, Mladen Miljanović, Renata Poljak, Dubravka Ugrešić, ŠKART, Ana Adamović

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