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Emilija Cvetković, MA, Research Assistant
Institute of Economic Sciences
emilija.cvetkovic@ien.bg.ac.rs

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American Economist Behind the *Iron Curtain*: John Kenneth Galbraith in Socialist Yugoslavia*

Abstract: *The paper focuses on the relationship between socialist Yugoslavia and the American economist, intellectual, and political figure John Kenneth Galbraith. The research is based on the analysis of archival materials, periodicals, travelogues, and Galbraith's works translated in Yugoslavia. Galbraith's first visit to Yugoslavia in 1958 was an integral part of his study visit to Poland, financed by the Ford Foundation. Based on the travelogue Galbraith wrote after his trip, the article analyzes the picture of the Yugoslav society in the 1950s and its transformation, looking into the period until the economist's second visit in 1989. Finally, through mapping the published monographs, this article analyzes the reception of Galbraith's work in socialist Yugoslavia.*

Keywords: John Kenneth Galbraith, Cold War, Yugoslav-American economic relations, science diplomacy, the image of socialist Yugoslavia.

Introduction

The increased interaction between scientists from the Eastern and the Western bloc coincided with the policy of *thawing* after Stalin's death in 1953. American economists interested in studying the socialist economic systems, linear programming, and mathematical methods in planned economies used every opportunity to travel *behind the Iron Curtain*.¹ Fortunately, the American government recognized

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¹ Johanna Bockman and Eyal Gil, "Eastern Europe as a Laboratory for Economic Knowledge: The Transnational Roots of Neoliberalism", *American Journal of Sociology*, 108, no. 2 (2002), 325.

the potential that culture, art, education, and sciences offer in achieving foreign policy objectives during the Cold War. One significant step in this regard was the passing of the Smith-Mundt Act in 1948, which made public diplomacy an essential segment of American political strategy in institutional terms.² Academic and scientific exchanges supported by various private foundations such as the Ford, Eisenhower, and Fulbright foundations also represented a significant direction of American soft power.³ Due to their association with the government, these foundations had to consider state interests when funding scientists' study stays and training. As a result, scientists, operating within political interests but also in line with their professional interests, became the bearers of *science diplomacy*.⁴ Scientific travels represented an opportunity for knowledge transfer and personal experience enrichment, and learning about new political, social, cultural, and economic systems.

John Kenneth Galbraith, a Canadian-born American economist, public intellectual, and often an outspoken critic of the American system, also embarked on a journey *behind the iron curtain*. The fact that, in addition to his rich academic career, this university professor held various positions in the government service is particularly important. In Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration, he was involved in planning resources for public works under the New Deal; and during World War II he worked for the Office of Price Control.⁵ This *Phileas Fogg of the academic world* as John F. Kennedy called him, alluding to the hero of Jules Verne's famous novel, had a career filled with travels to different parts of the world.⁶ Through the Ford Foundation, Galbraith went on a study visit to Poland and Yugoslavia in 1958.

² Radina Vučetić states that "public diplomacy" has been used in the United States since 1965 to describe cultural propaganda. In France and Great Britain, it is called "cultural diplomacy." Radina Vučetić, „Američka ‘javna diplomatija’ u socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji 50-ih i 60-ih godina XX veka” [American “Public Diplomacy” in Socialist Yugoslavia in the 1950s and 1960s of the 20th Century], *Tokovi istorije*, 1 (2014), 76–77.

³ Joseph S. Nye, Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, (New York: Public Affairs, 2005), 45–46.

⁴ Aleksandra Kolaković, „Naučnici i kulturna diplomatija Srbije” [Scientists and Cultural Diplomacy of Serbia], *Kultura: časopis za teoriju i sociologiju kulture i kulturnu politiku*, 173 (2021), 176. More on topics and approaches in the study of the history of science diplomacy in: Söenke Kunkel, “Science Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century: Introduction”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 56, no. 3 (2021), 473–484.

⁵ More about Galbraith's life in his biography: Ričard Parker, *Džon Kenet Galbrejt – život, politika, ekonomija*, [John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics] (Novi Sad: Mediterran publishing, 2012).

⁶ During John F. Kennedy's presidency, Galbraith served as ambassador to India and published records from his time in that position from 1961–1963 to 1969. (John Kenneth Galbraith, *Ambassador's Journal: A Personal Account of the Kennedy Years*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969). As the president of the American Economic Association in 1972, Galbraith traveled to China with a group of American economists, and after this trip, his impressions were captured in a travelogue. (John Kenneth Galbraith, *A China Passage*, Houghton Mifflin, 1973).

After the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the public condemnation of Stalin, Poland began the search for its own *path to socialism* in 1956. Yugoslavia's independent path began somewhat earlier. Despite rejecting the Marshall Plan for aiding European countries, Yugoslavia started approaching America and Western European countries in economic, political, military, and cultural terms after the split between Tito and Stalin in 1948.⁷ The new Yugoslav political position was accompanied by the intelligentsia, which, beginning with the 1950s, turned towards the West, in order to pursue education and opportunities for improvement.

Galbraith transformed his experience from the two countries, which demonstrated a distinct form of socialism from that of Moscow, into a memoir-style travelogue, which he published a few months after returning to the United States.⁸ The Yugoslav scientific community and readers remained engaged with Galbraith's scientific work and political involvement even after his initial visit to Belgrade in 1958. In 1989, Galbraith made a return visit to Yugoslavia during a period of significant upheaval, marked by the dissolution of the country, a shift in its international standing, and sweeping political, social, and economic transformations reminiscent of those being experienced across other countries in the Eastern Bloc.

In recent decades, travelogues, diaries, and reports have become increasingly valuable sources for research across various scientific disciplines, including Cold War history.⁹ The recorded impressions of visitors who observe a particular political system from the outside, represent an important source for reflecting on this political system's characteristics. However, the biases and interests of the observers themselves could influence these reflections. When Western intellectuals constructed ideas of socialist societies, they faced numerous limitations. Sociologist Paul Hollander writes

⁷ More in: Tvrtko Jakovina, *Američki komunistički saveznik: Hrvati, Titova Jugoslavija i Sjedinjene američke države: 1945–1955* [American communist ally, Croats, Tito's Yugoslavia and the USA 1945 – 1955.], (Zagreb: Profil international, 2003).; Lorejn M. Lis, *Održavanje Tita na površini: Sjedinjene Države, Jugoslavija i Hladni rat* [Keeping Tito Afloat: The United States, Yugoslavia, and the Cold War], (Beograd: BMG, 2003); Emilija Z. Cvetković, "Dva plana i dva maršala" u svetlu jugoslovensko-američkih odnosa", [„Two plans and two Marshals” in the light of Yugoslav-American relations (1947–1951)], *Baumuna*, 57 (2022), 253–270.

⁸ Galbraith's travelogue-memoir text aroused significant interest among readers, being published during a time of heightened Soviet-American rivalry in the space race, which was particularly fueled by the Soviet launch of Sputnik. It sold out in 10,000 copies. Ričard Parker, *Džon Kenet Galbrejt – život, politika, ekonomija*, [John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics], 485.

⁹ In Serbian historiography that deals with the Cold War period, travelogues are used as historical sources in the following works: Radina Vučetić, „Amerika u jugoslovenskim putopisima: Pogled kroz gvozdenu zavesu” [America in Yugoslav travel writings. A look through the Iron Curtain], *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju*, 1–3, 12 (2005), 65–83.; Milorad Lazić, „(Re)inventing Yugoslavia: American Cold War Narratives about Yugoslavia, 1945–1955”, *Годишњак за друштвену историју*, 20, 3 (2013), 49–72.; Nemanja Radonjić, “From Kragujevac to Kilimanjaro”: Imagining and Re-imagining Africa and the Self-perception of Yugoslavia in the Travelogues from Socialist Yugoslavia, *Годишњак за друштвену историју*, 23, 2 (2016), 55–89.

in his book *Political Pilgrims: Western Intellectuals in Search of the Good Society* how American, French, and British intellectuals sometimes created almost utopian images of socialist societies due to their dissatisfaction with their home countries, as well as the influence of the techniques of hospitality used by host countries.¹⁰ Throughout history, many economists, including Galbraith, traveled extensively. This provided them with opportunities to learn about other economies and rethink existing economic systems and practices.¹¹

This study aims to investigate various facets of Galbraith's attitudes toward socialist Yugoslavia. The first section looks into his initial visit to Yugoslavia in the context of Yugoslav-American relations and science diplomacy. The subsequent analysis delves into Galbraith's travelogue as a source for contemplating Yugoslavia during the 1950s. The final part of the study focuses on the ramifications of Galbraith's scholarly work in socialist Yugoslavia up to 1989, alongside the economic transformations that this nation faced in its twilight years. Ultimately, employing a novel conceptual framework,¹² the personal experience of the American economist will be examined in the light of his previously established networks of scientific contacts, which represent a crucial element in academic careers.

Between Science and Politics: A Harvard Professor in Belgrade

On May 8, 1958, John Kenneth Galbraith embarked on a study trip to Warsaw courtesy of a Ford Foundation scholarship. The foundation had initiated an exchange program with Poland after the country distanced itself from Moscow's dictatorship and embraced liberal reforms under Władysław Gomułka in 1956.¹³ Galbraith's prior

¹⁰ Paul Hollander, *Political Pilgrims: Western Intellectuals in Search of the Good Society*, 4th edition, (London and New York: Routledge, 1997).

¹¹ For economists like John Stuart Mill, Thomas Malthus, Alfred Marshall, John Maynard Keynes, Joan Robinson, Douglas North, and others, traveling and encountering "otherness" provided new frameworks for further research and scientific hypotheses. For more information, see: Mauro Boianovsky, „2017 HES Presidential Address: Economists and their Travels, or the Time when JFK sent Douglass North on a Mission to Brazil”, *Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 40, no. 2 (2018), 149–177; Mauro Boianovsky, Gerardo Serra, „Reports from China: Joan Robinson as Observer and Travel Writer, 1953–78”. *History of Political Economy* 54, no. 3 (2022), 547–569; João Sicsú, “Keynes's state planning: from bolshevism to The General Theory”, *The European Journal of the History of Economic Thought*, 28, 3 (2021), 352–374.

¹² Ludovic Tournes and Giles Scott-Smith, “A World of Exchanges: Conceptualizing the History of International Scholarship Programs (Nineteenth to Twenty-First Centuries)” in *Global Exchanges: Scholarships and Transnational Circulations in the Modern World*, eds. Ludovic Tournes, Giles Scott-Smith, (New York: Berghahn Books, 2017), 1–33.

¹³ Ingeborg Stensrud, “Soft Power” Deployed. Ford Foundation's Fellowship Programs in Communist Eastern Europe in the 1950s and 1960s”, *Monde(s)*, 6, no. 2 (2014), 117.

contacts, especially his acquaintance with economist Oskar Lange,¹⁴ facilitated his navigation of the unfamiliar terrain. Two weeks later, on May 23, 1958, Galbraith arrived in Belgrade.¹⁵ Unlike his previous visit, this trip to the Yugoslav capital was not planned as an integral part of the Ford Foundation program. However, personal contacts, again, played a significant role. The visit to Yugoslavia was made possible through an invitation that came directly from Janez Stanovnik, the then-director of the Yugoslav Institute of International Politics and Economics.

The Institute of International Politics and Economics was founded with the mission to develop “intensive cooperation with prominent foreign scholars and public workers, who present the most current issues in the field of economic and political issues through lectures at the Institute.”¹⁶ As such, the invitation extended to the renowned American economist John Kenneth Galbraith perfectly aligned with the Institute’s goals. Since its inception, the Institute was primarily a scientific institution with ties to Yugoslav foreign policy and economic objectives. One of its earliest aims was to assess the effects of the Marshall Plan, a potent tool of American economic aid, on Yugoslavia, with assistance from documentation provided by Yugoslav embassies in Washington and London.¹⁷ Additionally, the director, Janez Stanovnik, actively followed the American economic thought and was a member of the Permanent Mission of the Federal People’s Republic of Yugoslavia to the United Nations from 1952 onwards. During this period, he had the opportunity to meet and discuss economic matters with distinguished American economists such as Paul Samuelson and Simon Kuznets.¹⁸

The international collaboration of the Institute of International Politics and Economics during the late 1950s exemplified Yugoslavia’s foreign policy orientation and the distinctiveness of the institution, which attracted prominent economists of both Marxist and non-Marxist backgrounds from around the world. However, this exchange

¹⁴ Oskar Lange was an economist of Polish origin who acquired knowledge of neoclassical economic theory in America. After World War II, he returned to Poland, holding significant political positions. Through his recommendations, Lange influenced the economic policy of Poland and introduced elements of market socialism into the centrally planned system. Johanna Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011), 32–33.

¹⁵ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1958), 75–76.

¹⁶ Arhiv Jugoslavije (further reference AJ) [The Archives of Yugoslavia], collection 748, box 28, archival unit no. 212/1, Zajednička komisija Savezne narodne skupštine i Saveznog izvršnog veća za pitanja univerziteta-visokih i viših škola [Joint Commission of the Federal National Assembly and the Federal Executive Council for University-University and Higher Education Issues], 19. 2. 1958.

¹⁷ Đoko Tripković, „Jugoslavija i Maršalov plan” [Yugoslavia and the Marshall Plan], *Istorija 20. veka*, 1–2 (1990), 74.

¹⁸ Jože Pirjevec and Jure Ramšak, *Od Mašuna do New Yorka: 20. stoletje skozi pričevanja štirih slovenskih diplomatov* [From Mašun to New York: 20th century through the testimonies of four Slovenian diplomats], (Koper: Univerzitetna založba Annales, 2014), 35.

of knowledge was not one-sided. Domestic economists, including Jakov Sirotković, Ivan Maksimović, Branko Horvat, and Vladimir Stipetić, also left the country in the 1950s in order to seek further education and acquire knowledge about the potential applications of new methodologies and mathematical models to the economic system of socialist Yugoslavia.¹⁹ In 1957, the Polish economist Oskar Lange delivered lectures on the role of planning in socialist economies at the Institute, while Paul Sweezy, a professor of economics at Harvard, spoke about American capitalism.²⁰ The Institute's work plan for 1958 included a dynamic program and visits from prominent British economists Joan Robinson and Maurice Dobb, as well as John Kenneth Galbraith from Harvard.²¹ Galbraith's academic contributions were recognized at the Institute even before his visit; one of his most famous works titled *American Capitalism* from 1952 was reviewed in the journal *International Problems* published by the Institute,²² while his 1955 book *The Great Crash 1929* was included in the Institute's list of literature ordered from abroad.²³

The visit to socialist Yugoslavia was significant for Galbraith, especially regarding his scientific interests during the 1950s that covered issues of global economic inequality and development economics. His intellectual curiosity led him to India in 1956, where he contributed to the drafting of the Indian Second Five-Year Plan for economic development alongside a large number of economists from various parts of the world gathered on the initiative of Oscar Lange.²⁴

Two years later, he found himself in a country that openly promoted its non-aligned foreign policy orientation. A subtle announcement of the lecture series in the newspaper *Borba* was the only mention in the daily press that testified to the stay of the American economist in Yugoslavia. His three-day presentations on the most significant characteristics and contemporary tendencies in the American economy, outlined in his most famous works *American Capitalism* and *The Great Crash 1929*, were held at the Institute of International Politics and Economics in Makedonska Street, No. 25, in front of a diverse audience.²⁵

¹⁹Johanna Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism*, 85.

²⁰AJ, 748-240, Pregled saradnje sa naučnim institucijama i javnim ustanovama 1957 [Overview of cooperation with scientific institutions and public institutions].

²¹AJ, 748-240, Program rada Instituta za međunarodnu politiku i privredu za 1958. godinu [Work Program of the Institute of International Politics and Economy for 1958].

²²S. R., „American Capitalism”, *Međunarodni problemi*, 2 (1957), 130–131.

²³AJ, 748-28-104/1, Jugoslovenska knjiga, uvozno odeljenje [Yugoslav Book, Import Department], 28. 1. 1958

²⁴More in: Małgorzata Mazurek, “Polish Economists in Nehru's India: Making Science for the Third World in an Era of De-Stalinization and Decolonization”, *Slavic Review*, vol. 77, no. 3, (2018), 588–610.

²⁵„Predavanja” [Lectures], *Borba*, 26. 5. 1958, 7.

Drawing on the ideas of Keynes and the economic historian Charles Kindleberger, Galbraith also considered the historical context in his analysis of economic phenomena, distancing himself from mathematical models.²⁶ In his lectures, he first analyzed the history of the American economy, presenting the significant changes that occurred during the Great Depression. According to Galbraith, this led to the collapse of the previous capitalist system, which had functioned thanks to free competition and was recognizable by the absence of state intervention.²⁷ In America, the reexamination of old economic concepts led to a need for alternative solutions, the most influential of which was Keynes' theory of demand management, outlined in his *General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money*, where the state assumes the role of demand regulator.²⁸ In further discussions, Galbraith addressed the analysis of the American economy after World War II, noting that alongside monopolies, markets had become richer in oligopolies or smaller numbers of larger companies that had taken control of certain industrial sectors. His second discussion was devoted to countervailing power: trade unions and other organizations that opposed the concentration of economic power in the hands of capital owners. Galbraith concluded his lecture series with a review of the challenges facing the American economy at the time, such as unemployment and inflation, in line with his belief that *an economist does not deal with achievements, but with failures*.²⁹

The invitation for Galbraith's lectures extended beyond the collaborators of the Institute, including researchers from related institutions and faculties.³⁰ It even reached the Yugoslav Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In its statement to the Ministry, the Institute not only acknowledged Galbraith's place in economic sciences, but also underscored his role in the American political world. Specifically, the invitation emphasized Galbraith's position as *the closest economic adviser to the late President Roosevelt*, his contribution to the drafting of the Second Indian Five-Year Plan, and his status as the chief economic adviser to the Democratic Party at the time.³¹ By doing so,

²⁶ Alpar Lošonc, „Kritički etos političke-ekonomije Džona Keneta Galbrajta” [The critical ethos of John Kenneth Galbraith's political economy], *Politikon*, br. 10 (2015), 41–42.

²⁷ L., „Četiri predavanja profesora Galbrejta” [Professor Galbraith's Four Lectures], *Ekonomaska politika*, 31. 5. 1958, 503.

²⁸ All of the Galbraith's lectures were published in the journal *International Problems* from 1958 in the form of an integral article by Filip Pap. John Kenneth Galbraith, „Američka ekonomija: jedna interpretacija nedavne istorije (predavanje)” [The American Economy: One Interpretation of the Recent History (lecture)], *Međunarodni problemi*, 3 (1958), 125.

²⁹ John Kenneth Galbraith, „Američka ekonomija: jedna interpretacija nedavne istorije (predavanje)” [The American Economy: One Interpretation of the Recent History (lecture)], 125.

³⁰ AJ, 748-28-212/1, Zajednička komisija Savezne narodne skupštine i Saveznog izvršnog veća za pitanja univerziteta-visokih i viših škola [Joint Commission of the Federal National Assembly and the Federal Executive Council for University-University and Higher Education Issues].

³¹ Ministarstva spoljnih poslova Republike Srbije Diplomatski arhiv [The Diplomatic Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia], Politička arhiva [Political Archive], 1958,

the scientific visit was imbued with a political character and potential significance, particularly given the recently deteriorated relations between Belgrade and Moscow.³²

Subsequent recollections by John Kenneth Galbraith suggest that his visit to Belgrade was intricately tied to the state of Yugoslav-American relations and the US foreign policy towards the Eastern Bloc. In early 1958, the US National Security Council formulated and adopted the strategic document NSC 5805, which recommended the continuation of economic assistance to Yugoslavia through the PL-480 program, notwithstanding the challenges faced in its deliveries.³³ This aid was intended to bolster Yugoslavia's political independence from the Soviet Union and enable it to serve as an exemplar for other socialist nations by catalyzing economic growth and promoting reform.³⁴ Once Galbraith's trip to Poland was confirmed, an emissary from Washington advised him that Yugoslavs wished to avoid being perceived as less liberal than the Poles.³⁵ Consequently, Galbraith's protracted visit to Belgrade served to reinforce the US policy that accorded Yugoslavia an exceptional position among socialist countries during the Cold War.

It is noteworthy that during his brief study visit, Galbraith had intended to meet with the Yugoslav president, Josip Broz Tito. To facilitate this, Stanovnik sent a letter on behalf of the foreign visitor to the Cabinet of the President of the Republic in early May. The letter highlighted Galbraith's reputation as one of the most distin-

SAD [United States of America], folder 15, file 412454 [further reference DAMSP, PA, 1958, f. 15, SAD, file 412454], Dopis Instituta za međunarodnu politiku i privredu Državnom sekretarijatu za inostrane poslove – Američko odeljenje [Letter from the Institute of International Politics and Economics to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs – American Department], 24. 5. 1958.

³²The indication of this deterioration was present in late 1957. Yugoslavia then refused to sign the Declaration of the 12 Communist Parties, considering that it would acknowledge the patronage of the Soviet Union among socialist countries. The culmination of the conflict occurred after the April Seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, which the Soviets perceived as a Yugoslav reaction to the postulates of the Declaration. Dragan Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike: 1956–1961* [New Strategy of the Yugoslav Foreign Policy 1956–1961], (Beograd: Institut za savremenu istoriju, 2006), 184–186.

³³Based on the framework of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954, the United States started selling agricultural surpluses to Yugoslavia in dinars. This form of economic aid, in which Yugoslavia was a significant recipient, persisted throughout the 1960s. Ljubiša S. Adamović, Džon R. Lempi i Rasel O. Priket, *Američko-jugoslovenski ekonomski odnosi posle Drugog svetskog rata* [Yugoslav-American Economic Relations Since World War II], (Beograd: NIP Radnička štampa, 1990), 53–58. For more detailed information regarding the economic aid from the United States to socialist Yugoslavia look in: Milan J. Igrutinović, „Jugoslovensko-američki ekonomski odnosi: (1954–1968)”, [Yugoslav-American Economic Relations: (1954–1968)], (Phd Dissertation at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2018).

³⁴Milan J. Igrutinović, „Jugoslovensko-američki ekonomski odnosi: (1954–1968)”, [Yugoslav-American Economic Relations: (1954–1968)], (Phd Dissertation at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade, 2018), 152–153.

³⁵John Kenneth Galbraith, *A life in our times: memoirs*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1981), 350.

^{A1} 837-I-3-a/107-71, Prijem profesora Harvardskog univerziteta J. K. Galbraith-a, 5. 5. 1958.

guished economists in contemporary America and stressed the potential significance of a meeting between Tito and Galbraith in establishing stronger ties with American economists.³⁶ Despite this effort, Galbraith's subsequent travelogue revealed that the meeting was canceled, as well as that Tito did not meet with other Americans who were in Belgrade at the time either.³⁷ While archival materials do not provide a detailed explanation for the cancellation, Galbraith's notes suggest that other obligations of the Yugoslav president may have been a factor. Indeed, during this period, Yugoslav-Soviet relations were severely strained, with the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* even reporting on Yugoslav support for *American imperialists*. Moreover, the planned visit of the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, Kliment Voroshilov to Belgrade on May 10, 1958, was canceled and the Soviet loan for the development of the Yugoslav industry was suspended by the end of May.³⁸ Under these circumstances, a meeting with the American economist might have been perceived as problematic.

The well-established network of contacts in the academic community that bridged the East-West divide played a crucial role in facilitating Galbraith's visit to Yugoslavia. However, the significance of the visit cannot be fully appreciated by analyzing it solely from a scientific perspective. Beginning in the mid-1950s, the official US policy towards Yugoslavia entailed substantial military and economic aid aimed at bolstering its independent path. At a time when complex global circumstances and Yugoslav-American disagreements over international crises strained political relations, cultural ties with the West grew in importance.³⁹ It is worth noting that the visit of a renowned American scholar could also be seen through the prism of American public diplomacy and Yugoslav's Cold War positioning. Specifically, it coincided with a period during which the Ford Foundation was actively negotiating the inclusion of Yugoslavia in American exchange and scholarship programs. After several years of negotiations, which met with varying degrees of success, the official cooperation agreement between Yugoslavia and the Ford Foundation was finalized soon after Galbraith's visit.⁴⁰

³⁶AJ, 837-I-3-a/107-71, Prijem profesora Harvardskog univerziteta J. K. Galbraith-a [Reception of Harvard University Professor J. K. Galbraith], 5. 5.1958.

³⁷During his seven-day visit to Yugoslavia, Galbraith was only able to catch a glimpse of Tito from afar. When Galbraith was riding in a black limousine accompanied by four other cars, Tito sped through a rural area, disrupting normal traffic. Based on this "encounter" with Tito, Galbraith noted that he would have expected a wise man with such power to drive not only more slowly but also in a more modest means of transportation. John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 78, 81.

³⁸Dragan Bogetić, *Nova strategija jugoslovenske spoljne politike: 1956–196* [*New Strategy of the Yugoslav Foreign Policy 1956–1961*], 191–194.

³⁹Tvrtko Jakovina, *Socijalizam na američkoj pšenici: (1948–1963)* [*Socialism on the American Grain*], (Zagreb: Matica hrvatska, 2002), 90–91.

⁴⁰Radina Vučetić, „Američke stipendije u Jugoslaviji 50-ih i 60-ih godina XX veka” [US Scholarships in Yugoslavia in the 1950s and 1960s], *Tokovi istorije*, 2 (2019), 139.

Galbraith's sketches for a portrait of socialist Yugoslavia

In the mid-1950s, the press in the United States expressed praise for Yugoslavia's industrialization and began to write about Yugoslav self-management as a social, economic, and political phenomenon. Representatives of the Yugoslav Embassy in the United States believed that American interest in self-management was motivated by pragmatic reasons and the need to study *the achievements of the communist world if the United States wishes to position itself correctly within it*.⁴¹ John Kenneth Galbraith's visit to Yugoslavia and Poland took place during a significant period for the author, namely between the submission and publication of the manuscript for one of his key works called *The Affluent Society*. Behind the title, which would become a frequently used term for societies characterized by high living standards, prosperity, and consumerism, was Galbraith's sharp criticism of the American economic policy, which had led to an unequal distribution of resources, resulting in poverty and unemployment.⁴² Therefore, this is an example of how the American social and economic system critic viewed the world through an imaginary line of a divided world opens up a new perspective in analyzing this topic.

Galbraith observed an unexpected commonality during his travels to Poland and Yugoslavia: the absence of anti-American sentiment in both countries.⁴³ That was noteworthy because he emphasized the unique features of the systems rather than highlighting their similarities. While engaging in scholarly activities and delivering lectures, Galbraith also seized the opportunity to observe and understand the Yugoslav system. He arrived in Belgrade in 1958 after his stay in Poland, and his perception of Yugoslav society was undoubtedly influenced by his impressions of the socialist country he had previously visited. In addition to his scholarly work, Galbraith engaged in informal meetings with various individuals, including politicians, economic planning experts, academics, students, representatives from the American embassy, and local residents.⁴⁴ Through these encounters, he sought to gain a better understanding of the political, economic, social, and cultural context of his surroundings. During his time in Yugoslavia, he met with local economic officials whom he described as

⁴¹ DAMSP, PA, 1958, f. 113, SAD, file 413742, Izveštaj o propagandi u SAD [US Propaganda Report], 1958.

⁴² Stephen P. Dunn, *The Economics of John Kenneth Galbraith: Introduction, Persuasion, and Rehabilitation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), 25–27.

⁴³ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 84.

⁴⁴ In John Kenneth Galbraith's travelogue about his journey to Poland and Yugoslavia, he did not dedicate much space to describing his encounters with people. Additionally, in the preface of the book, the author refrained from mentioning the names of his conversation partners during the trip to both countries. John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, VII.

pro-American communists, he also observed the popularity of American writers such as Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Arthur Miller, and Tennessee Williams.⁴⁵

Galbraith's arrival in Yugoslavia coincided with a period in which the priority of economic policy was to improve the population's standard of living, as opposed to the previous orientation towards achieving high rates of economic growth and industrialization.⁴⁶ The Seventh Congress of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, held in April 1958 in Ljubljana, emphasized the focus on light industry and the agricultural sector as priorities of the Second Five-Year Plan.⁴⁷ This shift in focus towards consumer goods production and agriculture was part of a broader trend in Yugoslavia at the time, as the government aimed to improve its citizens' living standards. The integration of elements of a market-oriented economy that would enable the realization of these plans in socialist Yugoslavia and increase worker productivity was accompanied by divided opinions among the party leadership.⁴⁸

In this American economist's portrayal of the Yugoslav society, a critical moment was the depiction of many private vehicles in the Yugoslav capital.⁴⁹ According to the research of Predrag J. Marković, 1958 was a turning point in the Yugoslav perception of cars, as they went from being a luxury item only available to certain social groups, to becoming accessible to a larger number of citizens.⁵⁰ This first impression of the American economist was a significant indicator of the societal standard. However, this should be approached cautiously, especially considering it was based on observations from the city's streets.⁵¹ In his notes, Galbraith mentioned the availability of imported

⁴⁵ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 86–87, 81.

⁴⁶ The period of Yugoslav history from 1952 to 1960 represented a period of "economic miracle," characterized by a gross national product growth rate per capita of 8.5% annually, an industrial production growth rate of 13.4%, and an agricultural production growth rate of 8.9%. These figures are according to Branko Horvat, *Yugoslav Economic Policy In The Post-War Period: Problems, Ideas, Institutional Developments*, (Beograd: Institut ekonomskih nauka, 1971), 7.

⁴⁷ Igor Duda, *U potrazi za blagostanjem: o povjesti dokolice i potrošačkog društva u Hrvatskoj 1959-ih i 1960-ih [In Pursuit of Holidays and Well-Being: On History of Leisure and Consumer Society in Croatia in the 1950s and 1960s]*, (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2005), 44–47.

⁴⁸ Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, *The Economic Struggle for Power in Tito's Yugoslavia: From World War II to Non-Alignment*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), 167–175.

⁴⁹ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 76.

⁵⁰ Predrag J. Marković states that in 1957, the Yugoslav government encouraged the adoption of regulations that influenced the facilitation of the import of foreign vehicles. Because of this, the number of cars in Yugoslavia increased considerably, and of the 8,745 vehicles registered in 1958, 6,750 were imported from West Germany and Italy. Predrag J. Marković, *Beograd između Istoka i Zapada: 1948–1965 [Belgrade between East and West 1945–1965]*, (Beograd: Službeni list SRJ, 1996), 306–307.

⁵¹ Although between 1950 and 1960, the number of cars in private ownership increased sevenfold, it was still relatively small and amounted to 2.9 cars per 1000 inhabitants. Patric Hyder, *Bought and Sold: Living and Losing the Good Life in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 2011), 34. as cited in Ivana Dobrivojević Tomić, „Od krize do krize. Životni standard u Jugoslaviji 1955–1965” [From Crisis to Crisis: Living Standard in Yugoslavia 1955–1965], *Prispevki za novejšo zgodovino* 56, no. 1 (2016), 151.

products of various qualities in Belgrade stores, the well-dressed ladies, and diverse fashion.⁵² Although many Western goods from abroad were seen in Yugoslavia, one still had to go outside the country to cities like Trieste to acquire many of them.⁵³ Galbraith was aware that the standard of living he witnessed in Yugoslavia had been achieved thanks to extensive economic support, including that from abroad. He raised a series of open questions to point out the dilemmas facing the Yugoslav leadership regarding sustainability of a policy relying on foreign aid.⁵⁴

While staying in Yugoslavia, the economist was impressed by the quality of service in the capital's restaurants, and he contrasted this with his experiences in Poland. He noted the luxurious atmosphere, excellent food and wine, and the elite hotel Metropol.⁵⁵ However, the American economist's favorable experience with the service industry did not reflect the reality faced by most Yugoslavs, who had to allocate a significant portion of their income to food and basic needs. At the restaurant in the Metropol Hotel, he had a fascinating conversation with a young woman in her late twenties. Her perspective offered him insight into the problems faced by Yugoslavs, such as the high cost of clothing and housing in a crowded city.⁵⁶ Alongside inflation, housing dissatisfaction was one of the primary issues the Yugoslavs had encountered during this period. Although the plan was to increase investment in housing construction, it did not correspond with the number of newly built apartments.⁵⁷

The general impression of the American economist was that Yugoslavia had a significantly higher standard of living than Poland. Despite the changes that occurred in the 1950s concerning the democratization of the society and cultural openness towards the West, Polish stores did not stock goods from Western Europe or America, and the development of the service industry was modest.⁵⁸ The economic life in Poland was in line with the expectations that a visitor from the West might have had. Unlike capitalism, where everything was subordinated to sales and the service sector, communist ideology focused on the producer and their productivity. In this sense, the Yugoslav reality witnessed by Galbraith embodied the diversity compared

⁵² John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 76.

⁵³ Francesca Rolandi, „Yugoslavia Looking Westward: Transnational Consumer Contact with Italy During the 1960s”, *The Cultural Life of Capitalism in Yugoslavia. (Post)Socialism and Its Other*, Edited by Dijana Jelača, Maša Kolanović and Danijela Lugić, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 196–197.

⁵⁴ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 80.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 87.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 77–78.

⁵⁷ From 1955–1958. funds for housing construction increased by 47%, while the number of newly built apartments increased by 25% due to the slow modernization of the construction sector and the increase in the price of construction materials. Ivana Dobrivojević Tomić, „Od krize do krize. Životni standard u Jugoslaviji 1955–1965” [From Crisis to Crisis: Living Standard in Yugoslavia 1955–1965], 153.

⁵⁸ Porter-Szücs Brian, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom*, (Wiley-Blackwell: Chichester, 2014); 241.

to other Eastern Bloc countries.⁵⁹ It also confirmed Tito's statement that those who fought for socialism *should at least enjoy its fruits*.⁶⁰

As part of Galbraith's initial professional interests in the agricultural sector, his hosts took him on a journey to the northern parts of Yugoslavia. Passing through the landscapes of Vojvodina on the Day of Youth, the American visitor saw experimental agricultural stations for growing hybrid corn and other experimental agricultural goods, based on which he gained the impression that Yugoslav stations were much better equipped than those he had visited in Poland.⁶¹ The presentation of well-thought-out Yugoslav goods was in line with the hosts' desire to present the country to the eminent American economist in the most representative form possible. Regarding the agricultural sector, good representation was also crucial due to the multi-year problem of shortages of corn and wheat, which required imports from abroad, with the United States leading as a supplier based on the law PL-480 mentioned above.

Galbraith's travelogue recounts his experience during the agricultural tour in Yugoslavia. During that trip, he met a companion, a student from the University of Illinois, who was eager to elevate the level of agricultural sciences in the country.⁶² The student testified that American aid to Yugoslavia during this period was not exclusively material but was also manifested through the transfer of knowledge. Galbraith was also interested in how the Yugoslav economy would address problems in the agricultural sector. The issues with that sector and the reduction in agricultural productivity were results of the blockade of Yugoslav export to the Soviet Union and other Eastern Bloc countries after the Tito-Stalin split and the abandonment of forced collectivization policies. He learned about the planned agricultural investments, which doubled from 1954 to 1957, but remained relatively low.⁶³ The expected increase in economic productivity was to be achieved through investments in fertilizers, hybrid corn, and mechanization, while collectivization would be replaced with voluntary cooperation. However, Galbraith expressed skepticism about implementing these plans and their long-term effects. The Yugoslav hosts aimed to present the country in the most representative form possible, given the multi-year problem of shortages of corn and wheat requiring imports from abroad, with the United States as a leading supplier based on the PL-480 rule. During the tour, Galbraith saw experimental agricultural stations in the northern parts of Yugoslavia that grew hybrid corn and other

⁵⁹Timo Vihavainen, „The Spirit of Consumerism in Russia and the West”, *Communism and Consumerism*, Edited by Timo Vihavainen and Elena Bogdanova, (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2016), 4–5.

⁶⁰John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 80.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 82–83.

⁶²*Ibid.*, 83.

⁶³Vladimir Unkovski-Korica, *The Economic Struggle for Power in Tito's Yugoslavia: From World War II to Non-Alignment*, 141.

experimental agricultural goods, which gave him the impression that these stations were much better equipped than those he had visited in Poland.⁶⁴

The concept of self-management was closely linked to Yugoslavia's position in the Cold War bloc division of the world. From the first indications of that concept in 1949, shortly after the split between Tito and Stalin, and especially during the 1950s, it was intended to serve as a platform for leaving behind former allies, the Soviet Union, and other Eastern bloc countries, and turning Yugoslavia towards the West. The topic of self-managing socialism became significant not only in political but also in scientific terms in America when economist Benjamin Ward presented a theoretical model of the Yugoslav, or *Illyrian*, enterprise in 1958. The model combined elements of planning in line with the practices of socialist countries and elements of market economies.⁶⁵ During his brief stay, Galbraith did not have the opportunity to visit Yugoslav enterprises and gain a firsthand impression of their work in practice. Nevertheless, through conversations with economists and government officials, he concluded that there were political motives for introducing market elements into the Yugoslav economy.⁶⁶ The essence of Yugoslav *market socialism* was considered a system of free prices and the autonomy of enterprises that regulated 70% of prices.⁶⁷ In a brief overview of the institution of the workers' council, Galbraith emphasized that it was responsible for improving the performance of enterprises. Reflecting an American perspective and a politically biased standpoint, he concluded that he *did not encounter anyone who was disposed to think that Russian doctrine and experience should be considered the guide* and that Yugoslavia is persistent in maintaining its own course.⁶⁸ Thus, Galbraith's excerpt from the portrait of Yugoslavia in the late 1950s concluded precisely with what was particular to this system and what best corresponded to the idea of the *third way* – a general overview of workers' self-management.

History of an Uninterrupted Connection: Yugoslavia (Again) on Galbraith's Map

The appeal of Galbraith's work in Yugoslavia was already evident by the early 1960s when excerpts from his book *American Capitalism* were used in courses at

⁶⁴ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 91–92.

⁶⁵ Saul Estrin and Milica Uvalic, "From Illyria towards capitalism: Did labour-management theory teach us anything about Yugoslavia and transition in its successor states?", *Comparative Economic Studies* 50 (2008): 663–665.

⁶⁶ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 99–100.

⁶⁷ In 1958, Yugoslav enterprises gained the possibility of independent revenue distribution during the process of decentralization. Branko Horvat, *Yugoslav Economic Policy In The Post-War Period: Problems, Ideas, Institutional Developments*, 33.

⁶⁸ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 100.

the Faculty of Political Sciences.⁶⁹ From the mid-1960s, new works by Galbraith gradually expanded beyond narrow circles of economic experts who had access to foreign literature, reaching a broader readership. Several months after Galbraith's first visit to Yugoslavia in 1958, *The Affluent Society* was published in America. The Slovenian translation of this book, published in Ljubljana in 1964, represented the first translation of a work written by Galbraith in Yugoslavia.⁷⁰

Galbraith's influential work *The New Industrial State*, published in 1967, further explores the role of large corporations in developed countries, the changes in economic power structures, and the importance of technology in the post-war world. According to Galbraith, the functioning of modern enterprises in both capitalist and socialist economies depended on planning, which was the responsibility of a group of experts or *technostructure*. Yugoslav readers first encountered these ideas in articles published in the Belgrade magazine *Economic Policy*.⁷¹ The original book was translated into Serbo-Croatian and published in 1970. Galbraith's work remains relevant today as it offers insights into the organization and functioning of modern corporations and the role of planning and technology in shaping economies.⁷²

Galbraith's *The New Industrial State* swiftly gained acclaim as a bestseller of economic literature in the West upon its publication. Its fundamental tenets found their way to President Tito through a review penned by Dr. Berislav Šefer, a Yugoslav political scientist. This review provided an in-depth analysis of Galbraith's theory of convergence of economic systems as a significant contribution to the discourse surrounding the relationship between capitalist and socialist nations and the prospects of their cooperation, as opposed to confrontation.⁷³ The appeal of Galbraith's ideas in the late 1960s coincided with Yugoslavia's adoption and acceptance of economic reforms in 1965 which extended to economic relations with foreign nations. Notably, Yugoslavia strove to integrate into the international capital flows and establish collaborations with both capitalist and socialist economies.⁷⁴ Drago Buvač, a journalist

⁶⁹ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Snaga protivdejtstvujućeg uticaja i država: (iz knjige: "Američki kapitalizam")* [en excerpt from the book „American Capitalism“], (Beograd: Visoka škola političkih nauka, 1962).

⁷⁰ John K. Galbraith, *Družba, ki živi v izobilju* [*Affluent Society*], (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1964).

⁷¹ „Galbrajt: Era prilagođavanja“ [*The Era of Adjustment*], *Ekonomska politika*, 16. 9. 1967, 1138., „Plan i tržište“ [*The Plan and Market*], *Ekonomska politika*, 12. 2. 1968, 187–188.

⁷² John Kenneth Galbraith, *Nova industrijska država* [*The New Industrial State*], Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1970.

⁷³ AJ, 837-III-B-1-s, J. K. Galbrajt: Nova industrijska država [J. K. Galbraith: The New Industrial State], 24. 4. 1969.

⁷⁴ More in: Emilija Cvetković, „Novi oblici ekonomske saradnje sa inostranstvom i (li) samoupravljanje: Institucionalni okviri zajedničkih ulaganja u Jugoslaviji tokom 1967. i 1968. godine“ [New forms of economic cooperation with foreign countries and (or) self-management: Institutional frameworks of joint ventures in Yugoslavia during 1967 and 1968], *Značaj institucionalnih promena u ekonomiji Srbije*

and economic analyst, attested to Galbraith's popularity among Yugoslav economists during the 1960s, mainly because it presented the prospect of professional economists influencing economic policy.⁷⁵

The enduring relationship between Galbraith and socialist Yugoslavia was mutually beneficial. The contact established with the Harvard professor provided valuable insights into the Yugoslav society and its political-economic system within American academic circles. In 1968, Maksimilijan Baće, an esteemed former Yugoslav ambassador to Japan and Sweden, went on an official visit to the United States as a representative of the Federal Assembly. His cross-country tour, which spanned from the Atlantic to the Pacific and from the Canadian border to the Gulf of Mexico, included a meeting with John Kenneth Galbraith. Baće's visit also allowed him to engage with inquisitive American sociologists and economists at the Center for International Studies at Harvard.⁷⁶

Galbraith's inaugural visit in 1958 positively impacted the legitimization of other American economists in Yugoslavia. Before his departure, Galbraith engaged in discussions with representatives of the United States Information Agency (USIA) in Belgrade, who expressed interest in supporting the translation of works authored by American economists, per Galbraith's suggestion.⁷⁷ Galbraith's endorsement of Paul Samuelson's economics textbook, which was heavily criticized in the United States in the late 1940s and deemed a pro-socialist publication, proved influential.⁷⁸ However, Samuelson was among the few Western authors whose works were translated and published in the Soviet Union during the Cold War.⁷⁹ The Yugoslav translation of Samuelson's text was not available until 1969. Nevertheless, according to an article in *Pregled*, the official bulletin of the US Embassy in Belgrade, the book was well-received by the Faculty of Economics in Belgrade. In addition to its pedagogical and methodological merits, it was also ideologically compatible, given the belief that *certain laws of capitalist economy operate in socialist economic systems, particularly if those systems rely more heavily on market elements, which*

kroz istoriju, ur. Jelena Minović, Milica Kočović de Santo, Aleksandar Matković, (Beograd: Institut ekonomskih nauka, 2021), 212–232.

⁷⁵ Buvač stressed that the appointment of economist Jakov Sirotković as vice president in the government of Džemal Bijedić during the early 1970s was very significant. It was believed that this appointment marked the realization of the ideal that Galbraith represented in America regarding the role of professional economists in public policy and that it had become a reality in Yugoslavia. Drago Buvač, „Galbraith među nama” [*Galbraith Among Us*], *Danas*, 14. 3. 1989, 21.

⁷⁶ „Jugoslovensko-američki odnosi” [*Yugoslav-American relations*], *Pregled*, January 1968, 38.

⁷⁷ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Journey to Poland and Yugoslavia*, 91.

⁷⁸ Johanna Bockman, *Markets in the Name of Socialism: The Left-Wing Origins of Neoliberalism*, 56–57.

⁷⁹ Pekka Sutela and Vladimir Mau, „Economics Under Socialism: The Russian case”, *Economic Thought in Communist and Post-Communist Europe*, Edited By Hans-Jurgen Wagener, (London: Routledge, 1998), 72.

is precisely one of the essential characteristics of Yugoslav economic thought.⁸⁰ The PL-480 program provided funds to the US Embassy, which enabled the acquisition and translation of additional works by American authors for Yugoslavian libraries, thereby broadening the horizons of Yugoslavian economic science.⁸¹

Throughout the 1970s, a conflict emerged between dominant economic theories and their application in the field of US policy. J.K. Galbraith, who advocated that economists should detach themselves from pursuing the latest methodological techniques and return to a substantive debate about public strategies, witnessed a decline in confidence in Keynesian principles.⁸² This was the time of a growing preference for mathematical models in economics promoted by Milton Friedman, a proponent of neoliberal economics and the concept of monetarism.⁸³ Despite the political and societal changes of the 1970s, Yugoslav openness to diverse schools of economic thought persisted. Translations of Galbraith's works to Serbo-Croatian continued being published, with some receiving multiple editions.⁸⁴ Meanwhile, the American economist Milton Friedman visited Yugoslavia and delivered a lecture on the challenges of self-management socialism in the lead-up to its transformation, formalized

⁸⁰ „Semjuelsova ekonomija i Jugoslavija” [Samuelson's economy and Yugoslavia], *Pregled*, Septeber-October 1974, 39.

⁸¹ Some of the translations by the American authors in the field of economic sciences published in Yugoslavia were: *Operaciona istraživanja u istraživanju i razvoju* [*Operations Research in Research and Development*], edited by Burton V. Dean with translation by Slobodan Gubernić and Milan Rakić from 1968, *Ekonomska geografija sveta* [*World economic geography*] by White, C., Griffin, Paul F. and McKnight, Tom from 1972, *Teorija javnih finansija* [*The Theory of Public Finance*] by Richard A. Musgrave from 1975 and the two-volume *Povijest ekonomske analize* [*The History of Economic Analysis*] iz 1975 by Joseph A. Schumpeter. Ivan Vujačić, „Ekonomska nauka u Srbiji i izučavanje privrede SAD u svetlu naučne interakcije dveju zemalja posle Drugog svetskog rata” [Economic Science in Serbia and the Study of the US Economy in Light of Scientific Interaction between the Two Countries after World War II], *Sjedinjene Američke Države u društvenim i humanističkim naukama u Srbiji*, Ur. Vesna Aleksić i Radina Vučetić, (Beograd: Institut ekonomskih nauka, Filozofski fakultet, 2019), 148–148.

⁸² Looking at economists at the Washington conference called by President Gerald Ford to consider different approaches to inflation, recession, and stagflation in America, Yugoslav economist Branko Horvat offered a more precise definition of Galbraith's position. Specifically, Horvat saw Galbraith as a representative of a group of economists who did not belong to the Keynesians but to a minority group of supporters of “rigorous planning” or “the most direct control of income and profits.” Branko Horvat, *Jugoslavenska privreda: 1965–1983. Knj. 1: Prognoze i kritike* [*Yugoslav economy 1965–1983: Forecasts and Critiques*] (Ljubljana; Zagreb: Cankarjeva založba, 1984), 208.

⁸³ Ričard Parker, *Džon Kenet Galbrejt – život, politika, ekonomija* [*John Kenneth Galbraith: His Life, His Politics, His Economics*], 706, 747.

⁸⁴ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Novac: odakle je došao, kamo je otišao* [*Money: Whence It Came, Where It Went*], (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1975), John Kenneth Galbraith, *Doba neizvjesnosti* [*The Age of Uncertainty*], (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1977), John Kenneth Galbraith, *Ekonomika i društveni ciljevi* [*Economics and the Public Purpose*], (Opatija: “Otokar Keršovani – Rijeka”, 1979), John Kenneth Galbraith, *Anatomija moći* [*The Anatomy of Power*], (Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1987).

in the 1974 Constitution.⁸⁵ Following the suppression of *liberal currents* in Croatia and Serbia, the Yugoslav leadership chose to pursue intensive decentralization across all levels, from the republic to the enterprise, replacing the wave of market-oriented reforms from the 1960s with a system of *negotiated economy*.⁸⁶

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, economists began using television to convey abstract scientific concepts to a broader audience, employing a simple and concise yet attractive approach. The pioneering economist in this regard was John Kenneth Galbraith, who narrated the BBC documentary series *The Age of Uncertainty* in 1977, based on his eponymous book.⁸⁷ This series, translated into Serbo-Croatian by Konstantin Miles, reached Yugoslav viewers in the late 1980s.⁸⁸ The program provided an educational opportunity on *the fundamental trends in economic thinking, wherein scientists charmingly and wittily presented the most complex economic and social issues in a literary style*.⁸⁹ The Slovenian trading company called Metalka, which purchased the rights to broadcast the series, invited an American economist to visit Yugoslavia. With the aid of the US Embassy in Yugoslavia, Galbraith made a return visit to the country in early March 1989.

The renewed visit of Galbraith provided an opportunity for reunions with old acquaintances but in significantly altered political and economic circumstances. For example, Serbia was not on the map of the American economist at this time. Galbraith's new itinerary included Slovenia, which had already been showing dissatisfaction with the Yugoslav political system since the mid-1980s, and Croatia, which, after a long period of *silence* since the beginning of the 1970s, began to demonstrate its frustrations more openly.⁹⁰ The crisis extended beyond the political aspect and

⁸⁵ In the spring of 1973, Milton Friedman visited Yugoslavia and delivered a lecture at the Faculty of Political Sciences. Mijat Lakićević, „Fridman, Milanović i samoupravljanje” [Friedman, Milanović and the self-management], Peščanik, URL: <https://pescanik.net/fridman-milanovic-i-samoupravljanje/> (31. 5. 2022). O Fridmanovoj poseti Jugoslaviji i njegovim zapažanjima o samoupravnom socijalizmu više u: Branko Milanović, „Milton Friedman i samoupravljanje” [Milton Friedman and the self-management], Peščanik, URL: <https://pescanik.net/milton-friedman-i-samoupravljanje/> (31. 5. 2022).

⁸⁶ Like other Yugoslav economists, Branko Horvat was against the new tendencies in Yugoslav economic policy during the 1970s. He believed that decentralization of enterprises would lead to a reduction in their efficiency and, contrary to the central idea of this reform, result in an increased role for bureaucratic structures. Branko Horvat, *ABC jugoslavenskog socijalizma [ABC of Yugoslav Socialism]*, (Zagreb: Globus, 1989), 32–34.

⁸⁷ In response to Galbraith's documentary series, a new program titled “Free to Choose” was launched in 1980, featuring economist Milton Friedman. Angus Burgin, „Age of Certainty: Galbraith, Friedman, and the Public Life of Economic Ideas”, *History of Political Economy*, vol. 45, Issue suppl 1 (2013), 191–219.

⁸⁸ I. B., „Doba neizvjesnosti” [The Age of Uncertainty], *Slobodna Dalmacija*, 17. 1. 1988, 31.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 31.

⁹⁰ More in Branimir Janković, „Croatia's Knowledge Production on Kosovo around 1989”, *Comparative Southeast European Studies*, vol. 69, no. 2–3, (2021), 267–287. The political crisis mainly affected the relations between Slovenia and Serbia. The centralistic tendencies from Belgrade resulted

affected the economy as well. Yugoslavia's external debt from the early 1980s until 1989 ranged between 18 and 20 billion dollars, and one of the main problems was that the level of economic production and exports could not respond adequately to overcome the crisis.⁹¹ Thus, Yugoslav Prime Minister Ante Marković faced the challenging task of combating inflation and strikes, reducing external debt, and solving the unemployment problem. By the late 1980s, Marković's government turned to neoliberal measures in economic policy, initiating market-oriented reforms, stabilizing the exchange rate, and opening the country to foreign investment. That was a time when the US viewed Yugoslavia as an indebted country that relied heavily on American loans and the support of the IMF. While American economists were interested in studying the Yugoslav model of socialism during the 1950s, in the 1980s the model lost its appeal.⁹²

During his tenure as the President of the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia, Janez Stanovnik once again welcomed Galbraith, a prominent critic of Ronald Reagan and the neoliberal economic paradigm.⁹³ During his second visit, Galbraith asserted that Yugoslavia had a much more progressive and free-thinking disposition than other socialist countries.⁹⁴ Despite the prevailing discourse, Central and Eastern European socialist countries began integrating into the global market during the 1960s. However, since the collapse of the communist parties in 1989, they have increasingly followed the *neoliberal path*.⁹⁵ Yugoslavia underwent a comparable economic transformation, prompting questions regarding the veracity of Galbraith's claims. Galbraith was still seen as a renowned intellectual, but he occupied a peripheral position within the American economic establishment during this period.

in the abolishment of the status of autonomous provinces of Kosovo and Vojvodina at the beginning of 1989. As a reaction to this act, a gathering of Slovenian intellectuals in support of Albanians in Kosovo followed. Jasna Dragovic-Soso, *Saviours of the Nation: Serbia's Intellectual Opposition and the Revival of Nationalism*, (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 224.

⁹¹ Vladimir Gligorov, „Pogrešni politički odgovori na privrednu krizu” [Wrong political responses to the economic crisis], *Jugoslavija: poglavlje 1980–1991.*, ur. Latinka Perović i dr., (Beograd: Helsinški odbor za ljudska prava u Srbiji, 2021), 401.

⁹² Slobodan G. Marković, „Yugoslavia and the United States in the 1980s. How did an Important Partnership become a Matter of Secondary Importance?”, *Srpsko-američki odnosi: Trideset godina od pada Berlinskog zida*, Eds. Dragan R. Simić, Dragan Živojinović, Stevan Nedeljković, (Univerzitet u Beogradu: Fakultet političkih nauka 2021), 98–100. Milton Friedman perceived Yugoslavia's self-management system as a comparative advantage, believing that it would simplify the privatization and transformation process compared to other socialist countries in the early 1990s. Albert Bing, “Socialist self-management between politics and economy”, *Acta Histriae*, 27, no. 1 (2019), 25–26.

⁹³ “John Kenneth Galbraith na obisku v Sloveniji” [John Kenneth Galbraith's visit to Slovenia], *Delo*, 7. mart 1989, 1.

⁹⁴ „Ekonomski život je u biti vrlo pragmatičan” [Economic Life is Essentially Very Pragmatic], *Vjesnik*, 8. mart 1989, 5.

⁹⁵ James Mark, Bogdan C. Jacob, Tobias Rupprecht, and Ljubica Spaskovska, *1989: a global history of Eastern Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 51–52.

In socialist Yugoslavia, Galbraith delivered lectures in Ljubljana and Zagreb on the topic of capitalism, socialism, and changes in the economic system. On this occasion, he met with representatives of the Yugoslav authorities, significant figures from the business world, as well as journalists.⁹⁶ All of them were eager to learn new ways for dealing with the growing crisis that had gripped the Yugoslav economy, society, and state in the late 1980s. However, they did not get to hear some desired advices. Galbraith distanced himself from questions about overcoming the economic crisis with the following words: *I came here to learn something, not just to give advice.*⁹⁷

Although many journalists enthusiastically greeted the renowned economist, some doubted Galbraith's ability to offer practical solutions to the Yugoslav crisis. They questioned whether he understood the Yugoslav economic system's theoretical foundations and ongoing transformations. In the preface to the second edition of *The New Industrial State* in Serbo-Croatian, economist Adolf Dragičević criticized Galbraith for not paying enough attention to different ways of opposing the rule of capitalists and bureaucratic structures. Dragičević pointed out that the self-management system in Yugoslavia *harmonized the interests of individuals, organizations, and society by removing every monopoly in the field of management.*⁹⁸ Similarly, economist Drago Buvač⁹⁹ was highly critical of Galbraith's lack of knowledge of prominent Yugoslav economist Branko Horvat. Buvač was relieved that, as Keynes' successor, Galbraith did not meet with Prime Minister Marković.¹⁰⁰ After Galbraith's departure, Yugoslavia persisted in its own age of uncertainty and descended into an even more turbulent period, culminating in a devastating war that led to the country's disintegration.

⁹⁶ Andrej Poglajen, „Profesor Galbrajt u Jugoslaviji” [Professor Galbraith in Yugoslavia], *Pregled*, br. 248 (1989), 83–84.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 83–84.

⁹⁸ John Kenneth Galbraith, *Nova industrijska država* [*The New Industrial State*], (Drugo izdanje, Zagreb: Stvarnost, 1978), 435, 449.

⁹⁹ Buvač demonstrated a keen interest in American economic theory, methods, and the ideas of American economists regarding global issues, including those relevant to Yugoslavia. In search of answers to current issues such as hyperinflation and debt, labor markets, market socialism, and the Japanese economy, Buvač spoke with seven American economists from Cambridge in 1990. Based on these conversations, he published a book. Drago Buvač, *Ekonomika sa srcem: Američki ekonomisti za jugoslavensku upotrebu* [*Economics with Heart: American Economists for Yugoslav Use*], (Zagreb: August Cesarec, 1990).

¹⁰⁰ Drago Buvač, „Galbraith među nama” [Galbraith Among Us], *Danas*, 14. 3. 1989, 20–21.

Conclusion

The renowned American economist John Kenneth Galbraith's visit to socialist Yugoslavia represents a neglected episode in Yugoslav-American relations that can be looked at through multiple layers. It represents a contribution to American cultural and science diplomacy during the Cold War and the changing relations between global superpowers. Galbraith's study trip in 1958 to two socialist countries, Poland and Yugoslavia, demonstrates to what extent science diplomacy supported the goals of American foreign policy. For example, previously formed relations between the members of academia were critical in the case of Galbraith's visit *behind the Iron Curtain*. Connections with Janez Stanovnik were important for Galbraith's visit to Yugoslavia. Such examples allowed economic science, although closely linked to the ideological foundations on which blocs of countries in the bipolar world rested, to communicate smoothly between, conditionally speaking, capitalist and socialist systems at the institutional level. Galbraith's notes after his trip *behind the Iron Curtain* provide a compelling portrait of Yugoslavia in the 1950s from someone from the *Western side*. They point to the characteristics of Yugoslav consumer society, the standard of living of the population, but also its unique economic system. After a brief visit, Yugoslav economists, politicians, and society members became more familiar with Galbraith's work over time. From the mid-1960s, Galbraith's books were actively translated in Yugoslavia, and a TV series inspired by his work called *Age of Uncertainty* was aired. At the end of the turbulent decade, during an economic crisis, Galbraith made another brief visit to Croatia and Slovenia in 1989. He met his old friend Janez Stanovnik during his visit, but many things were different now. In the altered Cold War context, neither America nor Europe needed to support the Yugoslav side for political reasons. The previous relevance of Galbraith's ideas had given way to the attractiveness of Friedman's ideas as a more receptive option for the government of Ante Marković. Galbraith, as he testified, came to Yugoslavia to learn something, but he had no cure for inflation or the complex Yugoslav situation. After the dissolution of the unified Yugoslav state, Galbraith continued to maintain ties with the Croatian scientific community, becoming an honorary member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts.¹⁰¹ John Kenneth Galbraith's son, Peter Galbraith, became the first American ambassador to Croatia.

¹⁰¹ „Članovi akademije”, Hrvatska akademija znanosti i umjetnosti, [Members of the Academy] URL: <https://www.info.hazu.hr/clanovi/galbraith-john-kenneth/> (17. 5. 2022).

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Borba

Danas

Delo

Međunarodni problemi

Pregled

Slobodna Dalmacija

Vjesnik

Ekonomska politika

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Резиме

МА Емилија Цветковић

Амерички економиста иза „гвоздене завесе“: Џон Кенет Галбрајт у социјалистичкој Југославији

У раду је представљена посета америчког економисте Џона Кенета Галбрајта социјалистичкој Југославији као занемарена „епизода“ у југословенско-америчким односима, али и манифестација америчке јавне и научне дипломатије током хладног рата. Док је Галбрајтова посета Пољској била могућа захваљујући средствима Фордове фондације, амерички економиста је у Југославију дошао захваљујући директном позиву Јанеза Становника. Студијска посета Џона Кенета Галбрајта била је репрезентативни пример научне сарадње реализоване, како на индивидуалном, тако и на институционалном нивоу, између Истока и Запада током хладног рата. Галбрајтов путопис, настао након посете земљама иза „гвоздене завесе“, представља драгоцену сведочанство о Југославији, одликама њеног друштва и систему самоуправног социјализма током друге половине педесетих година. Од средине шездесетих година, економисти и политичари у Југославији су наставили да прате Галбрајтов рад, његове књиге су превеђене на српскохрватски језик, а на телевизији је била емитована и документарна серија *Доба неизвесности* инспирисана његовим делом. Галбрајт је поново посетио Југославију 1989, у јеку економске кризе. Међутим, упркос добро познатом имену, његове идеје више нису имале исту привлачност као раније. Нова влада Анте Марковића била је наклоњена реформама усмереним ка тржишту, због чега су идеје Милтона Фридмана имале већу популарност.

Кључне речи: Џон Кенет Галбрајт, хладни рат, југословенско-амерички економски односи, научна дипломатија, слика социјалистичке Југославије