

Chapter No. 13:

LAST EIGHT MONTHS IN KHARTOUM UNTIL LEAVING IN AUGUST 1964

In retrospect I believe that our first trip to Kenya had changed our stance and view on the continuation of living in Khartoum. The sense of safari made us to explore the countryside around Khartoum although there was not much to see about. The January 1964 was quite cool so we drove to Khartoum North and further into the desert. Driving through the desert was not too bad except for the very dry air drift through open windows. From distance we noticed a small mound with some movements around it. Soon we approached a deep well where local people got hold of water for their households. We found several people with camels and donkeys burdened with skin-bags to be filled with water. On top of a sand knoll stood gallows-like support holding a pulley for a long rope for a big bucket to reach into the deep well. The other rope's end was tied to a camel's harness with the animal walking to and fro from the well to pull out the bucket full of water. The bucket was then emptied in a trough for animals to drink or filled into pails used to fill skin-bags of waiting villagers. After a short chit-chat with bystanders we decided to return to our "civilization" feeling sorry for the camel unending slow walk to and fro from the well.



A water hole in the wasteland north of the Khartoum

In the Sudan humans learned how to make use of the fast evaporation in their climate. In cooler night with low temperatures and humidity of say 10% or even less the hoarfrost formed on water supply pipes due to the condensation of fast evaporation. The same effect was made use of on trucks with goatskin-bags full of water hanging on the front bumper cooling the content a great deal during a ride through desert heat. At KTI there were several large casks made of burned clay each standing on a tripod and covered with a wooden bung. Few ladles hung around and students drank from the casks during breaks as the water was pleasantly cool. Water seeped through slightly permeable burned clay and by instant evaporating cooled the cask's content constantly. This way of cooling used the powered coolers where very fine water droplets were sprayed into a ventilator created air current. This machine worked fine as long as there was no dust suspended in the air like during the haboob seasons. The air-conditioning machines could not work for too long in this climate because of the fine dust or dirt that was suspended in the air almost always. Thus constant cleaning was needed and the filters had to be replaced rather often.

A few times we drove to the South from Khartoum to get to the last cataract on White Nile at Gebel Aulia. There a dam had been erected that accumulation run a small hydroelectric power plant. The dam was wide enough for one way traffic for large vehicles and buses. Beshir passed this way when going to visit his family at El Obeid in West Sudan. We gave

him a 5-day leave for the Ramadan Bairam as the bus ride lasted about 24 hours. The dam wide overflow offered a good place for fishermen who would catch some large fishes like Nile tilapia or perch here. There were not many more interesting sites to visit in the surrounding of Khartoum hence we went often to Mogrem that is the confluence of Blue and White Niles. At the end of White Nile formed a wide and long clayey sand island that was visible at low water levels only. The soil was used for cultivation during dry seasons that last about 7-8 months. The bridge from Khartoum City to Omdurman crossed over that island and one could look down at neatly arranged plots with hard working farmers as they tended their vegetables growing well and fast on this island of river deposit.



The causeway over the Gebel Aulia dam on White Nile used for water level control and for an adjacent hydroelectric power plant

For a while Vesna persisted in going to see the Zoo of Khartoum so we did it but had been the only one. We have seen that almost all zoo captive animals were kept in sand dry complexes without any proper shadowy place to withdraw from the scorching sun here. Reminiscences of seeing the same animals in their natural surroundings during our safari in Kenya made us unhappy so we decided not to visit Khartoum zoo any more. Ljiljana went few times to the Botanic garden and kept small talks with its friendly director. The garden had a beautiful collection of bougainvilleas that the director was mighty proud of. He had succeeded to have all of the 48 known bougainvillea's colours in this garden at that time. On our veranda Ljiljana's plants were doing well now in cooler season but she knew too well that this would not last too long. Soon Ljiljana would have to decide to sell all her plants what she did in fact in April. She bargained for all pots and plants making a good deal of S£20 for all. This amount she had put forward as her saving whenever she would buy some new plants later on in future.

When Vesna returned to the school she found it to be a little bit boring after her short trip to Kenya. She was supposed to work hard as the 4th class tutoring and exams should finish by end of March already. She got few less good marks and dropped from top level in her class below number 10 that alarmed us a little bit. The Hon. Sister Master of Vesna' Class told Ljiljana not to worry about as our child is vivacious and straight girl and we should be happy with her. The actual problem was calculating the average mark (I found an error!) that included the marks in Arabic subjects too. There was no point including these marks into the average calculation at all. Vesna was supposed to leave her school the Comboni Sisters School in Khartoum for good at end of the current school year 1963/64 anyway. She could continue her schooling as from July depending upon on our future moves though.

Early in 1964 the Sudanese Government expelled all missionaries from the 3 Southern Provinces. This was the start of a long conflict between Muslim North and Christian and Agnostic South of the Sudan. This political issue caused a lot of anxiety and uneasiness between the Christian communities in Khartoum including all the Confessional schools too. It was obvious that the Comboni School had tried hard not to get in any conflict with the Ministry of Education. Thus one had to put more consideration on subjects and marks that referred to the teaching in Arabic language. At the end of school year the usual sportive competitions proceeded in good spirits and joyousness when triumphant pupils won their prizes as if nothing had happened. Vesna received her A-level certificate without those bad marks in Arabic subjects. This gave her the full satisfaction achieving an average mark that got her to the fourth place between 27 pupils in her class.

We had to visit the Yugoslav club soon after our return. Friends told us that our absence at the New Year's party had been noticed that gave a perfect matter for gossipers there. One of the main issue was how could we afford the expenses for an 8-day trip to Kenya. There was a lot of loathsome envy involved so the best way for us was to keep absolutely quiet about the real reasons. I suggested showing the safari slides in the Club once I got them back from the developer in Europe knowing that this procedure would rather a long time. The problems with developed slides turned out to become complicated as to frame them in prior to be show to the audience. A slide had to be fixed between two glass mini-panes in a frame that process represented a nerve-racking task due permanent dust suspended in the air. An electrostatic charge through the rubbing cloth made it unlikely that there would not be any dust speck between panes. It was just to become the "task impossible"!



A canon pointing north over the Blue Nile in front of the President's Palace

Of course we were invited by friends to parties where we had to repeat our stories in more details surely than we would dare to do it in the Yugoslav Club. We had to reciprocate their calls too so Ljiljana had to do some cooking and to arrange all necessary steps for a home party. With February returned the heat so the daily temperatures shot up to 40°C. Now we could sleep on the veranda without blankets again. At on of the parties in our flat we had twelve guests who cleared almost all the bits and pieces Ljiljana prepared for them in "the sweat" of her face. As the desert Ljiljana had put on the table a half-frozen tart (that she soaked with 2dl rum and cognac of each) of that our guests could take "just" a tiny slice of. Even so it made them very happy testing Ljiljana's latest creation that got into the annals as "the drunken tart". The party had lasted well after midnight so I had presented a handful of chosen slides only. I was not happy with my photographic efforts partly due to the usage of a wrong film material by AGFA. Also my Russian and East Germany made old cameras were not up to date anymore. These elderly cameras were certainly not good to take pictures of moving animals that we have seen on our safari trip any longer.

For me it was not simple to go back lecturing at KTI with all those concealed plans in my mind about my future employment. By mid of January started the Ramadan that gave me some respite and time to concentrate more on the consulting work that was better paid for. I got more tutoring hours at the University that definitely made me abandon any idea of “straightening up winding River Drina”. I had few lectures on the design of rivets that based upon the German standards because the British ones were not enough explainable in my opinion. I tried to impress on students the importance of knowing how disastrous could be if one does not follow the set out rules. At one lecture students started grumbling and complained that I was trying to scare them with description of few actual calamities. I blew up to such a stupidity and told them to choose either to become a vigilant civil engineer or get down to Nile bank to measure and calculate volumes of sand forms heaped up there. It was too difficult for them to argue about the proposed choice.

After several more trials I lost the interest to use the graphical methods in the structural designs finally. The usage of Imperial (British) System Units (BSU) had made it almost impossible the application of graphical approach except if one worked with decimals of a chosen set of units say foot for length and pound for weight. The conversion of different BSU length units into the chosen one only was an unfeasible task to be expected from Sudanese students. They were used to the inconsistency of BSU that were still applied in UK and US the later with minor differences in their real values though. The conversion methods and using the correct scale ruler to draw plans was not known to the Sudanese students at all. Nobody showed or trained them how to use properly the drafting tools like triangles or rulers or even T-square. I never got a student capable to draw two parallel lines or a perpendicular one. I had never succeeded even despite the many trials I did that looked like Sisyphus’ task at the end.

The Sudanese students may be good and performed better in subjects of arts and/or philosophy including theology. Years or generations may be needed for young Sudanese to acquire necessary technical capabilities and study technical sciences successfully. Prof. Dr. Turabi wanted me to work out with the students of final year a complete design including drawings of a steel structure printed in their textbook that he used in his lectures. The calculation for it was not difficult because it was contained in that textbook although in an abbreviated form. When the students started outlining details of this steel structure on a paper I have got the impression that they are utterly oblivious of what they are supposed to do. Days passed but the drafting paper remained almost blank despite approaching term of the submission of drawings. I tried hard to draw design details on blackboard to conform German steel standards but that apparently confused them even more.

Close to the final submission day the best all of students submitted the completed drawing as the first one. The others followed his way in short intervals - moreover their drawings had the same format although differing in drafting quality and with a few blurred up details. On scrutinizing the drawings I have noticed that all of them were almost an exact COPY of the print in textbook print though enlarged in the same ratio. The details were just a sheer disaster – lines started or ended nowhere, no difference in line’s intensities or profile’s cross sections misinterpreted etc. It was an absolute waste of efforts that just proved the students’ ignorance that included their disability becoming proper graduates of the Civil Engineering Science. I told my opinion and contempt to Prof. Dr. Turabi on the students’ design disabilities. Later he acknowledged my tough efforts by saying: “They produced a drawing at least - is not so? That is enough for me to let them pass the examination in the steel design.” I said to myself: Malesh!

The Ramadan ended by mid February and followed by the Ramadan Bairam festivities. When I thought that lectures would get back to the normal the Principal instructed to close down the Institute for 2 weeks. During that period examinations were held for students who had attended evening classes so I got a welcome break. I knew that I would not be able to complete the syllabus in time considering that the Kurban Bairam festivities in April. Thus I would have to find out how to teach the optimum so that students would be able to perform the minimum to pass their exams in April. It was like making a quadrature out of a circle! The students were used to draw on the minimum of their energy just to achieve the maximum possible of results. I told them that this was incompatible with the theory of the minimum potential energy. Then they cleverly reiterated that they do spend more than the minimum of energy in all. However for the subjects I was lecturing they use the maximum of energy in comparison to all other lecturers.

In our private life there were periods where we worried about missing the news from home as many weeks passed before letters and newspapers reached Khartoum. We never could find where and why these hold-ups took place in 1964. Was it the political issue of banning the missionaries' work? Was the rising antagonism between Muslim North and indigenous tribes of Christian faith or some Agnostics at the South of Sudan? Malesh! With the hot and dry weather we went to the swimming more often. The new permission to play tennis had been granted so Peter and I were at the courtyard at daybreaks again. Few times our spouses joined us to play in couples but for Ljiljana could not be a real pleasure to get up morning's so early.



We visited the President's Palace (of the former Governor) on the day open to public. At left Ljiljana and Vesna look at the tablet pointing to the place of General Gordon's slaughter.

Prof. Dr. Otto Werner, my mentor from Zagreb University, made a stopover at Khartoum on his way back home. We took this chance to show him around the City and to see few of my colleagues here. Otto found Khartoum very hot and wondered how we could endure here for so long. Of course we visited the "Athena" cool-drink bar and both the barman and I could stop Otto to drink the iced fruit shake on time. In principle it was a great health hazard to drink a very cold liquid after coming into a cool room right away from the outside heat over 40°C now. Of course I did not tell Otto about my engagement in Kenya to avoid any risk of premature exposure. Otto took a large number of my slides (not the best one though) to appease the curiosity of people at home.

Otto's departure confronted us with the fact that we might not be able to go home for an unspecified period of time or even not after all. We heard about that several compatriots were preparing to leave the Sudan after their contracts expire mostly early in April. Diklić started the preparations for their departure as well so we followed up cautiously their

actions and procedures as we would have to go through the same ones soon too. Finally Diklićs left on April 1 1964 for good but we would miss them very much and who knows whether we would meet ever again. The following months would be rather cheerless so the feeling of solitude crept up with any good acquaintance leaving either for holidays or for good.

An extreme heat wave hit Khartoum by end of March. The air in standstill loaded with fine dust had penetrated everywhere causing problems with breathing too. Even for the locals this weather was quite unusual and they were suffering from this fine dirt also. Just to that worse of time for everybody I received a strictly confidential letter from the Ministry that I have expected for a while. Somebody had tempered with it breaking the gum-seal but it did not matter much as I knew about its content through private link by now. I had been offered a new two years contract extension including advancement to the Senior lecturer status.

Consequently the moment arrived that I was waiting for so long having to encounter the final resolution about my political and personal subordination to the Yugoslav regime at home. First I asked for an appointment with the Embassy's counsellor Comrade Vidas in connection with the proposed 2-year extension of my contract as offered by Government of the Sudan. Vidas was the person who harassed my posture continuously by responding in a wicked language often. I was conscious about Vidas to be very well informed about my political "characteristic" that had kept trailing me since 1945. I did not have to loose anything in talking to him because I was too well aware of and believed in my plans for our future.

Still with some trepidation I entered the Embassy where Vidas was expecting me already. I produced the letter from the Ministry of Education asking my opposite whether I should accept this offer. Vidas seemed irritated as the letter was not sent to the Embassy first. At first our discourse got around the formal procedure about who was in charge to negotiate and sign a contract. I stood rigid to the fact that I did originally sign the contract with the Employer who set out the conditions as well. Vidas reiterated that the procedure had been changed so far and that I have to go back to Yugoslavia first. Once there I could negotiate a new contract through and with the Yugoslav authority only.

Cunningly I asked about would be like the Yugoslav offer regarding contract conditions but I learned right away that were by far less opportune than the new Sudanese offer. Then I had asked Vidas what would happen to our fully furnished flat in Khartoum in case that I could not sign the contract in Yugoslavia for whatever reasons of. Surely the Embassy should know whether there is any good chance for me to sign such a contract because it would certainly depend upon their recommendation (alias my "characteristic"). Vidas did not want "play" it my way at all and did not offer any specific answer to my query. Then Vidas ended our discourse with the explanation that Belgrade was not keen to sponsor the KTI "project" anymore. This despite that it was still favoured by the Ministry of Education so far. What ever it meant? Malesh!

So that was it for me meaning: "alea iacta est"! Therefore I would not have any chance to return to Khartoum after all. I promised Vidas to think over the whole matter thoroughly before I make my final decision as soon as possible. I left enlightened the Embassy after this tough dispute feeling happy about my final decision made already. During the whole 90-minute discourse with comrade Vidas I absolutely kept quite about my future plans. I felt conscious about my correct decision that including the job at hand when my contract with KTI expires in August 1964. Ljiljana was expecting my return very anxiously so I had

to retell everything regarding that very long meeting with Vidas. I had concluded my report very joyfully considering the good auspices in respect to our move to Kenya in about 4 months.

Ljiljana and I have agreed upon the strategy what to tell our friends and relatives in respect to our future steps. We should say that we would leave Sudan by travelling to Mombasa first and then to board a Yugoslav steamer on his return voyage to Yugoslavia. Nobody should be told that I do have a job in Mombasa for awhile before our next move to a still undecided city in Europe later. To Vesna we should say that we might go on another safari in Kenya providing there would be time for it. After it we should move to Yugoslavia or to another place not decided upon yet where I would get a new work. Subsequently we agreed with Abdel Halim to dispatch our large wooden crates through his company to Port Sudan. The deceit address should be declared as "Zagreb – Yugoslavia" that would be changed before the actual shipment goes to the real address of the recipient company in Vienna Austria. The crates would stay in that company's stores in Vienna until our final destination in Europe would be known in due time.

April brought the heat and dry air with fine dust suspension penetrating even into smallest pores. Many expatriates were leaving for good and some flats in Hai El Matar blocks got empty that resulted in a considerable decrease in party calls as well. Our refrigerator was not able to cope with that heat so I had to place a ventilator to improve the air circulation. In all flats the water supply collapsed due to low pressure in the main duct that becomes unbearable in this climate again. We depended upon large stocks of Bitter Lemon, Coca-Cola, Fanta or Soda water but for the cooking everyone had to fill buckets at the hydrant at ground level. I remembered what Stevo Diklić did on a previous occasion some time ago and I went to intervene at the right and high ministerial places. Luckily I found there few of my late students working who helped us fast and in a most professional way. The next day fitters installed a small power driven booster pumps at ground floor for each block. The pumps were strong enough to increase the main duct pressure filling up the tanks at roof level. All were greatly relieved having water through all of the day but we kept the bath tub filled as for emergency anyway.

On April 19 we drove to the open-air cinema but we could see hardly anything on large screen due to the dirty ambience when a haboob started unexpectedly. Somehow we managed driving home through a thick blind of dust to reach home covered with reddish filth. Beshir had closed all doors and windows in time so we started for the bathroom to get rid of the grime. Ljiljana was surprised with her red hair and more by cloth we had on that was all dirty with reddish brown scum stick of sweat. The early haboob meant that rains started in Kenya already. In the following days the temperatures dropped for more than 15°C and the dust suspended in air subsided too. Now it was time for me to visit our friend Sayed Farah Director in Ministry of Education to thank for their offer to extend my contract. The next step would be to inform my students that I could not assist them during their re-examination period in August anymore. I knew that this would be a hard shock for them!

Sayed Farah gladly met me in his office and after small chit-chat I inquired bluntly whether I could get an asylum in the Sudan. He was taken so much by surprise that for a moment it looked as he did not understand my question. Then I had explain the reason of having to turn down the new contract extension adding maliciously what Vidas told me regarding the Yugoslav Government not being interested in the KTI project anymore. It was obvious that I could not get an asylum in the Sudan after all. It was to be the final step to our freedom. Farah understood my situation instantly and wished us all the best of good luck at our new place of life. He had promised to keep my news as the secret until we leave the Sudan for

good. He assured to start all the necessary administrative acts terminating my contract by early August. That would include clearing of all my loans on account of the reimbursement due to me from the Government at the contract termination.

The students were getting rather nervous with the approach of examination period in May. I tried hard to prepare them for the exams as far as possible in their "traditional way" and to forget all of my previous ambitious intentions. There was no use or purpose to pursue them anymore. Soon after my meeting with Sayed Farah I notified one class first of that I would not lecture on KTI in the next school year. The news spread almost like bush fire so soon everybody knew that we were to leave the Sudan for good. I did attempt to please and/or to help my students to pass their exams as not to sit for re-examination later in the year. Students bewailed their bad luck and a few weeks later I got a number of presents from them including a picture in oil made by a student of Arts Department. That was the memento for us to start collecting and buy souvenirs that would remind us on the 3 years spent in the Sudan.

About the same time I got into my first and last argument with traffic police of Khartoum. This happened just when I was engrossed with too many bureaucratic affairs in connection with leaving the Sudan for good. I have not noticed a bicycle driver coming from rear of me waiting at a junction to turn left. He was trying to squeeze between my car and the road border stone. At the moment when I started moving forward it happened that the bike's front wheel got gripped by the rear bumper and the man fell of his bicycle. Instantly I stopped hearing a strange noise from behind and got out of my right car side (left hand driving at Khartoum) to see what made that squealing noise. I saw that the man was not hurt but his bicycle front wheel was bent almost like an "8". At first I offered him S£5 for a new wheel but a policeman turned out from somewhere.

Soon a small crowd gathered probably lamenting man's bad luck. To cut it short the policeman asked me to drive to the nearby police station what I could understand out of his Arabic. At the station an officer made a protocol in Arabic that I did not comprehend at all and that document I did not want to sign either. At last he explained that he must check my car whether it is road safe so he went to verify himself. There was not any noticeable damage to it except a small scratch on the rear bumper only. Again I offered money for the bent bicycle wheel but the officer said sternly "MA" that meant "NO" mumbling something about a court.

A week or so later I got a paper asking to appear in the court for an inquest to be held about an accident. At the court I found an English speaking elderly judge who translated the protocol for me that content I disputed in its full entity as incorrect. I have not signed that protocol so it was not valid in front of the judge to whom I explained in details what happened by drawing a sketch for better understanding. I told him about my loss of time for such a trifle case as my students at KTI would miss valuable lectures preparing for their exams now. From then on we were on very friendly terms so the judge explained that he could conclude the case with a fine only. After a short haggling around S£10 he asked first and me offering S£5 - we set for S£7.50 of which S£5 is for the court and the rest for the imprudent bicycle owner. We parted as best friends and I rushed back to KTI passing by the unlucky adversary in that "accident" who would get S£2.5 only now. Hard luck but still it was enough for him to buy a new wheel anyway.

By end of May ended the examination period at KTI and I was too happy that this was the last time I had to attend the examination control. Unfortunately out of 7 lecturers appeared 4 only and I was the senior of the other younger Sudanese colleagues. Normal procedure

of collecting and counter-signing of examination papers lasted almost 11 hours in three sessions instead one of say 4 hours only. I completed checking of students' papers and gave notes to all of my students who also sat for the local examination. As in principle it did not matter for me anymore they all have passed the exams in my subjects - wishing them all the best of good luck in my silent thoughts. I gladly went to say good buys to all the lecturing and administration staff of KTI and from now on I would concentrate on my own business. Our departure from the Sudan was encroaching fast and in about 2 months we would leave this climate that was getting more unendurable with every hot day and the haboobs coming at night and day now.

From now on I would spend most of my free time in the UNESCO's air-conditioned design office doing some useful work for them. It was a well paid job and a good training for me to refresh my structural experience and to gain some practice for my future appointment too. Through work for the UNESCO the friendship improved with mostly German professionals there some of them were our neighbours at Hai El Matar blocks. They have suggested me to apply for a UNESCO job and even provided a dozen of application forms to be filled in. Unfortunately it was clear to me from the very beginning that I do not have even a minimal chance for it. The application had to be recommended and approved by a proper national authority for that Yugoslavs would never concur to. However I could not give them any of explanations about the real reasons regarding my politically "contaminated soul".

Nevertheless these contacts were socially important to us during our stay in Khartoum. We spent many enjoyable evenings relishing on good food and drink that often ended in long and interesting conversations. UNESCO staff had diplomatic status that entitled them to special supplies and imports. I would never forget one evening when we listened to G. F. Handel's oratorio "Messiah" newly recorded on dozens of LPs that lasted almost 5 hours. During a pause our host served food and drinks before proceeding with the next step of this very long performance. The block guard passed several times below and I wondered what he should think about us sitting for long hours listening to evidently odd tunes to him.



The goldsmith at work in Omdurman business street (left) and Ljiljana at purchase tour in the Khartoum Prison Exhibition rooms (right)

Through this good link I could order the brand new camera CANON7 straight from Japan for a reasonable price of S£85. The parcel arrived in June so I would not have to pay any custom duty as my departure was due within 6 months. This extraordinary camera had a 50mm Ø70mm lens of f=1:0.95 weighing over 500g alone whit that I made perfect pictures later. The other lenses of Ø48mm of 35mm f=1.15 and 135mm f=1:3.5 including adequate filters completed the set. With leather box for all weighed some 5.5kg that all I would have to carry with me on our safaris later.

At home we sorted out household items to be put on for home sale and I typed lists of these. The lists would be distributed among our acquaintances and Halim offered to spread a word about between his Sudanese friends too. Beshir arranged to bring up the five large wooden crates to our flat. The crates were stored at basement since moving in here but we needed a carpenter to repair and close gaps and cracks caused by excessive drying now. Later I would use the paint on them left over after my “work of art” on newly acquired furniture in summer of 1962. Ljiljana started sorting out items mainly souvenirs according to their sizes putting them aside next other things that would go to Europe too. These objects were like floor carpets, framed in pictures and a map our collection of ARTE graphics, books as well as porcelain and crystal things, crockery and silver tableware that we would not need in Kenya.



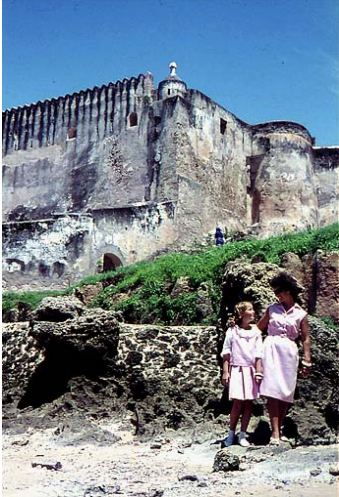
The camel-hair carpet bought at the Prison Exhibition (left) and Ljiljana smartly wrapped in the Sudanese Tob

Some of the largest items were the two shields of Shilluk tribe brought to us by our Polish neighbour on one of his medical wing services. A special wooden case had been made of mahogany planks for these shields that crate was the heaviest of all other 5 crates. The planks of soft wood would cost more so Ljiljana decided to use the mahogany boards for shelves later one day. There were many more objects to be packed and sent to Europe like the camel-hair carpet of 1.95x 3.50m. Further two large dust protecting pane covers nicely decorated acquired in the local prison made for the World Fair exhibition. Ljiljana bought several wood carvings made of hard and heavy ebony timber. She also found an inexpensive source where to buy carved ivory like necklaces, bracelets or armlets, a stand of intricate carved sandwich-picks with Sudanese regions’ emblems, a number of animal carvings of elephants and gazelles – thus our souvenirs’ collection increased fast. We got more pieces of beautifully carved on tusk parts at a reasonable price to those we added a few native long pipes, knives, several spear’s and arrow’s heads. As the collection grew constantly Ljiljana had to get some cardboard boxes for smaller items to be placed with much care in one of the large crates.

Beshir watched excitedly how Ljiljana prepared the smaller items carefully wrapping prior of placing them optimally in cardboard boxes. Sometimes she had to force things to match in between the gaps. There was a big white coral head that our friends Gadients presented to us after their diving trip to Red Sea. Beshir eager to help found an empty box for that coral head trying hard to shove it into that box that was probably a little bit too small for it. As to the consequence of his trial the coral head did not withstand that unrestrained force and shattered into smaller pieces with a quite splitting noise. My dear wife needed a while

to console her and the troubled Beshir as well stuffing the crushed pieces in that box after all. At length Halim suggested hiring professional packers who would do the job properly and shortly before the crates should be shipped away.

Subsequently we were getting more leisure time that each of us tried to make the best of it. Vesna re-read her books before putting them into a trunk except for a few she would take with on the safari and trip home. Ljiljana played Mah-jongg a few times with the ladies she met on parties in some Asian Embassies before. She learned game's rules that varied from the one we used to play known as the "ambitious" one compared to the Chinese way of "winning" ones. Also most of the pots with plants were sold prior before the haboobs so the veranda looked rather empty then. We started inviting friends to our flat for fare well parties before our household staff would be dissolved hopefully all being sold. We suffered of prickly heats, skin rushes and I had my asthma attacks during that rather unpleasant June of 1964. It was a tough time for Ljiljana too but she somehow managed enduring that hostess' complexity dreaming of going to Kenya soon.



Vesna and Ljiljana posed below the Fort Jesus at the Old Harbour of Mombasa Island where we should return in a few months to come

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