

Non-Alignment on the Move

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ABSTRACTS

Tvrtko Jakovina

The Symbolic Functions of Galeb – Tito's Floating Residence

For socialist Yugoslavia, and its political leadership, connecting with the Third World (the Global South) was, above all, a pragmatic political move. Following Tito's break-up with Stalin, the country was in danger of becoming isolated in the increasingly polarised global order. In Europe, new state formations (such as EFTA, EEC, and Comecon) emerged. At the same time, the welfare state in western Europe solved some of the key issues related to social inequality and state provision, even as Northern governments were becoming increasingly mindful of emergent social and political movements in (former) colonies. Yugoslav socialism was a modernising movement. It generated political discourses and imaginaries (Stubbs) that emphasised political strength, confidence, and self-reliance. Together, Tito's military victory over Nazism in WW2 and the risky political move of defying Stalin while remaining socialist generated the need for a fresh and audacious foreign policy. Yugoslavia's political and social policies were arguably emancipatory. They generated new kinds of global political and social interaction. In the 1950s and 60s, Yugoslavia's internal goals (of 'brotherhood and unity') mirrored its foreign policies: the country advocated political and social equality with both capitalist Euro-Atlantic states and the Socialist *realpolitik* of the Eastern bloc. The country also wanted to collaborate and trade with the newly sovereign nations that entered the UN in the era of decolonisation. The ship Galeb was an official symbol of such policies and goals. It was a mobile embodiment of the state policies that Tito sought to propagate and popularise with the masses, both at home and abroad.

Ljiljana Kolesnik

Position of culture in the politics of non-alignment and the requests for "common [horizontal] cultural action"

Within scholarly discourse on non-alignment in Yugoslavia – focused on viability of its political objectives, problems and prospects – culture took a more prominent position only at the beginning of the 1980s. Echoing its inclusion among developmental resources in the framework of the Second UN Development Decade, and responding to the call for “common cultural action” and more intense cultural collaboration within NAM, most of the studies belonging to the scope of that discourse, were focused on the importance of correlation between culture and technology for overall societal development, and on “cultural foundations of non-alignment”. The latter formulation is the furthest instance Yugoslav scholars wanted to go in the discussions on the “non-aligned culture”, imagined as a unique and specific entity with the capacity of bringing together a diversity of cultures integral to NAM’s geo-political space. The very idea of “non-aligned culture” raises the question of culture’s integrative power, position and relation to fundamentals of the politics of non-alignment, that will be examined using documents and declarations issued after NAM summits – from the first Belgrade conference in 1961 to the second one, held in 1989. We shall also examine contact zones, and shifting trajectories of NAM’s political and cultural geographies, defined by both important political meetings, and series of trans-national, and regional cultural events, as they are recorded and described in available archival documents and studies of that period. Taking Yugoslav policies and practices of cultural exchange as a case study, we shall also discuss certain controversies in approach to and understanding of cultural interactions with the “non-aligned World”, raising the question of their epistemic consequences.

Priti Mishra

India’s engagement with the Non-aligned movement was founded on a long-term commitment to reimagining the global collective of nations beyond the framework of empires with their centres and subjugated peripheries. This reimagination therefore necessarily involved a radical rethinking of the geopolitics of Asia (and Africa) and the possibility of a more equitable relationship between nations. In the decades prior to the establishment of the Non-Aligned movement, Indian politicians were already imagining a new internationalism that sought to unfetter itself from the legacies of liberal imperial internationalism. This new internationalism questioned the racial hierarchies between nations. In this paper, I will look at Jawaharlal Nehru’s defence of the idea of ‘Asia for Asians’ with the context of this intellectual

history of anti-colonial internationalism to seek a better understanding of Nehru's perspective on racial difference and its place within the Non-aligned movement.

Stephen Morton

Césaire, Peripheral Modernism and Non-Alignment

This paper forms part of a longer chapter on allegory, counter-allegory and decolonisation in Caribbean literature. To address the theme of this event, it considers how Aimé Césaire's poetic orientation away from Europe in the *Cahier* provides a way to decolonise colonial tropes of blackness in favour of a poetics of *négritude*. Such an orientation also entailed an engagement with emergent ideas of non-alignment. It is already well established that Césaire drafted some of the *Cahier* during a visit to the Dalmatian home of his university friend Petar Guberina. It is also well documented that Guberina wrote the preface to the third edition of the *Cahier*, and attended the first Congress of Black writers and Artists in Paris with Césaire in 1956. In this paper, I want to suggest that Guberina's preface to the *Cahier* expresses an affinity with Césaire's experience of colonisation, racism, and exile in ways that also help to clarify the connections between Césaire's peripheral modernism and ideas of non-alignment.

Ranka Primorac

Dubravka and Amos, or reading Africa from the Balkans in the age of Non-Alignment

In 1983, the prominent Yugoslav writer Dubravka Ugresic attended the prestigious International Writers' Workshop in Iowa City. There, she was photographed at a party with Nigeria's Amos Tutuola, a fellow Iowa invitee and an internationally established African literary figure. In the photograph, the two authors from global literary peripheries seem relaxed and friendly, but Ugresic later recalled that they could not find a way to engage in substantial literary conversation during the workshop, which Tutuola left early. The paper uses this ambivalent encounter as a starting point for a preliminary reading of the Afterword to the 1954 translation of Tutuola's novel *The Palm Wine Drinkard* by the Croatian modernist authors Antun Soljan and Ivan Slamnig – the text that had drawn Ugresic towards Tutuola's work in the first place. It

also reflects on the possibility of combining current methodological approaches to world literature with recent historical and cultural scholarship on the Non-Aligned Movement, in order to test and refine a reading of cold-war Yugoslavia as a political and cultural initiator of non-imperial European whiteness.

Chris Prior

‘An enemy to none’: Non-alignment in colonial and postcolonial Anglophone Africa

The paper will consider the ways African leaders and British colonial and postcolonial authorities envisaged the form and purpose of non-alignment in the 1950s and 1960s. Non-alignment presented the British authorities with something they felt was new, and which occurred at a time during which their sense of their own capacity to ‘know’ Africa was diminished, meaning that this had the potential to threaten not only what the authorities had assumed would be a European-managed transition of Africa from a colonial to neo-colonial state, but also their sense of how to understand or ‘predict’ Africa’s future geopolitical positioning. Conversely, splits amongst different African leaders about the room for manoeuvre afforded by entering into a state of non-alignment – a debate engendered by, for example, the question of how to sit simultaneously both within the NAM and the Commonwealth – were important in shaping African elites’ sense of agency as to the continent’s collective capacity to forge its own postcolonial place. Considering these competing beliefs comparatively, we are afforded the capacity to interrogate the limits of shared understanding and what these gaps tell us about ideas of race, empire, and Africa’s global role in the postcolonial world.

Marina Protrka Stimec

Ethnicity and Class as a Question of Race: Othering and Exoticisation in Vladan Desnica’s *Morlachia*

In Croatian literature of the 1950s, at the time when the very first diplomatic agreements among future founders of the Non-Aligned Movement were made, the question of race was posed in the context of debates mainly related to class struggle. Thus, for example, in *The Midwinter Summer Holiday* (Zimsko

ljetovanje, 1950), novelist Vladan Desnica stages a confrontation between two social groups "separated by the Chinese wall": the citizens of Zadar (who act as focalisers) and the socially deprived peasants of nearby area Ravni kotari. Narration in the novel discloses individual and collective stereotyping, the internal homogenisation of privileged groups, and the exclusion of subaltern ones (the peasantry abusively called the Morlachs). Procedures of othering and exotisation turns the Morlachs into figures of the colonial Other that is at the same time an object of fascination and the uncanny of western culture. Through the "eyes of the white man" (as the elite citizens call themselves), the Morlachs are seen as a "tribal headmen or chiefs", and as beasts. Hegemonic discourse at the time integrated both into the individual imaginary and in collective representations and symbolic social practices, which are, in the end, instrumentalised by both the civilian and military authorities. With his novel Desnica drew the reader's attention to the production of binary polarities, essentialisation and Orientalism as instruments of hegemonic structures of authority, enervating the neuralgic points of the contemporary social order and proclaimed equality, "brotherhood and unity" of the state. In the following years, simultaneously with changes in the official foreign policy and founding the Non-Aligned Movement, new generation of artists around the magazine *Circles* (Krugovi, 1952-1958) introduced texts, themes and authors from Africa, Asia and South America, showing the neo-avant-garde interest toward new conceptions of art, subjectivity and language. These shifts reflect important changes in politics of literature, in the sense that J. Rancière (2011) determines literary revolution as a shattering the perceptible order that underpins traditional hierarchies, intervening "in the parceling of space and time, place and identity, speech and noise, the visible and the invisible, that is the arena of the political".

Paul Stubbs

Ambivalent Circuits of Decolonial Affinity: Socialist Yugoslavia, the Global South and the Non-Aligned Movement

The Non-Aligned Movement offered alternatives to East-West conflicts in the context of the Cold War whilst also expressing the hopes of a world emerging from colonial domination of the South by the North. In the context of the dissolution of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the Non-Aligned Movement was actively forgotten, at least in the post-Yugoslav space, both politically and

academically. Recent years have, however, witnessed a resurgence of scholarly and activist interest in the history of the Non-Aligned Movement in the context both of work on the inter-relationship between socialist and decolonial processes and in terms of a renewed interest in Yugoslavia in a global perspective.

In this Introductory lecture, I want to address four themes:

- i. the origins, extent and limits of socialist Yugoslavia's identification with, and support for, decolonial struggles;
 - ii. the ways in which top-down diplomacy was accompanied by "non-alignment from below" in terms of the production of relatively autonomous spaces for transnational exchanges in the realms of science, art and culture, architecture, education and industry;
 - iii. the complexities of the "deracialised anti-racism" of socialist Yugoslavia's commitments to the Global South;
- and
- iv. the role of the Non-Aligned Movement in advocating for a "New International Economic Order".