

Looking for a Third Way: Non-Aligned Politics of Art

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The text explores art practices and cultural politics that evolved within the framework of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), examining their contemporary relevance in art and curatorial research projects in the post-Yugoslav context. By reviewing instances of non-aligned art from pan-African, pan-Arab, Latin American, and Yugoslav perspectives, it traces their foundational concepts that continue to inform present-day exhibitions, artworks, and politically engaged discourses. These concepts are often approached dialectically, through a decolonial lens, within today's global landscape of diverse positions and power dynamics. Drawing on feminist, materialist, and decolonial perspectives to explore the artistic geographies of this historical movement, the text highlights certain paradigmatic cases that reveal both the decolonial potential and the inherent structural nostalgia associated with the historical concept of a non-aligned world.

Keywords: Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), structural nostalgia vs. decolonial potential, art geographies, non-aligned art.

The geopolitical constellation of the universally accepted global cartography inevitably includes the term *Third World*, which originated in the context of the Cold War with a meaning entirely different from the one it holds today. After World War II, the concepts of the First, Second, and Third World reflected the geopolitical ideologies of state alliances engaged in the Cold War. The ideological, social, economic, military, political, and any other polarization between the capitalist Western Bloc and the communist Eastern Bloc unfolded under the constant “cold” threat of a nuclear conflict. In this binary system—where domination was manifested through nuclear weapons programs to maintain global peace, and progress was pursued through space programs of conquering the universe to advance civilization—an alternative bloc of non-aligned states emerged in search of a third way. The term *Third World* (a reference to the *third estate* of the French Revolution; Suavy 1952) was grounded in emancipatory politics, primarily advocating for the complete decolonization of all the peoples still under Western colonial rule. Simultaneously, it signified the process of the nation-state formation, in which newly independent states adopted non-aligned politics of modernization and socialism to free themselves from the hegemonic influence of both the capitalist West and the newly established communist Eastern Bloc.¹ The ultimate goal of non-aligned politics, following decolonization, was to achieve lasting peace among all sovereign and independent states in the world.²

However, political inconsistencies among non-aligned countries, disagreements over key principles, and numerous disputes—especially regarding their positions towards the East and/or West—led to a series of compromises and collusions, both within the non-aligned bloc and with external actors. The modernist ideas of statehood were soon undermined by processes of social retraditionalization, as internal divisions within the bloc gave rise to conflicting alliances. As a result, the emancipatory ideology of non-alignment soon took a troubling turn. Having freed themselves

1 Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2007), 11–15.

2 This is evident in the declarations issued immediately before and during the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement (Bandung 1955; Brijuni 1956, Belgrade 1961), as well as in numerous other documents, correspondences, and archives, accessible today through various platforms, including the NAM Globe exchange platform, established in 2020.

from colonial rule, newly independent states advocated progressive politics, yet at the same time, many implemented repressive dictatorships and fluctuated in their relationships with the Eastern and Western Blocs, which continued to exert direct or indirect influence over them.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the dichotomy between First and Third World persisted beyond the ideological schism between the Western and Eastern Blocs—that is, beyond the binary opposition of capitalism and communism, reminding that “the continued use of these terms, both academically and in everyday language, testifies to the time, effort and resources which are deployed in maintaining and reinforcing the boundaries drawn between both sides of [this] dichotomy, and the implicit hierarchies which might exist within it.”³

Losing any connection to the original politics of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Third World countries once again became dependent on First World states, primarily through economic assistance policies that facilitated the consensual exploitation of their economic, natural, human, and other resources. Ultimately, these patronizing policies—framed as efforts to democratize underdeveloped societies—accelerated the process of Westernization in many of these countries. This shift also led to the appropriation of the geopolitical meaning of the term *Third World*, originally rooted in non-aligned politics, which today refers to peripheral, *undeveloped*, or *underdeveloped* countries of the Global South (McDowell and Sharp 1999; Warf 2006; Flint and Taylor 2018, etc.).

The geopolitical, economic, cultural, educational, and social relations established between non-aligned countries during the Cold War succeeded in leaving behind a distinct anti-colonial aesthetic—one that shaped socialist, modernist, and progressive approaches to architecture, artistic design, and art in general, as well as their further dissemination via newly established modes of exhibition, international exchange, and collaboration. The unique aesthetics of the anti-colonial struggle for independence, planetary coexistence, and lasting peace among equals has preserved the revolutionary ideas of the NAM, resurfacing in the early 21st century, especially in the field of politically engaged art. Research into the

3 WGSF, *Feminist Geographies: Explorations in Diversity and Difference* (Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1997), 113–14.

decolonial potential⁴ of non-alignment—in contrast to the *structural nostalgia*⁵ for the NAM, where this concept remained unrealized, misunderstood, or politically co-opted—has led to new interpretations of what this concept might demonstrate or signify today in art, encompassing its critical, historical-material, aesthetic, and other forms or dimensions. This text will explore such perspectives through exhibitions, artworks, and artistic collaborations that engage with the various paradigmatic scopes of “non-aligned” art geographies.⁶

Historical note on Non-Alignment

The notion of “alignment” almost automatically evokes the idea of space. Concretely, it invites us to think of taking a certain position within a geopolitical space. But the fact is, however, that the term “alignment” as such does not at all belong to the vocabulary of geopolitics. It is rather its negation that more than a half-century ago entered the political stage of the world (Buden 2015).

As previously mentioned, the NAM emerged in the accelerated process of decolonization following World War II, culminating in the signing of its founding declaration at the First Non-Aligned Summit in Belgrade in 1961. At the Asian-African Bandung Conference in 1955, participating countries—many of whom had only recently gained independence—agreed

- 4 The term “structural nostalgia,” coined by anthropologist Michael Herzfeld, provides a theoretical framework for understanding the phenomenon of idealizing the past. This process involves erasing antagonistic politics and revising historical reality to portray it as a golden age. It represents a construct of the “eternal essence” that connects a mythological notion of pure origins to an idealized social and cultural form. This national history, akin to Levi-Strauss’s myth, retroactively smooths over experiential time in favour of generic time (Herzfeld 2016, 28). As a result, once-oppositional phenomena are reimagined as complementary. In this context, the anti-colonial struggle of the NAM and the regressive vision of newly independent nation-states within the NAM (corrupted, authoritarian, and reactionary) became conflated within this structural nostalgia.
- 5 Decolonial potential refers to the capacity or possibility of challenging and dismantling colonial legacies, structures, and ideologies. It involves actions, ideas, or movements aimed at decentering colonial power dynamics, promoting cultural autonomy, and fostering social justice and equity (Mignolo 2011).
- 6 Art geographies encompass the spatial and conceptual dimensions of artistic production, circulation, and reception across diverse cultural, political, and historical contexts. This includes how artists conceptualize, represent, and intervene in geographical spaces, often challenging dominant narratives and power structures through counter-cartographies. The term “art geographies” primarily refers to the aforementioned project: Art Geographies.

on the fundamental political principles that would shape the future movement. These principles included respect for territorial integrity, sovereignty, equality, and the human rights of all peoples and races; non-intervention in the internal affairs of other countries; the right of each country to defend itself from external threats while refraining from collective defence arrangements that served the interests of major powers; and a commitment to resolving international conflicts through peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration, or judicial settlement whenever possible (Final Communiqué, Bandung 1955). In the context of the Cold War, the participating countries specifically agreed that the developing world should refrain from aligning with either of the two superpowers—the United States and U.S.S.R.—and instead unite in support of national self-determination, opposing all forms of colonialism and imperialism. The rejection of power politics, symbolized by the historic Afro-Asian Bandung Conference of 1955, signalled a shift within the bipolar Cold War order towards an officially new stance: *active neutrality*. Emerging socialist and newly independent nations articulated a vision of political peace as a form of material collective solidarity. Shortly after the Bandung Conference, another key milestone leading to the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement took place in 1956, when presidents Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Josip Broz Tito (Yugoslavia), and Jawaharlal Nehru (India) signed an important declaration on the Brijuni Islands (Yugoslavia).

Finally, following the principles established in the previous declarations, the Non-Aligned Movement was officially founded in Belgrade in 1961 under the leadership of Josip Broz Tito (Yugoslavia), Gamal Abdel Nasser (Egypt), Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), and Sukarno (Indonesia). The founding declaration was signed by representatives of 25 non-aligned countries—Afghanistan, Algeria, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, Congo-Léopoldville, Cuba, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, Untied Arab Republic, Yemen, and Yugoslavia—along with three observer countries: Bolivia, Brazil, and Ecuador. In the summits that followed, many additional Asian, African, Caribbean, and Latin

American countries joined this movement, further shaping its shared vision of peace, development, and international relations.

Historian Vijay Prashad explains: “The Third World was not a place. It was a project” of African, Asian, and Latin American countries that longed for a new world and, above all, for dignity, land, peace, and freedom/justice. This desire for transformation was the main reason behind their collective efforts to establish various organizations, through which their leadership then formulated a platform of demands.⁷ As such, the Third World project was founded on very shaky ground:

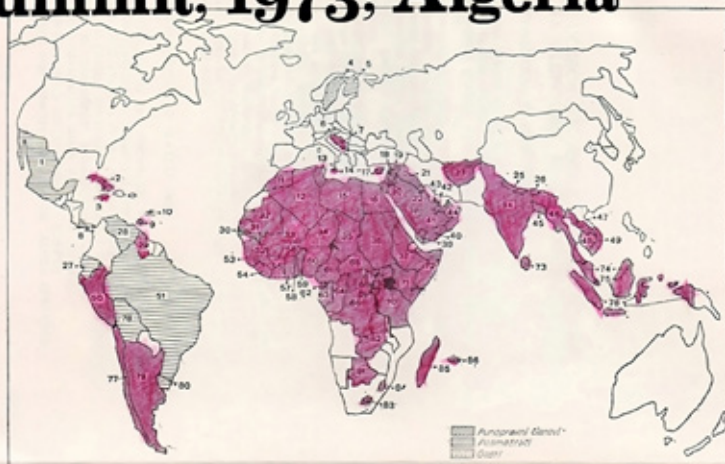
The houses of the new nations were not in order. They were constrained by a lack of democracy in their own political worlds, combined with mismanagement of economic resources and a very shallow reconstruction of the social landscape. The old social classes hesitated before the anticolonial mass movements, but as these were demobilized the old elites called on the generals or on right-wing populist politicians to sweep up the mess. The Project was hampered by these failings, but it was not these limitations that did it in.⁸

By the late 1970s, many non-aligned countries were embroiled in internal and regional conflicts, some of which were armed. As a result, the peace that have been foundational to non-aligned politics was threatened by the growing militarization of its members and their open alignment with either the Eastern or Western bloc. A new globally oriented world order emerged during the 1970s, positioning the NAM in contrast to the Northern industrialized countries. This shift marked the NAM as the forefront of the emerging Global South, which would take centre stage in geopolitics after the Cold War, replacing the Third World project (Prashad 2007, 2012; Dinkel 2018; Sajed 2020).

7 Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, xv.

8 Vijay Prashad, *The Poorer Nations: A Possible History of the Global South* (London: Verso Books, 2012), 14.

4th Non - Aligned Movement Summit, 1973, Algeria



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|---------------------|---|--|----------------------|
| 1. Meksiko | 25. Nepal | 44. Oman | 64. Kongo |
| 2. Kuba | 26. Butan | 45. Bangladeš | 65. Centralna Afrika |
| 3. Jamajka | 27. Ekvador | 46. Burma | Republika |
| 4. Švedska | 28. Venecuela | 47. Laos | 66. Zair |
| 5. Finska | 29. Gvajana | 48. Kambodža | 67. Uganda |
| 6. Austrija | 30. Gambija | 49. Južni Vijetnam (Privremena revolucionarna vlada) | 68. Ruanda |
| 7. Jugoslavija | 31. Senegal | 50. Peru | 69. Burundi |
| 8. Panama | 32. Mauritanija | 51. Brazil | 70. Tanzanija |
| 9. Trindad i Tobago | 33. Mali | 52. Gvineja | 71. Kenija |
| 10. Barbados | 34. Niger | 53. Sjevera Leone | 72. Somalija |
| 11. Maroko | 35. Čad | 54. Liberijska | 73. Sri Lanka |
| 12. Alžir | 36. Sudan | 55. Obala Slonovače | 74. Malezija |
| 13. Tunis | 37. Etiopija | 56. Gornja Volta | 75. Singapur |
| 14. Malta | 38. Saudijska Arabija | 57. Gana | 76. Indonezija |
| 15. Libija | 39. Jemen — Arapska Republika | 58. Togo | 77. Čile |
| 16. Egipat | 40. Jemen — Narodna Demokratska Republika | 59. Dahomej | 78. Bolivija |
| 17. Kipar | 41. Ujedinjeni Arapski Emirati | 60. Nigerija | 79. Argentina |
| 18. Liban | 42. Katar | 61. Kamerun | 80. Urugvaj |
| 19. Sirija | 43. Bahrein | 62. Ekvatorijska Gvineja | 81. Bočvana |
| 20. Jordan | | 63. Gabon | 82. Zambija |
| 21. Irak | | | 83. Lesoto |
| 22. Kuvajt | | | 84. Svazilend |
| 23. Avganistan | | | 85. Madagaskar |
| 24. Indija | | | 86. Mauricijus |

1. Map of the Non-Aligned, 1973, in Ranko Petković, *Teorijski pojmovi nesvrstanosti* (Belgrade, 1974)

Neprisijungusių šalių žemėlapis, 1973, in Ranko Petković, *Teorijski pojmovi nesvrstanosti* (Belgrads, 1974)

Non-Aligned art exposures

The politics of the NAM in its very conception could be summed up in a simple ideological equation: *modernism + socialism = emancipatory politics*. This ideological framework, later disassembled and reconfigured in various (geo)politically reactionary ways, was also mirrored in the cultural and artistic trends that emerged within the Third World project. In other words, art and culture reflected what was socially and politically unattainable in this “third way.” This enthusiastic momentum led to the creation of numerous new cultural institutions, manifestations, collaborations and, finally, artistic productions that were ahead of their time in their aspiration to create a post-colonial era, also within the realm of “non-aligned” art. As the anti-colonial thinker and political leader from Guinea-Bissau, Amílcar Cabral, emphasizes:

... people are only able to create and develop the liberation movement because they keep their culture alive despite the continual and organized repression of their cultural life and because they continue to resist by means of culture, even when their political and military resistance is destroyed.⁹

The development of cultural life within the context of non-aligned politics was evidenced by numerous new art events and biennials, such as those founded in Dakar, Havana, Ljubljana, Baghdad, and others. The exposure of non-alignment politics through art took shape in a variety of new art-political unions and collaborations, which extended even beyond the circle of NAM countries—particularly to all those individuals in the art world who supported the leftist politics of the movement. Pan-African and Pan-Arabian art movements, along with examples from Latin America and Yugoslavia, showcased a new political dimension of contemporary art, largely supported by NAM states where these artistic and cultural decolonial processes were taking place. The following sections present crucial insights into certain overlooked yet significant alliances and movements.

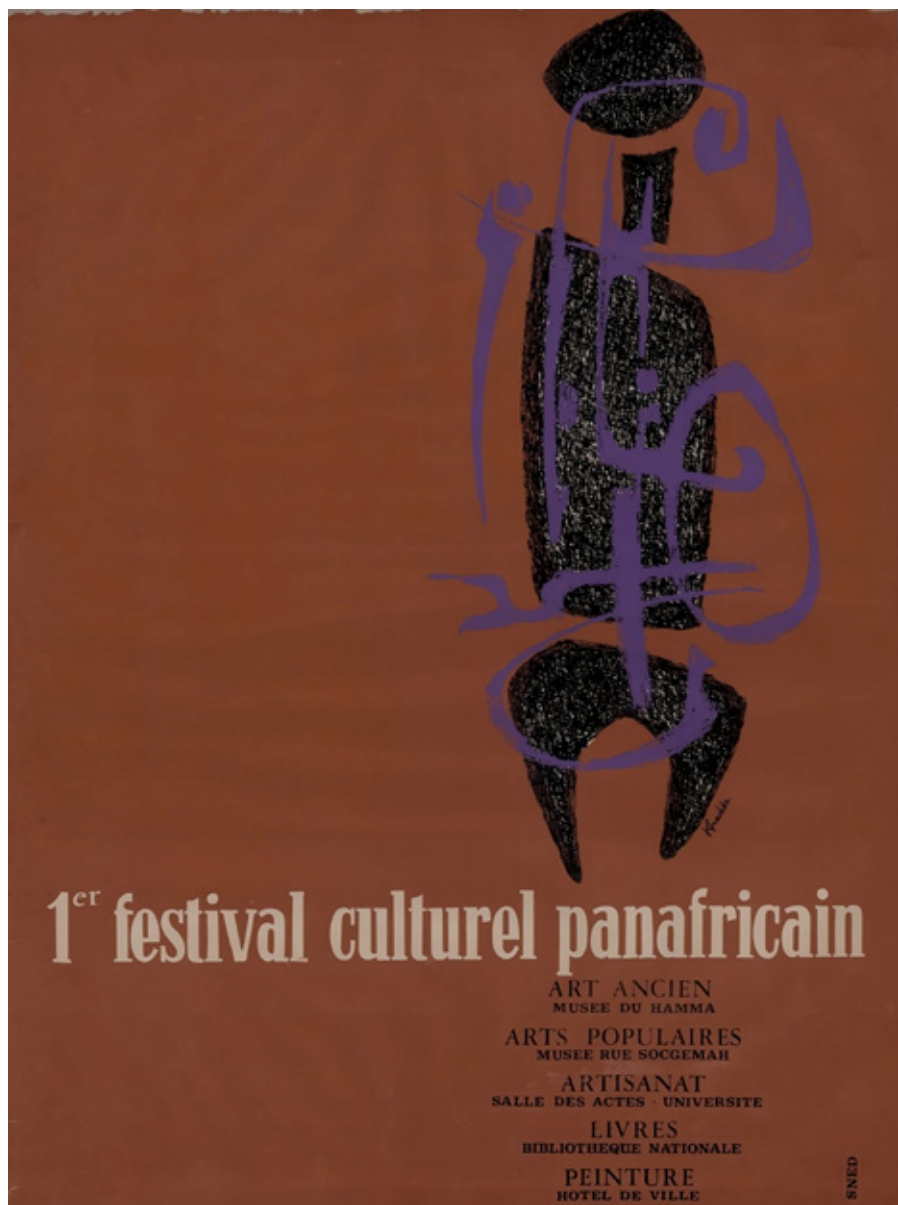
9 Amílcar Cabral, *Unity and Struggle: Speeches and Writings* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1983), 6, in Bojana Piškur, “Solidarity in Arts and Culture. Some Cases from the Non-Aligned Movement,” in *Art and Theory of Post-1989 Central and Eastern Europe, A Critical Anthology*, eds. Ana Janevski, Roxana Marcoci, and Ksenia Nouril (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), 123.

PAN-AFRICANISM

The Pan-African congresses of the 1960s and 1970s, dedicated to fostering cooperation within Third World, had a major impact on the foundation of international art festivals and their contents, involving both intellectual elites and resistance movements of the time.¹⁰ Various forums, roundtables, and programmes engaged in discussions on African languages, literature, and art, exploring their role in building new, independent, and progressive societies both on the African continent and in African diasporas worldwide. With this intention, in 1969, the Government of Algeria founded the first Pan-African cultural festival, PANAFA. The festival's discursive performance arts programme (including dance, music, theatre, and even a costume ball) celebrated African creativity as a global source of inspiration, also featuring art exhibitions—both historical and contemporary. Furthermore, prior to PANAFA, the first World Festival of Black Arts (FESMAN) took place in Dakar in 1966, continuing the legacy of early Pan-African congresses that had been held in cultural capitals of Western Europe before independence was achieved, including the first Congress of Black Writers and Artists in Paris in 1956 and the second in Rome in 1959. Additionally, festivals Zaire 74 in Kinshasa (1974) and the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture FESTAC in Lagos (1977) played significant roles in the development and spread of Pan-African and Third World art. In their joint archive for these four festivals, Dominique Malaquais and Cédric Vincent highlighted the external Cold War influences that were intricately woven into the cultural politics of these events, affecting their further development and the very concept of Pan-African art. In their PANFEST archive,¹¹ they also noted the involvement of representatives from both the USSR and the USA, who used Pan-African themes in various artistic

10 Representatives from various African liberation movements, as well as members of the Black Panthers from the US, Palestinian PLO movement, and individuals involved in the global struggle for political liberation from Western rule and influence, participated in the festival (Murphy 2016).

11 Built upon the cross-pollination of official archives with a variety of other types of archives—institutional, private, and those generated by the project itself—the PANFEST is established as a transdisciplinary research project that focuses on four Pan-African festivals of art and culture held in 1960s and 1970s: the First World Festival of Negro Arts (FESMAN, Dakar 1966), the First Pan-African Cultural Festival (PANAFA, Algeria 1969), Zaire 74 (Kinshasa 1974), and the Second World Black and African festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC, Lagos 1977). The project is led by Dominique Malaquais



2. *The first Pan-African Festival of Culture in Algiers, 1969, Poster, Photo by PANAFEST archive*

Pirmasis Pan-Afrikanistinės kultūros festivalis Alžyre, 1969, plakatas, PANAFEST archyvo nuotrauka

endeavours, especially cinema, primarily leveraging them as a propaganda tool to spread either communism or democracy across the Third World.¹²

Unlike the typical linear and monographic approach to the aforementioned festivals, which often portrays them as teleologically conditioned and mutually progressive, the PANFEST archive, with its multi-layered research of not only official but also numerous private and marginalized archives, reveals another crucial point: that independent and non-aligned Pan-African artistic practices were unable to fully free themselves from the hegemonic influences of either Western or Eastern Bloc (Malaquais and Vincent 2018), despite this being their ultimate goal.

PAN-ARABISM

At the same time, alongside the decolonial exhibition and art practices of the Pan-African world, the rhetoric of Pan-Arabism emerged, shaping art geographies distinct from the dominant ones of the time. Following the Naksa, the six-day war of 1967 that resulted in the defeat of the Arab League by Israel, artistic collaboration intensified among Arab countries through the creation of a shared cultural agenda. Determined to define what and whom good art represented, and which artistic practices and theories could support it, artists from Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Kuwait, and Sudan founded the General Union of Arab Plastic Artists in 1971. The Union was subsequently joined by artists from Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria. Initially, the ideological stance of the General Union was clearly articulated as decolonial and modernist, and it positioned itself as independent from the Cold-War divisions, primarily opposing Western influences and (neo)colonialism. Artist Fateh al-Moudarres, considered the pioneer of modern Syrian art, concluded his speech at the General Union founding conference with the following words:

and Cédric Vincent. For more details, visit: http://webdocs-sciences-sociales.science/panafest/#01-Menu-Inroduction_PANAFEST___une_archive_en_devenir (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

- 12 For example, the Central State Studio of the Order of the Red Flag produced the film *Rhythms of Africa* (1966), directed by Irina Venzher and Leonid Makhnatch, which captured key moments of the FESMAN festival (especially the exhibition focusing on the Atlantic slave trade), and a series of documentary films commissioned by the United States Information Agency (USIA) were produced by William Greaves, a pioneer of African American documentary cinema (Malaquais and Vincent 2018).

It is the duty of the Ministry of Culture and Information, the Arab League, and the proposals legislated by the people's assemblies to consider artistic work as an important component of the Arab nation's battle. I hereby affirm that the program of the governments of Western Europe and North America includes the total eradication of the Arab nation, because we represent the only wall of resistance before Africa. The demise of the Arab nation would make it easier for the West to inaugurate a long era of modern economic colonialism in Africa.¹³

Following its establishment, the General Union initiated a series of collaborative exhibitions and events, including the First Biennale of Arab Art in Baghdad (1974). More than 600 artworks and 14 art pavilions from Arab countries were presented in Iraq that year, including the Palestine Pavilion organized by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Two more Arab art biennales followed: one in Rabat (1976) and another in Tripoli (1980). Through various artistic endeavours, and especially through the organization of these biennales, the General Union worked to define and strengthen a pan-Arab identity—"Arabness"—which differed from the one already shaped through the lens of Western culture and art (Debsi 2022). From the outset of its work, it was clear that the Union focused on artists whose work challenged the global politics of the Cold War and who were politically engaged, primarily in the Question of Palestine, viewed as the hallmark of Arab identity (Shabut 2018).

The artists gathered around the Moroccan Association of Plastic Arts manifesto argued that the biennale format itself was not avantgarde enough to serve the Union's primary goal: to de-Westernize art in every possible sense, especially political. They stated:

We hope that this first Arab Biennial will not follow the example of Western biennials that consist primarily of grouping professional artists together in a dull exhibition, similar to any commercial exhibition where the laws of supply and demand entirely determine which characteristics a production should adopt at a later stage. As witnesses of Arab reality, and wishing to discover its

13 Fâtîh al-Mudarris, *Speech at the Founding Conference of the General Union of Arab Plastic Artists* (1971), in Anneka Lenssen, Sarah Rogers, and Nada Shabut, *Modern Art in the Arab World: Primary Documents* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2018), 341.



3. The first Arab Biennale in Baghdad, 1974,
Modern Art Iraq Archive, Item #76

Pirmoji arabų šalių bienalė Bagdade, 1974,
Irako šiuolaikinio meno archyvas

future concerns, we are convinced that this gathering of Arab plastic artists is too important to be merely an opportunity to take stock of abilities or talents. The next encounters should aim to focus our energies in order to mobilize the Arab peoples and put them on permanent alert.¹⁴

The General Union, initially established as the official representative body under the governmental auspices of participating countries, became increasingly instrumentalized over time and distanced from its original

14 *Manifeste de l'Association marocaine des arts plastiques*, in Lenssen, Rogers, and Shabout, *Modern Art in the Arab World*, 385.

collective goal—creating a pan-Arab forum to address the political engagement of art and its decolonial aesthetic. This shift soon led to the end of the Biennale of Arab Art, as well as to the cessation of any further art initiatives by the General Union that took a similar direction.

DECOLONIZING LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ART

The process of decolonizing art also spread to Latin American and Caribbean countries through the Third World project. One of the numerous attempts to transfer the politics of non-alignment—detachment from either the Eastern or the Western Blocs during the Cold War—to the world of art was the establishment of the Havana Biennial in 1984. In the process of creating an anti-colonial art system aimed at showcasing the intensity and diversity of Third World art, a unique cultural politics was being formed, grounded in socially engaged theory, praxis, and emancipation. One of the organizers of the first Havana Biennial, curator and art critic Gerardo Mosquera, pointed out that the core concept of the Biennial's artistic focus and content was to represent the “multiple modernities” emerging from the so-called “periphery,” which in fact encompassed three-quarters of all the countries in the world. As he stated, the processes of de-Westernising and de-exoticizing art were crucial to this effect:

The event has always focused on modern and contemporary art, developing the notion of a plurality of active modernisms, and giving little room to traditional or religious aesthetic-symbolic productions, which at the time were frequently stereotyped as the authentic art created in Third World countries, while other work was disqualified as an epigonal Westernised production.¹⁵

In Latin American and Caribbean countries, the art politics of non-alignment took a slightly different approach compared to the Eastern and Western Bloc countries, as seen in the pan-African and pan-Arab examples. Ideologically open to all the political options deemed relevant within this “third” way, art from these regions formed alliances with art practices closely related with revolutionary acts, regardless of their origin.

15 Gerardo Mosquera, “The Third Biennial de La Habana in Its Global and Local Contexts,” in *Making Art Global (Part 1). The Third Havana Biennial 1989*, eds. Rachel Weiss et al. (London: Afterfall, 2011), 77.

An example of this is Museo de la Solidaridad (Museum of Solidarity) in Chile, founded in 1971 by several individuals who later formed the International Committee of Artistic Solidarity with Chile.¹⁶ Unlike previous engaged art initiatives, this museum was created with the participation of curators, writers, artists, and others who were not necessarily from Third World countries; many were from the West. On the occasion of the museum's founding, President of Chile Salvador Allende invited artists to donate works in a political act of solidarity with the people of Chile, who were pursuing a "new way." In the first year alone, more than 600 works were collected. Harald Szeemann, a member of the museum's founding committee and curator of Documenta 5 at the time, also contributed by inviting all the artists involved in the renowned contemporary art event to donate their works to the museum. This experiment in museology demonstrated the possibility of creating an alternative exhibition system aligned with cultural democratization, which supported the politics of Chile at the time and relied on equal, non-hierarchical approach to art that was both transversal and polyphonic (Piškur 2018). Significantly, the Museum of Solidarity did not merely represent the institutional space of art; it extended to spaces that were not explicitly artistic—such as camping tents, posters, murals, and public spaces. In this way, the museum's institutional concept was redefined as conceptual, participatory, and engaged in every sense. However, during the military dictatorship that followed Allende's death and Pinochet's 1973 coup, the core idea of the museum was suppressed, and its art collection was relegated to the basement of the Museum of Contemporary Art of the University of Chile—at least those works that had not been destroyed or lost.

Numerous reactions from all around the world followed the brutal establishment of Pinochet's dictatorship. In the world of art, acts of solidarity were expressed through practices central to the Museum of Solidarity. An unusual example was the 1974 Venice Biennale, which demonstrated artistic solidarity with the people of Chile through a series of artistic events across the city. These included performative, exhibition, and discursive

16 Mario Pedrosa, a Brazilian art critic in exile, served as the president of the Museum, while the members of the International Committee of Artistic Solidarity with Chile included Dore Ashton, an art critic from the United States; Pablo Neruda, poet and ambassador of Chile in Paris; Edward de Wilde, director of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam; Giulio Carlo Aragan, Luis Aragon, and Harald Szeemann (Piškur 2018).



4. *Freedom for Chile*, Venice Biennale, 1974, Photo by Archivio Storico delle Arti Contemporanee (ASAC)

Laisvė Čilei, 1974, Venecijos bienalė, ASAC nuotrauka

activities, such as art interventions in public spaces, taking place in parks, factories, garages, stadiums, galleries, pavilions, streets, and on walls. The Brigade of Salvador Allende, established in Paris by exiled Chilean artists (e.g., Ramona Parra and Elmo Catalán), for this occasion painted 62 murals dedicated to the Chilean resistance and the struggle against dictatorship. This Venice Biennale, known as *La Biennale per una cultura democratica e antifascista* (The Biennale for a Democratic and Anti-Fascist Culture 1974), was significant not only for its solidarity with the people of Chile but also for marking a shift towards politically engaged art, which, in its true sense, endured—albeit briefly—in the organization of several subsequent Biennales (Orzes, 2022).

Biennials of art, exhibitions, and exchanges among the Non-Aligned Movement introduced critical, discursive, and politically engaged practices to the Western world of contemporary art. These practices are now foundational to numerous major art events and globally significant biennials. Referring to the so-called “biennials of resistance,” which established decolonial systems of art during the Cold-War era, theoretician and sociologist Oliver Marchart emphasized the need for a counter-historical approach to writing the global history (or the future) of biennials (Marchart 2014). However, the question remains: if such histories are to be written from the perspective of the former and contemporary “periphery” of the global Eurocentric world, can they truly become global, and if so, how?

YUGOSLAV NON-ALIGNED ART

Yugoslavia took a similar approach to the practice of exhibiting non-aligned art during the Cold War, being the only non-aligned country in Europe (alongside Malta and Cyprus), situated at the crossroads of East and West. Aimed at fostering connections with African, Asian, Latin American, and Caribbean countries, Yugoslav cultural politics focused on establishing new biennials, international exhibitions, and events, as well as creating new art spaces and museums dedicated to Third World art. Additionally, collaboration with art institutions, leftist curators, and artists from the West played a significant role in the formation of this non-aligned artistic canon, especially

during the Yugoslav-Soviet split between 1948 and 1955.¹⁷ It was in this period that Yugoslavia returned to the Venice Biennale in 1950, presenting itself as a redefined socialist entity in the aftermath of World War II.¹⁸

In the same year that split ended, the Biennial of Graphic Arts was established in Ljubljana, designed in accordance with the cultural politics of the non-aligned, while also connecting with emerging Western art trends. As Zoran Kržišnik, the then director of Modern Gallery and official founder of the first Biennial, emphasized, modernism on which the non-aligned policies were based was defined by the principles of freedom, independence, democracy, and the openness of the Yugoslav society (Grafenauer 2013). Accordingly, the call for participation in this biennial was extended to all artists, or more precisely, to those from both sides of the Cold War:

The invitation to participate [in the 1st Exhibition of Graphic Art] was met by a willing response from a significant number of prominent artists in the Western world; meanwhile, because of our country's unique political position it was also possible for graphic artists from Eastern Europe's people's democracies to participate in the exhibition as well. Their participation is an important achievement by the organisers, for which the credit must go above all to the independent and peace-loving policies of Yugoslavia as a country (Vidmar 1955: in Grafenauer 2013).

In addition to the Biennial of Graphic Arts and numerous initiatives that followed, many specialized museums and galleries were established during this period. One such institution was the regional museum Slovenj Gradec Art Pavilion, which opened in 1957. Its institutional politics were shaped through exhibitions organized in the 1960s and 1970s in collaboration with the Third World and under the auspices of the United Nations. The first two exhibitions, held in 1965 and 1966, were organized based on a

17 After several months of correspondence between the governments of the USSR and Yugoslavia, the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties (Cominform, or Informbiuro) issued a resolution that severed all political, diplomatic, economic, and cultural connections between the Soviet Union and other East-European countries on one side, and Yugoslavia on the other. This split lasted until Stalin's death, after which representatives of the newly-established Soviet government visited Yugoslavia in 1955.

18 The Yugoslav Pavilion in Venice was originally built in 1938 in the Giardini Park as the Pavilion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

public call and were rather eclectic in their search for a contextual perspective on non-aligned art, expressed through the title *Peace, Humanity, and Friendship between Nations* (Germ and Hribernik 2019). The call for collaboration with artists from non-aligned countries was strongly supported and encouraged by the state, especially in the 1970s, when new conceptual art practices appeared alongside modernist works by Yugoslav artists participating in these exhibitions. This period also saw significant interest in collaborating with Western artists and curators:

The experts curating the shows at the time were undeniably largely limited to the Western art historical canon in terms of their views and positions on art, despite Yugoslavia's specific political affiliations. This also explains the noticeable ambition to attract the participation of eminent Western artists, while the artists from non-aligned and Eastern European countries served as the conspicuous alibi for openness, variety and plurality.¹⁹

In their examination of the archives related to the museum's exhibitions, curators Katarina Hergold Germ and Andreja Hribernik note that the 1975 exhibition, organized in line with these tendencies, marked the culmination of consistent art exhibiting in the "non-aligned" context of the Pavilion. However, the final destruction of the emancipatory approach to art and contemporary exhibition frameworks occurred in 1985, during the final exhibition under the auspices of the UN. This shift resulted from numerous political contradictions related to non-aligned politics, as well as the retraditionalization of art and its ethnographic turn. The original idea of creating connections based on the principles of non-alignment—principles born out of decolonization—disappeared completely. The example of Slovenj Gradec Art Pavilion and its international exhibitions also reflects the general course of non-aligned exhibition practices in Yugoslavia and its evolving cultural politics.

In addition to the exhibition-focused efforts to establish a conceptual and emancipatory framework for representing and activating Third World art, there were also distinct institutional approaches that bridged the

19 Katarina Hergold Germ and Andreja Hribernik, *Peace, Humanity, and Friendship between Nations* (2019), 86.



5. *Collections for a Solidary Future*, 2002–2023. The exhibition project of the Contemporary Art Centre of Montenegro from Podgorica—the Laboratory of the Collection of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art Koroška, Photo by Tom Jeseničnik

Kolekcijos solidariai ateičiai, 2002–2023. Juodkalnijos Podgoricos šiuolaikinio meno centro parodos projektas – Neprisijungimo judėjimo kolekcijos laboratorija ir Koroškos modernaus ir šiuolaikinio meno muziejus, Tomo Jeseničniko nuotrauka

gap between traditional and contemporary art. The Museum of African Art in Belgrade (founded in 1977) and the Gallery of Art of the Non-Aligned Countries “Josip Broz Tito” in Titograd, now Podgorica (founded in 1984), stand as prime examples of this border-based approach. On the one hand, the Museum of African Art²⁰ was founded as the first European museum dedicated to Third World art, distinguishing itself by not deriving from colonial appropriation of ethnographic objects and collections. Instead, it reflected an anti-colonial practice based on gifts of gratitude and purchased works, evident in the conceptual frameworks of its exhibitions. On the

20 The Museum of African Art today explores the concepts and possibilities of creating an anticolonial museum, utilizing its archives and collections, as well as through collaboration with many African countries that established their museums of contemporary and modern art during the period of non-alignment. More at: <https://www.mau.rs/en/>; <https://www.nesvrstani.rs/nesvrstaniHomeEn.html> (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

other hand, the Gallery of Art of the Non-Aligned Countries “Josip Broz Tito”²¹ was established with the purpose of collecting, preserving, and displaying not only gifts in the form of traditional, cultural, and historical artefacts but also contemporary works by Third World artists, created throughout the long (anti-)colonial history in the non-aligned world.

The political activation of exhibition practices in the creation of the non-aligned canon of art was ambiguously defined in Yugoslavia, functioning both as a utilitarian agenda (art created under the auspices of the state) and as an emancipatory practice of anti-colonial art (art interventions and events in the context of the revolutionary potential in art). Ultimately, the revolutionary potential that non-aligned art practices sought to achieve was primarily contextualized by significant political events of the Cold War decades.

In her research on the art programmes and exhibitions at Belgrade’s Students’ Cultural Centre (SCC) during the 1970s and 1980s, art historian and curator Jelena Vesić underlines the revolutionary potential of the politically engaged art practices that developed within the SCC. One such example is the performative, discursive, and exhibition-oriented programme titled *The Week of Latin America* (1977), which was dedicated to anticolonial guerrilla warfare, with a special focus on Chile. Among the numerous politically engaged artists and groups from Latin American countries who participated in the programme was the previously mentioned Brigade of Salvador Allende. Together with the students of the Academy of Fine Arts, the Brigade created three large murals for this occasion on the SCC building—murals that have since faded, as has the political context that guided these artistic practices:

None of the murals were preserved—they grew pale and vanished over time, following the fading of the official ideology of socialism, non-alignment, and revolutionary struggle and its replacement by the currently prevailing combination of neoliberal economy and right-of-center ideology (Vesić 2012/14).

Following such examples, it can be noted that this specific blend of revolutionary and artistic endeavours has, in recent years, begun to

21 The Art Gallery of the Non-Aligned “Josip Broz Tito” is today part of the Contemporary Art Centre of Montenegro. More at: <https://csucg.me/collections-n> (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

resurface within the forgotten non-aligned Third World. This resurgence recalls some of its revolutionary ideals and emancipatory visions through a new decolonial aesthetic of resistance. Rooted in decolonial, feminist, and leftist politics, these art-based research and practices reveal the ambivalent potential of the historical idea of non-alignment. On the one hand, they highlight the anticolonial resistance politics, which holds the potential to challenge the neoliberal politics of the neocolonial era. On the other hand, they expose the pitfalls of structural nostalgia, which obscure a clear understanding of both the flawed ways to realize this vision and the complex geopolitical relations of power that contributed to its perceived “failure” in the first place. A paradigmatic case of this phenomenon is undoubtedly the post-Yugoslav “zone,” where the notion of non-alignment has been a subject of dialectic discourse for the past several years.

Resurgence of Non-Aligned: The post-Yugoslav case

During the Cold War, Yugoslavia remained non-aligned with either bloc, making it a distinctive example of the transition from socialism to neoliberalism in every sense, artistically as well as politically. Confronting the brutal wars of the 1990s and grappling with numerous challenges amid the rise of nationalism, contemporary post-Yugoslav art and curatorial practices have remained politically engaged. They continue to be interconnected through a radical geography of art, once again binding the post-Yugoslav space through its shared heritage of past social revolutions and emancipatory—yet unrealized—ideas. Experimental archives, research projects, and exhibitions emerge from the continuous interplay of collective and individual work, both within and beyond the circulation of (post-)Yugoslav revolutionary concepts that are being re-established as necessary through artistic and curatorial practices.

In this process, the NAM emerges as a significant revolutionary legacy of Yugoslav socialism, particularly in its ideological dimension. The concept of non-alignment becomes a recurring theme in art, gaining particular traction after the 2000s. Against the backdrop of economic neocolonialism—characterized by ongoing geopolitical conflicts, corrupt and often

fundamentalist state systems, poverty, and other associated challenges—this concept resurfaces not only from the post-Yugoslav perspective but also through voices from other formerly “non-aligned” regions, including the Middle East, the Far East, and the Global South. Through a counter-historical approach to the NAM, post-Yugoslav art engages with the evolving politics, perspectives, and dilemmas of the Third World, seeking to rediscover its own revolutionary anticolonial heritage embedded in the concept of non-alignment. The following examples explore this concept in various ways, aiming to sustain the continuity of emancipatory politics and revolutionary ideals, while also critically examining its failures, limitations, and shortcomings.

TRAVELLING COMMUNIQUÉ

The *Travelling Communiqué* exhibition, held in 2014 in Belgrade’s Museum of Yugoslavia, was one of the first events to reintroduce the idea and movement of the NAM into contemporary discourse. As the Museum began digitizing approximately 300,000 photographs from the presidential archive of Josip Broz Tito (1943–1980), Armin Linke, Doreen Mende, and Milica Tomić initiated a research project exploring this photo archive, focusing on the global politics of the Cold War and the NAM. The trio invited a diverse group of authors, artists, architects, theoreticians, and other collaborators²² to collectively explore the process of creating an exhibition and discursive event that would provide insight into the emancipatory politics of the Non-Aligned countries through this archive. Anchored in the question *Whom does this archive material address?*, this project paid special attention to photographs from the founding summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961 and the text of the Declaration signed at the event. Reflecting on the demands and resolutions of this Declaration²³—primarily addressed to Kennedy and Khrushchev as representatives of the two Cold

22 The basic information about the exhibition and the list of all the project and exhibition co-authors are available at: www.travellingcommunique.net (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

23 *Travelling Communiqué* accessed the key textual documents of the Conference, such as the collectively signed letter addressed to Kennedy and Khrushchev and the declaration of Heads of State or Government of non-Aligned Countries, from the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston and the Archive of Yugoslavia in Belgrade (Eshun and Mende 2016).

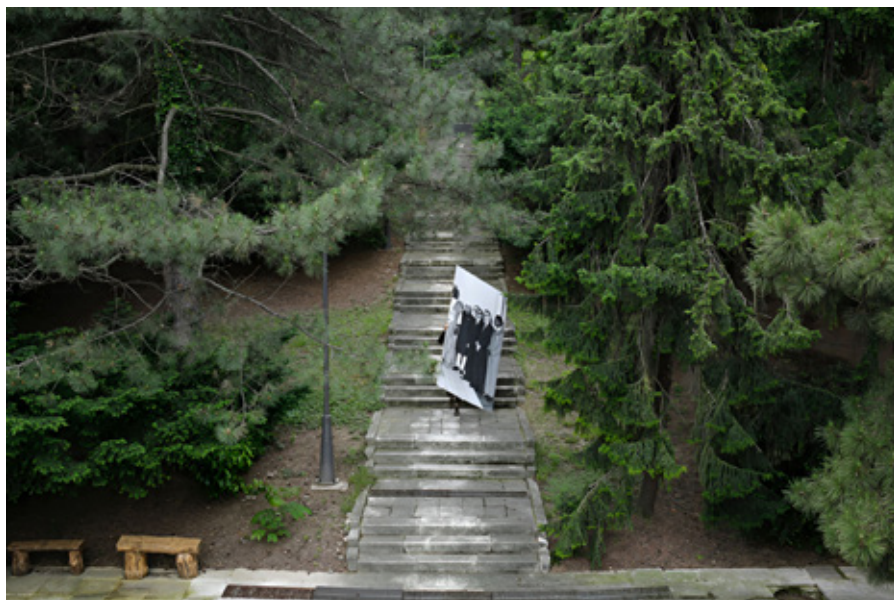
War blocs—one of the project authors, Branimir Stojanović, proposed re-considering its points from a contemporary perspective, within the current political landscape and global power structures. This led to the question of the archive's political significance in the present and how it could be reactivated today.

In the performance *Purloined Letter*, presented during the exhibition, artist Milica Tomić walks up the stairs through the garden connecting the Museum of Yugoslav History's building to Tito's Mausoleum, carrying a life-size enlargement of a photograph depicting the leaders who founded the Non-Aligned Movement at the Belgrade's Summit in 1961. Through this photo-performative act, she sought to demonstrate the possibility of visually reactivating the archive in the present moment, regardless of the photograph's original meaning or function, or that of the archive as a whole:

Entering the archive and accessing this valuable material raised the issue of the relationship between the time when the photograph was made and us, artists who now have the right to exhibit this material and, decomposing it into fragments, change the significance of the original intention of the authors. The work *Purloined Letter* examines the fragmentation of great political narratives, raises the question of delayed audience and introduces Jacques Lacan's comment that a letter always arrives at its destination and reaches its addressee, regardless of the original intention of the sender (Tomić 2022).

In this way, Milica Tomić's performance opened an art space for discursive reflection on the politics of the Non-Aligned Movement, revealing its potential to engage with current issues by establishing a continuity between the Cold War and present-day conflicts. Beyond exposing how Non-Aligned politics were marginalized during the Cold-War era, this approach also indicates a broader geopolitical shift which gradually erased its legacy, replacing the East-West confrontation with the divide between the Global North and the Global South.

In parallel, the site-specific work *Gather round me, my writers, musicians, artists: My name is NAM* by the Otolith Group used parts of



6. Milica Tomić, *The Purloined Letter*, 2014,
Photo by Armin Linke

Milica Tomić, *Pagrobtas laiškas*, 2014, Armino
Linkės nuotrauka

digital photographs from the archive to create a political montage (photo assemblage), questioning the reasons behind the collapse of the idea of the Non-Aligned Movement in the very process of its realization. Displayed on the central wall of the Museum, this fourteen-metre transhistorical frieze evoked the grandiose aesthetics of postcolonial authoritarian regimes, aligning with the conspiratorial tendencies that appeared as a result of the anti-communist hysteria of the Western Bloc, especially in the United States. By challenging the division between the Iron Curtain and the Colour Curtain,²⁴ the work revealed how the Non-Aligned Movement was perceived in the Western Bloc as an uncontrollable epidemic which should be suppressed in time. Rather than engaging directly with the present, the work reconfigured the archives of the past to chart new ideological trajectories for the future, avoiding the missteps from the ideological itinerary that had led to the failure of the NAM's vision.

24 In their work, the Otolith Group referenced Afro-American writer Richard Wright, who critically addressed the realization of the Pan-African Movement, highlighting its many weaknesses and shortcomings. The title of his book *The Colour Curtain* serves as a travelogue through political landscapes of the period of their liberation (Wright 2008).

In the historical context of speculative geographies, the contradictory and disputable points of the NAM prompted—through this and other works, discussions, and interventions—a reconsideration of the common idea of non-alignment as a process of unfinished decolonization and lost social emancipation. According to one of the curators, Doreen Mende, the *Travelling Communiqué* exhibition enabled the digital archive of the Museum of Yugoslavia to serve as a space for analyzing and visualizing the protocols that choreographed the images, speeches, and texts of the First Summit of the NAM (Eshun and Mende 2016). With the intention of applying a similar approach to archives across the Third World, where the meaning and significance of the NAM have shifted through state appropriation and reactionary revision,²⁵ the *Travelling Communiqué* exhibition established the basic guidelines for research and a contemporary political articulation of the movement's legacy. These were shaped by contributions of numerous artists, activists, and theorists, whose suggestions were presented in the Museum as printed blocks, each containing 1,000 sheets. This format commonly anticipated the extension of the *Travelling Communiqué* project while emphasizing the continuity of Non-Aligned politics, which was reactivated through engagement with this and other archival materials.

SOUTHERN CONSTELLATIONS: POETICS OF NON-ALIGNED

Several years after, the exhibition *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned* (2019) in Ljubljana's Museum of Contemporary Art was another initiative aimed at addressing the archives of Non-Aligned Movement.²⁶ Curated by Bojana Piškur, the exhibition presented specific collections, institutions, and archives, seeking to connect artworks and exhibitions from the Non-Aligned era with contemporary art practices. Featuring 26 positions (art-based works), the exhibition not only examined, interpreted, and contextualized various examples from the NAM's art history but also highlighted the extent to which this movement was, in many ways,

25 At the time when the exhibition was created, the Non-Aligned Movement officially had 120 members, both old and new, whose politics had, in the meantime, shifted to become inverse and mostly reactionary in relation to the founding principles of social internationalism.

26 More about the exhibition can be found at: <https://www.mg-lj.si/en/exhibitions/2439/southern-constellations-the-poetics-of-the-non-aligned/> (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

anachronistic even in its own time. The question *Could there be non-aligned contemporaneity?* emerged as both an idea and the reality of the movement whose vision collapsed completely with the triumph of neoliberalism in 1898 (Piškur 2019). According to Piškur, the discrepancy between society's political imagination and its social reality demonstrated that the revolutionary potential of creating new international art movements beyond Western and colonial frameworks was never fully realized, despite the fact that:

There obviously existed a heterogeneous artistic production, a variety of cultural politics and extensive cultural networks which enriched the cultural landscape of the NAM and enabled discussions about the meaning of art outside the Western canon. But in spite of all these substantial expressions there were no specific NAM-related modernisms, no common tissue that could create a new international narrative in art.²⁷

The exhibition focused on various archival materials that provided a curatorial insight into epistemic colonialism and cultural dependency and also served as the basis for questioning exhibition practices and art production from a non-Eurocentric perspective. In response to the earlier question—*Can we even think of revolutionary art at all, from any perspective, whether past or present, and what would revolutionary art actually mean?*—the answer is provided by the work of María Berrios and Jakob Jakobsen. Collaborating in their research for this occasion, they examined the exhibition *Del Tercer Mundo* at the Pabellón Cuba in Havana in 1968 and stressed that:

A revolutionary exhibition requires a multi-layered language that challenges language itself. It must be open to destructive collisions with the present, confronting the on-going immiseration of the already dispossessed. We as militant researchers have learned there is a difficult transit from reflecting on to becoming a revolutionary exhibition: it is not enough to gather knowledges around a new subject, but it is necessary to construct a new object that cannot belong to anyone.²⁸

27 Bojana Piškur, "Southern Constellations: Other Histories, Other Modernities," in *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of Non-Aligned*, exhibition catalogue (Ljubljana: Moderna Galerija, 2019), 21.

28 María Berrios and Jakob Jakobsen, "The Revolution Must Be a School of Unfettered Thought," in *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of Non-Aligned*, 97.

In addition to the Ljubljana exhibition, other art and research projects focused on the Non-Aligned Movement have been developed in many post-Yugoslav locations, raising a series of questions about the complex, paradoxical, and often misinterpreted archives and appropriated revolutionary ideas. Notable examples of this renewed interest in the Non-Aligned include: thematic contents and archives related to the NAM in Belgrade's Museum of African Art,²⁹ a research project on the cultural collaboration of the Non-Aligned at the Institute of Art History in Zagreb, in cooperation with Ljubljana's Academy of Fine Arts and Design (which resulted in comprehensive digital archives and bibliography related to the NAM),³⁰ and art and curatorial projects within *The Non-Aligned Art Collection Laboratory* at the Centre for Contemporary Art in Podgorica, which aims to activate the vast collection of the former Gallery of Art of the Non-Aligned Countries "Josip Broz Tito."³¹

- 29 Belgrade's Museum of African Art, which hosted the exhibition titled *Yugoslav Testimonies on the Algerian Revolution. Archival Omnibus* (March 18 –June 10, 2023), serves as a place where the history of the Non-Aligned Movement is explored through the topical lens of anti-colonialism, which is the foundational policy of the Museum. Some examples include the exhibition and programme titled *Anti-colonial Museum*, curated by Ana Sladojević at the end of 2022, and *The Non-Aligned World* by the Museum's curatorial team at the end of 2021. More at: www.mau.rs (last accessed on March 15, 2024). In addition to the exhibition and discursive programme, the Museum also focuses on accompanying publications, systematizing and presenting the archive, digitizing and improving its web platform as an extension of the previous exhibition of the Non-Aligned, which expands the content of the exhibition with numerous cross-referential contributions: <https://www.nesvrstani.rs/nesvrstaniHomeEn.html> (last accessed on March 15, 2024).
- 30 Research within this years-long project is organized into two parallel courses: one focuses on the cultural politics and new visual regimes of decolonization and mutual cooperation among the Third World/NAM, while the other examines the internal dynamics of the NAM, specifically the economic, social, and political frameworks of collaboration in the context of their present socio-cultural consequences. In addition to the publications and discursive programmes, which include analyses of historical and current exhibitions dedicated to the NAM, the project also features a bibliography covering the cultural, political, and social aspects of the NAM in two quite comprehensive volumes. More at: www.nam-globe-exchange.org (last accessed on March 21, 2024).
- 31 The curatorial and conservation team of the Centre for Contemporary Art in Podgorica—Marina Čelebić, Anita Čulafić, Nada Baković, and Natalija Vujošević—initiated *The Non-Aligned Art Collection Laboratory* project. Launched in 2022, the project aims to develop research and archival art practices that connect the rich collection of the Non-Aligned, housed at the former Gallery Josip Broz Tito, to both the historical and contemporary international art contexts through fresh readings, historiographic reviews, artworks, and interventions. More at: www.csucg.me (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

Mutual collaboration and the connections formed through these projects have inspired many to engage with the potentials, challenges, and limitations of decolonial art and curatorial practices, particularly in relation to the lost and/or mishistoricized revolution of the NAM. *The Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned* exhibition, along with the other examples mentioned, is significant in the process of knowledge production because it opens a dialectical space in which new art practices can emerge, holding the potential to articulate the politics of a new social reality, much as the *Travelling Communiqué* exhibition did, or as has been achieved through the new art and curatorial interventions within *The Non-Aligned Art Collection Laboratory* project.

OFF FRAME

The need for a counter-historical production of art and knowledge within the scope of the former political project of Third World solidarity has resurfaced today in various forms and locations. A politically engaged stance towards neo-colonial struggles has once again revived programmes from cultural institutions that were neglected, with the same intention of transforming them into spaces for the creation of anti-colonial discourses. One such example is the film/video festival held in 2021 under the title *The Non-Aligned* in the Students City Cultural Centre (Belgrade). Through its film programme, *This Is Not a War* exhibition, accompanying programmes, and discussions, it brought to life invisible and hidden anti-colonial struggles, contextualizing them within the ongoing issues of global poverty, neo-colonial geopolitical displacements, and the unfinished and lost revolutions of both the Third and the Second Worlds.³²

The selectors of the festival's competition programme, the Doppelgänger art collective (Isidora Ilić and Boško Prostran) emphasized that the video and film production of the Non-Aligned, also known as The Third Cinema, offered an alternative to First World films primarily by introducing

32 The three programme units of this festival were formed around the idea of decolonization in epistemological, historical, and contemporary contexts. In addition to the thematic focus on the Third World and the Non-Aligned, the festival also addressed the question of the Second World, exploring its ambiguous neo-colonial and anti-colonial role today. More on this alternative film festival at: www.2021.alternativefilmvideo.rs/en/ (last accessed on March 15, 2024).

aesthetic and political changes to the world of moving images. At that time, moving images served as both a tool and a weapon for producing decolonial knowledge (Doppelganger 2021), as well as for propaganda. This raises the question: what purpose do they serve today?

Perhaps the best answer is provided by Mohanad Yaqubi's film *Off Frame AKA Revolution Until Victory* (2016), screened as part of the special programme during the festival. The film explores the Palestinian struggle, focusing on the documentary archives of this struggle during the 1960s and the 1970s, which are scattered around the world. In his attempt to understand its potential influence on contemporary anti-colonial resistance and struggle, Yaqubi highlights the revolutionary heritage that remains unrecorded.

Oriented towards initiating new possible politics of change, the aforementioned post-Yugoslav examples rely primarily on the critical mapping of the postcolonial art geography of the world. While some are directed more towards art research and thematic curating of the Non-Aligned within the institutional frameworks of contemporary art, others view these unsystematized archives, which remain caught in the production of knowledge about the NAM, as an unfinished revolution which, as Yaqubi states, has remained unrecorded—"off frame."

Past realities, present narratives, future potentials of non-aligned arts

In conclusion, the former geopolitical divisions of the Cold War today have evolved into a stage for new and more violent geopolitical confrontations. Within this context, the non-alignment concept resurfaces as a potential avenue for articulating politics aimed at achieving lasting peace in today's global context of perpetual conflict.³³ On one hand, the anti-colonial legacy of the 1960s and 1970s NAM is revisited to investigate the reasons behind its failed politics, which appropriated and distorted the idea of non-alignment and active neutrality, particularly during the later years of the Cold War. On the other hand, the idea of non-alignment is defended

33 The permanent war can be seen as a continuation of the Cold War, defined by the politics of military interventions by powerful armed forces, which gained particular prominence after the terrorist attack in the USA on September 11, 2001 (also known as the "War on Terror"). This war is waged under the guise of preserving peace, liberty, and democracy, as defined by West-centric policies. It differs from the anti-colonial wars of the Third World, whose ultimate goal was lasting global peace and the end of the dominance of great forces (superpowers) and their armament (Hass 2001; Petrović 2018).

against such reactionary politics and restored to its original vision—rooted in ideals of independence, equality, emancipation, and the advocacy for peace and social progress.

Exhibitions held within and beyond the post-Yugoslav space over the past few years, and even decades, highlight the diversity in contemporary interpretations of the Non-Aligned concept. The instability in positioning this concept stems from the complex and often paradoxical discrepancy between the historical narrative of the movement and its social reality, as well as the fact that the understanding of non-alignment politics varies widely across Third World countries. A partial glimpse into contemporary approaches to art, which today seek to explore Third Worldism by making connections to its historical art practices, along with other important references in this text, is not intended to serve as representative, all-inclusive, or metonymic component of the long-established ideological whole of Non-Aligned Art. Rather, they serve as an emancipatory effort to gain insight into future planetary transformations that may be ideologically based on those revolutionary ideas of the past.

In recent years, the concept of non-alignment has become a challenge for new artworks, international exhibition projects, collective practices, and collaborations. This is partly due to its place within a broader context of decolonial art practices, where the NAM is seen as a key example of anti-colonial struggle, whereas in some other art-related contexts, the NAM is both affirmed and critiqued, as has already been shown through post-Yugoslav examples. Additionally, the idea of non-alignment today also offers the potential to reimagine a new form of internationalism, alongside other important emancipatory politics from the past. In the context of artistic and cultural collaboration, as exemplified by Chile's Museum of Solidarity and other examples in this text, the Third World fostered new political perspectives of social imagination, spreading influences and aesthetics distinct from those typically associated with Third World diaspora.

In the pursuit of a politics of planetary coexistence, aimed at reflecting the emerging world, the concepts of non-alignment and active neutrality are embodied in these and numerous similar art projects that seek

to establish a new geopoetics and geopolitics of space. This geopoetics, as described by Édouard Glissant, views the world as a shared space of relationships and differences, where entities can be mutually and freely constructed (Glissant 1990). In contrast to the principles of neo-colonial globalization, Glissant's vision of a globally shared geographic perspective fosters both the poetics and politics of relationships in a world that Manthia Diawara refers to as "Glissant's worldmentality" (Diawara 2017). Ultimately, this *worldmentality* encapsulates the vision of the non-aligned world, which, through the politics of socialist internationalism and anti-colonial struggle, sought, albeit unsuccessfully, to shape its own postcolonial reality during the Cold War as a unique "third way."

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Trečiojo kelio beieškant: meno „neprisijungimo“ politika

Jelena Petrović

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Neprisijungimo judėjimas, struktūrinė nostalgija *versus* dekolonizavimo potencialas, meno geografijos, neprisijungimo menas.

Šio straipsnio tyrimo objektas – meno ir politikos sankirta, daugiausia dėmesio skiriant Neprisijungimo judėjimui – vienam novatoriškiausių XX amžiaus judėjimų. Įkurtas 1961 m., Neprisijungimo judėjimas subūrė neseniai nepriklausomybę įgijusias Afrikos, Azijos, Pietų Amerikos ir Karibų jūros baseino tautas, vadovaujant tokiems lyderiams kaip Tito, Nasseris, Nehru, Nkrumah ir Sukarno. Šis judėjimas siekė geopolitinės pusiausvyros, solidarumo, neutralumo ir ilgalaikės taikos, pasisakydamas už „trečiąjį“ kelią tarp Vakarų ir Rytų blokų. Judėjimo darbotvarkėje svarbų vaidmenį vaidino kultūros politika, propaguojanti modernistinį požiūrį į tarptautinius socialistinius idealus, atsiskleidusį architektūrinuose projektuose, pramoniniame dizaine ir meninėje raiškoje. Pirmaisiais savo gyvavimo dešimtmečiais Neprisijungimo judėjimo kultūrinis kraštovaizdis tapo dinamiška antikolonijinio pasipriešinimo ir nepriklausomybės estetikos arena.

Kalbant apie neprisijungimo politikos ir modernaus bei šiuolaikinio meno sankirtą, straipsnyje pabrėžiami reikšmingi, tačiau dažnai nepakankamai dėmesio sulaukiantys įvykiai ir judėjimai. Tarp jų – Afrikos kultūros festivalis (PANAF), Arabų meno bienalė, Havanos bienalė, Čilės solidarumo muziejus, Liubianos grafikos meno bienalė, parodos Sloven Gradeco meno paviljone ir Jugoslavijos neprisijungusių tautų meno galerija „Josip Broz Tito“. Pagrįsti socialistiniais principais ir savita estetika pasižymintys kultūros reiškiniai atitiko antikolonijinio judėjimo esmę. Tekste taip pat aptariamos šiuolaikinės meninės praktikos, susijusios su Neprisijungimo judėjimo palikimu, ypač kontekstuose po Jugoslavijos suirimo. Tai rodo tokios parodos kaip *Keliaujantis komunikatas* Belgrado Jugoslavijos muziejuje ir *Pietų konsteliacijos: neprisijungimo poetika* Liubianos šiuolaikinio meno muziejuje. Aptariant šias menines ir kuratorines veiklas, straipsnyje atkreipiamas dėmesys į meno neprisijungimo politikos atgimimą, pabrėžiant dekolonizacijos potencialą ir nostalgiją istorinei neprisijungusio pasaulio vizijai.