

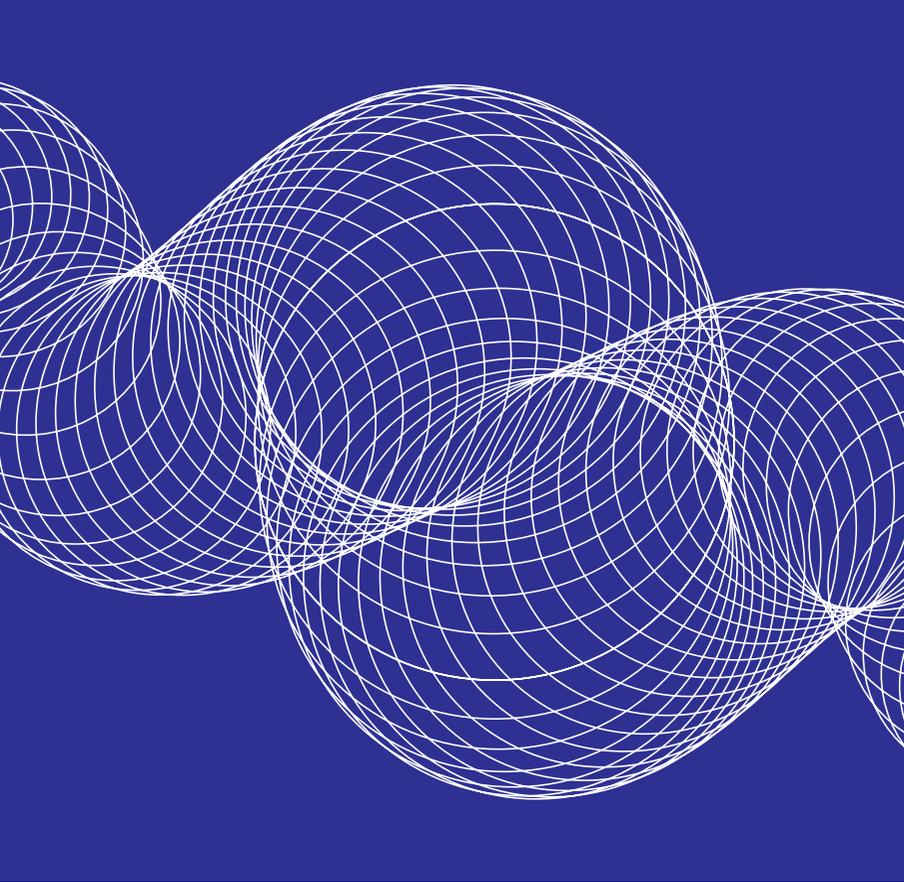
Edited by
Barbara Predan, Daša Tepina

**THE CULTURE OF THE NON-ALIGNED
THE CULTURE OF THE NON-ALIGNED**

**The Clash of Cultural and
Political Narratives**



University of Ljubljana
Academy of Fine Arts
and Design



Edited by
Barbara Predan, Daša Tepina

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The Clash of Cultural and
Political Narratives

Excerpt from the review by Dr Gal Kirn

The collection consists of nine contributions by authors of various disciplines. They shed light on the role of culture, offering a diverse range of in-depth and scientifically sound insights into the cultural characteristics of the Non-Aligned Movement. The contributions are not marked by some nostalgic glimpse into the past, but by a critical and partially affirmatory sting of overlooked heritage. The monograph furthermore brings new paradigmatic approaches and raises new methodological and theoretical considerations of the topics it analytically addresses. Through plural approaches, the collection deftly illuminates the habitually overlooked cultural practices on the periphery—geographic and thematic—and, with critical reflection, situates them within the contemporary currents of postcolonial research (critical contributions). Spanning a range of scientific disciplines—culturology, sociology, history, economy, art history and design—the contributions bring novel scientific discoveries and interpretations and are the result of an interplay of different newly developed methodological approaches in the area of digital humanities. This allows the authors to explore the Non-Aligned Movement while systematically and confidently tackling the topics of new economic policies, the definition of Non-Aligned Modernism, cultural diplomacy, cultural mechanisms, art and design, gift exchange within the movement and collaborations within the biennial artistic hubs. On top of that, the monograph also offers a supremely stimulating basis for further research in these areas, and will hopefully be recognised as appropriate introductory reading for the study of the non-aligned.



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Foreword

RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF ART REQUIRES RESEARCH IN THE FIELD OF ART REQUIRES INFRASTRUCTURE, RESEARCH PROJECTS AND RESEARCH PROGRAMMES AND RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

At the Department for Theoretical Studies of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana (UL ALUO) we pursue research in the field of art, design and restoration and conservation, which we recognise is important for many reasons. Scientific analysis of these areas encourages innovation and creativity by fostering new ideas, thus facilitating questioning and pushing boundaries, often with the aim of challenging conventional thinking. The artistic approach to research gives artists and designers the opportunity to experiment with various materials, techniques and concepts, which leads to the development of new artistic ideas and design solutions. Scientific research, meanwhile, analyses the present condition, generates new knowledge and develops new methodological approaches.

Art and design are powerful vehicles of cultural and social commentary and as such enjoy broad cultural and social influence. Research in this area helps us understand and address social, cultural and political questions and probe, as it were, the temperature of society in the past, present and future. The Department for Theoretical Studies of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana also covers the field of cultural heritage research, where it has made important contributions to its interpretation, understanding and conservation. By studying the historical artistic and design movements, techniques and artifacts, the

researchers can open a special window into the past, conserving cultural traditions and providing valuable context for modern artistic and design practices. The research helps us recognise new trends and opportunities in a world that, ultimately, needs to be re-designed into a sustainable one—in every sense of the word.

Newly researched facts precipitate new thoughts and insights, stimulate dialogue and bring about positive change. In art and design, we analyse how creative practices can enhance the human experience and contribute to well-being on the psychological, emotional and cognitive level, leading to insights on how to create meaningful and impactful experiences for individuals, as well as diverse communities with their specific needs.

For the members of the Department for Theoretical Studies at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Ljubljana, the project *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics* (J7-2606 ARRS Basic Research Project) was the first project at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana that offered the opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration, since the members of the Department otherwise cover different theoretical fields, work in different departments and with different groups of students. In contrast to our usual commitments, which represent a barrier, the opportunity to undertake a joint research project brought us closer together. Working together with other Slovenian researchers from a range of institutions (Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana, Institute of Contemporary History and the Science and Research Centre of Koper) and with the international partner (Institute of Art History, Croatia) had numerous positive consequences for the development of theoretical sciences at the UL ALUO, as it enabled us to step up the exchange of knowledge, ideas, new perspectives and approaches, while each of us contributed innovative solutions and approaches to the research challenges.

The joint research efforts fostered a mutually beneficial synergistic relationship, which can bring positive effects to the uniting members through the exchange of knowledge among students, professors and researchers in different fields at UL ALUO. The collaboration also connects us to researchers from other faculties of the University of Ljubljana, as well as other scientific research institutions. The broader range of topics also allows students to acquire varied competences and insights into different aspects of fine art, design and related disciplines.

The joint scientific research of the members of the Department for Theoretical Studies of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design of

the University of Ljubljana thus not only stimulates the generation of new knowledge and theoretical concepts, but also enriches the artistic production and spurs innovation in the cultural ecosystem to which UL ALUO belongs, thereby helping us to find answers to the current social challenges and needs. Accordingly, we will work to secure, as soon as possible, new research funds for further research projects and, in particular, for a research programme that will allow us to conduct more strategic and focused research over the longer term.

Petra Černe Oven,

Head of the Department for Theoretical Studies

Introduction

THE CULTURE OF THE CULTURE OF THE CULTURE OF NON-ALIGNMENT NON-ALIGNMENT NON-ALIGNMENT

Confrontations of Dominant Cultural-Political Narratives

Turning history on its head opens up whole new worlds of possibility.
Howard Zinn

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In the last decades, the growing number of in-depth examinations of overlooked and deliberately marginalised topics seems to indicate almost a trend in contemporary research. For those of us who conduct research in the cultural sphere, especially in the field of art and design, these themes are something that often seems to be part of everyday reality. But it is exactly this status of the ordinary that is actually alarming. Being permanently marginalised, art and design researchers often accept with a too high degree of resignation the dismissive attitude of the academic research community towards everything the traditionally established scientific fields often struggle to even classify. This is simply a consequence of the fact that we, art and design researchers, are constantly challenged by the rest of the scientific community expressing doubt as to whether our work in the field of art and design even belongs in the field of research. Moreover, most of the time we experience the problem related to the evaluation of research results and recognition of their excellence, especially if they are partly the result of artistic research or a combination of artistic and scientific research. Why? Simply because they cannot be classified (or worse, pigeon-holed) according to the established parameters of scientific

excellence.¹ Therefore, as researchers, we remain unclassified and on the margins, but determined to drastically change this situation step by step, one element after another, and to constantly draw attention to the overlooked possibilities and potentialities through the practice of research in the field of art and design.

The research on *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and Non-Aligned Movement* (funded by the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (ARRS J7-2606)) confirms these potentialities in a unique way. In fact, after only two years of research work and despite being only half-funded, the project was already recognised by the public Agency for its excellence and listed among the four best interdisciplinary and bilateral research projects financed by the Agency in 2022. Today, as the research project is coming to an end after three years, a group of eight Slovenian researchers are credited as authors of 21 presentations of results at national and international conferences, 20 scientific papers, one retrospective monographic exhibition, one scientific monograph and two proceedings with papers (the first with the interim results were published in 2022 in the collection *Vpogledi/Perspicacités*, while the second publication is now in front of you). In addition, we also organised eleven research conferences, methodological workshops and discussions.

The present proceedings are thus the final monograph of the project *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics*, which combined research in the fields of history, art history, culture, economics and sociology in an interdisciplinary and bilateral manner (bringing together researchers from Slovenia and Croatia). The research was based on the hypothesis that the accelerated process of decolonisation in the 1960s, which defined the articulation of cultural needs and cultural policies in the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, created new institutional mechanisms and new models or practices of cultural exchange. As demonstrated through the examples selected in our three-year study, this

1 Exhibitions are an illustrative example of this. If several years of research result in an exhibition curated by the author, it has no scientific value according to the current evaluation framework. In the document *Typology of documents/works for bibliography management in the Cobiss system*, the exhibition is listed under point 3.12 and defined as follows: "Event organised by the author of the works exhibited or by the author of the installation." This clearly shows that the researcher's work which results in an exhibition as a form of public presentation is not even recognised, let alone properly evaluated. In comparison to other results of research work, the exhibition is awarded only 5 expert points. A similar problem arose during the preparation of the document *Evaluation Methodology of Research Programmes at the University of Ljubljana* as publishing houses that primarily publish research results from the field of art and design have been completely omitted from the list of Slovenian publishing houses.

led to effects at the level of the Non-Aligned Movement that manifested in the global cultural and artistic field. The research project aimed to define the notion of Non-Aligned Movement culture in terms of a diverse and overlapping temporality, rather than adopting the idea of chronological and linear trajectories of the dominant narratives of the period. During the course of the research, we were constantly aware that we are dealing with a world subject to constant change, upheaval and conflict, and that—as will be shown further ahead in the present proceedings—art and design (in their broader field of activity) can be identified and interpreted as areas that are often overlooked yet are extremely important for identifying the specificities of this period. These fields are, in fact, often evasive in nature, but this characteristic is, paradoxically, the very basis permitting them to confront existing and dominant cultural-political narratives.

The scope of the research project in terms of geography was limited to the political geography of the Non-Aligned Movement. This gave us an insight into the different artistic, political and social processes that significantly influenced the development of different dynamics on the global cultural scene. In the recent past, which is the focus of the research, the existing models and practices of cultural exchange as products of national and transnational cultural policies enabled the project research to describe, analyse and explain the conceptual, performative and organisational aspects of the USA and the Soviet Union, as well as the cultural policies of several key countries of the Non-Aligned Movement—Yugoslavia (SFRY), India, the Middle East, Africa and Cuba—which clearly demonstrates the political and cultural diversity of the Movement.

Despite the project being half-funded, the present monograph encompasses the main conclusions drawn on the basis of diverse methodology, which was further developed in the course of the project. The extensive body of existing literature on the topic that was the basis for research is included in the freely accessible publication *List of Archival Collections and Bibliography of Titles on the Political Economy, Social Situation and Cultural Exchange of the Non-Aligned Movement*.² Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key individuals who were active in the Non-Aligned Movement and state bodies and responsible for defining the national cultural policies of the SFRY or other non-aligned countries. To provide a starting point for the research and a common methodological framework, we conducted a series of methodological discussions and organised scholarly workshops with invited speakers

2 Slovene title: *Seznam arhivskih zbirk in bibliografija naslovov o politični ekonomiji, družbeni situaciji ter kulturni izmenjavi Gibanja neuvrščenih*.

and experts sharing in-depth insights into the Non-Aligned Movement. These workshops enabled us to strengthen connections and establish a common inter-research understanding between the researchers participating in the project and coming from different theoretical backgrounds and disciplines. The core of the research work was primarily centred on the study of materials deposited in the national archives of the republics of the former SFRY, particularly in the archives in Ljubljana, Zagreb and Belgrade. In the case of design, the studied materials were also obtained from British archives, notably the Royal College of Art Special Collections and the University of Brighton Design Archives. In structuring and programming the archive module, archival standards (ISAD (G), EAD) and metadata standards were applied for the use of archival material as well as for the documentation of research data and its description. The newly developed archive module and the Can_is programme were fundamental for carrying out analyses of social networks (networks of professionals, artists, architects, cultural and economic policy makers, cultural workers) as well as networks of cultural programmes, institutions and cultural/political concepts. Network and spatio-temporal analyses with data visualisation proved to be important analytical tools, which were central to the project and permitted to establish a data-driven, decentralised view of social, cultural and political phenomena through interpretative and quantitative analysis.

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In terms of content, the monograph can be roughly divided into two parts. The first part consists of papers that provide an in-depth view of the period through the lens of economics, art and design. In the paper titled *The Non-Aligned Movement and the New International Economic and Information Orders: Yugoslavia, the Global South and the UN*, Paul Stubbs analyses the politics of non-alignment and the new international economic order. The paper reveals how, in the 1970s, socialist Yugoslavia and the countries of the Global South united in the Non-Aligned Movement, together with the G77 members, began to focus on economic issues in order to oppose neo-colonialism. One of the most important achievements was the New Economic Order (NIEO) adopted in the UN in 1974 and promoted by UN agencies—UNESCO and UNCTAD. Stubbs' paper aims to identify the seeds of a revolt against hegemony from which it might be possible to draw inspiration against the present global neoliberal order.

In the article *Eastern, Western or Non-Aligned Modernism? The Case of Yugoslavia*, Nadja Zgonik analyses the definition of non-aligned modernism from the perspective of art history. In this paper, the author explores the concept of non-aligned modernism

and argues that although the Non-Aligned Movement did not succeed in establishing a socialist globalism that would undermine the Western canon in art, it did form a set of fundamental elements that provide a good basis for understanding geopolitical relations in art today.

In the next paper, *Non-Alignment, Yugoslav Diplomacy and the Establishment of Cross-Cultural Links with Africa*, Jure Ramšak draws on material from federal and republican foreign affairs agencies in order to show how Yugoslav diplomats in each of the selected sub-Saharan countries acted in the role of cultural mediators, analysing their understanding of postcolonial cultural realities and identifying the cultural manifestations on both sides that they helped to organise.

The first part of the monograph concludes with a paper by Barbara Predan, in which she applies the historical method to explain how Yugoslav designers, building on the Yugoslav Non-Aligned Movement and workers' self-management, in the 1970s and 1980s brought the idea of decentralisation and the questioning of epistemic colonialism to the Global South and the Global North, underlining the role of participation and the importance of considering the voices from the so-called periphery of design.

The second part of the monograph presents a selection of different examples of cultural and technical exchanges. In the paper *The Culture of the Non-Aligned Countries on the Slovenian Cultural Horizon*, Aleš Gabrič provides examples illustrating Yugoslavia's position regarding scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between the members of the Non-Alignment Movement. The author demonstrates that Yugoslavia's ideas also had a significant influence on the formulation of common positions of the Non-Aligned Movement, promoted by its members in the context of international organisations. But, as Gabrič shows, due to the numerous difficulties faced by the non-aligned countries, different levels of development, geographical distance and the legacy of colonialism, only a small portion of the ideas were implemented (despite the common policy).

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The paper *Images of Friendship: Analysis of Artworks, Ethnological and Applied Arts Gifts from Non-Aligned Countries to the President of SFRY, Josip Broz* by Mitja Velikonja presents the results of in-depth research focused on the gifts received by President Tito from the leaders and delegations of the non-aligned countries, which are kept in the Belgrade Museum of Yugoslavia repositories. In the paper, the author analyses both the visual language of artworks as gifts and their various cultural codes. The paper concludes with a comparative analysis of the visual language

of artworks presented as gifts and the group of ethnological and applied arts gifts.

The next two papers examine Yugoslavia's cultural and political exchanges with India and Egypt starting from the same basis—the Ljubljana International Biennial of Graphic Arts. In the paper *Cultural Cooperation Between India and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s: A case study of the International Biennial of Graphic Arts*, Petja Grafenauer explores the diversity of readings of artworks in different contexts. Examining the example of the International Graphic Biennial and the cultural-artistic links between India and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s, the author focuses on the links connecting Indian artists to the Biennial and on the systemic arrangements for the exchange of other cultural events between the SFRY and India. In the paper, *Yugoslav–Egyptian Cultural Relations: A Case Study of Art Intersections in Ljubljana and Alexandria in the 1960s and 1970s*, Daša Tepina studies the influence of the Non-Aligned Movement on the cultural relations between the former Yugoslavia and Egypt in the 1960s and 1970s, analysing them and observing their effect on the reception of art of the non-aligned countries in the former Yugoslavia.

18 The monograph concludes with a paper by Petra Černe Oven on the importance and role of visualisations in science, entitled *The Challenges of Developing Methods of Visualisation in Digital Humanities Projects and What the Design Profession Can Contribute*. In the article, the author also discusses the digital project tool Can_is and the importance of design in the development of digital humanities tools. The author furthermore highlights the possible introduction of visualisation methodologies as these can influence interdisciplinary research and its results. The paper also deals with the development of a methodological approach in the context of visualisation, i.e. the aspect which is necessary for the optimal presentation of the project results. At the same time, the paper also suggests the direction for possible future improvements.

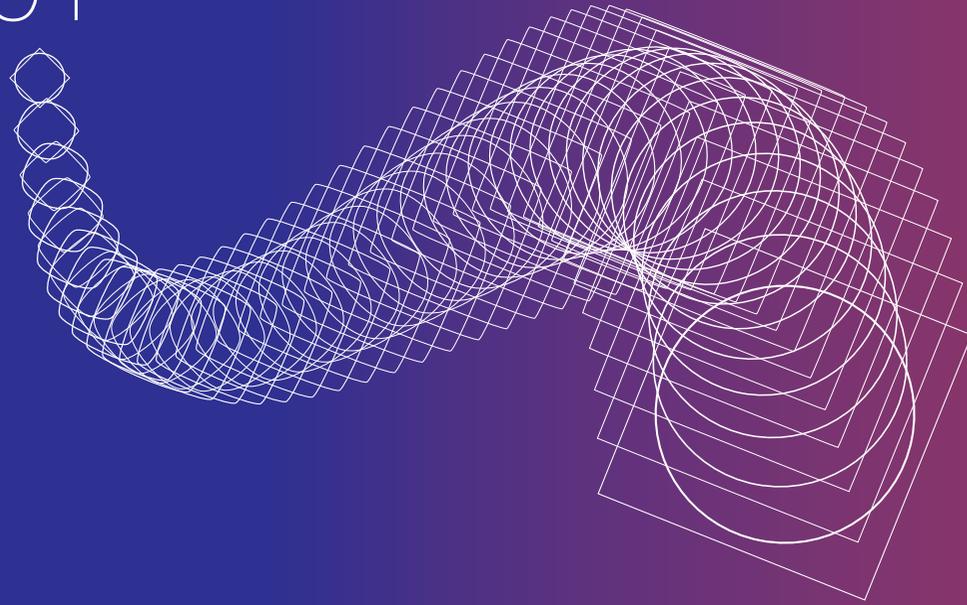
Howard Zinn in the preface to the series *The New Press People's History* writes that only by looking away from the so-called historical truth can we begin to learn "about the masses of people who did the work that made society tick". Moreover, by looking away new insights can be gained only if a shift in perspective is accompanied by changing the lens through which we observe and interpret the world. The latter is crucial according to Zinn, because only this allows us to see that "as the lens shifts the basic narratives change as well". The results of the three-year research confirm this necessity and at the same time reinforce our conviction that the work needs

to be continued: both in the context of exploring the models and practices of cultural exchange of the Non-Aligned Movement and in the context of the current and continuing culture of non-alignment in the field of art and design research.

Barbara Predan, Daša Tepina

Ljubljana, 5 July 2023

01



Paul Stubbs

**THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND
THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND
THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND
THE NEW INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND
INFORMATION ORDERS: YUGOSLAVIA,
THE GLOBAL SOUTH AND THE UN*
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Although, in factual terms, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) formally began with a summit in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in September 1961, a “spirit of non-alignment” can be traced much further back. In what stands to become a definitive history of NAM up to 1992, Jurgen Dinkel devotes the first two chapters of his book to the Brussels Congress Against Colonialism and Oppression of 1927—that led to the formation of the League Against Imperialism and For National Independence—and to the Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung in 1955.¹ Fragments of a philosophy of non-alignment can also be found in Nehru’s writings and, indeed, in terms of *realpolitik*, in the agreement between India and China in 1954 known as the Panchsheel Principles, based on mutual respect for sovereignty, non-aggression, non-interference, co-operation, and peaceful co-existence.²

India and China were, of course, important states in the Bandung Conference, which led to a communique articulating ten principles which, in broad terms, elaborate upon, and universalise, the

* This text is the result of the collaborative research project *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and the Non-Aligned Movement. Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics* (IPS-2020-01-3992), supported by the Croatian Science Foundation and the Slovenian Research Agency.

1 Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement*, pp. 1–2.

2 Verma, Jawaharlal Nehru.

Panchsheel Principles, making more direct reference to the Charter of the United Nations. As Willetts notes, “peaceful coexistence” was viewed by pro-Western governments as too radical and replaced, at Bandung, by the eighth principle of “settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means”.³ Made possible by, and focused on, processes of decolonisation, the countries gathered in Bandung made only vague reference to economic questions, resulting in a rather bland commitment to a “general desire for economic co-operation [...] on the basis of mutual interest and respect for economic sovereignty”.⁴ Similarly, Bandung hinted at cultural co-operation without ever really pinning down what was meant by “culture”. In the context of a frozen border dispute between India and China, a second Bandung never happened.

Instead, socialist Yugoslavia, emerging from international isolation after the break with Stalin in 1948, sought new allies in opposition to the two hegemonic global power blocs led, respectively, by the Soviet Union and the United States. A meeting on the island of Brijuni between Yugoslav President Tito, Indian Prime Minister Nehru and Egyptian President Nasser in July 1956 became “one of the constitutive myths of socialist Yugoslavia”⁵ and, indeed, of non-alignment itself. The final document called for “the intensification of efforts to speed-up the development of underdeveloped regions” as central to the establishment of “a permanent and stable peace among nations”. It reiterated the importance of “international economic and financial cooperation” and called for a UN special fund for economic development”.⁶

The idea of a non-aligned summit crystallised in September 1960 at a meeting in the Yugoslav mission to the UN in New York, on the occasion of the 15th UN General Assembly, attended by Tito, Nasser, and Nehru as well as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Sukarno of Indonesia. Nehru, in particular, was reluctant to commit to regular conferences, much less a permanent organisation, only agreeing to attend the Belgrade summit in September 1961 having received assurances that it would be a one-off event. Both the Bandung and Belgrade conferences can be seen as performative, presenting the developing nations on a global media stage.⁷ In the case of the Belgrade event, fears of limited media coverage dissipated once work had begun on the building of the Berlin Wall on

13 August 1961.⁸ Although there were only 25 participating states, with many in Latin America persuaded not to attend by the United States in the context of Cuba’s involvement, there were also more than 40 representatives of liberation movements, left-wing parties, trades unions, and the like. Although the conference was dominated by questions of security and, indeed, nuclear disarmament, it did not shy away from economic questions. The conference communique linked economic inequalities to imperialism and colonialism in a more radical form than in Bandung, stating that

efforts should be made to remove economic imbalances inherited from colonialism and imperialism. [...] It (is) necessary to close, through accelerated economic, industrial and agricultural development, the ever-widening gap in the standards of living between the few economically advanced countries and the many economically less developed countries.⁹

Indeed, in what can be seen as an early formulation of ideas that led to the New International Economic Order,¹⁰ the states meeting in Belgrade agreed to hold a Conference on Economic Development in Cairo in 1962. The Conference communique focused on low rates of growth in the developing countries, observing that “the terms of trade continue to operate to the disadvantage of the developing countries, thus accentuating their unfavourable balance of payment position”.¹¹

In terms of the NIEO, the holding of the first United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Geneva from 23 March to 16 June 1964, one of the key demands from the Cairo economic conference, supported by many of the Soviet bloc countries,¹² was crucial. In addition, at the first UNCTAD conference the Group of 77 (G77) developing countries was established, with Yugoslavia as a founding member. Hence, almost overnight, there was a multiplication of arenas in which global economic inequalities could be discussed and in which the newly decolonised nations could find their voice. UNCTAD, under the initial leadership of Argentinian economist Raul Prebisch, much of whose work on declining terms of trade for peripheral economies informed the thinking behind the NIEO, became “the multilateral site where the global

3 Willetts, *The Foundations of the Non-Aligned Movement*, p. 61.

4 Records of the UNESCO General Conference 21st session.

5 Petrović, *Jugoslavija stupa na Bliski Istok*, p. 139.

6 Tadić and Drobnjak, *Documents of the Gatherings of the Non-Aligned Countries*, p. 9.

7 Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement*. See also Turajlić, *Film as the Memory Site of the 1961 Belgrade Conference*, pp. 203–231.

8 Dinkel, *The Non-Aligned Movement*, p. 98.

9 Tadić and Drobnjak, *Documents of the Gatherings of the Non-Aligned Countries*, p. 18.

10 Astonishingly, Whelan, who argues this, completely ignores the role of the Non-Aligned Movement in organising the Cairo event, p. 201.

11 Cairo Declaration of Developing Countries.

12 Taylor and Smith, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)*, pp. 9–10.

South might articulate its needs and problems".¹³ However, from its very beginnings, it faced inevitable contradictions between acting as a technical assistance agency, being an analytical "think tank", an "honest broker" between the North and the South, and a "global South advocate", which severely limited its achievements.¹⁴

During the first UNCTAD, the statement from the G77 explicitly referred to "UNCTAD as a significant step towards creating a new and just world economic order [...] involv(ing) a new international division of labour oriented towards the accelerated industrialization of developing countries [...] (and) a new framework of international trade that is wholly consistent with the needs of accelerated development".¹⁵ The Non-Aligned Summit in Cairo in 1964 further refined the critique of existing global economic and social inequality, stating

the structure of the world economy and the existing international institutions of international trade and development have failed either to reduce the disparity in the per capita income of the peoples in developing and developed countries or to promote international action to rectify serious and growing imbalances between developed and developing countries.¹⁶

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The first time NAM explicitly addressed cultural imaginaries was during the Preparatory Meeting for the second NAM summit, held in the Sri Lankan capital Colombo in March 1964. The last of 11 themes discussed was "Cultural, Scientific and Educational Cooperation" including the consolidation of international and regional organisations working on the topic. Hence, although not explicitly mentioned, a major focus here was, clearly, on influencing the main UN body whose mandate included these themes, The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). "Culture", still undefined, was said to "widen the mind and enrich life", with cultural cooperation, alongside economic and scientific cooperation, necessary for deepening understanding, consolidating justice, freedom and peace, and contributing to development.¹⁷ By the time of the NAM summit of October 1964, the "preservation and fostering of national culture" was one part of the Economic Declaration, combining a critique of the effects of "cultural imperialism" as a form of "alien ideological domination" with a not unprob-

13 Ibid., p. 1.

14 UNCTAD, UNCTAD: First twenty years.

15 Sauvart, *The Early Days of the Group of 77*.

16 Tadić and Drobnjak, *Documents of the Gatherings of the Non-Aligned Countries*, p. 31.

17 Ibid., p. 32.

lematic notion of the importance of the reaffirmation of "national cultural identity" and "the establishment of a national personality".¹⁸ As Vijay Prashad has suggested, all newly independent decolonial nation states sought, albeit in different ways, to "assemble a history and an aesthetic".¹⁹ This new "cultural canon" needed to be created and disseminated by a nationalist intelligentsia and was far from "natural" as the Cairo declaration seems to suggest. At the same time, as Prashad also suggests, such a notion was not at all incompatible with ideas of the importance of promoting cultural exchange and an anti-imperialist cultural internationalism.²⁰ The statement does, however, illustrate that, at least in terms of its work in formal conferences, NAM was a transnational body that reinforced, rather than challenged, the idea that sovereign nation states were privileged global actors or, in the case of national liberation movements, future sovereign nation states.

NAM and the NIEO

There was a six-year hiatus in NAM summits between 1964 and 1970, for a variety of reasons that are too complicated to elaborate upon here. In the context of a lowering of political tensions between the two superpowers, a reinvigorated NAM was born at the Lusaka, Zambia, summit of September 1970. The hastily arranged summit was, in many ways, a result of close collaboration between President Tito of Yugoslavia and a new generation of leaders, notably Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Indira Gandhi of India, who all insisted on the movement being more pro-active, no longer just a "talking shop" and, crucially, focusing much more centrally on economic questions.²¹ The Lusaka summit included a Declaration on Non-Alignment and Economic Progress which represented an early iteration of the ideas that were to be enshrined in the New International Economic Order (NIEO) less than four years later. The statement referred to "the poverty of developing nations" and their "economic dependency" as a "structural weakness of the world economic order", with the colonial past leading to a "neo-colonialism that poses insurmountable difficulties in breaking the shackles of economic dependency". This echoed both Prebisch's analyses of the economics of the periphery and Kwame Nkrumah's critique of "neo-colonialism".²² The statement called on the UN to bring about "a rapid transformation of the

25

18 Ibid., p. 91.

19 Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 86.

20 Ibid., p. 88.

21 Willetts, *The Non-Aligned Movement*.

22 Prebisch, *The Economic Development of Latin America*, p. 22; Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*.

world economic system, particularly in the fields of trade, finance and technology, so that economic domination yields to economic co-operation".²³

Three years later, the NAM summit in Algiers from 5–9 September 1973 included an Economic Declaration that referred to imperialism as a form of "open aggression against the economies of peoples who do not submit to foreign domination"²⁴ and contained an outline plan of action. Stating that "the international strategy of development" had failed, with 70% of the world's population subsisting on only 30% of the world's income, the statement called on the UN General Assembly to draw up a charter of economic rights and duties of states. As Jankowitsch and Sauvart have demonstrated,²⁵ the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted without objection at a Special UN General Assembly (UNGA) held on 1 May 1974, uses the same logic and much of the same phrasing. The NIEO expressed the urgency of establishing a new order

based on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest and co-operation among all States, irrespective of their economic and political systems which shall correct inequalities and redress existing injustices, make it possible to eliminate the widening gap between the developed and developing countries and ensure steadily accelerating economic and social development and peace and justice for present and future generations.²⁶

Shortly after the Algiers summit, of course, the oil shock of October 1973 occurred in the context of the Yom Kippur war when a coalition of Arab states, led by Egypt and Syria, launched a surprise attack against Israel, aiming to take back territory lost in the conflict in 1967. No more than a week after the conflict began, a group of oil-producing Gulf States, already organised through the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), raised the price of crude oil by over 70%, whilst also cutting exports and implementing an embargo on oil exports to the United States and Western allies. In December 1973, OPEC doubled the benchmark price of a barrel of crude oil.²⁷ Although its membership included both net oil exporters and importers, NAM welcomed OPEC's move at first, with the Algerians in particular seeing the possibility that other groups

23 Tadić and Drobnjak, *Documents of the Gatherings of the Non-Aligned Countries*, p. 47.

24 *Ibid.*, p. 86.

25 Jankowitsch and Sauvart, *The Initiating Role of the Non-Aligned Countries*, pp. 41–77.

26 United Nations General Assembly Sixth Special Session, Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.

27 Jankowitsch and Sauvart, *The Initiating Role of the Non-Aligned Countries*, p. 67.

of commodity exporters could act together in a similar way. Algeria, effectively chair of NAM after the Algiers summit, and a vocal member of OPEC, acted to secure a special session of the UNGA to adopt the NIEO. This special session broadened the agenda and, effectively, "embedded OPEC's confrontation with the industrial states over oil into a confrontation of the entire Third World with the developed states over raw materials and development".²⁸

The NIEO included a Programme of Action summarised by Nymoer in terms of five core clusters: Sovereignty; Trade; Modernisation; International Decision-Making; and Development Assistance.²⁹ It was followed by a Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States (CERDS) which was adopted at the regular 29th session of the UNGA on 12 December 1974 by 115 votes to 6 against, with 10 abstentions.³⁰ Those voting against or abstaining, exclusively states from the Global North, were concerned with Article 2 of Chapter II of CERDS, reinforcing the right of national sovereignty over a nation's "wealth, natural resources, and economic activities", a principle enshrined in the NIEO, stating that each State has the right "to nationalize, expropriate or transfer ownership of foreign property, in which case appropriate compensation should be paid by the State adopting such measures, taking into account its relevant laws and regulations and all circumstances that the State considers pertinent". A number of countries, led by the Cubans, had been advocating for some time that the power of multi-national corporations needed to be curbed and the lessons of Algeria's own partial nationalisation of oil companies in 1971 was now followed by other producers.

The NIEO still divides commentators today, much as it did at the time of its development. Some suggest that it was so radical in its structuralist critique of the global economic order that it was bound to fail in the context of opposition from those with most to lose from such a shift, whilst others suggest that it never, actually, amounted to very much in terms of real change but was, rather, piecemeal in its conceptualisation and designed to create the conditions for the continued dominance of a reformed "embedded liberalism".³¹ The articulation of the NIEO was important, I would suggest, not least because of its holistic nature, bringing together a number of themes that had tended to be kept separate. In addition, it brought questions of the global economic architecture into an

28 *Ibid.*, p. 72.

29 Nymoer, *The United States' Economic Hegemony*, p. 19.

30 United Nations General Assembly. Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, Resolution 3281 (XXIX).

31 See, for example, Ruggie, *International regimes, transactions, and change: embedded liberalism in the postwar economic order*, pp. 379–415.

arena of political debate, namely the UN, in which the countries of the Global South had a real voice. Although only fully articulated later, along with Prebisch and Nkrumah noted above, the work of Algerian legal scholar Mohammed Bedjaoui was also important in underpinning the NIEO. The basis of Bedjaoui's analysis was that international law needed radical reform, as it remained a tool of neo-colonial domination, constraining the actions of decolonial states through the burden of "a host of unwarranted obligations".³² As Ozsu has suggested, a critique of existing legal structures went hand in hand with a firm belief in the possibility of creating a new legal order that would be both emancipatory and truly universal. For Bedjaoui and others, this legal order would form the bedrock upon which principles of self-determination, the right to development, and sovereignty over natural resources, could be institutionalised, prioritising universal, collective, economic and social rights over individualistic human rights.

Well before the second oil shock of 1979, as Spaskovska has argued, a sense of "triumphalism" associated with the passing of the Declaration on the NIEO, quickly gave way to a sense of "dread" amongst some NAM Member States, including Yugoslavia.³³ Although there was a sense that energy interdependence could be a part of "collective self-reliance" of states on the periphery, splits between oil exporting and oil importing states tended to grow, and these were exploited by the United States and its allies who began to be more vocal in their opposition to the NIEO. In addition, authors such as Samir Amin, from a radical left perspective, saw the NIEO as "a rebellion by the bourgeoisies of the periphery over the unequal division of the exploited proceeds from the periphery", an obfuscation of the real choice between capitalism and socialism as global systems and, thus, contributing little to "the struggle of the Third World against the dominant-imperialist hegemony".³⁴ NAM's call for a kind of voluntaristic reform of the international economic order was seen by some as futile, precisely because "the global capitalist system [...] continues to evolve under pressures more salient than those generated by this Movement".³⁵ Socialist Yugoslavia was, also, sceptical of the NIEO initially, not least because it was perceived as being driven by Algeria, a country which, since the overthrow of Ben Bella, was no longer a close ally, and was criticised for using NAM to pursue its own interests. At the same time, as Getachew has suggested, the NIEO formed the apex

of anticolonial worldmaking and represented an attempt to channel the UN as the means for the creation of "an egalitarian global economy",³⁶ combining a Marxist "diagnosis of economic dependence" with prescriptions "articulated within the terms of a liberal political economy".³⁷

In the end, the United States and its allies ensured, ultimately, that a very different new international order, underpinned by the ideology of neoliberalism, prevailed. Indeed, it was the NIEO on the global scene, as much as the rise of the new left at home, that energised a radical neo-conservative backlash, perhaps most clearly articulated in a 1982 report from the right-wing Heritage Foundation, describing the NIEO as "a simplistic scheme to redistribute the world's wealth and resources to more than 100 underdeveloped nations, creating a global welfare state financed mainly by the US and the western industrial nations" and attacking the "Fabian socialism" of the NIEO as no more nor less than "a secret plan to create a world government".³⁸ The 1980s saw a shift in terms of the locus of global governance from the United Nations where, despite the veto powers of the permanent members of the Security Council, newly decolonised nations could muster a majority of votes, and towards global International Financial Institutions, notably the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, where voting rights were linked directly to economic power. In short, "the US argued that the UN was not an appropriate forum for NIEO discussions and consistently suggested to move negotiations on development to other international institutions"³⁹ which, even if they did not control them directly, tended to act in the interests of a hegemonic global capitalist order.

Serving, in many ways, more to fragment and dissipate the NIEO within the UN system than to clarify things, UNESCO and, more directly, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) were tasked with commissioning a number of studies to set out the intellectual foundations of the NIEO and to ensure that it went "beyond economics". UNITAR, in collaboration with the Mexico-based Centre for the Economic and Social Studies of the Third World (CEESTEM), produced some 16 volumes of overviews, regional analyses, and thematic issues, directed by the Hungarian philosopher Ervin László.⁴⁰ This, in many ways, kept the NIEO alive as an intellectual idea long after it had been rejected

32 Ozsu, *In the Interests of Mankind as a Whole*, p. 131.

33 Spaskovska, *Crude Alliance*, p. 529.

34 Amin, *Self-Reliance and the New International Economic Order*, p. 205.

35 Shaw, *The Non-Aligned Movement and the New International Economic Order*, p. 139.

36 Getachew, *Worldmaking After Empire*, p. 100.

37 *Ibid.*, p. 145.

38 MacBride, Preface, p. xvii.

39 Nymoen, *The United States' Economic Hegemony*, p. 68.

40 László, Preface to the UNITAR-CEESTEM NIEO Library, pp. vii-xiv.

by US-led hegemony on the global political scene. UNESCO, along with NAM and others, worked to create the idea of a New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) as “a corollary to the NIEO”⁴¹ which, in some ways, represented a continuation of arguments around the NIEO and to extend them into the spheres of culture, communications and mass media.

NAM and the NWICO

Some of the antecedents of what became the NWICO can be found in the establishment of the Non-Aligned News Agency Pool (NANAP) in January 1975. NANAP was a product of a growing concern that information and news media needed to be central to “collective self-reliance”. At the same time, as Slaček Brlek has suggested, NANAP mirrored some of the contradictions of NAM itself with the more pragmatic leadership of the Yugoslavs in conflict, to a degree, with the more radical critiques of “cultural imperialism” emanating from some NAM members.⁴² Indeed, what I have termed Yugoslavia’s “liminal hegemony”⁴³ meant that, as in many other aspects of NAM’s work, the dominant role of, in this case, the Yugoslav news agency Tanjug, needed to be played down in favour of the appearance of a more multilateral, more horizontally egalitarian, form of cooperation.⁴⁴ By 1980, NANAP had expanded to include over 50 news agencies and information services but, reaching a daily exchange of 40,000 words by 1983, remained extremely small in relation to the “Big Four” global news agencies whose combined daily output was some 33 million words in 1978.⁴⁵

By the time of the NAM summit in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in August 1976, under the thematic heading “Press Agencies Pool”, it was stated that “a new international order in the fields of information and mass communications is as vital as a New International Economic Order”.⁴⁶ Colonialism was said to have created a “vast and ever-growing” communication gap between the non-aligned and “the advanced countries” resulting in domination and dependency with the majority of countries “reduced to being passive recipients of biased, inadequate and distorted information”.⁴⁷ Self-reliance in terms of information was seen as being enabled by technological breakthroughs and linkages between national, bilateral, regional

41 UNESCO, UNESCO’s Contribution to the Attainment of the Objectives of the New International Economic Order: Report by the Secretary-General, 22 C/13.

42 Slaček Brlek, *The Creation of the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool*, pp. 37–63.

43 Stubbs, Introduction, pp. 3–33.

44 Slaček Brlek, *The Creation of the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool*.

45 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

46 Tadić and Drobnjak, *Documents of the Gatherings of the Non-Aligned Countries*, p. 173.

47 *Ibid.*

and inter-regional forms of cooperation were now seen as much more possible. By the time of the NAM Summit in Havana, Cuba, in September 1979, the creation of a pan-African news agency was greeted “with satisfaction” even though the relationship of this to NANAP was not addressed. “The Promotion of Culture and Cultural Cooperation Among Non-Aligned Countries” was a specific agenda item in Havana, linking the NIEO to “the affirmation of cultural identity” and suggesting, again rather simplistically, that “the appreciation of the values of different civilisations could contribute towards defining original models of indigenous development.”⁴⁸

Around the same time, UNESCO took up the concept of “endogenous development”, discussed in a meeting in Quito, Colombia, in August 1979. The term remained vague but appeared to be based, like many of the principles of NAM itself, on the idea that “development cannot be patterned on an outside model” but “must be freely chosen by each society”.⁴⁹ A Working Group was established in 1980 to report on “Relations between endogenous development and tendencies towards modernization as reflected in UNESCO’s programme”, with a strong link to its work on popular participation. This resulted in a kind of technicisation of many of the issues and a focus on country-by-country case studies and projects, an emphasis on “socio-cultural context”⁵⁰ and “a revised economic philosophy in which the market economy is humanized by man-centred development (sic)”.⁵¹

At the same time, a more radical strand of work focused on the impact of transnational corporations. As Schiller suggests, the focus on market domination and neo-colonialism in culture and communications, gaining pace throughout the 1970s, was underpinned by three developments: the independence of new decolonial states after successful national liberation struggles, the global expansion of US-led capitalism, and the development of new rapid global communications technology and infrastructure.⁵² NANAP, albeit on a rather small scale, and a new international information order were, therefore, logical extensions of national liberation struggles and represented attempts to secure “cultural sovereignty” along with “economic sovereignty”. As these calls concretised into the idea of a New World Information and Communications Order, developing countries’ demands concentrated on what became known as the 4Ds: democratisation, decolonisation, demonopolisation, and

48 *Ibid.*, p. 381.

49 Final Communiqué of the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, 24 April 1955, p. 5.

50 UNESCO’s Contribution to the Attainment of the Objectives of the New International Economic Order.

51 *Ibid.*

52 Schiller, *Decolonization of Information*, p. 36.

development.⁵³ In a sense, then, in this period, whilst UNESCO, NAM and others either avoided defining culture or limited it to rather simplified understandings of indigeneity and national identity, a “concrete policy agenda” was formulated and agreed addressing “global media practices” and underpinned by “far-reaching claims about the impact of media on (national) cultures, their role in national development and in the (un)making of international order.”⁵⁴

In a way reminiscent of the contradictory roles of UNCTAD in relation to the NIEO, UNESCO, under the leadership of Mahtar M’Bow from Senegal, saw the NWICO as a way of placing itself centre-stage in the institutionalisation of global reform in the sphere of communications, whilst inevitably becoming embroiled, sometimes despite itself, in controversy and conflict. Radical voices such as the Algerian legal scholar Mohammed Bedjaoui went as far as to blame the blocking of the NIEO on the power of the largest news agencies, suggesting that this vicious circle needed to be broken.⁵⁵ Seeking compromise, UNESCO proposed an International Commission known as the MacBride Commission after its chairperson Sean MacBride. The Commission’s final report “Many Voices, One World”, published in 1980,⁵⁶ sought to reconcile the irreconcilable, in the process presenting little more than a functional list of “crucial problems facing mankind (sic) today” stripped of theoretical and political substance⁵⁷ and, yet, garnering a deal of support from the Global South seeing it as containing a set of winnable demands and, indeed, criticism from the United States and its allies as being too radical.

Resolution 4/19 adopted by the 21st session of the UNESCO General Conference held in Belgrade stated that the basis of the NWICO should consist of a number of elements including: the elimination of imbalances and inequalities; the elimination of the negative effects of monopolies; removal of barriers to the free flow of balanced information and ideas; plurality of sources of information; press and journalistic freedom; capacity building for developing countries; and “respect for each people’s cultural identity and for the right of each nation to inform the world public about its interests, its aspirations and its social and cultural values”. Interestingly, the resolution rejected universalistic solutions, stating: “diverse solutions to information problems are required because social, po-

litical, cultural, and economic problems differ from one country to another and, within a given country, from one group to another.”⁵⁸

Not unlike their stance towards the NIEO, the United States and its allies utilised shifting tactics to ensure that the NWICO was never implemented. Critics of the NWICO pointed to the way in which one of the leading figures in NAM, Indira Gandhi, had suppressed the mass media and limited the freedom of journalists after declaring a state of emergency in India in 1975, inferring from this the tendency of developing countries to censor information. Even before this, in 1972, the United States was the only dissenting voice against the UNESCO Principles on the Use of Satellite Broadcasting which required satellite broadcasters to, at least, negotiate with receiving countries before broadcasting.⁵⁹ In the second half of the 1970s, the US offered a degree of support, if largely tokenistic, to those developing country news agencies that adopted “Western modes of organization and work” and which acquiesced in “market-determined” systems.⁶⁰ Indeed, the idea of a “balanced free market” in information,⁶¹ not unlike the idealised free market in some iterations of the NIEO, was one that could garner support from many countries.

Nevertheless, responding to vocal neoconservative critics, and buoyed by a global “roll-out neoliberalism” in the form of deregulation, the United States, followed by the United Kingdom, sought to attack UNESCO as a symbol of a totalitarian, even communist, attack on freedom, in this case, the freedom of large US media corporations, dressed up as the “free flow of information”. Making a series of impossible demands such as the rapid introduction of weighted voting, which did not even gain the support of many erstwhile allies, the United States withheld its contributions to UNESCO and formally withdrew from the organisation in 1984, not returning until 2003.⁶² The United Kingdom withdrew a year later, rejoining in 1997. These withdrawals occurred despite the fact that the MacBride report, the 1980 UNESCO General Conference and, in particular, the 1983 UNESCO General Conference, essentially “depoliticized” communications issues and replaced them with technocratic calls for development assistance.⁶³ The 1985 General Conference, without the US and the UK as members, saw a renewed, final, push by NAM states for elements of the NWICO but this, too, proved to be in vain.

53 Carlsson, *The Rise and Fall of the NWICO*, p. 40.

54 De Beukelaer, Pyykkonen and Singh, *Globalization, Culture and Development*, p. 108.

55 *Ibid.*, p. 125.

56 *Many Voices, One World: Towards a New More Just and More Efficient New World Information and Communication Order*.

57 Mansell and Nordenstreng, *Great Media and Communication Debates*, p. 24.

58 Records of the 21st General Conference.

59 Schiller, *Decolonization of Information*, p. 40.

60 *Ibid.*, p. 46.

61 Preston et al, *Hope & Folly*, p. 121.

62 Scher, *UNESCO Conventions and Culture as a Resource*, pp. 197–202.

63 Carlsson, *The Rise and Fall of the NWICO*, p. 52.

The “Unfailure” of the NIEO and NWICO

It is far from an easy task to assess the “afterlives” of the NIEO and NWICO and whether there are any lessons that can be drawn from them for the contemporary period. What both initiatives show clearly, however, is that the 1970s was the decade in which the Non-Aligned Movement had its greatest influence in terms of the discourses, if not always the praxis, of global governance. This influence was a result of a rejuvenated NAM attaining a new balance between a degree of formalisation, through a three-year rotating chairperson, and continued flexibility to act as a kind of incubator for new ideas allowing for the cultivation of “a stronger political awareness than that of the G77”.⁶⁴ Socialist Yugoslavia continued to prefer “practical” solutions as opposed to what they perceived as more “radical” ideas and maintained a degree of ambivalence regarding their own continued “liminal hegemony” of the movement. This was reflected in the critique of Algeria as “privatizing” NAM during and after the 1973 summit at the time it took on leadership of the push for the NIEO, and in a very different way, attempts to persuade first Tunisia and, later, India, to take more of a lead, even if only symbolically, in NANAP.⁶⁵ Both the NIEO and NWICO were also a product of strong interlinkages, a mix of advocacy and critique, of the United Nations and its agencies, specifically UNCTAD and UNESCO.

Any attempt to remember, recover and re-assemble elements of the NIEO and the NWICO for a re-envisioning of contemporary global economic, cultural, political and social relations must address changed conjunctural conditions, including the longevity of neoliberal hegemony, even if sometimes “zombie-like”,⁶⁶ and the fact that the voice of Global South is by no means as strong in arenas of global governance as it was in the initial period after colonial rule ended. In his incisive analysis of the potential relevance of the NIEO, Gilman borrows Jennifer Wenzel’s notion of “unfailure”⁶⁷ suggesting that “although the historically specific institutional demands of the NIEO during the 1970s went unrealized, one can make a credible case that the undead spirit of the NIEO continues to haunt international relations”,⁶⁸ an argument that can be widened to include the NWICO and to go far beyond international relations. As Carrie Buchanan has suggested, elements of the NWICO have, indeed, been achieved “by other means” through the rise of social

media and so-called “citizen journalism”, the growth of significant new media production in the Global South, and the taking up by non-state actors of the struggle for “The Right to Communicate”.⁶⁹ Ultimately, whilst the NIEO and NWICO can continue to inspire, how to update the content of these demands to respond to contemporary crises may be easier than envisioning the who, when and how of real change in the global economic, cultural, ecological, social and political orders today.

64 Ibid., p. 54.

65 Slaček Berlek, The Creation of the Non-Aligned News Agencies Pool.

66 Peck, *Zombie Neoliberalism and the Ambidextrous State*, pp. 104–110.

67 Wenzel, *Bulletproof*.

68 Gilman, *The New International Economic Order*, p. 10.

69 Buchanan, *Revisiting the UNESCO Debate on a New World Information and Communication Order*, pp. 391–399.

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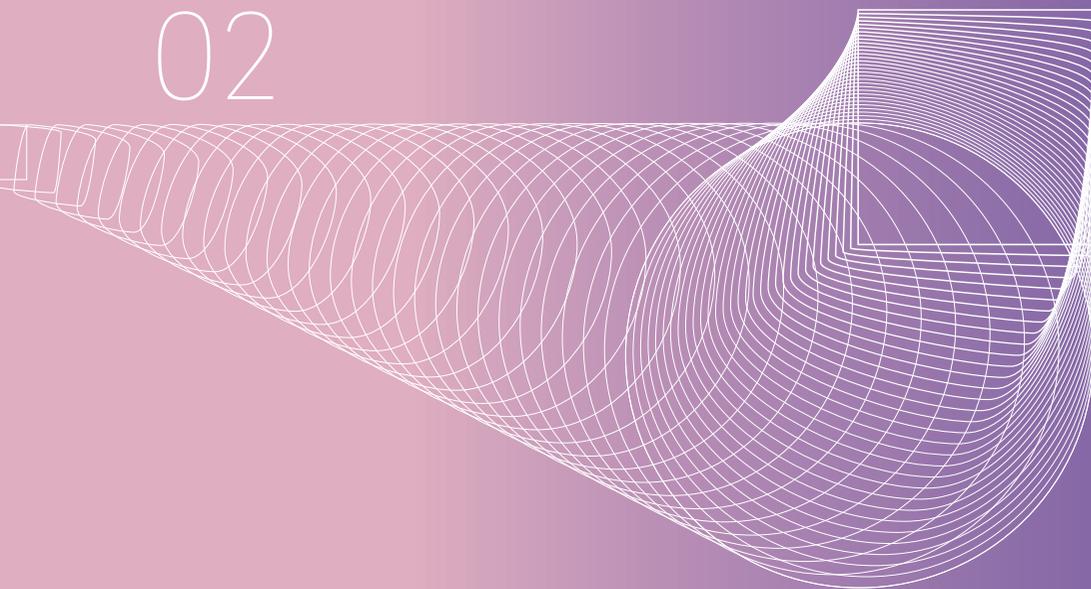
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02



Nadja Zgonik

**EASTERN, WESTERN OR
EASTERN, WESTERN OR
EASTERN, WESTERN OR
NON-ALIGNED MODERNISM?
THE CASE OF YUGOSLAVIA***

In recent years, there has been a lively discussion about the definition of visual art that emerged on Yugoslav soil after the Second World War. The rediscovery of art in the European East after the fall of the Iron Curtain, which had previously been hindered by Cold War tensions, led to a simplistic definition that referred to the artistic production of the second half of the 20th century in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as “Eastern art”. This definition applies to Yugoslavia as well as to other post-communist countries, regardless of its specific situation, since it was not part of the Warsaw Pact. But there was also a bipolarity within Eastern art itself: on the one hand, this was the period of ideologically controlled art directed by the ruling power, i.e. politico-programmatic or ideologically supported art, to which the entire public space was devoted, and on the other hand, it is the era in which politically subversive guerrilla art emerged at the same time, created underground by supporters of cultural alternatives. In the art historical literature dominated by the Western canon at the time, the political changes in Eastern Europe triggered research interest in a previously overlooked segment of the art of a large part of Europe; thus,

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the defining socio-political framework became the interpretive substructure from which the art of specific geostrategic positions, such as the territory of Yugoslavia, could hardly escape. However, in recent academic conferences and debates in the field, increasing attention has been paid to the study of definitions related to the development of Yugoslav art and, more broadly, popular culture. Yugoslavia's political identity was characterised by a number of peculiarities. It was socialist, but adopted elements of a market economy and introduced social ownership instead of state ownership. It was also a politically non-aligned country. In problematising the term "former East," Igor Zabel was one of the first to point out the little-reflected problem of the interchangeable use of the terms "post-communist art" and "Eastern art," which are taken for granted as identical, with "East" not being determined by geographic location or the "cultural essence" attributed to it, but understood as a political label.¹ He wondered why something from the past that had been abandoned (socialism) should define the present, especially since the difference in political order between East and West no longer existed. Zabel described the period after 1980 as a turning point in the history of art, and went on to argue that due to the changed socio-political circumstances (the death of President Tito, the introduction of a market economy and democratisation on the one hand, and the return of centralism and ideological control on the other), Yugoslav art of that period began to take on the identity of socialist art, which it had not developed in the past.² In this context, it can be hypothesised that the newly defined identity was imposed on Yugoslavia as an instrumentalisation of the new geopolitical relations, since in the 1980s, when the "West" emerged victorious from the Cold War, its interest in seeing Yugoslavia as a country "somewhere in between" waned.

While a few decades after the end of the Cold War the acceptance of the definition of Yugoslav art as Eastern seemed unproblematic, today, with a changed view of the global art aspect, the situation is different. This image is no longer limited to the binary system of Western and Eastern art. With the inclusion of the Global South in the integral scheme, the model of evaluation is also changing. The black-and-white image of a world consisting of areas characterised by artistic freedom in the West and politically and ideologically controlled art in the East (provoked only occasionally by underground artists) is a phenomenon of the past. Awareness of far more complex global contexts is increasingly asserting itself.

1 Zabel, *Intimacy and Society*, p. 81.

2 *Ibid.*

Under these new mental conditions, the situation of Yugoslavia in the period from 1945 to the fall of the Berlin Wall appears as specific, and this specificity is symptomatic and deserves special attention because of the elements on which Yugoslavia's participation in the (cultural) Cold War was based. In the framework of postcolonial research, we focus on the cultural-political practices of the Non-Aligned countries, while the crisis of liberal capitalism leads us to examine other forms of property, such as social property. The key element in this case is the principles of global cultural exchange and, in particular, the process of tracking its flows in the specific conditions of the political organisation of the world in the post-World War II period.

After the year 2000, historians in the countries that emerged after the collapse of the socialist federation of Yugoslavia gradually began to take an interest in the specifics of Yugoslav international cultural policy and the forms of intercultural relations. In the process, the question of the extent to which the United States, as a capitalist power, shaped the socialist Yugoslav reality came to the fore. Croatian historian, Tvrtko Jakovina was the first to address these issues, from US economic aid immediately after Yugoslavia's exclusion from the Cominform and break with the Eastern Bloc to US propaganda campaigns on Yugoslav soil, such as the installation of the *Supermarket USA* exhibition at the 1957 Zagreb Fair. In 2002, Jakovina published his first monograph, *Socijalizam na američkoj pšenici (1948–1963)* [Socialism on the American Grain (1948–1963)], followed in 2003 by his second work, *Američki komunistički saveznik: Hrvati, Titova Jugoslavija i Sjedinjene američke države 1945–1955* [The American Communist Ally: Croats, Tito's Yugoslavia and the United States 1945–1955]. The same year also saw the publication of his treatise *Narodni kapitalizam protiv narodnih demokracija: američki super-market na Zagrebačkom velesajmu 1957. godine* [National Capitalism versus National Democracy: American Supermarket at the Zagreb Fair in 1957] published in *Zbornik Mire Kolar Dimitrijević* (2003). In Serbia, the influence of American popular culture, especially music and film, on Yugoslav culture was studied by Radina Vučetić before 2010; her articles *Rokenrol na zapadu istoka – slučaj Džuboks* [Rock and roll in the West of the East – the Case of Džuboks] and *Džez je sloboda: džez kao američko propagandno oružje u Jugoslaviji* [Jazz is Freedom: Jazz as an American Propaganda Weapon in Yugoslavia] were published in 2007 and 2009 and appeared in the journal *Godišnjak za društvenu istoriju*. Her third article from this early period, *Kauboji u partizanskoj uniformi: američki vesterni i partizanski vesterni u Jugoslaviji šezdesetih godina 20. veka* [Cowboys in Partisan Uniforms:

American and Partisan Westerns in Yugoslavia in the 1960s] was published in 2010 in the journal *Tokovi istorije*. Until then, such topics were, if at all, the subject of specialised international research that focused mainly on political and economic history and paid less attention to culture.

The exhibition *Socialism and Modernity: Art, Culture, Politics 1950–1974* (Socijalizam i modernost: umjetnost, kultura, politika 1950–1974), shown at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb in late 2011, was the first to go beyond simply examining the Americanisation of Yugoslav culture. It can be described as groundbreaking in several respects. Its focus encompassed all areas and examined the views and connections between politics, culture, and art. This approach made it possible to draw certain conclusions about the identity of art in this period and opened a space for its identification that went beyond the definition based on its geopolitical Easternness or the concept of Americanised popular culture. The mere thesis of the continuity of postwar Yugoslav (socialist) art with the prewar art of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia shifted its definition into the context of examining Western connections through the prism of traditional cultural influences that dominated in previous centuries as the basis for the postwar development of Yugoslav art.

Despite the change of political system and social revolution, it was possible to confirm postwar Yugoslav cultural individuality on the basis of relations with prewar culture; however, this question had to be posed anew. Ljiljana Kolečnik continues to argue for the definition that a process of reconstruction of modernity was underway in Yugoslavia in the early 1950s. In doing so, she points to the need to connect to the experience of prewar modernism, which attempted to deconstruct the brief period of socialist realism. She completely excludes the experience of partisan art, since it cannot be placed in the historical context either as an attempt at modernisation or as mere political art. Kolečnik also uses the syntagma “process of reconstruction of modernism” to affirm the realisation of a process that ended in the mid-1950s with a successful “reconstruction of the means of expression of modern art, overcoming the initial resistance to abstraction, and establishing a relationship of trust between art criticism and abstract art”.³ She notes that

the process of reconstruction of modernism in Yugoslavia after the break with the Soviet Union was undoubtedly determined by a very similar

3 Kolečnik, *Konfliktne vizije moderniteta i poslijeratna moderna umjetnost*, p. 130.

(political) expectation, and in this sense the emergence of abstract art in the Yugoslav cultural scene and its acceptance was not only a reaction to the necessity of the domestic environment, to ‘modernise’ artistic production, but also a confirmation of art’s actual departure from the totalitarian doctrine of socialist realism and the acceptance of a cultural policy that brought Yugoslav society—through the aforementioned symbolic meaning of abstraction—closer to the ethos of the free world.⁴

At the end of the 1940s and in the first half of the 1950s, such an amalgamation of political and artistic motifs could be observed everywhere in Europe (with the exception of the Eastern Bloc countries), which could also be seen against the background of developments in the domestic art scene.⁵

The programme of the Union of Communists of Yugoslavia, adopted at the Seventh Congress held from 22 to 26 May 1958 in Ljubljana,⁶ already emphasised the liberation of artistic and cultural life from the administrative interference of the authorities and from etatist and pragmatic views of cultural creation, as well as “the struggle against the bourgeois class mystification of the history of culture and of cultural values, and also against the ignorant, primitive and sectarian underestimation of the cultural heritage of the past, which the socialist society, being the natural historical heir of the cultural heritage, accepts and cultivates, as one of the elements for building a classless civilization”.⁷

The exhibition *Socialism and Modernity* was conceived by Ljiljana Kolečnik and curated by Sandra Križić Roban, Tvrtko Jakovina, Dejan Kršić and Dean Duda, who also provided extensive scholarly contributions to the catalogue. In the joint editorial, they emphasised the sociological basis as a fundamental aspect of the analysed art epoch and posed the question of the nature of the connection between the cultural modernisation processes in the society of the former Yugoslavia and the international visual culture of modernism. The curators brought to the fore the question of whether this connection could have led to an identification with modernism.⁸ They hypothesised that in the post-war period the socialist society of Yugoslavia assumed the role of producer of its own vision of modernity. The main goal of the exhibition was

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 *Program Saveza komunista Jugoslavije* (Program of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia), p. 245.

7 Ibid., p. 246.

8 Kolečnik, *Socijalizam i modernost*, p. 5.

to neutralise, at least partially, the consequences of twenty years of trivialisation of the emancipatory effect of the socialist concept of culture, or, in other words, to examine some new interpretations of post-war modern Yugoslav art that emerged within the framework of the narratives associated with the new national art histories of the former Yugoslav countries.⁹

The decisive political turning point and impetus for the changes in postwar Yugoslavia that led to the situation described above was the dispute with the Cominform in June 1948, which culminated in Yugoslavia's exclusion from the Warsaw Pact. Since the Soviet Union no longer provided economic aid, Yugoslavia was forced to seek it in the West. The country received it not from the pro-communist Western democracies, but from the anti-communist United States. In fact, Yugoslavia and the United States had a mutual interest in cooperation. Yugoslavia needed help in the economic sphere, and the United States wanted to strengthen its political position in Eastern Europe. US economic support was critical for Yugoslavia to get back on its feet. At a time when the world was dominated by Cold War doctrine, Yugoslavia's situation was unique in the polarised picture of the world because it could occupy a special position between the blocs. In the United States, Yugoslavia was referred to as "America's communist ally". The country quickly began to experiment with forms of socialist development. It rejected the basic principles of Soviet socialism, i.e. central administration and state ownership, and instead introduced social ownership, gradual decentralisation, and workers' self-management.¹⁰ The gradual raising of living standards and the building of a welfare state were the goals by which policymakers sought to demonstrate convincingly to the world that there was a different kind of communism than that of the Soviet Union and that a socialist social order could also be attractive. The innovations that Yugoslavia introduced into the socialist system undermined the ideological monolithicity of the Eastern Bloc and provided the country with political alliances in the West that it desperately needed-but only insofar as they did not threaten its sovereignty.

In order to become acceptable to the West and so that the products of its economy, which it wanted to export to Western markets, were no longer perceived within the framework of an unattractive socialist design mediocrity that made them uncompetitive on the market, Yugoslavia began to pay more attention to the laws

of the market. Orientation to modernism embodied by the West was also an experiment aimed at testing possible ways of allowing forms of Western culture to penetrate a country whose system, due to its specific political position, found itself in a space between the principles of Eastern art production, socialist realism, and the Western currents steered into abstract art by the United States. When asked about the attitude of politics towards the pro-Western activities of the galleries, Zoran Kržišnik, initiator of the International Graphic Exhibition of Ljubljana in 1955 and long-time director of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, as the event was called from 1973 on, replied: "Art was used as a bridge to overcome the mistrust of foreign countries. The motive was economic penetration."¹¹ With the gradual departure from socialist realism and the acceptance of Western modernism, a new artistic field began to develop that allowed Yugoslavia to present itself abroad through its travelling exhibitions as a non-(Eastern) bloc country that did not dictate artistic expression and allowed artistic freedom. After all, Yugoslavia had two different "customers": the liberal and democratic Western world, to which it had to present the shiny "brand" of socialism, and, on the other hand, the orthodox Marxist political majority at home. Marketing was something Yugoslavia began to learn at an accelerated pace in the late 1950s. Politicians realised that modern art was a necessary element in international circles and in communicating with the world to overcome distrust of the young socialist state. This was not only part of Yugoslavia's efforts to market its symbolic capital in foreign policy terms, to gain prestige and recognition for the country's political relevance, but also played an important role in monetising the "Yugoslavia" brand as a prerequisite for the successful marketing of its products, which were to be characterised by modernity and progressiveness. The country's presence on international markets acted as a "melting pot" that produced a Yugoslav identity that did not exist domestically and was as suitable as possible for external communication. Cultural diplomacy proved to be very effective in implementing the soft power policy, especially by supporting the image of the Yugoslav economy for the purpose of trade in goods and obtaining foreign currency, which was important for economic development.

The country's ambition in terms of the policy of cultural exchange with the West is reflected in its adaptability and openness to the systems of artistic presentation adopted by the Western world. In the spring of 1966, the exhibition *Yugoslavia: Contemporary*

9 Ibid.

10 Repe, Vpliv zahodnih držav na domači sceni/The Influence of Western Countries on Yugoslavia's Internal Situation, p. 361.

11 Unpublished written interview with Zoran Kržišnik, Nadja Zgonik, 2004 (record kept by the author).

Tendencies: The Younger Generation opened at the invitation of the Corcoran Gallery, Washington. It was the most comprehensive exhibition of contemporary Yugoslav art in the United States up to that time. Yugoslavia's presentation was the seventh in a series of exhibitions—after Germany, Japan, France, and others—that offered national surveys of contemporary art and that the gallery, which otherwise focused primarily on the art of earlier periods, had begun to organise under the leadership of director Hermann Williams, Jr.¹² The Yugoslav side refused to accept the condition that the selection of works for the exhibition be made by an American curator,¹³ and the gallery did not object. The result was a revised list of artists, a combination of the curator's preliminary selection and new names added after Williams' six-week summer stay in Yugoslavia and visits to the artists' studios in Belgrade, Zagreb, and Ljubljana.¹⁴ The fact that the selection of Yugoslav artists made by a foreign curator could be confirmed testifies to the willingness of state cultural policy to rely on an outside view in determining the evaluation criteria for identifying artistically important works. What is also clear is the acceptance of the position that it is not political but professional criteria that are decisive for the successful inclusion of artists in the international art system. The comprehensive exhibition of fifty-one works by thirteen artists was a positive surprise to American audiences. Critics noted that it "resoundingly ignores the official dogma of socialist realism which for 40 years has hamstrung artists in Soviet Union"¹⁵ and that "the art now being produced in communist Yugoslavia is anything but what we commonly think of as Communist art".¹⁶ They noted that artists in Yugoslavia are remarkably free, as Yugoslav Ambassador to the United States Veljko Mićunović¹⁷ also pointed out in his speech opening the exhibition. In communication with the West, the adoption of modernism and the pro-Western orientation proved beneficial; the fact that a communist state fully adopted the Western canon of art and, above all, implemented the concept of personal freedom—at least in the sense of allowing a variety of artistic expressions, from abstract tendencies to figurative art—really impressed Western audiences.

12 AJ 559, box 89. Letter from Hermann Williams to Aleksandar Zambeli, 8 October 1963.

13 AJ 559, box 89, Letter 03-55/79, 24 May 1965.

14 Ibid.

15 Blumenfeld, *Slavs without Marx*.

16 Getlein, *Out of Yugoslavia*.

17 AJ 559, box 89, Remarks by Yugoslavian Ambassador. In: Micunovic at the preview of the exhibition, 7 January 1966.

In the field of cultural exchange with the West, there was no real basis for integrating the cultural policy of non-alignment that Yugoslavia began to pursue in the 1960s. The popular trend of exhibiting naive art all over the world could be a first attempt to promote an art that, by its deformalisation, escapes the Western canon of high art and allows artistic expressions even by people who do not have the opportunity to receive an academic education. However, the fact is that for Yugoslav art, the Western art market and art institutions were the only existing network to fall back on in order to give local artists the opportunity to establish themselves worldwide and gain visibility and recognition, but also to test their value on a competitive art market that did not exist in the East. The motivation of Yugoslav cultural policy to test the validity of the artistic corpus through the lens of the free market can be seen in the attempt to establish a "state" sales gallery, namely the Adria Art Gallery, which was founded in New York in 1967 in an exclusive location on Madison Avenue and was active for just over a year.¹⁸ It was founded in cooperation with the business community, but it was the business community's lack of understanding of the specifics of the art market that led to the gallery's rapid demise. Its initiator was Zoran Kržišnik, a brilliant promoter of pro-Western Yugoslav art in the West and a champion of national political concepts at a time when it became necessary to organise a global art image of the world at home and to confirm Yugoslavia within the framework of domestic politics—in terms of non-aligned ideology—through a globally oriented art event.

The Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, founded in 1955, was the most important art event in Yugoslavia, which, according to Bojana Videkanić, contributed to the consolidation of the idea of non-alignment.¹⁹ With its inclusive policy, free of political divisions and accepting individual (and not only national) requests for participation, it was the event that gave expression to the idea of non-aligned modernism in Yugoslavia.²⁰ In the introduction to the catalogue prepared on the occasion of the second exhibition in 1957, Zoran Kržišnik wrote that art can be not only an aesthetic experience, but also a means of mutual learning and promoting understanding between nations around the world that have different world views.²¹ For him personally, the Biennial was a springboard to

18 For more information, see Zgonik, *Jugoslovanska socialistična umetnost na ameriškem trgu*.

19 Videkanić, *Nonaligned Modernism*, see chapter 4, *The Ljubljana Biennale of Graphic Arts: Articulating Nonaligned Modernism*, pp. 176–213.

20 Ibid.

21 Kržišnik, *Il. mednarodna grafična razstava*, p. [7].

establish contacts with museum directors and private gallery owners from the West, as well as a medium to support the penetration of Yugoslav art in the West; and although he did not strive to develop a platform dedicated to the exhibition of Third Way art, unknown worldwide, thus contributing to its global recognition, the event he directed nevertheless created a place that could have become the nucleus of Third Way art had it provided adequate reflection.

Lilijana Stepančič analyses the positive impact of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts on the culture of African countries and raises the question of whether the event was needed more by artists or by politicians.²² African artists from the diaspora did not have the opportunity to participate in the presentations of the countries in which they had previously lived, nor to appear as representatives of the countries to which they had immigrated, so the possibility of applying individually to participate in the Biennial was a practical solution.²³ For example, after the adoption of the General Assembly resolution UN in 1962, which condemned South Africa's apartheid policy and called on other nations to boycott this African country, the Ljubljana Biennial was the only event where, in contrast to Yugoslavia's official political stance, it was possible to exhibit works by South African artists that could be described as examples of alternative or underground art, since they expressed a critique of apartheid.²⁴ According to Stepančič, participation in international events was part of the processes that took place in the newly established African countries and were associated with the formation of national cultures—in line with the belief that art can successfully reflect the existence of a particular nation.

Stepančič concludes the article with the idea that the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts played a pioneering role in advocating new definitions of African art, and that the definition of postcolonial modernity can also be largely based on the hierarchisation between the leading art produced in art centres and the art that is distant from these centres—that is, on the division between central and peripheral art that unites forms of artistic production in marginal political geographies.²⁵ This phenomenon can also be observed in Europe, which is divided into artistic leading and marginal actors.

Apart from the Biennial of Graphic Arts, the most tangible result of the Non-Aligned Movement in Yugoslavia was the impulse to collect postcolonial art. However, due to the prevailing mentality at

the time, sculptures and paintings from the non-aligned countries did not end up in Yugoslav museums of modern art, but in ethnographic museums. In fact, there was no clear opinion about what interest these objects served. Were they objects of ethnographic or anthropological interest, crafts or works of art, examples of folk art, naive art, or art experimentally exploring the fusion of Western influences with indigenous cultural tradition? In Yugoslavia, the founding of the Museum of Non-European Cultures in 1964 in the Goričane Manor near Medvode, Slovenia, was the turning point that promoted acquaintance with the cultures of Asian, African and Latin American countries, which, despite excellent contacts, were relatively unknown due to a lack of information.²⁶ In the field of culture, it was the first public state institution that reflected the aspirations of the non-aligned political movement in Yugoslavia. From its beginnings in 1964 until the end of 1990, this successful and well-visited museum was headed by the ethnologist Pavla Štrukelj. Until the establishment of the Museum of African Art – The Veda and Dr. Zdravko Pečar Collection in Belgrade in 1977, it was the only Yugoslav museum focused on the presentation of non-European cultures, especially from non-aligned countries. It should also be mentioned that in these new public museums the collections of non-European cultures were built according to the principle of a collection policy that went beyond the colonial collecting. The collections were not built from the top down, but on the basis of relationships between museum staff and amateur collectors, and in contact with students from non-aligned countries. In addition, they were supplemented by donations from students, artists, and, to a considerable extent, the Yugoslav presidency.²⁷ The trend of replacing the term "ethnographic museum" with "museum of world cultures" has only gained worldwide acceptance in recent decades.

The only institution in Yugoslavia dedicated to non-aligned art (which is reflected in its name) was the "Josip Broz Tito" Art Gallery of Non-Aligned Countries, founded in 1984 in Titograd (now Podgorica), Montenegro, which specialised in collecting and presenting the art and cultures of non-aligned and developing countries. In 1994, it was renamed the "Gallery of Contemporary Art", but retained its collection of art from non-aligned countries.

Recently, it has been observed that the concept of non-alignment has successfully moved from the sphere of political ideology to the sphere of art historical terminology and has also gained popularity and a presence in literature. The Museum of Contemporary

22 Stepančič, *Pionir sprememb*, p. 52.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 58.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 59–60.

25 *Ibid.*, p. 63.

26 Palaić, *Muzej neevropskih kultur v Goričanah*.

27 *Ibid.*, pp. 200–202.

Art (Muzej savremene umetnosti) in Belgrade led the research project “Non-Aligned Modernism” (Nesvrstani modernizmi) starting in 2011, which was financially supported by the Erste Stiftung and resulted in six booklets examining various aspects of the movement published between 2015 and 2016. The term “non-aligned modernism” was used by Bojana Videkanić in the title of her 2013 dissertation *Nonaligned Modernism: Yugoslavian Art and Culture from 1945–1990*, which was published in book in 2019 as *Non-Aligned Modernism: Socialist Postcolonial Aesthetics in Yugoslavia, 1945–1985*. Its central theme is the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts. The term “non-aligned modernist art movement” was used in Armin Medosch’s 2016 monograph on the aesthetics of the New Tendencies,²⁸ while the two exhibitions of artworks from the Marinko Sudac Collection of Yugoslav and Eastern European Art were titled, the first in Milan FM Centro per l’Arte Contemporanea in 2016 *Non-Aligned Modernism* and the second at the Ludwig Museum of Contemporary Art in Budapest in 2017 *Non-Aligned Art*. In 2016, the exhibition *Slovenia and Non-Aligned Pop*, curated by Petja Grafenauer, was held at the Maribor Art Gallery. In recent years, numerous events, scientific conferences and exhibitions have been dedicated to the cultural phenomena of the Non-Aligned Movement, carefully avoiding using a term that would associate non-alignment with a specific artistic expression. In this context, I would like to refer to the exhibition *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned*,²⁹ curated by Bojana Piškur, which was shown at the Metelkova Museum of Contemporary Art in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in 2019 and moved to Gwangju, South Korea, in 2020 and Rijeka, Croatia, in 2021. In 2021, the 60th anniversary of the first conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade, the number of different events and discussions around the movement greatly increased.

Bojana Videkanić examines non-aligned modernism in art from the end of World War II to 1980 and reconstructs the cultural movement of Non-Aligned countries as a path that paralleled political and global cooperation in the field of culture. She links the concept to the characteristics that shaped Yugoslav society, such as the struggle for national liberation and postcolonialism, and points out the tendency to adopt the Western canon, highlighting the awareness of its shortcomings, as it did not take into account colonisation and the experience of the war of liberation. Moreover, the concept highlights the need for Non-Aligned countries to put

28 Medosch, *New Tendencies*.

29 A catalogue was published to accompany the exhibition: Soban, *Južna ozvezdja/Southern Constellations*.

their own stamp on the Western model and create an anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist and transnational culture, or in other words, it points out how the aspirations of progressive political movements could be reflected in art in order to break away from colonialism and capitalism.³⁰

The fact is, however, that the term “non-aligned art” is a contemporary terminological product that did not exist as a label to describe developments in the art field during the historical period of the Non-Aligned Movement, i.e. the 1960s and 1970s. Although the political and social principles of the Non-Aligned Movement were theoretically explored, especially by Edvard Kardelj, who summarised them in the book *Yugoslavia in International Relations and the Non-Aligned Movement* (1979), their cultural aspect remained without programmatic basis; the term did not even prevail terminologically, and cultural policy showed no real interest in its identification. The alternative art scene did not react to it with movements or artistic manifestos either, although it strongly identified itself with the processes of decolonisation and the liberation movements, especially in the 1960s. Ivana Bago argues that in defining the phenomenon of non-alignment in the cultural sphere, one could draw in particular on the existing anti-colonialist theories of Frantz Fanon, which have recently received much attention. In addition, she mentions the theoretical attempt of literary theorist Stanko Lasić, who used the term “Fanonist vision of Yugoslav culture” to describe Krleža’s rejection of both socialist realism and Western modernism as an appropriate path for Yugoslav culture as early as 1968, the year of student unrest and Yugoslavia’s first serious socio-political crisis.³¹

In recent decades, a political reading of art production has prevailed over aesthetics, fundamentally changing the perception of the artistic past. Instead of examining the conceptual world of an autonomous art field, the focus is now on visual art as a sub-field of the broader field of visual culture, which is understood as another social symptom of a particular socio-political or economic system—in this case, a socialist social order with underpinning elements of market capitalism, a non-aligned, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist state that, due to the specifics of its political system, asserted itself on the international stage as a leading player in the Non-Aligned Movement and gained considerable prestige worldwide. On the international cultural scene, on the other hand, it established itself by adapting as much as possible to the Western

30 Vasile, *Nonaligned Modernisms*.

31 Bago, *Yugoslav Fanonism and a Failed Exit from the (Cultural) Cold War*, p. 285.

canon and adopting the models of modernism, especially abstraction, which was seen as an art that affirmed and expanded artistic freedom. Previously, modernism had already enabled the fusion between the art of non-European cultures and the Western artistic line of development, drawing from traditional Japanese printmaking and African sculpture, searching for Oriental models in Art Nouveau, and discovering previously unknown geographies through art; however, it remained limited to the appropriation of aesthetic models and bore a strong resemblance to the politics of exploitation, similar to the politics of the emerging capitalism of the time.

In order to reconstruct the “non-aligned style”, it is necessary to go beyond the sphere of art history and enter the realm of the anthropology of visual art and the visual, for which the media reports on the presidential couple Tito and Jovanka Broz are particularly suitable, dealing with their travels around the world, their peace missions aboard the ship *Galeb* and their personal image. It was their travels that had the greatest influence on the politics of the Non-Aligned Movement. Photos of sumptuous receptions where Tito was greeted by an enthusiastic crowd, or pictures of gala dinners published in all the world’s media, were part of the media communication that tended to present the combination of Tito’s dandyism and Jovanka’s exquisite style, which, according to the former director of the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade, Mirjana Menković, was a true fashion icon in the Eastern world and elsewhere.³² Her particular fondness for integrating embroidery and patterns from folk art into garments draws attention to the need to articulate the relationship between non-aligned aesthetics and folk art. The great interest of state cultural policy in naive art and the promotion of art production by self-taught artists should also be seen in this context. This is in line with the communist ideology that art for the people should be created by the people, which found theoretical support in the writings of one of the greatest Yugoslav art experts, Otto Bihalji-Merin.

The search for an independent, third way in art that would co-exist with Western and Eastern idioms was a unique challenge that the dominant cultural milieus that dictated the politics of interpretation in art did not accept as their own. Yugoslavia’s situation was probably unique in that it was able to create the basis for new forms of cultural participation of decolonised and marginalised areas from its mainstream position, as well as in the realm of politics, where it helped open up possibilities for a new global political model. The political principles that Yugoslavia pursued as a member of

the Non-Aligned Movement—socialism, federalism, self-government, movement for national liberation, and strengthening of Third World political power—could be experimentally confronted with the art phenomena in socialist Yugoslavia. The political concept of non-alignment, which was never fully realised, was not able to foster an art that would undermine the Western canon through the further development of socialist globalism; in fact, the movement was too short-lived to create the necessary infrastructure, i.e. a comprehensive system of art institutions that would allow the creation and establishment of new art currents. However, it was the catalyst for processes that are taking place today, where interest in the study of postcolonial cultures and in the study of the art of the Global South is increasingly coming to the fore in the context of the previously incomplete picture of world art. It is necessary to overcome the initial theoretical deficit—non-aligned art was not a movement that emerged from manifestos or art programmes, nor was it the subject of a coherent critique, but the phenomena they represent, although disparate, are a good platform for the construction of a new worldview of art. Even before modernism, art movements were named in a backward-looking way.

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03



Jure Ramšak

**NON ALIGNMENT
NON ALIGNMENT
NON-ALIGNMENT,
YUGOSLAV DIPLOMACY AND
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
CROSS-CULTURAL LINKS
WITH AFRICA***
WITH AFRICA
WITH AFRICA

Introduction

Within the framework of non-alignment as a fundamental foreign policy orientation and a cultural imaginary from which socialist Yugoslavia drew the meaning of its position on the global stage during the Cold War, Africa occupied a prominent place. This was not just due to the fact that by the 1980s, virtually all countries on this continent, with the exception of the Apartheid South African regime, joined the Non-Aligned Movement (hereinafter: NAM); it was also a consequence of the symbolic significance of Africa as a metaphor of people's power, unity and future and as that geopolitical arena in which Yugoslavia was having to constantly validate its new global role and significance.¹ In the 1970s and 1980s especially, Yugoslavia's role was put to the test when the concepts of the "North-South Dialogue" and "Collective Self-Reliance", or "South-South Cooperation", were introduced into the language of global reform efforts, in both cases by the NAM and its sister organisation, the Group of 77

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1 Radonjić, A Non-Aligned Continent.

(G77).² Yugoslavia, as an important co-creator of these ideas and political advocate of this agenda, as well as the “more developed developing country” of Europe, as it defined itself, was to adopt an especially agile approach based on solidarity. This was an explicit expectation especially of the African countries, which were by and large on the other end of the development ladder, i.e. among the most economically underdeveloped.³

In addition to transforming political and economic relations, which was what Yugoslav foreign policy and the diplomatic service devoted by far the most attention to, the claim of decoloniality also included a change in the global cultural patterns, which in the newly established decolonised countries took place in parallel with the formation of independent cultural production. To this end, the necessary technical skills had to be transferred to local creators. For example, there were numerous requests addressed to Yugoslavia from African countries for help with education and training, especially in filmmaking.⁴ In this paper, the focus of our interest will be the mediating role of Yugoslav diplomacy, that is, those rare diplomats—members of an otherwise robust network of diplomatic and consular missions in African countries—who covered the field of cultural cooperation. In parallel, we will cover the contributions of specialised institutions and individuals with similar responsibilities within Yugoslavia. In our analysis of the publications and archival documents of federal and republican foreign policy bodies, we will pay particular attention to the political dimensions of the cultural spectrum of Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism, dwelling on the following questions: how was Yugoslavia able to establish itself as a partner to decolonised countries with varying socio-economic systems in the competition with other purveyors of alternative globalisation (the Eastern Bloc and China)? How were the activities related to cultural cooperation integrated into the platforms of the NAM and the—at the time strongly associated—United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)? What were the criteria for and priorities of bilateral cultural cooperation and which artistic practices were most often involved? What theoretical reflection accompanied this unique phenomenon in the history of encounters between Europeans and Non-Europeans, and what was Yugoslavia’s role in this context?

In the body of literature dealing with the public and cultural diplomacy of capitalist and socialist countries during the Cold War,

2 Dinkel, Fiebrig and Reichherzer, ed., *Nord/Süd*.

3 SI AS 1271, box 6, Društveno-politička kretanja u Africi sa osvrtom na mesto i ulogu SFRJ i odnose sa afričkim zemljama, April 1985, p. 46.

4 Vučetić, *Uspostavljanje jugoslovenske filmske saradnje*. Vučetić, *We Shall Win*.

the East-West axis of analysis is still predominant.⁵ Interactions between the Global North and Global South, and within the South itself, have received less attention.⁶ Similarly, the cultural dimensions of Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism have so far been the subject of only a few studies.⁷ Their number may soon increase, however.⁸ This paper does not delve into analysis based on cultural studies; the intent is instead to provide the emerging field of research with a political framework from the perspective of diplomatic and intellectual history that will more clearly indicate the significance and place of Yugoslav cooperation with the non-aligned countries, both in the context of Yugoslavia’s cultural cooperation with foreign countries in general, and in terms of the relative importance given to culture in relation to the other components of Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism. Taking into account the specific institutional circumstances within Yugoslavia and the international context, the present analyses also help us understand why the crisis of the 1980s so severely weakened the cross-cultural links with Africa when they had only recently been established—links that would never again be restored to the same extent.

The universalism of Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism

As a political and social project, third-worldism (*tiers-mondisme*) was built on the assumption that the popular masses of the Global South harboured revolutionary aspirations whose realisation would be inevitable—brought about by history itself, through the convergence of pre-colonial forms of egalitarianism and a future utopia. The first generation of leaders there saw a strong, centralised state as the means to win and consolidate this fundamental post-colonial transformation, with alliances based on the spirit of organic collectivism as the international backstop.⁹ Serving as

5 Paulmann, *Auswärtige Repräsentationen*. Shaw and Youngblood, *Cinematic Cold War*. Barnhisel, *Cold War Modernists*. Wulf, *U.S. International Exhibitions*. Fosler-Lussier, *Music in America’s Cold War Diplomacy*. Phillips, *Martha Graham’s Cold War*.

6 Djagalov, *From Internationalism to Postcolonialism*. Dragostinova, *The Cold War from the Margins*. Vu, Tuong and Wasana Wongsurawat (ed.), *Dynamics of the Cold War in Asia*. Day, Tony and Maya Liem, ed., *Cultures at War*. Xu, Lanjun, The Southern Film Corporation.

7 Vučetić, *Uspostavljanje jugoslovenske filmske saradnje*. Vučetić, *We Shall Win*. Videkanić, *Nonaligned Modernism*. Slaček Brlek, Yugoslavia’s commitment to third-worldism.

8 I have in mind mainly the academic discussion that was started at two international scientific conferences in 2021: *The Non-Aligned Movement & Socialist Yugoslavia. Exploring Social, Cultural, Political and Economic Imaginaries* (23–26 February 2021, online) and *Towards a Conjectural Political Economy of Non-Alignment and Cultural Politics* (Rijeka, 27–29 September 2021).

9 Berger, “After the Third World”, p. 34.

the most typical example of the latter is the founding of the NAM, which in 1961 brought to Belgrade the leaders of 25 Asian, African, Latin American and European countries with a common interest in consolidating a non-hierarchical form of comprehensive mutual cooperation and promoting an alternative to the bipolar division of the world at the time.¹⁰

But Tito's Yugoslavia, prior to establishing itself as one of the main architects of the collective policies of the period known as the *Bandung era*—after the site of the first Afro-Asian conference, not yet attended by Tito's official representatives—, would first have to face a campaign that sought to distance it, as a European country taking moderate positions in international negotiations, from the Global South. As the Canadian historian Jeffrey James Byrne notes, a crucial debate was taking place in these latitudes between 1962 and 1965 on whether the notion of the "Third World" was a matter of identity—"typically Southern, non-white, poor and post-colonial"—or a broader project, open to anyone sharing the same goals.¹¹ According to the first interpretation, championed by Mao Zedong's China, which aspired to a leading position in the decolonised world and had already become embroiled in a bitter ideological conflict with the "revisionist" Yugoslavia,¹² the Yugoslavs—a white, industrialised nation—were supposed to be fundamentally incapable of understanding the problems of the southern hemisphere.

The Chinese were conducting their racially tinged campaign mainly in the young African countries and tried to push out of this part of the world not only the Yugoslav foreign policy but also the first efforts at spreading Yugoslav culture. At the second Afro-Asian Writers' Conference in Cairo, for example, the Chinese threatened the Egyptian organisers with departure if a Yugoslav representative were to be present.¹³ Overall, however, the Chinese campaign had limited impact. Yugoslavia, while indeed atypical among countries where the experience of colonialism was still very fresh or even ongoing, had no shortage of other means—discursive, ideological, political and economic—of effectively building links with Africa.¹⁴ The strong common anti-imperialist orientation was manifested es-

10 Thomas, *The Theory and Practice*, p. 75. In recent literature, more detailed descriptions emerged of the genesis of the diplomatic steps that culminated in the Belgrade Summit and defined the further development of the NAM: Dinkel, *Die Bewegung Bündnisfreier Staaten*. Bogetić, *Nesvrstanost kroz istoriju*. Dimitrijević in Čavoški, ed., *The 60th Anniversary*.

11 Byrne, *Beyond Continents*.

12 Bogetić, Sukob Titovog koncepta.

13 Selinić, *Savez književnika Jugoslavije*, p. 177.

14 Sladojević, *Beyond the Photographic Frame*, p. 99.

pecially in aid in the form of arms and other equipment, with which Yugoslavia—initially more in the name of solidarity and its own tradition of national liberation struggle during the Second World War, but later also for pragmatic economic interests—helped many liberation movements.¹⁵

The Yugoslav "discovery" of the African continent was also accompanied by treatises in which Yugoslav intellectuals were developing the idea of kinship or even renouncing their race, like the surrealist writer and poet Oskar Davičo. In his travelogue *Črno na belem* (Black on White, 1962), in which he proclaimed himself a "former white man", he emphasised that the Yugoslav peoples themselves had been "slaves" for centuries. The essential message they wanted to convey to their new African comrades was that they were a "different kind of white people"—the first Europeans free of both prejudice and any pretensions to future supremacy.¹⁶ They saw themselves as thus embodying an equal partner that could prove to Africans that there are forces outside the pan-African framework they can rely on.¹⁷

In the process of establishing cross-cultural ties, Yugoslavia, much like in its establishment of political and economic relations throughout the world, prioritised the values of non-alignment, primarily cooperation with countries with different socio-political systems, over the socialist internationalism evangelised by the Eastern European countries.¹⁸ As early as the late 1950s, the writer and diplomat Marko Ristić, who at that time headed the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, which operated under the Federal Executive Council (the government), described cultural diplomacy as an extraordinary tool for cultivating a new culture of coexistence; he felt that without this "cultural blood transfusion", this principle of international relations would have remained an empty phrase.¹⁹ With respect to cultural cooperation with countries of the Global South, with their wide range of socio-economic systems and political regimes, the bar had been set very low. As a group of experts from the Institute for Developing Countries in Zagreb recommended to those responsible for international cultural and educational cooperation in the mid-1970s, Yugoslavia should strive to develop relations with all developing countries, the only exception being those where racial, ethnic or religious discrimination was prevalent. Fascist regimes and countries

15 Lazić, *Arsenal of the Global South*.

16 Radonjić, "From Kragujevac to Kilimanjaro", pp. 60–61.

17 Rajak, "Companions in misfortune", p. 82.

18 Cf. Burton et al., ed., *Navigating Socialist Encounters*.

19 Videkanić, *Nonaligned Modernism*, p. 140.

fully engaged within neo-colonial relations were also avoided, while all others were to be offered equal opportunities without any regional preferences. According to the experts at the Zagreb Institute for Developing Countries, those countries of the Global South that were at that time experimenting with their own versions of Marxism had to be given special attention, but the greatest success was expected in cooperation with the partners that most consistently pursued a policy of non-alignment.²⁰

The cultural attachés (who weren't)

The programming documents of the NAM in the first decade of its existence did not yet single out mutual cultural and educational cooperation. This changed with the Algerian Summit in 1973, where mutual visits, exchanges of artists and scholars, scholarships, participation in festivals, exchanges of books and other media and similar activities were identified as desirable forms of solidarity-based joint action capable of overcoming Western cultural imperialism.²¹ The Yugoslav Federal Assembly and the Executive Council had already emphasised cooperation with developing countries a few years earlier as part of the Yugoslav policy of developing cultural links with foreign countries,²² but in the early days, this was not without organisational issues. In the case of Africa in particular, the Yugoslav diplomats who paved the way for artists and various professionals in the field of artistic production were not only faced with a lack of adequate infrastructure, but also with fierce competition. In the 1960s, contenders from other socialist countries, each with their own vision of creating a new world, began challenging the stream of cultural products that had been pouring in from the former colonial metropolises, with everyone locked in an intense competition for the affections of this part of the world. The Soviet Union, German Democratic Republic and China, were, for example, most active in developing their own networks on the ground, being willing to distribute their films under more favourable conditions than a more commercially oriented Yugoslav provider could.²³

On the one hand, the competitive and financially better supported Eastern European cultural advance into the decolonised countries, which in the early years of their existence hardly had a cultural budget of their own at all, did have some success. On the other hand, having just broken out from the grip of the former

metropolises, the local intellectual elites remained sceptical of the new, socialist "masters".²⁴ This was also the impression that Ranka Kavčič Božović, Assistant to the President of the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, got in Mali during her visit of several West African countries in 1969. The young intellectuals there were suspicious of the influence of the Soviet Union and China. By contrast, they viewed Yugoslavia with great sympathy because of its non-alignment and respect for the principle of sovereignty.²⁵ Even years later, Yugoslav diplomats in Angola observed that their country's "information and propaganda" activities, which were usually considered as including cultural cooperation, were clearly more adaptable and consequently more successful than the unrefined approaches of the Eastern European socialist countries.²⁶

The basic legal framework for cultural exchanges consisted of bilateral agreements on cultural and educational cooperation. Even though, by the early 1970s, Yugoslavia had entered into 17 such agreements with African countries,²⁷ the programmes outlining a specific set of activities were far fewer, and as a result, implementation always fell short of plans. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the first such agreement was with Sudan, dating to 1959, followed by Guinea, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali, Dahomey (Benin), Senegal, Nigeria and Congo-Brazzaville by the mid-1960s, mostly coinciding with Tito's tour of West and East Africa.²⁸ Cultural exchange accounted for one-fifth of the funds earmarked for scholarship schemes, which came mostly out of the Yugoslav federal budget and to a lesser extent out of the republican budgets, with some support also provided from time to time by the enterprises that were doing business with the countries in question.²⁹

Although by the mid-1970s, the network of Yugoslav diplomatic-consular missions in African countries had grown enormously, they were understaffed, and their work reports clearly indicate that cultural or public diplomacy came as a distant second to the political and economic tasks. It was often their own press attachés who were tasked with initiating and coordinating cultural exchanges. In the 1960s, it was discussed that cultural attachés should be posted

20 Cvjetičanin, *Projekcija dugoročne prosvjetno-kulturne suradnje*, pp. 15–16.

21 Videkanić, *Nonaligned Modernism*, p. 142.

22 AJ 559, box 70, document 69.3-20, 11 September 1969.

23 Vučetić, *Uspostavljanje jugoslovenske filmske saradnje*, p. 61.

24 Ibid., p. 62. More on the perception of Soviet assistance in the construction of the new African states can be found in Osei-Opare's *Uneasy Comrades*.

25 AJ 559, box 70, Izveštaj o boravku Ranke Kavčič-Božović, pomočnika predsednika Savezne komisije za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom, u nekim zemljama Zapadne Afrike, December 1969, p. 20.

26 DAMSP, PA, 1985, box 7, document 49071, 20 February 1985.

27 Jemuović in Lah, *Naučna, tehnička i kulturna saradnja*, p. 128.

28 Merhar, *Mednarodno kulturno sodelovanje*, p. 48.

29 Cvjetičanin, *Projekcija dugoročne prosvjetno-kulturne suradnje*, p. 87.

at least in the regional centres in Africa and Asia.³⁰ Ten years later, however, Sub-Saharan Africa had only a single such post systematised, namely for the embassy in Nigeria.³¹ The idea was floated of opening new Yugoslav cultural information centres, like those in Western Europe and in the USA, but at the end of the 1970s, still during the “golden age” of cooperation with the non-aligned countries, it was decided that no such centres would be opening in Asia, Africa and Latin America.³² The plan was nevertheless to bolster Yugoslav presence at least in those regional centres that received the most media coverage. In Sub-Saharan Africa these were the ones in Congo, Senegal, Tanzania and Côte d’Ivoire. In addition to the translation of Yugoslav texts into French and English, translations into Swahili were also planned.³³

On multiple occasions, cultural attachés, or rather, whoever performed these tasks at the Yugoslav embassies, in liaison with the Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, the federal and republican institutes for international scientific, technical, educational and cultural cooperation (ZAMTES) and the cultural institutions involved, provided information on potential institutional partners or artists in particular countries, facilitated contacts and took part in the organisation and realisation of individual cultural events. This included finding suitable venues, and logistical assistance with transport, as well as securing support from prominent figures in the political life of the host countries.³⁴ Familiar with the preferences of the local population, they also suggested which types of cultural manifestations would reach the largest audience given the limited financial resources.³⁵

From folklore to modernism: typical forms of cultural manifestations

Much like the criteria for political cooperation, the artistic-aesthetic criteria in the field of cultural cooperation with members of the NAM were vague. In addition to the fact that the artworks had to fit the developing countries’ equally ill-defined ideological and political conception of cooperation and not conflict with the cultural norms of the host countries, emphasis was placed on the requirement that

they resonate with and appeal to local audiences, that is, be comprehensible without extensive additional explanations.³⁶

A fixture of cultural exchanges with Sub-Saharan countries was the hosting of (academic) folklore ensembles on both sides. The visit of the folklore group *Ivo Lola Ribar* from Belgrade in 1969 was the first Yugoslav cultural manifestation in Kenya.³⁷ Music and art events of this type were also popular in Yugoslavia. For example, there were three groups visiting from Ghana in the late 1970s and early 1980s as guests of the Ljubljana Festival, the Dubrovnik Summer Games and the International Children’s Festival in Šibenik.³⁸ The tour of the Tanzanian college of arts *Bagamoyo* across Yugoslavia in 1987 attests to the fact that such logistical feats kept being undertaken even at the end of the 1980s, when funds were already in short supply.³⁹ Zagreb-based Africanist Biserka Cvjetičanin, noting the frequency of folklore-tinged cultural exchanges, pointed out that the hypertrophy of exotica can also result in the narrowing of potentials for cultural interaction, although, in her view, it was obvious that folklore, in all its forms, was simply the most recognised among the traditions of the countries of the Global South.⁴⁰

Ostoja Gordanić Balkanski, the “unofficial sculptor of the Non-Aligned Movement”, also borrowed from the traditional sculptural techniques of Sudan and many other “exotic spaces of the Third World”, as he put it in one of the interviews.⁴¹ As early as 1974, the only Yugoslav artist who, as he declared himself, consciously turned his back on Paris,⁴² focused all his creativity on the topos of the NAM and began to create sketches for its flag and coat of arms, as well as memorials for the places where the summits of the NAM were held.⁴³ While the Yugoslav Federal Secretariat did not accept Gordanić’s proposals, his portrait of Robert Mugabe did end up on the wall of the Harare Convention Centre, where the eighth summit of the movement was held.⁴⁴ The Zimbabwean commission from the Yugoslav artist was not an isolated case, however. In 1956, for example, Ethiopia sent a request to the “good painter” to paint portraits of their statesmen.⁴⁵ Yugoslav master artists would later also be invited to post-revolutionary Angola, which was otherwise

30 AJ 559, box 70, Informativno-propagandna delatnost Jugoslavije prema zemljama Afrike i Azije, 12 November 1969, p. 4.

31 DAMSP, PA, 1978, box 61, document 412462, 1 March 1978.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid.

34 DAMSP, PA, 1978, box 84, document 477729, 31 March 1978; 1986, box 150, document 433152, 31 July 1986.

35 AJ 142/II, box A-187, Ambasada SFRJ Dar es Salam, Izvještaj za 1980-u godinu, January 1981, p. 17.

36 Cvjetičanin, *Projekcija dugoročne prosvjetno-kulturne suradnje*, p. 44.

37 AJ 559, box 69, Lagos – 1987, 9 June 1969.

38 DAMSP, PA, 1985, box 28, document 429243, 21 June 1985.

39 DAMSP, PA, 1987, box 149, document 6304, 12 October 1987.

40 Cvjetičanin, *Projekcija dugoročne prosvjetno-kulturne suradnje*, p. 51.

41 *Vjesnik*, 31 August 1989, Dletom za Treći svet.

42 Ibid.

43 DAMSP, PA, 1974, box 173, document 44741, 31 January 1974.

44 *Vjesnik*, 31 August 1989, Dletom za Treći svet.

45 AJ 559, box 58, 1956: Jugoslavija – Etiopija, undated.

typically a destination for non-established artists from the Eastern European "fraternal" socialist countries.⁴⁶ As far as group guest exhibitions are concerned, modern graphic art gained a representative place in Yugoslav fine art. In a repertoire selected to be put up in ten African countries, it was represented by 102 examples (by Mersad Berber, Janez Bernik, Janez Boljka, Bogdan Borčić, Jože Ciuha, Stojan Čelić, Emir Dragulj, Ivo Friščić, Jože Horvat - Jaki, Vladimir Makuc, Edo Murtić, Jože Spacal and others).⁴⁷

For the more critical observers among Yugoslav diplomatic circles, it was the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture in Lagos in 1977 in particular that was responsible for broadening the horizons about the reach of African creativity. As they themselves acknowledged, the assumption until very recently had always been that the continent had little to contribute to modern world culture apart from its wealth of folklore. At that time, however, modernist approaches to African theatre were beginning to be evident, especially in Nigeria, which is where the first African theatrical troupe to come to the Belgrade International Theatre Festival (BITEF) was from.⁴⁸ They later tried to have the National Theatre of Zaire come to Belgrade, but technical issues ended up preventing them from realising that goal.⁴⁹

68 One of the more frequent areas of cultural cooperation with Africa was in film; this was not limited to the screening of Yugoslav films, but also included joint productions. Yugoslav film exports remained largely commercial in nature and perpetually troubled by issues with distribution, since, with the exception of a few African countries, the entire network was in the hands of foreign private companies.⁵⁰ A new market for the great partisan epics opened up in the 1970s in countries like Ethiopia and Angola, both of which were undergoing revolutionary transformation and trying to "educate" their cinema audiences accordingly.⁵¹ After the Yugoslav embassy gave the office of the first Angolan president, Agostinho Neto, a copy of Janković's *Krvava bajka* (Bloody Tale), the Angolans were immediately willing to buy the film, as it had left a profound impression on the president.⁵² While not all Yugoslav blockbusters were subtitled in Portuguese, there were other partisan-themed

46 DAMSP, PA, 1978, box 5, document 433353, 29 May 1978.

47 DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 46116, 31 January 1980.

48 DAMSP, PA, 1975, box 191-192, document 439693, appendix: Informacija o uslovima za rad u Zapadnoj i Centralnoj Africi na zadacima u oblasti informacija i kulturno-naučne saradnje i aktuelnim problemima, 17 July 1975, p. 24.

49 DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 456873, 11 November 1980.

50 Cvjetičanin, *Projekcija dugoročne prosvjetno-kulturne suradnje*, p. 57.

51 DAMSP, PA, 1978, box 33, document 442749, 18 July 1978.

52 DAMSP, PA, 1978, box 5, document 416743, 15 March 1978.

films that were well received by audiences in Luanda.⁵³ In Kenya, by contrast, the screening of Delić's *Sutjeska* did not go down well with the audiences accustomed to American films.⁵⁴

In the field of literature, the Struga Poetry Evenings occupied a special place in the creation of cross-cultural links. Through the mediation of Yugoslav diplomats, many well-known African writers came to Struga. Shortly after the signing of an agreement on cultural cooperation with Ghana, this increasingly renowned international meeting hosted the president of the Ghana Association of Writers, Atukwei Okai,⁵⁵ followed by several of his colleagues.⁵⁶ The town in the south of Macedonia was also visited by Angolan poets,⁵⁷ as well as those from Guinea, after the Yugoslav embassy in Conakry funded their air tickets.⁵⁸ The most famous African participant of the Struga Evenings was undoubtedly the first Senegalese President, poet and one of the founders of the theory of *négritude*, Léopold Sédar Senghor, who was awarded the festival's prize, the *Golden Wreath*, in 1975.⁵⁹ The high-ranking guests started giving the event on Lake Ohrid an air of political exclusivity, as illustrated by a written remark by the Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Josip Vrhovec, in the early 1980, when the Macedonian organisers were about to invite back Senghor, as a past prize-winner: "We have no interest in Senghor continuing to come to Yugoslavia [...]."⁶⁰ At the same time, Vrhovec's secretariat was working hard to get the Guinean Minister of Justice and former ambassador to Yugoslavia, as well as Senghor's poetic rival, Sikhé Camara, to come to Struga.⁶¹

Together towards cultural decolonisation?

The 1979 Summit of the NAM in Havana recognised culture as one of the cornerstones of social development in general, a vehicle of national emancipation and non-alignment, and of better mutual understanding. Cultural cooperation among the members and the dissemination of knowledge in this field were seen as strengthening the common intellectual and material potential needed for more rapid development, underlining the need to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation, including through the creation of

53 DAMSP, PA, 1978, box 5, document 464834, 24 November 1978.

54 DAMSP, PA, 1975, box 82, document 413348, 26 March 1974, p. 16.

55 DAMSP, PA, 1975, box 37, document 416688, undated.

56 DAMSP, PA, 1985, box 28, document 429243, 21 July 1985.

57 DAMSP, PA, 1985, box 7, document 49071, 20 February 1985, p. 20.

58 DAMSP, PA, 1986, box 118, document 432444, 28 July 1986.

59 Spaskovska, *Comrades, Poets, Politicians*.

60 DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 4742, 18 January 1980.

61 DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 43199, 17 January 1980.

joint institutions in the field of culture.⁶² This did not, in Yugoslavia's view, imply that the NAM needed a common cultural policy—something Yugoslavia was rather reluctant to do, considering the historical, political and religious differences among the members.⁶³ However, Yugoslav intellectuals were able to identify to a large extent with the concept of “the humanism of development”, as formulated by UNESCO under the leadership of the Senegalese geographer and Honorary Doctor of the University of Belgrade, Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, in harmony with the aspirations of the Global South. The essence of the concept was that development could not be interpreted solely in economic terms, but also in the social and cultural sense. It was in this context that the conclusion of the 1970 UNESCO Intergovernmental Conference on Institutional, Administrative and Financial Aspects of Cultural Policies was formulated, namely that either the development is endogenous, or there isn't one, and that every nation, large or small, has something to contribute to the world and something to receive from it.⁶⁴ The Yugoslav Marxist understanding of culture went a step further in this respect, arguing that culture has no independent goals of its own above or beyond the goals of general social development.⁶⁵ Culture was thus contextualised as a part of broader efforts towards changing the global economic relations and fostering cooperation among the developing countries (“South-South” cooperation)—two of the flagship projects of the NAM and its sister organisation, the G77, in the 1970s and 1980s. In this urge to find their own expression in the new world constellation, humanist intellectuals from the south-east of Europe and those from the Global South were united by a common experience of their peripheral position and dependence on external forces, both in the past and in the present, which could only be dealt with through definitive emancipation.⁶⁶

The Yugoslav Commission for UNESCO also facilitated the first contacts with the African Cultural Institute of Dakar, founded in 1972, that took up a leading role in the cultural “decolonisation and emancipation” of the African continent through activities such as education, research, linguistics, film development and the development of traditional crafts and arts. By the end of the 1970s, a total of 19 founding countries had joined.⁶⁷ In cooperation with the Insti-

62 6th Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the NAM.

63 Kolečnik, *Practices of Yugoslav Cultural Exchange*.

64 Jacob, *Southeast by Global South*, p. 259.

65 Cvjetičanin, Švob-Đokić and Jelić, *Kultura i novi međunarodni ekonomski poredak*, p. 12.

66 Jacob, *Southeast by Global South*, 257.

67 DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 4298/3, 22 May 1980, appendix: Izveštaj o »Danima informacija o kulturi Afrike«, p. 1.

tute's director, Basil T. Kossou, who had previously been a guest of the Federal ZAMTES, what was probably the largest manifestation of African culture in socialist Yugoslavia, called the Days of Information on African Culture, was organised in Belgrade (and partly in Novi Sad and Zagreb) in March 1980. The multi-day event included not only film screenings and book exhibitions, but also a series of lectures and panel discussions featuring distinguished African experts in the fields of literature, linguistics and history, some of whom were former ministers and ambassadors, and was presented as one of the first tangible results of the efforts to implement the Havana Declaration.⁶⁸

The key issues discussed both at the interviews at the individual specialised institutes in Belgrade and Zagreb, as well as in front of the general public (the proceedings were later published), echoed the intentions to mobilise culture and cultural cooperation as a means of struggle against (Western) hegemony and as an instrument of economic and technological independence and national identity. According to Kossou, the order of the “Third World”—as a political and ideological concept, not a cultural entity, as he pointed out—also included individual small European countries that had won their autonomy from one of the great powers. These countries—not especially rich, but also not burdened by very low gross social product, as described by the Senegalese expert, clearly alluding to Yugoslavia—have recognised the parallels between their fate and that of African, Asian and Latin American countries with much worse conditions, and thus achieved great prestige in Kossou's eyes.⁶⁹ African participants from countries with various foreign policy profiles had varying experiences with regard to relations with the two major socialist purveyors of alternative globalisation projects, the Soviet Union and China, with the former occasionally referred to as an “ideological coloniser”, offering its services only on the condition of acceptance of its orthodoxies.⁷⁰ By contrast, Yugoslavia was seen as a partner who respected the imperative of cooperating as equals, which is why, on this occasion as well, a number of proposals were addressed to Yugoslavia for cooperation or expert assistance in the fields of library science and book trade, radio and television production, and archaeology, as well as initiatives for cooperation in the research projects at the previously mentioned Dakar Institute.⁷¹

68 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

69 Kosu, *Perspektive i svrha*, pp. 100–101.

70 Benin, Gabon, *Obala Slonovače*, p. 193.

71 DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 4298/3, 22 May 1980, appendix: Izveštaj o »Danima informacija o kulturi Afrike«, pp. 19–21.

On Yugoslavia's list of priorities for the development of cultural links with foreign countries, the neighbouring countries and the non-aligned countries came first and second. It was only in third place that Western countries followed; in reality however, they were the ones with whom most exchanges took place.⁷² Cultural cooperation with the non-aligned countries began to decline as early as 1981, likely due to the general economic crisis, which caused the earmarked funds to dry up and sparked controversy between the federal and republican authorities over what portion of the costs each of them should bear.⁷³ At a time when Yugoslavia and most of the members of the NAM were becoming less financially capable and losing influence in the world,⁷⁴ one last major project of cross-cultural cooperation in this context was taking place: the Josip Broz Tito Gallery of Art of the Non-Aligned Countries.

The gallery opened on 1 September 1984 in the premises of the former Petrović Palace in Titograd (Podgorica). Preparations had begun some three years earlier, when the NAM Coordinating Bureau in New York was informed of the plans, and at the VII. Summit in New Delhi in 1983, there was already mention of the gallery in the Final Declaration, where members were also encouraged to contribute actively to the creation of the Gallery's fund and activities.⁷⁵ As a pioneering joint institution with the aim of "cultural decolonisation", the Gallery was to do more than just collect, preserve and exhibit outstanding archaeological and ethnological artefacts and contemporary artworks from non-aligned countries—the intent was to provide a space for the education and training of visiting artists and at the same time serve as a kind of meeting point for the intellectual production related to the affirmation of the cultural values of this part of the world.⁷⁶ This integral approach to art as a catalyst for facing the social challenges of the Global South was also hinted at with title of the international conference "Art and Development", co-organised by UNESCO, which was held at the Gallery in October 1985. The conference was attended by 40 participants from 21 non-aligned and developing countries, which included African representatives from Gabon, Ghana, Mali, Seychelles, Ghana and Uganda.⁷⁷

One of the "most widely known galleries in the world", as the Yugoslav ambassador to Angola described it,⁷⁸ put itself on the map by striving to transcend the artificial distinctions between the "big"

and the "small", and between the "metropolitan" and the "peripheral" cultures, as well as to break down the hierarchy of differences imposed by certain cultural models, as expressed by the Federal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Raif Dizdarević, in the introduction to the gallery catalogue.⁷⁹ The plan was to allow participation of representatives of other non-aligned countries on the Gallery's management boards. However, when this later triggered a complicated procedure for the amendment of its statute, no further steps were taken in this direction.⁸⁰

The very naming of the Gallery, after the late President and one of the founders of the NAM, Josip Broz – Tito, showed that Yugoslavia was counting on this institution in the capital of Montenegro to cement its place in the future political topography of the movement. The importance it ascribed to it is also shown by the unsuccessful plans to have the inauguration conducted by the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as the leader of the presiding member.⁸¹ Even more so than in the cases described above, the Yugoslav diplomatic network showed zeal in engaging with artists who were willing to donate their works, which was the only way to expand the gallery's collection. In Angola, for example, artists such as Paulo Jazz, Filipe Salvador, Manecas de Carvalho, Fernando Valentino and Augusto Ferreira were approached, and the donated paintings were given suggestive titles: *The Moment of Aggression*, *The Freeing of the Slaves*, *The Secret of Rebellion*, *The Black Tear*.⁸² A total of 206 exhibits from 21 countries came from Africa, including traditional wooden sculptures, examples of Makonde art, ritual shields and masks, and contemporary paintings and prints.⁸³ Some of these exhibits would later end up back in the countries of the Global South as part of guest exhibitions of the Gallery in Titograd (for example in Harare, Lusaka and Dar es Salaam).⁸⁴ Yugoslav diplomats also invited artists, among them the well-known Zimbabwean sculptor Bernard Matemera, to come to visit the Gallery, and to then bequeath it the works created during the visit.⁸⁵ Other renowned guest artists included Bunama Kosa from Guinea and Vittorio Madonga from Tanzania, whose visits were covered by the journalists from those countries.⁸⁶ Since the visiting artists had to pay

72 DAMSP, PA, 1986, box 118, document 43942, 21 January 1986.
 73 DAMSP, PA, 1983, box 114, document 445277, 22 November 1983.
 74 Atwood Lawrence, *The Rise and Fall*. Byrne, *Africa's Cold War*.
 75 DAMSP, PA, 1984, box 155, document 435390, 16 July 1984.
 76 Ibid.
 77 DAMSP, PA, 1985, box 153, document 7458, 1 November 1985.
 78 DAMSP, PA, 1987, box 149, document 04508, 11 June 1987.

79 Piškur, *Druga ozvezdja*, p. 19.
 80 DAMSP, PA, 1987, box 149, document 5494, 9 September 1987.
 81 DAMSP, PA, 1984, box 155, document 435390, 16 July 1984.
 82 DAMSP, PA, 1987, box 149, document 428719, 15 June 1987.
 83 DAMSP, PA, 1987, box 149, document 04508, 23 June 1987.
 84 DAMSP, PA, 1986, box 150, document 432558, 28 July 1986. Piškur, *Druga ozvezdja*, p. 18.
 85 Čelebić, *Galerija umetnosti neuvrščenih*.
 86 Shihata, 14 September 1987, *A Meeting of Non-Aligned Arts*.

for their trips to Yugoslavia themselves, Yugoslav diplomats during the difficult circumstances also proposed Solomonic solutions, such as engaging a somewhat less established painter or sculptor instead of a renowned artist from Mozambique, who would go on to create works in Titograd and then sell them in a sales exhibition, the proceeds of which would have been enough to buy the airline tickets.⁸⁷

Conclusion

According to a definition in one of the Yugoslav documents that were written around 1980 and reflected the general principles of non-alignment, the goal of the educational and cultural cooperation was to foster awareness of common social issues and needs and with that the strengthening of the spirit of solidarity among the members of the movement and other developing countries.⁸⁸ To what extent the various promoters of Yugoslav non-aligned internationalism succeeded in doing so, and whether in doing so they managed to subvert the Eurocentric perspective, is a question that the sources we analysed do not permit us to fully answer. Yugoslav diplomacy largely internalised the general principles of non-alignment, and as far as its cultural arm was concerned—and to the extent that we can even speak of cultural diplomacy as an independent endeavour when talking about Africa and the Global South, in light of the extremely limited human and material resources available for its implementation—it went somewhat beyond the tasks of typical propaganda activity as pursued by both Western and Eastern countries at the time. It is telling that in Slovenia in particular, in the first half of the 1980s, 82% of all manifestations of cultural exchange with Sub-Saharan Africa took place on this continent, and only the remaining 18% in Africa,⁸⁹ which in itself reveals efforts to bring arts from that region closer to Yugoslav and Slovene audiences.

Being familiar with the local environment, Yugoslav diplomats also had a say in what kind of art made its way into the cooperation programmes. Their efforts were initially dominated by logistical and financial concerns, although they were also aware, at least in some cases, of the need to represent different, including also modern, artistic expressions in cultural exchanges. The Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs was also involved in international debates

⁸⁷ DAMSP, PA, 1987, box 149, document 441436, 23 September 1987.

⁸⁸ DAMSP, PA, 1980, box 145, document 4298/3, Medjusobna saradnja nesvrstanih i zemalja u razvoju u oblasti obrazovanja i kulture, undated, p. 1.

⁸⁹ SI AS 1271, box 6, *Znanstveno-tehnično in prosvetno-kulturno sodelovanje SR Slovenije z afriškimi deželami v obdobju 1981–1984*, 4 June 1985.

among domestic and foreign experts in the fields of education and culture, which were somewhat in tune with the emerging postcolonial thought of the time. Through these events, organised either in Yugoslavia or in the partner non-aligned countries, a handful of Yugoslav experts emerged who were able to substantively discuss the characteristics and problems of cultural production in different parts of Africa.

At the same time, it became apparent that cultural policies in individual NAM member countries were not oriented towards encouraging broad interaction.⁹⁰ This was not only characteristic of Yugoslavia, but also of the great national cultures such as the Chinese and Iranian, or the various Indian cultures, which failed to constitute themselves as subjects capable of establishing links with other cultures of the Global South, but were subject to transfers only in relation to Western European cultures.⁹¹ The cultural cooperation in the (relatively short) period discussed, when the idea of comprehensive cooperation between non-aligned and developing countries flowered, can therefore be said to have faced similar issues as the mutual economic integration of this part of the world,⁹² namely that it has rarely moved beyond an administratively imposed framework to where it could have a life of its own, driven by initiatives by non-institutional actors. When many of the cross-cultural links with Africa, having just barely been established, weakened and broke down in the chaotic situation of the late 1980s, it became all the more difficult to re-establish them once Yugoslavia and its successor states lost their role as a key European link in the NAM.

⁹⁰ Cvjetičanin, Švob-Đokić and Jelić, *Kultura i novi međunarodni ekonomski poredak*, p. 36.

⁹¹ Ibid., p. 68.

⁹² Ramšak, *Poskus drugačne globalizacije*, p. 779.

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Barbara Predan

THE IMPACTS
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OF NON-ALIGNED
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At the time of the Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslavia had a special Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. According to Bojana Piškur, this commission “organised exhibitions outside Yugoslavia”, with the “exchanges happening at all levels of cultural production.” Piškur continues, however, that “architecture, urbanism and industrial design [had] a special, somewhat different status, being considered state-supported vehicles of new modernist tendencies, compatible with the idea of creating a new socialist society”.¹ This is also borne out by archival records which reveal, among other things, that architects, urban planners and industrial designers in non-aligned countries provided assistance in setting up study programmes, lectured at universities and also did much of the planning and building in practice.²

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1 Piškur, *Južna ozvezdja*, p. 10.

2 SI AS 1140, box 20/453, Zimbabwe – angažiranje slovenskih strokovnjakov, 1987–1988; box 20/468, ZAMTES Ljubljana – Iraq; box 36/707, ZAMTES Ljubljana – ILO – roster slovenskih kandidatov, 1985.

In light of the above, our exploration of Slovenian design in the context of non-alignment forks, roughly speaking, into two main directions. One of them leads to the West, the Global North—which for Slovenian designers had always been the primary focus. At the same time, engagement with the Global South in the field of design and architecture merits consideration as well. This is where we find the architects and designers who ventured there on the basis of international economic agreements with non-aligned countries.³ One of those was, for example, the architect Božidar Janez Gvardjančič, who supervised housing construction in the province of Gharyan between 1968–1970 and then later in Tripoli. He subsequently went to Kenya, where he designed, built and supervised rural healthcare facilities in 1971–1978. Between 1982 and 1983 in Iraq, architect Vlado Emeršič worked as an architect, designer and coordinator. He would later go on to design a pharmaceutical plant in Nigeria and low-cost housing in Sudan.⁴ In 1987, working for LIZ engineering under the auspices of Rudis, architects Marija Jugovec, Tanja Robek, Meta Deu and Matija Suhadolc built the Sonipac shoe factories in the Algerian towns of Freneda, El Bayadh and Bousaada.⁵

The present study shows from the outset that the roles of Slovenian designers in the Global North and the Global South were more or less diametrically opposed. In the first case, a desire for recognition and active involvement on the part of the so-called *advanced Other* was evident, while in the latter, the approval was obviously inherent to the role of the one who possesses and *selflessly* shares knowledge. That said, on the Yugoslav side, according to Bojana Piškur, the impetus for the sharing of knowledge was not understood as the desire to civilise others (as had often been the case when done by the “developed and advanced” West).⁶ Rather, Yugoslavia “cultivated the image of a culture/state whose goal in helping others was to help them establish themselves in a role that [had] yet to be created and clearly defined”. Piškur refers to the latter as the “*Big Brother* paradigm, which from today’s perspective is just as problematic”.⁷

Despite the sometimes awkward positioning and the endless balancing act that had to be kept up, it should be stressed that for

3 SI AS 1140, box 19/425, Federal Executive Council of the SFRY – Algeria, 1984; 20/459, ZAMTES Ljubljana – Iraq – Realisation of the Agreement on the Cooperation in the Field, 1985; 20/474, Zvezni ZAMTES – North Yemen – cultural and educational cooperation, 1983.

4 Ibid.

5 Špela Šubic’s interview with architect Matija Suhadolc, 5 July 2022. Carried out for the purposes of the work by Predan and Šubic: *Zakaj je vaza podobna hiši?*

6 Messell, *Globalization and Design* Institution, p. 91.

7 Piškur, *Južna ozvezdja*, pp. 13–14.

Slovenian designers and architects during their membership in the Non-Aligned Movement, professional work in the Global North and the Global South were not mutually exclusive. In the text we will use the historical method to illuminate examples of Yugoslav policymakers—building on the Yugoslav Non-Aligned Movement and workers’ self-management in the 1970s and 1980s—introducing the idea of decentralisation and questioning of epistemic colonialism to both the Global South and the Global North, and in doing so highlight the role of participation and the importance of taking into account the voices from the so-called periphery of design.

A Brief Overview of the Professionalisation of Slovenian Design and its Background

The professionalisation of Slovenian design was marked by the period after the Second World War, which was characterised by the accelerated post-war reconstruction and deliberate industrialisation of society. There is, however, another factor crucial for the understanding of the Yugoslav path towards industrialisation paved with socialism, namely the active integration of society with the aim of establishing an alternative to the prevailing ideology of the time, which entailed the division of the world into blocs in a perpetual state of Cold War. In the Informbiro period following the Tito-Stalin split of 1948, Yugoslavians chose to reject both of the major blocs’ ideologies—the ideology of Western capitalism, as well as the state socialism of the East. In the former, the problem they identified was that in capitalism, the integration of society is mostly carried out by the market, with partial assistance from the state. In the centrally planned socialist societies, by contrast, this integration is predominantly a responsibility of the state, with partial assistance from the market.⁸ In the area of international relations, the path beyond bloc politics in Yugoslavia in the 1950s and especially the 1960s was represented by the non-aligned movement—the so-called policy of peaceful co-existence⁹—while the alternative in the area of the sociology of work was built on the idea of socialist self-management. All of the above also proved vital for the further professionalisation and development of Slovenian design. The country’s rapid and deliberate industrialisation when it found itself in isolation in 1948 forced the Yugoslav industry to develop its own products, which on the other hand represented the foundation for the professionalisation of industrial design. If the 1950s were a pioneering time in Yugoslav design, the 1960s can

8 Kavčič, *Sociologija dela*, p. 325.

9 Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, p. 96.

be seen as a time of institutionalisation. This is also evidenced by the development of national and international professional organisations in the field of design.

The first formal steps towards the professionalisation of design in Yugoslavia were taken in the early 1950s within professional associations.¹⁰ Further professionalisation of institutions at a federal level took place in the 1960s. At the time, the Federation of Associations of Applied Arts Artists and Designers of Yugoslavia (SULU-PUDJ) established SPID YU, the Secretariat for Industrial Design.¹¹ In organisational terms, SPID YU was considered a typical example of polycentricity and self-management, with the federation bringing together the designers' associations of the individual republics that were formed in 1951–1953. In 1961¹² SPID YU joined the ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design), an association established in 1957 in Paris. It was founded by European and American designers wishing to improve the professional status of designers, encourage collaboration among industrial designers worldwide and establish unified international standards regulating the design profession.¹³ In Europe and America, like here, national design organisations were the first to be formed. The desire for growth and the increasing interest in the internationalisation of design led to the emergence of first design conferences and magazines in the international space and eventually international organisations.¹⁴ The founding of the ICSID was accompanied from the outset by the rhetoric of cultural internationalism, which was meant to transcend borders by building bridges of understanding. However, as pointed out by Tania Messel, from the very start, as its objectives and modes of operation were being formulated, sources of friction were encountered—most often as a direct result of Cold War policies, overly dominant local agendas and conflicting design ideologies.¹⁵

In the heated atmosphere in 1961, the Secretariat for Industrial Design (SPID YU) entered the international scene with the desire to internationalise Yugoslav design. According to the Slovenian industrial designer Saša J. Mächtig, the decision was undoubtedly, at least in part, based on

10 In 1951, the Designers' Society of Slovenia (DOS), initially named the Association of Artists of Applied Arts of Slovenia, was created. Likewise in the 1950s, the Industrial Design Studio (SIO) began operating under the auspices of the Association of Artists of Applied Arts in Zagreb, as well as in Belgrade under the auspices of their own association (Keller, *Dizajn*, p. 110).

11 *Ibid.*, p. 115.

12 Although the texts analysed mention various years, 1961 is cited most frequently (mainly in connection with the 2nd ICSID Congress in Venice in 1961).

13 Messell, *Design Across Borders*, p. 131.

14 Woodham, *Twentieth-Century Design*, p. 176.

15 Messell, *Design Across Borders*, p. 131.

Yugoslavia's international credibility and the favourable image achieved through Tito's innovative international politics. The 1st Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, which took place in 1961 in Belgrade, was a resounding and high-profile success on a global scale. Building on such accomplishments, however, much could also be done in cultural and other fields, with considerable potential for success.¹⁶

Among such successes is the first international Industrial Design Biennial (BIO). It was founded in Ljubljana a mere three years after accession to the ICSID. Attesting to the excellence and international visibility of the first two Biennials is the participation of some of the world's leading names in design at the time, both on the jury and on the advisory board: Misha Black, Wim Crowel, Gillo Dorfles, Charles Eames, Tomas Maldonado, Paul Reilly, Henri Vientot and Marco Zanuso.¹⁷ In 1966, the international relevance of Slovenian graphic design was recognised by the International Council of Graphic Design Associations (ICOGRADA). Founded in London only three years prior, the organisation held its second congress in Bled, Slovenia.

In the early 1960s, during their studies of design and architecture, those who would eventually become the most active members of the Slovene designers' association were already regularly undergoing further training and attending international design conferences abroad. Standing out with his insightfulness and perspicacity was the aforementioned industrial designer Saša J. Mächtig. The other striking example in this text will be the designer and architect Janja Lap.¹⁸ In the early 1960s, Lap joined a research team at the Royal College of Art in London on a British Council scholarship and, after returning to Slovenia in the 1980s, designed the interior of a army training centre in Libya.

Mächtig's Metamorphoses

Among the Slovenian professional and general public, Mächtig is most known for his red kiosk K67, which dates back to the late 1960s, and as a professor and co-founder of the Department of Design at the Academy of Fine Arts in 1984. His work in journalism and his regular international engagements, by contrast, are largely unknown. In this treatise, we will focus on the latter, and the mid-1970s period in particular. In this period, Saša J. Mächtig wrote the essay

16 Mächtig, *Ravnikar in design*, p. 257.

17 Gnamuš, ed., *Katalog BIO*, p. 12 and 24.

18 MAO AJL owns an extensive collection of personal documents, sketches, blueprints, manuscripts and typescripts, photographs and products.

Metamorphoses 2,¹⁹ the idiosyncratic sequel to *Metamorphoses*,²⁰ which he had published in the *Sinteza* magazine in 1969. Unlike the first essay, which dealt primarily with the role of architecture in society, this 1970s article was much more political and critical towards the broader society. Quoting Mächtig: “The essay is based on the Yugoslav attitudes towards the global process of social and national emancipation and the democratisation of international relations, and, in this context, with the new role of the design profession in modern society.”²¹ In *Metamorphoses 2*, Mächtig drew special attention to the urgent need for establishing participation in design:

The recognition of the need for interdisciplinary approach, cooperation of decision-makers and participation of users should shift the focus of our endeavours. Within this framework designers in today’s changing world can play a much more important and socially responsible role than was possible in their quality of “form-givers” when they were dependent on a territorially restricted market in industrialised countries and on rich clients.²²

86 It is worth mentioning here that the authors who study the field of co-creation and participation in design and co-design—starting from the economic practices of cooperatives and other co-management and self-determination practices of the 19th and 20th century—consider the 1970s to be the time that these topics entered the field of design. Most of them trace the origin of participatory design to the Scandinavian worker struggles,²³ as well as to a conference titled *Design Participation*, which was organised by the Design Research Society in Manchester, England, in 1971, and which remains an exceedingly important reference point even today.²⁴ User-centred design is considered by the authors of these texts as having origins in the political activism of the civil rights movements;²⁵ they call it a “US-driven phenomenon” that involves deliberate inclusion of users in the design process.²⁶ Despite Mächtig’s active role in ensuring recognition of the significance of participatory practices

19 MAO, Mächtig, *Metamorfoze 2*.

20 Mächtig, *Metamorfoze*.

21 MAO, Mächtig, *Kronologija dogodka*, p. [1].

22 MAO, Mächtig, *Metamorfoze 2*, p. 22.

23 See Bødker, *Creating Conditions for Participation*, in Greenbaum and Loi, *Participation, the camel and the elephant of design*.

24 Cross, ed., *Design Participation*.

25 See Sanoff, *Three Decades of Design and Community*, in Luck, *What is it that makes participation in design participatory design?*

26 Sanders in Stappers, *Co-creation and the new landscapes of design*, p. 5.

in design, the Yugoslav contribution to the field of participatory design currently remains overlooked. This is despite the fact that, as we will show below, his work left lasting traces.

The first time that Mächtig introduced the essay *Metamorphoses 2* to the public was at the conference of the British organisation DIA in Dubrovnik in the autumn of 1974. A year later, the essay was also accepted for the IX ICSID Congress in Moscow. The author’s intent with the article was to provide starting points for the international community to “address concrete questions about the role of the profession in the context of Yugoslav self-management as both a social theory and practice”.²⁷ When he arrived at the Congress in Moscow, however, he learned he would not get to present the text as part of the “Design and State Politics” topic. The official explanation was that there was insufficient time; unofficially, the reason was that the text was considered too political. According to Mächtig’s record of the Congress, entitled *Kronologija dogodka* [Event Chronology], he was approached by Vladimir Zinchenko, then the deputy director of the scientific research institute for industrial design VNIITE of the Soviet Union, who “intervened in connection with the part of the text that mentioned Vietnam, Czechoslovakia and Big Brother”.²⁸ Zinchenko warned him, Mächtig reports, that the Congress was not intended to be political in nature, whereas the text in question was highly political, and that since the Congress was supported by politicians, the organisers wished to avoid complications.²⁹ Mächtig, indignant over these developments, protested loudly both to the local organisers of the Congress and the international organisation the ICSID. His objections did not help, however, and he was not granted any time at the podium.

The reasons for this decision by the organisers are likely to be found in the events preceding the start of the Moscow Congress. As Dmitry Azrikan writes, throughout the preparation phase of the IX ICSID Congress, themed “Design for Human Beings and Society”, the VNIITE institute’s cooperation with the Science and Technology Committee was exemplary. Before the start of the Congress, however, the opening of the multimedia exhibition in one the most prestigious Moscow halls, the Rossia Concert Hall, was forbidden. In the exhibition, which had already been set up, the designers from VNIITA were hoping to present the role of industrial design in everyday life on 16 large screens, highlighting its ubiquity and its impact on the quality of life. Azrikan wrote, however, that

27 MAO, Mächtig, *Kronologija dogodka*, p. [1].

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., pp. [1–2].

a couple of days before the Congress opened, a mysterious panic suddenly came over the Committee. Although everything was built, organized, and prepared, all now was totally banned, including slides which were to support the [Soviet] panelists presentations. Nothing was explained. The Soviet portion of the Congress was converted to a boring bureaucratic format. I tried to draw something with a marker on a piece of paper during my presentation. All of my slides were locked up.³⁰

Azrikan saw this as a clear signal to the design profession from the Soviet authorities at the time. The political authorities evidently identified design as a potential threat, since it involved social changes in the cultural and economic sphere. Mächtigt's Event Chronology does not make clear the extent to which the Yugoslav delegation of designers was aware of the situation and these developments. In light of the criticism directed at the organisational deficiencies and the view that articles by the Eastern European delegates were "either restrained or low quality",³¹ it is reasonable to assume that they were not really aware of the political pressures behind the scenes. A critique by Goroslav Keller likewise includes only a brief observation that the Congress in Moscow felt lethargic and lacked meaningful discussions, reactions and disagreements.³² Despite everything, however, the event would prove to be of key importance for Mächtigt's subsequent steps and his active participation in the ICSID's international events.

Mächtigt would speak again in 1976, this time at the IX ICSID General Assembly in Brussels. It is readily apparent from the minutes of the General Assembly that the Yugoslav delegates' presentation was carefully thought-out and well prepared. As delegates from a non-aligned country, members of the Yugoslav association of designers SPID YU objected to the excessive centralism displayed by the international organisation. The result of such a regime, they felt, was the loss of regional contributions from less developed countries. At the same time, at the General Assembly, Mächtigt, proceeding from his *Metamorphoses 2* essay, advanced a thesis that the West ought to recognise that "there is no single model that would make it possible to easily transfer experiences and principles from one profession, or one country, to another".³³

In the 1970s and 1980s, similar criticism began to be voiced by individual Latin American countries. With the creation of ALADI (Asociación Latinoamericana de Diseño) in 1978, the pressure on

the ICSID's overly centralist organisation intensified.³⁴ As Tania Messell explained, the ICSID, promoted by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), expanded deliberately in the 1970s, with developing countries actively joining. But the main problem soon became apparent in that the ICSID simplistically imagined its cooperation with these countries as the gathering of international design experts aimed at "facilitating the implementation of foreign productivity guidelines in large and small-scale industries".³⁵ They proclaimed themselves the holders of knowledge and progress, as someone who wishes to and is capable of helping, yet they were not actually interested in knowing the whole picture. This is evident from the minutes of the executive council of the ICSID from 1970. Josine des Cressonnières, Secretary General of the organisation, explained the reasons for the dissemination of aid to developing countries as follows:

The only justification of the ICSID is to help. We must do it with all the assets and means particular from the ICSID which derive from its international status and allow for: A) exchange and information (which we can do better than anyone). B) a channel of assistance of more advanced countries, no longer in need of help (Sweden for instance) towards those who need [sic] it acutely.³⁶

This view, held with the blind conviction of its own correctness and uncritically following the guidelines set by UNIDO that call for focusing on industrial development, deliberately ignored the broader social, cultural and educational impacts of such an approach. In the 1970s and 1980s, however, this attitude gradually became a target of strong criticism, even by some of the active members of the ICSID from developed countries. Calls were made to cease doing things for the so-called periphery and instead begin doing things with them, as it is only through cooperation that technological independence can be achieved.³⁷ Among those critics, several stood out in particular: Gui Bonsiepe, Victor Papanek, Paul Hogan³⁸ and finally, Saša J. Mächtigt. At the IX General Assembly of the ICSID in Brussels, the latter offered the following two proposals: "The statute of the ICSID should prepare the basis that would provide a place for a representative from the so-called developing countries on the executive board. 2) A working group should be established

30 Azrikan, VNIITE, p. 64.

31 MAO, Mächtigt, *Kronologija dogodka*, p. [3].

32 Keller, *Kongres bez freed-backa*, p. 19.

33 MAO, Mächtigt, *Metamorfoze 2*, p. 20.

34 Buitrago-Trujillo, *The Siege of the Outsiders ALADI*, p. 55.

35 Messell, *Globalization and Design Institutionalization*, p. 89.

36 UBDA, No 6, ICD/04/1, Minutes ICSID Executive Board Meeting, 17–18 January 1970.

37 Bonsiepe, *Precariousness and Ambiguity*, p. 13.

38 Messell, *Globalization and Design Institutionalization*, pp. 92–93.

to examine the issues related to participation and self-management.” He added:

We are aware that our professional impact on society is not as great as it could be. [...] we have failed so far to develop adequate methods of participation, even though the methods of interdisciplinary work have already become common practice. Nevertheless, as these methods are too professionally oriented and our task is to find new ways and develop new methods that allow the participation of design-makers, designers and users at all levels in our design process, I propose that a new working group be established in order to deal with the problem and methods of participation and self-management.³⁹

This principle, he continued, was increasingly becoming “a topic of interest in Scandinavia, Great Britain and some Latin American countries, whereas in Yugoslavia, this has already been implemented within the sociopolitical system”.⁴⁰ So it was already in the mid-1970s that Mächtigt, at numerous international events, called for greater participation of designers, decision-makers and users on all levels. He further called for an understanding that the denial of the fact that our world is shared should cease and that the affairs of all (including those of the developing countries) should be treated as matters of community. He called for the development of methods that would stimulate interdisciplinarity, decentralisation, participation, cooperation and self-management. With just a handful of adjustments to bring them up to date, these words and approaches would not sound out of place in our “new” world of the present. Though it may sometimes appear as if the ideas of self-management and non-alignment are no longer palatable in these “new” times, we can see that the modern efforts to find alternatives to the current economic system—ones oriented more towards sharing, cooperation and co-creation among all the stakeholders in the process—in fact revolve around ideas that had, in the past, repeatedly been implemented or at the very least discussed in professional circles, only now repackaged in new terminology. Jacques Rancière would most likely see this recurrence as the recycling of old ideas from modernity with the old structures remaining exactly where they had already been:

The so-called “grand narrative” of modernity has not been dismissed. Instead, its elements have been recycled. What happens is not a process

39 MAO, Minutes of the IX. General Assembly (ICSID), typescript, Brussels 1976, p. 43.

40 Ibid.

of erosion of power, conflicts and beliefs heading towards some sort of levelling of the old oppositions in and of ideological consensus, but an active attempt at construing an order of domination, able to dismiss any resistance, or any alternative, by imposing itself as self-evident and inescapable. Our time is therefore not a “post-time” but “anti-time”. The evolution we have witnessed in the past three decades is, strictly speaking, intellectual counter-revolution.⁴¹

In this light it is perhaps easier to understand why Mächtigt’s aforementioned efforts and calls for a different approach were often deemed overly political. The origin of this anti-time—and its resulting cyclicity—in design go back much further than three decades. In his report from the Milan Congress of 1983, Mächtigt wrote:

The discussion on the latest developments in design associated with the most developed countries became even more heated during the Congress. Ever since the 1960s it has become apparent that functionalism has lost motivation in design. Of course the so-called post-industrial era does not understand the historical moment through the denunciation of industry, even though the latter can no longer be the source of cultural inspiration.⁴²

Despite the explicitly obvious active constructing of an order of domination by the developed countries, the international council of the ICSID, eventually—at the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s—acquiesced to considering the alternative that was being proposed by the Yugoslav delegates and the participants from Latin America. In 1980, at the 11th General Assembly in Paris, they adopted a proposal—based on the amended initiative by Vesna Popović and Saša J. Mächtigt—to establish a working group on the “future and structure of the ICSID”.⁴³ As something of a mission statement for the group, they wrote in the report of the General Assembly (under Article 7.3.1.7 – ICSID FUTURE 79–81) that “a ‘natural’ association of member societies should be promoted in order to improve communication and interaction. [...] This should also be reflected in the structure of the international organisation”.⁴⁴ The

41 Rancière, *Je čas emancipacije minil?*, p. 134.

42 MAO, Mächtigt, Report: ICSID Congress and General Assembly – Milan, October 1983, p. 3.

43 The group’s report, to be discussed at the General Assembly in Helsinki (1981), was prepared by April 1981. See also (everything by MAO): *Mednarodne novice. Informacije*. ICSID; ICSID News, p. 1. Mächtigt, Report from the 1st meeting of the special working group for the ICSID in Great Britain. Mächtigt, *Report on the Working Group on the Future and Structure of the ICSID*.

44 Mächtigt, *Report on the Working Group on the Future and Structure of the ICSID*. p. 30

newly established group for the future and structure of the ICSID (ICSID WG/FS) was led by Peter Lord⁴⁵ and Mächtig was appointed a member. The umbrella working group also included Françoise Jollant (France), Frans van der Put (Netherlands) and Yuri Soloviev (Soviet Union). Apart from the precept mentioned above, the group's objectives additionally included exploring the options of changing the statute of the ICSID in order to create a more polycentric organisation, delegating the decision-making power to individual regions and establishing better communication, cooperation and democracy among ICSID members. Mächtig's task within the group was to investigate polycentric processes and the practical opportunities for implementing regionalisation.

One of the key contributions of the ICSID WG/FS group's report⁴⁶ was the proposal that the ICSID abandon its position of being a so-called super-governmental organ and instead become a catalyst of activity in member associations. There was to be a shift in emphasis from management and domination towards practice, education and promotion in equal measures. Group members built the polycentric nature of the ICSID on the principle of "self-sufficient, self-promoting local (regional) groups congregating around centres that emerge naturally [...] An important role in this process of association will be played by factors such as necessity, culture and language; at the same time, no region should embrace exclusivity".⁴⁷ The Yugoslav organisation SPID YU was recognised as an example of good practice in the area of platforms of exchange. Among the newly established regional groups, the ICSID Asian Regional Group, formed in 1979, was highlighted in particular. Despite the tendency towards regional association on a geographical basis, it was stressed multiple times in the document that the regional nature of polycentricity should not derive from maps. As a practical example, they cited India and Pakistan, which they deemed (also on the basis of connections within the Non-Aligned Movement) to have more in common with the Latin American countries than their northern neighbours. The result was a short study that included the initial proposal for regional groups that would employ the logic of self-management to ensure their development and balance the needs of individual countries. In addition, Mächtig's several years of effort and active participation in the group finally bore fruit in

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45 Peter Lord, the future Secretary General and President of the ICSID International Council, would later become a key figure, having been an open supporter of Yugoslav designers' work within the ICSID from the very beginning. Correspondence between Lord and Mächtig is kept in the MAO archives.

46 Mächtig, *Report on the Working Group on the Future and Structure of the ICSID*.

47 *Ibid.*, p. 30.



Meeting of the Working Group on the Future and Structure of the ICSID.

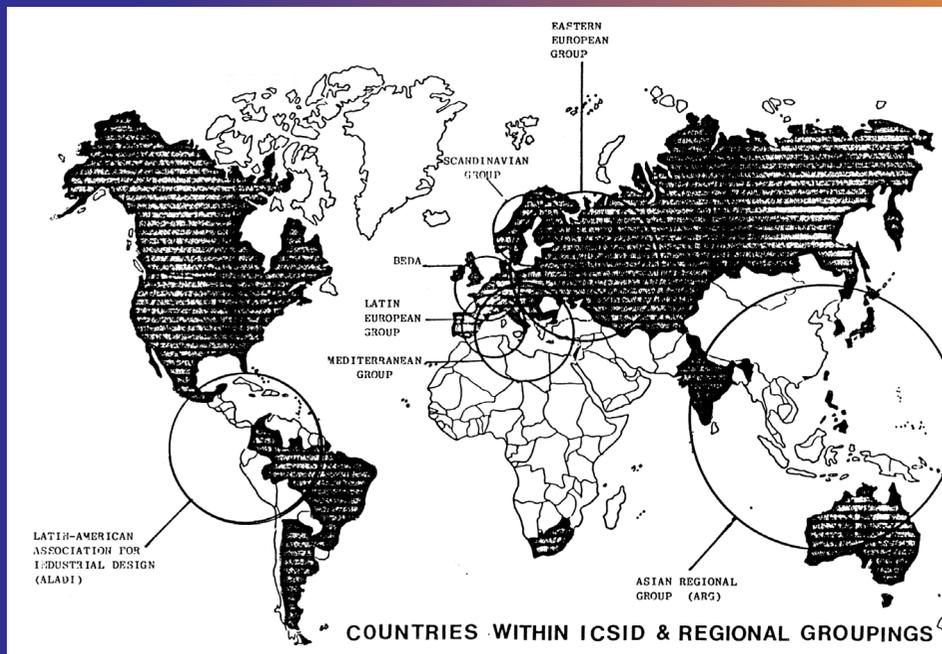
Present in the photograph (left to right): Frans van der Put, Mary Mullin, Peter J. Lord, Saša J. Mächtig, Françoise Jollant. Paris 1980. Courtesy of Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana.

1992, when he succeeded in bringing the ICSID Congress to Ljubljana—by then the capital of independent Slovenia. It is not insignificant that the international organisation (known since 2017 as the World Design Organisation, or WDO) to this day presents itself to the public as a global community of member organisations from six regions.⁴⁸

Janja Lap's Community Values

Designer and architect Janja Lap, unlike Saša J. Mächtig, is not well known to the Slovenian public (general or professional). It took two years of in-depth research within the scope of the research project *Modeli in prakse mednarodne kulturne izmenjave Gibanja nevrščenih* [Models and Practices of International Cultural Exchange] to uncover the extraordinary breadth and multi-layered nature of her work in glass and industrial design, as well as scientific research in the field of systems design. It was Lap who, aged 35 and with the help of a British Council scholarship, moved to London in September 1964, where she joined the research team at the London Royal College of Art (RCA). Two years after her arrival in London, she moved to Sheffield, where she worked as a lecturer at the School of Architecture, which is part of Sheffield University. Between 1973 and 1975, she was also lecturing at the famous Architectural Association School of Architecture in London (AA). Following her return to Slovenia, she first took employment as a researcher at the Institute for Sociology and Philosophy at what was then called the Edvard Kardelj University in Ljubljana. Afterwards, in 1979, she began 10 years of employment at Iskra as a designer of electro-optical devices. There she designed at least one (that we know of) project intended for the non-aligned countries. Immediately after her retirement in 1989, on the basis of one of the last Slovenian agreements with non-aligned countries, she went to Iraq for six months to teaching at the Department of Architecture of the University of Mosul,⁴⁹ But the key influence on the work detailed below was her time as a visiting researcher at the RCA in the mid-1960s.

In leaving for London, Lap first suspended and later quit her job at the School of Arts and Crafts (known today as the Secondary School for Design and Photography) in Ljubljana. She also left behind her career as an award-winning and established—in Slovenia—architect and designer. In her first year at the RCA, she focused on the research of glass at the Department of Industrial



ICSID membership map and proposal of regional associations

(Report on the Working Group on the Future and Structure of the ICSID, April 1981, p. 40)

Courtesy of Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana.

⁴⁸ WDO | People | Regional Advisors and Community Liaisons.

⁴⁹ SI AS 1140, box 20/468, ZAMTES Ljubljana – Iraq: Engagement by University Lecturers – Janja Lap, 1989.

Glass under the mentorship of Robert Goodden. In the second year of her residence she joined the research group for hospitals at the School of Industrial Design (Engineering). There, she got to know the head of the research group, professor Misha Black (known for designing the street signs in Westminster; otherwise one of the pioneers of hospital equipment optimisation) and professor Bruce Archer (known, among other things, as the designer of the first systematically developed hospital bed), under whose mentorship she completed her Master's thesis. Bruce Archer came to the RCA in 1962 at the invitation of Black, who entrusted him with leading a research project focused on non-surgical hospital equipment.⁵⁰ Before that, he worked for a year at the Ulm School of Design, where he was invited by Tomás Maldonado, working under the design theorist and lecturer Horst Rittl, among others.⁵¹ Archer, as noted by Stephen Boyd Davis and Simone Gristwood, worked at the RCA for 27 years and was not only a key figure but also the driving force of scientific research in the field of design. In the 1960s, he instituted and advanced an approach described as follows:

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to be rigorous, and in particular 'systematic', about the nature and practice of designing. He sought to establish a philosophy of design,⁵² even a 'science of design',⁵³ a phrase often associated with Herbert Simon's *Sciences of the Artificial*. Essential to this science was an understanding that Design Research was the study, not only of design's methods, but also of its ontology as a discipline and an activity.⁵⁴

The foundation of Archer's systematic methods of design was the necessity of moving design away from sculptural approaches to technological problems. The task of the designer, he asserted, is to find ways to incorporate into design thinking "the knowledge of ergonomics, cybernetics, marketing and management science", thus keeping up with the trend in technology and starting to "adopt a systems approach that is different than the approach to artefacts".⁵⁵

After joining the research group for hospitals, Lap focused on analysing and understanding the advantages and disadvantages of various hospital feeding schemes. Her first study, *Hospital Feeding*

50 Boyd Davis in Gristwood, "A dialogue between the real-world and the operational model" – The realities of design in Bruce Archer's 1968 doctoral thesis, p. 187.

51 Ibid., p. 186 in Krippendorff, *Designing in Ulm and off Ulm*.

52 Archer, *A view of the nature of design research*, p. 33.

53 Archer, *The Structure of Design Processes*, foreword.

54 Boyd Davis in Gristwood, "A dialogue between the real-world and the operational model" – The realities of design in Bruce Archer's 1968 doctoral thesis, p. 185.

55 RCA Archer, *Systematic method for designers*, p. 1.

Systems, already demonstrated her astute recognition that in order to find an answer, she would have to formulate a unique approach to a problem she first had worked on in a highly analytical and systematic way. Indeed, from today's perspective and in light of the remarkable proliferation of methodological approaches in design in the last decade, the methods described in her research work seem unusually progressive for the mid-1960s and early 1970s period and remain relevant today. She succeeded in incorporating the principles of systemic, service-experience and circular design into her research and planning, while placing everything firmly into the context of the architectural and urban planning foundation underlying the conception of the functionalist city as understood by her first mentor at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana, Edvard Ravnikar.⁵⁶

In April 1979, when she took employment as an industrial designer with Iskra Commerce, Lap first entered the world of consumer product design, which offered her an opportunity to examine the applicability of her research work. Despite her ambitious goals, she joined Iskra right when their independent design department was being dismantled. It is no wonder, then, that two years into her employment, upon receiving the international BIO Award, in an interview for the Iskra newsletter, she pointed out:

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I always look at things through the magical prism of the future and it is my utmost wish and hope that design will truly come to life in Iskra and come to permeate, in the positive sense, the whole company. [...] This is a goal that all of us together, the whole of Iskra, should be willing to sacrifice a lot to achieve. We ought perhaps to consider that design is no longer a good fit for Iskra Commerce and instead reimagine it as an institute operating at two layers: a service layer for addressing everyday issues and a second layer, where bona fide development would take place in close association with other development institutes.⁵⁷

However, in the context of interpreting Lap's products in the field of industrial design, it is important to keep in mind the aspect that she began to cultivate during her studies of architecture and which she developed further at the RCA, namely the awareness that "we are constantly confronted with the problem of creative heritage, which needs to be examined especially in the context of the diversity of cultural traditions and the existing social structure".⁵⁸ In the 1980s she additionally pointed out that

56 Žnidaršič, *Metoda projektiranja arhitekta Edvarda Ravnikarja*, pp. 9–10.

57 Ovsenik, *Oblikovanje iz lastnih korenin*, p. 5.

58 Lap, *Industrijsko oblikovanje in vprašanje ustvarjalnosti*, p. 13.

It is time we asked ourselves if we are capable of recording our periods of life through a deeper engagement with the questions of a nation's cultural and social heritage, and, from these starting points, form our own visual concept of industrial design that would, by virtue of its authentic and original expression, be able to equal the European level of industrial product creation.⁵⁹

The search for uniqueness and cultural authenticity of expression already hinted at the tendencies that would be reflected in society during the breakup of Yugoslavia a decade later. At the same time, Lap, by noting the necessity of searching for the so-called historic aspect of creativity, raised a topic that is still relevant today. This reflection needs to be interpreted together with her statement that she looks at everything "through the magical prism of the future."⁶⁰ A similar explanation was put forward by Alison J. Clarke, who argued that it is in fact impossible to look to the future without understanding history, stating that "at the core of the imaginary and the speculative within design, history has always played a major theoretical and conceptual part". This is why it is such a problem "that this explosion in contemporary design now largely neglects, or actively denies through its lack of engagement with histographical framing and its acritical approach to 'the social'".⁶¹

The above is key to understanding Lap's project, which she designed in the context of the cultural and economic cooperation among non-aligned countries. The project encompassed the interior design of the previously mentioned Training Centre in Libya, which she planned and implemented in 1984 for the Libyan army. In addition to furnishing design, this also included modern computer and electrooptical equipment by Iskra. The planned Training Centre, which also had a second role as a service station, was located somewhere "south of Tripoli in the [Libyan] desert".⁶² Božo Vukas relates that Iskra Elektrooptika sold a lot of equipment to Libya at the time; this being the case, they wished to have a service centre, and the building designed by Lap was aimed primarily at training service personnel.

Even a brief look at the blueprints from the green folder bearing the English title "Training center" makes it clear that Lap's design process followed the logic she had developed previously during her

59 Ibid.

60 Ovsenik, *Oblikovanje iz lastnih korenin*, p. 5.

61 Clarke, *The New Design Ethnographers 1968–1974*, pp. 73–74.

62 Interview with the design engineer Božo Vukas, 7 July 2022. He also states in the interview that in 1984, Lap visited the site to make sure everything was carried out according to the plans.

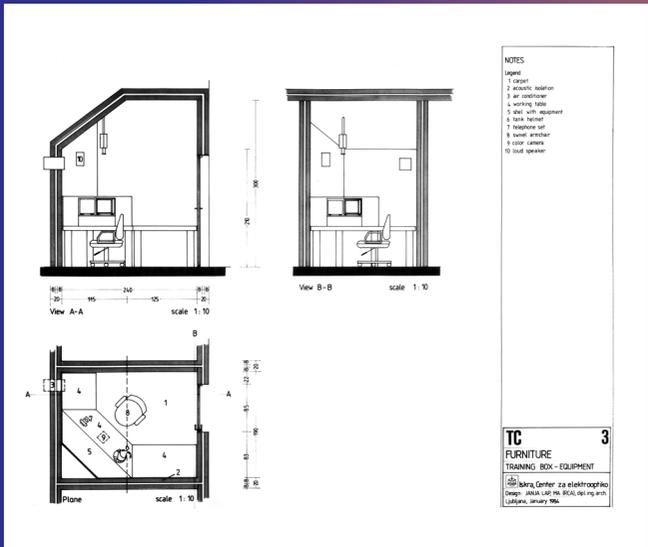
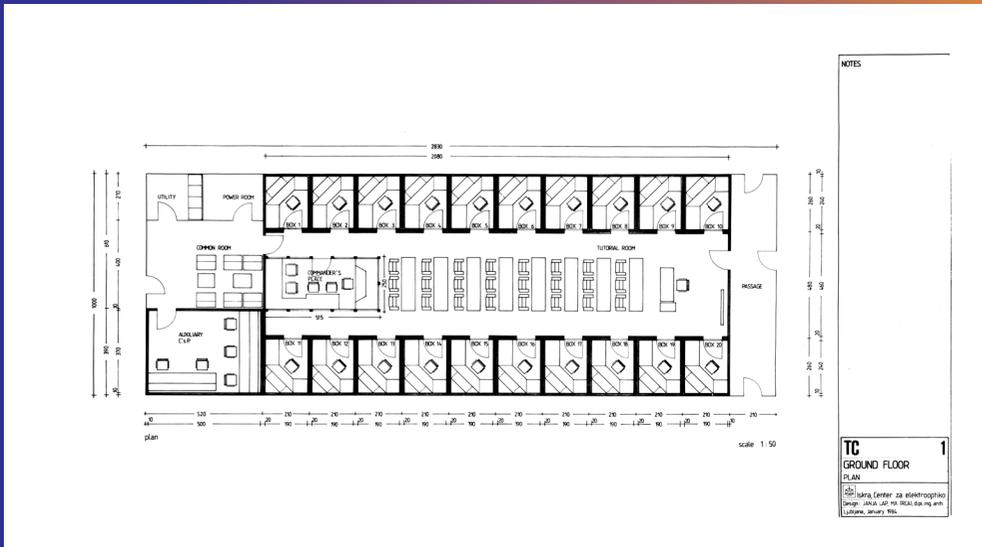
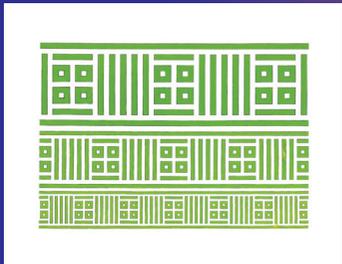
research in the field of designing for disasters.⁶³ In her text entitled *Disaster Housing in Yugoslavia*, published in 1977 in the New York magazine *Disasters, The International Journal of Disaster Studies and Practice*, she wrote that the main challenge in designing for disasters is that "All too often people design an item for a disaster without taking into account the variety of needs that different cultural groups may have. This is important if the aid is to be of value and facilitate the rebuilding process."⁶⁴ At the same time, by respecting cultural heritage and understanding diversity, Lap also followed the guidelines of the Non-Aligned Movement itself. While culture—as Piškur notes—was not a priority for the Non-Aligned Movement, the cultural policy of the Non-Aligned Movement strongly condemned cultural imperialism and promoted cultural diversity and culture hybridisation. Western (European) cultural heritage was to be understood in terms of "comparison"; it was to be woven into the living culture of colonised peoples, not merely repeated in new (political) circumstances. Strong emphasis was therefore put on "trans-national appreciation of cultural heritages" and a local approach. Here it makes sense to paraphrase Achille Mbembe, namely that it is not enough to merely create one's own forms and institutions of culture, etc., but that it is also necessary to translate, fragment and break up the realities and imaginaries originating elsewhere, and in the process to use these forms as an aid to our own development.⁶⁵

The above is also evident in her design of the equipment for the Libyan Tank Crew Training Centre. The preserved blueprints specify the basic furnishings of the interior with seating for 55 people. The plan also shows the rational arrangement of desks, club tables and seats in the main hall (the lecture hall) and in the smaller separate rooms. There are 20 separate rooms intended for individual work and study; one room served as the office of the Centre's Chief Officer, two were service rooms and one was used as a lounge. Other than the blueprint, Lap's estate only includes one more artifact—a single club table, low and stable, of massive and relatively heavy construction. The slats on the table surface are glued together in a pattern derived from the typical Greek meander.

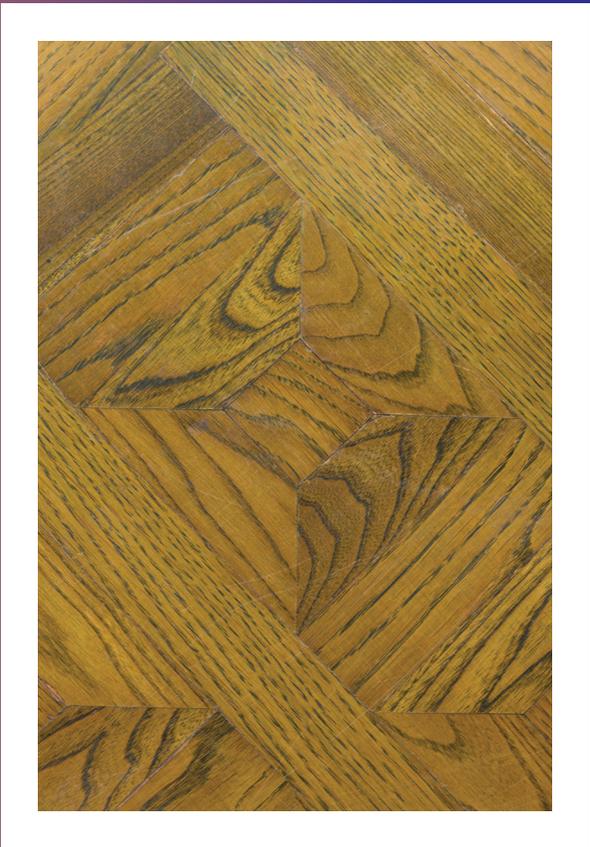
63 In addition to her research in the field of hospital design and improving the quality of meals for the most vulnerable segments of the population, Lap also spent two decades meticulously researching the field of design in times of crisis (from wars to earthquakes). She thoughtfully linked the topic to Slovenian partisan hospitals (focusing on the Franja and Jelendol hospitals) and made comparisons of different instances of disaster response. Her research always emphasised the importance and necessity of understanding vernacular design and architecture.

64 Lap, *Disaster Housing in Yugoslavia*, p. 61.

65 Piškur, *Južna ozvezdja*, p. 15.



Janja Lap, plans for the Tank Crew Training Centre, Libya, 1984, Iskra Elektrooptika. Courtesy of Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana.



Janja Lap, model club table for the Tank Crew Training Centre, Libya, 1984, Iskra Elektrooptika, photo: Aleš Rosa. Courtesy of Museum of Architecture and Design, Ljubljana.

The assumption, in light of the designer's fondness for ancient cultures, is that she sought inspiration in Antiquity, when Cyrenaica—Libya's north-eastern region—was a Greek colony. The wood stain colour choice was green—unsurprising, considering this was the Islamic world. The ornamentation, discreetly integrated into the table surface, and the choice of the table colour are the only culturally specific details, skilfully woven by the designer into a rational and purposefully designed object. While the choice of wood for the furniture was not informed by an understanding of local goods, it was logical, as the centre's design process was carried out in cooperation with the Slovenian industry that furnished the buildings.

Records of her work in Iraq can be found in the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia.⁶⁶ They tell us that in the winter semester of 1989/1990 she spent six months in Mosul, teaching Interior and Industrial Design at the School of Architecture of the University of Mosul. Fragmentary anecdotes from this period are also preserved in the report she wrote after her return, which was broadcast on Ars, the 3rd station of Radio Slovenia, in 1993. In the radio programme entitled *Spomini, pisma in potopisi* [Memories, Letters and Travogues] she recounts that during her stay, she was thrilled with working with the students, the well-equipped lecture theatres and the remarkable history, which she studied rigorously every week on her days off. At the same time, her report makes it clear that she did not let the historical beauty blind her to the critical perception of Iraqis' degrading treatment of women, the Kurds and foreigners, as well as the exploitation of foreign experts that she witnessed. Despite that, she managed to break the ice and build mutual trust with the students, as she sensed their hunger for knowledge from a part of the world that they otherwise found largely inaccessible at the time.

This last thought reaffirms the strength potential of meetings that go beyond the national perspective and that can result not only in the sharing of knowledge but also in the creation of opportunities for the generation of new knowledge and experience that transcends political ideologies. In this, both Janja Lap and Saša J. Mächtig were without rival.



66 SI AS 1140, box 20/468, ZAMTES Ljubljana – Iraq: Engagement by University Lecturers – Janja Lap, 1989.

Shaping Space and Time

Our chosen examples illustrate how Slovenian (and Yugoslav) designers, in accordance with the Yugoslav social order, actively worked to introduce into the international space the ideas of decentralisation and the necessity of emancipation to draw attention to voices from the so-called periphery of design. They focused on understanding and developing a holistic approach in the broader cultural, social and geographical context. They introduced discourse on decolonisation into and via their work in design, as well as the possibility of designing new approaches for addressing overlooked and non-aligned cultural elements in design. The main emphasis was on understanding the significance and role of active participation both in the design profession and in the community, as well as its role in society in general.

Both examples, however, also serve to illustrate the difference mentioned at the beginning of this text. Whereas the engagement of Slovenian experts in the Global South was (usually) welcome, establishing a voice in the Global North actually required confrontation. There had to be an attempt to silence, or as Rok Benčin would put it, there had to be “an attempt to usurp the privileges of thinking and creating”.⁶⁷ In response to the event, the Yugoslav designers, in a clear critique that exposed the weakness of the international organisation, showed that privileges are not the property of the self-appointed few, but are inherently universal. And it is at this point that we can detect the rudiments of emancipation, which, according to Benčin, “requires us to break up the consensus and introduce a confrontation that exposes seemingly insurmountable social divisions”.⁶⁸ Jacques Rancière wrote that emancipatory politics “depend on the multiplication of those operations of subjectivation that invent the worlds of community as worlds of disagreement”.⁶⁹ This is exactly what Mächtig and his colleagues managed to achieve as part of the of the Working Group on the Future and Structure of the ICSID. They succeeded in pointing to the seemingly insurmountable social divisions between the Global North and the Global South, and then, by introducing polycentricity and an understanding of the regional approach, to link these into new worlds of community with the possibility of forming their own voice in the global community. They also gained recognition from an international organisation that the world is a community of plural and equal voices, where the voice of the periphery is not to be

ignored, but entrusted with self-organisation and given the opportunity for cooperation. In doing so—if what has been described is put into actual practice—we all gain.

The examples provided therefore show that even a voice from what is seen as the periphery, from a different everyday life—a voice like the Yugoslav one, shaped by non-alignment and socialist self-management—can, through practical experience, influence the wider international community. Shaping space and time. However, the selected examples also show that voices from the periphery, that is to say, voices from countries with systems considered objectionable by the international community, or as unorthodox experiments, are quickly forgotten by history and design theory. It thus undoubtedly falls on all of us who draw on this heritage to keep reminding the world of this, albeit still from the periphery. It needs pointing out that a plurality of voices in the design community is not something to be feared;⁷⁰ that what Western authors keep telling us in their current books—how to participate, how to co-create, how to give voice to carriers of capability—is something that needs to be actually practiced in earnest in the context of writing design history and theory.

67 Benčin, *Med mimesis in aisthesis*, p. 214.

68 *Ibid.*, p. 218.

69 Rancière, *Nerazumevanje*, p. 75.

70 Petra Černe Oven and Marija Nabernik emphatically assert the opposite: we need to be able “to effectively describe the actual situation and trigger changes that are necessary at all levels of society”. *Development of Scientific Illustration*, p. 41.

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Yugoslavia and the principles of scientific and cultural exchange among the non-aligned Countries

In Yugoslav foreign policy, the Non-Aligned Movement had first and foremost a political and, to a somewhat lesser extent, economic connotation, with cultural connotations far less prominent. Likewise, when emphasising cooperation with the Third World, the developing countries or the non-aligned countries, the leading Yugoslav politicians would typically highlight political issues, while cultural issues remained on the sidelines, struggling to make their way out of administrative frameworks into real life.¹ It was not until the 4th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Algiers from 5 to 10 September 1973, that cultural issues were given significant consideration at the highest levels. The declaration of the conference stressed the need for eliminating “the harmful consequences

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¹ More on that in: Gabrič, *Kulturno in znanstveno sodelovanje nevrščenih* [Cultural and scientific cooperation of among the Non-Aligned countries]; Ramšak, *Nevrščenost, jugoslovanska diplomacija in ustvarjanje transkulturnih vezi z Afriko* [Non-Alignment, Yugoslav Diplomacy and the Establishment of Transcultural Links with Africa].

of the colonial era" and called for "the preservation of [...] national culture and traditions." The liberated peoples are to defend from "cultural alienation and the imported civilization imposed by imperialism and colonialism", which should be countered by "repersonalization and by constant and determined recourse to the country's own social and cultural values which define it as a sovereign people, master of its own resources".²

Reiteration of similar conclusions at subsequent conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement and the lack of agreement at ministerial level meetings serve as evidence that the ideas enshrined in the political declarations were having a hard time finding fertile ground for the development of more authentic connections.³ Common ground was, in any case, more readily found in the area of scientific and technological cooperation, which often represented the logical continuation of the strengthening of economic cooperation. In the cultural-artistic sphere in the narrower sense, the difficulties in establishing genuine cultural cooperation were far greater. Beginning with the second half of the 1970s, Yugoslavia's position was that, much like in politics and economics, the non-aligned and developing countries should coordinate the new principles of international cooperation in the fields of education, science and culture "to establish a common front in the international organisations, especially in UNESCO".⁴

It was only after the 6th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement in Havana in 1979 that calls for scientific, technical and cultural cooperation became more explicit. The agreements of the 1980s, the last decade of Yugoslavia's existence, when it was mired in a deep economic crisis, were therefore in many ways limited in scope. Even so, they certainly articulated the Third World's initiatives and aspirations towards forging closer links in these areas. When the last Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement during Yugoslavia's existence took place, which was held in Belgrade in early September 1989, the country had already been embroiled in major internal political conflicts. The following years saw the collapse of the country that hosted both the first and—at the time—the most recent NAM conference, and with this, the story of scientific, technical and cultural cooperation between Slovenia—in the form of Yugoslavia—and the non-aligned countries as it had emerged in the context of the movement came to an end.

2 Osolnik, *Jugoslavija v gibanju neuvrščenih*, p. 43.

3 SI AS 1149, t. e. 107, a. e. 1539/7, Medjusobna saradnja nesvrstanih i zemalja u razvoju u oblasti obrazovanja i kulture, p. 1.

4 Ibid., p. 2.

As one of the leaders of the Third World and the Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslavia encouraged the signing of intergovernmental agreements on scientific, technical and cultural cooperation. When dealing with those less developed countries that lacked democratic traditions, such agreements presented fewer problems. By contrast, representatives of developed Western democracies often pointed out that the state cannot dictate the content of scientific and cultural institutions' work programmes. As a result, some agreements ended up becoming more abstract, containing fewer specifics. In its report for 1980, the Institute for International Scientific, Technical, Educational and Cultural Cooperation of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (ZAMTES) described its activities as taking place within a framework defined by "a number of documents adopted in recent years at international conferences, such as the Summits of the Non-Aligned Movement in Colombo and Havana and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, as well as by the meetings of the group of 77 developing countries, or in the framework of the United Nations".⁵ That the conferences of the Non-Aligned were listed first was a clear indication of priorities. That said, even in these frameworks, the Yugoslav, and by extension Slovenian, policy was quite selective:

*Efforts to develop closer co-operation with individual developing countries that were at higher stages of development, as well as with oil-exporting countries, manifested in initiatives taken by Slovenia together with the other republics and the two provinces in terms of more complex arrangements at the expense of these countries, in particular for co-operation with Libya, Algeria, Iraq, Nigeria, Mexico and China.*⁶

In the cases of countries that could not offer oil or something similarly attractive to Yugoslavia in return, there was a considerable gap between aspirations and their translation into serious proposals. Yugoslavia, a country more economically developed than most other non-aligned members, often ended up torn between the desire to obtain "free technical assistance on the one hand, and the actual, limited capabilities on our part, especially in light of the limited financial resources, on the other hand".⁷

The proposal for the formulation of a more detailed strategy in the fields of education and culture, adopted at the conference in Havana in 1979, was developed further at the subsequent meetings

5 *Poročilo o znanstveno-tehničnem, prosvetnem in kulturnem sodelovanju [...] v letu 1980*, p. 15.

6 Ibid., p. 16.

7 Ibid., p. 18.

through the appointment of a working group whose objective was to draw up a proposal for a joint approach by the members of the movement in the aforementioned fields. The ten countries in the working group included Yugoslavia. Their first meeting was called at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris by Cuba, the presiding member of the Non-Aligned Movement, on the 8 and 9 October 1981. At the second meeting in January 1982 in Paris, they elected to discuss the draft action programme at the meeting of experts and high-ranking national representatives for the fields of education and culture that was hosted by Cuba between 26 and 20 April 1982 in its capital Havana. Yugoslavia's starting point was a programme that had been approved by the Federal Executive Council in August 1980. Involved in its preparation, in addition to the competent state authorities, were the Federal Institute for International Scientific, Educational, Cultural, and Technical Cooperation and the Yugoslav National Commission for UNESCO.⁸ Another reason that Yugoslavia was given an important role in shaping the cultural and political positions of the Non-Aligned Movement was that Belgrade hosted the UNESCO General Assembly in September and October 1980, with a Yugoslav representative subsequently assuming the presidency of the UN for the next three years.

114 Yugoslavia's platform was thus to a large extent shaped by the cultural policy positions of the Non-Aligned Movement, who also hoped to secure more favourable positions in the drawing up of the UNESCO budget. At the UNESCO General Assembly in Belgrade, representatives of non-aligned and developing countries had already advocated certain common principles, including in particular the need to increase UNESCO's budget, the bulk of which would, in line with UNESCO's primary mission, be devoted to the educational, scientific and cultural development of less developed countries. Leaders in the Yugoslav Commission for UNESCO reported that representatives of developed countries were strongly opposed to increasing the organisation's budget and were striving to narrow UNESCO's focus on fewer tasks. They were, for example, not moved by the less developed countries pointing out that more than 90% of scientists were working in developed countries, where their scientific and technological achievements are subsequently retained, and are not willing to share the latest findings with the world.⁹

8 SI AS 1140, t. e. 107, a. e. 1539/1, Platforma za rad jugoslovenske delegacije na sastanku eksperata i visokih funkcionera za obrazovanje i kulturu nesvrstanih zemalja u Havanu od 26. do 30. IV 1982 godine, pp. 1–2.

9 Učešće Jugoslavije na XXI zasjedanju Generalne konferencije Uneska, pp. 436–437.

This was the international context in which the Non-Aligned attempted to develop a unified platform. A draft action programme was to be jointly endorsed at the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies in July and August of 1982 in Mexico City, Mexico. Yugoslavia proposed expanding the programme, so that in addition to the general principles, it would also include some concrete actions. Yugoslavia's own contribution was to take over the operation of the Josip Broz Tito Gallery of Art of the Non-Aligned Countries, which was established in Titograd (modern-day Podgorica) and was also due to be presented at the conference in Havana.¹⁰

The basic principles of the cultural policy action programme of the Non-Aligned Movement (and, by extension, of Yugoslavia) were that each country has its own cultural dimension, which defines its specifics in accordance with its economic, political, social and cultural characteristics. It should strive to preserve its cultural identity and thus demonstrate a break with the past by embracing cultural diversity and cultural pluralism as phenomena worthy of recognition in modern times. By acknowledging the equal worth and interdependence of different cultures, the need would arise to improve intercultural communication, and programmes of mutual cultural cooperation should accordingly be developed within the framework of UNESCO and other international organisations. In the draft action programme, the non-aligned countries highlighted their anti-colonial and anti-imperialist character, as well as their struggles against apartheid and racism, all forms of aggression and attempts at domination and hegemony. They pointed to the Declaration of Human Rights, which defines education and culture as a basic human right, and cited the high degree of illiteracy and the high number of children around the world who did not have access to education. Accordingly, the non-aligned countries supported UNESCO's actions to eradicate illiteracy and other UN actions in the field of education and culture.¹¹

The Non-Aligned Movement was to promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the non-aligned countries and developing countries. Cultural exchange between themselves would act as a kind of bulwark against the importation of cheap Western products that represented a channel for the spread of the "American way of life". In education, they were to foster mutual exchange, organise joint seminars and scientific conferences, and, most importantly, take care of the training of cadres for the least developed

10 SI AS 1140, t. e. 107, a.e. 1539/1, Platforma za rad jugoslovenske delegacije na sastanku eksperata i visokih funkcionera za obrazovanje i kulturu nesvrstanih zemalja u Havanu od 26. do 30. IV 1982 godine, pp. 1–5.

11 Ibid., pp. 6–10.

countries. Yugoslavia had by that time less of a need for concrete actions in the field of education, as it no longer had to contend with mass illiteracy, the introduction of primary education or education in general, having already solved the fundamental problems regarding the school system in the preceding decades.¹²

With respect to cultural cooperation, the members of the Non-Aligned Movement referred to the part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that affirms the right of everyone to participate in the cultural life of the community. They often referred to the right to one's own cultural identity, rejecting both attempts to establish domination through multinational industries and the stereotypical assessments ("exported" by the developed Western world) of cultural values. High on the list of priorities for the Non-Aligned were the finalisation of the decolonisation process by promoting restitution or the return of cultural property to the country of origin and combating the illicit trade in cultural property. In the area of exchange of experiences, they advocated cooperation at the inter-regional level among culturally related traditions, counting on UNESCO's assistance in this endeavour. Member States were to facilitate the training of indigenous cultural cadres; once again, this was something that Yugoslavia already had experience with, unlike many of the—until recently—less developed colonies. They were mainly referring to bilateral cooperation projects. News-sharing was also to be handled bilaterally, with a special role reserved for the Non Aligned Countries Documentation Centre (NAMDC) in Sri Lanka. In proposing concrete actions they limited themselves to those not requiring too much financial investment, such as book translations, guest appearances at festivals and fairs, and exchanging films, both fiction and documentary.¹³

Yugoslavia suggested that countries include in their agreements as many concrete actions as possible, in addition to general principles. Cooperation in the field of fine arts would, for example, be in the remit of the Gallery of Art of the Non-Aligned Countries in Titograd, and the possibility would be explored of setting up a joint translation and publishing association and organising a film festival for the non-aligned countries. Finally, Yugoslavia reiterated a principle that had been pervasive throughout the period of drafting the action programme for the cultural cooperation of non-aligned countries, namely that all actions should be coordinated within the UN system, in particular within the framework of the UNESCO programmes.¹⁴

12 Ibid., pp. 11–15.

13 Ibid., pp. 16–18.

14 Ibid., pp. 19–20.

The non-aligned countries' demands in the cultural, political and economic spheres introduced a number of new elements that went against the principles driving the cultural industries of the developed world. The repeated demands for funding for an increasing number of international educational, scientific and cultural programmes within the UNESCO framework, of course, boosted the flow of funds from the developed countries to the underdeveloped world in this area, as well. Repeated calls for the establishment of new evaluation criteria represented a rejection of the domination of the Western cultural canon and the developed world's preconceptions in which "high" culture is contrasted against the "folkloric" character of cultural goods from the less developed world, and of the cultural dominance of the Christian part of the world on the international scene. Another way that the developed world maintained and extended its advantage was through new scientific advances, which it was unwilling to share freely for the purposes of accelerating the development of less developed and developing countries. An even more delicate matter was the demand for restitution—this was about the cultural artefacts of the less developed countries that had in the past been expropriated by the developed countries or former colonisers without regard for the needs and wishes of the locals. Returning cultural goods would entail diminishing the cultural institutions in the developed countries, which is why this issue is still a difficult one for their leaders to face today.

Scientific and cultural cooperation between Slovenia and the non-aligned countries

The actual practice of establishing contacts with members of the Non-Aligned Movement belied the declared principles of Yugoslav foreign policy. Scientific and technological cooperation, especially in terms of foreign students studying at Yugoslav universities, certainly played a greater role than cultural cooperation.¹⁵ The detailed annual report on Slovenia's international cooperation for 1982, which is when the Non-Aligned Movement's action plan on cultural cooperation was drawn up, yields some insight into what the scientific and cultural cooperation with the Non-Aligned Movement really looked like. The statistics only show trends, not an exact picture, as the non-aligned countries were not recorded as a separate category. Instead, the figures summarised from the tables refer to cooperation with developing countries in general. Slovenia hosted 328 scholarship holders from developing countries. Of those, 154 received scholarship from Yugoslavia, 35 held scholarships from

15 Strani državljani na studijama i usavršavanju u Jugoslaviji, pp. 247–250.

their countries of origin, and 139 held private scholarships. Roughly two-thirds of the scholarship holders were from African countries, followed by Arab (15%) and Asian (13%) countries, with a few from Latin America and Cyprus. The students' choices of study programmes were commended as suiting both their countries of origin and Slovenian companies in terms of establishing economic contacts with partners. 149 experts from developing countries came to Slovenia for study trips and training, as well as international scientific meetings, courses or seminars organised in cooperation with international organisations. On the other hand, there were also 136 Slovenian specialists who travelled to the developing countries for work, short-term missions, or UN missions, or to attend international scientific conferences. In Libya and Kuwait, Slovenian specialists helped to organise hospitals and medical services, while in Angola, there were experts from Splošna plovba Piran, who cooperated with the Angolan marine company and marine agency. Slovenian experts also assisted Sudan in the development of a marine company. In Guyana, within the framework of Inter-American Development Bank projects, experts from the Urban Planning Institute of SR Slovenia assisted the locals with project planning. In Cyprus and Ethiopia, Slovenian consultants provided assistance in business management; they also participated in the development of poultry farming in Yemen and Tunisia, fishing in Tanzania, mining in India, cement production in Algeria and mountain climbing in Nepal. Most of the projects represented the culmination of several years of cooperation, but the lack of funds forced the cancellation of some of the missions.¹⁶

In the cultural field, there were no major changes compared to previous years, and the assessment that cooperation with African countries was least developed was not new. Cooperation with Arab countries was equally modest, with a few Slovenian films screened at the Week of Yugoslav Film, while Slovenian institutions were, as usual, present at certain traditional events, such as the Cairo International Book Fair and the New Delhi World Book Fair, or at the Alexandria Biennale. Cooperation in the fine arts was somewhat more extensive, with an exhibition of works by France Slana organised in Syria under an intergovernmental agreement and Slovenian artists participating in the Fifth Triennale in New Delhi. Slovenia hosted an exhibition from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and, as usual, the International Festival of Sport and Tourist Films included several titles from the non-aligned countries. A few exhibitions and

musical exchanges with Cuba, Colombia and Ecuador did not end up improving the final assessment, which was that "cooperation with developing countries is unsatisfactory, especially in terms of individual exchanges, and in the field of culture we are yet to move beyond individual exhibitions and ensemble performances".¹⁷

Only a few Slovenian scientific and cultural institutions ended up intensively pursuing programmes of scientific, technical, educational and cultural cooperation with the Non-Aligned Movement member countries. Among them were the two Slovenian universities of Ljubljana and Maribor, both of which hosted many students from the non-aligned countries and whose professors often helped in the development of particular disciplines in those countries. Specific to Slovenia within Yugoslavia was the long-term cooperation of the Alpine Association with Nepal, where they conducted courses and training for mountain guides. In terms of exposing people to literature from less developed countries, the Pomurska Publishing House from Murska Sobota and its book collection *Mostovi* (Bridges) were highlighted. Among the dozens of foreign authors invited to the International Writers' Meeting in Bled, effort was made to include representatives from less developed or non-aligned countries. Accordingly, the invitees in 1982 included two Cypriots. While guest performances by Slovenian musicians or theatre artists in developing countries were a rarity, Slovenia did host a few foreign individual artists or ensembles every year. In 1982, visitors to Slovenia had the opportunity to see performances of Indian theatre (in Ljubljana, Maribor and Bled) and Nepalese theatre (in Ljubljana and Maribor), as well as Cuban Ballet and Indian shadow puppet theatre (in Ljubljana). Slovenian audiences were also treated to performances by folklore groups from Guinea and Ghana. Slovenian film production was more prominently represented in the less developed world than music and theatre. In 1982, per intergovernmental agreements, screenings of Yugoslav films were organised in eleven foreign countries, which included no less than five NAM member countries, and in each of them, at least one Slovenian film was screened. Less was happening in the reverse direction, as films from countries where cinema was still in its infancy were quite rare. In terms of exhibitions and museum activities, the Museum of Non-European Cultures in Goričane had a marked focus on Third-World cultures. Each year, it organised several ethnographic exhibitions that introduced Slovenians to previously unfamiliar cultural environments (in 1982, for example, exhibitions on the art of the DPR of Korea and Ecuador were organised). Participation of artists

16 Poročilo o znanstveno-tehničnem, prosvetnem in kulturnem sodelovanju [...] v letu 1982, pp. 25–29.

17 Ibid., p. 48.

from the Third World was also a consideration in the preparation of the International Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana and the international sculpture symposium *Forma viva* in Kostanjevica na Krki, where six artists were hosted in 1982, including one each from India and Venezuela (although at the time, the latter had not progressed beyond the status of observer in the Movement).

In searching for the reasons for such a modest record of cultural cooperation with non-aligned countries, ZAMTES staff noted the following:

Naturally, the implementation and planning of this cooperation has been beset by a number of objective problems, and organisational difficulties have accompanied the realisation of individual actions. We are insufficiently informed about the cultural and other achievements in these countries, and about their education policies.

Organising art and other exhibitions, music tours and other events in these countries is accompanied by problems involving transport and communications, inadequate venues, difficult climatic conditions and long distances, all of which lead to high costs. Also evident is a necessity for greater involvement of our diplomatic, consular and other missions in these countries in the planning and realisation of the projects.¹⁸

Analysts at ZAMTES did not delve into the more subjective circumstances, such as the degree of interest in cooperation with these countries, or how much improvement could be expected in terms of cultural cooperation if at least some of the objective barriers that had hindered deeper cultural cooperation with third world countries were removed. Even in the simplest form of cooperation—the translation of books—publishers were faced with a shortage of translators for languages of small nations. In the case of art exhibitions, it was certainly not encouraging for further networking that many of the works exhibited abroad were found to be kept in inappropriate conditions, returning damaged or even destroyed.¹⁹ That said, the Western-art-based standards for evaluating works of art had not been shaken off in the preparation of exhibitions in Slovenia, with the consequence that works from the non-aligned countries were often given a subordinate position compared to works from the Western world.²⁰ Even in film, where cooperation was better developed, the Yugoslavian organisers of cooperation found that the results after several years of effort fell short of expecta-

18 Ibid., pp. 48–49.

19 Merhar, *Mednarodno kulturno sodelovanje*, p. 55.

20 For more see: Piškur and Merhar, *Tretji svet*, p. 165.

tions, partly due to the fact that in the expansion of cinema in the underserved African world they faced competition from the world's most powerful cinematic industries, which were able to offer more financially favourable conditions.²¹

A model example - the publishing project of Pomurska založba

Yugoslavia's foreign policy orientation gave rise to numerous translations, exhibitions, expert exchanges and the establishment of co-operations with the resulting expansion of horizons, despite the numerous factors constraining cultural cooperation. The Non-Aligned Movement member countries were diverse in terms of culture, language, religion and level of development, and for the majority of the population, these distant countries were completely unknown. Another factor that often influenced the (in)ability to cooperate was geographical distance, with the steep financial requirements associated with hosting larger ensembles or exhibitions a constant impediment to familiarisation. The 1980 ZAMTES annual report stated that "the policy of educational and cultural cooperation of the SR of Slovenia with developing countries has not yet been sufficiently defined. It needs to be taken into account that developing countries need primarily educational experts, scientists and technology, as well as assistance in the formation of their cultural institutions." They added that "the least amount of cooperation has been with African countries" and that cultural cooperation has seen most development "mainly in the field of fine arts [...] and literary activity".²²

In the latter case—literary cooperation involving translations of foreign works into the languages of the Yugoslavian nations—Yugoslav publishing houses extended their translation repertoire from the countries of the West and East to the Third World countries, with a particular focus at that time being the countries of Latin America. This was as early as the 1950s, before the establishment of the Non-Aligned Movement. This was an easier endeavour, of course, as translating books written in Spanish by Latin American authors was not as difficult as translating books by writers from some of the other countries of the Non-Aligned Movement. In the four decades after the war (1945–1985), 89% of all foreign works published in Yugoslavia were translated from five languages (English, French, Russian, German and Spanish). There simply weren't enough translators available to enable learning about the literature of smaller nations, especially non-European ones. The reading

21 Vučetić, *Uspostavljanje jugoslovenske filmske saradnje sa Afrikom*, pp. 77–79.

22 *Poročilo o znanstveno-tehničnem, prosvetnem in kulturnem sodelovanju [...] v letu 1980*, p. 33.

repertoire did start expanding beyond the major literary traditions that the regular reader would have been familiar with, but in terms of literature from countries who were members of the Non-Aligned Movement, this was limited to individual works. The best opportunity to explore previously lesser-known literary horizons was offered by the numerous anthologies. In terms of countries with significant influence on the Non-Aligned Movement, Yugoslav publishers had, since the second half of the 1950s, been the most receptive to translations of Indian literature.²³

In the aforementioned ZAMTES report from 1982, as well as in several other places, a publishing project undertaken by Pomurska založba from Murska Sobota has been highlighted as an example of good practice. Established in 1954, Pomurska založba was not a major publishing house. It took on the challenge, however, differentiating itself by paying particular attention to the translation of literature from the Third World. In 1976, it expanded its core tasks of publishing literary works by authors from north-eastern Slovenia and cultural mediation between Slovenian and Hungarian culture by introducing the collection *Mostovi* (Bridges). It was edited by the translator Jože Hradil, author of several Hungarian–Slovenian dictionaries. In the first year, the collection still adhered to the core mission of the publishing house, publishing a translation of Ivan Cankar’s work into Hungarian and a translation of the Hungarian poet Zoltán Csuka into Slovene. But when he conceived the collection, the editor Jože Hradil had a broader view in mind from the start, writing: “The direct impetus was, of course, the realisation that the great efforts of the Yugoslav foreign policy—offering the right hand to all the nations of the world who can abide a comradely, egalitarian dialogue—need to be supported and complemented in publishing as well.” Every year, the new book collection was to publish six translated works from literary traditions that, due to cultural cooperation traditionally being oriented towards larger nations, had not yet received the attention of Slovene publishing houses. “These are nations suffering from the same fate as Slovenians, namely that they cannot present themselves in other linguistic guises due to language and other barriers”, Hradil said, subsequently explaining where the editor’s focus was: “Understandably, works from the non-aligned countries have become one of the main components of the collection.”²⁴

In its second year, the *Mostovi* collection already featured translations from literatures less familiar to Slovenian readers. The

six translated works for the 1977 year included two by authors from Non-Aligned member countries (Cuba, Nigeria) and one that originated from an observer country (Mexico). Printed in enviable runs of several thousand copies, the books met with critical and popular acclaim, going a long way to changing people’s views of an unfamiliar world. Alejo Carpentier, a Cuban writer already well known in the Western world, was now available to Slovenian readers for the first time with a translation of his novel *Explosion in a Cathedral*. Through a chronicle of a revolutionary who had brought the ideas of the French Revolution to the Caribbean, it introduced the reader to the unfamiliar setting of the Antilles, and descriptions of the gains and wrong turns of the revolution offered an opportunity to reflect on the temptations faced by the new political elite. *Arrow of God* was the second work by the Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe to be translated into Slovenian—a translation of his debut novel *Things Fall Apart* was published in 1964 by the publishing house Obzorja. Achebe’s second novel once again focuses on the confrontation between a traditional African village and Western civilisation, and the conflict between the older generation, portrayed through the character of a tribal leader opposed to innovations, and the younger generation, which includes one of his sons, who realises the need for changes in their local environment. On the one hand, there is the desire to be faithful to tradition and old patterns; on the other, the desire to break free—not only from colonial dependence, but also from the self-imposed shackles of rejecting modernity in the name of tradition. In the text accompanying the release, the publishing house described Achebe as representing “the true image of his homeland, unlike the one we have been accustomed to, which was of an exotic world as mediated by interpreters”.²⁵ This is also how it was received by the critics, who also took into account the successes that the authors had already achieved with translations into the languages of major nations. On the occasion of the first translations into Slovene, France Forstnerič, the cultural section correspondent for the main Slovenian daily newspaper *Delo*, wrote that “*Mostovi* represent more than just a moral cultural debt to the Third World and to minor, lesser-known literary traditions; the works are for the most part modern and artistically interesting, offering a glimpse into cultures little known to us.”²⁶

In 1978, the six works in the collection once again included two novels from NAM member countries, written by authors from Mali and Zaire, and one from an observer country, Uruguay. 1979

23 Prevodi strane književnosti u Jugoslaviji, pp. 460–466.

24 Hradil, *Od prve knjige do desetih zbirk Pomurske založbe*, p. 15.

25 *Knjiga*, 1977, No 12, p. 578, Chinua Achebe, *Božja puščica*.

26 Forstnerič, *Svet in domačija*, p. 7.

brought translations of Malawian and Indonesian novelists and notably—from the perspective of familiarisation of readers with the otherness of Africa—the translation of the South African writer and anti-apartheid activist Nadine Gordimer, which was also the first Slovenian translation of a book by the eventual winner of the 1991 Nobel Prize for Literature. The trend of publishing translations by writers from the Third World or the non-aligned countries was maintained—indeed, strengthened—and in 1982, five out of the six novels were from non-aligned countries: Algeria, Colombia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Egypt. The books featured a foreword through which Slovenian readers could learn about the author, the country's literary tradition and the social changes that were often the subject of the novels, i.e. the consequences of colonialism, the changes after gaining independence and the tragic fate of people on the precipice between the primordial past on the one hand, and the challenges of the modern times on the other. Authors from other countries were also selected in line with the intent of presenting the issues of disadvantaged people and ethnic groups lacking equal rights within their countries. In addition to the aforementioned Gordimer, for example, the collection included novels by a Catalan author, as well as the first Maori writer. After the first few years of the collection, its editor and the editor-in-chief of the Pomurska Publishing House, Jože Hradil, pointed out proudly that “it frequently represented the first literary encounter with one of these countries, or the first translation into Slovene”.²⁷

Throughout the 1980s, the *Mostovi* collection continued enriching Slovenian bookshelves with around six works of lesser-known literature every year. Published in it were translations of novels by writers from Cuba, Cameroon, Peru, Senegal, Bangladesh, Benin, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Nicaragua, etc. Between 1977 and 1990, 65 translations in total of novels by writers from literary horizons that had previously been poorly known or almost unknown to Slovenes were published in the collection, 27 of them from NAM member countries; adding writers from observer countries and minority ethnic groups in larger countries, we exceed more than half of the works in the collection.²⁸ The changing cultural policy and the reversal in Slovenia's foreign policy also brought major changes both in publishing policy and Slovenian publishing as a whole. First, the *Mostovi* collection dried up in 1990; within a few years, the Pomurska publishing house was privatised and ended up in bankruptcy proceedings.

27 Hradil, *Od prve knjige do desetih zbirk Pomurske založbe*, p. 15

28 Data are summarised by individual lists in: Brumen, *Bibliografija Pomurske založbe: 1954–1978*, p. 172 and Brumen, *Bibliografija Pomurske založbe: 1979–1988 in 1989–1993*, pp. 82–84 and 169–170.

The *Mostovi* collection has been repeatedly cited as an example of good cultural cooperation with the less developed world. It was certainly a remarkable project within the context of Slovenian publishing. Further deepening of contacts was hampered not only by the lesser willingness of publishing houses in Yugoslavia to take on financially risky projects at a time of economic crisis, but also by the broader cultural and political problems faced by the less developed world. In April 1980, a book exhibition opened in Zagreb that featured publishers from some Sub-Saharan African countries, namely Senegal, Cameroon and Kenya. It showed the legacy of colonial times in publishing, which was only slowly dying. It was only in recent decades that literacy had started to expand, and with it the need for books. Even so, books in the languages of the former colonial powers, French, English and Spanish, still dominated, with the indigenous African languages struggling to gain a foothold. A comparative analysis by UNESCO shows that between 1955 and 1976, the number of book titles published more than doubled worldwide and in the developing countries, more than tripled in Africa as a whole, and more than quintupled in the Sub-Saharan Africa. The very low starting point of the developing countries, however, clearly showed that the gap between the developed countries and the underdeveloped Africa was also evident in the cultural field, with 565 books per million inhabitants published in Europe in 1976 and only 27 in Sub-Saharan Africa. The distribution of books in the former colonies was still dominated by multinational publishing houses, and it was difficult for local publishers and retailers to make a name for themselves in the face of such competition and the flood of imported literature.²⁹

Yugoslavia's efforts to boost the numbers of translations from friendly countries were also demonstrated by the exhibition “Non-Alignment and the Non-Aligned Countries in the Publishing Activity of Yugoslavia”, which was organised in 1978 as part of the International Belgrade Book Fair, and was subsequently hosted in Cairo, where roughly 600 works were presented. Foreign language translation figures for the late 1970s still show a marked dominance of the world's major languages. Arabic and the languages of the Indian subcontinent accounted for the largest share of translations from the languages of non-aligned countries.³⁰ As this part of the world and culture—stretching from the Middle East to South-East Asia—was comparatively more familiar to Slovenians than the African world, it was the books by authors from Sub-Saharan Africa

29 Potokar, *Knjiga v Afriki* [Books in Africa], pp. 271–272.

30 Prosvetno-kulturna saradnja Jugoslavije p. 122.

that were the biggest novelties. It is estimated that in the three decades after the founding of the Non-Aligned Movement, some 40 books received Slovenian translations, with the collection *Mostovi* being particularly noteworthy, having published 12 titles from this part of the world.³¹ Judging by the reports of the federal or national institute for scientific, technological and cultural cooperation, book publishing houses, in this case Pomurska, needed to show considerable initiative, as the records regarding cooperation in the fields of visual, musical, theatrical and film art are much more detailed, suggesting that these fields received much more generous support. By introducing readers to a foreign, unknown world, however, books influenced the thinking of Slovenes in many ways. Chinua Achebe's writings were intended to influence and change the negative presentation of Africans.³² He was certainly not an exception, however. Through other similar works, stories told through the eyes of the natives—quite different, naturally, from the narratives of the colonisers—found their way onto Slovenian bookshelves.

31 Gacoin-Marks, Uvodnik v tematski sklop "Podsaharska Afrika", p. 8.

32 For more see: Babnik, *Roman Chinua Achebe Razpad kot odgovor na negativno prezentacijo Afričanov*.

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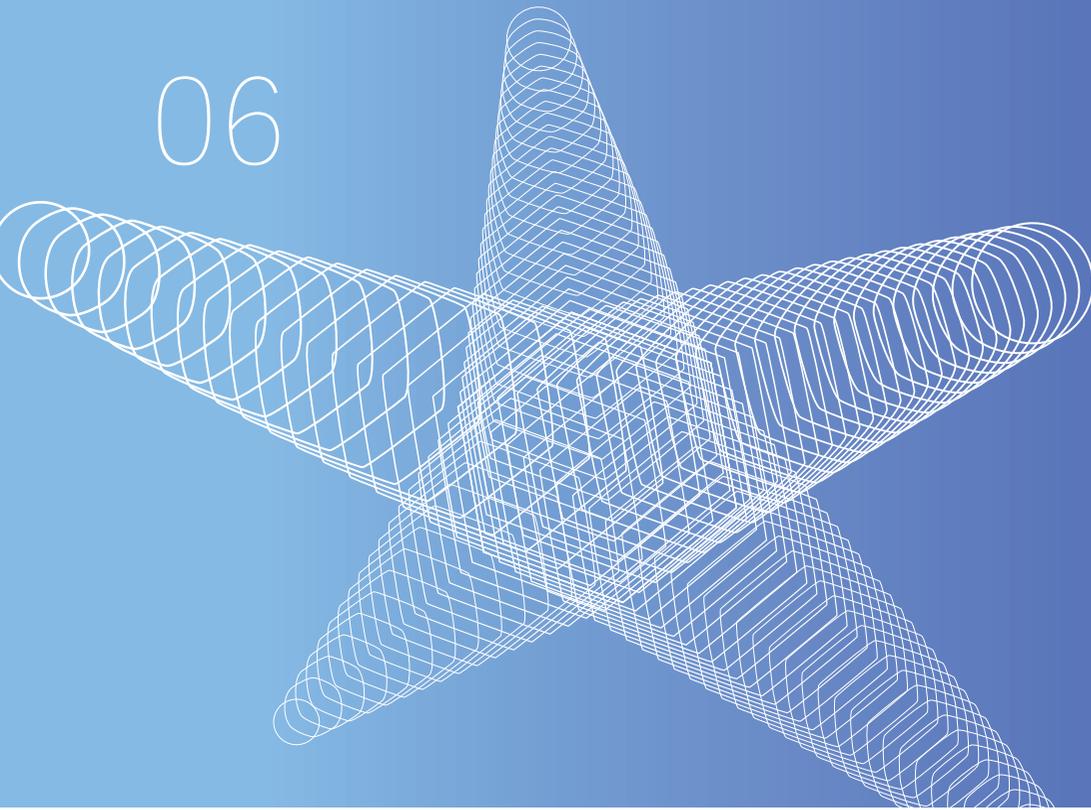
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128 *Knjiga*, Slovenian publishers' newsletter, 1978–1982.

06



Mitja Velikonja

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FRIENDSHIP

Analysis of artworks, ethnological and applied arts gifts from non-aligned countries to the President of SFRY, Josip Broz

Part I and II

**Part 1:
Analysis of artworks as gifts from non-aligned
countries to the President of SFRY, Josip Broz**

We must give back more than we have received.

Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 136

The act of gifting is one of the fundamental conventions on both an individual and a social level: from the most personal sphere to international politics, where giving presents is part of diplomatic protocol. The gift establishes a social relationship between its giver and its receiver, underlines their symbolic and actual position, which is based on mutual respect and honour, and promotes committing to cooperation. In my part of the research titled *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics*, I deal with the visual language of artworks presented to the Yugoslav President Josip Broz by the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, which are stored in the repositories of the Museum of

* The article is a result of the research project J7-2606, *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics*, which is financed by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS).

Yugoslavia in Belgrade.¹ Tito's diplomatic activity was, as the Belgrade curator Aleksandra Momčilović Jovanović notes, "so prolific that a monography could be written to describe relations between Yugoslavia and each specific country".² In order to strengthen the role of his country as one of the founding members of the Movement, Tito "spent an enormous amount of time making contacts with statesmen who—in the protocol exchange of gifts at the highest state level—gave him objects of different purposes, times, and places of origin that carry rich layers of meaning".³

Initiatives to explore this relatively narrow and less known aspect of this cultural history have come from several quarters: first, due to the growing interest in cultural and artistic exchanges between Yugoslavia and the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, which, in recent years, has become prominent in the fields of art and science;⁴ second, because of my previous research on Yugonostalgia, "Titostalgia" and nostalgia for socialism in general;⁵ and third, because of my frequent and fruitful collaboration with the staff of the Belgrade-based museum, which has been ongoing for more than fifteen years.

The Movement, which was based on the "five principles of peaceful coexistence" (mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty; non-aggression; non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries; equality and mutual benefit; peaceful coexistence), promoted and strengthened, first and foremost, the political and economic ties between the majority of the recently decolonised countries as well as their search for a *third way*⁶ in the

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1 Occasionally, some of these exhibits are lent and included in various exhibition arrangements; for example, in September 2021 they were part of the exhibition *Prometheans of the New Century*, which focused on cooperation with India.

2 Momčilović Jovanović, Darovi Titu, p. 67.

3 Panić, Yugoslavia and India, p. 116.

4 To mention just a few examples of more recent exhibitions on this subject: *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned* (Museum of Contemporary Art Metelkova, Ljubljana, 2019), *Southern Constellations: The Poetics of the Non-Aligned – It is not Enough to Write a Revolutionary Poem* ("Drugo more" gallery, Rijeka, 2021), which is a similar exhibition by the same curator but with an extended title, and the already mentioned exhibition *Prometheans of the New Century*, which was arranged to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement (Museum of Yugoslavia, Belgrade, 2021, curated by Ana Panić and Jovana Nedeljković). The historical and political studies on which I relied in particular were conducted by Jakovina (*Treća strana Hladnog rata, Dinkel (The Non-Aligned Movement)*) and Stubbs (*Socialist Yugoslavia and the Antinomies of the Non-Aligned Movement and The Emancipatory Afterlives of Non-Aligned Internationalism*).

5 *Titostalgia – A Study of Nostalgia for Josip Broz. Lost in Transition: Nostalgia for Socialism in Post-Socialist Countries. Rock'n'Retro – New Yugoslavism in Contemporary Popular Music in Slovenia. The Past with a Future: The Emancipatory Potential of Yugonostalgia*.

6 Ideological discourse is marked in italics throughout the text.



Edsel Moscoso (Philippines), *Talipapa (Market Scene)*, 1979
 Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, collection "4 May", inv. no. 470

tense Cold War constellation of powers between the West and the East, between the American and the Soviet blocs. Although cultural, artistic and scientific cooperation between non-aligned countries was overshadowed by political and economic cooperation,⁷ it was vibrant and diversified, with Yugoslavia playing a significant role.⁸ This fact is also demonstrated in a unique way by the artworks presented as gifts to the Yugoslav president.

Before the start of empirical work, I asked myself the following basic and open-ended question with a focus on cultural aspects: What are these gifts conveying, what ideological messages are encoded in their content, how do they operate – to use Stuart Hall's phrase – "in discursive chains, in clusters, in sematic fields, in discursive formations",⁹ what are their "maps of meaning"? How do they represent the gift-giving countries? Do these works share any common characteristics despite the extraordinary diversity of creative techniques, formats, genres, motifs, provenance, authorship, time of creation and mode of gift presentation? Instead of approaching this extremely interesting topic from a classical perspective of art history, I adopt the cultural studies perspective, being more interested in the social and ideological connotations carried by the artworks' motifs than in their aesthetic dimensions: What do they reveal about the gift givers and the politics and culture of the Non-Aligned Movement in general? In short: I am interested in this type of cultural or artistic "texts" in their broader historical and political "context".

The collected artworks were analysed using the method of visual social semiology, which deals with "the ways in which the meanings of signs are made socially",¹⁰ as well as on the basis of Hall's theory of representation, defined as production of meaning through language,¹¹ and Mauss's concept of the gift as a material and spiritual bond that fosters friendship and cooperation between the giver and the recipient.¹² I connected these theoretical and methodological starting points building upon my own reflections

7 See, for example, Piškur, *Southern Constellations*, p. 15. The similarity with today's forms and dimensions of cooperation within the European Union, where political and economic issues once again take precedence over all others, is more than significant.

8 In this context, I will not approach the dimensions, potentials and limitations of Yugoslavia's cultural and artistic activities, conventions and programmes in relation to these countries; they are covered in articles by Merhar, *International Collaboration in Culture between Yugoslavia and the Countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and Cartography of SFR Yugoslavia's International Collaborations in Culture with Developing Countries*, with an accompanying map on p. 98.

9 Hall, *Kulturne študije 1983*, p. 169.

10 Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, p. 135.

11 Hall, *Delo reprezentacije*, p. 36.

12 Mauss, *Esej o daru in drugi spisi*.

on the representational function of the gift in diplomatic protocol. Due to the comprehensive nature of the topic, my analysis is divided into two independent parts, which only together form an integrated whole. In Part I of the present chapter I provide a brief description of the collection (of mostly paintings), develop the theoretical and methodological approaches and classify the collected artworks according to what they represent. Then I use the method of social semiology to analyse and interpret these artworks as gifts, i.e. no longer only in terms of their content. In Part II I apply the same theoretical and methodological approach to a much larger number of ethnological and applied arts gifts that Tito received from the representatives of the non-aligned countries. At the end I make comparisons between these two groups of gifts, pointing out notable similarities and significant differences.

Brief description of the collection

The collection of paintings, sculptures, drawings, etc. which is subject of this analysis has been made accessible to me through the kind cooperation of the curator of the Museum of Yugoslavia, Ana Panić, to whom I would like to express my sincere thanks. We met in January and July 2021; before, during and after that we also kept in touch via e-mail. At the beginning, she presented me with a clear and thoroughly prepared list of artworks in the collection, which she had compiled herself, and then led me through the museum's two carefully arranged repositories where these works are stored. In the first part of this chapter I refer to this list, the complete title of which is "Nesvrstani – likovna" (Non-Aligned – fine art). Related collections of gifts that Tito received from non-aligned countries are arranged in a similar way: the ethnographic collection "Nesvrstani – etnografska" (Non-Aligned – ethnographic; consisting of 278 items), the collection of applied arts objects "Nesvrstani – primenjena" (Non-Aligned – applied; 296 items) and the collection of decorative objects "Nesvrstani – volonteri" (Non-Aligned – volunteers; 579 items in total). Some of these gifts are featured on the Museum of Yugoslavia website (<https://www.muzej-jugoslavije.org/lista-ekspozicije/>), while Tito's photo library (<http://foto.mij.rs/site/galleries>) contains approximately 170,000 photographs.

My topic of interest was first limited to the fine art collection, for which I provide some basic information below. The list contains 43 artworks, of which four are missing (for unknown reasons). It provides the main information: author, title of the work, year of creation, artistic technique, dimensions, manner of acquisition and eventual remarks (and, of course, signature, inventory number and location in the collection). Unfortunately, not all data is available

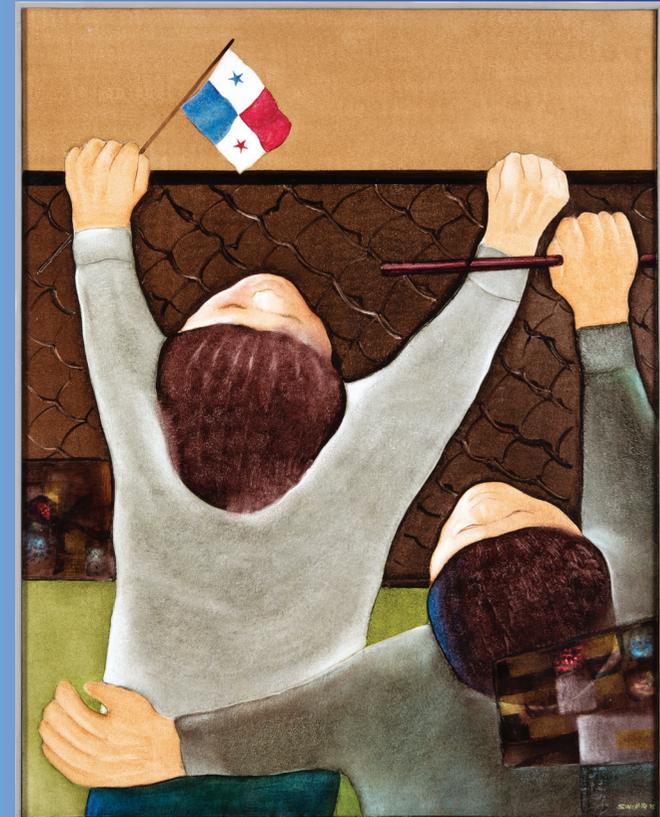
for some of the works. They originate from various members of the Non-Aligned Movement (and China as an observer): mostly from Asia, 23 in total (nine from India, three from Bangladesh, two each from Indonesia and Vietnam, in addition to the works from the Philippines, North Korea, Iraq, Pakistan and China), followed by Africa (Egypt, Algeria, Congo, Tunisia, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia and Ghana) and the Americas (two each from Panama and Cuba, followed by Chile, Bolivia and Guyana). The provenance of two of the works is unclear; moreover, due to the subject matter, the collection also includes the works *Founders of the Non-Aligned* by the Montenegrin-born, Croatian-based sculptor Stevan Luketić (1925–2002) and *Emperor Haile Selassie I* by Antun Augustinčić (1900–1979).¹³ Most of the paintings date back to the second decade of the Non-Aligned Movement (1971–1980; fifteen in total), followed by the first decade (1961–1970; nine in total). The date of creation is uncertain for ten paintings, while four were produced before 1961 and one after 1980. The President of Yugoslavia (and his office) received these gifts in various ways: during visits to the member countries (from hosts, i.e. political leaders, senior politicians or representatives of the visited cities, regions and institutions); during visits from political leaders of these countries to Yugoslavia; from member countries' embassies in Belgrade and, in some cases, directly from artists (often as a token of gratitude from those who had received their artistic training in Yugoslavia).¹⁴

The authorship of these works is also worth noting: fourteen of them are unsigned, i.e. the author is completely unknown; others are not well-known and consequently I found (almost) no useful information about them in scientific and specialist literature; others studied at Yugoslav art academies or even worked in Yugoslavia.¹⁵ A few, however, were very well-known and respected in their time and milieu, and were closely linked to the political regimes in their countries. Below are some examples. The award-winning and decorated Alfredo Sinclair (1914–2014) was a pioneer of abstract painting in Panama as well as founder of the Academy of Fine Arts, a lec-

13 It is interesting to note that following the invitation of the Ethiopian Emperor, he erected three very impressive monuments in Ethiopia: to the victims of Italian fascism (1955, as Tito's gift to the Ethiopian nation), to the Ethiopian partisans and to Ras Makonnen, the Emperor's father. The sculpture in the collection was probably created during Augustinčić's stay in Ethiopia, at the time when the first of the three monuments was being erected.

14 The exact register of individuals who presented gifts (politicians, diplomats and artists) is included in the list mentioned in the introductory part of the paper.

15 Especially artists from India (Vidya Bhushan, Animesh Nandi, Ghulam Jellani and Gangadhar Balkrishna Vad), but also from elsewhere; Carlos Fernandez, for example, came from Bolivia.



Alfredo Sinclair (Panama), *Grand Event*, 1975
Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1-2-332

turer and curator.¹⁶ The French-educated Faeq Hassan (1914–1992) earned the nickname “The Father of Contemporary Iraqi Art”, being the founder of several progressive art groups, who in his works brought together Iraqi heritage and traditional art, on the one hand, and experimental and abstract contemporary art on the other. The Indian Padmashree Singannachar Narasimha Swamy (1911–1983) was close friends with the most important political figures of the (post-)colonial era (Jawaharlal Nehru, Mahatma Gandhi, Lord Louis Mountbatten, etc.), who he portrayed in his works. Moreover, he also managed several art institutions and won multiple state awards. Augusto Fausto Rodrigues Trigo (1938) from Guinea-Bissau began his career as a painter of motifs from his own environment, and later, from the seventies onwards, established himself as a world-renowned comic book illustrator.

The life and work of Huang Zhou (1925–1997) was turbulent and full of vicissitudes: he started his career as a war painter and held a series of prominent positions in the artistic field, winning several awards for his work and exhibiting widely; during the Cultural Revolution he was demoted, becoming a manual labourer. Following his rehabilitation, he was almost incapable of painting due to the sustained physical strain, but he still produced some paintings, which the state presented to important guests.¹⁷ Bangladeshi artist Mohammad Syful Islam (1946) studied in Moscow and was particularly drawn to Renaissance and Socialist Realist art: he became a world-renowned portraitist, portraying local and international artists and politicians.¹⁸ The Pakistani Sheikh Ahmad was a representative of Social Realist painting and the founder of the Karachi Institute of Applied Arts.¹⁹ After graduating in painting in India, Animesh Nandi (1940–2020) continued his studies in Yugoslavia, where he earned his master’s degree and worked as an independent artist for more than a decade.²⁰ The previously mentioned Yugoslav sculptors were also among the most well-known and prominent artists of their time.

16 See, among others, Angel, *A Century of Painting in Panama*, pp. 12–13.

17 His artworks were presented to the Japanese Emperor, the American President and President Tito, for whom, in 1978, he painted an eagle symbolising the strength and ambitions of the old hero. For more information about his work, see Zhangshen, *Chinese Masters of the 20th Century Volume 3*.

18 From the poet Rabindranath Tagore and the musician and poet Kazi Nazrul Islam, to Queen Elizabeth II, the Japanese imperial couple and the Malay royal couple, Kurt Waldheim, Ronald Reagan, Indira Gandhi and, of course, Tito.

19 For more information on the emergence of contemporary art movements in Pakistan, see Arshad, *Artists who created art movements in Pakistan*.

20 In spring 2021, the organisers of the “Sarajevo Winter” festival curated a special exhibition in his honour. Retrieved 8 January 2022 from <https://www.gjartent.com/BA/Sarajevo/166682320559632/Sarajevo-Winter-Festival-Sarajevska-zima>.

In the field of the visual arts, cultural exchange between Yugoslavia and other members of the Non-Aligned Movement was extremely vibrant, reciprocal and well documented, and has recently been the subject of numerous exhibitions.²¹ Artworks from the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement produced during this period are not only kept in the Museum of Yugoslavia but, among others, also in the Belgrade Museum of African Art (in existence since 1977), the Podgorica Centre for Contemporary Art of Montenegro (established in 1984 as the “Josip Broz Tito” Art Gallery of the Non-Aligned Countries in then Titograd), and the Koroška Gallery of Fine Arts in Slovenj Gradec, Slovenia (founded in 1957 as the Art Pavilion). Elsewhere, these artworks are rare or non-existent: it could be expected that the artifacts dating back to the height of the Movement would be included in the table of selected works from museums in Yugoslavia, yet it does not contain a single one.²²

Theoretical background and methodological approach

The source for my research was data acquired through careful observation of all these works (from both sides, front and back, where some useful information about the painting, notes about the reception, comments from protocol office staff, etc. were often included on a label; I photographed all these artworks for my archive). Further information was gathered through conversations and correspondence with the curator of these works, Ms Panić (and other curators in charge of related collections), as well as on the basis of primary sources (archival sources, various original documents, the web) and secondary sources (previous research on cultural exchanges between the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, articles, catalogues, records of cultural exchanges during the examined period, texts on local art scenes, etc.).

The collected artworks were examined both in terms of their content (what they represent) and function—as received gifts. To understand this latter component, I initially drew on the classical theory of the gift by the French sociologist and anthropologist Marcel Mauss. He points at the reciprocity of the gift as its intrinsic characteristic: the gift “commits” the recipient to give something back to the giver. In a profit-oriented economy founded on private

21 See catalogues of recent exhibitions (and the exhibitions themselves) by Tamara Soban and Ana Panić.

22 Srejšević and Jeremić, *Muzeji Jugoslavije*. The table, on the other hand, contains examples of prehistoric, antique and medieval art produced on the territory of Yugoslavia, as well as artworks by contemporary artists, both domestic and foreign (such as Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Paul Gauguin, Alfred Sisley, Edgar Degas, etc.).

property, objects are disposed of through sale to a new owner. In a gift economy (which he understands as a triple obligation: the obligation to give, to receive and to reciprocate the gift), in the system of “total services” as he defines them, it is the exact opposite. The given object not only pleases the receiver, but also remains linked to its giver: instead of being disposed of, it guarantees a “return gift” to the giver. In such an exchange, objects “are never completely detached from those carrying out the exchange. The mutual ties and alliance that they establish are comparatively indissoluble”.²³ The anthropologist Maurice Godelier, who adopted and extended Mauss’s conception of the gift, defines it as a voluntary, individual or collective act, which may or may not be prompted by the person or persons receiving it.²⁴ At the same time, he adds that the act of giving seems to create a twofold relationship between giver and receiver: a relationship of solidarity (horizontal relationship) and of superiority (hierarchical relationship).

In this study, I am not only trying to answer the question of what “force impels one to reciprocate the thing received”,²⁵ focusing on the dynamic symmetry of gift-giving that creates opposing tendencies of mutual solidarity and domination, but I go a step further. I primarily observe the ways in which givers represent themselves by their gifts, what image of themselves they offer or literally “give” to another person. “[T]o make a gift of something to someone is to make a present of some part of oneself;²⁶ while Godelier notes that “what is present in the object, along with the owner, is the entire imaginary of society, of [their] society.”²⁷ A gift is neither a mere “gesture of goodwill” nor only “a mere object”, but always and above all a (representative) part of the giver that is accepted by the receiver. The gifted object possesses two powers: the power to create a mutual bond between the giver and the receiver, and the power to represent. I therefore also understand the gift as one of the fundamental human and social means of self-representation: we use gifts to present ourselves to others in the best light, with something that is most ours, the most outstanding and typical. This applies to personal, intimate gifts but also to protocol gifts presented by political communities. In short: the gift “communicates culture”,²⁸ creating and recreating ideological representations of ourselves in relation to others.

23 Mauss, *Esej o daru in drugi spisi*, p. 63.

24 Godelier, *Uganka daru*, p. 22.

25 Mauss, *Esej o daru in drugi spisi*, p. 12.

26 Ibid., p. 26.

27 Godelier, *Uganka daru*, p. 120.

28 Momčilović Jovanović, *Darovi Titu*, p. 76.

The choice of gift is another complex issue, which similarly concerns different levels, from the personal to the protocol sphere. However, what is undoubtedly true is that it must be a “precious object”, which, according to Godelier, is characterised by the these three elements: it has no practical application or is not meant to be used in everyday life, is abstract and meets the prerequisite of being beautiful.²⁹ The “abstract” character mean that these objects “embody’ social relations and thought systems and then [...] re-present them [...] to the social actors in a form which is material, abstract and symbolic”,³⁰ while “beautiful” is “defined by the cultural and symbolic universe of the societies that use and make these objects”.³¹ Works of art can therefore be more than suitable protocol gifts: they embody—to use the expression of both mentioned sociologists—“spiritual mechanisms”, having a moral, symbolic, intangible and prestigious value.

The specificities relating to protocol gifts presented at the highest, i.e. state, level are addressed in a series of studies in the field of international relations and are part of a broader field dealing with the functioning of “soft power”. The Ljubljana-based political scientist Jana Arbeiter notes that “diplomatic protocol in this sense also represents a source of symbolic power and prestige in international relations and diplomacy, since actors—despite their multitude—put strong emphasis on diplomatic protocol, by which other actors in the international community recognise their desired protocol and ceremonial position”.³² This requires a set of related skills and knowledge—from rules on diplomatic behaviour and etiquette to broader cultural insights, from ways of communicating and adopting appropriate rhetoric to knowledge of political and historical background. “Diplomacy is very sensitive to any display of power and status symbols”, states the Uzbek political scientist and diplomat Alisher Faizulayev, and goes on to say: “[e]xpressions of status and power – such as greetings phrase and gifts – have traditionally been symbolic”.³³ Furthermore, mutual exchange of gifts in line with the protocol “constitutes a universal model by which cultural differences are neutralised through communication”.³⁴ The gift—although not always a necessary element

29 Godelier, *Uganka daru*, pp. 195–198.

30 Ibid., p. 196.

31 Ibid., p. 198.

32 Arbeiter, Symbolic importance of diplomatic protocol, p. 161.

33 Faizullaev, *Diplomacy and Symbolism*, p. 109. The same is also observed by Arbeiter and Brglez in *Prednostni vrstni red*, p. 18: “[d]iplomacy has to be analysed through the prism of symbolism and symbolic power, which is one of the main forms of soft power and the foundation of diplomacy in general”.

34 Momčilović Jovanović, *Darovi Titu*, p. 68.

of the protocol—honours the receiver in a particular way, strengthens the bond between the receiver and the giver, suggests an exchange and establishes a symbolic positioning of both parties (according to the previously mentioned ambivalence of solidarity and hierarchy). At the same time, it exhibits the best of what the giver possesses and what they are proud of, creating their best possible representation.³⁵ In diplomacy, the gift—even if given by a political leader/politician to another political leader/politician merely as a “personal gift”—always and unavoidably represents a wider community (a country, a region, etc.) and is collective and political in all cases.

In the following paragraphs I pass from the theory of the gift to the theory of its ideological significance. In explaining the ideological significance, I rely on the theory of visual representation, which “examine[s] in detail how certain institutions mobilise specific forms of visibility to see, and to order, the world”.³⁶ According to Hall, in fact, “[w]e always need systems through which we represent what the real is to ourselves and to others”.³⁷ He understands representation as “the process by which members of a culture use language (broadly defined as any system which deploys signs, any signifying system) to produce meaning”.³⁸ As such, representation provides grounds for the conditions regarding the social existence of individuals and groups: it creates ways in which the group can be formed inwardly and presented outwardly. Gifts to various guests are one of the most effective and frequent ways in which ideology as a system of representation of a given group materialises, becomes tangible and concrete.³⁹

Content of the painting as representation

The understanding of the gift as self-representation—i.e. the gift not being only an object of exchange or an indicator of (asymmetrical) social relations—is still a relatively unexplored topic, especially in the field of diplomacy.⁴⁰ The constructivist approach to representation explains that “things don’t mean: we construct meaning, using representational systems – concepts and signs”.⁴¹ From the

35 See the study by anthropologist Nikolai Ssorin-Chaikov for a particularly interesting insight into the Soviet and international “gift economy” in the context of the celebration of Stalin’s 70th birthday, which was commemorated in 1949 by the “exhibition of birthday gifts to Stalin”.

36 Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, p. 10.

37 Hall, *Kulturne študije 1983*, p. 169.

38 Hall, *Delo reprezentacije*, p. 82. In other words: “The relation between ‘things’, concepts and signs lies at the heart of the production of meaning in language.” (ibid., p. 39)

39 Cf. Hall, *Kulturne študije 1983*, p. 168.

40 This is also pointed out by Ssorin-Chaikov among others (*On Heterochrony*, p. 358).

41 Hall, *Delo reprezentacije*, p. 46.

semiological point of view, a painting (or sculpture, relief, etc.) is in itself a representation of content, and similarly, the act of giving a painting qualified as a gift is a representation of the relationship between the giver and the receiver. The present study, therefore, addresses two representations: the content of the painting and the painting as gift. The content of painting is first observed using Hall’s method (concept– language–code) and then analysed as a protocol gift (since it is no longer only a painting but becomes a gift and should be considered as such). Therefore, in the first step, I explain how the painting creates meanings and in the second step, how the act of presenting the painting as a gift creates meanings: in order to understand the “language of the gift”, we need first to understand the “language of the painting” itself.

The following questions are therefore examined: What is the self-representation of a state in the presented artworks, what are its “kernels of imaginary material”—to quote Godelier—which were “necessary to its formation and reproduction”?⁴² How did these “developing countries” represent themselves through gifts to Yugoslavia, which was nevertheless perceived as a “more developed developing country”; in other words: how did the “Global South” appear to a country that was somewhere at the tail end of the “Global North” based on its gifts? What do we find in these paintings?

I grouped the collected artworks according to their systems of representation (indicating for each the artist, the provenance, the serial number included in the previously mentioned list and the main motif or image).⁴³ The first system is the system of “concepts” or “conceptual maps” or “mental representations”. I listed six of them. The second system of representation is language, in this case “visual language” or the visual image of concepts, which refers to how artists imagine these six concepts/mental representations and how they draw/paint/model them. These two systems are connected by a cultural code, which translates between the concepts and the language and consolidates the relationships between them. In the following, I list the artworks in order of identified groups:

1. First system of representation: nature, landscape, animals.

- M. Rodriguez (Cuba, entry no 5) – second system of representation: image of flowers and fruit (and small human figures).
- Unknown author (Bangladesh, entry no 11) – second system of representation: image of a tiger in a thicket.

42 Godelier, *Uganka daru*, p. 45.

43 See Hall, *Delo reprezentacije*, pp. 37–42, 49.



Unknown author (Vietnam), *Red River*, 1957
 Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1-2-135

- Unknown author (Chile, entry no 14) – second system of representation: image of a girl leading a horse.
- Unknown author (Vietnam, entry no 16) – second system of representation: image of a river with floating boats.
- H. Zhov (China, entry no 18) – second system of representation: image of an eagle perched on a branch.
- R.D. Saleh (Indonesia, entry no 22) – second system of representation: image of a wooded wilderness and a river.
- R. Savory (Guyana, entry no 24) – second system of representation: image of leafy trees in the wind.

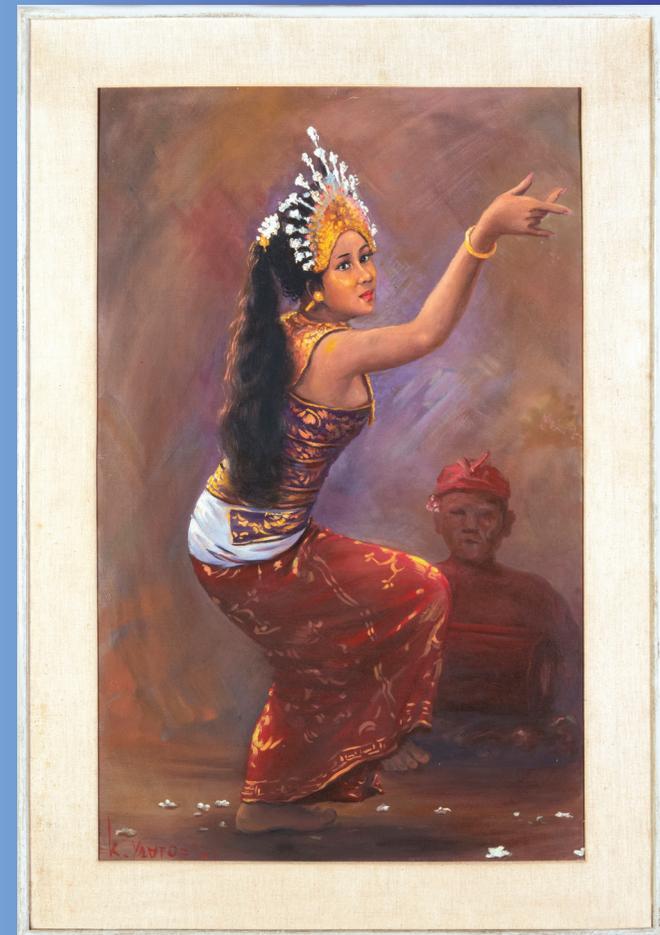
Cultural code: strong attachment to nature, idealisation of its beauty and the fact of being untouched by development, pollution and modernisation: on the one hand, it is wild, dangerous, powerful, but on the other, it is also already tamed, domesticated—in the traditional way and in symbiosis with the natives.

2. First system of representation: individual natives.

- A. Nandi (India, entry no 2) – second system of representation: stylised images of three natives.
- J. T. Sursock (Egypt, entry no 3) – second system of representation: image of a sitting girl.
- J.B. Jeanine (Panama, entry no 4) – second system of representation: image of a banana picker.
- Unknown author (India, entry no 8) – second system of representation: image of a mother and child in a field.
- Unknown author (India, entry no 13) – second system of representation: image of three female dancers.
- Unknown author, probably Fidge Ngombe (Congo, entry no 14) – second system of representation: image of two peasant women carrying jugs.
- Unknown author (Tunisia, entry no 14) – second system of representation: image of a sitting princess.
- G. B. Vad (India, entry no 25) – second system of representation: an image of a mother breastfeeding a black and a light-skinned newborn.
- K. Yahto (unidentified East Asian country, entry no 38) – second system of representation: image of a female dancer (and a male observer).
- S. Ahmad (Pakistan, entry no 39) – second system of representation: image of a local female.
- G. Jellani (Pakistan, entry no 44) – second system of representation: image of Maya (the queen of the Shakya tribe), Buddha's mother.



Juan Bautista Jeanine (Panama), *Banana Picker*, 1974
Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1-2-469



Yahto, K. (East Asia), *Dancer*, 1962
Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1-2-534

Cultural code: pronounced patriarchy with classical female roles (workers, mothers, seductresses), and, to a lesser extent, representation of women in superior positions, the positions of (religious, political) power; a strong component of traditionalism (clothes, appearance, activities) as if modernisation—even that of colonial times—had not yet begun; social conservatism in the sense of the absence of any liberation, vertical mobility and cultural pluralism.

3. First system of representation: society, community, culture.

- E. Moscoso (Philippines, entry no 6) – second system of representation: image of people in the marketplace.
- K. A. Hossain (Bangladesh, entry no 10) – second system of representation: image of a boating village.
- Unknown author (India, entry no 21) – second system of representation: image of a celebration, a crowd of people gathering at the foot of a magnificent shrine.
- Unknown author (Indonesia, entry no 10) – second system of representation: image of a group of people building a junk (a local type of sailboat).
- Vidya Bhushan (India, entry no 21) – second system of representation: image of a bodhisattva (enlightened being) in a group of people.
- E. Michaelsen (Cuba, entry no 27) – second system of representation: image of a horse race through the village attended by an enthusiastic crowd.
- F. Hassan (Iraq, entry no 34) – second system of representation: image of a group of Bedouins with horses in the desert.
- Unknown author (Ethiopia, entry no 40) – second system of representation: image of a mansion on the riverbank.
- Unknown author (Ghana, entry no 41) – second system of representation: image of a group of people at the royal court associated with the Ashanti people.

Cultural code: depictions featuring traditional social structure, division of labour, religious affiliation and ancient culture: an arcadian idealisation with no sign of modernisation; the emphasis is on the strength of the rural community (chores and activities performed by the community as a whole, common celebrations—all hallmarks of a Durkheimian society of “mechanical solidarity”).

4. First system of representation: political and military struggle.

- Unknown author (Algeria, entry no 9) – second system of representation: image of ancient warriors around a hearth in the wilderness.



Unknown author (Ghana) – *A scene from the tradition of the Ashanti people, 1970.*
Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1112 P

- Unknown author (Vietnam, entry no 17) – second system of representation: image of a battle (from the Vietnam War) in the river reeds.
- A. Sinclair (Panama, entry no 19) – second system of representation: image of student demonstrations at the Panama Canal border.
- A. F. R. Trigo (Guinea-Bissau, entry no 33) – second system of representation: image of a battle from the war of independence.

Cultural code: very graphic and dramatic depictions of the recent anti-colonial and anti-imperialist revolts (almost in the sense of socialist realism); traditionalism is less present, but the emphasis remains on the power of community, represented in this case by armed or politically engaged peoples.

5. First system of representation: Josip Broz Tito as guest.

- Unknown author (North Korea, entry no 7) – second system of representation: portrait of Presidents Tito and Kim Il Sung shaking hands.
- S. Islam (Bangladesh, entry no 28) – second system of representation: portrait of President Tito.
- Hassaine (unknown provenance, entry no 29) – second system of representation: portrait of President Tito.
- C. Fernandez (Bolivia, entry no 37) – second system of representation: portrait of President Tito.

Cultural code: contemporary and very realistic depictions of a distinguished guest, President Tito (portrayed as a seasoned statesman and not as a young Partisan leader, which is characteristic of Titostalgia).⁴⁴

6. First system of representation: host or leader of the host country.

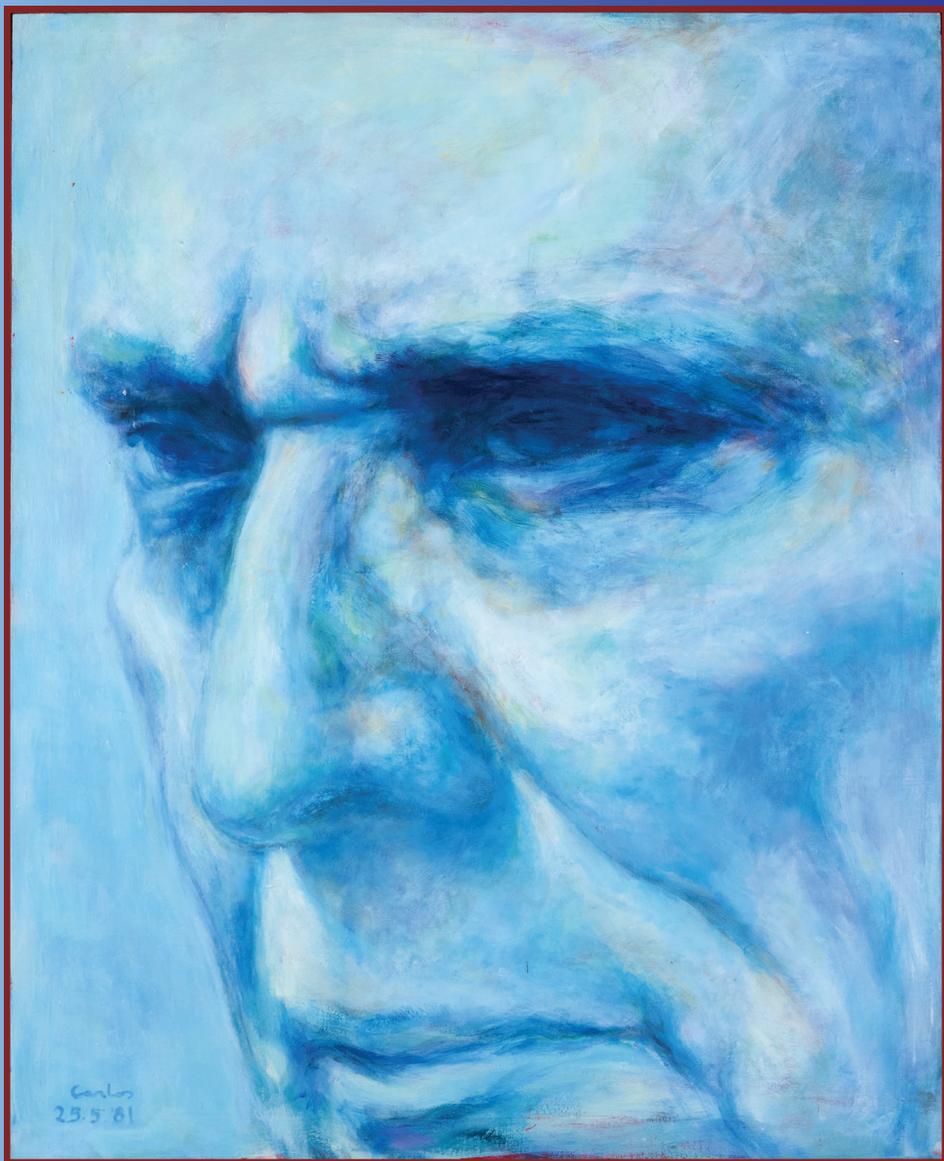
- P. S. N. Swamy (India, entry no 32) – second system of representation: portrait of Gandhi.
- M. Majumdar (India, entry no 35) – second system of representation: portrait of Gandhi and Nehru (with the globe).
- S. Luketić (Yugoslavia, entry no 42) – second system of representation: portrait of the founders of the Non-Aligned Movement (Nehru, Nasser, Nkrumah, Sukarno and Tito).
- A. Augustinčić (Yugoslavia, entry no 43) – second system of representation: portrait of the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie.

Cultural code: patriarchal ideology of the “founders”, “founding fathers” and important personalities of the Non-Aligned Movement

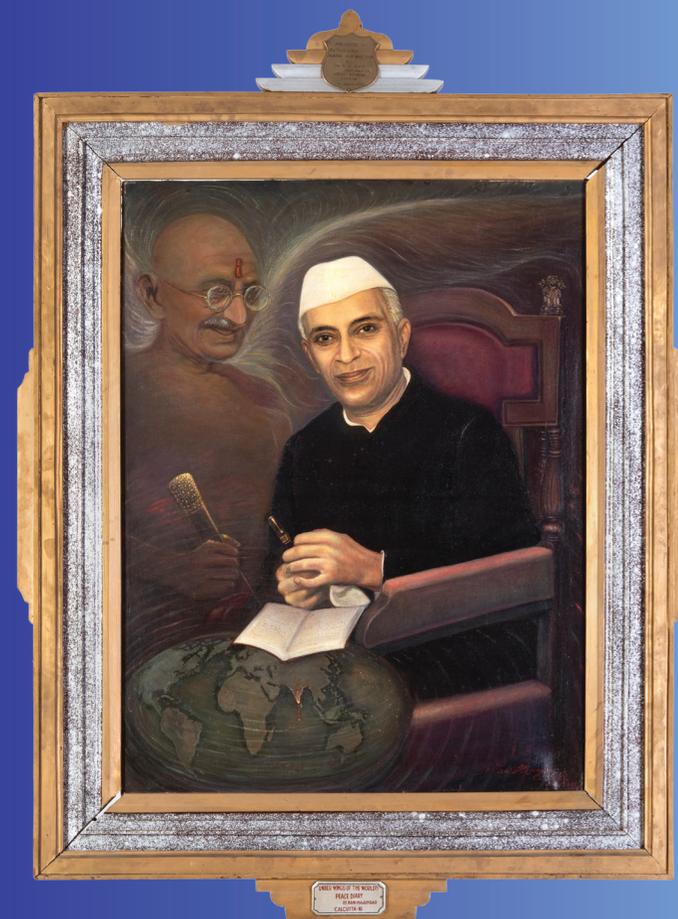


Augusto Fausto Rodrigues Trigo (Guinea-Bissau), *Battle*, 1976
 Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1-2-331

44 Velikonja, *Titostalgia*, pp. 115–116.



Carlos Fernandez (Bolivia), *Portrait of Josip Broz Tito*, 1981.
Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, collection "4 May", inv. no. 244



Mani Majumdar (India), *Portrait of Nehru and Gandhi*, 1954
Courtesy of Museum of Yugoslavia, inv. no. 1-2-655

in general; anti-colonial counter-hegemony—highlighting the global importance of these figures and thus the prominence of the alternative idea of non-alignment and its practice in the world.

To summarise the analysis of the representation of reality in these artworks and to correlate their cultural codes (based on two systems of representation, concepts and language): the first characteristic is the marked presence of traditionalism. In the analysed paintings, people live in rural communities and engage in traditional activities; what exists is only a pre-capitalist economy, with no signs of modernisation. The second characteristic is strong patriarchy: in these artworks, women are portrayed in typical and traditional roles. A better position can only be innate and not acquired or gained through emancipation. The third trait is the corporate organisation of society: everyone is assigned their own (hierarchical) position and performs the tasks expected of them in the existing archaic social structure. The fourth distinctive aspect is, as expected, the (self-)mythologising of the fathers of the Non-Aligned Movement, who establish their legitimacy either alone or through relations with each other, or by referring to “significant others” from the history of their countries. And fifth, the military and political struggles against the colonial powers nevertheless suggest the beginning of progress, which, however, is not (yet) perceivable in the images of modernisation and post-war construction—what these images dramatically convey is more a “no” to the present than a “yes” to the future.

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Part 2: Analysis of ethnological and applied arts gifts from non-aligned countries to the President of SFRY, Josip Broz

[A] gift presented in the right spirit, at the right moment, by the right person, may act with tenfold power upon him who receives it.

French diplomat François de Callières,

The Practice of Diplomacy (1919, p. 25), first published in 1716.

The mutual exchange of gifts during diplomatic meetings and visits has become a legitimate topic of study only in recent years; consequently, there is still a paucity of relevant theoretical, historical and comparative literature. This prompted me to undertake research on the gifts received by the president of socialist Yugoslavia Josip Broz Tito from non-aligned countries. In general, diplomatic gifts “represent a sophisticated form of political communication,

which was able to consolidate or strengthen political alliances, to emphasize loyalty or at least to show mutual respect, but also to pursue concrete representation and power strategies”,⁴⁵ and “have always been an essential pillar of the political order, an effective political means of communication for sealing contracts, renewing coalitions etc”.⁴⁶ Part II of the research concentrates on the comparison of the contemporary artworks received by the Yugoslavian President, which are analysed in detail in the previous part, with other ethnological and applied arts gifts presented by the leaders or delegations of non-aligned countries.

This part of the research opens by posing two questions that are theoretically related to the analytical apparatus from Part I. The first question is semiological: What do these gifts intrinsically convey; what is their aesthetic and ideological language; how do they represent the non-aligned countries? The second question is comparative: What are the similarities and differences between the motifs of these gifts and the artworks discussed in the previous part; do these gifts reinforce or undermine the representations and, consequently, cultural codes present in the paintings and reliefs that the Yugoslav President received as gifts from the *Third World*⁴⁷ during his thirty-five- or thirty-six-year rule?

During this period, he met 350 heads of state and government and other high-ranking officials, some more than once, visited 73 countries and made 169 state visits; most of these activities concerned non-aligned countries as non-alignment was one of the foundations of Yugoslav foreign policy. Non-alignment “became a global performative strategy for Yugoslav policy-makers to ‘world’ the country – for the consumption of both internal and external publics – as a sovereign space located outside the Cold War’s hostile ‘European theatre’”.⁴⁸ Part of the protocol of these meetings was the exchange of gifts; Tito was known for giving and receiving personal gifts, in addition to official presents.⁴⁹ All of this was recorded in approximately 4,300 files kept in relation to this matter since 1953. The Museum of Yugoslavia in Belgrade holds around two hundred thousand objects, divided into twenty-four collections, consisting mostly of various gifts that Tito received

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⁴⁵ Hatschek, *The Blessing and Curse of (Military) Diplomatic Gifts*, p. 20.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴⁷ See the critique of the reductionist notion of the Third World, which attempts to violently homogenise the diversity of the non-Western world, in Young, *White Mythologies*, pp. 114, 159, 167 and 168.

⁴⁸ Kilibarda, *Non-Aligned Geographies in the Balkans*, p. 27.

⁴⁹ The first gift that Tito received from a monarch was an ancient Corinthian bronze helmet (from the late 7th/early 6th century BC), which was given to him in 1954 by King Paul I of Greece (1901–1964).

from the federal states and from abroad: from the most mundane, mass-produced objects to items that are unique and valuable from an aesthetic and archaeological point of view (as well as in monetary terms). This second part of the research focuses exclusively on the ethnological and applied arts gifts presented to Tito by non-aligned countries, either during his visits or during the visits by political leaders or delegations to Yugoslavia. A total of 1,153 objects meeting these criteria are included in three collections. These items come from virtually all non-aligned countries and are of the most diverse shapes, colours, materials and sizes, feature different production techniques and bear a wide range of meanings. In relation to the provenience of the objects, the countries that stand out are those that had the most genuine relations with Tito.⁵⁰

In recent years, the most precious gifts have been included in various well-attended exhibitions that have drawn media attention, and have been featured in catalogues published on these occasions. In 2008, the Museum of Yugoslavia in Belgrade held the exhibition "World of Silver", displaying more than 200 different gifts made of this precious metal that Tito received during his visits around the world. Five years later, it was followed by "Imperial Gifts", which was displayed in the same venue and presented approximately 70 exhibits that the Yugoslav President received between 1954 and 1979 from monarchs, both from the non-aligned world and Europe (a year later, the exhibition was moved to the City Museum in Sombor). In 2015, the exhibition "Gifts to Josip Broz Tito" was opened in Villa Kumrovec, which is part of the Old Village (Staro selo) Museum in Kumrovec. The exhibition presented a total of about one hundred items previously held at Villa Zagorje, originating from various parts of the world, including the non-aligned world, which Tito received in the 1960s and 1970s. What is also worth mentioning is the publication on Serbian-Egyptian cultural and political exchanges, which includes valuable information on mutual gifts and was published at the beginning of the last decade by the Belgrade Museum of African Art. The vast majority of these gifts are either stored in repositories, exhibited in collections or on permanent display at the previously mentioned museums in Dedinje and Brijuni.

50 These countries are: India, Egypt, Ethiopia and Cambodia, followed by Indonesia, Burma/Myanmar, Algeria, Chile, Mongolia, Mali, Zambia, Nigeria, Iran, Cuba, Pakistan and North Korea.

The semiological language of gifts

The protocol gifts discussed in these pages are artistic products or cultural artefacts⁵¹ in which individual initiatives and social structures of artists, gift-givers and receivers are linked in ever-specific ways. As such, "a gift is always considered one of the indispensable attributes of international politeness and expresses, on the one hand, the national specifics of its country, and on the other hand it is a response to the personified features of someone to whom it is intended to be given".⁵² For this reason, I started the analysis by trying to answer the question: How do non-aligned countries represent themselves through ethnological and applied arts gifts and what is their aesthetic and ideological language? Using Barthes'⁵³ and Hall's⁵⁴ semiological methods, the gifts were classified into four groups (descriptive level or denotation). At the end of each group, I identified their distinctive cultural code (the "language of the gift", its ideological connotation, the "cultural grammar"⁵⁵ of the group presenting the gift) as "abstract notions always conceal a sensible figure".⁵⁶

The first and most numerous group encompasses gifts linked to contemporary cottage industry and objects from the recent past (early 20th century, 19th century). It is difficult to provide a summarised overview due to the diversity and multitude of objects composing the three analysed collections of the Museum of Yugoslavia; for this reason, I divided the gifts into thirteen major subgroups: There is a vast array of (1) decorative crockery and cutlery, vases, decorative plates, trays, tea and coffee services. These objects are followed by (2) decorative fabrics, carpets, tablecloths, cushions, napkins, etc., and (3) clothing items, such as hats, embroidered scarves, overcoats, turbans, carnival costumes and folk costumes, as well as exquisitely made bags and suitcases. The collections also include a considerable number of (4) different dolls and figurines, mostly dressed in folk costumes, as well as sculptures and masks made by locals. There are also some examples of (5) local musical instruments, but a much better represented group consists of (6) various antique weapons and warrior equipment (sabres, swords,

51 Wolff in *The Social Production of Art* (p. 139) writes that a cultural artefact is "the complex product of economic, social and ideological factors, mediated through the formal structures of the text (literary or other), and owing its existence to the particular practice of the located individual".

52 Vinogradova and Porodina, *Weapons as Ambassadorial Gifts in the Collection of the Central Armed Forces Museum of the Russian Federation*, p. 181.

53 Barthes, *Elementi semiologije*.

54 Hall, *Delo reprezentacije*.

55 The term was coined and effectively used by Giordano in his analyses of intercultural contacts, *Ogledi o interkulturalnoj komunikaciji*, see in particular pp. 25–39.

56 Derrida, *Bela mitologija*, p. 7.

daggers and shields) and decorative weapons. Other groups of gifts that stand out are (7) objects related to smoking, such as cigarette cases, tobacco or cigar boxes and ashtrays, in addition to (8) precious chess sets and (9) various pieces of filigree jewellery and ornate walking sticks. These are followed by (10) stationery sets, small tables, mirrors and decorated table lamps, and (11) decorated boxes in various sizes and shapes.

A relatively large category is composed of (12) numismatic gifts, either in the form of old or commemorative gold and silver coins or collections of contemporary banknotes and coins of the local currency. The last major group includes (13) other symbolic markers of statehood, i.e. collections of postage stamps of the time, coats of arms and flags of the host countries.

The most valuable presents were protocol gifts received from crowned heads: Prince Sihanouk presented Tito with a metal and wooden model of the emperor's carriage, two decorated wooden vases, a richly embellished silver tea service with floral motifs and stylised images of the Hindu demigod Garuda, and ornamental silver tableware. The Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie (1892–1975) was particularly generous when it comes to gifts to Tito (and his wife Jovanka Broz): his favourite presents were precious items from the imperial goldsmith's and jewellery workshop at his court in Addis Ababa, all engraved with his monogram (gold and silver jewellery – bracelets, necklaces, decorative hair comb, silver boxes, cigarette cases, gold coins, gold tray with a goblet, etc.). Items that stand out in particular include a writing set, which is actually a model of the imperial throne decorated with all the dynastic symbols dating back to Biblical times (imperial crown, angels, Star of David, etc.).⁵⁷ A magnificent example of an Arab dagger was received from the Yemeni King Ahmad bin Yahya (1891–1962), while a silver gilded jewellery box was a gift from the Afghan King (Shah) Mohammed Zahir (1914–2007). The last ruler to give Tito a precious gift was Saad Al-Salim Al-Sabah (1930–2008), the Sheikh of Kuwait, who in 1979 presented the Yugoslav President with a silver model of a sailing ship symbolising this Gulf state, accompanied with a luxurious silver tea and coffee service bearing the state coat of arms.

The cultural code of this group of gifts to Tito can be defined as strength and beauty of the native and unspoiled heritage of the gift-giving countries and described as the pinnacle of the local artisans' craftsmanship.

57 Among all the leaders of non-aligned countries, Tito met most frequently with Haile Selassie I, Norodom Sihanouk (1922–2012) and the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918–1970).

The second group of gifts from the leaders of non-aligned countries comprises objects from the distant past or their replicas. In 1960, the abovementioned King of Afghanistan presented Tito with a 16-centimetre Buddha head (4th century BC) from the Kabul National Museum.⁵⁸ Similarly, the Cambodian Prince Norodom Sihanouk gave him a fragment of a pilaster kept in the National Museum of Cambodia, decorated with a relief of an apsara, a celestial dancer, which was originally embedded in the walls of the Angkor Thom sanctuary, the former capital of the Khmer Empire.⁵⁹ The Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba (1903–2000) presented him with a medallion of a nymph on a centaur dating from the 2nd century BC. From Egypt Tito received three alabaster vessels found during the excavations of the Step Pyramid of Djoser in the necropolis of Saqqara, and, in addition, a bronze statue of the god Osiris (from 6th century AD), which was presented to him by President Anwar el-Sadat (1918–1981).⁶⁰ A golden copy of the harp belonging to the Sumerian queen/high priestess Shubad (or Puabi, circa 2450 BC), engraved with scenes from the mythical Epic of Gilgamesh, was given to him by Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr (1914–1982), a senior Iraqi politician, holding the positions of Prime Minister, President of the State and Secretary General of the Ba'ath Party.

The distinctive cultural code linked to these archaeological gifts is the recollection of a glorious pre-colonial past, i.e. invoking the ancient foundations of modern states.

The gifts in the third group combine domestic and foreign elements, local traditions and the Western chic that only monarchs could afford. On the occasion of the 2500th anniversary of the Persian Empire in 1971, the Shah of Iran, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi (1919–1980), presented Tito with a replica of the clay document known as the Cyrus cylinder (the first document on human rights, religious tolerance, freedom of choice and the abolition of Jewish slavery), published by the Persian ruler Cyrus II (the Great) in 539 BC. In addition, Tito was also given a precious porcelain vase and a commemorative porcelain plate with the Shah's coat of arms surrounded by gold overlay and enamel, whose author was Harold Holdway, the famous British ceramics designer for the Spode brand. King Hussein bin Talal of Jordan (1935–1999) presented Tito with a silver and partly gilded 12 cm sculpture of a warrior on a

58 Paradoxically, by giving these objects to Tito, he actually saved them from being destroyed by the Taliban, who, in the decades to come, systematically targeted all of the country's non-Muslim heritage sites.

59 The original inventory numbers from the museums have been preserved in both cases.

60 For insightful details and anecdotes about the gifts Tito received from Egypt, see Epštajn, *Egipat u sećanju Srbije/Egypt Remembered by Serbia*.

camel, installed on an onyx base and made by the Asprey company, London, while King Hassan II of Morocco gave him a unique gold cigarette case bearing the Moroccan coat-of-arms and studded with brilliant-cut diamonds and sapphires, which was produced by the Paris-based company Marchak.

The cultural code of these gifts could be defined as glocal—to use a term by Roland Robertson. In this case, global homogeneity and local heterogeneities are not mutually exclusive, but are, in fact, “complementary and interpenetrative”.⁶¹

The fourth group of gifts from non-aligned countries includes various animal trophies, such as decorated or raw elephant tusks, taxidermied animals, ostrich eggs, antelope and buffalo antlers, rhinoceros horns, big cat and zebra pelts, and even fossils. Particularly impressive are the huge, two-metre-long elephant tusks received from Mobutu Sese Seko (1930–1997), President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The second sub-group consists of precious stones: from the President of the Central African Republic Tito received three boxes of diamonds varying in size from large to small. The gifts also include samples of precious ores, minerals and corals. From inanimate to animate nature: the Guinean Prime Minister Ahmed Sékou Touré (1922–1984), the Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) and Emperor Haile Selassie provided exotic animals (antelopes, wild cattle, zebras, etc.) for Tito’s zoo in Brijuni. The famous Asian elephant Sony, which lived till 2010, was, for example, given to the Yugoslav President in 1970 by another Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi (1917–1984). And to close this section, the most unusual gift: Tito was given a four-hectare estate and a villa in Marrakech by the Moroccan King Hassan II.⁶²

These gifts are characterised by a particularly naturalistic cultural code: the richness of (unspoiled) nature being perceived as the most important asset that these countries have to offer to such a distinguished guest.

Comparison

This part of the research explores whether the cultural codes related to these ethnographic and applied arts gifts are comparable to the codes of the contemporary artworks (mostly paintings) received by Tito from non-aligned countries and discussed in detail in Part I of the chapter. Let us briefly summarise the codes pertaining to the analysed artworks: a strong connection with (un)tamed

nature; social conservatism with a patriarchal attitude towards women; traditionalism and Arcadian idealisation; depictions of anti-colonial resistance or struggle; realistic depictions of President Tito; and, finally, the glorification of the founding fathers or modern political leaders of non-aligned countries. The question that poses itself is: What are the similarities and differences between these cultural codes?

I will first address the similarities. In paintings and reliefs presented as gifts as well as in other gifts from non-aligned countries, nature plays an important role: motifs are taken from the natural environment, whether wild and untouched or cultivated and at the service of man. A similar observation can also be made about the materials of these gifts, being the most valuable examples of the local natural riches, such as precious stones and precious metals, ebony and other noble woods. Another similarity is obsessive traditionalism: typical of gifts from both groups is that they neither exhibit the present, nor traces of the recently ended colonial period, let alone any prospects for the future; what can be observed is only an intact ancient, pre-colonial culture, linked to old beliefs and its (religious) symbols. Ethnological motifs and their basis—the “ideology of home”⁶³—are evident in nativist motifs (natives wearing national costumes, performing rural activities, following ancient beliefs and remaining immobile when it comes to class and gender hierarchies), in aesthetic choices (ancient ornamentation and modalities of artistic representation) and in ancient symbols, which are either engraved or drawn. Some gifts (the Buddha’s head from Afghanistan, Cyrus cylinder from Iran, etc.) are the result of the appropriation of the cultural, ethnic and religious past of the earlier societies inhabiting the territories of the present countries; on the other hand, this also reflects the cosmopolitan openness and cultural inclusiveness of the former colonies experiencing the process of modernisation. Motifs that are absent are just as meaningful as those that are present: the third similarity between the gifted paintings and other gifts is their non-political nature. There are hardly any signs of modern post-colonial statehood, in either the first or second group of items (with the exception of, for example, money, stamps and national coats of arms or flags, which in some rare cases appear in combination with the Yugoslav flag). The last similarity is the almost complete absence of the signs of progress, modernisation and secularisation, despite the fact that all of these countries were referred to as developing countries, a newly

61 Robertson, *Glocalization*, p. 40.

62 Panić and Cvijović, *World of Silver/Svet od srebra*, p. 149.

63 The term is used by both Robertson, *Glocalization*, p. 35, and Said, *Oblasti povedati resnico*, p. 108.

coined term at that time. Likewise, there is only a scarce number of items commemorating anti-colonial rebellions, struggles and revolutions. These objects appear as if they were presented as gifts a few centuries ago, not in the dynamic world of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, a period marked by the information revolution, unprecedented urbanisation, the explosion of communication technologies, the world becoming a global village, the space race, new social movements, popular culture and the mass media.

However, there are also some significant differences between the cultural codes of the presented artworks and other gifts. The paintings tend to largely follow aesthetic currents which are contemporary to the period of their creation; their appearance is essentially hybrid, combining local art with the contemporary artistic production from other parts of the world (such as various forms of modernism, but also postmodernism and naïve art; there are also instances of a documentary approach or, in the case of artworks from socialist countries, socialist realism). On the other hand, the design of ethnological or applied arts gifts is almost entirely folkloristic, as if they had not been created in the middle of the 20th century. While paintings often portray political leaders and the guest, President Tito, such items are particularly scarce in the category of ethnological and applied arts gifts. The most notable exceptions are the depictions of the Egyptian President Nasser and the North Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh (full name Nguyễn Sinh Cung, 1890–1969). Especially in the case of gifts from precious metals, gift-givers very often chose to engrave a dedication to Tito, the occasion and year when the President received the gift and, of course, their own name. Furthermore, even a superficial observer can notice the pronounced exclusivity and high value of some of the gifts made of gold, precious stones and other rare materials, especially as they came from poor countries. On the one hand, this undoubtedly reflects the fact that in the non-aligned world “Josip ‘Tito’ Broz enjoyed enormous popularity to the degree of a personality cult”.⁶⁴ On the other hand, consumer excess is often a way of compensating for a disadvantaged social position: classic sociologist Thorstein Veblen described this phenomenon long ago with the term *conspicuous consumption*.⁶⁵

The analysis of the artworks, ethnological and applied arts gifts that Tito received from non-aligned countries during his trav-

64 Panić and Cvijović, *World of Silver/Svet od srebra*, p. 149. Kilibarda argues that Tito is a good example of “post-Revolutionary Dandyism” (Non-Aligned Geographies in the Balkans, pp. 29–31).

65 Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class – An Economic Study of Institutions*, pp. 68–101, but also elsewhere.

els abroad or from foreign leaders and delegations at home opens up possibilities for a series of other comparisons and provides starting points for further studies. Namely, social life, in fact, entails a complex cycle of exchanges, and diplomatic protocol, or, more generally, “soft power” in international relations, is no exception to this. In the gift economy, the presented gift, in which “obligation and liberty intermingle”,⁶⁶ “obliges a person to reciprocate the present”.⁶⁷ Godelier describes the logic behind the gift with the words: “Give more than your rivals, return more than your rivals: this is the recipe, and it relentlessly drives the system to its limits.”⁶⁸ The gifts of Non-Aligned countries which are mentioned here were certainly followed (or were preceded) by other “reciprocated” gifts, gifts presented in return by the Yugoslav or Tito’s Protocol. What kind of artworks were presented as gifts to other political leaders of non-aligned countries; who are their authors; where, when, on what occasion and how were they presented; what is their fate today; where are they exhibited or stored? I hope that we will be able to continue the project in order to also thoroughly examine this set of questions.

Then, it would be interesting to explore the similarities and differences with the gifts received from the Western world,⁶⁹ European socialist countries which were members of the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance as well as from other socialist countries. Moreover, it would be possible to explore how gifts varied over time and what gifts were “fashionable” in different decades of Tito’s receptions abroad and at home. Another topic that could be addressed concerns the structure of the gift-givers (presidents, monarchs, prime ministers, ministers, military leaders, religious dignitaries, representatives of parties and organisations) and the political ideologies and systems they represented. Numerous state decorations awarded to Tito by various non-aligned countries,⁷⁰ ceremonial documents conferring him the title of “Honorary Citizen” of their capitals, honorary doctorates, etc., would also

66 Godelier, *Uganka daru*, p. 135.

67 Mauss, *Esej o daru in drugi spisi*, p. 18, see also p. 38 and pp. 83–86.

68 Ibid., p. 179.

69 Kastratović Ristić and Cvijović note that the gifts received from European monarchs were significantly more modest than the objects presented to Tito by Asian and African monarchs: the latter were much more authentic, had historical value and embodied typical national characteristics (*Royal Gifts/Carski darovi*, p. 15).

70 In total, he received 47 state decorations, from some countries even more than one. In the descending order: from Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma/Myanmar, Central African Republic, Chile, Ethiopia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Cambodia, Cameroon, Kenya, Colombia, Congo, North Korea, Kuwait, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Panama, Senegal, Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Venezuela and Zambia.

deserve research attention. And last but not least: the act of presenting gifts is a specific performative act, a social ceremony—in this case a protocol event—involving a well-defined dramaturgy, *mise en scène*, speeches, direct act of handing over/receiving the gift, music, protagonists' entourage (delegations, guard of honour, national costumes, etc.), followed by official communiqués and media reports about the visit from both countries; all of this could also be a legitimate subject for future analyses.

Conclusion: Ideology of postcolonial colonialism

The Non-Aligned are a very heterogeneous community of countries in terms of geographical location, size, population, history, religious and cultural traditions, economic power and influence, process of decolonisation, and their current ideology and political system.⁷¹ One of the few common features of these countries is their post-colonial position, which, at the beginning of the Movement in the 1960s, was still fresh and only recently acquired through struggles, but is today well consolidated. Their first decades of independence were marked by the process of modernisation in different fields, a *Great Leap Forward*, social experimentation and political, cultural, economic and general social emancipation from the subordination to the colonial metropolises, which had been their reality for the last few centuries, or at least decades. One could expect that such deeply transformative social dynamics would influence postcolonial artistic creativity and design to critically synthesise pre-colonial traditions and the inevitable imposed colonial innovations, creating fresh, progressive and future-oriented cultural currents.

However, the contemporary artworks, ethnological and applied arts objects presented to Tito as gifts hardly reflect this. The gap between the imperative of social modernisation and the folkloristic essence of the gifts could hardly be wider. In the majority of these gifts, cultural autochthonism and nostalgic turning to the past as conservative responses to new social dynamics are manifested in two ways: by re- and neo-traditionalisation. First, by a raw return to old motifs, ornaments, materials, colours, appearance and other means of visual expression, and by re-traditionalisation and persistent returning to *the roots*, to the pre-colonial times of Durkheimian "mechanical solidarity" as if nothing has happened or changed between then and now. Primordialism understands future perspectives as mere reproductions and at best as actualisations of distant beginnings. And second, by fabricating tradition ("fakelore"), by a

71 For a critical reflection on the global centre and periphery after the capitalist paradigm became predominant, see Amin, *Evrocentrizem*, pp. 153–156.

false authenticity that makes newly invented practices autochthonous, indigenises them, makes them old. I call this phenomenon "neo-traditionalism";⁷² it does not modernise something traditional, but rather traditionalises the modern. On the one hand, the nationalist return to the (supposedly) *good old days* is understandable, as it brings a radical break with the traumatic colonial, racist and Eurocentric past, riddled with multiple and long-lasting injustices, and re-affirms the local and hardly liberated culture. On the other hand, traditionalism in its re- or neo- version ignores the indelible mark that was inevitably left by the colonial period and offers cultural autarky instead of a dynamic amalgamation of cultures and a fixation on the past rather than a future-oriented view.

At this point, I can draw meaningful parallels with similar regressive processes in the former socialist societies of Eastern Europe: re-patriarchalisation, religious integralism, world-view and moral conservatism, neo-racism, *turbo-folk* culture, the rustication of aesthetics, etc. Boris Buden describes these phenomena with terms "regressive re-essentialisation" and "repressive infantilisation".⁷³ I understand neo-traditionalism in this part of the world as a cultural logic pertaining to the post-socialist transition, as a concrete political consequence arising from the predominance of the ideologies and concrete practices associated with the inseparable pair – neoliberalism and ethno-nationalism. The new tradition created and essentialised by ethno-nationalism is a reflexive reaction to the effects of neoliberalism, which, in fact, destroys tradition. In other words, neo-traditionalism builds an image of traditional society that neoliberalism simultaneously obliterates. The new tradition is in no sense a renaissance of heritage, a return to the *old times*, but exactly the contrary—a post-traditional phenomenon, a new pragmatic reality. Folkloristic fetishism conceals the neoliberal destruction of the community and serves as a its substitute, as a compensation for it.

Back to the visual self-representations of the Non-Aligned as manifested in their gifts to President Tito: the development of art in these countries is characterised by two factors. First, the very concept of art "arrived in the non-European worlds with Western

72 Velikonja, *The New Folklore: Neo-Traditionalism as the Cultural Logic of the Post-Socialist Transition*.

73 Buden, *Cona prehoda*, pp. 138 and 36. For a concrete example of such neo-traditional cultural production, see the analysis in Stanković, *Simbolni imaginarij sodobne slovenske narodnozabavne glasbe*. But to stay in the field of protocol gifts: completely in the spirit of the "regressive re-essentialisation" and significant in this sense are three of the gifts that the British monarchs received from Slovenia in the 1990s and 2000s. Queen Elizabeth II was presented with a Lipizzaner, while Prince Charles received a large beehive featuring ten painted beehive panels and a *Slovenian* hayrack.

colonisation".⁷⁴ And second, the overall diversity of non-aligned countries certainly contributed to the fact that "there were heterogeneous artistic productions, different cultural policies and extensive cultural networks that enriched the cultural landscape of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement and allowed for debates on the meaning of art outside the Western canon", but at the same time "there were no specific NAM-related modernisms, no common tissue that could create a new international narrative in art".⁷⁵ However, what draws attention is that almost none of the gifted objects, with the exception of a few paintings, exhibit progressive, non-Eurocentric intellectual and cultural currents, such as *négritude* (Africa), *tropicália* (Brazil) or *créolité* and *antillanité* (Caribbean). All of these—and many others parallel currents⁷⁶—provide a trenchant critique of colonialism and the Eurocentric historical paradigm, affirming new and original hybrid cultural forms, social emancipation and alternative modernisation. In contrast, these gifts express another cultural triumph of colonialism: the fact that the neo-colonial ideological capture of Europe's "silent Other"⁷⁷ is clearly more powerful than its post-colonial emancipation.

In short: the gift, a material object, always expresses something immaterial: the identity, the ideological self-image of the giver. It is a way of the giver's self-representation: a performative display showing the best of what they are, what they own and what they can produce. In simple words: show me what you give, and I will tell you who you are. Protocol gifts are not only "a token of a contract between two states"⁷⁸ but also "represent the country of the gift giver",⁷⁹ co-creating its official symbolic image. The majority of such gifts presented to Tito by non-aligned countries are traditional in terms of aesthetics, socially and culturally conservative, and associated with nature. They do not critically question the existing and coherent conservative, pastoral and naturalistic notions about these countries, but rather cement and internalise them. The paradoxical conclusion of my study is that the analysed artistic, ethological and applied arts gifts persistently express exactly the

74 Šuvaković, Nacionalni realizam i medijska snaga tehno-kapitalizma, p. 4.

75 Piškur, *Southern Constellations*, p. 21.

76 Cf. the discussion on the aesthetics of "nonaligned modernism" in Yugoslav art or on "socialist postcolonial aesthetics" in Videkanić, *Nonaligned Modernism*. She, however, argues that "[n]onaligned modernism borrowed from Western ideas of modernism in the manner of Glissant's forced poetics – it used them because it was forced to do so by the infrastructure of the international art world; however, it created its own, more political aesthetic forms" (p. 9).

77 Said, *ibid.*, p. 98.

78 Godlewski, *Diplomatic Gifts from the Era of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Collection of the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw*, pp. 145–146.

79 Kastratović Ristić and Cvijović, *Royal Gifts/Carski darovi*, p. 22.

same essentialist, totalising and exotic image of these countries' societies that colonial masters created decades or centuries earlier to justify their ideological domination and political power over them: as backward, pre-modern, ossified, inert, particularistic, dependent on nature. As Young notes, the nativist cultural strategy of non-aligned countries "simply reproduces a Western fantasy about its own society now projected out onto the lost society of the other and named 'the Third World'".⁸⁰ The current self-representations of recently decolonised societies—and, in the colonial period, their representations by Westerners—have become their reality according to the logic of self-fulfilling prophecy. In other words, they do not escape from the formerly forced, now voluntary entrapment in the essentialist universalism of "white mythology".⁸¹ Perhaps two obvious facts related to gifts to Tito contributed to this: (1) Yugoslavia was the most industrially developed of the non-aligned countries and had won the liberation war, making it more than an obvious *success story*, an inspiration for these countries; and (2) it was practically the only European, i.e. white, country in this community.⁸²

The ideological hegemony of colonialism continued after decolonisation; its source, however, were no longer the Western colonial centres, but the liberated countries themselves, which continued to symbolically represent themselves in the same way as their masters did before decolonisation and who, in fact, still see them as inferior. The cultural self-traditionalisation of the Non-Aligned goes hand in hand with ideological self-inferiorisation and political self-peripheralisation⁸³—as if they did not want to symbolically break free from the grip of the colonial past. The protocol gifts analysed in these pages, which symbolically represent the giving countries and their attitude towards the presented object, more than obviously show that in this field the colonial ideology of the old European masters has been preserved and modified into a neo-colonial form, which seems to be consciously recreated by the new elites in the decolonised countries. To paraphrase Wittgenstein: the limits of their post-colonial world are still the limits of their internalised colonial folklorism.

80 Or: "the figure of the lost origin, the 'other' that the colonizer has repressed, has itself been constructed in terms of the colonizer's own self-image"; *ibid.*, p. 168.

81 Derrida, *Bela mitologija*, pp. 13–14. See also the interesting discussion on the "white racial unconscious" in American popular culture (the "potent fantasies of the black body [in] the white Imaginary") in Lott, *Black Mirror*, p. 120.

82 Except for Malta, which was a member from 1973 until it joined the EU in 2004.

83 Orientalism thus continues in self-Orientalisation, just as Balkanism often continues in self-Balkanisation, especially in popular culture.

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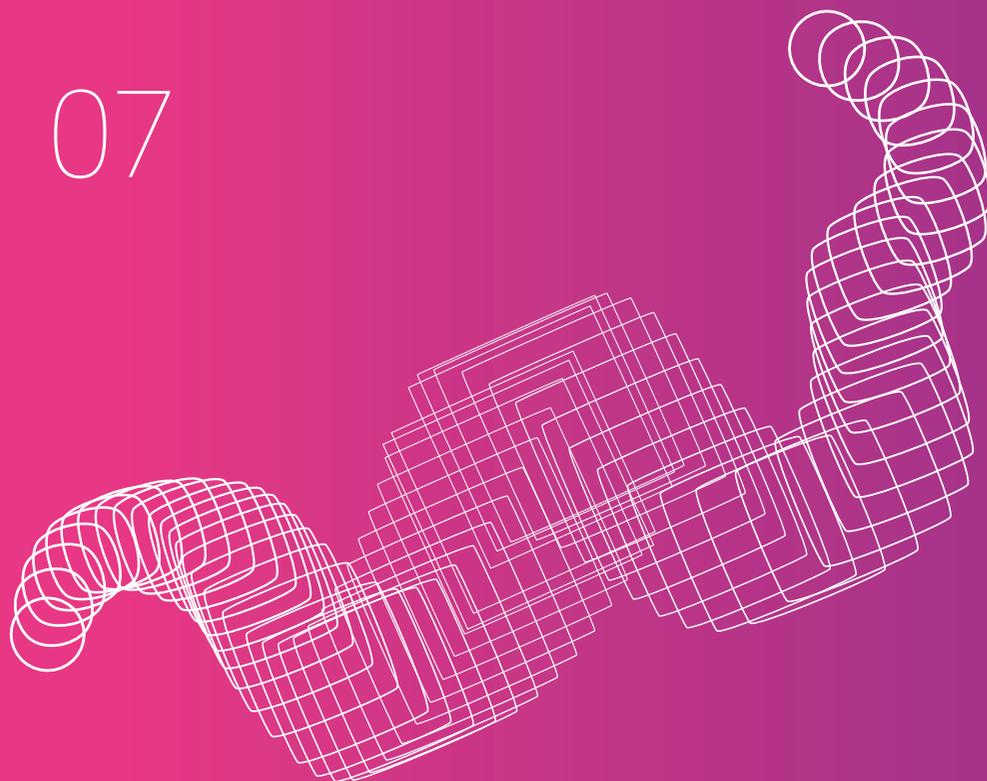
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Petja Grafenauer

**CULTURAL COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA
AND THE SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC
OF YUGOSLAVIA IN THE 1960s AND 1970s:
A CASE STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONAL
BIENNIAL OF GRAPHIC ARTS***

This paper examines the cultural artistic links between India and the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) in the 1960s and 1970s, focusing in particular on the links connecting Indian artists to the institution of the Ljubljana-based International Biennial of Graphic Arts (IBGA), as well as on the systemic arrangements for the exchange of other cultural events between the two countries. Studying the case of participation by the Indian graphic artist Krishna Reddy in the IBGA—who almost certainly entered the Biennial via the Western art world, paving the way for many of his compatriots—and concentrating on other institutional routes established with India (e.g. Lalit Kala Academy), we investigate how Yugoslav cultural agreements and programmes but also the self-initiative of artists influenced the processes of artistic exchange between India and the SFRY, and how, in the case of the IBGA, this was reflected at the level of procedures adopted for inviting Indian artists and exhibiting their works.

The paper is based on the analysis of the archival material deposited in the Archives of Yugoslavia, the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia and the archives of the International Centre of Graphic

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Arts in Ljubljana, as well as on the study of the literature to the present date. The most extensive portion of the studied material is held in the Archives of Yugoslavia, Belgrade, and for the purpose of the research a substantial proportion of its fonds "AJ 319 Savezni savet za obrazovanje i kulturu 1967–1971" [Federal Council for Education and Culture] and "AJ 559 Savezna komisija za kultur veze sa inostranstvom 1953–1971" [Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries] were analysed. It is important to note that during the NATO bombing of Belgrade (1999), four fonds were destroyed and one partially damaged, including the fond "Solidarity with Non-Aligned and Developing Countries", which would be relevant for the present research.

The thesis of the research is that the cultural policy of the SFRY in the sphere of fine and visual arts—which could be conceived as completely individual, founded on anti-imperialism and decolonisation, non-interference and peaceful co-existence, in addition to Yugoslav self-management—is in practice not identifiable in the activities of fine and visual arts organisations or, at least, its impact is not considerable, even in the case of the IBGA, which was valued primarily for bringing together art from all over the world. "The International Biennial of Graphic Arts, with its Western-centrism and unreflected understanding of quality in art and art's autonomy, seems to have moved more visibly away from the search for new cultural policies based on the socialist principles of equality, freedom, self-management and solidarity".¹ Although concepts often occupy a significant part in manifestos included in speeches, commentaries, invitations and letters, practices reveal different trends, reflecting the great influence of Western modern art and its search for individual freedom and autonomy, disengagement from politics and the establishment of so-called objective criteria of quality. Already at the level of selection procedures, these criteria were established as the authority of predetermined conditions necessary for the artist's success. The success, in turn, depends on the perspective and the intensity of establishing the authority of the adopted perspective, which tends towards "truth" or "factuality".² The aim is to establish a totality (Western modernism), which can only emerge by placing a specific particularity in the position of an absolute, and this is inevitably linked to the elimination of other particularities.³ The canon of Western modernist art was formed as a result of certain intrinsic characteristics of the modernist period, which

1 Tepina, Umetniška stičišča – utopije – neuvrščenost, p. 89.

2 Feyerabend, *Znanost kot umetnost*, p. 68.

3 Welsch, *Unsere postmoderne Moderne*.

remained unnoticed during this era, as Francois Lyotard points out. These characteristics were nationality, power and hegemony. The problem of hegemony—without realising, Europe conceives and presents its culture as a universal fact—is also the problem of the IBGA.⁴ At this point, we are entering an area where, at the cultural level and in the period of the bipolar world, the struggle for the dominance of ideas was fought once again. In this field, the SFRY did not actually succeed in establishing its own criteria but followed the predominant hegemonic (Western) trends—which created the conditions for following a single and increasingly global influence—rather than tending towards the dispersion and diversity of multiple perspectives and equal opportunities for interaction that constituted the conceptual foundations of non-alignment.

Period prior to the agreements on cultural cooperation (1955–1960)

In 1957, before the signing of the Cultural Convention with India, the SFRY Embassy in New Delhi described the cultural relations between the two countries as follows:

India remains a peaceful non-bloc country. The aim is to achieve a balance between the two blocs, which is sometimes loosened in favour of the West and sometimes in favour of the East. According to the Embassy, these are tactical moves to identify internal and external needs in order to strengthen India's position. Tactical leniency towards the West does not yield the best results for India. Consolidation and improvement of political and other ties are occurring at a faster pace, despite the re-ignition of the Cold War. Many leaders are coming to India (Chou En-lai, Georgy Zhukov, etc.). Nehru's visit to the US was another important event, as India interpreted it as a major bridge for smoothing relations between the US and non-bloc countries as well as with the East. India entered, albeit to a limited extent, into the politics of the big nations. Its role was specific because it kept its doors more open than any other big country. India sought to avoid strong integration with the East, while the Western bloc policy was a major barrier to better contacts due to its colonial attitudes and racial discrimination. Consequently, India's relations with the West were at a proportionally low level, while the country was striving to meet the conditions to obtain aid and loans as soon as possible.

In the 1950s, Yugoslav-Indian relations were mainly determined by the attitude reflected in Indian politics; India aimed to become an equal

4 Ženko, *Totaliteta in umetnost*; Lyotard, Jameson and Welsch.

partner of the big countries, and therefore also tried to keep non-bloc and friendly countries at a certain distance: advising rather than consulting them, expecting support for its actions rather than displaying willingness for joint actions as equal partners. However, it should be pointed that among the non-bloc countries India maintained the best relations with Yugoslavia. According to the Embassy, this is mainly due to the importance of Yugoslavia in global politics, which other smaller non-bloc countries lack, the respect for principle in our foreign policy and, as an important factor, Nehru's⁵ personal respect for Comrade President.

Later on, the Federal Executive Council (SIV) and the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries in their information notices, reports and evaluations of cultural cooperation repeatedly emphasised that relations between the two countries had been good since the beginning of the cooperation and were rapidly strengthening and that, at the same time, cultural contacts constituted an important field and an incentive for the development of political and economic relations. In its report on cooperation between Yugoslavia and India between 1953 and 1966, the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries states:

These are two nations that emerged after the Second World War and fought for their freedom and independence—therefore contacts were established very soon and have been genuine and fruitful from the very beginning. Usual activities: diplomatic missions in New Delhi and Belgrade were established immediately after the war. At the cultural level, there was an exchange of information, publications from the sphere of cultural life—cultural propaganda. Before the meetings of the representatives of Yugoslavia and India, meetings of “goodwill missions” took place, which, in addition to their political character, also had the function of cultural missions; on these occasions, representatives of cultural and educational life had, for the first time, the opportunity to directly encounter the cultural achievements of our nations and become acquainted with the level of their cultural development. These relations are not accidental and are the result of the impressions that the members of our “goodwill mission” brought back from India. The Chair of Indology in Zagreb was established in 1962/63. This was followed by the organisation of Indological educational research, as well as by a

5 AJ 837_KPR-I-5b/39 (1–12), Kabinet predsednika republike. India: Iz izvještaja jugoslovske Ambasade u New Delhi-u o spoljnoj politici Indije i jugoslovske-indijskim odnosima, 11 October 1957.

symposium and an exhibition held in 1965 on Yugoslav-Indian cultural contacts through the centuries, which provided interesting insights for the wider cultural public on our cultural achievements related to the great culture of India—Sanskrit, the presence of the spiritual culture of India.⁶

Due to the distance between the two countries and historical circumstances, cooperation and integration at the level of cultural relations had to be developed anew, and in 1968 the Yugoslav diplomatic-consular missions provided the following assessment:

Translation of works had an instrumental role, and over the last ten to fifteen years there has been noticeable progress, as previously interactions were non-existent due to different contexts and distance. Conversely, political relations are at a high level and there is a long-term orientation towards the expansion of economic connections. In this way, culture and art, if they become better acquainted with each other, can also mutually enrich each other and become an object of interest and creative inspiration for cultural operators and artists in Yugoslavia and India, which are objective reasons for expanding cultural relations with India in the future. Cultural cooperation lags behind political relations and increasingly stronger economic cooperation—this is what emerges from all the reports prepared up to three or four years ago. This area received less attention and, consequently, fewer resources were allocated to it. Even when the Cultural Convention was signed with India in March 1960, this did not change.⁷

Krishna Reddy at the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts (1957–1963)

The Indian printmaker Krishna Reddy (1925–2018) exhibited at the IBGA even before the beginning of a greater influx of Indian artists and prior to the conclusion of agreements by the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. The thesis is that Reddy reached the IBGA through another route, the Western world art route, and that the same is true for as the vast majority of Indian artists who followed him.

Reddy, born into a family of farmers, fought injustice all his life, participating in protests, including Mahatma Gandhi's Quit India movement.⁸

6 AJ559_57_126 Savezna komisija za kulturne veze sa inostranstvom. Opšti material. Veze sa Azijom. Veze sa Indijom 1953–1966: Information notices on cooperation with India in the fields of education and culture. Petar Mihailovski.

7 AJ 319_49_65 Kulturno-prosvetne veze sa inostranstvom: Ocene i predlozi naših diplomatsko-konzularnih predstavništva, May 1968.

In fleeing the colonial police for his involvement in this revolutionary movement, Reddy came to Santiniketan, West Bengal, where he spent his formative years at Visva-Bharati University's Kala Bhavana (Institute of Fine Arts) founded by Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore. While at Santiniketan, Reddy trained to be a sculptor and watercolorist, and came to be influenced by key figures such as Nandalal Bose, Ram Kinker Bajj and Benode Behari Mukherjee—artists now characterized as forming the school of contextual modernism in India.⁹

He graduated in 1946 and was head of the art section at Kalakshetra Foundation until 1949, while also teaching art at the Montessori Teacher Training Institute in Madras, where he took up painting for the first time.¹⁰

Relevant for our research is his move to London in 1949 to study sculpture at the Slade School of Fine Arts under the supervision of Henry Moore, who himself exhibited several times at the IBGA, and Lucian Freud. In 1950, Reddy moved to Paris on a scholarship, where he met Constantin Brâncuși, who introduced him to the artistic life of the city. Here, Reddy studied sculpture under Ossip Zadkine at the Academie Grande Chaumiere and etching under Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17. Hayter, who regularly received personal invitations to participate at this Ljubljana-based event, was also a frequent guest of the IBGA.¹¹

In 1957, Reddy left for the Accademia Di Belle Arti Di Brer in Milan in order to study under Marino Marini. During this period, in 1957, 1961 and 1963, he exhibited his prints at the IBGA, but the archival material revealing how his works were admitted to the Biennial is scarce.

In 1957, artists were either invited in person or submitted their works themselves, which were then selected by a jury.¹² That year, Reddy, whose biography in the catalogue lists his studies in India and under Moore, Zadkine and Hayter was, was the only Indian artist to exhibit at the Biennial.¹³ On this occasion, he exhibited a colour aquatint *Fish*. In 1959 he did not participate, while in 1961 he exhibited three colour etchings, i.e. *Water Lilies*, *Pastoral and River*, the first two dated 1960 and the third dated 1961. The biography

in the catalogue mentions "numerous exhibitions in Paris, European cities and America" and the prize he won at the International Exhibition held in Philadelphia.¹⁴ The archival material of the International Centre of Graphic Arts for 1961 is non-existent, but other sources¹⁵ indicate that in October 1961 Reddy not only exhibited at the Biennial but also at the gallery Mala galerija in Ljubljana, selling two prints, which also emerges from his correspondence, dated in 1963, with the head of the IBGA Zoran Kržišnik.¹⁶ The Indian Ambassador was unable to attend the opening of the exhibition,¹⁷ although, in the same year, the Serbian art historian and critic Lazar Trifunović stressed the importance attached to participation in the Biennial by artists from all parts of the world.¹⁸

In 1963 Reddy received a personal invitation to exhibit at the IBGA, to which he responded with a letter and prints.¹⁹ Three other Indian artists, i.e. Krishna Kanwal, Bishamber Khanna and Kaiko Moti, exhibited their works alongside Reddy. Reddy's presentation is described by Alexander Bassin in the journal *Sinteza*, where he describes his prints as follows: "the lace-like sequence of graphic lines in Reddy's work already represents a departure from the acquired practices, and, on the whole, an attempt to merge Oriental and European art".²⁰ The catalogue of the 1963 Biennial of Graphic Arts already mentions Reddy being co-director of Atelier 17 in Paris and lists numerous exhibitions in Europe, America and India that displayed his artworks, highlighting once again the prize he won in Philadelphia.²¹ Reddy exhibited two prints from 1963, *Water Forms and Sunset*. In this period, he was already renowned for his mastery of intaglio printing and had been co-director at Hayter's Atelier 17 at least since 1962. Hayter founded this thriving workshop in Paris in 1927, moved it to New York in the period from 1939 to 1940 and re-established it in Paris in 1950. Originally located on the Rue Moulin Vert, the workshop's name was derived from its later location at 17 Rue Campagne Premiere, Paris, where Hayter settled at the beginning of the 1930s. Atelier 17 is known for numerous celebrated

8 Krishna Reddy 1925–2018.

9 Sumesh Sharma. Krishna Reddy and Atelier 17: A "New Form" Takes Shape.

10 Krishna Reddy 1925–2018.

11 SI MGLC 1963/F2, archive relative to the 5th Biennial of 18 May 1962: List of exhibitors, 18 May 1962.

12 SI MGLC, 1957/F1, 2. IBGA 1957: Minutes of the 1st ordinary meeting of the Committee for the 2nd International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, 2 March 1957.

13 Krishna Reddy 1925–2018.

14 Ibid.

15 Hayter, Krishna.

16 SI MGLC 1963/F2, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts: Competition: Applications and invitations. Krishna Reddy's letter, 8 February 1963.

17 SI MGLC 1963/F1, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts 1963: Invitations.

18 SI MGLC 1963/F1, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts: Minutes of the 1st meeting of the Organisational Committee for the 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, 21 December 1962.

19 SI MGLC 1963/F2, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts: Applications for participation: Krishna Reddy's response to the invitation and SI MGLC 1963/F2, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts: Minutes: Personal invitations.

20 Bassin, Peta mednarodna grafična razstava, p. 59.

21 Krishna Reddy 1925–2018

artists who worked there and were encouraged by Hayter's insistence that printmaking was not simply a method of reproduction but rather a form of artistic creation. The artists of the atelier often worked directly on the plate and were in a constant search for new experiences and techniques. Paris-based Atelier 17 was considered a meeting place, which provided a space for artistic experimentation for a number of artists, including Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Alberto Giacometti, Juan Cardenas, Constantin Brâncuși and Zarina Hashmi:²²

Notable among the innovations of Atelier 17 is the method of simultaneous color printmaking, an etching technique involving several colors on the same plate. It offers artists increased possibilities for experimentation and innovation. Collaboration between experienced and novice artists created a spirit of creative research. Each day an assistant or collaborator/assistant helps and advises the artists. However, each works according to his own rhythm and creates his own personal works of art.²³

Technique and style distinguish Reddy as an important printmaker. His prints are abstract, consisting of subtle grid-like designs on plates with intricate textures, even reliefs. The myriad of complex colours introduced into his prints reveal a contemplative approach to the infinite mysteries of nature. His work at Atelier 17 played a key role in developing a new printing process to produce multi-coloured prints using a single printing matrix and exploiting the viscosity and tackiness of the inks; this method was subsequently named "viscosity printing".

During the Paris demonstrations in May 1968, Reddy also created a print entitled *Demonstrators*, which is considered one of his most famous works.²⁴ "His unique vision was the startling combination of his pastoral nature studies from Santiniketan, with the darker cosmic view of French surrealism. His plate-making was sculptural, carved with styluses and tools into the copper."²⁵

In 1976, Reddy moved permanently to the United States. "A real guru and teacher, Krishna mentored generations in France and the US and always kept his links with India. He did many print workshops here with art students and taught many Indian artists in the

22 Atelier 17.

23 Ibid.

24 Krishna Reddy 1925–2018.

25 Kalra. A real guru, he always kept his links with India. The art fraternity remembers eminent sculptor and printmaker Krishna Reddy, who died in New York at the age of 93.

influential art studio Atelier 17, including Zarina Hashmi. A gentle soul with sharp political beliefs, his roots combined Tagore and Gandhi with a good dose of the French left," says photographer and curator Ram Rahman. He adds:

He also mentored me when I had just moved to New York and he got me to teach design at NYU. Always very generous with his time, guidance and even loans to young students, his loft was always filled with people of every continent and he made it a point to interact with black artists in the US. Bob Blackburn was one such artist he was extremely close to.²⁶

First agreements on cultural cooperation (1960–1965)

Institutional links between the IBGA and the countries from which the exhibitors came were also formed in other ways. The path leading to the expansion of contacts and cooperation was established with the *Agreement on Cultural Cooperation* signed in March 1960, which produced concrete results—from this point on, cultural relations actually began developing. What can be referred to as the second period lasted until the signing of the *Programme of Educational and Cultural Cooperation* in July 1965, which contributed to raising the level of cultural cooperation. The Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries described as major achievements of this period the visits of important personalities from Indian cultural life, i.e. Khwaja Ghulam Saiyidain (Secretary at the Indian Ministry of Education), Devi Presad (artist, activist and publicist) and Humayun Kabir (Indian Minister for Education), as well as the anniversary celebration dedicated to the humanist, writer and artist Rabindranath Tagore, which was organised in several cultural centres throughout the SFRY in 1961. In the academic year 1962/63, the Chair of Indology was founded at the Faculty of Arts in Zagreb. Five scholarships were offered for studying in India and five for studying in Yugoslavia. According to the Commission reports, the artistic field saw major achievements in the fine arts, music, performing arts and literature. An exhibition of contemporary Yugoslav painting was hosted in India in 1962,²⁷ followed by a solo exhibition by Peter Lubarda in 1963.²⁸ Indian artist Bishamber Khanna, who, as stated above, also participated at the 5th edition of the IBGA in 1963, refers to Lubarda's exhibition in his correspondence. In a letter dated 27 March 1963 to Zoran Kržišnik, director

26 Ibid.

27 Sodobno jugoslovansko slikarstvo, p. 91.

of the Museum of Modern Art (Moderna galerija) and head of the IBGA in Ljubljana, he apologised for the delay and communicated that Lubarda's exhibition was being held in Delhi at the time of his writing, describing it as an important contribution for Indian artists and art critics.²⁹ In 1962, India organised an exhibition held in the SFRY featuring works of two painters who were recipients of scholarships granted by the Government of Yugoslavia, where they had also undertaken their specialisation. In April 1964, an exhibition of twenty-five exhibits by the Indian sculptor Amar Nath Sehgal was presented in Belgrade.³⁰

The implementation of the Cooperation Programme, which was signed on 7 July 1965, took place mainly in 1966, as the programme did not enter into force until the second half of the year. This complicated the dynamics of its implementation, as the cooperation between the two states was disproportionate and unbalanced. Another problem arose at the end of the programme, as it was not extended and therefore expired on 31 March 1967; however, for the rest of 1967, the activities that experienced delays remained ongoing in the attempt to complete all their phases. A new cultural cooperation programme was signed only at the beginning of 1968, which did not interrupt the exchanges, but delayed and extended the time for the completion of activities, allowing the full realisation of the previous programme.³¹ This period of intense cooperation represents realistic terrain where the process of adaptation of both countries to the needs and interests of their own cultures took place, manifesting not only as a desire but also considering the material possibilities. The Commission expressed strong concern in relation to the geographical factor affecting cultural cooperation, since the considerable distance between the two countries required additional adjustments. It also noted that the distance reduced the possibility for a more intense and frequent cooperation, which became evident after 1964. Moreover, it recognised the differences between the two specific national cultures as an addi-

tional obstacle but expressed the belief that over a longer period of time and with continued cooperation, these differences would eventually diminish, which was a mutual desire. In its opinion, significant results had been achieved in all sectors (cooperation in the fields of education, fine arts, music and stage art, literature and film).³²

In 1965, New Delhi hosted an international painting exhibition with twenty-one participating countries. The exhibiting artists from the SFRY included, among others, Andrej Jemec, Ljubo Lah, Ibrahim Ljubović, Slavko Šohaj, Nikola Reiser, Aleksandar Tomašević, Đorđe Pravilović and Trajče Jančevski.³³ The event was part of art exhibitions exchanges—in return, India arranged an exhibition of miniature painting in Belgrade and Zagreb, which was held for the first three weeks of November 1965, while in December 1965,³⁴ the fifth international art exhibition was organised in New Delhi by the All India Fine Arts & Crafts Society. Yugoslavia participated in the international exhibition with four artworks, and the catalogue also includes an overview of contemporary Yugoslav art. Subsequently, the exhibition travelled to Calcutta, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Bombay, Chandigarh, Ahmedabad and Amritsar.³⁵

First biennial agreement on cultural cooperation (1965–1967)

On 7 July 1965, the first biennial programme on cultural and educational cooperation with India was adopted. Cultural activities began to be conducted in a completely systematic way. In January 1967, a delegation consisting of Dušan Vejnović (chairman of the Commission), Petar Mihailovski, Dušan Štrbac and the Secretary of the Embassy of the SFRY in New Delhi, joined by the President and Vice-President of the Republic of India, the Indian Minister of Education and the Secretaries for Culture, came to New Delhi. One of their activities was a visit of the Lalit Kala Academy.³⁶ The programme was usually renewed every two years, but as mentioned before, there were delays in its implementation; consequently, the new programme for the period 1968–1969 was signed only in January

28 AJ 559_57_126 Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. General material. Relations with Asia. Relations with India 1953–1966: Information notices on cooperation with India in the fields of education and culture. Petar Mihailovski (senior councillor on the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries).

29 SI MGLC 1963/F2, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts 1963: Correspondence from individual exhibitors.

30 AJ 559_100_221 Izložbe stranih umetnika u Jugoslaviji 1962–1964. Letter from the Embassy of the SFRY to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries on Nath Segal's arrival, 20 December 1963.

31 AJ 559_57_126 Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. General material. Relations with Asia. Relations with India 1953–1966: Information notice on cultural cooperation between India and Yugoslavia, 15 October 1966.

32 AJ 559_57_126 Petar Mihailovski.

33 Kronika, p. 109.

34 AJ 559_100_222 Exhibitions of foreign artists in Yugoslavia (1965–1966), Correspondence between the Embassy of the SFRY and the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 19 April 1965.

35 AJ 559_100_222 Exhibitions of foreign artists in Yugoslavia (1965–1966), Correspondence between the Embassy of the SFRY and the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 24 August 1965.

1968 (its signing coincided with the visit of President Tito's delegation to India between 22 and 24 January 1968).

In the meantime, the structure of the Federal Executive Council (SIV) in the SFRY changed; the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries was formed as a special socio-political body at the federal level, which merely coordinated the international cultural and educational activities of the SFRY in cooperation with the newly established republican Commissions for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, as well as with self-governing institutions and organisations, which were active in the field of culture and also cooperated with foreign institutions according to their own interests. In 1967, republican Commissions were formed in Montenegro, Macedonia and Slovenia. In the same year, biennial programmes were reaching their end and new ones were being drafted for the period 1968–1969. Preparations and discussions on programmes signed in the SFRY with fifteen countries were in progress, which is one of the reasons why the signing of the 1967 agreement with India was delayed until 1968, as it was connected to funding arrangements. Given the importance attached to the continuity of cooperation, this caused widespread discontent.³⁷ The possibility for cooperation was no longer the domain of the Federal Commission but was extended to local competent authorities and included coordination of all the activities of publishing houses, writers, fine arts, music and dramatic arts academies as well as of individual visual and other artists in relations with foreign countries. The main visual arts manifestations, which had been successfully approved at that time by the Federal Commission, were a solo exhibition by the painter Peter Lubarda and a representative exhibition dedicated to the Yugoslav graphic arts (which was planned to be opened in June 1967, displaying 100 prints³⁸). Prints also proved to be the most sensible choice, as they did not require a lot of resources for transport and the technical equipment was provided by India, but they had nevertheless the potential to leave a big impact.

Particularly important is also the participation at the Triennial of Art in Delhi, which exhibited works by Riko Debenjak, Boško

36 AJ 559_57_127 Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. General material. Relations with Asia. Relations with India 1967–1971: Report on the visit of the Yugoslav delegation to India in order to sign the Programme of Educational and Cultural Cooperation for the period 1968–1969.

37 AJ 319_49_65 Cultural and educational relations with foreign countries: report of the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries for the year 1967, Belgrade, May 1968, pp. 3–4.

38 Merhar, *Mednarodno kulturno sodelovanje Jugoslavije z državami članicami gibanja neuvrščeni*, p. 64.

Karanović, Albert Kinert, Zlatko Prica, Marjan Detoni, Aleksander Lukovič, Božidar Jakac, Mario Mascarelli, Mihajlo Petrov, Mersad Berber and Miroslav Šutej among others. Triennial-India was conceived by Dr Mulk Raj Anand, the then President of the Lalit Kala Academy in New Delhi, and it was in 1968 that the Triennial opened its doors for the first time.

In its documents, the Federal Commission draws attention to the lack of knowledge of Indian culture in the SFRY and suggests placing greater emphasis on the importance of learning the language and translating as well as on learning about Indian classical music, which had captured the interest of the West, exploring the ancient sculptures, which were unrivalled in terms of their richness and preservation, studying the best works of literature, etc. Moreover, the Commission also attaches great importance to the scholarships awarded by the Federal Institute for International Cultural, Educational and Technological Cooperation.³⁹ It noted that in 1968 relations between the two countries were sound and that the SFRY was striving to open up to all the countries across the globe but also to integrate into the international scene, as was evident from a number of conventions and programmes signed worldwide. In 1968, the SFRY cooperated in the field of culture with 100 countries, concluded cultural conventions with 46 countries and signed cultural biennial programmes with 21.⁴⁰

The financing of cultural cooperation was shaped according to a structure that changed considerably over the 1960s (in 1966 the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries still included the Republican Commissions for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries). After 1966, the Federal Executive Council (SIV) continued to finance and organise presentations of Yugoslav artists at international art manifestations. Throughout this time, there was a tendency towards decentralisation, but the SIV could not be completely excluded from financing cooperation with developing countries; in order to maximise the devolution of competencies to the Republics and the direct promoters of cooperation, the Commission proposed to diminish the role of the Federation and to concentrate its powers on only two categories: developing countries and the "joint actions".⁴¹ While most of the artistic cooperation with the above-mentioned countries remained founded by the Federation, the responsibility of the Republics was limited to rare instances. It was also proposed that the Federation retain a

39 AJ 319_49_65 Cultural and educational relations with foreign countries: Evaluations and proposals of our diplomatic and consular missions, May 1968.

40 AJ 319_49_65 Cultural and educational relations with foreign countries: Analysis of cultural relations: considerations 1968.

role in providing financial and material support for artistic exchanges with developing countries and that the Republics gradually become involved in the financing of cooperation (for the first two to three years it was envisaged that the Republics would cover half of the total costs). The SIV furthermore proposed that joint actions—those related to major artistic manifestations and the organisation of major representative art exhibitions, through which the cultures of nations and ethnic groups of the SFRY affirmed themselves in the world—continue to be supported materially and financially by the Federation, while the Republics would have the responsibility to organise the exhibitions on a proportional basis, according to the activities of individual territories.⁴² In addition to expanding the biennial programmes, the Federal Commission also aimed to increase the number of direct connections and initiatives of individual institutions, which were either foreseen but not yet implemented or insufficiently realised. It assumed that the financing problems in India were even greater:

The budget of the Ministry of Culture and Education has been considerably reduced, and given the economic situation, it is improbable that significant funding will be allocated for cultural cooperation. The question which arises in these circumstances is whether our companies should be more actively involved in financing cultural activities and contribute to elevating the prestige of Indian companies active in this field. The main problems are financial resources and the great geographical distance, which implies that in cases where the costs are limited, everything has to be done to ensure cultural exchanges between institutions and cultural operators.⁴³

It can be deduced that the financial aspect was one of the key obstacles to the development of cultural cooperation, and despite there being high interest in deepening cultural contacts with developing countries, it long lagged behind political and economic interests and relations. From 1960, when the SFRY signed the first convention, until the signing of the Cooperation Programme, the Commission's evaluations of the cultural exchanges with India pointed out that they were carried out in a haphazard manner, with no organised work from either side, causing cultural cooperation to lag behind political relations and economic links. Attention was drawn to the fact that

41 AJ 319_50_66 Cultural and educational relations with foreign countries: Questions regarding financing cultural cooperation, SIV, 17 July 1970, p. 4.

42 Ibid., pp. 14–17.

43 AJ 319_49_65 Cultural and educational relations with foreign countries: Evaluations and proposals of our diplomatic and consular missions, May 1968.

in a situation of strict centralisation of foreign currency, as was the case in India, it was not possible to count on unplanned exchanges, which affected the fruitfulness of cooperation:

In the difficult foreign currency situation that India is facing, the budget of the Ministry of Education and Culture planned for cultural exchanges with foreign countries is the first to be impacted by cuts as it occurred a couple of months ago when India's budget was drastically reduced. It is therefore important that the Programme is adapted to our needs and capacities as realistically and appropriately as possible.⁴⁴

Self-governance

The development of self-management in the field of Yugoslavia's cultural relations with foreign countries did not keep pace with other social processes in terms of its intensity. The old forms of performing work and decision-making on cultural cooperation, which were tied to a single decision-making centre, were preserved. The goal, however, was to decentralise the Federation's competences regarding its international cultural activities, but the attempts did not yield much success. The Commission expressed the need to focus on substantive rather than organisational processes, especially on the realisation of the constitutional rights of the Republics and the pursuit of their interests. It argued that cultural relations could not be consolidated without self-governing bodies. Its members wanted to promote the self-governing processes relevant to cultural links, which were supposedly more suitable for the functioning of a self-governing system, presuming that the elements in common would crystallise. They recognised the need to develop an awareness of the interconnectedness of the world among the working population, labour organisations and their associations with the purpose that these actors would concentrate their efforts on building the broadest possible cultural connections. The development of self-management in the field of culture and education should have enabled working people to assess and identify their interest in cultural exchange and facilitate the development of responsibility awareness among all the parties involved. The Federal Council hoped that with the self-managed development of culture in general, cultural contacts with foreign countries would become a matter managed by working people and individual communes, pursuing their interests and opening up processes in which individuals would freely and directly realise their interest in exchanging

44 AJ 559_5_12 Opšti poverljivi materiali 1965–1966. Comments by the Embassy of the SFRY in New Delhi to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries on the proposals of the Yugoslav-India Cultural Cooperation Programme.

creativity and learning about the creativity of others. At the same, the Federation was expected to be vigilant and direct resources towards the overlooked interests of society.⁴⁵ The Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries emphasised that in cultural exchanges with foreign countries it had to be considered that these were not merely exchanges but also produced effects, which, through the involvement of countries, occurred in the East as well as in the West. In 1968, it suggested that cultural cooperation should be integrated into the whole system of cultural development in Yugoslavia in a more organic way to be a genuine reflection of the country's progress. The Commission's members underlined their awareness that closing could not prevent the effects, and that they had to concentrate on what would benefit Yugoslavia, i.e. a clearer formulation of a differentiated conception of the policy on its cultural relations with foreign countries, which included the great powers, neighbouring countries and regions (the Balkans, the Mediterranean, Europe) as well as developing countries.⁴⁶ In the contacts with Eastern European countries they wanted greater visibility of Yugoslavia's contemporary successes in the area of cultural production. They stressed that a more critical attitude should be adopted towards art originating from these countries. As regards developing countries, the Commission argued that future cooperation and Yugoslav interest should be clearly defined and conceived for the long term. Most of these countries seemed interested, and the Commission recognised the great importance of Yugoslavia in cultural cooperation with them. Furthermore, it reckoned that it was important to also find ways to cooperate through international organisations such as UNESCO and the OECD, and to understand culture and education in the context of development. For the future, the Commission thus saw the need for a stronger cultural and educational policy and a policy on cultural cooperation with foreign countries. It also pointed out that with the participation of all interested factors, it would be necessary to consider the potential ways of conducting foreign policies in line with the internal policies of these countries.⁴⁷

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45 AJ 319_ 49_ 65 Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries 1967–1971: Considerations of the Federal Council for Education and Culture: analysis of Yugoslavia's cultural relations with foreign countries, 14 November 1968, p. 5.

46 Ibid., p. 7.

47 Ibid., p. 9.

Cultural Cooperation Programme and the IBGA

The IBGA was rarely discussed by the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, but Zoran Kržišnik and the creators of the Biennial ensured from the very beginning that informal connections with this important body were maintained. In 1955, the Organising Committee decided to form a permanent secretariat of the International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, to which Zoran Kržišnik personally invited Ivo Frol (Secretary of the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries from 1953 to 1958, Assistant Chairman of the Commission for Education and Culture of the SIV from 1958 to 1961), as the Committee considered this essential for the international and therefore also absolutely Yugoslav character of the Biennial.⁴⁸ Already at the Committee meeting held in June 1955, at the time of the catalogue's publication, the IBGA decided to invite as patrons Rodoljub Čolaković, Marko Ristić (Chairman of the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries), Juš Kozak, Boris Kraiger, Marijan Dermastia, Dolf Vogel-nik, Boris Kocjančič and the ambassadors of all the participating countries.⁴⁹ Contacts with the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and others actors therefore also occurred through "unofficial" channels.

In 1957, the IBGA asked for sponsorship, proposing a request for the funds from the President of the country either through the Marshal's Office, Moša Pijade or Rodoljub Čolaković.⁵⁰ During these years Ivo Frol was still on the Secretariat Committee. At a meeting of the Secretariat for the Organisation of International Exhibitions on 26 November 1958, the Secretariat proposed an expansion and the inclusion of Bogdan Osolnik, secretary of the Committee on Information in Belgrade, and Dušan Popović, secretary of the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and member of the Ideological Commission of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, as its members,⁵¹ which was realised in January 1959 at the request of the People's Organisational Committee in Ljubljana. Another interesting fact about the

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48 SI MGLC 1955, 1st International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F1, Correspondence between Kržišnik and Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (Frol), Letter, 28 October 1955.

49 SI MGLC 1955, 1st International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F1, Minutes of the meetings for the organisation of the 1st IBGA, Minutes of the meeting of the Committee for the 1st International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, 8 June 1955.

50 SI MGLC 1957 2nd International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F1, Minutes of sessions and meetings, Minutes of the 1st ordinary session of the Working Committee for the 2nd International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, 2 March 1957, p. 6.

51 SI MGLC, 1959, 3rd International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F1, Minutes of meetings, Minutes of the meeting of the Secretariat for the Organisation of International Exhibitions of Graphic Arts, 26 November 1958, p. 2.

third edition of the IBGA (1959) is that President Tito took over the patronage of the event, to the great satisfaction of the Secretariat.⁵² In the same year, Tito also visited the IBGA, and the patronage continued in the following years, e.g. it is mentioned in the 1975 information notice on the 11th edition of the IBGA.

After the third edition of the IBGA (1961), the organisational structure of the Biennial no longer involved a direct representative of the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. An example emerges from the correspondence relative to the preparations for the fifth edition of the IBGA between the Commission and Zoran Kržišnik asking it for participation in the prize fund (with a contribution amounting to 300,000 of the former dinars).⁵³

Besides the programmes with Egypt and Tunisia, the programme on cultural cooperation between the SFRY and India was one of the most extensive programmes signed with developing countries. It developed a very wide range of cooperation at the level of education—including university cooperation and the exchange of scholarships for specialisation and post-graduate studies—and comprised the exchange of art exhibitions, exchange of theatre and music companies, and exchange of cultural operators, writers, artists and music professionals, as well as cooperation in the field of sport.

The cooperation continued in the 1970s. The discussions on the programme for the 1973–1974 period were chaired by Krsto Bulajić, director general of the Federal Institute for International Educational, Cultural and Technical Cooperation, who also welcomed the visiting Indian delegation, led by State Secretary Mohan Mukherjee deputising for the Minister of Culture. In the field of fine arts, the plans provided for exchanging art exhibitions, inviting Indian artists to visit the art colonies in Strumica and Prilep and, for the first time, inviting artists from the SFRY to participate in the art colonies organised by the Lalit Kala Academy.⁵⁴ The programme, signed in Belgrade in January 1975, stipulated that the two countries would exchange one art exhibition each, accompanied by one expert, whose visit could last up to three weeks. Moreover, it was specified for the first time that Yugoslavia would invite India to par-

52 SI MGLC, 1959, 3rd International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F1, Minutes of meetings, Minutes of the meeting of the Secretariat for the Organisation of International Exhibitions of Graphic Arts, 11 April 1959.

53 SI MGLC 1963, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F2, Personal invitations and List of invited embassies and consulates general. Request for contribution to the prize fund.

54 AJ 465_619 Kulturna suradnja sa Indijom 1976–1977: Information notice on the Yugoslav plan for the programme of cooperation in the field of education and culture between the SFR Yugoslavia and the Republic of India for the period 1975–1976, p. 4.

ticipate in the 9th edition of the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts in 1975. At India's request, Yugoslavia participated with one artist in each of the colonies for sculptors and painters organised by the Lalit Kala Academy. This was the youngest of the three similar national organisations, founded in New Delhi in August 1954. It was inaugurated by the Minister for Education Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. The Lalit Kala Academy was the materialisation of the dream of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of independent India, who aspired for the cultural and national identity of India. The Academy focused on activities in the field of visual arts. In his opening speech, Kalam Azad emphasised: "The Academy must preserve the glorious traditions of the past, enriching them with the work of our modern artists. It also must strive to improve the standards and public taste."⁵⁵

Indian representatives at the IBGA and the Lalit Kala Academy

The Committee meeting minutes from 24 January 1955 on the first IBGA report that in relation to the Indian artists, the best course of action would be to write to the Indian Ministry of Education. However, apart from the official communication channels, the correspondence was also personal, as is evident from Reddy's and Bishamber's letters. From the available sources emerges that Krishna Reddy exhibited at the second Biennial in 1957 and at its fourth edition in 1961 as the only Indian representative, but at the fifth Biennial in 1963, he was joined by three other representatives, one of whom was Bishamber, who was in personal contact with both the Embassy and Zoran Kržišnik. The group of Indian artists exhibiting in 1965 consisted of Kaptain Perez, Kanwal Krishna, who participated again, and Moti Kaiko. In 1967, India participated with just one representative, Bhavsar Natyar, while in 1969 the exhibiting Indian artists were three (Bhalt Jyoti, Hore Somnath and Krishna Devayani, all of whom participated in the first Triennial in New Delhi, where Bhalt and Hore won three national awards each, and Krishna was awarded the grand prize). Chopra Jagmohan and Dutt Lakshmi exhibited their works at the 9th edition of the Biennial in 1971, while 10th anniversary edition of the Biennial was attended by as many as seven exhibiting artists from India: Agrawal Jai Krishna, Banerjee Dipak (who, like Krishna Reddy, studied with Hayter), Ghosh Tapan (studied with Hayter and trained in Atelier 17), Pasricha Anjula, Selvam Panner (studied with Hayter), Shaw Lalu Prosad, Sud Anupam (like Krishna Reddy, studied at Slade School of Fine Arts). Ghosh,

55 Lalit Kala Akademi.

Shaw, Selvam and Pasricha were invited, while Agrawal and Sud attended the event on the basis of a competition.⁵⁶ What becomes apparent is the importance of the Indian artists' route through their studies in France, which was opened by Reddy and followed by a number of exhibitors. In 1975, Agrawal Jai Krishna, Banerjee Dipak and Sud Anupam exhibited again, along with Reddy Dubbaka Laxminarsimha and Devraj Dakoji, both winners of Indian national awards, who studied in Hyderabad and Baroda.⁵⁷

The question of the role of the Lalit Kala Academy in relation to the IBGA remains unanswered. The Academy appears on the list of intermediaries for the fifth IBGA, which was organised in 1963, and on the list for the following two biennials.⁵⁸ At that time, as emerges from the IBGA archives, Krishna Reddy was personally invited to attend the exhibition, along with the Indian Ambassador in Belgrade, Jagan Nath Khosla (Ambassador between 1961 and 1964).⁵⁹ Khosla is also mentioned in one of the Commission's dispatches, in which Bhabesh Chandra Sanyal, director of the Western Division of the Ministry of Education in India, blames him for the fact that none of the ministers of the Indian government met with Krsto Cervenkovski when he was on a visit to India.⁶⁰

According to archival material of the International Centre of Graphic Arts (MGLC), on 7 December 1970, the IBGA organising committee sent a request to the Lalit Kala Academy asking for provision of artists from India, as also emerges from Kržišnik's reminder of 19 January in which he seeks information from Lalit Kala Academy regarding the participation in the 9th IBGA.⁶¹ But it was only then, in 1971, that the Indian selector—the Lalit Kala Academy—was thanked in the catalogue by the IBGA Secretariat for the first time; it appears as if it was only then that this Indian academy officially became the selector of Indian artists, although, as already mentioned, it was included in the IBGA's lists of intermediaries as early as in 1963. The acknowledgement appears again in the catalogue of the 11th IBGA (1975), in which thanks are expressed to the selector for India, i.e. the secretary of the Lalit Kala Academy, as

56 SI MGLC 1973/F2, 10th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, box F1, Jury: Embassy interventions, invitations, confirmations, Competition list.

57 Kržišnik, 12. *mednarodni bienale grafike*.

58 SI MGLC, 1963, box F2, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, New Year's card 1964 and addresses, List of New Year's cards recipients 1963/64 for exhibitors at the 5th International Graphic Art Exhibition and its mediators.

59 SI MGLC, 1963, box F1, 5th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, Personal invitations and List of invited embassies and consulates general.

60 AJ 559_67_149, Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries General material, Dispatches 1960–1963, ŠTK dispatch n. 841, 7 June 1963.

61 SI MGLC, 1971, box F1, 10th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, Invitations to participate, Letter from Kržišnik to B.C. Sanyal of the Lalit Kala Academy, 19 January 1971.

well as to Sankho Chaudhuri, a sculptor who, among others, exhibited at Forma Viva in Kostanjevica na Krki, Slovenia, and that year acted as an intermediary by recommending three Indian artists for the IBGA.⁶²

Findings

It emerges that the IBGA's cooperation with Indian artists and their entourage is varied and occurs through institutional and non-institutional channels to an almost comparable extent. The cultural contacts between India and the SFRY were much more genuine than with some other non-aligned countries, as the political and economic connections were considerably more stable and balanced than was the case with most other members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Several artists who exhibited at the IBGA established personal contacts with its organisers, especially with Zoran Kržišnik; this also resulted in closer contacts and more in-depth presentations through additional exhibitions, such as Krishna Reddy's exhibition hosted in October 1961 at the Mala galerija, Ljubljana, or the colony in Kostanjevica na Krki, which Sankho Chaudhuri, a sculptor and selector of Indian artists for the IBGA, attended during his visit to the SFRY. Similarly, federal cultural cooperation with India in the field of the fine arts was also very varied, ranging from scholarships for specialisation in printmaking in Yugoslavia to exchanges of exhibitions and longer visits, as in the case of Peter Lubarda, who exhibited in New Delhi, where he stayed for several months (1963; see, for example, the exhibition "Prometheans of the New Century", Museum of Yugoslavia, Belgrade 2021, curated by Ana Panić and Jovana Nedeljković). Participations in the Triennial in New Delhi were also important, as well as participations in other international exhibitions across India, at which Yugoslavia was present with the represented artists.

Most of the contacts at the level of the SFRY, especially after 1961, were, however, conducted according to the Convention and Programme; what was lacking was countries' own engagement and the search for links from the core, as Yugoslavia and India were in reality miles apart, geographically, politically and historically as well as culturally. The authorities were aware of the geographical and cultural distance and were taking steps towards mutual education and building mutual acquaintance. In this way, the authorities strived to establish a cultural policy which would be complementary to stronger political and economic relations. With this in mind, we

62 SI MGLC, 1977, box F1, 12th International Exhibition of Graphic Arts, Invitations list, 11 November 1976.

can see that the cultural exchanges and collaborations that originated from the channels of political bodies and cultural institutions often served the prestige of abundance and generated manifest openness, and, at least at the level of the IBGA, also created more genuine ties and co-influences. The establishment of new artistic landscapes did not occur to a large extent, as the venue itself was established as a carrier of prestige, at least for a while. "The display of artworks, however, is neither an innocent process nor one in which some sort of neutral evaluative criteria are applied by those who are in charge of these events. Rather, it is always dependent on the larger politics that those who occupy key positions in these institutions, the government, the funders, the curators or the artistic directors, wish to express them."⁶³ At the level of the IBGA, these policies were represented by self-governing bodies, which followed the already existing and established criteria, reflected at the time in the cultural policies of the West.

63 Kompatsiaris, *The Politics of Contemporary Art Biennials. Spectacles of Critique*, pp. 27–28.

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Daša Tepina

VIROSI AV EGDYPTIAN CULTURAL
 VIROSI AV EGDYPTIAN CULTURAL
 YUGOSLAV-EGYPTIAN CULTURAL
 RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF ART
 INTERSECTIONS IN LJUBLJANA
 AND ALEXANDRIA IN THE
 1960s AND 1970s*
 1960S AND 1970S*
 1960S AND 1970S

The paper explores how the Non-Aligned Movement influenced the cultural relations between Yugoslavia and Egypt¹ in the 1960s and 1970s and examines the reception of fine art originating from the non-aligned countries in the former Yugoslavia (FPRY/SFRY). It starts by looking into the activities of two artistic intersections—the International Biennial of Graphics Arts in Ljubljana (MGB) and the Alexandria Biennial for Mediterranean Countries (both founded in 1955). They served as central art intersections that brought together works from both sides of the Iron Curtain, as well as those from the so-called Third World, which was in the process of establishing itself as a counterpoint to the bipolar relations of the Cold War.

The International Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana was organised into individual presentations by the participating countries (modelled on the Venice Biennale) and featured prints from all the

* The article is a result of the research project J7-2606, *Models and Practices of International Cultural Exchange of the Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics*, which is financed by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS).

¹ Throughout its turbulent history, Egypt had often been part of Arab states of various forms. Between 1958 and 1961, it existed as the United Arab Republic, a name it continued to use at MGB as late as in 1971, despite merging with Libya and Syria in 1972–1977.

participating countries. From its very founding, the Biennial began extending invitations to the non-aligned countries. Yugoslavia was a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement and a prominent player in this field; its cultural politics were accordingly oriented towards integration and cultural exchange with the non-aligned countries, a fact that was also reflected at the art venues. According to semi-structured interviews,² as well as archival material, artistic styles other than Western modernism aroused little interest. The analyses corroborate that, showing that the prints by authors from the NAM at the MGB were largely overlooked (the rest of the authors had a similar experience, as attested to by the works by Cuban³ or Indian authors that were also examined). The paper thus offers an overview of the political background of the biennials, which we examine mainly through an analysis of archival materials from the Archive of Yugoslavia and the archives of the International Centre of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana. Our findings are based primarily on the material from the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries fund, the analysis of the established cultural programmes, and the cultural agreements and conventions on cooperation established between Yugoslavia and Egypt. We also draw on the aforementioned semi-structured interviews with people who were active participants at the time, as well as the existing literature on the topic.

In the international sphere, the mid-1950s saw the newly established countries of the Global South begin to establish links among each other. The stand-out example of such international integration was the Non-Aligned Movement, which was founded in 1961 in Belgrade. As one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the country known at the time as FPRY was gaining increasing importance and prestige in the international political arena through its international policies. In the paper we seek to understand how the fundamental principles of the Non-Aligned Movement were expressed in the area of artistic practices in individual artistic intersections, namely Ljubljana and Alexandria.

Our central focus will be the 1960s and early 1970s, which is when the founding and the bulk of the activities of the Non-Aligned Movement took place. We will be examining the case of two central art venues that served as important intersections of cultural, as well as political international relations between Egypt and Yugoslavia. We will be taking a deeper look into the impact of cultural policies, since we are interested in how the principles of non-align-

2 Testimony by Ž. Š. V.

3 See Grafenauer, Umetnost, gibanje neuvrščjenih in mednarodni grafični bienale v Ljubljani, pp. 91–104.

ment resonated with individual artists and curators, as well as in the organisational processes themselves. In addition to examining the individual premises of non-alignment through the examples of Egypt's cultural policies, we will also be taking an in-depth look at a specific example, namely the trajectory of the artist Menhat Allah Helmy, the most frequently featured Egyptian artist at the MGB, and the only participant at the Biennial from a non-aligned country to receive a special mention from the organising committee. We are starting with the thesis that art venues like the MGB in its early period (1955–1970), which attracted artists from the Global South, were strongly influenced by Western criteria of quality.⁴ This is also apparent in the case of the Egyptian artist who, while trained in Egypt, was introduced to high modernism during her specialisations in the UK. Her art is not especially typical of her place of origin, and is instead strongly influenced by Western modernism. Our assumption is that she got in contact with the MGB through studios and artists from Western Europe, and that this was perhaps the reason she received an honorary award, since her artistic expression was based on high modernism that was seen at the time as the pinnacle of quality graphics.

Cultural Policies and Exchanges between Yugoslavia and Egypt

We trace cultural policies by examining three premises that characterise both the politics of Yugoslavia and the politics of the Non-Aligned Movement. These are anti-colonialism, anti-imperialist struggles and decolonisation; the politics of non-involvement and peaceful coexistence, and finally the Yugoslav self-management. In light of these principles, we observe how cultural exchanges and interactions were being established at policy level at the biennials in the form of artistic practices.

Anti-colonialism, Anti-imperialist Struggle and the Questions of Decolonisation

We try to examine anti-colonialism, anti-imperial struggles and issues of decolonisation through the thesis that, in the context of culture, these were reflected in struggles over the idea of what constituted the art of the period. In the cultural sphere, a parallel race was going on regarding which direction would flourish in the world of art, and here, the biennial exhibitions played an important role in shaping global trends. Analysing the MGB, for example, shows that, while following Western modernist trends, it also included graphic

4 Ibid., p. 95.

prints from all round the world. Even so, they did not receive the same level of acknowledgement and appreciation as the art by well-known European graphic artists.⁵ Modernism coincided with the general trend of pursuing modernity, which is fundamentally about “the imperial regulation of land, the discipline of the soul, and the creation of the truth”.⁶ This discourse, Ashcroft asserts,⁷ made possible the large-scale regulation of human identity within the boundaries of Europe and its colonies. The emergence of modernism in art spread from Europe at a time of colonial collapse, establishing itself as a new attempt at hegemonic cultural unity in the world and manifesting as a new form of colonialism. We want to explore this paradigm by looking at cultural intersections and by performing a comparative analysis to give us an idea of the role played by the periphery in these processes.

The archival material shows that the cooperation between the UAR and Yugoslavia from the mid-1950s onwards was very diverse in nature. Egypt was a cultural centre of great interest to the West, which saw it as an important starting point for the spread of modern art in the Arab world and more widely in Africa. In addition, the country had a keen interest in ancient Egyptian art and its manifestations in Europe.⁸ Despite the strong Western presence dating back centuries, the period under study also brought rich and quality cooperation in the field of cultural exchanges with Yugoslavia, which was considered one of Egypt’s closest friends. The questions we wish to raise here are how these contacts were reflected in the cultural exchanges between the two countries in the context of the Non-Aligned Movement, how the relations between the UAR and Yugoslavia influenced the West and the East, and whether the beginnings of a different cultural policy, one based on an anti-colonial perspective, could have been established.

The UAR, and Egypt in particular, with its rich and long historical and cultural tradition, made use of its prominent cultural role to expand its international affiliations. Success in the area of cultural policies was very important for the country, as it often represented the starting point for better political and economic international relations. The state strongly encouraged the spread of culture from the narrow circles of the initiated to the broader classes of the people, from intellectuals, workers and youth to agrarian workers. Using this approach, the UAR was able to create a climate in which

it was easier to secure funds—credit, guarantees, foreign exchange inflow through tourism, film co-productions, commercial use of radio, and so on.⁹

The cooperation with Yugoslavia was based on a different relationship—one that was based on friendship and a political alliance, which were important for both countries at the time, as evidenced by archival material. The focal points for cultural exchanges were the two biennials. Yugoslavia had participated in the Alexandria Biennial continuously since its inception. Starting with 1961, with the exceptions of 1965 and 1973, UAR artists also participated at the MGB in Ljubljana.

In 1955, arrangements began for the ratification of a convention on cultural cooperation between the FPRY and the UAR. Cultural cooperation began intensively as early as 1956. In 1957, the first agreement on cultural cooperation was signed in Cairo, and on 22 December 1958, a cultural cooperation plan was signed. The signatories were Krste Crvenkovski, Minister of Culture of the FPRY, who represented Yugoslavia, and the Minister of Education of the UAR. The plan entered into force on 9 February 1959.¹⁰ Crvenkovski played a key role in forging cultural links on the Yugoslav side, being more than just a signatory. He visited Cairo several times during that time (a 10-day stay in 1959 and then at least two more times in the following years). Each time, the visits were reciprocal in 1960, for example, the Yugoslav visit was followed by a visit by a delegation of Egyptian cultural workers, whose tour, in addition to Belgrade and other cities, included Ljubljana.¹¹ In addition to politicians’ trips, this period was thus also characterised by frequent and fruitful exchanges of cultural manifestations and guest appearances by cultural workers.

The archival materials show that by 1964, the modest results began to be acknowledged.¹² As in other countries, the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (CCRFC), as the central body for cultural exchanges of the SFRY, showed interest in Egyptology. The Western European and other, richer countries, however, had more success in this respect. On the other hand, the modest results were also, in part, a consequence of the acrimony between Egypt and Israel. Despite the complications in the previous editions, the programme of artistic cooperation for 1964 and 1965

5 Testimony by Ž. Š. V. (s. a.) or Stepančič, *Zgrešene klofute*, p. 39.

6 Turner, *Theories of Modernity and Postmodernity*, p. 4.

7 Ashcroft, *Post-Colonial Transformation*, p. 211.

8 Tatomir, “Egyptomania in antiquity and in modern world literature. imaginary, inter-cultural context and mentality”, pp. 556–581.

9 AJ 559_511_Obči poverljiv material 1964, Kulturni odnosi UAR sa inostranstvom.

10 AJ 559_55_122-123 Egipat (UAR) 1956–1966, *Plan izvršitve kulture in znanstvenega sodelovanja med FNRJ in ZAR*.

11 AJ 559_55_122-123 Egipat (UAR) 1956–1966, Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 21 October 1960.

12 AJ 559_55_122-123 _Magreb i Levant, Egipat (UAR) 1967–1970.

(in the latter year, the UAR did not participate in the MGB) was still rich. Visual arts presentations were subsequently scaled down in accordance with the financial capacity of both countries, and were fewer in 1966 than in previous years. In 1967, the SFRY waited for the UAR's response to the draft agreement.¹³ That same year, the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries in the SFRY noted that cultural exchanges were no longer going smoothly and that many of the planned cultural activities had not been carried out. Even so, the participation in both biennials, the MGB in Ljubljana and the Alexandria Biennial, was carried through.¹⁴ Trouble was mounting, however. Despite its previous intent, Egypt did not send an exhibition entitled *5000 Years of Egyptian Ceramics* to the SFRY, replacing it with an exhibition of contemporary works. Commenting on this development, the Commission wrote that Egyptian art had "already approached Western art to such a degree that this is a sensible decision."¹⁵ This confirms the thesis that the Commission itself saw Western modernism as the benchmark of quality, and shows a degree of acceptance of the given situation.

In 1968, the Yugoslav Embassy in Cairo was visited by Hasan Boulbola, the Egyptian Undersecretary for Cultural Exchange. He acknowledged that, while the SFRY had implemented 90 per cent of the programme, Egypt had only managed 50 per cent. The reasons, he argued, were of purely financial nature—especially after the so-called Six-Day War with Israel—and not a lack of desire to cooperate with the SFRY. In the same year, the SFRY again sent an invitation to the UAR to participate in the MGB, as Yugoslavs had also been invited to the Biennial in Alexandria.¹⁶ The new programme was announced by Boulbola at the end of February 1969 and signed in Yugoslavia by the Egyptian delegation in April.¹⁷ In comparison to the previous years, there were few agreements on cultural exchanges of artefacts during that time, with cultural policy focusing more on scholarships for exchange students and education in general. There had also been fewer trips by officials and delegates to Egypt, as well as a general decline in cultural cooperation.¹⁸ In the cultural programme for 1975 and 1976, the Commission's analysis of relations until that time noted that in 1973, the scope of cultural relations with the Arab Republic of Egypt had been limited due to the events that took place in the Middle East in October of that year. In October 1973, the Arab-Israeli War took place between Israel, Egypt and Syria

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 AJ 559_55_122-123_Magreb i Levant, Egipat (UAR) 1956–1966.

16 Ibid.

17 AJ 559_69_153–156 Dispatches, Dispatch No 214, 19 February 1968.

18 AJ 559_55_122-123_Magreb i Levant, Egipat (UAR) 1967–1970.

as a consequence of the 1967 Six-Day War, a conflict between Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan that had resulted in the Israeli occupation of Palestine, Sinai and the Golan Heights. The announced visit of the Minister of Culture Yusuf Sibai to Belgrade was cancelled that year, for example. In the art sphere, however, the cooperation was still quite robust (SFRY artists participated in the Alexandria Biennial, and while Egypt did not attend MGB that year, there were other small exhibitions on tour).¹⁹

In its cooperation with Egypt, Yugoslavia took on a different role than the imperial powers; Egypt's cooperation with the latter in the field of culture was mainly due to the financial and political benefits. This part of the cooperation with the West ran in parallel with the cooperation with the SFRY and the ideas of the Non-Aligned Movement. Despite the UAR's position as the focus of cultural interest for the countries of the Western bloc, it saw cooperation with the SFRY as very important and thus laid the groundwork for the exploration of different cultural policies. It was, evident, however, that the attitude of both Egypt and Yugoslavia towards the valuation of works of art in this period was heavily influenced by the criteria of Western modernism. According to Gardner and Green, most of the works on display were comfortably figurative, and their creators in many cases trained in Western European art schools, often with links to the Ecole de Paris—an institution that also had a significant impact on the MGB. With this argument, Gardner and Green rightly try to draw attention to the pitfalls of judging aesthetics through a Western or North-Atlantic lens.²⁰ In a broader sense, modernism was one of the major challenges at the time, but also one to which insufficient attention was paid at the level of the cultural policies of the so-called Third Way. Modernity, Maha Samman cautions, does not by itself construct culture; rather, it transforms indigenous culture through the processes and forces of globalisation. This process leaves commerce as the sole driving force, with the consequence that the same characteristics begin emerging in different parts of the world. Samman thus finds that, by all accounts, modernisation is not concerned with the impacts of the colonial perspective, but rather with ignoring the specificities of a place, its characteristics and its needs, and helping to make sure that the world is unifying under the same cultural model.

19 AJ 465_608_Kulturna suradnja s Egiptom_1975-76, Review of realisation in the cultural programme for educational and cultural cooperation with the Arab Republic of Egypt for 1973 and 1974 and evaluation of past cooperation, with proposals for further cooperation and the drafting of a Yugoslav proposal for a programme for educational and cultural cooperation with the ARE for 1975 and 1976, 4 December 1974, pp. 1–2.

20 Gardner and Green, *Biennials, Triennials, and Documenta*, p. 90.

The Politics of Non-involvement and Peaceful Coexistence

Within the Middle-East, the UAR was an area of great interest, where Israeli, French, British and American interests clashed with the interests of Arab countries (Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia). The nationalisation of the Suez Canal by Egypt on 26 July 1956 set in motion a series of events that culminated in a joint invasion on Egypt by Israel, France and Great Britain, which ended in the occupation of Gaza and Sharm El-Sheikh. This was not supported by the US at the UN, leading France and the UK to withdraw. Eventually, after lengthy negotiations and US mediation, Israel withdrew from the occupation as well, on the condition that the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) take control of the area. In 1957, the US froze Egypt's assets under their control, leading Nasser to turn towards Moscow. On 1 February 1958, the United Arab Republic was proclaimed—a Syrian-Egyptian union lasting three and a half years until September 1961, when Syria left due to Egypt's dominant influence. The Syrian-Egyptian split had many repercussions and led to mistrust and resistance, all of which contributed to the outbreak of war in 1967.²¹ A number of other conflicts were taking place in parallel, with alliances in the Arab League changing rapidly. In 1958, North Yemen joined the UAR. It remained part of it until 1961. Relations with Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Lebanon were unstable, fluctuating between escalating conflicts and the building of short-lived alliances. Nasser sought to maintain his primacy within the Arab League throughout that time. Syrian support for Palestinian Fatah established a pattern of Arab-Israeli and inter-Arab relations that played a crucial role in the outbreak of war in 1967.²² In the 1960s, US support for Israel continued to grow, while the Soviet Union increasingly supported the Arab states, which it saw as part of the "anti-imperialist camp". Egypt occupied the UNEF-controlled areas of Sinai and imposed a blockade on the Straits of Tiran to prevent the passage of Israeli shipping. In response, Israel occupied Sinai, then the Old City of Jerusalem, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. Unstable alliances doubtlessly contributed to the outcome of the so-called Six-Day War in June.²³ The situation strengthened role of the Soviet Union in the region. Yugoslavia, which took a strongly pro-Arab stance in the war, likewise increased its influence. This was demonstrated by the visit of Tito and the leaders of the Warsaw Pact states to Moscow and the severing of diplomatic relations with Israel with the aim of

21 Smith, *Palestine and the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, pp. 178–180.

22 Ibid., p. 188.

23 Ibid., pp. 195–201.

strengthening relations in the Middle East and counterbalancing the alliances with the two superpowers.²⁴

The policies of non-interference and peaceful co-existence, despite being one of the cornerstones of the NAM, often proved ineffective or remained unrealised in practice, as can be seen in the case of NAM members in the Middle East. But how were these policies manifested through artistic intersections and were they able to develop a space for multiple, plural and diverse subjectivities?

In terms of culture, the political and economic level in the 1960s and early 1970s were distinctly pragmatic. Interest was expressed frequently and eagerly, and the importance of cooperation between Yugoslavia and the UAR was emphasised often. The biggest obstacle was the lack of financial resources, which was felt especially strongly during the conflicts with Israel in which the UAR was involved. Egypt was the centre not only of the Arab world, but also of Africa (both culturally and in terms of education, with more than 30,000 students from African countries studying there), and the UAR sought to maintain this primacy. For financial reasons, its cultural affiliations at that time were with the USA and the UN, which mostly financially covered all cultural manifestations. They were also developing links with the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and Italy, as well as the DDR and Czechoslovakia, because Egypt had a very important cultural value and these countries had the means to ensure its representation, which UAR accepted. The UAR also worked with a number of Asian countries (India, Pakistan, China, Indonesia and Japan).

Yugoslavia, fully aware that its lack of financial resources would make it difficult for it to compete, was among the less interesting countries in terms of cultural links. Despite the scarcity of resources, however, the friendship between Nasser and Tito, along with Nasser's recognition of Yugoslavia as one of his closest friends and supporters, ensured that cultural cooperation between the two countries remained prioritised and was oriented towards long-term cooperation.²⁵ The political alliance between the two countries was an extremely important link that the two leaders shared in their similar vision of the Near East and of building an alliance that would succeed in transcending the alliances with the two superpowers.

In the cultural sense, both Yugoslavia and the UAR were open to the entire world. The conflicts in the Middle East, despite going against the policy of peaceful coexistence, had brought the two countries together. The international cultural policies between

24 Bielicki, *The Middle East in Yugoslavia's Foreign Policy Strategy in the 1970s*, p. 398.

25 AJ 559_69_153–156 Dispatches, Dispatch No 346, 25 March 1968.

Yugoslavia and the UAR were also reflected in their agreements. We can see that, while the conflict had a considerable impact on the relations—mainly from a financial point of view, according to the Commission—it had not shaken the ideological foundation. We could, in part, perceive it reflected in the cultural venues themselves. The fact that Israel did not participate in any of the Biennials in Alexandria is likewise conspicuous. By contrast, it had continuously participated at the MGB (alongside UAR, even) since its 3rd edition, sending several artists at a time.

Introduction of Self-Management in the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

In the study of cultural links between Egypt and the SFRY, the principles of Yugoslav self-management are especially important from the perspective of the exploration of different models of cultural-political action and even innovations that had, among other things, significantly shaped art in the post-war period. This was most obviously manifested at the tail end of the 1960s with the complete transformation of the political system, which began moving towards decentralisation and democratisation. At the level of cultural organisation and policies, this was reflected in changes to how international cooperation took place at the institutional level. With the introduction of self-management, the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, which was based in Belgrade and was responsible for the execution of all cultural conventions, agreements and programmes, began to be disbanded as an umbrella body, with its work being delegated to the republican commissions. These, in turn, delegated the realisation of cultural exchanges to professional organisations, associations and other cultural institutions, which became responsible for the implementation of intergovernmental agreements in the field of culture. In 1969, the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries was finally dissolved and re-established as a Federal Commission that merely coordinated the international cultural cooperation, with implementation delegated to the Republics and, by extension, the cultural organisations. The contacts were thus passed on directly to the commissions of the individual Republics, which, through the relevant cultural organisations or associations of artists, made direct contact with, for example, the Embassy in Cairo and the Egyptian organisations responsible for the implementation of cultural activities under the cultural cooperation programme between Yugoslavia and the UAR. Representing an example of such transfer is the message of 12 July 1969 from the CCRFC to the Union of Fine Artists of Yugoslavia, which included as an attachment a copy of the invitation for the Alexandria

Biennial, which had been received from the Governor of Alexandria. They were told that the best option was contacting the organisers of the Biennial—the Museum of Modern Art in Alexandria—directly. They were also advised that it would be a good idea to send copies of correspondence to the Embassy in Cairo, which would intervene if necessity arose.²⁶

At the same time as the process of decentralisation of cultural contacts with foreign countries was taking place in the SFRY, the UAR was also undergoing many changes in its organisations and committees. This was in addition to the international tensions with Israel, which made the work even more difficult. The environment in 1967 was thus not favourable to the implementation of the programme, and in the end it was because of the conflict with Israel that a large part of the programme remained unrealised.²⁷

Alongside the changes in the system towards decentralisation—representing a new form of social action—the cultural policies were also changing, with cultural institutions becoming the main drivers of cultural exchanges. In this transfer of mandates, the biennials were in fact highlighted as examples of good practice, since even previously, the exchanges had taken place largely via cultural institutions. Critically speaking, examples of their work also served as an entry point for Western modernist values.

The Alexandria Biennial for Mediterranean Countries and Yugoslav Participation

The Alexandria Biennial for Mediterranean Countries served as the central intersection for cultural cooperation between Egypt (UAR) and the FPRY/SFRY. It was founded in 1955 to celebrate Revolution Day on 26 July. It was inaugurated by Hanna Simaika, the Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, who was also one of the initiators and organisers of the Biennial. On 10 May 1955, the Embassy of the FPRY in Cairo informed the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries that they had been notified by the Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Simaika, that a Biennial for Mediterranean Countries was being organised in Alexandria, and that Yugoslavia was invited to participate.²⁸ This was confirmed by Yugoslavia through the Commission and the Embassy of the FPRY in Cairo. A commission headed by the then Secretary Ivo Frol chose the art critic Radoslav Putar to be the Commissioner for the organisation

26 AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Notice from the CCRFC to the Union of Fine Artists of Yugoslavia, 12 July 1969.

27 AJ 559_55_122-123_Magreb i Levant, Egipat (UAR) 1967–1970.

28 AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Notice by the Mission of the FPRY in Egypt to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 10 May 1955.

of the Alexandria Biennial. He, in turn, selected painters and sculptors from all over Yugoslavia, who would participate in the Biennial with 25 paintings and 22 sculptures. The Biennial took place between 26 July and 28 September 1955, with the opening attended by the Commissioner, who was responsible for the the exhibition layout planning, promotion, and setting the prices of the works, as well as all matters directly related to the organisation of the Yugoslav pavilion. The transport of the works was arranged by the Fine Arts Gallery of Rijeka, Croatia. In Cairo, Yugoslavia achieved outstanding success, winning three prizes (1st prize for sculpture went to Drago Tršar with his sculpture *"The Bull"*, 3rd prize for sculpture to Vojin Bakić, and 2nd prize for painting to Ljubo Ivančić).²⁹

The Second Alexandria Biennial took place between 28 December 1957 and 15 March 1958. Nine countries participated (Albania, Egypt, FPRY, Greece, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Spain and Tunisia, with Italy represented through the works of Italian artists living in Egypt). The Commissioner of the FPRY was Zoran Kržišnik, Director of the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana and, most importantly, a key figure and Secretary of the MGB. We will therefore devote some more attention to the visit. Kržišnik selected 27 canvases, 10 sculptures and 14 prints for the exhibition. He noted in his report that Yugoslavia had been given the nicest exhibition spaces.³⁰

The Yugoslav Information Centre in Cairo, which operated as part of the Embassy of the FPRY, reported on the occasion of the 2nd Biennial that the jury of the 2nd Mediterranean Biennial had again awarded three prizes to Yugoslav artists (1st prize for painting to France Slana, 2nd prize for sculpture to Karel Putrih, and 2nd prize for prints/graphic designs to Živka Pajić). They wrote that the Yugoslav pavilion was one of the most varied and interesting, and that the first prizes for sculpture and graphic design, which went to Spain and Greece, were likely intended more as a compromise.³¹ The Yugoslav pavilion was also reported to be highly popular and well attended. The first prize for paintings and statues was 200 Egyptian pounds, the second prize 100 Egyptian pounds and the third prize 50 Egyptian pounds. The prizes for prints were more modest: 100, 50 and 25 Egyptian pounds.³²

29 AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Letter by the Embassy of the FPRY in Egypt to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 2 October 1955.

30 AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Report by the Yugoslav Information Centre in Cairo to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries about the 2nd Biennial in Alexandria, 9 February 1958.

31 AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Notice by the Yugoslav Information Centre in Cairo to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 11 March 1958.

32 Ibid.

Yugoslavia continued to win top prizes in subsequent Biennials in Alexandria. The rest of the text covers the Biennials that took place up to the dissolution of the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries in 1969. At the Third Biennial in 1959, the Yugoslav pavilion was organised by the Commissioner Boris Vižintin, president of the Fine Arts Gallery in Rijeka. Prizes were awarded to Miodrag Miša Popović (2nd prize for sculpture) and Vladimir Makuc (1st prize for prints/graphic designs). At the 4th Biennial in 1961, the Acting Commissioner was Dragan Djordjević, and Yugoslavia ended up winning the 2nd prize for painting (Mladen Srbinović) and two prizes for sculpture, which were awarded to Olga Jančić and Jovan Kratochvil. The Head Commissioner for the 5th Biennial in 1963 was Željko Grum (art critic and director of the Museum of Modern Art in Zagreb). Once again, Yugoslavia was awarded some of the highest prizes (1st prize for graphics went to Janez Boljka, 2nd prize for painting to Ljubo Ivančić, 3rd prize for sculpture to Slavko Tihec, and the Purchase Award to Dimitar Kondovski). In 1965, at the 6th Biennial, the Yugoslav pavilion was organised by the curator of the Gallery of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, Boris Kelemen, and the prizes were awarded to Bogdan Meško (1st prize for graphics) and Krs-to Hegedušić (2nd prize for painting). At the 7th Biennial (1968), the SFRY Commissioner was Nikola Kusovac, curator of the National Museum in Belgrade, and Yugoslav artists received two prizes (1st prize for graphics went to Mersad Berber and 3rd prize for sculpture to Peter Černe).³³ In reviewing these fifteen years of participation at the Alexandria Biennials, it becomes clear that Yugoslavia had been particularly successful in the field of graphics, winning four consecutive first prizes for graphics.

The costs of participation at the Mediterranean Biennial were shared, with Yugoslavia covering transport, packing and securing of the works, as well as other costs related to the organisation of the Yugoslav selection, and Alexandria covering the transport to the gallery and the costs of the exhibition and promotion, as well as insurance and all the other expenses connected with the exhibition itself. The biggest problems encountered were damage to the works and frequent delays in returning the works to Yugoslavia. In addition, especially at the first few Biennials, the payment of prizes was a major problem due to the different currencies. This was coordinated by the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Embassy in Cairo, and the process was most often very protracted, which heavily delayed the authors' receipt of the prizes. Exchanges of cultural workers—likewise an integral

33 AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Biennials in Alexandria – list appended to the report.

part of the programmes—were often coordinated with the Commissioners' trips to Alexandria. The latter stayed in Alexandria and Cairo longer, providing additional training, building networks of acquaintances, visiting artists' associations and studios, and making contacts of all kinds.

As Gardner and Green note, bringing together artists from both sides of the Iron Curtain, as well as from countries oppressed by post-fascist dictatorships and subjected to isolationism and despair, was a major achievement. They highlight Hussein Sobhi, the Head Commissioner of the Alexandria Biennial, for whom regionalism meant a way of transcending geopolitical divisions and ensuring that "the Biennial re-establishes friendly relations among the Mediterranean countries".³⁴

Zoran Kržišnik and the Alexandria Biennial

The participation of Egyptian artists at the MGB—led by Zoran Kržišnik, art historian and director of the Museum of Modern Art in Ljubljana between 1948 and 1986—was reciprocated by sending works by Yugoslav artists to the Biennial in Alexandria. Here, too, the Director of the Museum of Modern Art and the MGB played an important role. In his report on the visit to Egypt on 12 January 1958, which he submitted to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries as the Commissioner of the exhibition, he describes travelling to Cairo on 21 December 1957 and reporting to the Embassy's Information Office, where he met with the office director Ljubo Drndić and his assistant. The following day at the office, they met with selected Egyptian newspapers and art critics. The office director informed Kržišnik that the exhibits had arrived in Egypt, with the exception of Putrih's work. The director and his assistant also informed Kržišnik that the Secretariat of the Alexandria Biennial, where he represented the FPRY as an exhibition commissioner, had lost his introductory text and asked him if he could provide a new one.³⁵

When Kržišnik arrived in Alexandria from Cairo, he immediately met with the museum's director, Hanna Simaika, and they sorted out the problems with the text and the missing work by Putrih. Kržišnik wrote in his report that other countries had also sent prints, but that Yugoslavia's were far superior. Simaika told him, as he had done at the embassy before, that he wished to award the first prize to one of Yugoslavia's most prominent printmakers. That year, the

organisers bought the statue of Drago Tršar and placed it in front of the town hall. The jury selected some of the works from the portfolio, which Kržišnik changed at the last minute, so that the portfolio ended up featuring 14 works by Božidar Jakac, Riko Debenjak, Ankica Oprešnik, Josip Restek, Frano Baća, Maksim Sedej, Boško Karanović, Živka Pajić, France Mihelič and Oton Gliha. Kržišnik felt that this line-up represented a high-quality presentation that did full justice to FPRY's painting and sculpture. In addition, Yugoslavia was assigned what was in his view the nicest exhibition hall, which allowed them to make the Yugoslav presentation aesthetically complete. He also wrote that even the authorities had told him that "the Yugoslav pavilion is by far the most consistent and homogeneous and at the highest level of quality in general",³⁶ and that he was expecting prizes in all three areas.

That the response to the Yugoslav pavilion by critics and authorities alike was indeed tremendous was already apparent at the reception held by the Yugoslav Ambassador on the day after the opening to celebrate the Biennial. A desire was expressed there to bring the works from the Yugoslav pavilion to Cairo, and the Embassy was tasked with seeking exhibition opportunities and funding, to be reported on at a later date.

Kržišnik's report to the Commission continues with a description of the other participants at the Biennial, noting that France, for obvious political reasons, did not participate, and that while Italy did, it was only through Italian artists living in Egypt. He found Spain's response particularly disappointing; while prolific, it was in his estimate very low in quality. He also highlighted his conversation with Tunisia's Commissioner, who had expressed the desire to have Yugoslavia exhibit and lecture in Tunisia. The same wish was also expressed by the Moroccan representative, as well as the Spanish representative Maria Revenga. According to a conversation with the latter, Spanish artists were keen to establish close contact with the Yugoslav cultural sphere. He passed these contacts on and expressed his interest in following up.

The Syrian Ambassador, who was also hosted in Alexandria, asked Kržišnik to inform the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries that he was interested in a touring exhibition (preferably easily transportable) that could be realised in Damascus. At the Academy in Egypt, Kržišnik received a request for guest lectures by art teachers from the SFRY, especially in the field of sculpture and printmaking. The Egyptian art circles and their organisations wished for direct exchanges of exhibitions with the

³⁴ Gardner and Green, *Biennials, Triennials, and Documenta*, pp. 84–85.

³⁵ AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Report by the Yugoslav Information Centre in Cairo to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries about Yugoslavia's participation in the 2nd Biennial in Alexandria, 9 February 1958, p. 1.

³⁶ AJ 559_93_208_Bienale u Aleksandriji 1955–1969, Report by Zoran Kržišnik to the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, 12 January 1958, p. 3.

galleries of the FPRY, wanting to highlight their paintings in particular, which they said had increased in quality in recent years. Kržišnik was also a member of the jury for the Egyptian pavilion, of which role he wrote the following: "the principle I followed in awarding prizes to Egyptian artists quite clearly overlaps with the principles that have been employed in setting up of our most representative exhibitions to date".³⁷ We can see here that the criteria for quality Kržišnik was referring to aligned with those of the hegemonic Western modernism.

The Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana and Egypt's participation: the case of Menhat Helmy

Zoran Kržišnik, as a representative of the post-war generation of art historians, suspected that the key question they were facing was "how do we escape the grip of socialist realism?"³⁸ Thus, the MGB, of which he was one of the main founders, adopted a positive attitude towards contemporary modern art, creating socialist aestheticism that drew on Western modernism. Alongside MGB, a variant of high modernism in graphic art was developing that later came to be known as the Ljubljana School of Graphic Art, which emphasised the criteria of exceptionalism and formal perfection of the graphic sheet. In terms of juries, installations and prizes MGB also largely followed the tradition of Western modernism, with Riva Castleman writing in 1993:

*Inevitably, it was the artists of the capitalist countries whose artistic expression was honoured by the Biennial jury. This was, of course, due to the fact that art represented state policy, and the method of selection (by country) perpetuated this situation.*³⁹

Egypt's first appearance at the MGB in Ljubljana was at its 4th edition in 1961, where it participated as the UAR with three artists (Mandooh Ammar, Amin Awad Kamal and Menhat Allah Helmy). All of them initially studied in Cairo and then continued their studies in Europe (Awad in Urbino and Helmy at the Slade School of Fine Arts in London). Helmy also received an honourable mention from the Organising Committee at the MGB that year, which represented an unusual and unique recognition for a representative from a Non-Aligned country. The jury at the time was chaired by Jacques Lassaigne (France) and its members were: Fjodor Davidov (USSR), Gustave von Groschwitz (USA), Gunnar Jungmarker (Sweden), Zoran

Kržišnik (SFRY), Jean Leymarie (France), Giuseppe Marchiori (Italy) and Miodrag B. Protić (SFRY).⁴⁰ Whether the jury was attracted by the Western modernist visual code in which she worked, the significance of the cultural and political links with the UAR, or something else is not known.

Only Helmy participated in the 5th Biennial (1963), and there were no Egyptian representatives at the 6th Biennial (1965), as the UAR was already experiencing strong social and political unrest. At the 7th Biennial, Helmy was again the only exhibitor. The representation at the 8th MGB (1969) was stronger (Hussein Al Gebali, educated and based in Cairo, Mariam M. Abdel Alim, who also participated at the 32nd Venice Biennale, Mohsein Charrara, an archaeologist based in Cairo, and Farouk Chehat and Ahmed Maher Raif, who had both studied in Cairo, with Raif having also exhibited at the biennials in Sao Paulo and Venice). According to records from the Yugoslav archives, the Egyptian Ministry of Culture sent five graphic artists to the MGB in Ljubljana that year, at its own expense, who arrived in Belgrade by airplane on 20 August 1969. They stayed there for two days, socialising with local graphic designers, before continuing their journey to Ljubljana. The Slovenian Artists' Association was responsible for their visit and hosted their presentation at the MGB.⁴¹

At the 9th MGB (1971), Egypt was still exhibiting under the acronym UAR (United Arab Republic), again represented by the archaeologist Charrara Mohsein. The 10th MGB (1973), however, again lacked Egyptian representatives. This coincided with the conflicts in the Middle East, which also shook up cultural policies. It was not until the 11th edition (1975) that the country, this time as Egypt, again participated in the MGB. It was again represented by Menhat Helmy, this time joined by Farouk Shehata. Helmy went on to exhibit at the 12th (1977) and 16th (1985) editions of the MGB, making her the most frequently exhibited Egyptian artist at the Biennial. This is also the reason we delve deeper into her participation at the MGB in terms of her career trajectory, collaborations and reception.

Menhat Helmy (1925–2004) was a pioneer of Egyptian print-making. She was born in Helwan, Egypt, into a family of nine children. As the daughter of a legal advisor at the Ministry of Education, her exposure to fine arts was minimal, yet despite this, she managed to stand out with her artistic expression.⁴² In 1949, she graduated from the High Institute of Pedagogic Studies for Art in

37 Ibid., pp. 1–4.

38 Žerovc, Kržišnik, Zoran, p. 24.

39 Castleman, p. 236.

40 SI MGLC, šk. 1963/F1, Work Records of the International Jury from 7 to 9 June 1961, p. 3.

41 AJ 559_69_153–156 Dispatches, Dispatch No 1224, 25 August 1968.

42 Zidan, A grandson's quest to preserve his grandmother's artistic legacy.

Cairo. Her remarkable talent earned her a state scholarship, allowing her to continue education at the prestigious Slade School of Fine Art in London in 1953—one year after the July 1952 military coup that overthrew the Egyptian monarchy—where she studied from 1953–1955 with a focus on drawing, painting and etching.⁴³ During her three years at university, she studied under sculptor Henry Moore and others, such as Graham Sutherland and William Coldstream. Helmy's focus was on painting and printmaking, and she eventually settled on etchings. She started experimenting with different plates, using copper, zinc and wood to make black and white prints. And, as Karim Zidan writes:

She journeyed across England during her three years at Slade, exploring London's parks, churches, and rivers, and traveling to places like the Isle of Wight and to small towns along the countryside. She carried a small sketchbook, which she used to lay the foundations for her later prints. Her dedication to the craft of printmaking did not go unnoticed, as the Egyptian artist—one of the first to attend the prestigious school—went on to win the Slade Prize for Etching in 1955.⁴⁴

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Helmy returned to Egypt in 1956, when the country was engulfed in social and economic turmoil, geopolitical tensions and revolutionary fervour. Armed with the newly acquired skill of etching, she documented the social changes taking place around her, including the Suez crisis, the historic parliamentary elections of 1957 and the construction of the Aswan Dam. In her works, she captured the country's invisible majority: the fishermen on the Nile, the workers in the brick factories and animal markets, and the peasants who tilled the fields. She was one of the first artists to capture the rapidly changing Egyptian state through female eyes—whether campaigning in elections, breastfeeding in newly built clinics, or living as prominent members of society who worked just as their male counterparts. Her work from this period cemented her reputation as a pioneer of Egyptian printmaking. Her black-and-white etchings were critically acclaimed for their complexity, but also for their challenging execution. She was one of the first Egyptian artists to include entire scenes in her work, reproducing the effects of sketches and intricate drawings on zinc plates before transforming them into prints.

Having participated in most of the local exhibitions since 1956, she won a prize at the Cairo Production Exhibition in 1957 and the Salon du Caire prize in 1959 and 1960. Internationally,

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Helmy's pioneering work had not gone unnoticed, either. After the Slade Prize, she took part in numerous international exhibitions and, starting in 1956, in most of the exhibitions in Egypt. In 1966, she held her first private exhibition of etchings. She participated in numerous international etching biennials in West Germany, Poland, Italy, Japan and India. In 1959 and 1960 she was awarded the Salon du Caire prize, in 1957 the Cairo Production Exhibition prize and in 1961 a honorary prize at the 4th MGB in Ljubljana (honorary prize bestowed by the Organising Committee). The work she exhibited at the MGB later earned her the title of professor emeritus at the prestigious Accademia delle Arti del Disegno in Florence. In Egypt, she became a lecturer at the Cairo College of Fine Arts, a Professor of Fine Arts at Helwan University in Cairo and a member of the UK Printmakers Council. She also participated in the Venice Biennale in Italy.

In the late 1960s, Helmy thus established herself as an award-winning printmaker acclaimed both internationally and at home, and decided to abandon the black-and-white etchings that had characterised her work in favour of powerful political paintings and abstract prints that were ahead of their time on the Egyptian art scene. In 1972, she returned to London and completed her turn to abstraction, producing several pieces that had since become some of her signature works. Her black and white prints became a thing of the past, replaced by conceptual prints with complex geometric structures and bright colours, inspired by her fascination with space, space exploration, technological advances and modern machines. She also studied at Morley College in London from 1973 to 1979:

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While Helmy's earlier works were influenced by European masters such as Spain's Francisco Goya and Germany's Albrecht Dürer, her later work was uncompromisingly architectural in its use of geometrical abstraction, something she was likely predisposed to through her exposure to Islamic art. She experimented with techniques that required both craftsmanship and artistry, adding depth of space and texture to her work that did not previously exist.⁴⁵

Unfortunately, Helmy's second tour to the UK, which ended in 1979, would eventually be seen as the twilight of the artist's career. In 1978, she held a critically acclaimed solo exhibition of her abstract works in London, returning to Cairo for another solo exhibition the following year. Being only 54 at the time, Helmy bought a printing

⁴⁵ Zidan, Menhat Helmy.

press and studio space in Cairo, where she planned to continue creating more works. Her career then came to an unexpected end. Helmy's lungs began to suffer the consequences of the many years she had spent inhaling fumes from the printing process. Her last print dates from twenty-one years before her death in 2004.

Her involvement in the MGB in the 1960s and 1970s reveals several facts. The first is that she almost certainly did not come to the MGB via embassies, or perhaps merely used them to administer the participation in an internationally renowned exhibition. At the same time, other Egyptian graphic artists came to the MGB through official channels, via the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Yugoslav Embassy in Cairo. Unfortunately, there is no record in the MGLC archives of why Helmy's work convinced the jury, which consisted of distinguished critics mainly from Western Europe and the USA. The fact that she was awarded a special honorary award by the Organising Committee, could be seen as political on different levels—good relations with the UAR; a response to the political and cultural process of awarding the prizes in Alexandria and a gesture of gratitude for the awards received by Yugoslavia there; or a matter of an aesthetic preference for a modernist work. Certainly, in the case of the Yugoslav-Egyptian connections, there was a positive attitude on both sides towards the contemporary modernist canon, which at the time was not yet seen as a part of Western cultural colonialism.

Reflections on Cultural Policies and the Culture's Broader Social and Political Role

In conclusion, the cultural and political relations between Yugoslavia and Egypt in the 1960s and 1970s were very intertwined and the internal political situations were complex. Internationally, the two countries, as political allies, cooperated well in all areas and invested heavily in cultural exchanges and links between them. Under the auspices of the Non-Aligned Movement, of which both were founding members, they sought their own expression and pragmatic political paths beyond the bloc divisions, but it was precisely in the field of culture that they were the two centres and at the same time the two areas of the periphery where cultural colonialism, through the modernist criteria of the West, was able to develop and also to spread further. Both Nasser's Egypt until 1970 and Tito's Yugoslavia (until 1980) sought different policies of international integration, based on the principles that were part of the manifest of non-alignment—anti-imperialism and decolonisation, a policy of non-interference and peaceful co-existence, and a search for different approaches to social organisation, such as the

Yugoslav self-management. Economic dependence, however, often prevented the development of such policies, and thus, on many levels, including artistic language, both often submitted themselves to Western criteria, even in the field of culture and fine arts, and found themselves at the centre of Western cultural imperialism. Under the modernist criteria of quality, new forms of colonialism were concealed, primarily in the cultural sphere.

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Petra Černe Oven

**THE CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPING
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METHODS OF VISUALISATION IN DIGITAL
HUMANITIES PROJECTS AND WHAT
THE DESIGN PROFESSION
CAN CONTRIBUTE***
CAN CONTRIBUTE*
CAN CONTRIBUTE*

Introduction

This paper provides insights into the area of design that deals with the visualisation of science. It has become clear that in the modern society, in which science plays an important role in the development of many different fields, the power of knowledge depends equally on its presentation and dissemination as on other aspects of its production. To ensure that scientific discoveries are presented in an understandable way, scientists need to use suitable channels, and do so in a way that makes content accessible to a certain target audience. Often, this is the general public, which lacks in-depth knowledge on the particular domains that are the subject of the communication. It is the responsibility of the researchers to convey their findings in an understandable and credible manner, since detailed presentation of the subject matter is a vital component of scientific communication. These challenges have recently intensified, especially when it comes to the natural sciences. Expert opinions struggled for traction on the social networks and in the public media and often ended up losing out due to unclear

* The article is a result of the research project J7-2606, *Models and Practices of International Cultural Exchange of the Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics*, which is financed by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS).

messaging, which resulted in pseudoscience and conspiracy theories causing a lot of harm.

In science, too, the increasing recognition recently of the fact that humans are visual creatures has led to scientists beginning to increase the share of content that is communicated visually. After the last three decades in particular, with digitalisation leading towards the democratisation of media and tools and consequently to the increase in the use of visual means of communication, it is thus imperative that visual means of knowledge representation in science are deeply understood, methodologically developed and professionally applied. Robert E. Horn went so far as to define the integration of words, images and shapes into a consolidated unit of communication as an entirely new language that he called *visual language*. He singled out the increasing complexity of the world, with mounting problems, along with the ambition to solve them, as well as the development of media and technologies in the 1990s, as the forces driving the development of this language.

The aim of the paper is not to present the historical achievements in the area of visualisation, which is something the author has written about in detail elsewhere, but to try to present the potential problems that can arise when introducing visualisation concepts in the humanities. In doing so, the author hopes to prompt reflection within the framework of the research project “Models and practices of international cultural exchange of the Non-Aligned Movement: researching the spatio-temporal cultural dynamics”, which also encompasses the development of a visualisation tool that will facilitate the analysis of the material being examined. With technology playing a major role, the historical principles and methods of visualisation were completely different from what we have today, and this is the origin of the difficulties we face in the visualisation process. The insights can aid in the establishment of a new methodology in the field of digital humanities covered in the project (design, visual arts, architecture and cultural/art history) and, in the process of thorough examination, indicate some of the problems that can arise in the process.

The Case for Visualising Complex Topics

It makes sense in the beginning to ask ourselves whether we are capable of identifying those types of information that are particularly suited to visual presentation and those that are better conveyed verbally. Certainly, the field of rhetoric continues to be highly relevant, especially when communicating concepts that cannot be visualised in any meaningful sense, or in cases where visualisation might even be an unwelcome distraction. In a society that keeps us

overwhelmed with information and in which modern digital tools and means of communication offer access to virtually unlimited amounts of data, the answer is, of course, right in front of us. As early as October 2008, Hal Varian, the chief economist at Google, said in an interview that:

The ability to take data [...] to visualize it [...] that's going to be a hugely important skill in the next decades, not only at the professional level but even at the educational level for elementary school kids, for high school kids, for college kids. Because now we really do have essentially free and ubiquitous data. So the complimentary scarce factor is the ability to understand that data and extract value from it.¹

Scientific journals—*Nature*, for instance—have likewise long been publishing calls promoting the use of visuals in science, arguing that a clear and convincing image is “of crucial importance in science communication”.²

The neurological basis and the dominant role of visual information in perception and understanding

In modern society, we strive to research, understand, stimulate and utilise all the senses. Neuroscientific findings, however, have long ago confirmed that visual information plays a dominant role in human cognition. Half of the neural fibres in our brains are associated with vision, and when our eyes are open, vision accounts for two thirds of the brain's electrical activity. The brain needs a mere 150 milliseconds to recognise an image, and only 100 more to ascribe meaning to it.³ There are studies claiming that the human brain is capable of fully processing an image seen for a mere 13 milliseconds. In a study, the researchers showed the participants a series of pictures that were visible for 13 to 80 milliseconds each. The viewers successfully identified scenes such as “picnic” or “a laughing couple” despite the incredibly short time they were shown for.⁴ David Rock (of the NeuroLeadership Institute) likewise demonstrated that using visual images reduces the energy required to process information and consequently maximises the energy available to think and act effectively.⁵

This is about more than just perception, of course. Information presented visually instead of through words or numbers is more

1 Manyika and Varian.

2 Cheng and Rolandi, *Graphic design for scientists*.

3 Raworth, *Doughnut Economics*, p. 13.

4 Potter et al., *Detecting meaning*, p. 270.

5 See Rock, *Your Brain at Work*.

readily processed by the brain. The right hemisphere recognises shapes and colours. The left hemisphere, by contrast, processes information analytically and sequentially and is therefore more active when people read or examine spreadsheets. Whereas studying a number table demands considerable mental effort, information presented visually can be understood in seconds, since the brain recognises patterns, relations and relationships between visual values.

Since at least as early as the Enlightenment, vision has been recognised as the most objective of the senses and thus associated with the mind, reason, rationality and logic. Vision is our dominant sense, and our perception of the world is primarily visual.

More than just sight is measured in terms of visual acuity; vision is the process of deriving meaning from what is seen. It is a complex, learned and developed a set of functions that involve a multitude of skills. Research estimates that eighty to eighty-five percent of our perception, learning, cognition, and activities are mediated through vision.⁶

This paper is dealing with a very specific area: the deliberate transfer of information and understanding. We can therefore stick to the premise that visual perception is extremely important in the field of science.

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Visualisation in the field of digital humanities

While pioneering work in the field of visualisation has been done by individual authors in the past, the field is developing continuously under the influence of technology (digitalisation) and social changes (democratisation, the struggle for minority rights, the environmental catastrophe, political movements). Likewise, disciplines making use of visualisation—as the most potent tool in the age of social networks—may be driven by business interests, in addition to transmitting new knowledge or empowering society. Use of infographics is universal in the modern media (*New York Times*, *The Guardian*, *Reuters*, *Corriere della Sera*, *USA Today*, to name only those most awarded), and there are numerous awards and institutions that raise awareness and educate on the subject (examples include Information is Beautiful, with its website, educational books and the eponymous awards, and the Malofiej Awards for infographics in newspapers). We are also witnessing the emergence of a new profession: “visual journalism”.

Many companies, too, have made remarkable progress, if we look at the use of charts in annual reports in the 20th century, and

6 Politzer, *Vision Is Our Dominant Sense*.

now build their arguments in a visual way. Even in politics, rhetoric is increasingly combined with visual elements. President Obama, for example, in his annual State of the Union Address in 2015, combined rhetoric with visualisations for better results. For certain data, the best—the only, even—way it can be presented to the public is through moving, interactive kinetic visualisation.

Major breakthroughs in the understanding of statistics through interactivity in modern times were made, for example, by the physician, academic and lecturer Hans Rosling (1948–2017) as part of his *Gapminder* project.⁷ Examples such as these demonstrate that one of the key influences in the field of visualisation over the last 30 years has been technological progress: the development of information technologies has enabled the development of tools that have had a profound impact on the field of visualisation, allowing both active participation and innovative data processing.

Visualisations allow users to look at quantitative and qualitative data from a different perspective, encouraging interpretation of data in ways that a textual presentation cannot. Diagrams, charts and other forms of visualisation can stimulate comparative interpretations, model new ways of understanding and indicate emerging categories, patterns and potential deviations from the expected, thus facilitating new insights.

The development of what can broadly be defined as the *digital humanities* has led to a number of pioneering explorations into the possibility of using digital tools in the humanities. As this is the field covered by the project this paper is a part of, it is logical to include a reflection on innovative ways of integrating visual material based on the tools offered by the digital realm.

Digital humanities cover many different fields. Each of them is covered by many of the commercial and open-source tools available in the modern world: from text analysis (Voyant, Juxta, HathiTrust, LitViz), spatial analysis (CartoDB), network analysis (Onodo, Gephi, Palladio) and image analysis to timeline generation (Knightlab Timeline, Tiki-Toki), map generation (StoryMapJS, MapHub, MyMaps), infographic generation (Piktochart, Canva), and data visualisation (RAWGraphs, Mondrian, Many Eyes, Tableau Public, Prefuse). Many tools also exist that facilitate basic programming without previous knowledge of programming (Processing, Scratch). Some of these tools are already integrated into operating systems (e.g. Excel, Numbers, Google Docs, OpenOffice). Others, likewise aimed at the lay user, are available on the web (e.g. Venngage.com and Visme.co).

7 See *Gapminder*.

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As mentioned in the second section of this paper, visualisations can be a very powerful aid in creating understanding. If this knowledge is supported by the ability to create visualisations relatively easily, their usage, of course, increases immediately. Drucker cautions that we are, in fact, too trusting of visualisations occasionally: “we seem ready and eager to suspend critical judgment in a rush to visualization”,⁸ continuing

At the very least, humanists beginning to play at the intersection of statistics and graphics ought to take a detour through the substantial discussions of the sociology of knowledge and its developed critique of realist models of data gathering. At best, we need to take on the challenge of developing graphical expressions rooted in and appropriate to interpretative activity.⁹

Controversial as it may sound, the use of freely available visualisation tools can (as is the case with all tools that are potentially not in the right hands) also raise the problem of data transparency and thus the possibility of misinterpretation. In the modern era, when everyone is free to interpret information and knowledge, the key question is how to establish visualisation methods that will follow the concepts and comply with the standards in the field of humanities research. Naturally, this must be backed up by theoretical considerations and argument-based decisions. Recognising that all knowledge is interpretive in nature and that the visual representation itself must be consistent with this is already a positive step in this direction. There is no ultimate truth—the visual expression is a particular interpretation that someone has augmented through graphical/visual means. This negates the common notion regarding the display of quantitative information, namely that it represents “the truth”.

The Difficulties and the Non-Objectivity of Visualisation

One of the most basic examples of bias or even deliberate exploitation of mistaken notions regarding visualisation are charts. Charts employ simple (albeit often misleading) geometric shapes suitable for producing easily legible comparisons of values and relationships, as well as displays of a change in state through time. Lines, bars, columns and pie charts are common and familiar examples of such shapes. While capable of depicting quantitative relationships in a transparent way, they can also completely distort the

⁸ Drucker, *Humanities Approaches to Graphical Display*.

⁹ *Ibid.*

underlying data. A chart might show the increase or decrease of a particular value on a timeline, but in interpreting it, we rely on our pre-existing knowledge. If the author of the chart reverses the timeline so that it progresses from right to left (in cultures using the Latin alphabet, we are used to reading from left to right), so that we are actually looking at a decrease rather than an increase in a given quantity, the audience is of course being misled. Such examples abound, especially when it comes to political coverage in the media.

The phenomenon of time itself can also serve as a good example of something we have to pay attention to if we want to maximise the utility of visualisation. Time can be conceived of as something given, as a space in which individual events happen by chance, or it can be conceived of as a web of causally interconnected events. In our project, we opted for the latter approach. In doing so, we encountered a potential problem: in order to produce a successful visualisation, we would need to show the temporal relationships between documents (their dates of origin) of quite heterogeneous nature (articles have a story, some of the documents are more notable than others, some reflect time to a much greater extent than others). Since the research team consists of many members, with each trying to cover their own field, the temporality of historical events does not always coincide with the timing of the documents (*when* is it that an influence of something is seen, and *what* is affected). In addition, the interpretations found in the documents are themselves influenced by the times in which they were produced (which cannot always be accurately evaluated in retrospect, nor can they be assigned all the necessary variables or information for the database). In network visualisation in particular, the choice and application of selection filters, as well as their presets, can have a crucial impact on how effective and understandable the visualisation is.

Data visualisation and information design

The broader field that we discuss in this paper could be termed *information design*.¹⁰ This is an umbrella term for an area of visual communication that centres on clear and comprehensible presentation of data-derived information using visual tools (example:

¹⁰ In 2009, on the occasion of the 22nd Biennial of Industrial Design, the Museum of Architecture and Design, in cooperation with the Pekinpah Association, organised a series of lectures on information design featuring lecturers from abroad, and the exhibition *Service and Information Design: Examples of Good Practice*. They also published a book of the same name (Černe Oven, Predan, 2010) on the subject. In our texts at the time we already stressed the importance of good data visualisation in light of the general information overload in society.

an underground railway diagram). We all encounter situations every day where the information we need is not conveyed in an unambiguous way. This is especially often the case when it comes to complex information. Information design is therefore an activity in which disorganised and unstructured complex data is translated into useful and understandable information. In the process, we prioritise the readability and comprehensibility of the documents, along with their usability for the end use.¹¹ While the field of information design is by nature very broad, a common thread can easily be identified. Information designers make decisions about the selection, structuring and presentation of the message, whose delivery must be consistent with the reasons, knowledge, experience, preferences and circumstances of the intended users.

What is it, then, that links information design and data visualisation? In data visualisation, we typically make use of databases far larger than would be practical in an analogue presentation, and the tools used for data visualisation are nearly always tied to particular software. This allows both static and interactive displays, where processes are presented in relation to the time in which they take place, and the viewer can take an active role in the process—even manipulating the visualisations according to their own information needs.

At this stage we can employ another useful definition, which indicates the function of the visualisation. F. Frankel and A. DePace divided visualisations into explanatory and exploratory ones. Explanatory visualisations communicate findings (answers to research questions), pointing out patterns, exceptions and concepts. Exploratory visualisation, by contrast, invites the user to explore the information on their own, providing an individual perspective and giving insight into the data. This can stimulate thinking about the subject of the research and offer new research questions.¹² When understanding depends on the observer—even when based on data—the observer can generate conclusions that are entirely their own. This can be a double-edged sword, since observers may bring different perspectives into the process: the intent behind the interpretation, as well as their initial knowledge of the topic, may vary, or they might have a different level of visualisation ability.

Information design projects could therefore mostly fit into the “explanatory” category, with most data visualisation projects conversely fitting into the “exploratory” category. In the context of the latter, the openness of entry into interaction and the possibility of

different perspectives or views on a topic are extremely important. In any case, both information design and data visualisation transform data into a visual whole through the use of a visual language.

Even experts such as Lev Manovich admit that it is not an easy task to formulate a definition that would apply to all types of data visualisation projects emerging today, yet at the same time maintain distinction from other related fields such as scientific visualisation and information design.¹³ He defines information visualisation as “the mapping between discrete data and their visual representation”.¹⁴ This is why information visualisation also includes artistic projects whose interest in displaying data is not in understanding or explaining information and concepts, but in using the data purely as aesthetic parameters and experiments to create attractive or interesting visualisations (which do not necessarily have the objective and informative content that we attribute to information design).

We typically distinguish between two- and three-dimensional visualisations (the latter are often interactive). Manovich explains that two-dimensional visualisations often belong to the field of information visualisation and were developed in the 1990s in the field of design. They received a marked boost with the democratisation of the use of personal computers and later, around 2005, with the emergence of social networks and freely accessible databases, which served as the basis for the generation of visualisations, and with new programming languages. Information visualisations use graphical elements (points, lines, curves and other geometric shapes, often combined with textual information). Three-dimensional visualisations generally fall under scientific visualisation, are often interactive and were developed in the 1980s alongside the field of 3D computer graphics.¹⁵ At that time, large computer systems—specialised graphics workstations—were already relatively powerful, but not yet accessible to individuals for personal use. In the last ten years, the situation has, naturally, changed somewhat, so the precise definition, implementation and functionality actually depend on the individual project.

The conceptual approach and deciding the type of visualisation on the basis of intent

Research on how people read (and misread) various types of visualisations helps identify which types and features of visualisation are best at conveying information understandably and effectively.

¹³ Manovich, What is Visualization.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 2.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 4.

¹¹ See Černe Oven, Predan, *Service and Information Design*.

¹² Frankel and DePace, *Visual Strategies*.

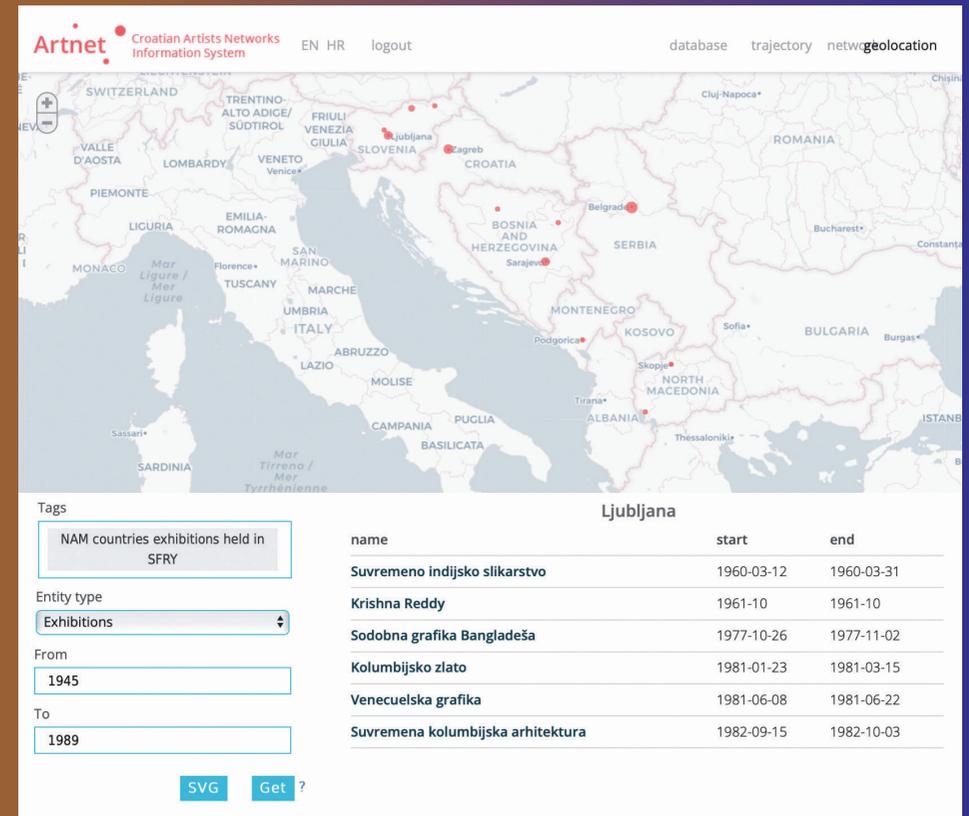
Interpreting overly complex information requires considerable cognitive effort. For this reason, it's important to know the intent of communication, as well as who the intended recipient is and what kind of reaction the communication is expected to engender.

In exploratory visualisation—where the viewer is invited to discover the information they're interested in on their own—the visualisation itself must make clear what possibilities it provides to the user, both on the level of the user experience and in terms of data acquisition prior to that. In the case of explanatory visualisation, by contrast, what is essential and what is additional information included at the secondary level needs to be decided prior to designing the visualisation. It is only on this basis that we can start deciding on the tools, methods and type of the visualisation. The visual elements or visual building blocks (more on those later) will depend on our content-level priorities.

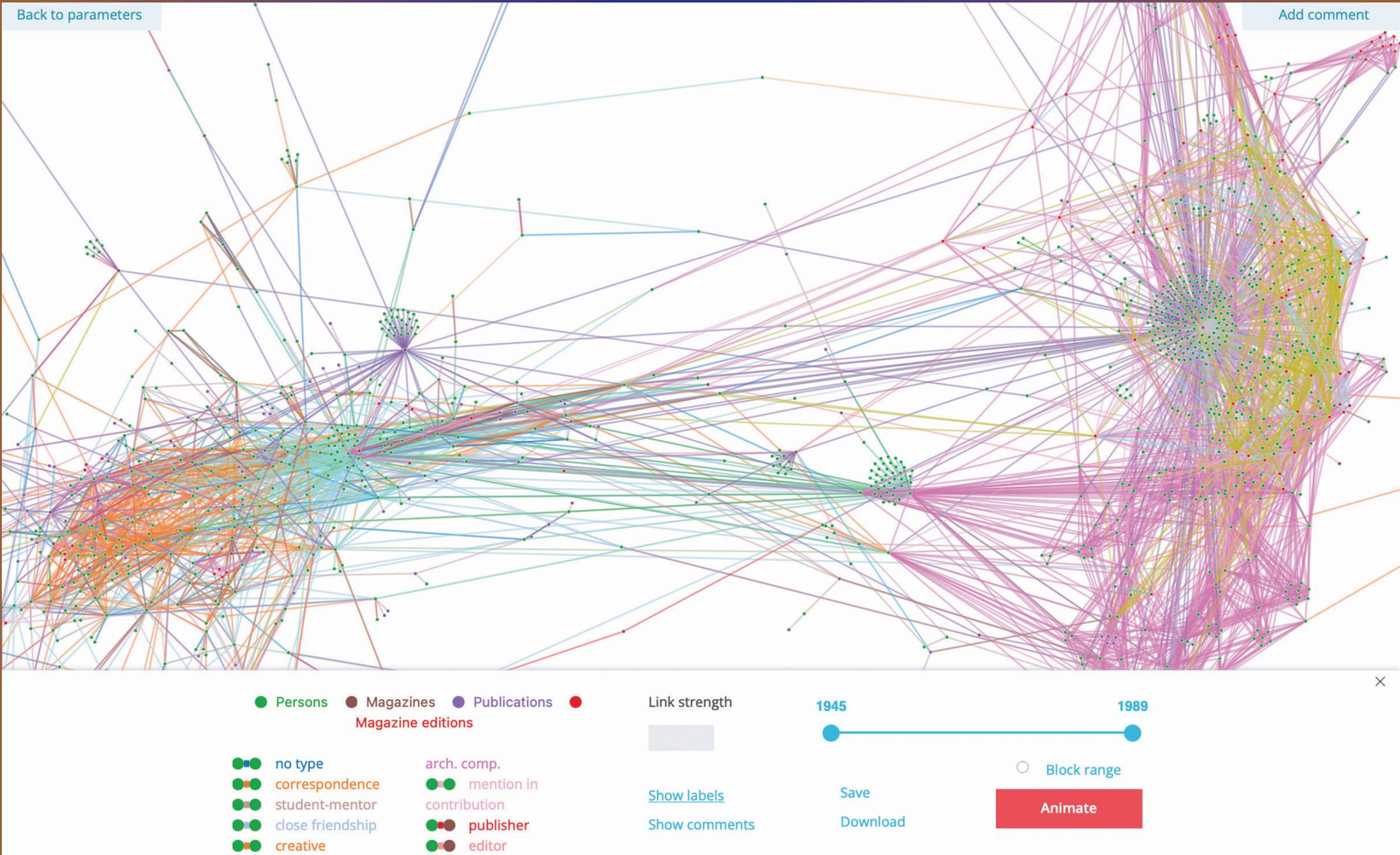
In addition to the database, the project “Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and the Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics” offers visual display of geolocations and networks of related content from the database.

232 Changing the size of the grid can help us understand the data differently. When the user zooms out in order to view the entire network, they can access the nodes at the centre of the network comprised of the interconnected people, institutions, and other variables. The user can thus work out the desired information quickly. By zooming in, we can either explore many of the smaller nodes or pan across the structure to examine overlapping between the points. Users can also select individual nodes to access additional information on the link, or move a node across the grid, rearranging the grid so that it is most useful to them.

Visualisations help us discover patterns that cannot be discerned from textual inputs of empirical data which cannot by themselves provide insights into the theories that could be developed from them. Visualisation can thus facilitate sensory access to tangible representations of locations, time, historical perspective and, above all, the links between particular events, places or even periods in history. The so-called exploratory method of visualisation was used, which at the same time allows for subsequent generation of new understandings, provided that this transformation of data takes place at the level of many users and a large amount of data.



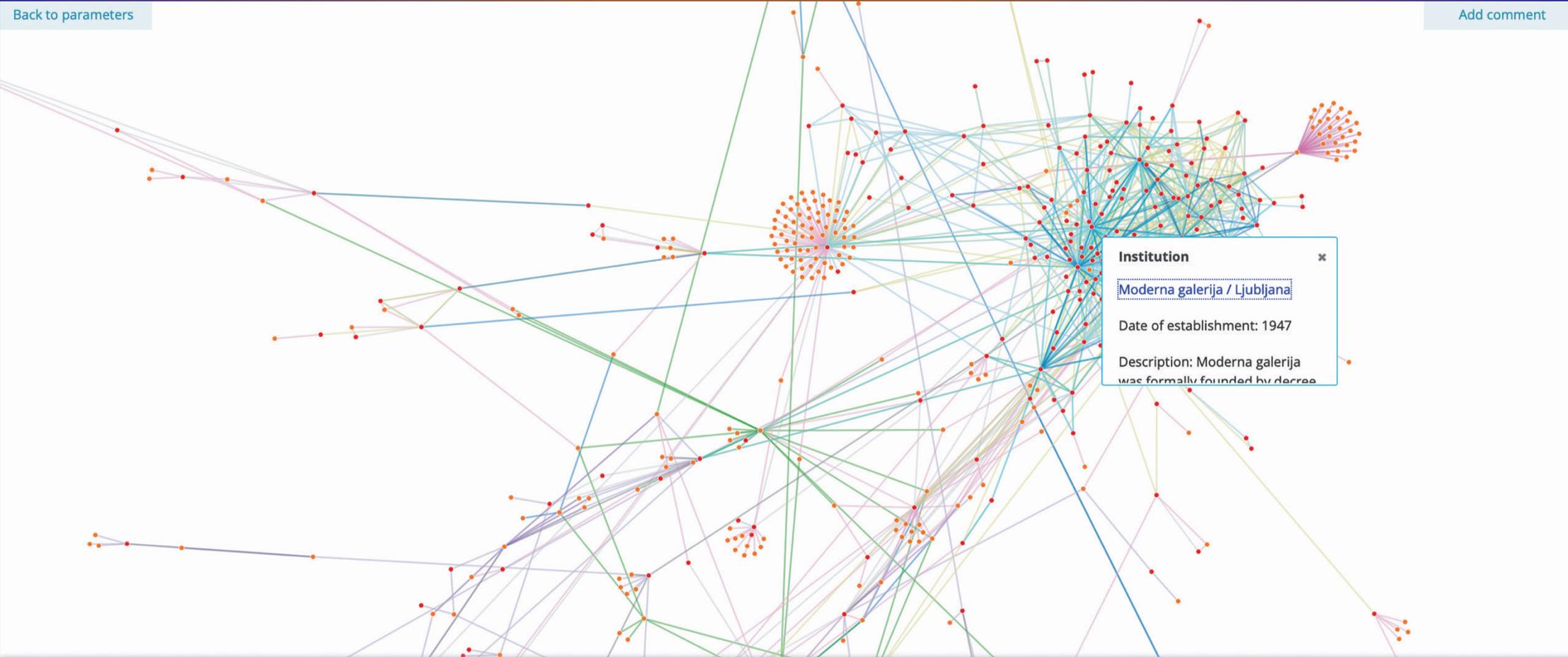
Geolocations of exhibitions in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
Based on project database. (screen capture, author's personal archive)



Network visualisation showing persons, magazines, publications and magazine editions. Based on project database. (screen capture, author's personal archive)

[Back to parameters](#)

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Institution ✕

Moderna galerija / Ljubljana

Date of establishment: 1947

Description: Moderna galerija was formally founded by decree

Persons ● **Institutions** ●

●● correspondence	●● tutoring
●● student-mentor	●● co-mention in contribution
●● creative cooperation	●● common people
●● business cooperation	●● cooperation through cultural and art projects

Link strength █

1961 ————— 1989

Block range

[Save](#) [Download](#) [Animate](#)

[Show labels](#) [Show comments](#)

Network visualisation showing persons and institutions.
Based on project database. (screen capture, author's personal archive)

Methods, types and attributes of visualisations

Data visualisation aids understanding and improves effectiveness. The human mind learns quicker from visual content than from text and tables. As in the case of speech, one of the dimensions of visualisation is persuasiveness, as it often aims to influence people's ideas, beliefs and attitudes. It is more than just a communication tool, since it can use the form of the message to create meaning. Visualisation can thus combine aesthetic and strategic aspects, since it has both a narrative and a functional level. New methods are being sought that combine a planned, staged approach to project management with the iterative, intuitive and creative approach of designers. The most important method, which can already be evidenced in historical visualisations, is *reduction*.

Reduction

Although data visualisation is the most discussed topic in today's technology-dominated world, and we will look at it in more detail in the context of the project for which this methodological framework is intended, it is important to underline the fact that there are many types of visualisation. Common to all of them is the method of reduction, which is evident in scientific illustration, charts, infographics and data visualisation (it is also found, of course, throughout the wider field of art history in the form of mosaics, frescoes, stained glass artworks, on geographical maps, woodcuts, engravings and so on). It might sound counterproductive, but reduction already takes place during the selection and acquisition of data. This is because the diversity of visualisations will depend on the research question of the viewers or users of the database. If there are many of them, or if they have different requirements, we need to use a small quantity of curated data, or the data need to be displayed in a functional way, with their relationships reflected, or evident, in the structure of the display. Selectivity with respect to data is also important due to the technical limitations of databases.

Spatial dimensions

The second most important tool for visualising information according to Manovich are *spatial dimensions*, which, in human visual perception, are privileged over other visual attributes (colour, tonal value, opacity, texture, symbols and so on).¹⁶ While this fact could have neurological underpinnings, it could also be—as has been the case throughout history—a consequence of technological evolution. Since colour printing used to be an expensive rarity, the

spatial components, widely used in thinking about and conceiving messages, gradually became dominant. Spatial variables (position, size, shape, movement) are central to the development of the research question we are trying to construct, as well as to the planning (design) of the visualisation itself.

Despite having roots in statistics, the field of visualisation is inherently associated with visual presentation—with the presentation of the visual elements, to be more exact, also referred to as graphical elements due to the historical development of the field (media used to be in print). These also serve as the basic tools of graphical design, which is part of the broader field of visual communication design, alongside photography, illustration and typography. Each of these areas are, on the one hand, a subject of visual art theory and perception, and contingent on the medium and the technology through which the visualisation is present on the other hand. The field of information visualisation in its entirety must thus combine information technology, science and design. Especially important in the segment of the field that includes design is the theory of perception, which makes use of Gestalt psychology and visual art theory, the latter includes the theoretical laws relevant to visual components in general.

A quick analysis of the principal morphological elements of visual language, which include words (individual words, phrases, sentences, bodies of text), shapes/graphical elements (points, lines, abstract shapes, negative space) and images (illustrations, photographs—images that carry semantic meaning) tells us that all these elements feature diverse attributes that are controlled by variables: thickness, texture, colour (hue, saturation, value), orientation, size, position within 2D or 3D space, motion, etc. Combined into a whole, these elements constitute a *visualisation*. Variables are supremely important; in addition to their inherent value they also influence one another. Accordingly, they must be chosen sensibly, both in terms of their functional transformation and their visual image.

Elements of visual language can roughly be categorised into static (largely, but not exclusively, two-dimensional, for example icons, pictograms, diagrams, charts, maps, spreadsheets, infographics) and interactive (allowing us to better utilise three-dimensional space; examples include interactive graphics and data visualisations). Depending on the intent and/or the research question, a lot of information can be displayed through visualisation: when something started, the position of something in time, how long something took; the quantity of something, what proportion each quantity represented in relation to the whole; we can show the order, the

sequence of things; we can categorise them according to specific parameters or show them in a hierarchy; we can arrange them in space (geographical, political, cultural); we can show the trajectory, the process or the development of a particular movement, as well as the causal relationships between the elements we are interested in.

Interdisciplinarity

Indeed, it is in the field of science that we can often spot very basic errors in the use of colour, form and hierarchy. These errors stem from a lack of familiarity with visual language, so it is crucial that such projects are approached in an interdisciplinary way. It is also true that even scientists are increasingly aware nowadays of how important it is to be familiar with the tools used to create quality visualisations. This is evidenced by the publication of articles on art and art theory in natural science-focused journals. One such article was published in the journal *Nature Communications*. It discussed how colour maps can visually distort the data due to uneven colour transitions, or how they cannot be used by people with deficits in colour vision.¹⁷ Different media (digital, analogue, spatial) demand different areas of expertise, which necessitates collaboration by interdisciplinary teams. This is likewise important in the field of data visualisation, which combines visual aspects with statistics and art with science. The visualisation envisioned within the framework of the research project “Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and the Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics” will therefore necessarily have to involve at least three fields of expertise: building, managing and maintaining databases (architecture, design, art history), maintenance of digital databases and algorithm development (information and computer sciences), and the field of visual communication (information design, which develops visual elements of user interfaces and ensures the readability of the data collected, based on the definition of the users). Only through collaboration will we be able to visualise the patterns and structures contained in the data obtained in the project (people, institutions, locations, dates), as well as the relationships between these elements. The visualisation should ideally permit the comparison, matching, distinguishing, arranging, aggregation by variables and adding new connections between elements.

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17 Crameri et al., The misuse of colour.

Criteria of excellence

In general, the same criteria apply to data visualisation as to visual communication in general. They can be divided into three groups according to: relevance (how well does the result serve a specific purpose), which is also about functionality; excellence of individual components; and excellence of all the elements as combined into a whole. The criteria can be subdivided further according to the three phases of the process: design, planning and execution/implementation.

In design, it is important to analyse the problem thoroughly and plan the concept sensibly based on the content that we want to convey; to choose the medium of communication based on the context; to ensure originality, innovativeness, inclusivity and sustainability in planning and to be as thorough as possible in managing data. As each dataset in the research project could potentially be incomplete, we need to introduce certain safeguards, or have suitably customised sets of research questions ready. In the absence of input data, certain research questions may not be correctly presented, or may be incomplete or even incorrect.

During planning, we can evaluate aesthetic and artistic consistency, adherence to genre and support of content, quality of individual elements (e.g. legibility of typefaces, appropriateness of other visual elements/graphic elements, potentially illustrations and photographs), the consistency of the combination of pictorial and typographic language, linguistic appropriateness, functionality of the design (clarity, rationality), navigation through the material and its hierarchical structure, appropriateness of the testing methods, and the quality of the iteration, or refinement, of the prototype.

In the execution phase, we focus on technical quality (user experience, quality of the user interface in terms of functionality, complexity of the application) and the use of interdisciplinarity.

Possible Further Steps

The truth is, unlike analogue printed books, a digital project, even once published, is never truly finished. It can always be built upon, new layers added. New information can always expand the field of understanding. Here I will outline some options for future developments or approaches that ought to be taken in similar projects.

The project as it stands is not externally linked. Interaction with other databases created in similar projects and the interconnection between them is something that should probably have been considered before the project started, as that is when many of the factors for capturing, recording and visualising data were being defined.

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An extended testing phase would also be necessary—if researchers were given more time in advance in the project programme to use the tool in-depth over a longer period of time, they would be better able to observe the interaction and give better feedback to the tool developers and designers on what is needed. The result would be an even closer alignment of the tool with the research objectives of the project. In an even more ideal scenario, during the course of the project, the interactive visualisation could already allow the project participants to adjust the research process and enrich the individual teams of researchers during the process.

Opening up the access to the visualisations to other potential scientific users would also be welcome, as a broader view would allow interdisciplinary enrichment of the task. To make this possible, a different project design would be required, which would financially allow the construction of two different models that could be tested with different users. They would look at the models, use them and reflect on their experiences and potential improvements in informal focus groups. The improvements would then be integrated in collaboration with the users active on the project.

The process of collaboration itself could be improved by eliminating the jargon that is so pervasive in professional silos, especially in the field of information and communication technologies. Especially in international collaborations, it can be a distraction, complicating ongoing communication. In addition, the introduction of plain language¹⁸ into the interactive environment is of paramount importance, as verbal components, regardless of their visual design, are a key carrier of information for the user.

It is clear that well-conceptualised content is one of the key elements of a project's success. It is the same with visual content design: if clearly conceived in the first place, the results will be better and the project more usable. As for the conceptual approach to the whole project, many of the conundrums we have mentioned could certainly easily be solved by an effective co-design approach. This approach has long been present in design, and as Barbara Predan writes: "the numerous practices, methods and tools can be used as a basis for establishing an operating framework and instructions for tackling the individual steps in the process of collective

co-creation and co-design and how to continually adapt them to the situation at hand".¹⁹ It is precisely because of this apparently open approach that co-design can be effective in interdisciplinary projects like ours.

Part of the principle of rational planning is that it links design with science, which in modern times likewise has an extremely important responsibility to communicate clearly and understandably both to professionals and to the general public. Considering that it might well be visual language that is their common point, which "increases learning speed", "decreases learning errors", "contextualises interpretations" and "allows for more complex expression",²⁰ I see careful planning of all steps in interdisciplinary projects of different professions as the only possible approach.

18 Abroad, the terms for easily understandable language used in information design literature are "clear language", "plain language" and "simple language", and are used to better communicate with a variety of users, but largely in the administrative and legal environment of government institutions. In Slovenia, however, the term *lahko branje*, "easy-to-read," is gaining ground, especially in the field of special needs and pedagogy (See: A. To. 2021).

19 Predan, A Discussion of Processes, p. 4.

20 Horn, *Visual Language*, p. 249.

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Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics and Protests, art practices and culture of memory in the post-Yugoslav context. She regularly publishes articles about social movements, art, utopias, cultural exchanges and non-alignment, some of which have been published in the international scholarly journal *Third Text*. In autumn 2022, she had a scholarly monograph *Revolutionary Utopias* published by the *Aristej* publishing house.

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250 **Assoc. Prof. Dr Nadja Zgonik**, art historian and art critic. Her research focuses on the history and theory of modern and contemporary visual art, especially the study of national and other identities in art (*Podobe slovenstva* [The Images of Slovene National Identity], 2002), intercultural exchange, and issues of cultural hegemony. In 2016 she spent a semester as a visiting professor at the University of Humanities and Arts, National Chiayi University, Taiwan, and in 2018 she was a visiting scholar at Augsburg University, Minneapolis, MN, USA. Since 2009, she has participated in the *Theatre and Inter-art Studies* research programme at the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (AGRFT), University of Ljubljana, Slovenia; and since 2020, she has also been part of the *Models and Practices of Global Cultural Exchange and Non-Aligned Movement: Research in the Spatio-Temporal Cultural Dynamics* project at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (UL ALUO), both funded by the Slovenian Research Agency (ARIS). She is also a guest curator in Slovenia and internationally, associate professor of art history at UL ALUO, a member of the International Association of Art Critics (AICA), and a member of the Slovenian section of PEN.

Abstracts

01 **Paul Stubbs**
**THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND THE NEW
 INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFORMATION
 ORDERS: YUGOSLAVIA, THE GLOBAL SOUTH
 AND THE UN**

With socialist Yugoslavia playing a leading role together with countries of the Global South, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), along with the G-77, turned, in the 1970s, much more towards economic themes, asserting “collective self-reliance” as an opposition to “neo-colonialism”. The most important results of this were the New International Economic Order (NIEO), passed at a UN Special Session in May 1974, and the New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO) passed at the UNESCO General Conference in Belgrade in October 1980. Both involved close collaboration with UN agencies including UNESCO and UNCTAD. The paper maps elements of these endeavours, tracing processes of the production and circulation of knowledge and addressing the ambivalences and contradictions of the NIEO and NWICO, not least in terms of slippery understandings of “culture”. The paper concludes with an assessment of the reasons for the “failure” of the NIEO and NWICO, including the radical opposition to it marshalled by the United States, and whether some lessons can be learned from the period to challenge the hegemony of a globalising neo-liberal order today.

KEYWORDS

New International Economic Order (NIEO), New World Information and Communications Order (NWICO), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), UNCTAD, UNESCO

02 **Nadja Zgonik**
EASTERN, WESTERN OR NON-ALIGNED MODERNISM?
THE CASE OF YUGOSLAVIA

This article reviews the definitions used to describe the art produced in socialist Yugoslavia in the post-World War II period until the collapse of the state in 1991. For almost two decades after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the consensus to define this art as “Eastern” did not seem problematic. In the last two decades, however, there have been repeated pleas for a more precise definition, one that is said to derive from the specific socio-political order of Yugoslavia in comparison to other communist countries of the Eastern Bloc. The question arises whether and how the non-aligned, anticolonialist and anti-imperialist politics of this multinational and culturally diverse country, which took a leading role in the political movement of the non-aligned countries, manifested itself in its art system. With its policy of non-alignment, Yugoslavia gained political prestige and strengthened economic cooperation, but in the cultural sphere its strategies for self-expression on the international stage were not so clearly defined. With exhibitions of popular and naive art, Yugoslavia emphasised the aspect of young, non-elitist socialist art in a multicultural society created by the people and for the people. At the same time, by gradually turning away from socialist realism and toward Western modernism and abstract art, it presented itself as a non-(Eastern) bloc country that allowed the same artistic freedom as Western democracies. The event that most closely conformed to the concept of non-aligned modernism was the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts, founded in 1955. Through its inclusive policy, which included countries from the West, the East, and the Global South and allowed both national and individual applications, the Biennial helped consolidate the idea of non-alignment. The second, more concrete result was the promotion of postcolonial collecting, which presented the artistic production of Third World countries in museums of non-European cultures and art galleries rather than in ethnographic museums. It can be noted that the Non-Aligned Movement did not lead to the elaboration of art programmes and manifestos that would have undermined the Western canon of art through the development of a socialist globalism, but it did form a set of fundamental ele-

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ments that provide a good basis for understanding geopolitical relations in art today.

KEYWORDS

Non-Aligned Movement, socialist modernism, cultural policy, cultural exchange, Yugoslav art

03 **Jure Ramšak**
NON-ALIGNMENT, YUGOSLAV DIPLOMACY AND THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF CROSS-CULTURAL LINKS WITH
AFRICA

For Yugoslav diplomats, the “Non-Aligned” African continent represented a terrain where their country needed to demonstrate, through various engagements, its commitment to Non-Alignment, which was first and foremost a concept of a new, non-hierarchical type of international relations. In addition to promoting political and economic cooperation, this involved cultural diplomacy, which—understaffed and insufficiently materially supported—was facing competitors from both the capitalist and socialist bloc in the newly created African countries. Drawing on materials from the federal and republican foreign affairs bodies, this paper shows how Yugoslav diplomats in each of the highlighted Sub-Saharan countries found themselves in the role of cultural mediators by way of analysing their understanding of post-colonial cultural realities and tracing those cultural manifestations, on both sides, that they helped organise. By shining a light on the work of a broader community of experts working in the field of cultural cooperation on the Yugoslav side, the discussion also focuses on the ambiguous process of shaping the imaginary of African cultures within Yugoslavia and on the discourses reflecting the common aspirations of the European-African peripheries towards cultural self-assertion and transcending the established monopolies.

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KEYWORDS

Yugoslavia, Sub-Saharan Africa, non-aligned, decolonisation, international cultural cooperation

04 **Barbara Predan**
THE IMPACTS OF NON-ALIGNED DESIGN

The central topic of this paper are the different postures adopted by Slovenian designers when interacting with the Global North and the Global South. In the first case, a desire for recognition and

active involvement on the part of the so-called advanced Other was evident, while in the latter, as one who possesses and selflessly shares knowledge, the approval was clearly inherent to the role itself. Using the historical method, the text illuminates two examples that illustrate how, on the basis of the Yugoslav Non-Aligned Movement and workers' self-management in the 1970s and 1980s, Yugoslav designers introduced to both the Global South and the Global North the idea of decentralisation and questioning the epistemic colonialism, as well as highlighting the role of participation and the importance of listening to voices from the so-called periphery of design. The selected examples further show that Slovenian (and Yugoslav) designers, following the orientations of the Yugoslav social order of the time, focused their international outlook on understanding and designing an integrated approach in a broader cultural, social and geographical space.

KEYWORDS

non-aligned, industrial design, Janja Lap, Saša J. Mächtig, ICSID

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05 **Aleš Gabrič**
**THE CULTURE OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES ON
 THE SLOVENIAN CULTURAL HORIZON**

The article outlines Yugoslavia's position on the scientific, technological and cultural cooperation among the member states of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), who had an important influence on the development of the positions that the members of the Movement jointly represented in international organisations. Due to the numerous issues that the non-aligned states were facing—the varying levels of development, geographical remoteness and a legacy of colonialism—only a small part of the ideas were realised. Slovenia took in many students from these countries, most of them from Africa. They tried, and in many cases succeeded, to align their study programmes and scientific cooperation with the demands of economic cooperation with the students' countries of origin. Cultural cooperation was more modest in its extent. In Slovenia, art exhibitions and music events featuring artists from the non-aligned countries were only held a few times a year, and a handful of writers were invited to the International Writers' Meeting in Bled. Fewer still were instances of Slovenian artists visiting the non-aligned countries.

Frequently mentioned as an example of good practice in the area of establishing contacts with the non-aligned countries was Pomurska založba, a publishing house based in Murska Sobota.

In 1976, it began publishing a book collection of translated literature entitled *Mostovi* (Bridges), which prominently featured writers from non-aligned countries and some other developing countries, as well as writers from ethnic groups that had not yet achieved equal status in their own countries. There were numerous works by Sub-Saharan African authors, and many of the published works represented Slovenians' first exposure to literature from previously unknown cultures. The book collection *Mostovi*, along with contemporary translations by other publishing houses, were a strong influence on the Slovenian readers' shifting views of unknown cultures, as they introduced them to stories told by the locals. Previously, their knowledge of unknown lands would have mostly been derived from the simplified descriptions by the colonisers.

KEYWORDS

non-aligned, cultural cooperation, scientific cooperation, translated literature, Pomurska publishing house

06 **Mitja Velikonja**
IMAGES OF FRIENDSHIP

Analysis of artworks, ethnological and applied arts gifts from non-aligned countries to the President of SFRY, Josip Broz
Part I and II

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The present two-step research analyses the gifts stored in the repositories of the Museum of Yugoslavia in Belgrade that President Tito received from leaders and delegations of non-aligned countries. In the first step, I concentrate on the visual language—the cultural breadth and ideological layers—of a total of 39 artworks presented as gifts, while in the second step I observe the visual language of more than 1,100 ethnological and applied arts gifts. The analysis is based on primary sources (the gifts themselves, interviews with curators, archive materials, various original documents, exhibitions) and secondary sources (previous researches on cultural exchanges between the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement). The collected materials are approached using the theory of representation and the practical method of visual semiology. In Part I, I investigate the meanings inherent to the motifs of the artworks, i.e. how non-aligned countries presented themselves outwardly (along the axes of meaning relative to essentialism/constructivism, traditionalism/progressivism, exoticisation/emancipation, local/global, political/non-political, gender dichotomies, etc.). In addition, I preliminarily explore the artistic expressiveness of these works (figuration/abstraction, various techniques and materials, etc.). In Part II, I divide

the second, much larger group of ethnological and applied arts gifts into four big sub-groups: gifts linked to contemporary cottage industry and gifts from the recent past (the cultural code is the beauty of tradition); archaeological gifts (the cultural code is glorious pre-colonial past); gifts combining domestic and foreign elements (cultural code is glocalisation); gifts consisting of a variety of animal trophies, precious metals and stones (cultural code is natural riches). Subsequently, I compare the visual language of artworks presented as gifts with the visual language of ethnological and applied arts gifts, noting similarities (nature, traditionalism, non-political and anti-modernist character) and differences (aesthetics, ways of portraying political leaders, exclusiveness of ethnological and applied arts gifts). In the final part of the chapter, I problematise the unexpected persistence of the colonial discourse in the post-colonial period, which is expressed through the selection of gifts presented by Non-Aligned leaders and delegations to Tito, and manifestations of the enormous disjuncture between the imperative of social modernisation and the folkloristic essence of these gifts.

KEYWORDS

Non-Aligned Movement, Josip Broz Tito, gift, gift-giving, traditionalism, colonialism, modernisation

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07 **Petja Grafenauer**
CULTURAL COOPERATION BETWEEN INDIA AND THE SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA IN THE 1960s AND 1970s: A CASE STUDY OF THE INTERNATIONAL BIENNIAL OF GRAPHIC ARTS

The article explores the diversity of readings of artworks in different contexts. We discuss the case of the International Biennial of Graphic Arts (IBGA) and the cultural artistic links between India and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s. Our interest is focused on the connections between Indian artists participating in the IBGA, the systemic arrangement of the SFRY cultural exchange with India and the biennial exhibition, which testifies to the various codes of visual literacy.

Studying the case of participation by the Indian graphic artist Krishna Reddy in the IBGA—who almost certainly entered the Biennial via the Western art world, paving the way for many of his compatriots—and exploring other institutional routes established with India (e.g. Lalit Kala Academy), which were aimed at visual decolonisation, we investigate how Yugoslav cultural agreements and programmes influenced the processes of artistic exchange bet-

ween India and the SFRY, and how, in the case of the IBGA, this was reflected in procedures for inviting Indian artists and at the level of exhibiting and reception of their works.

This paper is based on the analysis of the archival material deposited in the Archives of Yugoslavia, the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia and the archives of the International Centre of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana, as well as on the study of the literature to the present date. The most extensive portion of the studied material is held in the Archives of Yugoslavia, Belgrade; a substantial proportion of its fonds related to the Federal Council for Education and Culture (1967–1971, AJ 319) and the Federal Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (1953–1971, AJ 559) were analysed for the purpose of this research.

The thesis of the research is that the cultural policy of the SFRY at the level of visual arts and visual literacy—which could be conceived as completely individual, founded on anti-imperialism and decolonisation, non-interference and peaceful co-existence, as well as Yugoslav self-management—is in practice not identifiable in the activities of fine and visual arts organisations; that the readings of the visual codes were, therefore, Western-oriented or the influence of the Non-Aligned Movement was small, even in the case of the IBGA, which was valued primarily for bringing together art from all parts of the world, but in reality, as the Indian artist Krishna Reddy discussed here, mainly relied on Western modernism and its visual code.

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KEYWORDS

Non-Aligned Movement, Ljubljana graphic biennial, Krishna Reddy, graphic arts, visual art

08 **Daša Tepina**
YUGOSLAV-EGYPTIAN CULTURAL RELATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF ART INTERSECTIONS IN LJUBLJANA AND ALEXANDRIA IN THE 1960s AND 1970s

The aim of the paper is to explore how the Non-Aligned Movement influenced the cultural relations between Yugoslavia and Egypt in the 1960s and 1970s and to clarify how this impacted the reception of fine art originating from the non-aligned countries in the former Yugoslavia (FPRY/SFRY). As one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement, the country—then named FPRY—was gaining increasing importance and prestige in the international political arena through its international policies. We will be tracing cultural policies by examining three premises that characterise

both the politics of Yugoslavia and the politics of the Non-Aligned Movement: anti-colonialism, anti-imperialist struggles and decolonisation; the politics of non-involvement and peaceful coexistence, and finally the Yugoslav self-management. In the text we demonstrate how these fundamental principles of non-alignment were expressed in the area of artistic practices in individual artistic intersections, namely Ljubljana and Alexandria.

Our central focus will be the 1960s and early 1970s, which is when the founding and the bulk of the activities of the Non-Aligned Movement took place. We will be examining the case of two central art venues that served as important intersections of cultural, as well as political international relations between Egypt and Yugoslavia. These artistic manifestations are the Ljubljana International Biennial of Graphic Arts (MGB) and the Alexandria Biennial for Mediterranean Countries, both of which were founded in 1955. The influence of cultural policies will also be explored in more depth, as the focus of our interest is in how the principles of non-alignment were reflected in the work of individual artists from the UAR who exhibited at the MGB. With this in mind, we will be examining the opus of artist Menhat Allah Helmy at the MGB.

258 The text presents an overview of the political background of the biennials, which it examines mainly through an analysis of archival materials from the Archive of Yugoslavia and the archives of the International Centre of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana. While it is mainly based on an analysis of material from the Commission for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries fund and the cultural agreements and conventions on cooperation established between Yugoslavia and Egypt, it also draws on structured interviews with contemporary actors and the existing literature.

KEYWORDS

Non-Aligned Movement, International Biennial of Graphic Arts in Ljubljana, Alexandria Biennial for Mediterranean Countries, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Menhat Helmy

09 **Petra Černe Oven** **THE CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPING METHODS OF VISUALISATION IN DIGITAL HUMANITIES PROJECTS AND WHAT THE DESIGN PROFESSION CAN CONTRIBUTE**

Humans are visual creatures. Neuroscience has already shown that we comprehend verbal messages more quickly when they are complemented by visual elements. This is true everywhere to some

extent, but especially so in the field of scientific research, where being able to successfully present new discoveries and explain concepts so that they are easily understood is of critical importance. The last thirty years of scientific research in this area have brought important advancements, since facilitating the understanding of scientists' discoveries is not only desirable but crucial for the democratisation of society and the role of science within it.

This paper presents the broader context of the use of visual communication in the field of digital humanities and the importance of visualisation, as well as how tightly it is embedded in a number of technological, social and theoretical currents that are constantly influencing the development of new fields of expertise. The boundaries of the latter are increasingly blurred and most successful projects in the field of visual presentation of complex information are interdisciplinary in nature. In modern working environments, the design tools that had in the past been used by the professionals (artists, designers, architects) can and should be used by everyone. As a result, visualisation often fails to reach its full potential, since the users of the tools for the most part lack education and training in the field of visual communication.

259 The analysis of the material collected from research projects depends to a large extent on its accessibility, logical presentation and clear, understandable and aesthetic visual language. This is especially true for projects that feature complex materials, transcend time periods and geographical areas and are inherently diverse in terms of their visual presentation. The paper aims accordingly to shed light on the possible approaches towards establishing a methodology, which can have an impact on all the interdisciplinary sciences contributing to the project. In other words, the paper looks at the methodological approaches necessary to optimise the presentation of the project's results and points the way to possible future improvements of the project from which it originates.

KEYWORDS

visual communication design, visual language, methods, data visualisation, information design, methods

Povzetki

260 01 **Paul Stubbs**
**GIBANJE NEUVRŠČENIH IN NOVE MEDNARODNE
 EKONOMSKE IN INFORMACIJSKE UREDITVE:
 JUGOSLAVIJA, GLOBALNI JUG IN DRUŠTVO ZN**

S socialistično Jugoslavijo in državami globalnega juga v glavni vlogi sta se gibanje neuvrščenih in skupina G77 v sedemdesetih letih 20. stoletja v veliko večji meri usmerila h gospodarskim temam, pri čemer sta zagovarjala načeli »skupinske naslonitve na lastne sile«. Najpomembnejša rezultata teh prizadevanj sta bili nova mednarodna gospodarska ureditev (NIEO), sprejeta maja 1974 na posebnem zasedanju ZN, in nova mednarodna informacijska in komunikacijska ureditev (NWICO), sprejeta oktobra 1980 na Generalni konferenci Unesca v Beogradu. Obe sta nastali v tesnem sodelovanju z agencijami ZN, kot sta UNESCO in UNCTAD. Članek opisuje elemente teh prizadevanj ter sledi procesom produkcije in kroženja znanja, posveča pa se tudi dvoumnostim in protislovjem v NIEO in NWICO, tudi v smislu izmuzljivega pojmovanja »kulture«. Članek zaključujemo z oceno razlogov za »neuspeh« NIEO in NWICO, vključno z radikalnim nasprotovanjem, pri katerem so imele glavno vlogo Združene države, oceni pa sledi razmislek o morebitnih lekcijah iz tega obdobja, ki bi lahko pomagale izpodbijati hegemonijo globaliziranega neoliberalnega reda.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

nova mednarodna gospodarska ureditev (NIEO), nova mednarodna informacijska in komunikacijska ureditev (NWICO), gibanje neuvrščenih (NAM), UNCTAD, UNESCO

02 **Nadja Zgonik**
**VZHODNI, ZAHODNI ALI NEUVRŠČENI MODERNIZEM?
 PRIMER JUGOSLAVIJE**

V članku so zbrane opredelitve, ki so se uveljavile za označevanje umetnosti, ki je od druge svetovne vojne pa do razpada države leta 1991 nastajala v socialistični Jugoslaviji. Skoraj celi dve desetletji po padcu železne zavese se pristajanje na definicijo te umetnosti kot vzhodne umetnosti ni zdelo problematično. V zadnjih dveh desetletjih pa se je začel proces zavzemanja za njeno natančnejšo opredelitev, kar naj bi bilo posledica specifičnosti družbenopolitične ureditve v primerjavi z ostalimi komunističnimi državami vzhodnega bloka. Vprašanje, ki si ga postavljamo, je, ali in kako se je neblokavska, antikolonialistična in protiiimperalistična politika te večnacionalne in kulturno raznolike države, ki je bila tudi vodilna v političnem gibanju neuvrščenih, odrazila v njenem umetnostnem sistemu. Z neuvrščeno politiko si je Jugoslavija pridobivala politični ugled, krepila je gospodarsko sodelovanje, na kulturnem področju pa njene strategije samoprikazovanja v mednarodnem prostoru niso bile tako jasno definirane. Z razstavami ljudske in naivne umetnosti je poudarjala vidik mlade neelitistične socialistične umetnosti v večkulturni družbi, ki nastaja med ljudstvom in je ljudstvu namenjena. Obenem se je s postopnim odmikom od socialističnega realizma, sprejemanjem modernizma zahodnega tipa in abstraktne umetnosti prikazovala kot izven(vzhodno) blokavska država, ki dopušča umetniško svobodo tako kot zahodne demokracije. Prireditve, ki se je najbolj približala pojmu neuvrščenega modernizma, je bil Ljubljanski grafični bienale, ustanovljen leta 1955. Z inkluzivno politiko, vključevanjem zahodnih, vzhodnih držav in držav globalnega juga ter dopuščanjem tudi individualnih poleg nacionalnih prijav je pomagal utrjevati idejo neuvrščenosti. Drugi oprijemljivejši rezultat je bila spodbuda postkolonialnemu zbirateljstvu, ki je afirmativno predstavljalo umetniško produkcijo dežel tretjega sveta ne v etnografskih, temveč v muzejih neevropskih kultur in umetnostnih galerijah. Ugotavljamo, da gibanje neuvrščenih ni spodbudilo pisanja umetnostnih programov in manifestov, ki bi z razvijanjem socialističnega globalizma spodkopali zahodni kanon v umetnosti, je pa oblikovalo mnoge nastavke, ki so dobra osnova za razumevanje geopolitičnih razmerij v umetnosti danes.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

neuvrščeni modernizem, socialistični modernizem, jugoslovanska kulturna politika, jugoslovanska identiteta, umetnost globalnega juga

03 **Jure Ramšak****NEUVRŠČENOST, JUGOSLOVANSKA DIPLOMACIJA IN USTVARJANJE TRANSKULTURNIH VEZI Z AFRIKO**

»Neuvrščena« afriška celina je za jugoslovanske diplomate predstavljala teren, na katerem je bilo skozi različne angažmaje treba dokazovati zavezanost svoje države neuvrščenosti, v prvi vrsti konceptu nove vrste nehierarhičnih mednarodnih odnosov. To je poleg promocije političnega in ekonomskega sodelovanja vključevalo tudi kadrovske in materialne sicer podhranjene kulturne diplomacije, ki se je na terenu novoustanovljenih afriških držav srečevala s konkurenti tako iz kapitalističnega kot iz socialističnega bloka. Prispevek na osnovi gradiv federalnih in republiških organov za zunanje zadeve prikazuje, kako so se v posameznih izpostavljenih podsaharskih državah znašli jugoslovanski diplomati v vlogi kulturnih posrednikov, in sicer na način, da analizira njihovo razumevanje postkolonialne kulturne stvarnosti in sledi tistim kulturnim manifestacijam na obeh straneh, ki so jih pomagali organizirati. S pozornostjo na delu širše skupnosti strokovnjakov, ki se je na jugoslovanski strani ukvarjala s področjem kulturnega sodelovanja, se razprava osredinja tudi na dvoumen proces oblikovanja imaginarija afriške kulture znotraj Jugoslavije in na diskurze, ki so odražali skupno periferno evropsko–afriško stremljenje h kulturni samobitnosti in preseganju ustaljenih monopolov.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

Jugoslavija, podsaharska Afrika, neuvrščenost, dekolonialnost, mednarodno kulturno sodelovanje

04 **Barbara Predan****UČINKI NEUVRŠČENEGA OBLIKOVANJA**

Prispevek se osredotoča na različni poziciji delovanja slovenskih oblikovalcev na globalnem severu in globalnem jugu. Pri prvem vidiku se je odražala želja po priznanju in aktivni vključitvi s strani tako imenovanega naprednega Drugega, pri drugem pa je bilo odobravanje več kot očitno položeno že v zibko z vnaprej priznane pozicije tistega, ki znanje ima in ga nesebično deli. Besedilo s pomočjo historične metode osvetli izbrana primera, ki pojasnita, kako so

jugoslovanski oblikovalci na temelju jugoslovanskega gibanja neuvrščenih in delavskega samoupravljanja v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja tako na globalni jug kot na globalni sever pripeljali idejo decentralizacije in preizpraševanje epistemičnega kolonializma ter izpostavili vlogo participacije in pomen upoštevanja glasov s tako imenovane periferije oblikovanja. Izbrana primera še pokažeta, da so slovenski (in jugoslovanski) oblikovalci, sledeč usmeritvam takratne jugoslovanske družbene ureditve, svoj pogled v mednarodnem prostoru usmerjali v razumevanje in oblikovanje celostnega pristopa v širšem kulturnem, družbenem in geografskem prostoru.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

neuvrščeni, industrijsko oblikovanje, Janja Lap, Saša J. Mächtig, ICSID

05 **Aleš Gabrič****KULTURA NEUVRŠČENIH V SLOVENSKEM KULTURNEM OBZORJU**

V prispevku je orisano stališče Jugoslavije do znanstveno-tehnološkega in kulturnega sodelovanja med članicami gibanja neuvrščenih, ki so pomembno vplivale tudi na oblikovanje skupnih izhodišč neuvrščenih, ki so jih članice zagovarjale v mednarodnih organizacijah. Ker so se neuvrščene države soočale s številnimi težavami, različno stopnjo razvitosti, zemljepisno oddaljenostjo in dediščino kolonializma, je bil uresničen le manjši del idej. Slovenija je sprejela na šolanje in študij veliko študentov iz teh držav, daleč največ iz Afrike. Študijske usmeritve in znanstveno sodelovanje so poskušali in v veliko primerih tudi uspeli uskladiti s potrebami gospodarskega sodelovanja z državami, od koder so prihajali študenti. Bolj skromno je bilo kulturno sodelovanje. V Sloveniji so v enem letu pripravili zgolj po nekaj likovnih razstav in glasbenih prireditev umetnikov iz neuvrščenih držav, nekaj pisateljev je bilo povabljenih na mednarodno srečanje pisateljev na Bled, še manj pa je bilo gostovanj slovenskih umetnikov v neuvrščenih državah.

Kot primer dobrega navezovanja stikov z neuvrščenimi je bila pogosto omenjena Pomurska založba iz Murske Sobote, ki je začela leta 1976 izdajati knjižno zbirko prevodne literature Mostovi. V njej so dobili pomembno mesto pisatelji iz držav neuvrščenih, še nekaterih držav v razvoju in iz narodov, ki v svojih državah še niso uživali enakopravnosti. Veliko del je izviralo iz podsaharske Afrike, mnoge izdaje so bila prva literarna srečanja Slovencev z dotlej povsem neznanimi kulturami. Knjižna zbirka Mostovi je ob sočasnih prevo-

dih pri drugih založbah zelo vplivala na spreminjanje pogledov slovenskih bralcev na neznane kulture, saj so se seznanjali z zgodbami, ki so jih pripovedovali domačini, medtem ko so dotlej v večji meri poznali le orise neznanih dežel iz opisov kolonialnih prišlekov.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

neuvrščeni, kulturno sodelovanje, znanstveno sodelovanje, prevodna literatura, Pomurska založba

06 Mitja Velikonja PODOBE PRIJATELJSTVA

Analiza likovnih daril neuvrščenih držav predsedniku SFRJ

Josipu Brozu

I. in II. del

Raziskave daril, ki jih je predsednik Tito dobil od voditeljev in delegacij neuvrščenih držav in ki so spravljene v depojih beograjskega Muzeja Jugoslavije, sem se lotil v dveh korakih. V prvem me je zanimala vizualna govorica – kulturna širina in ideološke plasti – likovnih daril (skupaj 39), v drugem pa govorica etnoloških daril in daril uporabne umetnosti (več kot 1100). V analizi sem posegal po primarnih virih (darila sama, pogovori s kustosinjo, arhiv, različna originalna dokumentacija, razstave) in tudi po sekundarnih (dosedanje raziskave o kulturnih izmenjavah znotraj gibanja neuvrščenih). Zbranih materialov sem se lotil s teorijo reprezentacije in konkretno metodo vizualne semiologije. V prvem delu sem raziskal pomene, ki so vpisani v motiviko likovnih del, torej kako so se neuvrščene države z njimi predstavljale navzven (vzdolž pomenskih osi esencializem/konstruktivizem, tradicionalizem/progresizem, eksotizacija/emancipacija, lokalno/globalno, političnost/nepolitičnost, spolne dihotomije ipd.), uvodoma pa tudi njihovo likovno izraznost (figuralika/abstrakcija, različne tehnike in materiali ipd.). V drugem delu sem drugo, veliko večjo skupino daril razdelil na štiri velike podskupine: darila aktualne domače obrti in tista iz nedavne preteklosti (njihov kulturni kod je lepota tradicije); arheološka darila (kulturni kod je slavna predkolonialna preteklost); darila, ki povezujejo domače in tuje (kulturni kod je glokalizacija); različne živalske trofeje in drage kovine ter kamni (kulturni kod je naravno bogastvo). Nato sem medsebojno primerjal vizualno govorico likovnih daril z govorico etnoloških daril in uporabne umetnosti: ugotavljam podobnosti (narava, tradicionalizem, nepolitičnost, antimodernost) in razlike (estetske, glede upodabljanja političnih voditeljev, ekskluzivnost etnoloških daril in daril uporabne umetnosti). V sklepnem delu poglavja problematiziram presenetljivo persistenco kolonial-

nega diskurza glede izbora daril neuvrščenih voditeljev in delegacij Titu tudi v postkolonialnem obdobju, ki se kaže v ogromnem razkoraku med imperativom družbene modernizacije in folklorističnim bistvom teh daril.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

gibanje neuvrščenih, Josip Broz – Tito, darilo, darovanje, tradicionalizem, kolonializem

07 Petja Grafenauer KULTURNO SODELOVANJE INDIJE IN SFR JUGOSLAVIJE V ŠESTDESETIH IN SEDEMDESETIH LETIH 20. STOLETJA NA PRIMERU MEDNARODNEGA GRAFIČNEGA BIENALA

V prispevku proučujemo raznolikost branj likovnih del v raznorodnih kontekstih. Obravnavamo primer Mednarodnega grafičnega bienala (MGB) ter kulturne likovne povezave Indije in Socialistične federativne republike Jugoslavije v šestdesetih in sedemdesetih letih 20. stoletja. Zanimajo nas vezi med indijskimi umetniki na MGB, pa tudi sistemska ureditev izmenjave kulturnih dogodkov SFRJ z Indijo in MGB, ki priča o raznolikih kodih vizualne pismenosti. Ob primeru sodelovanja indijskega grafika Krishne Reddyja na MGB, ki je na bienale skoraj gotovo prišel prek zahodnega sveta umetnosti in pri tem odprl pot mnogim sorojakom ter razkrivanju drugih, institucionalnih poti z Indijo (npr. Lalit Kala akademija), ki so težile k vizualni dekolonializaciji, skušamo ugotoviti, kako so jugoslovanski kulturni sporazumi in programi vplivali na postopke likovnih izmenjav med Indijo in SFRJ ter kako se je to odrazilo na danem primeru na ravni postopkov vabljenja, razstavljanja in recepcije del indijskih umetnikov.

Prispevek temelji na preučevanju arhivskega gradiva Arhiva Jugoslavije, Arhiva Republike Slovenije in arhiva Mednarodnega grafičnega centra v Ljubljani ter dosedanje literature. Najobsežnejši del gradiv prihaja iz Arhiva Jugoslavije v Beogradu, kjer je obdelan večji del fonda Zveznega sveta za izobraževanje in kulturo 1967–1971 (AJ 319) in fonda Zvezne komisije za kulturne stike s tujino 1953–1971 (AJ 559). Teza raziskave je, da kulturne politike SFRJ na ravni likovne umetnosti, vizualne pismenosti, ki bi gradila povsem lastno kulturno politiko, temelječo na protiimperializmu in dekolonializaciji, politiki nevmešavanja in miroljubni koeksistenci ter jugoslovanskem samoupravljanju, v praksi ni moč zares zaslediti v dejavnostih organizacij likovne in vizualne umetnosti; da so bila torej branja vizualnih kodov zahodnocentrična oziroma

je bil vpliv gibanja neuvrščeni majhen, celo v primeru MGB, ki je bil cenjen predvsem zaradi združevanja umetnosti vseh delov sveta, a se je v resnici, kot obravnavani indijski umetnik Krishna Reddy, napajal predvsem pri zahodnem modernizmu in njegovem vizualnem kodu.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

gibanje neuvrščeni, Ljubljanski grafični bienale, Krishna Reddy, grafika, vizualna umetnost

08 Daša Tepina

JUGOSLOVANSKO-EGIPČANSKI KULTURNI ODNOSI NA PRIMERU LIKOVNIH PRIZORIŠČ V LJUBLJANI IN ALEKSANDRIJI V ŠESTDESETIH IN SEDEMDESETIH LETIH 20. STOLETJA

Cilj prispevka je preučiti vplive gibanja neuvrščeni v kulturnih odnosih med nekdanjo Jugoslavijo in Egiptom v šestdesetih in sedemdesetih letih ter razumeti, kako so ti vplivali na recepcijo likovne umetnosti neuvrščeni v nekdanji Jugoslaviji (FNRJ/SFRJ). Tedanja FNRJ je kot ena izmed ustanovnih članic gibanja neuvrščeni s svojimi mednarodnimi politikami vedno bolj pridobivala pomen in ugled v mednarodnem političnem prostoru. Kulturnim politikam sledimo s preučevanjem treh premis, ki zaznamujejo tako politiko Jugoslavije kot tudi politiko gibanja neuvrščeni. Te so protikolonializem, protiimperialni boji in dekolonizacija; politika nevmešavanja in miroljubne koeksistence ter jugoslovansko samoupravljanje. V besedilu pokažemo, kako se ta temeljna načela gibanja neuvrščeni izražajo na področju umetniških praks v posameznih umetnostnih stičiščih, v Ljubljani in Aleksandriji.

Zaradi ustanovitve in delovanja gibanja neuvrščeni so naš osrednji fokus šestdeseta in zgodnja sedemdeseta leta prejšnjega stoletja. Obravnavamo primer dveh osrednjih likovnih prizorišč, ki sta pomembni točki prepletanja kulturnih, pa tudi političnih mednarodnih odnosov med Egiptom in Jugoslavijo. Ti likovni manifestaciji sta Ljubljanski Mednarodni grafični bienale (MGB) ter Mediteranski bienale likovne umetnosti v Aleksandriji, obe nastali v letu 1955. Vpliv kulturnih politik preučimo tudi globlje, saj nas zanima, kako so načela neuvrščeni odzvanjala tudi v delih posameznih umetnikov iz ZAR, ki so razstavljali na MGB. S tem namenom preučimo opus umetnice Menhat Allah Helmy na MGB.

Besedilo obsega pregled bienalnih politik, ki jih preučuje predvsem z analizo materialov arhivskega gradiva Arhiva Jugoslavije in Mednarodnega grafičnega likovnega centra v Ljubljani. Zlasti izhaja

iz analize fonda Komisije za kulturne stike s tujino in vzpostavljenih kulturnih sporazumov ter konvencij o sodelovanju med Jugoslavijo in Egiptom. Navezuje pa se tudi na strukturirane intervjuje s tedanjimi akterji in obstoječo literaturo.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

gibanje neuvrščeni, Ljubljanski grafični bienale, Mediteranski bienale likovne umetnosti v Aleksandriji, Egipt, Jugoslavija, Menhat Helmy

09 Petra Černe Oven

IZZIVI VZPOSTAVLJANJA METOD VIZUALIZACIJE NA PROJEKTIH DIGITALNE HUMANISTIKE IN KAJ LAHKO K TEMU PRISPEVA OBLIKOVANJE

Ljudje smo vizualna bitja in že nevroznanost je dokazala, da vizualne komponente pomagajo hitreje razumeti vsebino verbalnih sporočil. To velja za vsa področja, vendar je še posebej pomembno za področje znanstvenih raziskav, kjer sta uspešna predstavitev novih odkritij ali jasna in razumljiva razlaga konceptov izjemnega pomena. Znanstveno raziskovanje je na tem področju v zadnjih tridesetih letih naredilo pomembne korake, saj je možnost razumevanja dognanj, do katerih znanstveniki pridejo z raziskovanjem, ne samo zelena, temveč tudi nujna za demokratizacijo družbe in vlogo znanosti v njej.

Članek predstavi širši kontekst uporabe vizualnih komunikacij na področju digitalne humanistike, predstavi pomen vizualizacije ter njeno vpetost v številne tehnološke, družbene in teoretične tokove, ki ves čas vplivajo na razvoj novih strokovnih področij. Meje le-teh so vedno bolj zabrisane in večina uspešnih projektov, ki pomagajo vizualno predstavljati kompleksne vsebine, so interdisciplinarne narave. Ker oblikovalska orodja, ki so jih v preteklosti uporabljali profesionalci (umetniki, oblikovalci, arhitekti), v sodobnem delovnem okolju lahko in mora uporabljati vsak, vizualizacija pogosto ne doseže vseh potencialov, saj uporabniki orodij večinoma niso poučeni in izobraženi na področju vizualnega.

Analiza zbranega gradiva raziskovalnih projektov je v veliki meri odvisna od njegove dostopnosti, logične predstavitve ter jasnega, razumljivega in estetskega vizualnega jezika. To velja sploh za projekte, ki imajo kompleksne materiale, presegajo časovna obdobja, geografska področja in so že v osnovi raznoliki v svoji vizualni prezenci. Članek poskuša zato osvetliti možne vzpostavitev metodologije, ki lahko vpliva na vse interdisciplinarne vede, ki prispevajo v projekt. Povedano drugače, članek se ukvarja z metodološkimi

pristopi, ki bi bili potrebni za optimalno predstavitev rezultatov projekta, in nakazuje smeri možnih izboljšav projekta, iz katerega izhaja, v prihodnosti.

KLJUČNE BESEDE

oblikovanje vizualnih komunikacij, vizualni jezik, metode, vizualizacija podatkov, informacijsko oblikovanje

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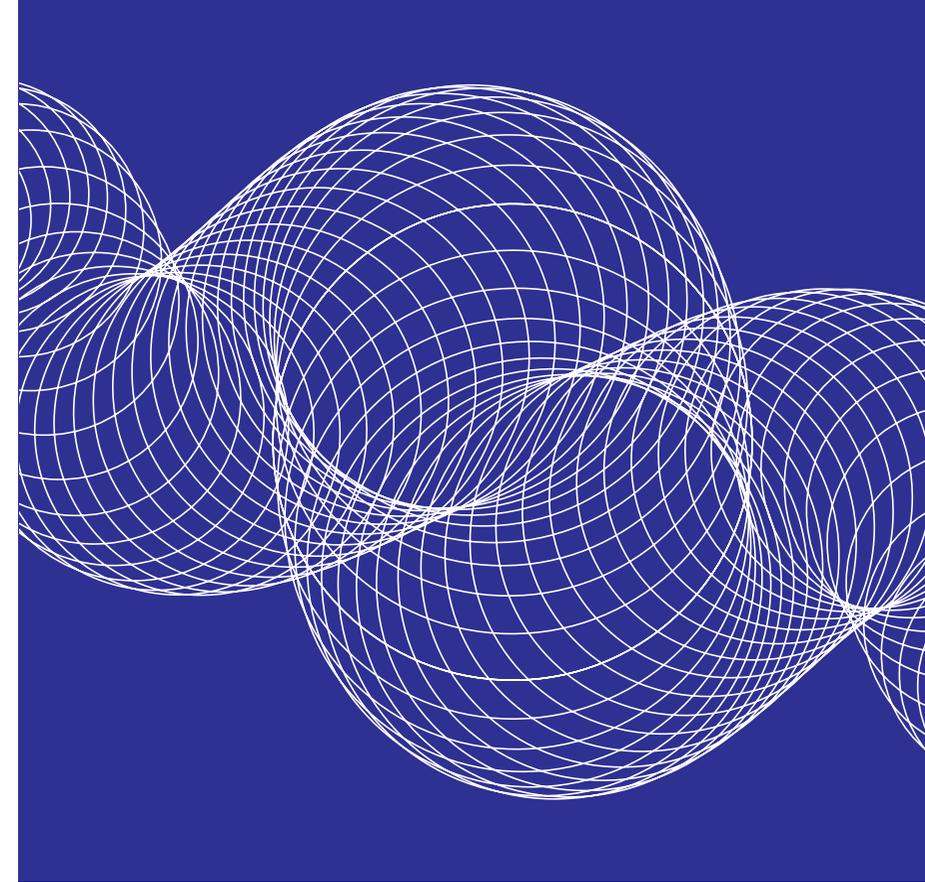
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Excerpt from the review by Dr Kaja Kraner

In particular, the collection offers insights into the cultural and political foundations of cultural exchanges: the contributions analyse the strategic aspects of the formation of so-called Non-Aligned Modernism, describe in detail the exchanges between Yugoslavia and the individual countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, and critically evaluate Yugoslavia's role as a mediator and facilitator of decolonisation in relation to several non-European countries through the lens of policies in the area of collecting and exhibitions. In addition to the analysis of heretofore underrepresented cultural areas, the collection's chief original scientific contribution is a reflection on the increased attention given to the heritage of the Non-Aligned Movement within the contemporary art sphere in the last decade; as some of the contributions illustrate, when researching the culture of the Non-Aligned Movement, it is imperative that historical and art-historical analysis of (cultural) policies be supplemented from the perspective of the visual, the visual semiotics and art theory. In addition, the collection also makes an important contribution to the development of digital humanities, or the visualisation of scientific findings, which is underrepresented in the Slovenian scientific sphere.

