

nesvrstani modernizmi
non-aligned modernisms

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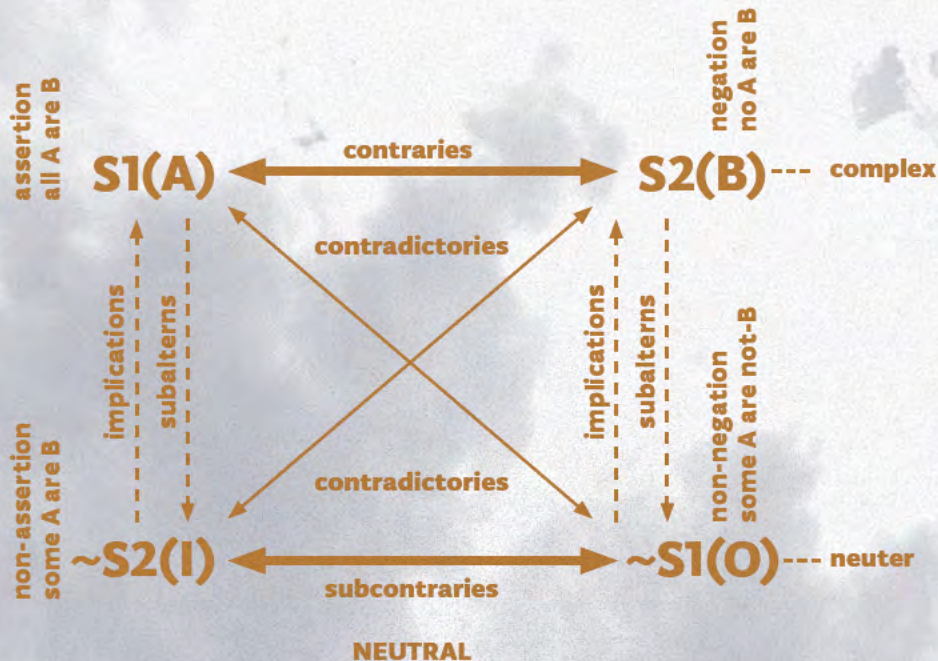


Jelena Vesić • Rejčel O'Rajli •
Vladimír Jerić Vlidi

O NEUTRALNOSTI

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ON NEUTRALITY



Complex Contrary S1 + S2
Neutral Contrary ~S2 + ~S1
Schema 1 Contradiction

S1 + ~S1

Schema 2 Contradiction

S2 + ~S2

Deixis 1 Implication

~S2 + S1

Deixis 2 Implication

~S1 + S2

S1 and S2: opposition

S1 and ~S1, S2 and ~S2: contradiction

S1 and ~S2, S2 and ~S1: complementarity

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ON NEUTRALITY

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**Jelena Vesić •
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ON NEUTRALITY

The Letter From Melos

Neutrality as a political concept has existed as long as there has been warfare. At its simplest, neutrality means not taking part in a war, or, in more durational terms, to remain uncontaminated by great rivalries. But with any second glance through its conflicting legacies, the terminological negativity of the Neutral gets quite complex — juxtapolitical and generative — as it continues to be utilized across progressive and conservative, legal-normative and revolutionary identifications. It is often said that in international law there is no term more complex, entangled and subtle than the one of neutrality.

Within the history of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), we locate Neutrality as not a static *term*, nor a petrified legal *institution*, but rather a dynamic *category* of position taking. Our research experiment tracks through Neutrality as a political discourse of comportment, as a strategy, and as a historic geopolitical phenomenon, *constitutive of philosophies of war and peace, or of inequality in conflict*. We consider the NAM experiments in *Active Neutrality* as key element of both the genealogy of the very term of Neutrality and what the Movement was about; in other words, we see this

examination of Neutrality within NAM as necessary for understanding both.

Our modest effort in historical-textual examination takes a journey through the emergence of normative and juridical notions of Neutrality discourses at the limits of the juridical imagination of international relations, before taking up with more (and less) radical pasts and futures of an *Active Neutrality* politic as key to NAM.

Genealogies of Neutrality: From A Philosophical Sketch to Political Theory

The longing for a Neutral-izing element in international governance, of norms of conduct and political peace, existed long before actual institutional and legal apparatuses of international law materialized.¹ Persistent across theoretical and imaginative precursors of liberal legal thought is the notion that both individuals and states are bound by the *same* codes of universal moral law. The establishment of such liberal internationalism became more doctrinal as the burgeoning capitalist era introduced the first means of regulating the international (European) play of powers and forces:

The Westphalian Peace (1648)

Established across a series of treaties, and breaking with medieval clero-monarchist schemes of justice in right faith, the Westphalian Treaty articulated two specific principles for the further development of Neutrality — *the principle of the sovereign equality of states* and *the principle of the balance of forces*. As Stephen Wynne notes, the notional ‘peace’ that this sets up in early law is “... the principle of *non-intervention*, prohibiting one

state from interfering with the internal affairs of another. With this, arose 'the beginning of respect for the territorial integrity of other nations'."²

The Westphalian model also inaugurated an Unlimited Right of States to Wage War, assuming that a state is sovereignly free to decide upon its politics of engagement ("the state is the judge of itself and there is no judge of the state"). The Unlimited Right to Wage War, accompanied by the principle of "non-intervention", is thus part of the era of colonial modernity.

Emphasizing force as the strongest argument in international relations, this epoch gives rights to the most economically and militarily powerful states to have the last word, take ultimate actions and impose regulatory rules in world politics. Following this logic, small countries and economically and militarily weaker states had no other choice but to treat their sovereignty less as *the right to wage war*, and more as a *right to avoid annihilation by claiming neutrality*. Otherwise, according to the (uncontested) logic of power, they would lose their sovereignty anyway.

It can be said that the spatialization of war and peace as a product of 'Enlightened Europe' gave birth to the very institution of Neutrality; both as a part of international law, and as an instituted idea in its own right, neutrality is an exclusively modern phenomenon.

Regulatory (Permanent) Neutrality

"The state supporting a permanent neutrality is the state that cannot wage any offensive war and that in return cannot be the subject of any aggression."³

The political idea of a possible 'perpetual peace' arrived only during the 18th century as the product of Enlightenment.⁴ The legal regulatory form of *permanent neutrality* followed in European international relations soon after (Paris Congress of 1856 and the Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907), to signify the status of states that, even in a time of peace, were expected to perform certain international and legal obligations to anticipate their neutral standpoint in assumed-forthcoming confrontations.

In the emerging United States during this period, President Washington's Proclamation of Neutrality of 1793, written in line with the European laws of nations, kept the new republic out of conflicts in Europe created by the French Revolution, while its main purpose was to protect the nation from taking responsibility for acts of its citizens contravening the US government's stance.

In Europe, the categorical features of the permanent neutral state of the 19th century were *strict abstinence* and *absolute impartiality*. According to the Yugoslav publicist and political analyst Ranko Petković,⁵ a permanently neutral state denies itself the right to wage war except in the act of self defense; it takes the formal obligation to never take part in war and to restrain from any politics that can draw it to war. Further, permanently neutral states cannot make any pacts, offensive or defensive; cannot sign treaties on military collaboration, nor allow other states' creation of military bases on its territory; cannot allow the passage of foreign troops in war through its own territory, nor allow its air space to be open for foreign planes, even if such troops and planes are acting in accordance with the orders of

the currently active international organization. In legal interpretation: “Permanent neutrality is like any other contractual obligation. It is the limiting of sovereignty.”⁶

On the other hand, a permanently neutral state has arguably not only the right but also the duty to wage war in the case that it is under attack, that is, it is obliged to *defend its neutrality*.

But its Enlightenment spatial fix makes the principles of Neutrality only able to be wedded to a classically two-sided (European) formula — *either participation in the war or absolute neutrality*.

Entangled Sovereignties

In the aftermath of the conflicts of World War I, which massively reorganized states, discourses, statuses, categories and orientations, the second important institution for the regulation of sovereignty within international relations was set up. The League of Nations’ activity was expressed in two main directions: one was the prohibition of war (that is, beyond mere ‘self-regulation’); the other was the introduction of the principle of *collective security of states* (which inherits and modifies the former principle of the *balance of forces*). In this significant shift from *unlimited rights and balanced forces* to *collective security*, international relations comes to treat a notion of inter-national solidarity between nations as a next regulatory idea.⁷

Through the League of Nations, the politics of collective security assigned the principle of absolute or permanent neutrality to some states;⁸ this was observed both as a constitutive part of the internationally secured peace and as the grounds for further debate on “the sins of neutrality” (argued to be a material practice of

exceptionalism) in which neutrality and international solidarity were seen as mutually exclusive principles.⁹

Neutrality Redefining War Itself

As wars do not start by themselves, but are prepared on the economical and political plane, the Western powers debated whether European neutralist states could take part in any form of economic and political preparations for war without losing their neutral status, only to discover that the concept of neutrality itself is redefining the understanding of the mechanism of war. American diplomat, scholar and jurist Philip C. Jessup, observing the contemporary changes of the institution of neutrality within the context of early twentieth century international relations,¹⁰ considers neutrality in its second historical (United States-dictated) period to be developing as a predominately *economical category*. The basic goal of the neutrals in the first half of this century was to remain outside of war in order to remain *uninhibited in trading*, or, as in the earlier words of Thomas Jefferson: "... let us milk the cow, while the Russian holds her by the horns, and the Turk by the tail."¹¹

With the "science of war" being already executed by the Hague Conventions,¹² the codification of basic norms on economic relations of the neutral states enabled private entrepreneurs to freely trade with one or the other side of a war (ideally, both) out of pure financial interest, and without holding the State responsible for, nor considering it to be involved in, such acts.

The League of Nations was technically accepted to proclaim potential wars as either just or prohibited, but the organization didn't manage to

prevent the aggressions of Japan against China, Italy against Ethiopia, and later, the conquests of Nazi Germany. During ww2, the anti-Hitler coalition aspired to urgently create new international organizations for peacekeeping.¹³ At the inaugural conference of the United Nations in San Francisco, 1945, the representatives of 50 states established the Charter of the UN, in the spirit of the sentiment that *the world should be built anew, and as the antithesis to the Nazi/fascist ideology of violence.*¹⁴

With aggression according to the UN Charter coming to be considered the key international crime, neutrality, somewhat paradoxically, again comes to be considered a potentially ambiguous form of 'silent collaborationism.' A member of the UN could remain neutral on a conflict only in the exceptional case when there is a war between two non-members, and if the UN itself does not consider it necessary to take measures and prevent that particular war. In all other cases, the members of the UN were obliged to provide the assistance needed towards preventive and forceful actions against potential aggressors.¹⁵

The World War That Perhaps Never Ended: Testing Balances

Through these modernizing legal doctrines from the 17th century to the post-ww2 era we can observe the principles of neutrality being tested, remodeled and rejected, but also (un)conditionally accepted, within different articulations of a system of security defined along national state lines.¹⁶

After ww2, neutrality often performed as *de facto* admission of certain forms of *non-participation* and *passivity*. For example, the decision of

Switzerland not to become a member of the UN was taken as an argument for the thesis on the incommensurability between the principle of neutrality and the system of collective security. At the same time, diplomats and political theorists active in international politics after WW2 continued to speak positively about the uses of Neutrality within a possible international politics of peace. Their arguments are condensed in the well-known statement of the French political theorist Charles Chaumont, made just prior to the formation of the NAM:

“The neutrality is not contrary to the principle of collective security, it is not the exception — an exception that is more or less awkward, more or less shameful — but it is a part of the system of collective security itself and one of the ways to achieve collective security.”¹⁷

Neutrality and Class Struggle, Intra- and Extra-State

It was only with the arrival of Marxist political thought that distinctions between just and unjust wars were for the first time interpreted through the criteria of social revolution and class struggle.

In Marx’s classical works, the wars of the bourgeoisie are always inspired by goals of conquest, which lead to the enslavement of other nations; by this fact, these wars (i.e. vast majority of wars) are *unjust wars*. In Marx and Engels, we find a movement beyond the thought of war as the conflict of two sides towards a larger comprehension of revolution worked through the extreme experience of *war’s hardship on both sides*, whereby the proletariat splits from imperial

identifications to take up socialist revolutionary investment. But there is a complex Neutral at work here.

At the outset of World War, Lenin proposed that the socialist struggle should not be limited or restrained by the risk that it might bring on the defeat of one's own country in the forthcoming conflicts. Marx was frequently invoked (and misquoted) in debates between pro-war and anti-war socialists. In Lenin's writings on the military program of proletarian revolution, *just wars* are seen as a continuation of the politics of struggle against national oppression, or as the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie — such wars Lenin considered *inevitable* and *revolutionary*.

However, it is worthwhile noting that clear principles of a socialist *policy of war* cannot be clearly found in Marx and Engels. On the question of war, Marx only ever asked "How can this conflict, before or after war has been declared, be turned to promote or hasten revolution?"¹⁸ Marx and Engels repeatedly refused to name the 'better' belligerent and proudly endorsed the 'anti-war' vote, while at the same time lamenting:

"The plague on both your houses' (...) For my own part, I do everything in my power, through the means of the International, to stimulate this 'Neutrality' spirit."¹⁹

Wording of the Non-Aligned "Worlding"

The Non-Aligned Turn

Despite post-war efforts to reorder international relations through a collective idea of inter-operative social economic systems ('collective security'), the first decade, 1945–55, under the weight

of the Cold War, remained dominated by the “Roman understanding” that there could be only two sides of conflict, with either allies or enemies involved or considered. It was only after the threat of global nuclear destruction terrorized the world that conditions emerged to recognize a stronger need to establish new principles towards a balance of forces and international security.²⁰

The negation of power politics, symbolically captured by the historic Bandung Afro-Asian conference of 1955, marked the movement of the bipolar Cold War condition towards an *officially novel* situation. The emerging forces of new and socialist nations articulated the project of *political peace* — as a form of *material* collective solidarity. Their proposition was a claim of decisionist power within, but also beyond the design of the UN Charter’s post-war project.

In the NAM countries’ later-developed *Word-ing of the Non-Aligned Worlding*, neutrality becomes synonymous with: non-alignment / independent politics / (national) sovereignty / respect for (inter-national) sovereignty / politics of “eternal peace” / solidarity / friendship / equality...

From this point, terms like *active neutrality* or *politicized neutrality* become characteristic of statements in post-war foreign policy, and part of NAM history.

Neutrality in Non-Aligned Declarations / The Politics of The Nominal

One of the first declarations of a political position of active neutrality prior to the official formation of NAM was given by Jawaharlal Nehru before the Congress in Jaipur (1947). Nehru insisted that India have chosen its own way of *independent politics*, aside from the politics of power of allied groups.

“We propose to stand on our own feet and to co-operate with all others who are prepared to co-operate with us. We do not intend to be a plaything of others.”²¹

Minister of foreign affairs of Burma U Tin Tut confirms this newly sketched stand of independent and non-aligned political positioning with his statement from 1948: “Burma does not want to be involved in any process of allying with the world powers and aims at establishing friendly relations with all other countries.” Burmese Minister of Defense U Ba Swe explicitly underlines the difference between the neutrality of Burma and “passive” neutralism, while the Prime Minister U Nu uses the metaphor of a fish “which knows how to swim no matter how small it is” to portray the viability of non-aligned politics of newly independent states under lateral external pressure.

Non-alignment was an urgent discussion in the temporary parliament of Indonesia following its declaration of independence that directly confronted Cold War divisions. Parliament proclaimed the politics of Indonesia independent and active; Sukarno’s Foreign Minister Subandrio later in 1959 affirmed Indonesia’s neutralism, especially with regard to its most obvious potential rivalries:

“Indonesia wants friendship with all nations... We even want good relations with the Netherlands, but as long as West Irian (Dutch New Guinea) is occupied by the Dutch, there is no chance that our relations with the Dutch will be good.”

With the fall of the monarchy in Egypt in 1952, Gamal Abdel Nasser comes to power with a far

more neo-realist articulation of Non-Aligned interests. He stated:

“I was afraid of alliances with any of the external force, precisely because I know Arab history and Arab people. For hundreds of years they have been looking at their governments with the affright and distrust, like at the agents of foreign powers, like at the governments that get instructions from the ambassadors (...) Now, our international political orientation is clear — it is the politics of positive neutrality, of non-alignment, of Arab nationalism and of establishing one socialist, democratic and cooperative society”.

Kwame Nkrumah in his 1957 parliamentary speech following the proclamation of independence of Ghana defended the principle of anti-colonial sovereignty, peace and security among all the countries of the world. He was the first to differentiate the NAM approach towards neutrality from the European legacy of *passive states*:

“This politics of **non-alignment and de-linking** certainly does not have to be interpreted as if my government decided to play the role of silent observer of world issues, or the issues that are concerning the interests of our country and the destiny of African people. Our **politics of positive neutrality is not passive or neutral politics** — this is affirmative politics based on our firm belief into positive action.”

In international affairs, he had seen issues of disarmament and de-escalation as fundamental

to ensuring a peaceful environment for Ghana's freedom of social, economic and industrial development.

Yugoslav minister of foreign affairs Edvard Kardelj considered the Yugoslav example of resistance — both in the struggle against fascism and capitalism at the beginning of WW2, and in the 1948 split with Cominform and Stalinism — as an example of how the negation of the politics of power can find its way into political sovereignty and socialist state forms. He advocated anti-imperial and decentered “ways of building socialism” across different socialist countries, through a progressive politics “determined by their own internal struggles and specific contexts.”

Well before the establishment of NAM, at the national assembly session of 1949 (one year after the split with Stalin), Kardelj's nuanced neither/nor dialectics of active neutrality in non-alignment came to be articulated very clearly.

“I would like to say at the beginning that New Yugoslavia does not endanger anyone's security and sovereignty, it does not participate in any of the aggressive blocs, neither develops any hegemonist tendencies, neither can be part of any of the imperialist blocks.”

Kardelj would later historicize the NAM position further through the Yugoslav experience in his book *Historical Roots of Non-Alignment*, written in 1975.

In his articulation, Non-Alignment is discussed as a viable logic for maneuvering in between existing political parameters (i.e. Cold War, Third World, Communism-Capitalism, North-South, etc.). This text, also strategic as a form

of public relations, is his most comprehensive treatise on the operationality of NAM against its persistent misinterpretation by western propaganda and power politics.²² Worth noting is that throughout the book the word 'equality' or 'equal' is used in a total 74 times while the word 'neutrality' appears only once.

“We are small and we have politics”, or on the logic that reads as BAFFLEMENT

We can trace one of the earliest *positional* references to an active politics of Neutrality in the chronicles of the Peloponnesian War, documented by Thucydides. Within the context of the history of NAM, it is useful to revisit this mythologized story of the reaction of 'third party' peoples of the island of Melos to an encroaching conflict between Large Powers, and to look into the complex relationship between *realpolitik* and political fantasy *within* Active Neutrality that this famous tale sets up. One of the tasks of our re-reading is precisely to determine, in the logic and rhetoric of the Thucydides' text, retold in the form of a 'dialogue' between the powerful Athenian generals Cleomedes and Tisias and the magistrates of the small and threatened island state, whether it was a 'dialogue' at all, or a different form of practicing (or of addressing) the relationship of power.

In the war between the state of Athens and Sparta in 416–15 BC, the Athenians confront the island peoples of Melos, one of the very few colonies of Lacedaemon that would not submit to their charge. The Melians had at first taken no direct part in the struggle, and later, after the Athenians plundered their territory, took up a position of *open hostility to being involved* in the conflict. The population, considered to be historically closer

to Sparta but now independent and explicitly not wanting to take part in this war, happened to be on the war path of Athens, and became the subject of demands to submit or to be annihilated.

As Thucydides writes, the Athenians sent their envoys to negotiate this, and on their arrival are immediately annoyed that they are expected to present their case to an audience of a few Melian magistrates, rather than being given direct access to a proper crowd. Questioning this strategy to keep them away from the polis, which they had hoped to convince directly of the logic of self-preservation (here, a lot of discussion in regard to the principles of propaganda/PR could be also involved in contemplating the ancient — and contemporary — strategies of “media wars”), the Athenians ask of their few Melian interlocutors if it suits them then to be “more cautious still” and to refrain from any grand speeches themselves; they propose to just go through the main points of their demand, and for Melians to react immediately to what they find unacceptable.

At this point, the Melians request Athenians cut to the chase. And here the drama begins:²³

Athenians. If you have met with us to reason about presentiments of the future, or for anything other than to consult for your safety, we will give over; otherwise we will go on.

Melians. It is natural and excusable, for men in our position, to *turn more ways than one* — both in thought and utterance. However, the question in this conference is, as you say, the safety of our country...

Athenians. We shall not trouble you with specious pretenses, and make a long speech which would not be believed... in return we hope you don't say that you have done us no wrong and know as well

as we do that 'right' is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.

Melians. You ask us to ignore what is right, and talk only of interest — [BUT] our *common* protection is the privilege of being allowed, when in danger, to invoke *what is fair and right*, and even to profit by arguments not strictly valid if they can be argued well.

Athenians. The end of our empire, if end it should, does not frighten us: we come here in the interest of our empire, and the preservation of your country;

Melians. How could it be as good for us to serve, as it is for you to *rule*?

Athenians. Because you would have the advantage of submitting before suffering the worst, and we should gain by not destroying you.

Melians. *So you would not consent to our being neutral, friends instead of enemies, but allies of neither side?*

Athenians. No; for your hostility cannot so much hurt us as your friendship will be an argument to our subjects of our weakness, and your enmity of our power.

Melians. Is that your idea of equity, to put those who have nothing to do with you in the same category with peoples that are most of them your own colonists, and conquered rebels?

Athenians. As far as right goes ... if any maintain their independence it is because they are strong... if we do not molest them it is because we are afraid; so besides extending our empire we should gain in security by your subjection; *the fact that you are islanders and weaker than others renders it all the more important that you should not succeed in baffling the masters of the sea.*

Melians. How can you avoid making enemies of all existing neutrals ... if you risk so much to retain your empire, and you risk your subjects to get rid of it, *we are surely base and cowardly if we are still free and don't try everything that can be tried?* ... to submit is to give ourselves over to despair ... action still preserves for us a hope that we may stand erect.

Athenians. Hope, danger's comforter, may be indulged in by those who have abundant resources...

Melians. ... we are as aware as you are, of the difficulty of contending against your power and fortune. But we trust that the gods may grant us *fortune as good as yours*, since we are JUST men fighting against UNJUST... *Our confidence, therefore, is not so utterly irrational.*

Let us attend to the historical logic of the Melian's fantastic claims.

This Dialogue is widely accepted as the first documented instance of the historical debate in which 'Neutrality' as such is claimed as a viable (but defeated) oppositional politics of non-violence for a small state to take on. Instead of being used and misused as it was by most of global media since late 2010s to either speculate on the contemporary Greek agony vs. its creditors and speculators, or to fuel the us military industry and internal/external power politics, or to infotain the world while financializations tighten their global grip,²⁴ in Thucydides' chronicles of the Peloponnesian War we find *the allegorical prefiguration of NAM*, the positioning of a movement within the logic of *Active Neutrality* towards the power politics of USSR and USA.

For our own examination, we are less interested in (re)analyzing the confrontation between the grand forces and their moves, or in the morality of the pursuit of war (or otherwise) of those who consider themselves confronted with or compelled by power. Instead, we are paying attention to the *political logic* of the supposedly non-pragmatist and “irrational” Melian response to the historical expectation of their submission. The Athenians persist with a purely *economical and cynical* interpretation of the small or disempowered states’ collective-leaning announcement that it already has political value, logic and genuine agential politics on its own side. Here we see the powerful *still* interpret the non-aligned position as irrational/simple/pre-political, *despite* the clear and logical achievements of a non-aligned statement otherwise.

Borrowing from the Athenian’s own wording, we call this a tactic and response of “*bafflement*” in the reception of non-aligned positions, which historically repeats in the reactions of large powers — over and over again — regardless of *how* rationally, patiently or logically the position of (non-)alignment is argued. Despite its provision of an alternative rationality, Power Politics from its own logic will inevitably see NAM acting irrationally, precisely because it has nothing / everything to lose. logic inevitably see NAM acting irrationally precisely because it has nothing/everything to lose.

Square / Circle — Language without Soil: Utopia, Foundations, Abstentions

“Before you hear what I say, you must want to hear me.”²⁵

What role does language play in the space in which everything has been already once defeated by fascism? The formation of collectives, their possibility to form and to endure, is presupposed as already fixed by friend vs enemy discourses. Given this, we might consider how the NAM, in its most dynamic phases, operated through both linguistic and social-diplomatic gestures that muddied the internality and externality of existing ideological and economic boundaries (**US←→Soviet | Aligned←→Non-Aligned | For←→Against | Friend←→Enemy**). In so far as 'non-aligned' is a third option or a third space — rather than an indecisive moment between A or B, or convenient hybridization of A and B — then it is also an inherent discourse of reflexivity in organizational behavior, or, to put it this way, a form of transcendence that takes shape *within* particular conditions of histories (worded and worlded).

The way Theodor Adorno articulated the notion of the post-war 'language without soil' in his text *Words from Elsewhere* comes particularly to mind when reading Kardelj's NAM linguistic operations. As a treatise against the inflexibly myopic ontologies of nationalism and national socialist belonging, the 'language without soil', according to Adorno, "distinguish(es) itself from the uniformity and intelligibility of existent reifications" by making use of and absorbing foreign elements that make possible shifts from what is already manifested or optionable in the materiality of the present 'here'. Most pointedly, this ejection of the author (as culture-worker and reader) from the earth 'as it exists' (through language), as well as being what makes it possible to reject claims that put the political subject 'under a spell' (of colonial/Nazi identification), is also what enables one to 're-pose' historical existence as a question:

“The relation to the earthly remainder founded by the rescuing return is... no longer one of ‘subjection,’ but a relation of freedom or a free bearing: in language games between language games, between cultures in cultures.”²⁶

The emphasis is not on creating a vague operability of freedom or relief in the space of the third, but instead the very opposite of vagueness:

“The more precise the language, the more free and unrestrained it is... Through the rescuing return, the utmost in linguistic precision is attained as the rushing of language is set free for perception. At the border of the infinitely precise and inconspicuous, precision turns into something different.”²⁷

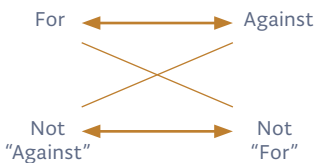
Compare this kind of reflexive commitment to worked *grounds* in Adorno to an other ‘literary’ theory of the Neutral found in the late work by Roland Barthes. His theory of the ‘Neutral’ as a decolonial aesthetic operation — which he was committed to since early in his work²⁸ — becomes in this posthumously published text an approach to a (post-)politics of form that enacts a hypersensitivity to *agential linguistics in general*.²⁹ The neutral “postulates a right to be silent — a possibility of keeping silent,” because “in every ‘totalitarian’ or ‘totalizing’ society, the implicit is a crime, because the implicit is a thought that escapes power.” The first lines of his text, *The Neutral*, thus begin:

“I define the neutral as that which outplays (*de’joue*) the paradigm, or rather I call

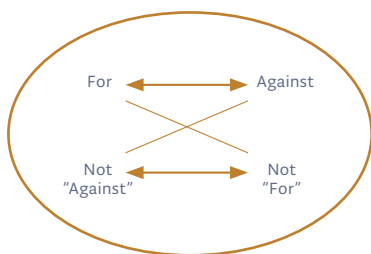
Neutral everything that battles the paradigm. For I am not trying to define a word; I am trying to name a thing: I gather under a name, which here is the Neutral.”³⁰

What is most interesting about Barthes’ articulation of this programmatic *refrain from position*³¹ is that his Neutral is a “structural term that carries within it the seed of a counter-structuralist ideal”. Instead of being interested in a foundation for futurity or in any holding circle for its various non-alignments, the Neutral offers what Barthes calls only various modes of “sweetness” — escapes from obligation and meaning, which he elevates to the status of a *categorical choice*, and specifically as a detachment from possibilities offered up by the linguistic paradigm.

In Barthes’ tilting, deflating, but just as often compelling and nuanced formulations of this counter-structural neutralism it is precisely the *apparent systematicity of his exploding of figures of an(y) argument* that sets up the text’s performativity. The Neutral is the “thought and practice of the nonconflictual,” but yet, “it is nevertheless bound to assertion, to conflict, in order to make itself heard... By dodging or *baffling* the paradigmatic, oppositional structure of meaning, [it] aims at the suspension of the conflictual basis of discourse.”³² Contrary to the Neutral as a specific practice or configurative approach to a politics of non-aligning, Rudolphus Teeuwen points out that the Neutral here becomes “a means of *refining* oppositional analyses. By increasing the number of analytical classes stemming from a given opposition from two to four to eight or even ten, a neutral possibility is *created in the last abstention*.”³³



Consider in the diagram that by the setting up of For and Against, two categories are created. In a next possible 'entertainment' of *not* taking up with either of the given positions, already four categories appear: For, Against, Not-For and Not-Against. This can go on *ad infinitum*. In the scheme, what connects the two positives 'a + b' is the complex term with which a concept, or Utopia (as we shall see) wrestles. The two negatives 'neither a nor b,' form the Neutral term. The logic of this kind of anti-normative social 'movement' in Barthes has the same kind of generative impetus as it does in Non-Aligned, but with Non-Aligned moves (and especially in the Kardelj/Yugoslav context)³⁴ away from capture, we have the TOTALITY of the socialist transitional State as the space of any proposal.

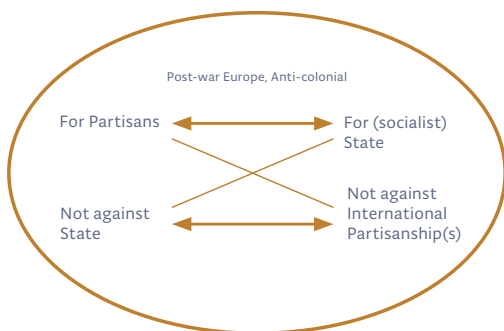


SOCIALISM

Frederic Jameson's work on the typologies of utopia³⁵ has described such materially unframed, escapist argumentation for the neutral as "Bad Utopianism": the utopianism of modernism in its "specifically aesthetic and aestheticization vision, valorizing art as the space in which the incompatibles can reach a positive kind of fullness".³⁶ He continues:

"The neutral position does not seek to hold two substantive features, two positivities together in the mind at once, but rather attempts to retain two negatives, along with their mutual negation of each other. But for thought to be "properly utopian", the two negatives "must neither be combined in some humanist organic synthesis, nor effaced and abandoned altogether: but, retained and sharpened, made more virulent, their incompatibility and indeed their incommensurability as a scandal for the mind, but a scandal that remains vivid and alive, and that cannot be thought away, either by resolving it or eliminating it."³⁷

Such an *active neutrality* for Jameson negotiates what he calls "biblical stumbling blocks" which give "Utopia its savor and its bitter freshness, when the thought of Utopias is still possible." It is neutrality, he says, that enables calls to arms, refusals of compromise, but also a real material force for irony as a viable form. Such interests in the activity of the neutral are in line with Maurice Blanchot's attempts to seek out a "neutral which cannot be neutralized."³⁸



Colombo: In Between The Two Red Phones

If we are following non-alignment as an anti-colonial dialectic, spatially and ideationally working inside and outside of Cold War era bonds, it is worth re-dramatizing another of its peak moments and nominal heights of its diplomatic material assessment and engagement of international relations achieved at Colombo in August of 1976.

Building the Network by Cutting the Cords

A decade after the Cuban missile crisis had installed the 'red telephone' between the two Cold War powers,³⁹ just eight years after the "Brezhnev doctrine"⁴⁰ responded to Czechoslovakian 'liberalization' to give communist countries the right to intervene in other communist states whose policies threatened the international communist movement, and after détente had begun in 1972, the alter-activities of Henry Kissinger and the circles of political and economic power took heightened significance for NAM.⁴¹ The Summit had a lot to discuss: during much of the early détente period, the Vietnam War had continued to rage. Conflicts in South Asia and the Middle East saw the Soviet and us backing their respective surrogates with propaganda, war machines

and diplomatic posturing. The coup against Allende in Chile appeared as a next level tactic of imperialism.

The forthright airing of the US destabilization modus operandi and the Non-Aligned nations' determination to fight back (either through UN "organs" or independently) received the support of the 'socialist sector' led by the Soviet Union.⁴² Yugoslavia proposed the idea of a Third World security council that would convene within 24 hours of any aggression against any member country to take appropriate action.⁴³

"The Third World, the conglomeration of the newly rich, the slowly established, the hopelessly poor — who have already been described as the Fourth World — is determined to present itself as the third force... And so it is not astounding that the movement began to assume increasingly more anti-Western and increasingly less neutral characteristics."⁴⁴

Exactly one year before the Colombo Summit, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe designed to improve relations between the Communist bloc and the West brought *The Helsinki Final Act* of August 1975.⁴⁵ And exactly one year before that, in August of 1974, Kissinger instructed the us president Gerald Ford:

"On CSCE — we never wanted it but we went along with the Europeans. It includes some basic principles, something on human contacts, no change of frontiers, and what they call 'confidence-building measures.' (...) It is meaningless — it is just a grandstand play to the left. We are going along with it."⁴⁶

From the Soviet viewpoint, “Brezhnev had looked forward... to the publicity he would gain... when the Soviet public learned of the final settlement of the postwar boundaries for which they had sacrificed so much.”⁴⁷ Instead he argued that the Helsinki Accords in their subsequent Soviet worlding historicized as a “manifesto of the dissident and liberal movement.”⁴⁸

As direct relations between the super powers thawed,⁴⁹ intractably dependent, so-called Third World economies were inflicted with more and more impacts of the ideological tensions of post-war ‘planning.’⁵⁰ What was at stake were the beginnings of *new* military-economic tactics of late and post-Cold War accumulation, as processes of so-called globalization in financial capture and new *in*-securitizations of markets became key to the New Economy, perpetually boosted by a permanent state of war. This is another story (un-capturable in this occasion) of the power and growth of non-state agents, of the rise of transnational corporations and financial power, of new capacity for harming just-won political gains of subjects in emergent democracies.

In 1976, several days before the NAM Colombo Summit, the West German *Handelsblatt* reported that “the conference of the Non-Aligned nations in Colombo will be above all an economic conference — in spite of the political decisions that are planned there about the definition of the concept of ‘non-aligned’...”⁵¹ American press coverage schizoidly moved between charging the Soviet Union with orchestrating a takeover of the NAM, exaggerating *realpolitik* divisions within the movement, or blindly asserted that nothing of significance could happen at the meetings. The chair of the pending Summit Indira Gandhi

warned her fellow Congress party members not to be disoriented: "Some people are calling it a 'jamboree.' She said the conference is going to focus on 'economic problems, because the countries already have a united stand on imperialism.'"⁵²

Kissinger's constant attempts to stall the upcoming Conference on International Economic Cooperation (CIEC),⁵³ known as "North-South Dialogue", was a central theme of the closed NAM discussions and prompted calls for issuing a deadline for western action, implying possible use of the Third World's strongest weapon — unilateral debt moratoria (if no forthcoming economic reorganization otherwise). The strength of the argument for this strategy referenced and was reinforced by European and other powerful States' support for NAM: indebted Italy's significant trade deal with the Comecon sector and its support for the Palestine Liberation Organization, Japan's view of the Non-Aligned's import, France reinforcing North support to making a New International Economic Order⁵⁴ a reality, and so on. The coverage of the West German *Die Zeit*, August 13, sympathetically chimed:⁵⁵

"The main dividing line in conflicts no longer runs East-West but North-South, between the rich and the poor. So the consequences of interdependence as it is understood in the 1970s is that what leads the list of priorities is no longer the creation of a new political order but the creation of a new world economic order..."

The Colombo Demands: Advocating neutrality is not neutral!

“The goal of the Colombo conference must be that two-thirds of humanity, which has over two-thirds of the raw materials but does not have more... than one-third of the income, will finally be taken seriously in the balance of power... But the history of the so-called non-aligned leaves little hope that this goal will be attained.”⁵⁶

As the eyewitness accounts say, “there could hardly ever be another conference in Sri Lanka of the size, grandeur and organizational brilliance of 5th Summit of Non Aligned Movement”.⁵⁷ The spectacular meeting of Colombo 76 brought together 85 internationally recognized heads of countries and a meeting of 86 nations,⁵⁸ symbolically representing approximately 2 billion people — close to 60% of global population at the time. Amidst the urgency of the gathering and despite of some hilarious misunderstandings in the matters of protocol, one particular thing stood out in regard to the focus of the interest of this text: **the demands.**

Following the petrol crisis that began in 1973 and affected the living standards and also invigorated political imagination and debate within the “Western Block”, the NAM’s demands departed somewhat from the goals for political independence and endings of the old-style, formal colonialism, to focus more on demands for economical equality, access to development and international cooperation. Such demands by the NAM reflects into a propositional form the *baffling ambitions* expressed in the founding conference

of NAM held in 1961 in Belgrade which amazed the world for merely *daring to imagine* turning the world upside down, immediately and with no further questioning of yet-to-be elaborated new principles of a New World.

The Colombo Summit, organized by Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the world's first woman Prime Minister, and chaired by Indira Gandhi, to date the only woman Prime Minister of India, managed to produce a short list of demands that aspired to represent the interests of what was the majority of the global population. It could be said that, especially on the matter of its organized, tactical engagement with debt, the principles of neutrality as debated by NAM reached the point of its most active understanding here: in posing a *demand* to other entities towards which it wanted to *project* the neutral stance, precisely in order to confirm its *position* of neutrality, of political peace, of justice as a practical, active commitment and achievement.⁵⁹

This particular NAM gathering, in which the initial Ambition of Belgrade eventually materialized as The Demands of Colombo, can be considered as the peak of the curve of the Movements' internal cohesion in regard to being able to unite behind the more-or-less mutually agreed ways to implement joint policies. It also means that, from that point on, things went downwards; the momentum was lost due to the collapse of scheduled Paris talks with the representatives of industrialized countries mainly grouped within OECD where the demands of NAM were expected to be accepted.⁶⁰ This never-to-be historical agreement frequently referenced as the "North-South Conference" had the potential to fundamentally change the course of global politics and economics, and would have presented the fullest materialization

and political victory of NAM concepts, but some other things were happening *elsewhere*... As Jahangir Amuzegar wrote in 1977, "an 18-month 'dialogue' between the rich North and the poor South, which had begun with much enthusiasm and great hope, finished on a faint and joyless note."⁶¹

Meanwhile, elsewhere

In October 6, 1976 in San Francisco, The Second Carter-Ford Presidential Debate was being presented to the US public, moderated by Pauline Frederick of NPR, who opened the event by reminding the audience that the UN Charter was signed in the same city more than three decades ago.

When asked by Max Frankel, associate editor of the *New York Times*, if, according to what was exposed throughout his campaign, he wouldn't commence and build on the achievements of previous Republican administration in retreating from the Vietnam war, entering the negotiations about arms control with USSR, disengagement from the Middle East or opening diplomatic relations with China, Jimmy Carter of Georgia, Democratic candidate for (and soon to be) President, replied:⁶²

"(...) We've got a chance tonight to talk about, first of all, leadership, the character of our country, and a vision of the future. (...) Our country is not strong anymore; we're not respected anymore. (...) We've lost, in our foreign policy, the character of the American people. (...) In addition to that we've had a chance to become now, contrary to our long-standing beliefs and principles, the arms

merchant of the whole world. We've tried to buy success from our enemies, and at the same time we've excluded from the process the normal friendship of our allies."

Although the entire debate was dedicated to international affairs and the us position in the global context, the NAM Colombo Summit from only two months ago was neither discussed nor even mentioned at all.

The Carter argumentation, combining the United States' "natural" right to supremacy with the absolute negation of the recent development in Colombo, it can also be observed, draws a strong resemblance to the Athenian argumentation from the Thucydides' story on the "dialogue" with Melians, but with the important twist that perhaps reveals the essence of the Athenians' speech for what it is — the Melians are neither present nor acknowledged, and such argumentation is not even a mental practice of shadow boxing, but essentially a dubious, self-indulging and self-justified monologue.

* * *

During 1976 in the Soviet Union the development of strategic nuclear arms continued — a series consisting of 21 nuclear tests were conducted. At the 25th Congress of the Communist Party the general secretary Leonid Brezhnev declared⁶³ that the USSR would not invade or fight other countries, but also stated that he would actively support global national liberation movements, despite the *détente* agreement with the us that officially-unofficially, more or less, with occasional exceptions confirming it as a "rule", was being observed from 1969.

Meanwhile, the discussion continued on how best to preserve Lenin's body, kept on display in the Lenin's Mausoleum on Moscow's Red Square; the results of its embalming in 1924 being so successful that to the present day there are claims that it must be a substitute made of wax. In 1973, sculptor Nikolai Tomsky designed a new sarcophagus, while new scientific procedures were developed and discussed with anatomy professors and doctors in order to improve and prolong the lifelike appearance of the remains; more than 10 million people visited Lenin's tomb between 1924 and 1972.

As the review⁶⁴ of the book *Lenin's Embalmers* written by Ilya Zbarsky,⁶⁵ the son of Boris Zbarsky, the original expert behind the first embalment of the body, relays, "Zbarsky tells the adventure of his family and their closeness over seven decades to the Soviet hierarchy, and of all those who worked in the laboratory of the Red Square mausoleum, dedicated not only to maintaining in perpetuity the body of the founder of the Soviet Union, but also to preserving leaders from elsewhere in the Communist bloc with a solution that they devised, which is known as 'balsam'."

However, the review concludes:

"Abandoned by the State since 1991, the mausoleum survives today only by embalming the dead of the Russian nouveaux riches and the Mafia. In the wake of the Soviet system, Zbarsky also dares to ask whether it is not now time to inter these once glorious remains. Is it indeed scientifically possible to continue to preserve them?"

**Waxification / Embalment:
Meanwhile, in the South East**

On an archaic wooden bench behind iPhone-wielding primary school students, six life-sized wax figures of leaders of the later NAM⁶⁶ sit ready at the original conference desk furniture of Bandung 1955, while an erect Sukarno is frozen at the podium in the moment of his opening address.⁶⁷ The Asia Africa museum (Museum Konferensi Asia Afrika) that holds them opened in 1980, 15 years after the CIA supported genocide of communists of 1965, on Asia Afrika Street in Bandung, its foot-path lined by 29 knee-height metal globe-like elements, each inserted with the flag of Bandung 55's participating countries, to "eternalize" the Asian-African Conference as the museum says on its website, as a culmination of "the most successful period of Indonesian foreign policy."

Upon entrance into the museum's dimmed light, the visitor encounters a massive silver globe, larger than human height, around which it is possible to walk a complete circle, and feel, for a moment, a sense of alter-global ambition, that sheer ambition going astray. To a fully neoliberalised sensorium, perhaps such globe-stroking seems more like a prop of Superman's lair. One sees tiny flashes Right and Left, Red and Dead⁶⁸ on its silver surface. When the eyes adjust, the back of the room reveals our Non-Aligned wax figures, and the space opens up as a scene. In the absence of much diachronic curation, that is, entirely suspended from the story of the historical transitions of the state apparatus on which the museum is fully grounded, the viewer ambles through dates and descriptions framing black and white photos of international states-people, blown up to life size. National flags, typewriters

and recording devices sit on plinths and under glass — a tribute to the second-degree work of coding political change, tapping the operations of NAM into (revisable) representations. Immanence might be gained from diplomacy's hardware, but in any case one is provided full relief from political agitation via this waxification of NAM's most significant gestures and speech acts. Neutralization precedes the curatorial act in most occasions.

Savvy locals living these diachronics of revolutionary through counterrevolutionary nationalism, also in the complexity of religious, ethnic, indigenous and other subaltern cultures of the Archipelago, which never folded completely into the command and reward structures of generic modernist selfhood and 'progress' on the ground, might not need to spend much time here contemplating a certain geopolitical conjuncture that, in rear view, speaks as much of the death of NAM as of a move of foreign policy from territorial anti-imperialism into complex neocolonialisms. The exhibition breaks off into the conference's original venue hall that has been left most minimally (renovated) 'as it is': hundreds of empty chairs facing an empty stage of diplomacy-as-heritage. Beyond Homi Bhaba's lament on the Janus face of nationalism — "ambivalence that haunts the idea of the nation, the language of those who write of it and the lives of those who live(d) it" — the space inevitably meditates on its own "transitional social reality"⁶⁹ of national time and foreign policy, where apparitions of the genocide under the CIA-supported Suharto are composed precisely by a museological 'outside'. By being so momentarily divorced of the kind of polyphony that it would have held up at the time, museumification raises difficult questions about what it means to mourn

the political 'now' *specifically* through scenes of diplomacy, institution-building and *utterly obfuscated, ideologically-driven transitionalism*.

For the struggling classes of certain parts of the under- (and over-) developed South of today,⁷⁰ increased numbers and complexity of migration within and across states, in necessary defiance of official international relations, has profoundly changed links between political subjects, borders, and resource management. Many move to labour or flail in working conditions that are fundamentally neocolonial. Sovereignty recedes with special economic zones and large scale land grabs; states and companies purchase territory inside other states for plantations, biofuel production, with a more general trend of the Global South becoming a place of alternative energy production, food crops and reservoirs of 'environmental services' to the North and already depleted world. Inequality and conflict within countries complicates inequality and conflict between them, while the emerging "Fourth World" exists between gaps not marked by legal borders at all. Infrastructural markers of NAM modernity (especially in major dam construction, water management, and the long duree outmoding of local agricultural practices) remind of the skewed metabolic teleologies of modernization; but where contemporary resistance is defeated, even more expropriative private-contracted mega-projects unfold.

Meanwhile, in Yugoslavia, an especially prominent country of the NAM North-South connection through Tito's curation, during the 1970s the political situation had become already firmly embedded within European circuits of capital

accumulation through regional trade agreements, a steadily mounting burden of debt and the increasing migration of Yugoslav temporary 'guest-workers' to Western Europe and particularly Germany. Edvard Kardelj was still portraying Europe as "falling behind Non-Aligned frameworks of cooperation" but by the 1980s the socialist state was more clearly being informed by a technocratic and neoliberal economic reality that had begun to neutralize its earlier gestures towards 'anti-colonialism,' 'self-determination,' 'new international economic order' and 'progressive forces.' The new technocratic tone in Yugoslavia, the evolution of tendencies from the 1960s, effectively paired with the drive towards marketization, towards the Europeanization of the space, which followed with its ideological renaming in the context of the EU during the 1990s. A certain performativity of *anti-foundational* Neutrality, in a 'language without soil', might also be traced here, "as both mode and as position-taking — an inherently spatial activity" from Yugo(South)Slavia towards the (West)ern Balkans; the Paradigm outplayed (for now) in a neoliberally reformed, if never quite 'last abstention,' from socialist rationality.

In the post-Yugoslav context, the contradictory *temporality* of transitionalism combines with a process of *recoloring*, which is also a dialogue with the fate of the South. Political identity shifted from the "colored" (NAM) to the "white" (EU), with the shift of politics from anti-colonialism to new forms of self-colonization, in which post-Yugoslav nation-states are forced/encouraged to perform various political-economical plays of self-submission to the ideology of Europeaness, and to prove their *political* 'whiteness' in the EU context. This political whitening can be

seen therefore as the process of submission to the western capitalist democracy, the process of privatization of the former social property, widely referred to as the (other) 'transition'.

As it was reported on the development around the October 18 1995 NAM Summit in Cartagena, Colombia:

"Most observers in Belgrade say officials are silent about NAM because of their fresh memory of the Jakarta (Indonesia) summit in 1992, when Islamic countries denounced Belgrade for its role in the war in Bosnia. Foreign ministry sources here say Ali Alatas, foreign minister of Indonesia, which hosted the last summit, and Ilija Đukić, rump Yugoslavia's foreign minister at the time, reached "a gentlemen's agreement" to keep the country's membership alive at the summit in 1992.

(...) Official sources here say African countries helped forge a compromise which allowed an "empty chair" to be kept for Yugoslavia in Cartagena — a place for a delegation and a plate with the country's name."⁷¹

The dispute remained frozen within the NAM for nearly a decade with an *empty chair* reserved for a non-existent SFRY until a suitable solution could be found. In late-2000, the new post-Milošević government in Belgrade accepted the thesis that the SFRY had 'dissolved' and that its successor states should divide the old state's assets and debts according to mutually agreed quotas. Within NAM, the former Yugoslav republics continued to shape-shift their status from 'observer' to 'non-member' until today, when most

of the populations are not even aware that NAM ever existed. Once non-aligned within Yugoslavia, the small national states are today weighing the benefits and sentiments towards joining the NATO, while the only conceptual and political counterweight remains the newly-risen Russian military interventionism.

The empty chair in Non-Aligned summits is an obvious metaphor for transitional waiting, so persuasively portrayed by Chantal Akerman in her film *D'Est (From The East, 1993)*, where people of the former “communist bloc” losing the political game of the Cold War are portrayed in a moving image of seemingly *eternal* waiting — in train stations and public spaces, on the squares and streets... Waiting in the crossroads of capitalist transitionalism; waiting for the Last Judgment of Capital to arrive in its full force of destabilization and privatization, to acquire even those very public spaces already reserved for waiting...

Today we see the international community coming to terms with an era in which it has become more and more difficult to mark any difference between trade and war, peace and administration, politics and banking. Techno-cultural complicities and neutralizing practical political distances that far exceed the complexity of Cold War binarisms are thrown in play. The working and middle classes, hanging on still to variegated-achieved political freedoms of speech, negotiate exacerbating financial servitude and repression and navigate multiple unfolding crises that appear in ever new forms. Analytical links between colonization and financialization are being more strongly forged. And today, perhaps because of all the embalment out there, there are claims that it is hardly possible to baffle anyone with anything anymore.

True, the heights of the NAM peak years from only a few decades ago do appear now like an ancient tale from Utopia, and it seems that there is a lot of bafflement left to process still, over and over again, only to “return” to that point. But yet, the emergences of new forms of nominally socialist politics do still respond strangely to all this; and no embalment can put a lid on this knowledge about what happens when people come together on principle and the powerful are baffled anew. ▼

Notes

- 1 A major literary precursor is Dante Alighieri's dream of the peace-oriented idea of universal and international common law envisioned to foster the development of collective human intellect (in *De Monarchia*, published between 1312 and 1321).
- 2 See Stephen Wynne, "International Governance: Its Idea and Incarnation", Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, 2012.
- 3 Marsel Moa (Marcel Moye), *Osnovni pojmovi međunarodnog javnog prava (The Basic Principles of The International Law)*, Belgrade, 1925, p. 138.
- 4 Charles-Irénée Castel de Saint-Pierre published his 1712 essay *Project for Perpetual Peace* anonymously, while only a year later working as a negotiator upon the Treaty of Utrecht (1712–1713). A more well known treatise of possible principles for 'Perpetual Peace' arrives with Kant's essays *Idea toward a Universal History in a Cosmopolitan Respect* (1784) and *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795). Kant's universal subject that gathers in cosmopolitan relations among peoples was, besides Saint-Pierre, especially inspired by the writings of the exiled Dutch jurist and natural law theorist Hugo Grotius, who called on quarreling parties to "confer and negotiate before resorting to combat, and if necessary, to compromise, surrendering a portion of their demands in exchange for peaceful resolution of the dispute." (Wynne, *Ibid.*, p. 2).
- 5 Dr Ranko Petković, *Teorijski pojmovi neutralnosti (Theoretical Notions of Neutrality)*, Belgrade, Rad, 1982.
- 6 Joseph Kunz, "Austria's Permanent Neutrality", *AJIL*, Vol 1, 1956, p. 419.
- 7 The League of Nations was a multilateral contract, based on theoretical doctrinal principles more than on a practical political principles. In line with the larger legal conceptual history we map here, it was the winning forces of ww1 who actively participated in conflicts leading to this war (many of which in the previous historical epoch were key actors of the European agreement based on the principle of balance of forces), who came out of the ww1 with a motto 'all for one, one for all'.
- 8 Principles of absolute or permanent neutrality were adopted by Switzerland, Belgium, Sweden, Luxembourg and Austria, among others.

- 9 Soviet diplomat Maxim Litvinov at the time described neutrality as “a novel way for small states to prepare themselves for suicide, by using this new means to send themselves to sleep — by neutrality”. Ranko Petković sources the statement from Litvinov’s speech in the Assembly of the League of Nations (Journal officiel, Supplement special N° 182, Geneve 1938).
- 10 The four Neutrality Acts of the us were laws passed in 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1939 to limit us involvement in future wars. They were based on the widespread disillusionment with World War I in the early 1930s and the belief that the United States had been drawn into the war through loans and trade with the Allies. See: Ph. Jessup, *Neutrality, its History, Economics and Law, Vol I (The Origins)*, New York, 1935.
- 11 Here, Jessup quotes from Thomas Jefferson’s Letter to John Adams (1822).
- 12 Along with the Geneva Conventions, the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 were among the first formal statements of the laws of war and war crimes in the body of secular international law.
- 13 The Atlantic Treaty 1941, Declaration of UN 1942, Moscow and Tehran Conferences 1943, Dumbarton Oaks 1944, and Yalta conference 1945 marked the process of building platforms and structures for a new international organization.
- 14 See: Petković, *Ibid.*, p 27. The entire UN Charter here: <http://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations>
- 15 See: E. Korovin, “The Second World War and International Law”, *AJIL* N° 40, 1946, p. 754.
- 16 See: W. P. Griewe: *The Present Position of Neutral States*, 1947 p. 113.
- 17 Charles Chaumont, *Nations Unies et Neutralite* (United Nations and Neutrality), 1956, p. 8.
- 18 Also the position at the Congress of the Second Socialist International in 1907 and 1910.
- 19 Karl Marx — Letter to Paul and Laura Lafargue, 28 July 1870, in Hal Draper, Ernest Haberkern, *Karl Marx’s Theory of Revolution*, Center for Socialist History, California, 2005, via David Broder, “Marx and Engels on war”, *Workers’ Liberty*, 2012, <http://www.workersliberty.org/story/2002/03/30/marx-and-engels-war>
- 20 One of the important events towards such direction was the meeting in Geneva in 1954 of the presidents and representatives of the ‘major’ countries.

- 21 This and several subsequent statements of the world officials as quoted in Olivera and Dragan Bogetić, *The Establishment and Development of the Non-Aligned Movement*, Export-Press, Belgrade, 1981, pp. 11–24.
- 22 For example, examine *Neutralism and Non-Alignment: The New States in World Affairs* from 1962 (edited by Lawrence W. Martin), possibly one of the first books on the subject written from the perspective of the West/us. The essays articulate the issue of Non-Aligned neutrality while still framing it incorrectly within the relational structure of bloc politics, and further, making an effort to reduce NAM to morally derided traditions of passivity.
- 23 Note: this excerpt of the Melian Dialogue has been abbreviated for emphasis. For the full text: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/classics/students/modules/introhist/usefuldocuments/thucydides_v.84-116.pdf
- 24 Graham T. Allison, analyst of us national security and defense policy and Harvard professor (note: the foreword to his latest 2013 book was given by Henry Kissinger), coined the phrase of Thucydides Trap, based on the famous Thucydides' sentence from the History of The Peloponnesian War that reads: "It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this inspired in Sparta that made war inevitable." Thucydides Trap has been the focus not only of media and diplomatic speech producing some truly fantastic headlines but also of academic research in academic research in recent years that has aided to explain or normalize the perception of the inevitability of another formal World War (informally, the global state of war seems to be tacitly but widely accepted as the condition that was chronic ever since the formal end of ww2, while moving toward more acute phases ever since the early 1990's).
- 25 Hollis Huston, *The Performance / Thought of Roland Barthes*, *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism*, Fall 1986, p. 105.
- 26 Alexander Garcia Duttman, "Without Soil: A Figure in Adorno's Thought", in Gerhard Richter (ed.) *Language Without Soil: Adorno and Late Philosophical Modernity*, Fordham University Press, 2010.
- 27 *Ibid.*
- 28 See especially Roland Barthes, *Writing Degree Zero*, Beacon Press, 1970. (originally published in French in 1953).
- 29 Much of these insights draw directly from Rudolphus Teeuwen, "An Epoch of Rest: Roland Barthes' 'Neutral'"

and the Utopia of Weariness”, *Cultural Critique*, Nº 80, Winter 2012, p. 1–26.

- 30** Roland Barthes, *The Neutral*, Lecture Course at the College de France (1977–1978), Columbia University Press, 2002.
- 31** These and subsequent several quotes from Teeuwen, *Ibid.*, p. 2. Teeuwen convincingly biographs this geo-political refrain in Barthes as an internal struggle between anti-us sympathies and aesthetic disappointment in the experience of Maoism ‘on the ground’.
- 32** Barthes 2005, p. 211 in Teeuwen, p. 8.
- 33** *Ibid.*
- 34** See page xiv.
- 35** Used also in Teeuwen. The full reference: Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called Utopia and Other Science Fictions*, Verso, London, 2005.
- 36** *Ibid.*, p. 179.
- 37** *Ibid.*, p. 180.
- 38** See Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation*, University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
- 39** Formally, the Washington-Moscow Direct Communications Link, and never a telephone but first a Teletype (Telex) equipment, then various fax machines, and since 2008 a secure email link.
- 40** “When forces that are hostile to socialism try to turn the development of some socialist country towards capitalism, it becomes not only a problem of the country concerned, but a common problem and concern of all socialist countries.” — Leonid Brezhnev, speech at the Fifth Congress of the Polish United Workers’ Party on November 13, 1968. (Norman E. Saul, *Historical Dictionary of United States-Russian/Soviet Relations*, Scarecrow Press, 2008, p. 60.)
- 41** Much of the week preceding the Colombo conference, the Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned dedicated discussion to Kissinger’s economic and political tactics of blackmail and destabilization against the Third World. These were led by Iraq, Cuba and Guyana and linked very clearly to what the NAM intended to make central to the Summit itself — an action program for debt moratoria and the creation of a New International Economic Order.
- 42** A commentary released by the Novosti Press Agency of Moscow reviews in detail the sequence of attempted destabilization moves directed against the Colombo meeting

itself. Meanwhile, the US attempted to derail the conference with a theory of “equidistance” in which the Soviet Union would be rated “equal” to US imperialism.

- 43 The measure was opposed by Syria, which declared that such a measure is a direct attack on Syria’s massacre — orchestrated by Henry Kissinger — of the Palestinian and Lebanese left in Lebanon.
- 44 *Die Zeit*, Aug. 13, 1976, from What Will Happen At Colombo? Excerpts from the World Press (http://www.la-rouche.com/eiv/public/1976/eiv03n33-19760819/eiv03n33-19760819_002-what_will_happen_at_colombo_exce.pdf)
- 45 The Helsinki Accords, among other demands, asked for “sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty, refraining from the threat or use of force, peaceful settlement of disputes, non-intervention in internal affairs, equal rights and self-determination of peoples...” (more: <http://www.osce.org/mc/39501>)
- 46 *National Security Adviser’s Memoranda of Conversation Collection*, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library, p. 5, <https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/document/0314/1552750.pdf>
- 47 The Helsinki Final Act was seen both as a significant step toward reducing Cold War tensions and as a major diplomatic boost for the Soviet Union at the time, due to its clauses on the inviolability of national frontiers and respect for territorial integrity, which were seen to consolidate the USSR’s territorial gains in Eastern Europe following the Second World War.
- 48 See: John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History*, Penguin Books, 2005.
- 49 Western liberal journalistic coverage separated the above from ‘economic matters’ while recognizing that any New International Economic Order through third world solidarity (e.g. in UN Conference on Trade and Development in Nairobi, Kenya of same year, or the ongoing “North-South” talks which were supposed to reach its conclusion in Paris, immediately after the Colombo Summit), would need to deal with Kissinger and West German allies (among others) if it were to be possible to transfer development resources from the western industrialized nations.
- 50 Jürg Martin Gabriel states in *The American Conception of Neutrality after 1941* (Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2002): “Economic warfare had become a major pillar of American foreign policy, and its practice clashed head-on with

traditional neutral rights. There were geopolitical nuances as well. Once the situation in Europe had stabilized and the Cold War front had been drawn, the United States accepted — at times only grudgingly — the neutrality of those European countries that were politically stable and democratic. The situation in Southeast Asia was different, however. Here both domestic and international politics were in constant flux, if not in turmoil. From an American perspective neutralization meant the abandonment of a country to the communist side. Neutrality, therefore, was not a viable policy in that part of the world.”

- 51** See endnote 44.
- 52** *The Baltimore Sun*, August 10, 1976.
- 53** “The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, an economic organization from 1949 to 1991 under the leadership of the Soviet Union that comprised the countries of the Eastern Bloc along with a number of communist states elsewhere, formed as the Eastern Bloc’s reply to the formation of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation in Western Europe. Yugoslavia negotiated a form of associate status in the organization, specified in its 1964 agreement with Comecon.” — Library of Congress Country Study, Appendix B: The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. (www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/CMEA.html)
- 54** *Declaration for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order*, United Nations General Assembly document A/RES/S-6/3201, May 1, 1974.
- 55** *Die Zeit*, *Ibid.*
- 56** *Ibid.*
- 57** According to the memories of Major General Lalin Fernando who was in charge of the matters of security, “The delegates and the Sri Lanka officials had the opportunity to intermix with the 3rd world’s galaxy of iconic, world renown, extraordinarily patriotic world leaders during their heyday (...) Much had to be done. The magnificent Chinese built Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall was ready in time and even today is the most sought out building in sL. The roads from Katunayake to Colombo were re-surfaced and a new road called Duplication road was opened. Two luxury hotels, the Intercontinental (now Continental) and the Oberoi (Cinnamon Grand) of a standard never seen or indulged before were built to house the delegates in addition to the stately Galle Face Hotel.” — *Asian Tribune*, World Institute for Asian Studies, Vol. 12 Nº 1412.

- 58 The difference in count stemming from Palestine being recognized as a nation, but it's status as a "country" being challenged.
- 59 The entire list of Colombo declarations is here: http://cns.miis.edu/nam/documents/Official_Document/5th_Summit_FD_Sri_Lanka_Declaration_1976_Whole.pdf
- 60 "(...) the financial oligarchy staked everything on softening up the "front" which had formed at Colombo, while also moving to isolate or destabilize those OECD countries, such as Italy, Japan, France, and even some circles in Switzerland, which had shown interest in establishing a new, just world economic order. It was perfectly obvious that Kissinger was playing for time, and that he intended, with his demand for "case-by-case decisions," and a drawn-out "series of negotiations," to prevent the developing sector from proceeding en bloc at the final discussions at the mid-September North-South Conference in Paris. At the same time, Kissinger and his controllers in the City of London did everything they could to dissuade President Ford from issuing a public positive statement on the Colombo Resolution; and, in the back of their minds, they were already conjuring up the next US President to come from the circles of the powerful Trilateral Commission: Jimmy Carter." — Hartmut Cramer, "Victory at Colombo for the Non-Aligned", *EIR* Volume 25, № 32, August 14, 1998.
- 61 Jahangir Amuzegar, "A requiem for the North-South Conference", *Foreign Affairs* 56.1 (1977), p. 136–159.
- 62 Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library & Museum, Presidential Campaign Debate Between Gerald R. Ford and Jimmy Carter, October 6, 1976, <https://www.fordlibrarymuseum.gov/library/speeches/760854.asp>
- 63 Jessica Smith, David Laibman, Marilyn Bechtel, *Building a New Society: The 25th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, *New World Review*, 1977, <https://archive.org/details/BuildingANewSociety25thCongressCPSU>.
- 64 https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/330464.Lenin_s_Embalmers.
- 65 Ilya Zbarsky, Samuel Hutchinson, *Lenin's Embalmers*, Harvill Press, 1997.
- 66 The figures seem to be Sir John Kottalawala of Ceylon, Muhammed Ali of Pakistan, Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia, U Nu of Burma, General Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Zhou En Lai of China and Jawaharlal Nehru of India.

- 67 Video of the initial address here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DR1ch247vb8>
- 68 Indonesia, like the majority of Non-aligned Movement Countries, does not fit any mould of non-aligned nominalism. Sukarno early committing to NAM (the Indonesian name for NAM was Gerakan Non Blok), through The Initiative of Five, stabilized his domestic image. His persistent anti-imperialism in the post-war Pacific and lack of interest in macroeconomics made for increased dependence on the support of China and Russia (cf. equidistance). Ongoing tension within Indonesian armed forces between leftist KPI (Indonesian Communist Party) members and us-courted and supported army members were exacerbated by a famine in '65, and Sukarno's rejection of us food aid. What followed is a well known but under-documented story. After a failed military coup by the 30th September movement in 1965 (a self-proclaimed organization of Armed Forces members, aka Gestapu), a CIA-supported genocide of communists, leftists, women activists and sympathizers unfolded, killing more than 1 million. Suharto's New Order regime rewrote history textbooks to heroize the army for their punishment of the apparent communist 'authorship' of the first six murders of the Indonesian Army Generals who died in the coup. Sukarno himself ended up under house arrest. The un-prosecuted genocide continued into ongoing forced disappearances, imprisonment, torturing and sanctions against leftists over 30 years of dictatorship. Today the still operative People's Assembly Decree No 25 of 1966 bans "all activities that spread or develop Communist/ Marxist-Leninist ideas or teachings".
- 69 From *The Introduction to Homi Bhaba, Nation and Narration*, Routledge, 1990.
- 70 For this whole paragraph, the remarks of Indonesian historian Hilmar Farid regarding the relevance of Bandung to contemporary politics in Asia have been included. See his talk "Bandung Effects", 2015 Inter-Asia conference: <https://youtu.be/M8inDCvKIR8>
- 71 Vesna Perić Zimonjić, "NAM-YUGOSLAVIA: In Founding Member, NAM is Only a Memory", Inter Press Service News Agency, October 17 1995, <http://www.ipsnews.net/1995/10/nam-yugoslavia-in-founding-member-nam-is-only-a-memory>

nesvrstani modernizmi
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SVESKA #6 / VOLUME #6

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The Ambition of Belgrade, 1961:

"...the establishment and strengthening of the international peace and security, respect of the right of nations to self-determination, the struggle against imperialism and liquidation of colonialism and neocolonialism, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the states and non-interference in their internal affairs, racial discrimination and the policy of apartheid, general and complete disarmament, the banning of nuclear experiments and the maintenance of military bases on foreign territory, peaceful coexistence among states with different social systems, the role and structure of the United Nations and the application of its resolutions, an equal economic development, the improvement of international economic and technical cooperation, and a number of other questions."

Source: 50 godina Pokreta nesvrstanih, Filmske novosti Beograd, 2011.

The Demands of Colombo:

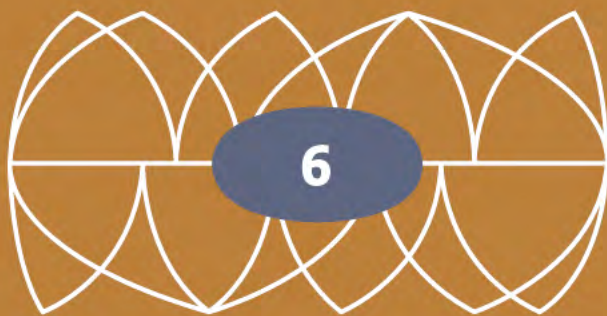
- 1. Immediate suspension of the foreign debt payment "of the poorest countries and those countries subjected to imperialist pressures."*
- 2. A "new universal monetary system," which should replace the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.*
- 3. The creation of new liquidity, which should be automatically coupled to the needs for worldwide development.*
- 4. The world community of nations should be included in this "universal system" by means of triangular trade agreements among the developing sector, the socialist countries, and the developed countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).*

Source: Schiller Institute

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