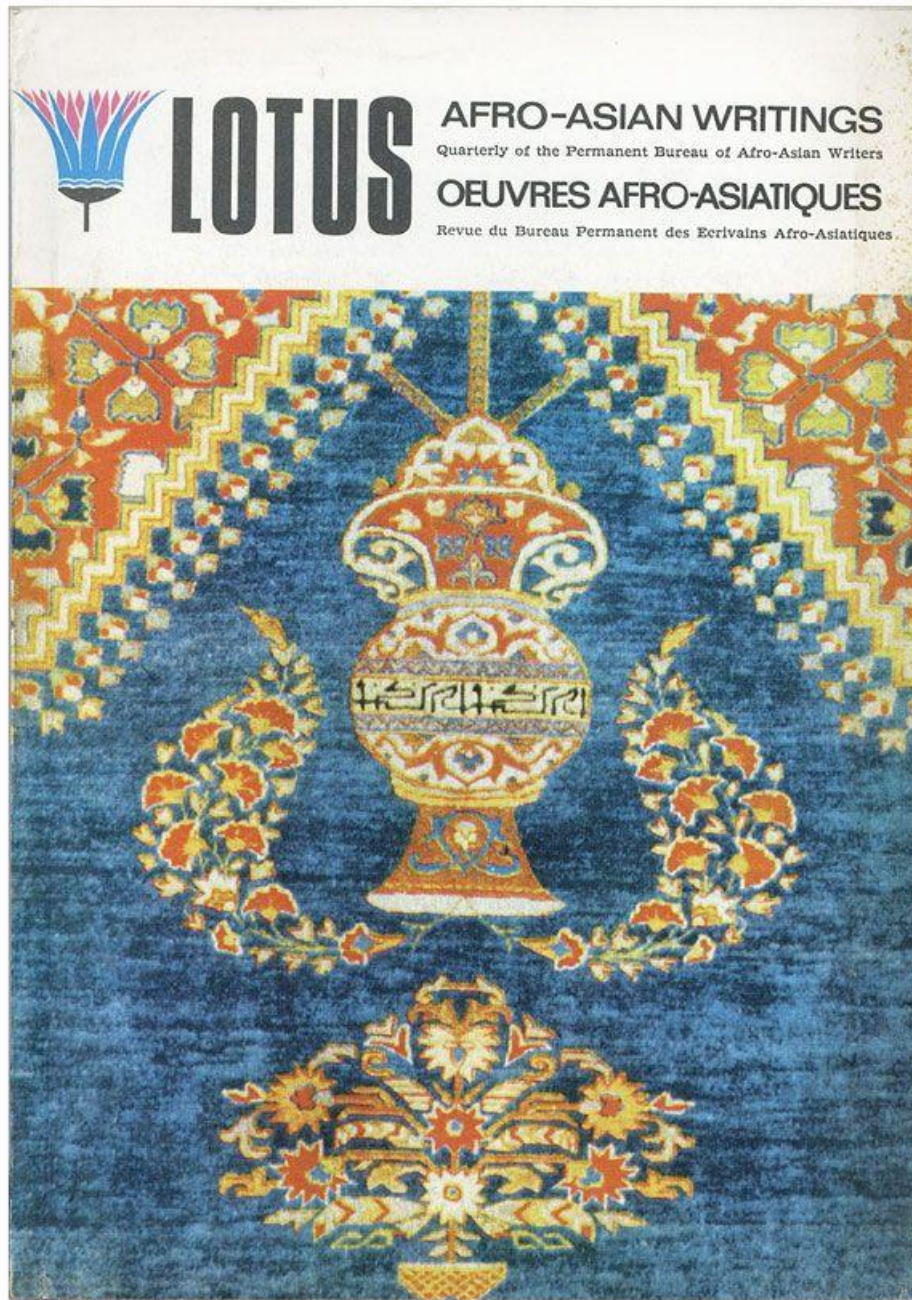


Afro-Asian Writers Association: An Inventory Workshop
Jordan Center, NYU
19 University Pl.
Department of Russian and Slavic Studies (2nd fl.)
New York, NY 10003.
May 19th 2017



**The workshop is co-sponsored by the Hagop Kevorkian Center
for Near Eastern Studies at New York University.**

Schedule of Workshop Events

9:30 am-10:30 am. Coffee and Breakfast

10:30 am-10:45. Introduction.

10:45 am-1 pm. Morning Session: The Afro-Asian Archives

Part 1: The Soviet Union; South Africa and Alex La Guma

Rossen Djagalov, New York University-NYC

Masha Kirasirova, New York University-Abu Dhabi

Monica Popescu, McGill University

Christopher J. Lee, Lafayette College

Break (15 minutes)

Part II: Library of Congress; Cairo; British Library; India; Congress for Cultural Freedom

Duncan Yoon, University of Alabama

Sophia Azeb, New York University-NYC

Maia Ramnath, Pennsylvania State University

Sneha Desai, Columbia University

Beth Holt, Bard College

1 pm-2:15 pm. Lunch

2:30 pm-3 pm. Videoconference with 1973 Lotus Prize Winner, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

3:15 pm-5:30 pm. Afternoon Session: Afro-Asian Writers in Relation

Part I: Comparative Frames of Inquiry

Third World, Postcolonial, Global South, World Literature, Comparative Literature

Rossen Djagalov-New York University-NYC

From Third-Worldist to Postcolonial

Duncan Yoon-University of Alabama

On AAWA Intersections with World Literature, Postcolonialism and the Global South

Lydia Liu-Columbia University

World Literature and the Geopolitics of Translation

Hala Halim-New York University-NYC

On the Global South in relation to Comparative Literature

Leah Feldman-University of Chicago

On aesthetic and political horizons of the Global Souths

Coffee Break (15 minutes)

Part II: Sino-African-Arab-Soviet relations and Cold War Studies

Maia Ramnath-Pennsylvania State University

On social movements, soft power, decolonization, solidarity and Sino-Soviet dynamics in South Asia

Sneha Desai-Columbia University

On Postcolonial "cultural translation" and the Black Atlantic

Sophia Azeb-New York University-NYC

On Arab participation in pan-African cultural movements

Beth Holt-Bard College

On Palestine, Ghassān Kanafānī, and the Weaponization of the Literary

Monica Popescu-McGill University

African Literature, Postcolonial Studies, and the Cold War: Comparative Perspectives on the AAWA and the CCF

5:45 pm-6:45 pm. Roundtable on Lines of Future Inquiry

7:30 pm. Dinner

Participants:

Sophia Azeb is a Postdoctoral Fellow in New York University's Gallatin School. Her current book manuscript, "Another Country: Constellations of Blackness in Afro-Arab Cultural Expression," theorizes blackness in Arab North Africa through a multilingual cultural archive of anti-colonial literature, festival, music, and sport.

Sneha Desai is a Ph.D. candidate at Columbia University and received her M. Phil. in English and Comparative Literature with a concentration in Comparative Literature and Society in 2015. She is writing a dissertation on a moment during decolonization overshadowed by the circulation of Indian English and Hindi film (and later, Bollywood)--when Afro-Asianist print culture networks connected progressive writing in Hindi and Urdu with the cultural capitals of the global south, from Accra to Hong Kong. After receiving an M.A. in South & Southeast Asian Studies from UC Berkeley in 2008, Sneha undertook a project on young, contemporary Hindi and Urdu poets in Delhi as a Fulbright Scholar ('11-'12) affiliated with the Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). In her other former lives, she was a lecturer in Hindi at the Stanford University Language Center ('08-'11) and an educational technologist and technical writer in the SF Bay Area; her incarnations are learning how to collaborate in the archive.

Rossen Djagalov is an Assistant Professor of Russian at New York University. His interests lie in socialist culture globally and, more specifically, in the linkages between cultural producers and audiences in the USSR and abroad. His manuscript, "Premature Postcolonialists: Soviet-Third-World Literary and Cinematic Encounters in the Age of Three Worlds," reconstructs the history of the main organizations within which those encounters took place--the Afro-Asian Writers' Association and the biannual Tashkent Festival of African, Asian and Latin American Film (1968-1990)--and their consequences for Soviet and Third-World literature and film. His second book project, "The People's Republic of Letters: Towards a Media History of Twentieth-Century Socialist Internationalism," examines the relationship between the political left and the different media (proletarian novel, singer-songwriter performance, political documentary film) that at different times played a major role in connecting its publics globally.

Leah Feldman is Assistant Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Chicago. Her research explores the poetics and the politics of global literary networks, focusing on critical approaches to translation theory, semiotics, postcolonial theory, and Marxist aesthetics. Before joining Chicago, she held two postdoctoral fellowships at The Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies and The Institute for Advanced Study at CEU in Budapest. She will be an ACLS Fellow for the 2017-18 year. Her current interests include contemporary formations of Eurasianist thought in new right media and the role of performance lived-work communes in articulating post-marxist politics from 1970s through the fall of the Soviet Union. Her book project *On the Threshold of Eurasia: Orientalism and Revolutionary Aesthetics in the Caucasus* (Forthcoming Cornell UP) exposes the ways in which the idea of a revolutionary Eurasia informed the interplay between orientalist and anti-colonial discourses in Russian and Azeri poetry and prose. Tracing translations and intertextual engagements across Russia, the Caucasus and western Europe, it offers an alternative vision of empire, modernity and anti-imperialism from the vantage point of cosmopolitan centers in the Russian empire and Soviet

Union. She has published in *Boundary 2* and *Slavic Review* and is currently an editor at *Boundary 2*.

Hala Halim is an Associate Professor of Comparative Literature and Middle Eastern Studies at New York University. Her book, *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism: An Archive* (Fordham University Press, 2013), received the American Comparative Literature Association's Harry Levin Prize Honorable Mention. Her current project builds on her 2012 article "Lotus, the Afro-Asian Nexus, and Global South Comparatism." The article addresses the journal *Lotus: Afro-Asian Writings* once published by the Afro-Asian Writers' Association that she has been researching for many years in relation to post-Bandung Third Worldism.

Elizabeth M. Holt is Assistant Professor of Arabic in the Division of Languages and Literature at Bard College. She holds a Ph.D. in Middle East and Asian Languages and Cultures and Comparative Literature from Columbia University, and a B.A. in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations from Harvard University. She serves as Associate Editor of the *Journal of Arabic Literature*. Dr. Holt is the author of *Fictitious Capital: Silk, Cotton, and the Rise of the Arabic Novel* (Fordham University Press, 2017), and is in the midst of writing a second book, "Imperious Plots: Arabic Literature and the Cultural Cold War," about how the Congress for Cultural Freedom, a CIA-founded and -funded cultural organization of American empire, shaped Arabic literature in an age of decolonization and cold war.

Masha Kirasirova is an Assistant Professor/Faculty Fellow of History at NYU Abu Dhabi. Her research focuses on political and cultural exchanges between Soviet Eurasia and the Middle East. Her articles have appeared in *Ab Imperio*, *Kritika*, *Iranian Studies*, and in *Reassessing Orientalism: Interlocking Orientologies during the Cold War* published by Routledge in 2015.

Christopher J. Lee is an associate professor of history and Africana studies at Lafayette College. He has published five books including *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (2010), *Unreasonable Histories: Nativism, Multiracial Lives, and the Genealogical Imagination in British Africa* (2014), *Frantz Fanon: Toward a Revolutionary Humanism* (2015), *A Soviet Journey: A Critical Annotated Edition* (2017), and *Jet Lag* (forthcoming September 2017). He is currently completing an edited volume of previously uncollected essays by Alex La Guma, provisionally entitled *Culture and Liberation: Exile Writings, 1966-1985*.

Lydia H. Liu is a theorist of media and translation, a scholar of comparative literature, and a bilingual writer in Chinese and English. She is the Wun Tsun Tam Professor in the Humanities and the Director of the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society at Columbia University. Her publications include *The Freudian Robot: Digital Media and the Future of the Unconscious* (2010), *The Clash of Empires: The Invention of China in Modern World Making* (2004), *Translingual Practice: Literature, National Culture, and Translated Modernity* (1995) and more recently, *The Birth of Chinese Feminism: Essential Texts in Transnational Theory* (2013), a book she coedited and co-translated with Rebecca Karl and Dorothy Ko.

Monica Popescu is Associate Professor and William Dawson Scholar of African Literatures at McGill University. She is the author of *South African Literature Beyond the Cold War* (which won the 2012 Gustave O. Arlt Award in the Humanities) and *The Politics of Violence in Post-Communist Films*, and co-editor of a special issue of the *Journal of Postcolonial Writing* on *Alternative Solidarities: Black Diasporas and Cultural Alliances during the Cold War*. She has published articles on postapartheid literature, African culture and the Cold War, postcommunist cultures and nationalism which have appeared in journals like *Studies in the Novel*, *Research in African Literatures*, *Current Writing*, and *The Yale Journal of Criticism*. She is currently completing a book manuscript on "African Literatures, Postcolonial Cultures and the Cold War."

Maia Ramnath has taught modern South Asian and world history at NYU and Penn State. She is the author of two books and a number of articles on transnational anticolonial movements, and is currently finishing a manuscript for a book on the internationalism of the South Asian Progressive Writers Association culminating in their relationship to the AAWA. She is based in NYC.

Duncan Yoon is an assistant professor of postcolonial literature at the University of Alabama. The Library of Congress has awarded him a Kluge Fellowship for his current book, which examines representations of China in African literature. He is the co-director of *The Global South Project* at Cornell University and is the MLA delegate representative for the forum *The Global South*. His work has appeared in *The Journal of Contemporary Thought* and *The Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*. He served as a Fulbright Scholar to South Korea in 2004. In the fall of 2017, he will join New York University as an assistant professor in the Gallatin School.