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Louro, Michele, Stolte, Carolien, Streets-Salter, Heather, Tannoury-Karam,
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Published by Leiden University Press

Louro, Michele, et al.

The League Against Imperialism: Lives and Afterlives.

Leiden University Press, 2020.

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Towards Afro-Asia? Continuities and Change in Indian Anti-imperialist Regionalism, 1927–1957

Carolien Stolte

“The Afro-Asian peoples believe that imperialist domination, foreign exploitation and other evils which result from the subjugation of the peoples are a denial of the fundamental rights of man ... The Afro-Asian peoples desire unity, to work together, to help each other, in order to struggle for the welfare of the Afro-Asian peoples as well as the whole of mankind.”¹

Introduction

In February 1927, Indian students, activists, and other anti-imperialists converged on Brussels to attend the first session of the League Against Imperialism. The League sought to convene anti-imperialists from the colonized world as well as their allies in order to join forces and build “a permanent international organization in order to link up all forces combating international imperialism and in order to ensure their effective support for the fight for emancipation conducted by the oppressed peoples.”² The conference was both influenced and supported by the Comintern, but the Soviets did not fully control it.³ Jawaharlal Nehru, member of the Executive Committee of the Congress, had taken an active part in its organization.

The opening quotation to this chapter, however, is not from the Brussels Conference, but from thirty years later. In December 1957, anti-imperialists from across the Afro-Asian region and their allies met in Cairo to found an international organization combating imperialism in “all its forms and manifestations.”⁴ The conference was both influenced and supported by the Soviet Union, but not controlled by it.⁵ Rameshwari Nehru, member of the Executive Committee of the Congress and relative of Jawaharlal Nehru, had taken an active part in its organization. This rhetorical repetition serves as a preliminary demonstration that the similarities between the 1927 and 1957 conferences were no coincidence. The Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Conference in Cairo convened in a

very different world from that of the Brussels Conference. Many of its Asian participants had gained independence by the time of the Cairo conference, and representation from Africa had greatly increased compared to Brussels. Most importantly, new forms of imperialism emerged as the Cold War spread to all corners of the globe.⁶ Why, then, examine Indian participation in events on different sides of decolonization as comparable manifestations of regional anti-imperialist solidarity?

This chapter argues that Indian participation in, and hopes for, the League Against Imperialism were informed by a tradition of Asianism that continued to inform anti-imperialist internationalism throughout the interwar years and beyond Indian independence in 1947. This tradition continued to shape Indian internationalism, but its defining anti-imperialist character enabled it to expand into Afro-Asianism as more African anti-imperialist movements entered the international scene. In doing so, this chapter does not argue that all Asianism from the interwar years on became Afro-Asianism: for that, the phenomenon of Indian Asianism was far too varied.⁷ It included cultural movements that sought to establish the unity of Asia as a result of historical linkages; religious movements that sought to define Asia along Hindu-Buddhist or, in some cases, Islamic lines; as well as more outright Pan-Asianism attempts to federate politically.⁸ It does argue that anti-imperialist Asianism, which used common features and shared experiences among Asian nations (both perceived and real) to unite around an anti-imperialist agenda, was used to such great effect during the lifetime of the League Against Imperialism that it carried over into later projects that claimed to be its successors.

John Steadman once lamented that “many a writer on Asia ... postulates a unity that has no real existence outside his own imagination.”⁹ The same might be said for attempts to unite anti-imperialist agendas under an Asian banner. However, this does not mean that this “Asia” was without content. Many Indian Asianisms knew exactly what they were, who was included, and why. A moving map of Asia as defined by those areas affected by European imperialism proved especially durable in radical visions for a post-colonial future in a more just international order. This was a project that continued after political decolonization had been achieved and carried the legacy of the League Against Imperialism past independence.

Anti-imperialist Asianism was informed by a variety of Indian internationalist networks and participation in organizations which included the League but were not determined *by* the League. Without wanting to overstate the importance of the League Against Imperialism,

it is nevertheless no coincidence that the League was regularly referred to during post-war conferences. Moments like the Asian Relations Conference (New Delhi 1947), the Conference of Asian and African Countries (Bandung 1955), and the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference (Cairo 1957) did not pass without reference to their 1927 predecessor. Nehru frequently referred to his connection to Mohammed Hatta through the LAI, and in 1947 organized an aeroplane to airlift the Indonesian delegation from behind the Dutch blockade because he would not hold an Asian conference without them.¹⁰ Sukarno famously stated in his opening speech at the Bandung Conference that "only a few decades ago it was frequently necessary to travel to other countries and even other continents before the spokespersons of our people could confer. I recall in this connection the Conference of the 'League against Imperialism and Colonialism', which was held in Brussels almost thirty years ago. At that Conference many distinguished Delegates who are present here today met each other and found new strength in their fight for independence."¹¹

Sukarno's statement at Bandung reveals the important place the LAI came to occupy in Afro-Asian memory.¹² It was seen retroactively as a conference of states-in-waiting, convening political leaders who would later take up leading positions in the independent governments of their respective countries. Yet that was just one part of the story. Though Bandung was an intergovernmental affair, the 1947 Delhi conference, the 1957 Cairo conference, and many other Asian and Afro-Asian gatherings were not. The interconnected processes of decolonization and the Cold War included an uneven timeline for decolonization, new regional pacts, new spheres of influence, and other geopolitical considerations. Both the need for, and the constraints on, Afro-Asianist meetings in this period created a blurring of the lines between the state and non-state realms. An official conference in the eyes of one delegation could be an unofficial one in the eyes of another. One state might send a delegation of government officials to a gathering, or civilians to function as such in practice, while another one might be represented only by opposition parties or other organizations on their own initiative.¹³

The blurred lines between state and non-state spaces, in terms of both participating states-in-waiting and the many semi-official Afro-Asian conferences in the early Cold War, have guided the selection of events in this chapter. Afro-Asianism and its Asianist antecedents are analysed as discursive strategies in the context of anti-imperialist activism. They are not analysed in a teleological sense as proto-foreign policy: anti-imperialist conferences from the League Against Imperialism to the Cold War era

included ultimately unsuccessful independence movements, as well as political groups who later became marginalized or in the opposition.¹⁴ The causes and effects of Asian regionalism at the League Against Imperialism and its successors can be brought into full view only when looking beyond the anti-imperialists who ended up in positions of (state) power, to the broader network of Indian anti-imperialists.

Regionalism at the First League Against Imperialism Conference

When the Brussels Congress opened at the Egmont Palace on 10 February 1927, a number of delegates brought experiences of early Asianism along with them. The best-known example is Jawaharlal Nehru. Much has been written about his anti-imperialist internationalism.¹⁵ During the interwar years he often expressed sympathy for Asianist projects, although he primarily acted as a voice of reason in putting the brakes on unrealistic federalist projects, including that of Indian National Congress President Chittaranjan Das in 1921.¹⁶ It is no coincidence that his own biggest Asianist triumphs, the Asian Relations Conference of 1947 and subsequent regionalist projects, did not happen until twenty years later, with the organizational power and political weight of first the Provisional Government (during the Asian Relations Conference) and later the government of independent India behind them.¹⁷ At the Brussels conference Nehru was one of the main reasons that British imperialism in Asia featured so prominently on the agenda. Aside from building solidarity with associates like Liao Huanxing, a prominent Guomindang representative, and Sen Katayama, one of the founders of the Japanese labour and socialist movements, he also emphasized that Asian anti-imperialisms were inherently interlinked.¹⁸ This was not limited to professions of international solidarity. On the opening day, Nehru stated that Afghanistan, Burma, Persia, and Mesopotamia had suffered at the hands of the British primarily because India, their prized possession, had to be safeguarded.¹⁹ However, statements such as these had an unintended side-effect: their Indo-centric nature fitted a larger pattern. As noted below, at later Asian and Afro-Asian conferences, accusations of (at best) Indian paternalism and (at worst) Indian expansionist designs emerged as a darker side of anti-imperialist Asianism.²⁰

A very different Asianist trajectory was present at Brussels in the person of Maulana Barkatullah, an Indian revolutionary exile who spent much of his life moving between Japan, the US, and Europe. He had been appointed Professor of Hindustani at the University of Tokyo in 1904, and developed his own blend of Pan-Asianism and Pan-Islamism from

there, publishing the results in *Islamic Fraternity*, a periodical he founded. Taken aback by its anti-British tone, one British Embassy official in Tokyo was shocked to note that it “advocated an alliance of the Asiatic nations against the domination of the white races.”²¹ In terms of his writings, though, Barkatullah would become better known for his pamphlet entitled *Bolshevism and the Islamic Nations*. This text was written shortly after his meeting with Lenin and Mahendra Pratap, another Pan-Asianist veteran with later links to the League against Imperialism.²² The pamphlet was written in Persian and translated into various Central Asian languages, and ended up circulating from Soviet Central Asia to Indonesia.²³

Due to his long years of Asianist and other peregrinations, the League Against Imperialism Conference in Brussels was actually where Barkatullah met Nehru for the first time.²⁴ He attended the Brussels conference as a representative of the Hindustan Ghadar Party, an Indian revolutionary party headquartered in San Francisco with a history of sponsoring Asianist missions—including those of Pratap and Barkatullah.²⁵ Pratap had corresponded with Nehru several times over the course of the interwar years about Pan-Asian projects.²⁶ In Barkatullah’s case, however, the first contact between Nehru and himself on Asianist projects is likely to have taken place in Brussels.

In the sparse historiography of the League Against Imperialism that this volume seeks to remedy, Asianism as a theme has not received much attention.²⁷ This is strange, considering that the very foundations of the League Against Imperialism were Pan-Asian in character: a group of students from several colonial and semi-colonial areas had come together in a Pan-Asiatic League in Berlin prior to the Brussels Congress, and were involved in preparations for the latter.²⁸ The intent of having the Brussels Congress function as a platform for Asian delegates to meet and organize ways of coordinating anti-imperialist activities was clear from the outset.

As noted elsewhere in this volume, the Asian delegates to Brussels discussed the possibility of founding a more permanent Pan-Asian Organisation in a separate meeting.²⁹ It is worth noting that the resolutions arrived at in Brussels demonstrate Asianism at two different levels. On the one hand, the Asian contacts that were fostered there served specific political ends. China and India arrived at a joint statement denouncing the use of Indian troops and resources in the British suppression of China. Their resolution read, “Ever since the unholy Opium War from 1840 to 1842, Indian troops have been sent to China time and again, in order to secure the power of British Imperialism in that country. Eighty-seven years have Indian troops been abused in this way, and thousands of

Indians were stationed as police officers today in Hong Kong, Shanghai etc. They were later used to shoot Chinese workers, which has caused Chinese hostilities against the Indian people to grow.”³⁰

While no Pan-Asian plans were directly apparent from this resolution, it was predicated on the idea that China and India shared a historical trajectory and affinity that had been interrupted by colonialism, but was worth recovering. This rhetoric was reminiscent of the cultural Asianism espoused primarily by Tagore and his colleagues at the Visva Bharati University in Santiniketan. Founded in 1921, it gained traction as an Asianist centre while the League was building up. Tagore believed that “Asia owes it to humanity to restore her spirit of generous cooperation in culture, and heal the suffering peoples of modern age now divided by cruel politics and materialistic greed.”³¹ The resolution also built on Asianist engagements dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century, such as the Indo-Chinese League mentioned in Anna Belogurova’s chapter in this volume.

At the League the Sino-Indian resolution was prefaced by the statement that “[f]or more than three thousand years, the people of India and China were united by close cultural relations. From the days of the Buddha to the end of the Mughal period and the start of British rule, these friendly ties were ever-present. British Imperialism, which has kept us in isolation from one another in the past and has brought so much injustice, is now the very power that unites us in our struggle against it.”³² As a rhetorical device, the idea of ancient cultural bonds and the revival of pre-colonial ties proved especially durable and, as shown below, developed into a regular feature of post-war conferences.

The Sino-Indian resolution was one of the few bilateral resolutions arrived at in Brussels. Most resolutions were based either on the particular situation in one country or on collective stances against imperialist exploitation. Another exception was a resolution by the Asian delegations: twenty-eight delegates from China, fourteen from India, four from Indonesia, three each from Korea and Indo-China, and two from the Philippines.³³ Their statement, too, was predicated on the idea of a common Asian cultural and political heritage, which now united them in their anti-imperialist struggle: “[t]he International Congress against Colonial Oppression and Imperialism, considering, that there are no areas in Asia free from colonial imperialism; considering, that all Asian lands have been the heritage of indigenous nations since centuries; considering, that these nations themselves have built states; considering, that these Oriental nations, who possess an old civilization, have a right, as much as the

Western peoples, to determine the course of their own history; considering that political independence is an absolute requirement for a people, and that no nation may be subjected to a power it rejects, demands, that all groups participating in this Congress as well as the current organization, which must be built on these decisions, must undertake all necessary action, to free Asia from Imperialism and Colonial Oppression.”³⁴

But if the Indian delegates brought a longer history of Asianism to the League, this was actively facilitated behind the scenes as well. Before the Brussels Congress, the Comintern sent “secret instructions” to a number of trusted delegates. Aside from an appeal to keep the ranks firmly closed and prevent factions from forming at any cost, they read that “[p]arallel with work at the plenary sessions, indefatigable work should be carried on among the delegations. After the ground has sufficiently been prepared ... it is desirable that the Chinese and Indian representatives should sign a joint declaration on mutual support of the national liberation movement against imperialism.”³⁵ The instructions also flagged the intervention in China, the brutalities of Dutch imperialists in Indonesia, and new imperialist ventures in Syria as key concerns. Finally, the instructions read that connections with and between revolutionary parties from the British Empire were considered “of most interest.”³⁶

Soviet attempts to amplify Asian anti-imperialism through the League had not gone unnoticed by British authorities. For Indian political intelligence officers, too, it appears that the Asianist threat was of particular concern. David Petrie, officer in the Indian Imperial Police and later director of MI5, noted that the Brussels Conference had stimulated Pan-Asian initiatives.³⁷ Fear of the “Pan-Asiatic threat” grew when, in the months after the Brussels conference, reports surfaced that the Comintern had indeed purposely funded the travel of several Asian delegates to Brussels.³⁸

Asianism and the League after Brussels

As the League expanded its activities after the Brussels Congress, it soon became clear that its reach went far beyond the walls of Egmont Palace. As shown elsewhere in this volume, its impact ranged from European workers to the Afro-Caribbean and Indo-Caribbean diaspora. The League’s voice was further amplified when the International Secretariat in Berlin founded a journal, *The Anti-Imperialist Review*.³⁹ By then, the League’s Indian membership had grown, and the first issue had a number of prominent Indian activists and politicians among its authors. Forewords by Sòng Qīng-líng, widow of the late Sun Yat-sen and honorary president of the

League, and S. Srinivasa Iyengar, former president of the Indian National Congress, were published alongside each other. The first issue itself, also discussed by Disha Karnad Jani and Michele Louro in this volume, was mainly intended to advertise the outcomes of the Brussels Congress and the League's aims for the future. It is telling, therefore, that this included the republication of several of Lenin's publications about Asia, such as *The Awakening of Asia* (1913), in which that awakening was heralded as "a new stage of world history."⁴⁰ Excerpts from *Conservative Europe and Progressive Asia* (1913) declared that "[i]n Asia a mighty democratic movement is growing, expanding, and becoming stronger ... hundreds of millions of men and women are awakening to life, to the light and to liberty ... no power on earth can prevent its victory."⁴¹

The decision on the part of the Indian National Congress to affiliate with the League at the Annual Session in December 1927 is now well known.⁴² Dr. Ansari, President of the Congress, qualified this decision further in a speech in which he spoke of the "absolute necessity of forming a federation of Asiatic peoples for the united struggle against imperialism," to which associating with the League was "the first step."⁴³ It is no coincidence that Ansari cast Indian participation in the League in this light. He himself had a history of regionalist activism, having led an ambulance mission in solidarity with Turkey during the Balkan Wars in 1912.⁴⁴ After the war, when campaigns against the abolition of the Ottoman Caliphate emerged all over India and many Indian Muslims left for Turkey in solidarity, Ansari stated publicly that the cause of the Khilafat was the cause of "all the enslaved Asiatic people from the thralldom of the West."⁴⁵

Given the strong Indian involvement in both the Brussels Congress and the International Secretariat in Berlin and the prominence of Asianist rhetoric among anti-imperialist statements in the League's publications, it is worth looking into the regionalist ideas of some of the League's Berlin-based workers, of whom Virendranath Chattopadhyaya—known to his comrades as "Chatto"—is the best-known. Like Barkatullah above and M.P.T. Acharya below, his early political life had included participation in the Berlin-India Committee or, in British intelligence parlance, the "Indo-German Conspiracy" during the First World War.⁴⁶ By the mid-1920s, he was known as "the most prominent Indian living in Germany" and as a noted anti-imperialist activist.⁴⁷ It was also Chatto who had persuaded Nehru to attend the Brussels conference in the first place, and continued to work with him after Brussels to expand Asian participation in the League.⁴⁸ As he wrote to Nehru in early 1929, "There is every reason to believe that we shall succeed in drawing the parties

into active cooperation with the League. If that is attained, we shall have the satisfaction of recording the affiliation of all the national movements from Morocco to Indonesia."⁴⁹ This definition of Asia, in which all of North Africa is included, was not an uncommon one in anti-imperialist circles: as shown below, this too would carry over into the Asian Relations Conference as well as the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Conference, and further facilitated the transition from anti-imperialist Asianism into the Afro-Asianism of the early Cold War.

But "Chatto" was not alone in the League. Alongside him worked, among others, his old acquaintance, M.P.T. Acharya. Acharya was a seasoned Indian revolutionary exile with such an impressive record of activities that he managed to cover only the first decade of his exile in his memoirs, and sadly never found time to record the years after 1915.⁵⁰ His early anarchism and later communism had earned him a permanent warrant for his arrest, which meant that he could not set foot on British soil.⁵¹ He was familiar with Berlin long before the League moved there, having joined the Hindu-German Conspiracy on recruiting missions among Indian prisoners of war in German camps.⁵² After the Bolshevik Revolution he moved to the Soviet Union where he helped to found the first incarnation of the Communist Party of India in Tashkent. The Central Asian crossroads of Tashkent proved a fertile breeding ground for a number of Pan-Asianist activities. Acharya met Mahendra Pratap, perhaps one of India's most inveterate Pan-Asianists, and joined him on a mission that included a meeting with Lenin in 1918.⁵³ A year later, Acharya and his associates succeeded in rerouting some of the Khilafatists to Tashkent as well. Having thus brought together a sufficient number of Indian activists in the city, Acharya assisted Abdur Rab Barq in forming the Indian Revolutionary Association in Tashkent in 1920. His experience with the Khilafatists and his success in inflecting their various understandings of Pan-Islamism towards more Pan-Asianist ideas caused him to bring several former Khilafatists to the Comintern-organized Congress of the Oppressed Peoples of the East in Baku in 1920.⁵⁴ Fourteen Indian delegates attended this Congress, which tested much of the anti-imperialist and regionalist rhetoric that would resurface in Brussels in 1927. It was but a small step for Acharya to continue in the role of typist and secretary for the Eastern Section of the League Against Imperialism.⁵⁵

Soon after the establishment of the *Anti-Imperialist Review*, the logistics of the second congress of the League in Frankfurt were hammered out. When the Congress opened on 20 July 1929 it convened a slightly different set of anti-imperialist activists: participation from Asia had markedly

increased, and delegations no longer consisted primarily of associations of exiles, students, or professional groups abroad, but included trade unions and other local organizations. The shift was due, at least in part, to Nehru and Chatto's active networking amongst Asian anti-imperialist movements. It also rendered visible what was to cause a rift in the League: the increasing influence of the Comintern on the organization and its commitment to world revolution on the one side, and the focus on national independence of many anti-imperialists from the colonies on the other. This split between revolutionaries and reformists, or moderates, as they were known at the time, was part of a global trend of hardening ideological lines during Stalin's Third Period. It also affected Asian projects in the field of trade unionism, some of which were connected to the League. In the case of the League itself, Indian participation quickly became more radical, and Nehru came to be regarded as a traitor to the cause.⁵⁶ By and large, Mohammed Hatta and Chiang Kai-shek suffered the same fate. As one British official noted, "[T]hey had once been members of the League. Now ... they have been expelled from its ranks."⁵⁷

As the 1930s progressed, Soviet funding of Asian anti-imperialist projects declined. The League did not survive the interwar years although, as Michele Louro has shown, Nehru remained in contact with his comrades from the early League and harboured no ill will against the organization.⁵⁸ Asianist projects, which looked to sources of inspiration other than the Bolshevik revolution, likewise saw their opportunities dwindle. Many had focused on Japan, and withdrew as Japanese imperialism became more manifest. After the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War in 1937 many organizations and institutions ceased operating, their hopes of Pan-Asian solidarity crushed. For instance, attempts to create an Asian women's movement independent of western feminists was stranded in attempts to convene a conference in Japan—even after a first successful conference in Lahore in 1931.⁵⁹ And while the democratic socialist Asiatic Labour Congress, first convened in Colombo in 1934, did convene a second conference in Japan in 1937, as a result it lost all goodwill in India and was disbanded.⁶⁰

The outbreak of the Sino-Japanese War ended the interwar years in Asia. As a turning point in the history of Asianist anti-imperialism, however, the Second World War turned out to be an interruption rather than an endpoint. After 1947, the key features of the League's Asian regionalism—the idea of Asia as a connected space with shared historical-cultural characteristics and a commitment to anti-imperialist solidarity—returned in full force, albeit in a changed world.

Towards Afro-Asianism: Echoes of the League

The rhetoric of anti-imperialist regionalism returned soon after the war. And not unlike in the interwar period, the idea that the decolonizing world had to stand together to end imperialism resulted in a wide array of international conferences between the late 1940s and the 1950s. Before 1960, in which year sixteen African countries achieved independence, anti-imperialist solidarity continued much as it had before the war. But there were new concerns that required a collective stand. The most important of these were to make the United Nations more than an extension of Western geopolitical interests; to ensure that hard-won independence would not be immediately lessened by surrendering autonomy to Cold War powers; and to combat Western hegemonies through direct intra-Asian and Afro-Asian exchanges of people, goods, and ideas.⁶¹

Three post-war initiatives stand out in particular. Interestingly they were all spearheaded by women whose careers had started in the interwar years; who were intimately familiar with the League against Imperialism; and who called for international solidarity using the same Asian, and later Afro-Asian, idiom that had been successful in the League. These initiatives also had in common with each other and with the League Against Imperialism an existence in the ambiguous space between the state and the non-state, the official and the non-official. They convened political actors, but they were representatives of states-in-waiting, of anti-imperialist movements that would not be successful, and of voices of opposition from sitting governments. And, like the League, all three included allies and sympathizers from outside the colonial world, as well as close observation by imperial powers.

In 1945, Nehru's sister and close political ally, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, led the Indian delegation to the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco.⁶² Held prior to Indian independence, this was not an official delegation. The official delegation represented British India, whereas Pandit represented the Indian National Congress.⁶³ Vijayalakshmi Pandit participated in the conference to promote Indian independence and lay the groundwork for post-independence relationships.⁶⁴ Accounts of her success vary, but she found receptive audiences and was able to maintain such high visibility that she became head of the official delegation to the UN after independence, eventually leading the General Assembly in 1953.⁶⁵ In 1945, however, her visit was primarily part of an Indian goodwill tour of the United States: to win sympathy and support for Indian decolonization and to create allies. Her focus, however, was less on power than on people. She met with Indian and other diasporic groups in

the United States, and with allies from both America and Asia. In Tucson, she received a considerable sum of money crowd-funded in sympathy with Nehru's continued imprisonment in Ahmednagar Fort.⁶⁶ In New York an "Indian Independence Dinner" was organized by the India League of America, in which the American Declaration of Independence was read alongside resolutions from the Indian National Congress.⁶⁷ Among the speakers for the night was famous Hokkien Chinese writer Lín Yǔtáng, who had just published *Vigil of a Nation*, in which he gave an account of wartime China and looked ahead to China's post-war "role in Asia and in world cooperation."⁶⁸

By the time the San Francisco conference opened in April, the American press had taken note of Pandit's tour, and so had the other Asian delegations. Fifty nations were represented at the conference, twelve of which were from the Afro-Asian region. Pandit developed especially close ties with the Arab delegations, who had well-founded fears that the United Nations would prove to be a continuation of the League of Nations: they perceived the United Nations' trusteeship system as a continuation of the mandate areas. In the end, a separate meeting consisting of the Asian delegations to San Francisco—"Asia" once more loosely defined and including the whole Arab world—was convened. Interestingly, the Asian presence at San Francisco included another sibling of the original League leadership: Sòng Zīwen, brother of former Honorary LAI President Sòng Qìng-líng and head of the Chinese delegation.⁶⁹ At the Asian meeting the idea of an Asian organization was floated, should the UN prove ineffective in representing Asia. The plan emerged to organize an Asian Conference to evaluate the workings of the United Nations, and Pandit and her colleague, B. Shiva Rao, another interwar veteran who could count many League Against Imperialism members among his trade union contacts, offered to take the lead.⁷⁰ In December of that same year, after Nehru had been released from prison, this idea started taking shape and Nehru started alluding to the idea of an Asian federation, or at least an Asian organization, in the international press.⁷¹

The Asian Relations Conference and the short-lived Asian Relations Organization established there, opened in New Delhi on 23 March 1947. This conference emblemized the ambiguous space between the official and the non-official: arranged effectively by the Provisional Government, boycotted by the Muslim League, but organized by the Indian Council for World Affairs as a cultural and academic gathering.⁷² Like the Indian delegation at the San Francisco conference, this conference too had been engineered by Nehru, but led by a "League sibling": Sarojini

Naidu, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya's sister. The two shared a love for poetry, and Chatto often boasted of his sister's success in that area.⁷³ The two had political differences, especially where the Indian National Congress' reformist rather than radical tendencies were concerned.⁷⁴ Anti-imperialism and the need for Asian solidarity, however, were not among their disagreements.

As an anti-imperialist, Sarojini Naidu's politics were closer to those of Gandhi than of her brother. During the salt marches, she took over leadership after Gandhi's arrest, until she too was arrested.⁷⁵ This arrest caused her to miss the aforementioned All-Asia Women's Conference in Lahore, organized by the All-India Women's Conference which she had helped build. In recognition of her sacrifice she was elected president of the Lahore conference anyway.⁷⁶ The complexities and contradictions in Sarojini Naidu's feminism have been noted elsewhere.⁷⁷ But it was as co-convenor of this women's conference, alongside Rameshwari Nehru (below) and her and Chatto's sister-in-law, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya, that her Asianism was best expressed. As a lyrical poet, finally, Sarojini Naidu had a history of celebrating the diversity and interregional connection of Asia: "[i]n brotherhood of diverse creeds, and harmony of diverse race / The votaries of the Prophet's faith, of whom you are the crown and chief / And they, who bear on Vedic brows their mystic symbols of belief / And they, worshipping the sun, fled o'er the old Iranian sea / And they, who bow to Him who trod the midnight waves of Galilee. / Sweet, sumptuous fables of Baghdad the splendours of your court recall / the torches of a Thousand Nights blaze through a single festival. / And Saki-singers down the streets pour for us, in a stream divine / From goblets of your love-ghazals, the rapture of your Sufi wine."⁷⁸

At the Asian Relations Conference, she was able to combine her two selves as an anti-imperialist activist and a poet. Addressing the crowds on the opening session of the Congress as "Comrades and Kindred of Asia" amidst continued cheers from the audience, the opening words of her speech closely resembled the preamble to the Sino-Indian resolution at Brussels: "I wonder how many of you who have come journeying across steep mountain passes, floating on the vast bosom of many-colored seas, riding amidst the clouds of dawn and darkness realize that we stand today, here and now, not only in the heart of Asia, but in the very core and center of India's heart. This *Purana Qila*, this historic ruin, the broken arches, what do they signify? They signify the dawn of history, the history of many forgotten ages. They also symbolize the dawn of a new era beckoning today."⁷⁹ Her activist self, however, spoke more plainly and stated simply

that “we may have our own movements for freedom, but we have come here to take an indestructible pledge of the unity of Asia.”⁸⁰

Sarojini Naidu was not alone in invoking historic connections between the nations of Asia and condemning imperialism for interrupting both. Nehru, in his speech, phrased this clearly: “one of the notable consequences of the European domination of Asia has been the isolation of the countries of Asia from one another. India has always had contact and intercourse with her neighbor countries ... with the coming of British rule in India these contacts were broken off ... A similar process affected the other countries of Asia also. Their entire economy was bound up with some European imperialism or other; even culturally they looked towards Europe and not towards their friends and neighbours from whom they had derived so much in the past.”⁸¹ As Sarojini Naidu had done, Nehru too hammered home the message of Asian solidarity straight away in one simple sentence: “[w]e seek no narrow nationalism.”⁸²

In terms of participation numbers, Asian representation, and laying important groundwork for the Bandung Conference, the Asian Relations Conference was a great success. However, it also laid bare some cracks in the wall of Asian solidarity.⁸³ As had been the case in Brussels in 1927, too great a focus on India could also result in fears of Indian domination, real or discursive. And both Nehru and Sarojini Naidu had given the audience cause for concern. Nehru in his speech claimed Egypt as “Asian” before stating that “[w]e in Asia have a special responsibility to the people of Africa. We must help them take their rightful place in the human family.”⁸⁴ However well-intentioned, this was not universally read as a horizontal statement of solidarity. And, as Antoinette Burton reminds us, such statements were part of a history of racialized capitalist relations and colonial-era racial hierarchies, causing the hyphen in “Afro-Asia” to elide tensions that strained anti-imperialist solidarities.⁸⁵ Closer to home, Sarojini Naidu sounded almost belligerent in defending India as the location of the conference: “[i]f India, my India, has issued an invitation and summoned the people of the east and west of Asia, has she—who has been the custodian of our own cultures as of yours, one of the great achievements of Asia—not the right to do so? Did we not send to Southeast Asia the great treasure of ours in India, Gautama Buddha—the teaching of peace? Did we not send to China, to Japan, to Ceylon, to Burma, the influence, philosophy and wisdom of India? ... Did we not send to Babylon, to Egypt, to the furthestmost corners of Asia with our merchandise, the treasure of our arts, the teachings of our literature, the wisdom of our sages and the splendor of our ideals?”⁸⁶ It is no wonder,

perhaps, that one Burmese delegate noted in the conference's session on cultural problems that while it was terrible to be ruled by a European power, it would be worse to be ruled by an Asian power.⁸⁷

More reminiscent of the League Against Imperialism, however, was a resolutely anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and anti-militarist congress in New Delhi eight years later: the Congress of Asian Countries on the Relaxation of International Tensions. Because of its more extreme positions and because it almost literally coincided with Bandung, threatening to take some of the wind out of the latter's sails, Nehru dissociated himself completely from this event. It was organized, however, by another Nehru, completing the trifecta of familial connections to the League: Rameshwari Nehru, social worker, organizer, long-time friend of Sarojini Naidu, and married to Nehru's uncle Brijlal.⁸⁸ This conference could not have taken place without the previous two. Like San Francisco, it was strongly committed to policing the United Nations and ensuring it was representative of the Afro-Asian world. Like the Asian Relations Conference, it professed to be an unofficial cultural-academic gathering but ended up drawing large participation from political actors. But it resembled the League in two ways in which San Francisco and the ARC did not: those political actors were, if not card-carrying communists, at least fellow travellers; and behind the scenes, there was considerable Soviet influence.⁸⁹ Of the three, this 1955 Delhi conference best demonstrates the "creative interplay" between anti-imperialists and international communists noted by Michele Louro elsewhere in this volume.

Rameshwari Nehru was a prominent member of the Indo-Soviet Cultural Society. Though not a card-carrying member of the Communist Party, she was involved in the All-India Peace Council (AIPC), the Indian chapter of the Soviet-dominated World Peace Council (WPC). She organized the event with the help of AIPC and WPC members, several of whom were also Indian MPs who had started their political careers during the interwar years. Her correspondents, too, included foreign leaders from across a broad leftist political spectrum: from Egypt's Anwar Sadat to hardliners like North Korea's Pak Cheong-ae.⁹⁰ This roughly corresponded to the "Asia" at this conference: it was loosely Afro-Asian, drawing attendance from most of the Arab world, and this time it gave rise to a set of explicitly Afro-Asian meetings that continued throughout the 1950s.

At the conference, Nehru's opening speech resembled its predecessors: "[t]here was a spirit of unity underlining the civilizations of all our countries. We, the Asian countries, lived in peace and tranquility. We

never entertained any aggressive designs against each other ... Then the change came over us. These great people of Asia fell asleep. They lost their initiative ... These were really dark and sad times of our history. But then, the cycle of time changed again and we all woke up simultaneously ... We yearned for freedom, which was our birthright."⁹¹ However, the conference as a whole was, like the LAI, anti-imperialist first and Asianist second. This time the anti-imperialist idiom had come to include the Cold War and its bloc formation. As noted by Pakistani delegate Maulana Bhashani, "Even after seeing this mood of Asia the foreigners refuse to give up hopes. They have become more desperate. On all sides they are spreading the net of blocs ... Wherever the imperialists extend their net of war either in the form of military agreement or alliance, the lamp of democracy goes out. Any work for the defense of world peace and democracy is branded 'subversive', 'communist', 'fellow-traveler', etc., ... The countries of Asia do not want war as much as they do not want to enter into a pointless armament race."⁹²

The Asian Solidarity Committee that had organized the conference followed a pattern of solidarity committees that operated in the larger orbit of Soviet cultural diplomacy. A few months after the conference, the committee renamed itself the Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee, and set about organizing the next meeting in Cairo. An international team of activists and writers organized the conference, the Indian members of which had organized the Delhi gathering, but it was actively sponsored and supported by Nasser. Convening in December 1957, every effort was made to include independence movements from throughout Africa by organizing them in local solidarity committees. The Cairo conference convened a much more representative portion of the Afro-Asian world—much more so than Bandung had two years previously, because it included still-colonized nations—and gave rise to an enduring institution: the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO), which still exists today. It welcomed five countries that had gained their independence between the 1955 and 1957 conferences—Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Ghana, and Malaya—which, along with the international support and solidarity Egypt had received during the Suez crisis the year before, was seen as a cause for optimism.⁹³ As Rameshwari Nehru said in her Cairo address, "We may have to pass through many trials, it may yet take a little time, but we may be sure that the last victory is going to be ours. Only let us, my brothers, dedicate ourselves to the bond of friendship with which we have bound ourselves and take a pledge that together we resist all aggression and injustice one to any of us."⁹⁴

Conclusion

Since the moment the League Against Imperialism was founded, the cartography behind the regionalist rhetoric of anti-imperialist internationalism has been a shifting one. Stretching the map of Asia to include the whole Arab world, effectively Chatto's "Morocco to Indonesia," demonstrated that "Asia" was used primarily as a rallying point for anti-imperial solidarity, rather than as a bounded geographical space. This enlarged map of Asia was due, in large part, to the international interlocutors of early League Against Imperialism members like Maulana Barkatullah and M.P.T. Acharya, who could count many Pan-Islamists among their comrades. It also facilitated the transition from anti-imperialist Asianism to Afro-Asianism in later years, as the precise demarcation of Asia had never been a concern. Alternatively called "proletarian solidarity" or "subaltern internationalism," anti-imperialist regionalism was meant to be expansive and include the decolonizing world.⁹⁵

Of the anti-imperialist gatherings and institutions discussed in this chapter, the Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization became the closest approximation to a "spiritual successor" to the League Against Imperialism. This was due in no small part to the fact that, at long last, the geographical backgrounds of the anti-imperialists it convened matched the conceptual reach of its regionalism. In Cairo in 1957, Asia was no longer the dominant voice. As more meetings were convened in AAPSO's institutional orbit, this trend continued. At the Afro-Asian Jurists' Conference (Damascus, 1957), the Afro-Asian Writers' Conference (Tashkent, 1958), and the Afro-Asian Women's Conference (Cairo, 1961) representation was much more equitably spread over the Afro-Asian region and the size of Indian delegations was more proportional than had been the case in the past.

The 1950s, in this sense at least, were the high point for Afro-Asian organizing and for its importance as a force for decolonization. Much of this was the result of the relentless efforts of anti-imperialists, who had continued to build regional contacts and networks from the interwar period onwards. In these efforts a broad range of Indian activists created a regionalist idiom flexible enough to last beyond independence. However, as Gerard McCann has shown, after the 1950s much of the Afro-Asian goodwill of the "Bandung Era" dwindled. African anti-imperialists became more hesitant towards Nehruvian calls for international solidarity, for reasons that included, but were not limited to, their strong presence in international institutions. Under new geopolitical circumstances beginning in the mid-1960s, Indian influence waned once African nations won their liberty and worked in new international constellations.⁹⁶

Notes

- 1 “Message to the Peoples of the World,” in *The Indian Delegation Reports on Afro-Asian People’s Conference, Cairo: December 26, 1957 to January 1, 1958. Resolutions and Speeches of the Indian Delegation* (New Delhi: Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Committee, 1958), 11.
- 2 International Institute for Social History (IISH), League Against Imperialism Archive (LAIA), File 1: Invitation.
- 3 Though there is some disagreement on the extent of Soviet influence, few historians would deny agency to the many prominent political activists who participated in the League. For extensive treatment of the links with the Comintern, see Fredrik Petersson, *Willi Münzenberg, The League Against Imperialism and the Comintern, 1925–1933* (Lewiston: Queenston Press, 2014), 2 vols.
- 4 “Resolutions,” *The Indian Delegation Reports on Afro-Asian People’s Conference, Cairo*, 12.
- 5 Here, I follow recent historiography of the Cairo conference, rather than the representation of this organization in Cold War era scholarship. For the former, see Reem Abou El-Fadl, “Solidarity and Internationalism in Egypt’s Afro-Asian Hub: the 1957 Afro-Asian People’s Solidarity Conference in Context,” *Journal of World History* 30:1–2 (2019). For the latter, see Charles Neuhauser, *Third World Politics: China and the Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Organization, 1957–67* (Cambridge MA: East Asia Research Center, 1968).
- 6 For an account of new pressures on India, see David Engerman, *The Price of Aid: the Economic Cold War in India* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018).
- 7 For an overview, see Carolien Stolte and Harald Fischer-Tiné, “Imagining Asia in India: Nationalism and Internationalism (ca. 1905–1940),” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 54:1 (2012), 65–92.
- 8 Inspired by Çemil Aydin’s work, this chapter locates the distinction between Asianism and Pan-Asianism in political intent: the former encompasses discursive attempts to frame Asia as a relatively homogenous space for a variety of agendas; the latter refers to projects that seek to unite Asia for concrete political purposes. See Çemil Aydin, *The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
- 9 John Steadman, *The Myth of Asia* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969), 15.
- 10 Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), Oral History Project, interview L.C. Jain. Jain was a student volunteer at the conference.

- 11 George McTurnan Kahin (ed.), *The Asian African Conference: Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1956), 40. As noted in Stutje's chapter, Sukarno himself did not attend the Brussels Congress.
- 12 Many historians, too, have cast the League as the precursor to Bandung. One of the first was Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: a People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press 2007).
- 13 For this argument, see Su Lin Lewis and Carolien Stolte, "Other Bandungs: Afro-Asian Networks in the Early Cold War," *Journal of World History* 30:1–2 (2019).
- 14 On this issue, see Lydia Walker, "Decolonization in the 1960s: on Legitimate and Illegitimate Nationalist Claims-Making," *Past and Present* 242:1 (2019), 227–64; Quito Swan, "Blinded by Bandung? Illumining West Papua, Senegal, and the Black Pacific," *Radical History Review* 131 (2018), 58–81.
- 15 Most recently by Michele Louro, *Comrades Against Imperialism: Nehru, India, and Interwar Internationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- 16 Miloslav Krása, "The Idea of Pan-Asianism and the Nationalist Movement in India," *Archiv Orientální* 40 (1972), 38–60: 46.
- 17 On this Asian Relations Conference, see Carolien Stolte, "'The Asiatic Hour': New Perspectives on the Asian Relations Conference, New Delhi, 1947," in Nadia Miskovic, Harald Fischer-Tine, and Nada Boskovska (eds.), *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War: Delhi – Bandung – Belgrade* (London: Routledge, 2014), 57–75; Vineet Thakur, "An Asian Drama: the Asian Relations Conference, 1947," *The International History Review* (2018), 1–23. On its regionalist aftermath, see Geoffrey H. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment* (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), 79–162.
- 18 On Liao Huanxing, see Belagurova in this volume, as well as Thomas Kampen, "Solidarität und Propaganda, Willi Münzenberg, die Internationale Arbeiterhilfe und China," *Zeitschrift für Weltgeschichte* 5:2 (2004), 99–105. On Katayama, see Nozomu Kawamura, "Sociology and Socialism in the Interwar Period," in Thomas Rimer (ed.) *Culture and Identity: Japanese Intellectuals during the Interwar Years* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 61–82: 63–4; on his influence as an international communist, see Minkah Makalani, *In the Cause of Freedom: Radical Black Internationalism from Harlem to London, 1917–1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).
- 19 Speech by Nehru on the opening day of the Congress. Louis Gibarti, *Das Flammenzeichen des Palais Egmonts* (Berlin: Neuer Deutscher Verlag, 1927), 55.

- 20 See below and T.A. Keenleyside, "Nationalist Indian Attitudes Towards Asia: A Troublesome Legacy for Post-Independence Indian Foreign Policy," *Pacific Affairs* 55:2 (1982), 210–30.
- 21 British Library, India Office Records (BL IOR): Memorandum regarding Japanese co-operation with Indian revolutionary agitators. G. Eliot to Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, Foreign Office, 1 February 1923.
- 22 National Archives of India (NAI), Home Political 831/II (1926), memorandum, 15 December 1926.
- 23 Gangadhar Adhikari (ed.), *Documents of the History of the Communist Party of India*, vol. 1 (New Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1976), 121.
- 24 P. Roy, S.D. Gupta and H. Vasudevan (eds.), *Indo-Russian Relations 1917–1947: Select Documents from the Archives of the Russian Federation* (Calcutta: the Asiatic Society, 2000), 375.
- 25 On the Ghadar Party see, in particular, Maia Ramnath, *Haj to Utopia: How the Ghadar Movement Charted Global Radicalism and Attempted to Overthrow the British Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).
- 26 NAI, Mahendra Pratap Personal Papers: Nehru correspondence.
- 27 Exceptions include Michael Brecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 109–10; Louro, *Comrades Against Imperialism*; Petersson, Willi Münzenberg, *The League Against Imperialism, and the Comintern*.
- 28 N.K. Barooah, *Chatto: The Life and Times of an Indian Anti-Imperialist in Europe* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), 248.
- 29 Brecher, *Nehru*, 109–10.
- 30 IISH, LAIA, File 26: Joint Sino-Indian resolution. German original.
- 31 Rabindranath Tagore, *Journey to Persia and Iraq* (Kolkata: Viśva Bharati Press, 2003), 153.
- 32 IISH, LAIA, File 26: Joint Sino-Indian resolution.
- 33 IISH, LAIA, File 2: List of organizations and delegates.
- 34 IISH, LAIA, File 28: Joint Resolution by the Asian Delegations. Emphasis in German original.
- 35 Rossiskii Tsentr Khraneniya I Izucheniya Dokumentov Noveishei Istorii (hereafter RTsKhIDNI) 495-18-534/41-43. Many of the Center's documents relating to India have been translated and published in Roy, Gupta and Vasudevan, *Indo-Russian Relations*.
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 BL IOR, L/P&J/12/404: Workers and Peasants Parties.
- 38 BL IOR, L/P&J/12/266: New Scotland Yard to India Office, 15 September 1927.

- 39 On the history of this journal, see also Fredrik Petersson, “‘Why We Appear:’ the Brief Revival of the Anti-Imperialist Review,” *Viewpoint Magazine*, 1 February 2018.
- 40 V.I. Lenin, “National and Colonial Revolution,” *Anti-Imperialist Review* 1:1 (1928), 61–4: 61.
- 41 *Ibid.*, 62.
- 42 Michele Louro, *Comrades Against Imperialism*, 118.
- 43 ‘Report on the Development of the League Against Imperialism’, *Anti-Imperialist Review* 1:1 (1928), 83–93: 92.
- 44 On the mission, see S.T. Wasti, “The 1912–13 Balkan War and the Siege of Edirne,” *Middle Eastern Studies*, 40:4 (2004), 59–78.
- 45 Birendra Prasad, *Indian Nationalism and Asia* (New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1979), 83.
- 46 Barooah, *Chatto*, esp. 34–60.
- 47 According to the Dresdner Neueste Nachrichten. Barooah, *Chatto*, 246.
- 48 Barooah, *Chatto*, 249.
- 49 P.C. Joshi Archives, New Delhi, LAI Papers, File 6: Chattopadhyaya to Nehru, 3 March 1929.
- 50 B.D. Yadav (ed.), *M.P.T. Acharya, Reminiscences of an Indian Revolutionary* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 1991). Now partly remedied by the publication of Acharya’s essays edited by Ole Birk Laursen, *We Are Anarchists: Essays on Anarchism, Pacifism and the Indian Independence Movement, 1923–1953* (Minneapolis: AK Press, 2019).
- 51 Yadav, *M.P.T. Acharya*, iv.
- 52 On this part of the conspiracy, see Franziska Roy, Heike Liebau and Ravi Ahuja, *When the War Began, We Heard of Several Kings: South Asian Prisoners in World War Germany* (New York: Social Science Press, 2011).
- 53 Carolien Stolte, “‘Enough of the Great Napoleons!’ Mahendra Pratap’s Pan-Asian Projects (1929–1939),” *Modern Asian Studies* 46:2 (2012), 403–23.
- 54 On the Baku Congress, see John Riddell (ed.), *To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East* (New York: Pathfinder, 1993).
- 55 Roy, Gupta and Vasudevan, *Indo-Russian Relations*, 374.
- 56 BL IOR, L/P&J/12/271: New Scotland Yard Report, 15 October 1930.
- 57 BL IOR, L/P&J/12/271: Report 24 July 1931. See also Petersson, *Willi Münzenberg. The League Against Imperialism and the Comintern*, vol. 2, 682.
- 58 Louro, *Comrades Against Imperialism*, esp. 181–213.
- 59 On this conference, see Shobna Nijhawan, “International Feminism from an Asian Center: the All-Asian Women’s Conference (Lahore, 1931) as Transnational Feminist Movement,” *Journal of Women’s History* 29:3 (2017), 12–36.

- 60 Carolien Stolte, "Bringing Asia to the World: the Long Road towards the Asiatic Labour Congress, 1934–7," *Journal of Global History* 7:2 (2012), 257–78.
- 61 On examples of concrete exchanges of activists and expertise in the 1950s, see the special issue "Trade Union Networks and the Politics of Expertise in an Age of Afro-Asian Solidarity," *Journal of Social History* 52:4 (2019).
- 62 On Vijayalakshmi Pandit and the San Francisco Conference see, among others, the second chapter of Manu Bhagavan, *India and the Quest for One World: the Peacemakers* (London: Palgrave Macmillan 2013); Julie Laut, *India at the United Nations: a Postcolonial Nation-State on the Global Stage, 1945–1955* (The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign: PhD Dissertation, 2016).
- 63 Both the secretary and the military advisor of the official delegation, moreover, were British. Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment*, 42.
- 64 Rakesh Ankit, "In the Twilight of Empire: Two Impressions of Britain and India at the United Nations, 1945–7," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 38:4 (2015), 574–88: 574.
- 65 Long marginalized in historiography or dismissed for her use of emotional registers in diplomatic exchange, her role has only recently been re-evaluated. See particularly the first chapter in Laut, *India at the United Nations*.
- 66 South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA), Community Event for Visit by Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, 1945.
- 67 SAADA, Indian Independence Day dinner booklet, 26 January 1945.
- 68 Lin Yutang, *The Vigil of a Nation* (New York: John Day Book Company, 1944), 1.
- 69 In contemporary sources usually T.V. Soong or Soong Tse-Ven. He was also a former classmate of Lin Yutang both at the St. John's University in Shanghai and at Harvard.
- 70 Jansen, *Afro-Asia and Non-Alignment*, 41–2.
- 71 See, amongst many others, "Federation of Asia Predicted by Nehru," *The China Weekly Review* 26/1/1945, 154.
- 72 Stolte, "The Asiatic Hour," 58.
- 73 Barooah, *Chatto*, 247.
- 74 *Ibid.*, 271.
- 75 Padmini Sengupta, *Sarojini Naidu* (London: Asia Publishing House, 1966), 230–4.
- 76 *All-Asian women's conference, first session, Lahore, Jan. 19–25, 1931* (Bombay: Times of India Press, 1931).
- 77 Hasi Banerjee, *Sarojini Naidu – The Traditional Feminist* (Kolkata: K.P. Bagchi, 1998), esp. 83–109.

- 78 Sarojini Naidu, "Ode to the Nizam of Hyderabad," *The Golden Threshold* (London, 1896).
- 79 *Asian Relations, being Report of the Proceedings and Documentation of the First Asian Relations Conference New Delhi, March-April 1947* (New Delhi: ARO 1948), 27.
- 80 *Ibid.*, 28.
- 81 *Ibid.*, 23.
- 82 *Ibid.*, 26.
- 83 See also Thakur, "An Asian Drama."
- 84 *Ibid.*
- 85 Antoinette Burton, *Brown over Black: Race and the Politics of Postcolonial Citation* (Gurgaon: Three Essays Collective, 2012), 2.
- 86 *Ibid.*, 30.
- 87 Quoted in W. Henderson, "The Development of Regionalism in Southeast Asia," *International Organization* 9:4 (1955), 463–76: 466.
- 88 Om Prakash Paliwal, *Rameshwari Nehru: Patriot and Internationalist* (New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1986), 19.
- 89 For a more comprehensive account of this conference, see Carolien Stolte, "'The People's Bandung': Local Anti-Imperialists on an Afro-Asian Stage," *Journal of World History* 30:1–2 (2019).
- 90 NMML, Rameshwari Nehru Personal Papers (RNPP), Personal Correspondence. Pak Cheong-ae, (Pak Den-ai), was the only woman ever to serve in the Politburo of the Workers Party of Korea.
- 91 NMML, RNPP, Conference of Asian Countries, Bulletin 1 (1955), 3.
- 92 NMML, RNPP, Speech Moulana Bhasani, 7 April 1955.
- 93 On this point, see Reem Abou el-Fadl, *Foreign Policy as Nation Making: Turkey and Egypt in the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- 94 *Afro-Asian Peoples Solidarity Conference* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958).
- 95 The former was coined by David Kimche, *The Afro-Asian Movement: Ideology and Policy of the Third World* (Jerusalem: Israel Universities Press, 1973). For the latter, see Çemil Aydin, *The Idea of the Muslim World: a Global Intellectual History* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).
- 96 Gerard McCann, "From Diaspora to Third Worldism and the United Nations: India and the Politics of Decolonizing Africa," *Past and Present* 218:8 (2013), 258–80: 259.

