

This is a repository copy of *Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian solidarity? Africa's 'Bandung moment' in 1950s Asia*.

White Rose Research Online URL for this paper:  
<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/143555/>

Version: Accepted Version

---

**Article:**

McCann, Gerard [orcid.org/0000-0003-0509-319X](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0509-319X) (2019) *Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian solidarity? Africa's 'Bandung moment' in 1950s Asia*. *Journal of World History*. pp. 89-123. ISSN 1527-8050

<https://doi.org/10.1353/jwh.2019.0014>

---

**Reuse**

Items deposited in White Rose Research Online are protected by copyright, with all rights reserved unless indicated otherwise. They may be downloaded and/or printed for private study, or other acts as permitted by national copyright laws. The publisher or other rights holders may allow further reproduction and re-use of the full text version. This is indicated by the licence information on the White Rose Research Online record for the item.

**Takedown**

If you consider content in White Rose Research Online to be in breach of UK law, please notify us by emailing [eprints@whiterose.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@whiterose.ac.uk) including the URL of the record and the reason for the withdrawal request.

# Where was the Afro in Afro-Asian solidarity? Africa's 'Bandung Moment' in 1950s Asia<sup>1</sup>

GERARD MCCANN

*University of York*

*Journal of World History*, Vol. 30, No. 1&2 © 2019 by University of Hawai'i Press

## **Abstract**

*Africans are staged but not often heard in discussions of the 'Bandung moment', a high-watermark of decolonial possibility and Afro-Asian connection. This article foregrounds the agency and perspectives of African activists who travelled across Asia in the 1950s. In Delhi, Rangoon and Bandung, Africans engaged, co-produced and made useable the dialogical Afro-Asian world to deconstruct colonialism and engineer alternative futures. The piece tracks these dynamics through three interlocked arenas of Afro-Asian affinity: journeys of African students to India from the 1940s; African participation in the Asian Socialist Conference in Burma, 1953–1956, and, as the geographies of Afro-Asianism shifted, radicalized and splintered, African activism within the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organization in Cairo from 1957. It reveals how the overlapping internationalisms of these fora reinforced a dyad of anti-colonial politics and development in the construction of African nationhood and pan-African community. This article breaks new ground in privileging the Afro in Afro-Asian.*

In June 1954, the Asian Socialist Conference (ASC) published the first edition of its *Anti-Colonial Bureau News Letter*. After reporting the recent Bureau meeting in the Burmese hill-station of Kalaw, the news became overwhelmingly African: political crisis in Buganda, a new constitution for Tanganyika, Mau Mau and Kwame Nkrumah's electoral success in Gold Coast. The editor of the *News Letter* and Joint Secretary of the ASC, working in Rangoon, Burma, was a young West African journalist, James Gilbert Markham.<sup>2</sup> His mission: to wrangle the ideological and organizational potency of Asian national liberations and Afro-Asian solidarity towards expedited freedom for Africa and his own flagship country, Gold Coast/Ghana. Jim Markham was Nkrumah's man in Asia as the 'Bandung moment' approached its powerful and fleeting crescendo.

Markham's journey to Burma and the landmark 1955 Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia, was one track in the dense traffic of anti-colonial solidarity

---

<sup>1</sup>Thanks to all members of the 'Afro-Asian Networks Research Collective' (<https://afroasiannetworks.com/>) for their invigorating friendship, and in particular to Su Lin Lewis, Carolien Stolte, Leslie James, Ali Raza and Rachel Leow. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their incisive and warm advice. Unna McCann helped in the final stage of writing.

<sup>2</sup>Asian Socialist Conference, *Anti-Colonial Bureau Newsletter* no. 1 (1954): 1.

journeys across the 1950s. Most famously, African-American man of letters Richard Wright reprised Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. Du Bois in asserting a global 'Color Curtain' from his reading of Bandung at which he was an observer.<sup>3</sup> (Du Bois himself could not attend given the confiscation of his passport by the U.S. government in 1951.) Hundreds of less feted tours around Asia by African trade unionists, artists, journalists and students shaped effervescent debate on the nature, entanglements and timetables of post-colonial futures. Africans contemplated how conversations with free Asians could expedite the end of empire. Giddy new pan-Asian and Afro-Asian institutions channeled the energy of peripatetic activists to castigate colonialism and forge equitable development in building global post-colonial communion.

The Bandung conference dominates and simplifies understanding of this Afro-Asia. Rachel Leow remarks how Bandung became 'easy metonymy: Bandung the place, Bandung the spirit—Bandung the moment, Bandung the history. Anti-colonialism and transnational solidarity were all theatrical parts: Bandung was the diplomatic debut of newly decolonized peoples on a bipolar world stage, full of agency and vigour'.<sup>4</sup> The quinquagenary in 2005 unleashed a wave of scholarship.<sup>5</sup> The Bandung conference was conceptually portable: an arena to reify new Asian post-colonial states, an anti-colonial iteration of global human rights debate, a teleological origin story for the non-aligned movement and resurgent south-south cooperation.<sup>6</sup> More recent interventions reconstruct a more complicated Bandung conference than related in Wright's 'urtext' and much of the early twenty-first century 'Bandung studies' work towards recognition of the more conflicted vocabularies of several Asian, although not yet many African, statesmen.<sup>7</sup>

The statism of Bandung was but one of many crucibles of Afro-Asian solidarity in the 1950s, a decade of multiple internationalisms within and beyond freedom movements and post-colonial states. Chris Lee convincingly argues that 'Bandung' served as an unstable '*communitas*' – a community of feeling – based on the shared experience of Western imperialism. Bandung intended to 'provide a distinct, even utopian, alternative to the preceding era through a discourse of Afro-Asian solidarity'.<sup>8</sup> The voices of Africans in this *communitas* are underrepresented in the scholarship given the volume at which they spoke in its layered transnational communities of affinity. These Afro-Asian fraternities entangled with an intricate nexus of anti-colonial institutions in Europe and the Americas, a global matrix of

---

<sup>3</sup>R. Wright, *The Color Curtain: A Report on the Bandung Conference* (Cleveland: World Pub., 1956).

<sup>4</sup>R. Leow, "Asian Lessons in the Cold War Classroom: Trade Union Networks and the Multidirectional Pedagogies of the Cold War in Asia," *Journal of Social History* (forthcoming, 2019).

<sup>5</sup>For an overview see C.J. Lee, ed., *Making a World after Empire: The Bandung Moment and its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010).

<sup>6</sup>D. Chakrabarty, "Legacies of Bandung: Decolonisation and the Politics of Culture," *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, no. 46 (2005); R. Burke, "'The Compelling Dialogue of Freedom': Human Rights at the Bandung Conference," *Human Rights Quarterly* 28, no. 4 (2006); V. Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: New Press, 2008).

<sup>7</sup>M.P. Bradley, "Richard Wright, Bandung, and the Poetics of the Third World," *Modern American History* 1, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>8</sup>Lee, *Making a World*: 25–27.

possibility. Africans are staged but not often *heard* in this ‘Bandung moment’. Naoko Shimazu illustrates how Asian organizers incorporated Africans into the public choreography of the Bandung conference.<sup>9</sup> The colourful West African *kente* attire of the Gold Coast delegates attracted more attention than their complex ambitions. Robert Vitalis busts myths of African participation, noting how many commentators falsely believed that Nkrumah himself attended Bandung such is its mystique.<sup>10</sup> Antoinette Burton requires acknowledgment of both cooperation and tension within this Afro-Asian milieu, particularly recognition of hierarchical Asian assessments of African modernity.<sup>11</sup> Such scholarship impels us to foreground African perspectives in detail, to listen to those Africans who co-constructed that ‘Bandung moment’ at the same time as they were shaped by it. This article tracks their journeys and experiences to centre the ‘*Afro*’ in ‘Afro-Asian’.

The canon of Africanist decolonization also lacks textured narratives of Afro-Asianism. Hitherto dominant African national(ist) historiographies, suspicious of the transnational, stand testament to the anxieties of neocolonialism inherent in power asymmetries between African states and global networks over the latter twentieth century.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, fractious African-South Asian race relations in eastern and southern Africa over economy and autochthony – tensions forged under colonial rule – inform Africanist aloofness to Asian influence on processes of decolonization.<sup>13</sup> Innovative new work by Fred Cooper and Gary Wilder does centre the extra-continental imaginings of African decolonization, leaning toward the contingencies of Eurafrikan contact.<sup>14</sup> In proud traditions of pan-Africanism, a rich literature grows on the intersections of African-American civil rights struggle and African freedom fighting.<sup>15</sup> There is a blind spot for multivalent Afro-Asian linkages, beyond sites of South Asian diaspora in Africa, in these new globalist remappings of African decolonization.

This article does not throw out the baby with the post-colonial bathwater in stressing subsequent division, fracture and failure over solidarity, connection and possibility in the Afro-Asian world. Rather, this piece aims to ‘understand better what imaginings of Afro-Asian solidarities resulted in materially before we engage in critical pessimism’.<sup>16</sup> Through the travels of African activists in Asia (and beyond), it

---

<sup>9</sup>N. Shimazu, “Diplomacy as Theatre: Staging the Bandung Conference of 1955,” *Modern Asian Studies* 48, no. 1 (2013): 225–252.

<sup>10</sup>R. Vitalis, “The Midnight Ride of Kwame Nkrumah and Other Fables of Bandung (Ban-doong),” *Humanity* 4, no. 2 (2013): 261–288.

<sup>11</sup>A. Burton, “Epilogue,” in *Making a World*, ed. Lee, 354.

<sup>12</sup>J. Ferguson, *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).

<sup>13</sup>Although see S. Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya: The Politics of Diaspora* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015) for a notable exception.

<sup>14</sup>F. Cooper, *Africa in the World: Capitalism, Empire, Nation-State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015); G. Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

<sup>15</sup>E.g. Y. Richards, *Maida Springer: Pan-Africanist and International Labor Leader* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004); F.C. Wilkins, “Beyond Bandung: The Critical Nationalism of Lorraine Hansberry, 1950–1965,” *Radical History Review* 2006, no. 95 (2006).

<sup>16</sup>D. Menon, “Bandung is Back: Afro-Asian Affinities,” *Radical History Review*, no. 119 (2014): 242.

examines how Africans engaged and made useable Afro-Asian relationships to deconstruct colonialism and engineer alternative futures. In the 1950s, Africans ‘moved between nationalism and internationalism in a manner that defies scholarly obsession with this supposed dichotomy [and] channeled their own forms of internationalism through these expanding networks’.<sup>17</sup> The approach here, focused on Africans, affords deeper critical ability to assess the tensions and tenderness of post-colonial imagination, to “breathe heterogeneity into the word ‘imagination’” in order to open up its wide-ranging sites and expressive possibilities’.<sup>18</sup>

It eschews the elite diplomatic approach to the ‘Bandung era’, principally told from Asian interlocutors such as the former Indian diplomat G.H. Jansen who lauded Nehruvian realism against more ethereal articulations of the ‘Bandung spirit’.<sup>19</sup> Such narratives frequently conceive Bandung as a site of geopolitical competition in shifting Cold War terrain.<sup>20</sup> Other recent work situates Bandung as an arena of emerging Afro-Asian hierarchy and jockeying for global post-colonial position.<sup>21</sup> Frank Gerits concludes that ‘Nkrumah dreaded Asian paternalism and Arab competition because it threatened his own power base . . . and was concerned with how Asian paternalism towards Africa might affect his pan-African project’.<sup>22</sup> Delving beneath the state relations of Bandung, Nehru or Nkrumah in favour of a focus on more dialogical communities of anti-colonial affinity, it is clear that competition and realism did not hamper African entry into, and use of, the Afro-Asian world. The complex tangle of Afro-Asian and world socialist networks nourished rather than imperilled (pan)African liberation projects in the 1950s. Mobile African activists, still under colonialism, crisscrossed anti-imperial routes on their own terms and to their own ends. They swerved the tutelary paternalism of their Asian collaborators to breathe in an atmosphere of experimentation and institutional creativity. Jim Markham absorbed precedent and resource in socialist Asia to plan pan-African community and give meaning to Ghana’s technocratic post-colonialism. This was not threat to Nkrumaism, but means to help create it. African participation in 1950s ‘Bandung’ Asia was not concerned with transforming the Afro-Asian world or grabbing global power. It was about defining the detail of African independence through international and transnational network connection. This is heritage ignored in teleological narratives of introverted African nationalisms and tales of Afro-Asian demise from the 1960s onwards.

This article concentrates then not on the big men, rather their junior colleagues and facilitators, the behind-the-scenes actors who personally travelled to the frontlines of emerging anti-colonial affinity. In Part I, Apa Pant, independent India’s first High

---

<sup>17</sup>The Afro-Asian Networks Collective, “Manifesto: Networks of Decolonization in Asia and Africa,” *Radical History Review* 131 (2018): 176–182.

<sup>18</sup>D. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 149 cited and expanded in Lee, *Making a World*: 24.

<sup>19</sup>G.H. Jansen, *Non-Alignment and the Afro-Asian States* (New York: Praeger, 1966).

<sup>20</sup>C. Ewing, “‘The Colombo Powers’ Crafting Diplomacy in the Third World and Launching Afro-Asia at Bandung,” *Cold War History* (first view online, 2018).

<sup>21</sup>Vitalis, “The Midnight Ride of Kwame Nkrumah”: 270–276.

<sup>22</sup>F. Gerits, “Bandung as the Call for a Better Development Project: US, British, French and Gold Coast Perceptions of the Afro-Asian Conference (1955),” *Cold War History* 16, no. 3 (2016): 270–271.

Commissioner to Africa from 1948 to 1954, sat at the coalface of forging intimate friendships with African leaders through the provision of educational opportunities. These pragmatic tools of grand Nehruvianism were seized enthusiastically by African leaders to scramble technocratic capacity as a form of local anti-colonialism. Part II focuses – for the very first time – on African roles in the Asian Socialist Conference through Jim Markham’s Rangoon stay from 1953 to 1955. It demonstrates the potency of leftist internationalisms in moulding ideological and material forms of Afro-Asian and African cooperation. Finally, as the geographies of Afro-Asian solidarity shifted, radicalized and splintered in the late 1950s, Part III considers how African agents, like Joseph Murumbi of Kenya, worked the Afro-Asian Peoples’ Solidarity Organisation, based in Cairo, and soon the pan-African epicentre of Accra, to definite and enact African statehood on African terms. These institutions were discrete sites, even arenas of competition, in the eyes of their Asian leaders. Mobile African nationalists imagined them as enmeshed contact zones. They ‘engaged critically with communist, socialist, and democratic ideas in circulation, constantly reevaluated their political loyalties, and built up diverse networks of intellectual and radical sociability’.<sup>23</sup> These African liberators opportunistically traversed the conferences of Asia’s ‘Bandung moment’ to extract resource, example and solidarity to buttress their local struggles against empire and imagine their own post-colonial modernities. This article takes their view from the corridors of celebrated anti-colonial institutions rather than from the more famous vantage points of the grand conference podiums.

This contribution draws on archival resources in East Africa, West Africa, South Asia and Europe, as well as published writings from across the 1940s to 1960s. Its findings are to be tested and expanded in particular through deeper explorations in African archives being revitalized after decades of neglect, not least during corrosive ‘structural adjustment’ regimes of the 1980–1990s. Our Afro-Asian Networks Research Collective insists that new global histories of decolonization require ‘an attitudinal shift where research is not “owned” or “discovered,” but enabled and shared’ through collaboration with and between scholars in the global south’, to view this historical moment from multiple archives, languages and epistemologies.<sup>24</sup> I invite such collaboration, from Africa especially, to enhance our understandings of Afro-Asianism.

## **<H1>NAIROBI TO DELHI**

<T-NOIND>South Asian networks – a ‘Greater India’ within the imperial Indian Ocean – served as the first conduits of Afro-Asian political connection in the early twentieth century.<sup>25</sup> The diasporic politics of imperial citizenship in Gandhi’s South Africa and the proliferation of Indian National Congress (INC) branches throughout the British Empire defined early Indian political association with Africa from the 1890s to

---

<sup>23</sup>Afro-Asian Networks Collective, “Manifesto”: 176–182.

<sup>24</sup>ibid, 179.

<sup>25</sup>S. Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

1920s.<sup>26</sup> From the 1930s, the intersections of Indian nationalism and African protest increasingly animated the INC. In 1936, the new INC Foreign Department, under the direction of Ram Manohar Lohia, liaised in earnest with leaders around the pan-African world. Lohia corresponded with George Padmore, the Trinidadian point-man of the Pan-African Federation London branch, and its vice-president, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya.<sup>27</sup> Through Padmore, Lohia expressed Indian sympathy with pan-African discontent at the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and supported the grievances of the Gold Coast Aborigines Rights Protection Society. On Nehru's insistence, Lohia sent copies of the INC fortnightly foreign affairs newsletter to Du Bois in Atlanta.<sup>28</sup> New spaces of anti-colonial connection across European cities, colonial capitals and the black Atlantic seeded novel forms of transnational activism and progressive sociability.<sup>29</sup> Lohia tapped these bubbling dialogical arenas of anti-imperial possibility and experimentation, links that would shape the Afro-Asian 1950s.

In 1948, less than a year after Indian independence, Apa Pant arrived in Nairobi as India's High Commissioner to East and Central Africa. His full-throated commitment to African nationalism soon eclipsed his twin mission to solder the estranged Indian diaspora to the new Indian nation-state.<sup>30</sup> To the British anxiously looking on, Pant was Nehru's 'blue-eyed boy', the charming son of a Maharaja, subverting rejuvenated postwar developmental colonialism.<sup>31</sup> British officials repeatedly censured Pant for meddling in African politics, leaning on Nehru through the Commonwealth to transfer him.<sup>32</sup> A far-fetched Colonial Office memo even argued that Pant's deputy, Mohammed Altour Rahman, was a Soviet agent complicit with Mau Mau.<sup>33</sup> Pant ignored British warnings and befriended a range of African leaders. Most vigorously, he supported the Kenyan African Union (KAU), founded in 1942, under Kenyatta with whom he developed a cordial relationship (Fig. 1).<sup>34</sup> Pant was especially close to Pio Gama Pinto, the radical trade unionist and journalist, whose career spanned Indian, Goan and African anti-colonial movements. Born in Nairobi in 1927, Pinto attended school in Goa and Mysore, and served in the Indian air force during WWII. From Bombay, he helped found the Goa National Congress to combat Portuguese colonialism, fleeing back to Kenya in 1949 under threat of arrest in Goa. He worked on the radical Kenyan Asian newspapers, *The Daily Chronicle* and *Colonial Times*, and was soon imprisoned under Kenya's Mau Mau emergency regulations.

---

<sup>26</sup>N.V. Rajkumar, *Indians Outside India: A General Survey* (New Delhi: All-India Congress Committee, 1951).

<sup>27</sup>See L. James, *George Padmore and Decolonization from Below: Pan-Africanism, the Cold War, and the End of Empire* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

<sup>28</sup>Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML), New Delhi: All-India Congress Committee (AICC) papers first installment, FD8/1936: R.M. Lohia to W.E.B. Du Bois, 20 July 1936.

<sup>29</sup>See M. Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015).

<sup>30</sup>D. Sutton, "'Divided and Uncertain Loyalties': Partition, Indian Sovereignty and Contested Citizenship in East Africa, 1948–55," *Interventions* 9, no. 2 (2007): 276–288.

<sup>31</sup>A. Pant, *A Moment in Time* (Bombay: Orient Longman, 1974), 64.

<sup>32</sup>The National Archives, London (TNA): FCO/141/14553: Secretary of State for Colonies to Governors of Trinidad, Jamaica, Mauritius, Fiji, Gold Coast, Nigeria, Singapore and Malaya, 23 December 1953.

<sup>33</sup>Aiyar, *Indians in Kenya*, 192.

<sup>34</sup>G. McCann, "From Diaspora to Third Worldism and the United Nations: India and the Politics of Decolonizing Africa," *Past & Present* 218, no. Suppl 8 (2013): 258–280.

Before his assassination in 1964, the alleged result of his socialist radicalism and association with President Kenyatta's political rivals, Pinto played key strategic roles in KAU and independent Kenya's first ruling party, KANU. He established KANU's newspaper *Sauti ya Africa* through his 'Pan-African Press', born in part with finance from Pant. Pinto was Pant's passport to Kenya's anti-colonial leadership and fixer for Kenyan nationalists in search of Indian allies and resources.



Figure 1: Apa Pant (center) with Kenyan nationalists Jomo Kenyatta (left) and Achieng Oneko (right) (Wikimedia Commons)

Like Lohia in the 1930s, Pant also corresponded with African-American leaders with interests in continental Africa, some of whom he visited on his official trips to the United Nations in New York. One such activist was Max Yergan, whose 1916 missionary trip to India with the YMCA influenced his famed anti-colonial agitation.<sup>35</sup> By 1953, the official 80-member Indian Council for Africa had republished Kenyatta's *Kenya: The Land of Conflict* (1944) for an Indian audience and advocated the rapid expansion of African scholarships at India's universities. From 1954, Peter Wright, a teacher and British contractor to the Kenyan Education Department, directed Asia's first African studies centre at Delhi University at the invitation of Nehru. An old friend of Pant at Oxford University, Wright was a rare European deported from Kenya in 1952 for criticism of colonial education policy and liaison with subsequent Mau Mau detainees.<sup>36</sup> Pant and Wright became a convivial double-act, sponsoring, mentoring and often personally hosting India's African students in Nairobi and Delhi.

---

<sup>35</sup>NMML: Apa Pant papers first installment, No. 2 Subject Files, File 2: Pant to Max Yergan, 1 April 1953; D.H. Anthony, *Max Yergan: Race Man, Internationalist, Cold Warrior* (New York: New York University Press, 2006).

<sup>36</sup>United Kingdom. Hansard Parliamentary Debates, vol. 508, 26 November 1952.



Educational provision was a key pillar of India's quotidian engagement with Africans to compensate for colonial underdevelopment and a talismanic marker, in New Delhi at least, of Indian-led anti-colonial solidarity. On a tour of central Kenya in 1949, Pant struck up a warm comradeship with one of Kenya's most prominent leaders, Mbiyu Koinange. The son of a leading Kikuyu chief (the Koinanges later initiated Pant as an honorary Kikuyu elder), Mbiyu founded the African Teachers' College at Githunguri, the central facility for the massive Independent African Schools movement in Kenya. In late 1949, Koinange embarked on a funded tour of India to learn more about educational advancement.<sup>37</sup> Pant wrote to Delhi that 'I cannot but stress again the extreme importance and value of such a visit . . . if we have to stop the recrudescence of such events that have overwhelmed us in South Africa, it is essential that immediately from now on we have not only to win the sympathy and love of these people but by definite actions prove to them our comradeship'.<sup>38</sup> Koinange visited sites from the Tata Iron Mills in Bihar to handicraft villages in Nagpur. The Indian and Kenyan press covered his trip in detail, linking KAU and INC as sister parties. Educational uplift and anti-colonial politics formed a dyad that defined Afro-Asian solidarity.

Such partnership was not, however, entirely a matter of Indian soft power supply. Pre-emptive African demand also drove interactions. In September 1946, a collection of Kenyan agitators from KAU, the Kikuyu Central Association and Luo newspaper *Ramogi Luo* swiftly wrote to Nehru to congratulate him on the establishment of his interim government in advance of Indian independence. They praised Gandhian non-violence and India's achievement of freedom as a wider 'historic moment for the emancipation of the oppressed and down-trodden coloured people of the whole world', having heard Nehru's speeches broadcast on All-India Radio. The petitioners quickly cut to the chase, demanding urgent Indian commercial, agricultural and technical instruction because 'we have been kept pitifully backward educationally.' Nehru's published a warm reply in the *Hindustan Times* two weeks later.<sup>39</sup> Momentum built. In October 1948, over 300 East Africans applied for Indian scholarships. This progress alarmed the competing British Council such that the Kenyan government reluctantly agreed to coordinate certain activities with the sponsoring Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR).<sup>40</sup>

R. Mugo Gatheru, a Kenyan student who won a place in Allahabad in 1949, recalled his fascination with India's caste-based wealth disparities and expressed mild ennui at the paternalism of his teachers. He also stressed an existential sense of liberation derived from education in an independent land. Being in India was 'a tremendous experience to me emotionally and psychologically. There, for the first time in my life, I felt a free man – free from passes or being pushed here and there as if I was an

---

<sup>37</sup>A. Pant, *Undiplomatic Incidents* (Hyderabad: Sangam Books, 1987), 20; TNA: CO/537/5764: Political Intelligence Summary, Central African Department, April 1950.

<sup>38</sup>National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi: F. 19-1/49-AFRII: Pant to Subimal Dutt, Additional Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, 20 January 1949.

<sup>39</sup>NAI: 25-25/46-O.S.I: Henry Muoria, George Ndegwa, George Kariuki, Zabula, J. Kariuki and Mbiyu Koinange to Jawaharlal Nehru, 16 September 1946.

<sup>40</sup>NAI: 20-24/48-O.S.I: Pant to Dutt, 28 August 1948.

undesirable animal'.<sup>41</sup> In 1953, Kenyan leader Ajuma Oginga Odinga toured India, sponsored by the ICCR. His report expressed equal enthusiasm for India's burgeoning factories, historic railways and cutting-edge universities as Gandhian hagiography.<sup>42</sup> On his 1958-1959 state tour of India, Nkrumah lauded Indian agro-industry and the modernist architecture of Chandigarh. The Bhakra Dam in Himachal Pradesh made a particular impression as his plans for the Volta Dam in Ghana took shape.<sup>43</sup> Such vocational endeavours dovetailed with local East African Indian philanthropy, notably in Nairobi's Gandhi Memorial College, incorporated into the Royal Technical College of East Africa by Indian vice-president R. Radhakrishnan in 1956.<sup>44</sup> African correspondence with, and reminiscence of, India in the 1950s imagined political solidarity and technocratic advancement as a continuum.

The destinations of African students to 1950s India is telling: the Wardha Cottage Industry School; Javadpur Soap Works, Calcutta; Leather Technical Institute, Madras, in addition to more traditional academic paths at the Delhi School of Economics that propelled the career of future Malawi president Bingu wa Mutharika in the 1960s.<sup>45</sup> African petitioners bombarded Pant with requests for technical opportunities denied by colonialism. In October 1948, Pant praised the enlightened cooperatives of Kilimanjaro's Wachagga Chief Petro, who in turn demanded immediate Indian scholarships to address the paucity of non-missionary, skilled education in northern Tanganyika.<sup>46</sup> Omukama Rukidi III, leader of the small western Ugandan kingdom of Toro, laboured the argument for preferential university places for his subjects, suffixing his 1949 letter to Nehru with a dusting of praise for India's Africanist lobbying at the United Nations.<sup>47</sup> In 1947, the Ethiopian Emperor sent his own mission to Bombay to recruit Indian teachers, 300 of whom taught in Ethiopia by 1955.<sup>48</sup>

The number of African students sponsored in the first years of the ICCR scheme was small and overwhelmingly male. In 1953, only 16 out of 296 East African applicants secured places in India. Partly, such low rates pertained to deliberately high official fees and opaque processes to acquire passports. Prominent Indian businessmen occasionally paid costs through the East African Indian National Congress. The detention of Kikuyu youths during Mau Mau denied many successful applicants. Of those 296 applicants in 1953, 229 were Kenyan given Pant's close relations with Kikuyu leaders from his Nairobi base.<sup>49</sup> Pant's incessant calls for additional finance often fell on deaf ears amongst the accountants of India's Ministry of External Affairs. Still, a glitzy week-long African students conference in Delhi in December 1953 catered to over 100 scholars. Four zonal offices in Aligarh, Benares, Bombay

---

<sup>41</sup>R. Mugo Gatheru, *Child of Two Worlds: A Kikuyu's Story* (London: Heinemann, 1966), 123–136.

<sup>42</sup>A. Oginga Odinga, *Two Months in India* (Nairobi: New Kenya Publishers, 1966).

<sup>43</sup>"Bhakra Dam fascinates Prime Minister Nkrumah," *India News* (Accra), 15 January 1959.

<sup>44</sup>Kenya National Archives (KNA): GH/32/57: Message of goodwill to Gandhi Memorial College from Jawaharlal Nehru, 10 June 1956.

<sup>45</sup>NAI: 20-24/48-O.S.I: Pant to Dutt, 28 August 1948.

<sup>46</sup>NAI: 18-68/49-AFRII: Pant to Dutt, 18 October 1949.

<sup>47</sup>NAI: 20-7/49-AFRII: Patel to Nehru, 28 November 1949.

<sup>48</sup>D.V. Patel, *Impressions of My Tour in Europe and East Asia* (Bombay, 1955), 29.

<sup>49</sup>NAI: MEA R&I section 3(23)-R81/55: Education Report for East and Central Africa, 1953–54.

and Madras administered student welfare and annual holiday camps in Mahabaleshwar, Kodaikanal, Simla and Darjeeling hill-stations. Student numbers grew rapidly. By 1965, half of the 5000 overseas students in India hailed from Africa, and with specific opportunities for women, through old ICCR scholarships and the new Indian Technical and Educational Cooperation (ITEC) development programme.<sup>50</sup>

African leadership shaped the character of such opportunities, a process of negotiation over mere dictatorial Indian largesse. In 1958, 62 of 101 Kenyan candidates for studentships in India accepted interviews by a committee that included Tom Mboya and Oginga Odinga, among the first African members of the Kenyan legislative council after the 1957 elections, and Julius Kiano, the first Kenyan to gain a PhD (in California) and first African lecturer at the Royal Technical College in Nairobi. Mboya insisted, against Indian guidance, that age and marital status should not be impediments to success given that colonial underdevelopment held back African 'youths' well into their 40s. Medicine, agriculture and civil engineering must be the priority degrees for Kiano.<sup>51</sup>

These Afro-Asian networks ran on personal, affective relationships. From 1957 to 1959, Kenyan H.P. Kabutu used his studentship in India to eclectic technical effect. He enrolled at Sibpur Polytechnic, Bengal Engineering College, before joining the *Times of India* in Delhi for printing training. He gained broadcasting experience at All-India Radio in his spare time.<sup>52</sup> His stay in Delhi was arranged by Peter Wright, Pant's old pal from Oxford and Nairobi. In 1952, Pinto introduced Pant to his close friend Joseph Murumbi, the General-Secretary of KAU. Pant sponsored Murumbi's visit to India, where the half-Goan Murumbi had been educated as a child, to escape arrest in Kenya in 1953 (see Part III). In Delhi, Murumbi called for a bespoke East African scholarship scheme. He cited the expulsion of striking students at Makerere University College, Uganda, in June 1952 as a sign of growing colonial repression in the region.<sup>53</sup> As Afro-Asian embrace moved beyond Afro-Indian contact zones, personal affinities between Asian and African freedom fighters gelled formal Afro-Asian cooperation. African engagement with Asian institutions of the 1950s twinned the importance of anti-colonial solidarity with the technocratic needs of possible African post-colonies. Numerous African activists like Murumbi tied into older Afro-Indian educational networks in the pre-Bandung era directly shaped the expansion of Afro-Asian collaboration into the mid-1950s.

## <H1>RANGOON TO BANDUNG

<T-NOIND>This solidarity was not without a twang of tutelary condescension. Pant reported home that African recipients of scholarships 'look to India with hope and they trust that India would, as a big brother, lead them to realize their most ardent

---

<sup>50</sup>Indian Council for Africa, *India and Africa: Perspectives of Cooperation* (New Delhi: Haya Hindustan Press, 1967), 36–43.

<sup>51</sup>Kenyan National Archives (KNA), Nairobi: OP/EST/1/697: Minutes of meeting of the Indian Scholarships Local Selection Committee, India House, Nairobi, 23 September 1958.

<sup>52</sup>NMML: Apa Pant papers second installment: M.J. Desai to Mukul Mukherjee, 31 July 1959.

<sup>53</sup>NAI: MEA AII/53/1641/3101: B.N. Nanda to M.A. Rahman, 13 November 1953.

dream of self-development and of freedom'.<sup>54</sup> At the 1947 Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi, Nehru himself declared that 'we of Asia have a special responsibility to the people of Africa'.<sup>55</sup> Such moralist rhetoric merged Indian diasporic, Afro-Asian and geopolitical reformism, packaged neatly in Nehru's first intervention (on South Africa) at the United Nations in 1946.<sup>56</sup> But, for Africans, the utility of Afro-Asian solidarity did not have to relate to the ethics of global governance and invocations of non-aligned destiny. In the early 1950s, African student-activists like R. Mugo Gatheru could sideline paternalism to embrace opportunities to construct the content of their freedom. They collaborated with independent Asians on their own terms. Cosmopolitan, liberated Asian cities were key, and historiographically much overlooked, hothouses to debate and enact African post-colonial futures. From 1956 to 1958, the liberation of Sudan, Ghana and United Arab Republic added more proximal freehouses to evade the restrictions on mobility that marked late-colonial control in Africa.

One important hub in the early 1950s was Burma's capital, Rangoon, the 'intellectual hotbed of Afro-Asian socialism', headquarters for the Asian Socialist Conference (ASC) and, briefly, home to Jim Markham of the Gold Coast.<sup>57</sup> Markham is elusive for such an important pan-African organizer. He was a rarely named behind-the-scenes administrator, grainy in the photos (Fig. 2 Fig. 2), who slips through the archival cracks as a bureaucratic enabler of more famous leaders like George Padmore and Kwame Nkrumah. We do know that Markham studied journalism on a Gold Coast government scholarship at Regent Street Polytechnic, London, from where he interned at *The Observer*.<sup>58</sup> Such an apprenticeship – alongside Nkrumah's ten-year residence at Lincoln University and University of Pennsylvania (1935–1945), George Padmore's stint at Fisk University, Nashville, New York University and Howard University, Washington, D.C. (1924–1928) or Ram Manohar's Lohia's decision to pursue doctoral studies at Friedrich Wilhelm University, Berlin, (1929–1933) over Britain – revealed a broadening of educational opportunities and preferences for young anti-colonial activists in the interwar period. Studentships in historically black US colleges, beyond the deep surveillance of the colonial state, or in vocational institutions in Britain, provided African activists with more energetic and democratic anti-colonial breathing spaces in contrast to the older Oxbridge circuits presented to the children of rarified colonial elites like Nehru.<sup>59</sup>

On his return home, Markham worked as sub-editor of the *Gold Coast Express* and editor of *Accra Evening News*, the organ of Nkrumah's Convention People's Party (CPP). He was detained with Nkrumah for sedition under the 1950 State of

---

<sup>54</sup>NAI: 6(217)-GI/49: Pant to Nanda, 7 January 1953.

<sup>55</sup>*Nehru and Africa: Extracts from Jawaharlal's Speeches on Africa, 1946–63* (New Delhi: Indian Council for Africa), 19.

<sup>56</sup>M. Mazower, "Chapter 4," *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological Origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

<sup>57</sup>See Lewis in this issue.

<sup>58</sup>M. Sherwood, "Kwame Nkrumah: The London Years, 1945–47," *Immigrants & Minorities* 12, no. 3 (1993): 164–194.

<sup>59</sup>J.C. Parker, "'Made-in-America Revolutions'? The 'Black University' and the American Role in the Decolonization of the Black Atlantic," *Journal of American History* 96, no. 3 (2009).

Emergency and did the bureaucratic heavy lifting for the CPP's 1951 legislative assembly election campaign.<sup>60</sup> Markham maintained close relations with Padmore in London, who, amongst numerous pan-African roles, was correspondent for the *Accra Evening News*. Markham and Padmore enjoyed a productive working collaboration, central to Ghana's pan-African diplomacy throughout the 1950s. Their success owed much to Markham's Asian sojourn.

In late 1953, as Ghanaian nationhood came slowly into focus, the CPP decided to send Markham to Burma, an independent socialist state from 1948. Markham arrived in Rangoon at a febrile moment of leftist organization in Asia. On the fringes of the 1947 Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi, leading socialists of India, Indonesia and Burma liaised to discuss the desirability of emboldened cooperation. In 1951, on the sidelines of the International Labour Organization's Asian regional conference, plans for a more formal alliance gained traction. In August 1952, a new journal *Socialist Asia* laid out a manifesto for the fledgling ASC. It chimed perfectly with Markham's political leanings. Anti-imperial to the core, the ASC vehemently opposed both European empire and the totalitarianism of Soviet internationalism. It defined itself, by contrast, as a social democratic enabler. It instilled in the decolonized and the dependent 'a sense of confidence in their own organized struggle . . . the innate importance of the individual as a man; socialist revolution with "human values", a means of self-fulfillment'.<sup>61</sup> In January 1953, 200 delegates arrived in Rangoon for the inaugural ASC conference from the socialist parties of Burma, Egypt, Indonesia, India, Israel, Lebanon, Malaya, Pakistan and two factions from Japan.<sup>62</sup> Ten fraternal delegates from the Socialist International, International Union of Socialist Youth, Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism and League of Communists of Yugoslavia attended. Six observers from African freedom movements – the Algerian People's Party, Tunisian Destour Party, Ugandan National Congress and Kenya African Union – accepted invitations. Apa Pant and Muljibhai Patel, leader of the Ugandan Asian Congress, funded the participation of the Ugandan delegates, who stopped in India en route to Burma.<sup>63</sup>

The business of Rangoon divided in three, merging grand geopolitical questions with specific technocratic affairs in similar fashion to India's African outreach. Committee A tackled socialist theory, world peace, and intra-Asian cooperation. Committee B dealt with agrarian and economic policy, specifically land reform, labour productivity and state-controlled markets. Committee C, the site of major African participation, addressed solidarity with freedom movements, particularly in Algeria, Kenya, Malaya, South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda. The most vocal African participant was Taeib Slim of the Tunisian Destour Party, who embarked on a month-long publicity

---

<sup>60</sup>See TNA: FCO/141/4933: Nkrumah's activities, 1947–51. This was the result of CPP rejection of the 1949 constitution, which contravened British wartime promises on educational and welfare provisions for military service.

<sup>61</sup>*Socialist Asia* 1, no. 1 (1952): 1–6.

<sup>62</sup>The ASC could therefore boast 602,000 members: 283,000 from India, 150,000 from Indonesia, 120,000 from Japan, 16,000 from Burma, and the remainder from Israel, Lebanon, Malaya, Pakistan and Vietnam. *Three Years of the Asian Socialist Conference* (Bombay: ASC, 1956), 5.

<sup>63</sup>*Report of the First Asian Socialist Conference, Rangoon* (Rangoon, ASC, 1953), 111–112; Pant, *Undiplomatic Incidents*: 44–46.

month-long tour of South Asia. E.M.K. Mulira of the Uganda National Congress addressed the mass rally that concluded the conference. He warned that the achievement of Asian liberation intensified colonial plans to create 'the Dominion of Capricornia' in plans for the white settler-led Central African and East African federations. This was new imperialism 'under cover of development', attested by the suppression of Koinange's independent schools movement in Kenya. Afro-Asian unity could break Capricornia.<sup>64</sup>

The anti-colonial concerns of Committee C assumed increasingly prominence in the ASC between 1953 and 1956 thanks to the efforts of Burmese MP, UN representative and head of the barebones ASC administration, U Hla Aung and Markham. In August 1953, the second ASC Bureau meeting in Hyderabad, India, quickly moved beyond the headline issue of Chinese Kuomintang troops in Burma to the urgent need of establishing a discrete Anti-Colonial Bureau (ACB) to support African liberation movements. Ram Manohar Lohar, the former head of the INC foreign department in the 1930s (see Part I), served as a committee member of the new ACB. He repurposed his INC linkages to freedom movements across Africa and Asia to new socialist ends after he departed the INC in 1948 to form the Congress Socialist Party and Praja Socialist Party in India. Lohia emphatically judged colonial violence 'a hundred times more inhuman than the African Mau Mau'. In honour of his mentor, Gandhi, he called for an African *satyagraha* to lay the foundation of a new civilisation'.<sup>65</sup>

Less philosophically, U Hla Aung embarked on a two-month tour of Africa en route to the UN in New York, where he spoke at the invitation of British socialist and anti-imperialist MP Fenner Brockway and Congress of Peoples Against Imperialism. U Hla Aung visited Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda, Congo, Northern Rhodesia and Gold Coast. Across Africa, he cultivated relationships with anti-colonial leaders to learn the distinctiveness of African nationalisms and identify common problems to orientate ASC outreach. He committed to support nascent pan-African cooperation both in the successful institutional precedent and material resources of the new ASC. In December 1953, he attended a regional 'Pan-African Conference' in Lusaka at the invitation of Harry Nkumbula, President of the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress. The occasion proved to be a disappointment compared to Nkrumah's pan-African gathering in Kumasi, Gold Coast a few days before, at which U Hla Aung was also a guest on his tour. He lamented that that the British 'mercilessly wrecked' the poorly attended Lusaka meeting by restricting the travel of delegates from Kenya, Tanganyika, Uganda and Southern Rhodesia. His speech in Lusaka castigated the deplorable stranglehold of settler power in southern Africa relative to the brighter prospect in West Africa.<sup>66</sup> Back in Burma, he condemned linked policies of racial

---

<sup>64</sup>*Socialist Asia* 2, no. 4 (1952): 20; *Socialist Asia* 2, no. 5 (1953): 10. This referred to the 'Capricorn African Society', a multiracial pressure group established in Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia, Kenya, Nyasaland and Tanganyika by liberal white settlers in the 1950–1960s.

<sup>65</sup>ACBNL no. 7 (1955): 4.

<sup>66</sup>*Socialist Asia* 2, no. 10 (1954): 44; ACBNL, no. 5 (1955): 4; TNA: CO/936/351: Monthly Northern Rhodesian Intelligence Report, December 1953.

superiority, educational deprivation and economic exploitation that characterized the Central African Federation, Kenya and Algeria.<sup>67</sup>

The bright spot on U Hla Aung's Africa trip was his time in Gold Coast where he met Markham. As a result, the ASC mooted the idea of supporting a quick-fire (but unrealized) second pan-African conference in Khartoum in 1954 to build on the momentum of the Gold Coast Kumasi meeting.<sup>68</sup> Markham was the pivot of this new Afro-Asian alliance. In 1954, the ASC appointed him one of three Joint-Secretaries. Markham coordinated freedom movements in the new Anti-Colonial Bureau (ACB). Roo Watanabe of the Japanese Socialist Party (Right) led economic policy. U Hla Aung ran general administration. The wider Coordination Committee of the ACB comprised six ASC officials, including Lohia, Reuven Barkatt of Israel, Tandiono Manu of Indonesia and Peter Williams of Malaya. Five representatives for freedom movements also sat on the committee, including Nnamdi Azikiwe (later first president of Nigeria) and Kenya's Joseph Murumbi.

The ACB mouthpiece was Markham's monthly *Anti-Colonial Bureau Newsletter (ACBNL)*, the Africa-facing sister publication of *Socialist Asia*. It assumed three functions. Most overtly, it encouraged broad anti-colonial comradeship, notably through the annual ASC 'Dependent Peoples' Freedom Day' in October. Secondly, it provided a forum for African nationalists to present their grievances and anti-colonial histories to Asian allies for ideological and material reward. Finally, and most tellingly for Markham, it was an emerging database. *ACBNL* articles were often historically and empirically dense, primers for a myriad of African domestic political contexts. These reports were largely unattributed, collated or written by Markham himself. The ACB was a sorting-house where Markham enjoyed institutional resource to marshal old pan-African allies such as Padmore, but also channels to recruit and learn from brethren situated beyond the Black Atlantic and colonial metropole. Kenneth Kaunda (later the first president of Zambia) and Walter Sisulu (later South African ANC deputy president) utilized the ASC as a sympathetic anti-colonial connecting place, their details absorbed into Markham's databank. From this hub in Rangoon, Markham researched pan-African possibility, populated his contact book, and assessed the useable strands of Afro-Asian community in the building of pan-African and Gold Coast/Ghana liberation.

In July 1954, Markham embarked on a ten-week ASC fact-finding tour of Malaya, Singapore, Indonesia and South Vietnam alongside Watanabe and Indonesia's Wijono, the ASC Secretary-General. Menahem Bargil of the leftist Israeli Mapai, who was on a similar mission, accompanied them on some legs.<sup>69</sup> The British, nervous that Markham had until then flown under their radar, confessed him to be the 'most impressive' member of mission with 'acute understanding of wider problems' facing the Malayan Federation.<sup>70</sup> An intercepted letter to Nkrumah demonstrated how

---

<sup>67</sup>"ASC Joint Secretary Meets the Press. Views on African Struggle against Colonialism," *New Times of Burma*, 2 February 1954; *ACBNL*, no. 6 (1955): 4–5; no. 9 (1955): 3–4.

<sup>68</sup>*Socialist Asia* 2, no. 9 (1954).

<sup>69</sup>*ACBNL*, no. 1 (1954): 1.

<sup>70</sup>TNA: CO/936/351: Federation of Malaya Political Intelligence Report, August 1954.

Markham interpreted his findings for West African purposes. He warned how British and American firms expanded into cocoa plantation in Malaya to diversify away from the depressed global rubber market. Markham advised that Gold Coast prioritize pre-emptive economic strategies to protect itself.<sup>71</sup> Coupled with the constant irritant of Pant in East Africa, British officials worried that Asian ‘infiltration’ of West Africa through the ASC set a troubling continental portent.<sup>72</sup>

There were often differences of anti-colonial tone and intensity between the central leadership of the ASC and Markham’s ACB. British intelligence concluded the ACB was not socialist at all, but ‘anti-colonial ganging up’ of which Markham was the prime bully.<sup>73</sup> Certain officials felt that Burma and Israel, ‘sound on communism’, brought moderation to more radical African agitation.<sup>74</sup> Markham was a most outspoken ASC leader on colonial matters, preferring direct action to the deep socialist theory of India’s Lohia and Madhav Gokhale. Markham directed his ire at two of the ASC’s key allies: the Socialist International (SI), founded in 1951, and British Labour Party. Alignment with European socialists had presented a conundrum for the foundational ASC. Former British prime minister Clement Attlee, widely respected in Burma for his role in the nation’s independence, attended the 1953 Rangoon conference as a representative of the SI and guest of honour. The socialist parties of Israel, Japan (Right) and Malaya affiliated to the SI before joining the ASC. Egyptian, Indian, Indonesian and Pakistani ASC members resisted formal connection to the SI. For them, the SI was too obsessed with European and Cold War affairs to be the principal vehicle for their anti-colonial visions of international socialism. Gokhale and Wijono eventually pushed through a compromise policy of loose ‘liaison’ over formal affiliation to ensure ASC-SI cooperation despite consistent ASC criticism of the SI’s weak approach to imperialism.<sup>75</sup>

Markham was vociferous in his criticism of European socialists’ refusal to properly denounce colonialism alongside communism. He declared that their empty rhetorical statements lacked ASC commitment to social work, trade unionism and economic cooperatives as tools of liberation. Vague European sympathy over demonstrable action risked the translation of anti-colonial resentment into overt sympathy with communism, to which Markham was committedly opposed to the extent that he had turned down a place at Masaryk University, Brno.<sup>76</sup> In a piece for

---

<sup>71</sup>TNA: FCO/151/5050: Markham to Nkrumah, 11 September 1954.

<sup>72</sup>TNA: FCO/151/5050: R.A. Brown, Ministry of Defence, Gold Coast to Chief Secretary, Lagos, 16 February 1954.

<sup>73</sup>TNA: CO/936/351: Colonial Office Memorandum on the Asian Socialist Conference, 29 September 1956.

<sup>74</sup>TNA: FCO/317/111928: Keith Oakeshott, British Embassy Rangoon to J.G. Tabourdin, South East Asia Department, Foreign Office, 22 December 1953.

<sup>75</sup>Preparatory Committee of Second ASC Congress, *Three Years of the Asian Socialist Conference* (Bombay: ASC, 1956), 3–6; Lewis in this issue; I. Talbot, *The Practice of Socialist Internationalism: European Socialists and International Politics, 1914–1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).

<sup>76</sup>The Eastern Bloc would provide rich educational opportunities, exploited by enterprising African nationalist leaders, for thousands of African students over the 1950s–60s. Some 1500 would study in Eastern Europe from Kenya alone. D. Branch, “Political traffic: Kenyan students in eastern and central Europe, 1958–69,” *Journal of Contemporary History* (2018).



*Socialist Asia* in 1955, one of few articles explicitly bearing his name, Markham let loose that:

‘Anti-communism needs freedom *first* and this is what metros need to understand to avoid world violence. It is only in an independent country that democratic socialism can take shape to combat the evils of communism . . . dependent peoples have nothing to safeguard or defend against the evils that tend to further enslave them because they are already enslaved’.<sup>77</sup>

For Markham, abstract European denouncement of imperialistic Soviet communism distracted from the fact there was already actual European colonialism in place. Its destruction was the more urgent task over Cold War posturing. Freedom required tangible acts not words.

His old friend in London, George Padmore, was on the same page. Across 1954, he wrote several lengthy articles curated by Markham for *Asia*. On topics as diverse as British Guiana and Anglo-Egyptian confrontation in Sudan, he proved sensitive and provocative to his Asian readership. In June 1954, celebrating Nkrumah’s success in constitutional reform, he compared the ‘tribalist separatism’ of Gold Coast’s Muslim northern chiefs who challenged Nkrumah to ‘Pakistan manoeuvres’.<sup>78</sup> Like Markham, Padmore presented the practical, real world boons of Afro-Asian solidarity. His June 1954 piece on Singapore argued that the recent victory in excluding the territory’s Eurocentric chambers of commerce from special constitutional representation drew direct influence from achievements in Gold Coast. Afro-Asian solidarity provided legal precedent to forge progressive change.<sup>79</sup>

In October 1954, the Kenya Government proscribed *Socialist Asia* after an incendiary May 1954 Padmore article on Mau Mau, commissioned by Markham. The Colonial Office (CO) lamented the Kenya Governor’s knee-jerk reaction given the ASC’s helpful position on communism, the bogey justifying the ban in Nairobi. For the CO, the Kenyan move threatened the willingness of the Burmese to rein in Africanist radicalism and might alienate Burma wholesale.<sup>80</sup> Padmore and Markham had not pulled their punches. Padmore’s article, reporting the British parliamentary delegation to Kenya, compared police brutality to the ‘Black and Tans’ in Ireland. Padmore argued, moreover, that Mau Mau forced the British parliament to acknowledge Kenyan protest. ‘Unless Africans resort to direct action, their rulers refuse to recognize – much less redress – their grievances’. Without opening up the fertile Highlands to African farmers, reopening Koinange’s schools and ensuring parity of political representation, Padmore contended, ‘the necessary psychological changes’ to end the bloodshed could not occur.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup>J. Markham, “The Heart of the Matter,” *Socialist Asia* 3, no. 9/10 (1955): 11–13.

<sup>78</sup>G. Padmore, “Gold Coast Revolution,” *Socialist Asia* 3, no. 2 (1954): 14–18.

<sup>79</sup>G. Padmore, “New Constitution for Singapore,” *ACBNL*, no. 1 (1954): 7–8.

<sup>80</sup>TNA: FCO/371/116974: Ban on Socialist Asia in Kenya, October 1954.

<sup>81</sup>*Socialist Asia* 3, no. 1 (1954): 16–20. This was likely a pointed reference to British assessments of Mau Mau as psychological crisis among the Kikuyu. E.g. J.C. Carothers, *The Psychology of Mau Mau* (Nairobi: Government Printers, 1955).

Markham did not focus single-mindedly on emotive questions of colonial violence, although his writings in the *ACBNL* were consistently passionate. Like the Wachagga in Tanganyika seeking Indian scholarships from Pant in 1948, the ASC provided avenues for African leaders to render abstract anti-colonialism pragmatically meaningful. This was the Committee B business of the 1953 Rangoon Conference, as necessary to Markham's anti-imperialism as his denunciations of white settler dictatorship in the Central African Federation for Harry Nkumbula. In a letter to 'Doc' Nkrumah in 1954, Markham boasted that a key advantage of his ASC stint was access to Israeli diplomats in Rangoon given close relations between the new socialist states of Burma and Israel. Markham lauded the ability of the Israelis to help develop irrigation, mechanization and electrification. 'Burma is drawing much of its projects from the Israel plan' and, he argued, Ghana must do the same.<sup>82</sup> This coincided with the establishment of the Israeli Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies and Cooperation in Tel Aviv, at which hundreds of Africans would study trade, industry and *kibbutz* agriculture over the next decade.<sup>83</sup> Unlike the Indian scholarships of the late 1940s, from the outset, Israel specifically included women as a vital constituent of the vocational student body. In 1964, the president of the African Students' Association of Israel lamented that 'when a country gets independence it is a sad thing to see a large number of graduate administrators and lawyers, a handful of doctors and a few or no engineers at all'.<sup>84</sup> Markham's emphasis on the ASC as a body to facilitate African industrialization was foremost in his interview with Japan's left-leaning *The Mainichi* newspaper (Fig. 2) in December 1954.<sup>85</sup> His ASC liaison sketched the blueprint of Gold Coast participation at Bandung and Nkrumah's state tour of the Bhakra Dam in India in 1958.

---

<sup>82</sup>TNA: FCO/141/5050: Markham to Nkrumah, 11 September 1954.

<sup>83</sup>*Programme of Studies, 8th International Course of Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies and Cooperation, 1963–1964*, (Tel Aviv: AAILSC, 1964), 2.

<sup>84</sup>E.J. Mangame, "The African Youth", *The African Student: Magazine of the African Students Association of Israel*, no. 6 (1964): 24–25.

<sup>85</sup>"Self-rule nearly gained by African Gold Coast," *The Mainichi* (Tokyo), 2 December 1954.

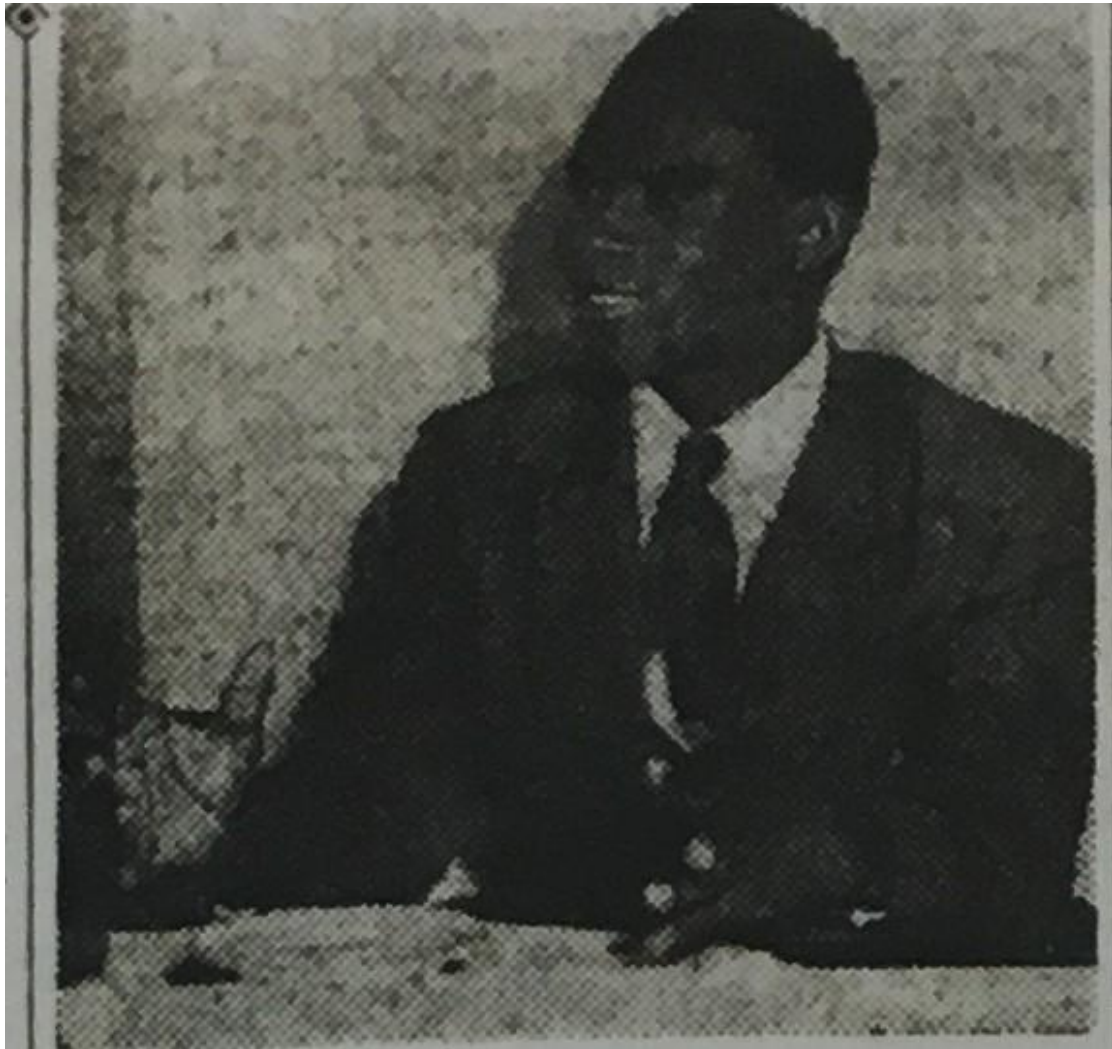


Figure 2: Jim Markham *The Mainichi* (Tokyo), 2 December 1954

Nkrumah placed Markham on the Gold Coast's three-man observer delegation to the Bandung conference under Kojo Botsio, Nkrumah's key ally and later Ghana's second foreign minister, and alongside the writer Michael Dei-Annang. Nkrumah politely declined an invitation given the delicacy of independence negotiations with Britain. The participation of the Gold Coast observers in their bright *kente* brought theatricality and globalist affirmation to the closely choreographed Asian-led gathering.<sup>86</sup> Padmore reported Botsio to have 'stolen the show' at the opening session in his splendid green robes set against the dull beige and khaki of the Chinese and Egyptian delegates.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>86</sup>Shimazu, "Diplomacy as Theatre": 225–252.

<sup>87</sup>G. Padmore, "Gold Coast Steals the Show at the Afro-Asian Conference," *West African Pilot* (Lagos), 22 April 1955.

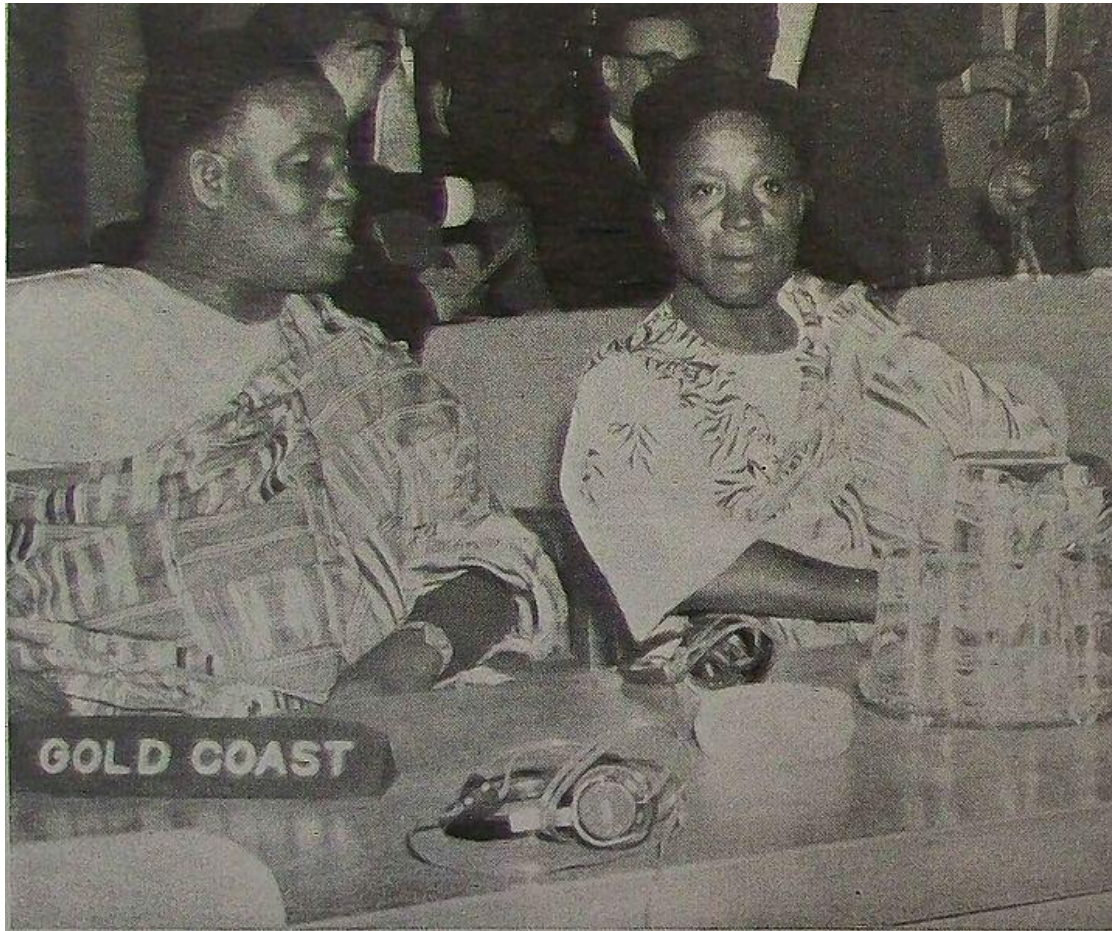


Figure 3: Gold Coast delegates at the Bandung conference 1955 (*Bandung Bulletin* 5, 1, 1955, Foreign Ministry of Indonesia. Wikimedia Commons.)

Dei-Annang confided anxiety to the British that Botsio might ‘commit blunders’ to endanger Nkrumah’s negotiations. Dei-Annang subsequently confessed that he had struggled to restrain Botsio speaking out on wider African issues in light of ‘inert’ Ethiopian and Liberian delegations.<sup>88</sup> But, beyond the plenary session grandstanding, Botsio had a more precise agenda revealed at a champagne party he threw at his hotel and attended by the leading Indian diplomat Krishna Menon, Indira Gandhi and delegates from Ceylon, Lebanon, Sudan, Liberia and Ethiopia. At the soir e, Botsio pressed his South Asian guests on Ghana’s case at the United Nations on the future of Togoland. The Indian delegation noted his keen interest in Indian civil engineering, Bollywood film industry and technical scholarships.<sup>89</sup> Markham, who the British judged ‘might have been decidedly less correct had he been on his own’, sought advice from the Indian guests on the practicalities of the Indian Independence Act, procedures for setting up a constituent assembly and arrangements for retiring British civil servants.<sup>90</sup> Participation at Bandung for Gold Coast was not entirely, or even principally, about theatrical geopolitical performance. It had gritty practicality.

---

<sup>88</sup>TNA: FCO/141/5051: F.E. Bruce Cummings to Governor, Gold Coast, 6 April 1955 & F.E. Bruce Cummings record of talk with Mr. Dei-Annang, 2 May 1955.

<sup>89</sup>NAI: 19(2)/55-AFRII, Subimal Dutt record of conversation with Kojo Botsio, 30 April 1955.

<sup>90</sup>TNA: FCO/141/5051: Chancery, British Embassy Djakarta to FO South East Asia Department, 5 May 1955.

Following the success of the 1954 legislative assembly elections and the 1953 Kumasi pan-African conference, Nkrumah accelerated plans for a more significant pan-African gathering. In August 1955, four months after Bandung, he recalled Markham to Accra to serve as secretary of a new 'Pan-Africa office' to arrange a conference that year. Almost immediately, the CPP reluctantly put the scheme on hold to tackle the more pressing domestic challenge of the new 'National Liberation Movement'. Against Nkrumah's state designs, this largely Ashanti alliance lobbied the British for a federal structure for self-rule to protect their interests in lucrative cocoa farming, the 'Pakistan manoeuvres' Padmore lamented in 1954.<sup>91</sup> Markham continued to work on reinforcing pan-African connections as Gold Coast's chief pan-African bureaucrat before the arrival of Padmore as Nkrumah's adviser on African affairs in 1957.

Markham's central role in administering the quotidian affairs of Nkrumah's early pan-African offensive – exploiting his databank of international contacts, assembling monthly bulletins and compiling memoranda – owed much to his time at the ASC. In Rangoon, he developed skills of transnational administrivia, populated his contact book, and assessed the successes and travails of Burmese statehood and pan-Asianism. In 1955, Markham informed a British diplomat that he had flipped on his opposition to the retention of British technical experts in Gold Coast to 'avoid the mistakes made by the newly independent countries of Asia'.<sup>92</sup> Markham's 'Bandung moment' in Asia exposed him to an arena of example, resource and indeed failure to conceive Ghana's own internationalist future.

## <H1>BOMBAY TO CAIRO

<T-NOIND>Markham's departure to pan-African organization did not signal the end of African linkage to the ASC and wider networks of Afro-Asian solidarity. Now representing the 'West African Conference', he served on the coordinating committee of the second ASC conference in Bombay, 1956.<sup>93</sup> The ASC was, however, changing. It became more attuned to the global crises of social democracy and escalating Cold War, the fodder of the Rangoon 1953 Committee A (socialist theory and world peace) over the more Africa-facing Committees B (economic policy) and C (freedom movements).<sup>94</sup> In Bombay, the Hungarian Revolution and Suez Crisis dominated fractious anti-colonial debates.<sup>95</sup> African affairs continued to feature prominently in public proceedings, but the nature of backstage African ASC participation shifted. A more heated Cold War environment and the quickening pace of decolonization dictated more complex and frenetic African networking within and beyond the Afro-Asian world. The vectors of African internationalism were more energetically multidirectional at Bombay than in Rangoon to urgently press for statehood.

---

<sup>91</sup>W. Thompson, *Ghana's Foreign Policy, 1957–1966* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 5.

<sup>92</sup>TNA: CO/936/351: Chancery, British Embassy Rangoon to FO South East Asia Department, 15 March 1955.

<sup>93</sup>TNA: FCO/151/5050: Commissioner for Police to Governor, Gold Coast, 10 October 1956.

<sup>94</sup>See ASC, *Information Bulletins* (Bombay), July 1956 to June 1960.

<sup>95</sup>TNA: FCO/371/123269: British Embassy Belgrade to FO Southern Department, 8 December 1956.

Numerous African participants travelled to the ASC Bombay conference. The Uganda National Congress, prominent guests at the 1953 Rangoon conference, elicited sympathy for its boycott of foreign goods to protest the deposition and exile of the Bugandan king, Kabaka Mutesa II, by the Ugandan Governor. It argued that Afro-Asian solidarity could prevent Ugandan incorporation into a Kenya-led white settler federation, a fear that had provoked the Kabaka constitutional crisis, 1953-1955.<sup>96</sup> The American peace activist Alijah Gordon travelled to Bombay, fresh from an affective stay in Cairo during Suez. She befriended Joseph Murumbi who spoke in an 'emotional tone' of Kenya's travails and his comradeship with the Tunisians and Egyptians he encountered on his travels in London and Cairo.<sup>97</sup> The journeys of the cosmopolitan Murumbi exemplified the fluidity and promiscuous reach of anti-colonial socialist solidarity over the 1950s. The Kenya-born son of a Goan trader and Masai leader's daughter, he attended school in Bangalore and worked in the Somali gendarmerie during WWII. He returned to Kenya in 1950 and filled an administrative void in KAU left by the detention of Kikuyu leaders during Mau Mau. As related in Part I, Murumbi fled Kenya in 1953 to India – funded by Apa Pant and fixed by Pio Pinto – ostensibly to study community development and cooperative organization.<sup>98</sup> In Delhi, he was greeted by a huge reception committee, met Nehru at length and spoke widely on Afro-Indian anti-colonialism in parliament, at public meetings in Bombay and Delhi, and on All-India Radio.<sup>99</sup> En route from Delhi to London to lobby for KAU, he stayed in Cairo for a month where he frequently dined with Gamal Abdel Nasser, who had recently inaugurated an office for the Uganda National Congress in support of African liberation. In 1954, two provocative articles in Anwar Sadat's new nationalist daily, *Al Gomhuria*, 'went to town with publicity' celebrating Murumbi, inaccurately, as an anti-colonial Mau Mau leader. After seeing the bulky surveillance file of his trip to India and Egypt on a visit to the Colonial Office, Murumbi himself soothed British anxieties as to his more moderate intentions in London to expedite Kenyan self-determination.<sup>100</sup>

In Britain, Murumbi worked with socialist Labour MP Fenner Brockway and stayed with the West African Students Union, founded in 1925, and which, in 1946, co-hosted a joint anti-imperial conference with Nkrumah's London-based West African National Secretariat. Murumbi served as Assistant Secretary of the Congress of People's against Imperialism (COPAI), for whom he lectured at the 1954 International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY) summer school in Switzerland.<sup>101</sup> Murumbi became Secretary in the Movement for Colonial Freedom (MCF), successor to COPAI, and 'probably the first African refugee to lead a major British political

---

<sup>96</sup>ACBNL, no. 1 (1954): 2–3.

<sup>97</sup>A. Gordon, *On Becoming Alijah: From the American Revolutionary War through Burma, 1957* (Kuala Lumpur: A. Gordon, 2003), 275–276.

<sup>98</sup>"Kenya Security Methods," *The Times* (London), 18 April 1953.

<sup>99</sup>KNA: Joseph Murumbi collection MAC/KENY/81/1: Visit to India, 1953.

<sup>100</sup>Murumbi's recollections in K. Rothmyer, *Joseph Murumbi. A Legacy of Integrity* (Nairobi: Zand Graphics, 2018), 63–67.

<sup>101</sup>International Institute of Social History (IISH), Amsterdam: International Union of Socialist Youth (IUSY) Papers Box 1357, Uganda: Freddie Moller, Secretary IUSY to Joe Zeke, Kampala, 15 October 1954.

organization'.<sup>102</sup> He spoke at the World Conference for Colonial Liberation in Margate in November 1955, an event co-sponsored by the MCF, ASC and IUSY and attended by Nkumbula and Kaunda.<sup>103</sup> Through these overlapping socialist networks across Afro-Asia and Europe, Murumbi attended the ASC in Bombay, an institution for which he served on the ACB coordinating committee with Markham since its inception in June 1954.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, Stephen Mhando, the Tanganyikan African National Union delegate at Bombay, forged relations with Sudanese and Egyptian nationalists on his way to India.<sup>105</sup> In a time of Cold War peril, late colonial restriction and heightened emancipatory potential, African nationalist movements required international strategies and mobility to press their cases.

With the symbolic victory of Suez in 1956, Cairo loomed large as an anti-colonial hub.<sup>106</sup> Unlike India, Egypt was an overland journey (via Sudan, independent from 1956) for East Africans. The British could not patrol such borders as vigorously as the region's sea and air links. Cairo was also conveniently geographically positioned – between Africa and Asia, and well connected to Europe – as a stopping point in multi-legged anti-colonial world tours on expanding and cheaper air transportation networks. In 1954, Munukayumbwa (Munu) Sipalo from Northern Rhodesia, an African law student in India in 1953 through a scholarship arranged by Pant and Wright, became General-Secretary of a new 'Africa Bureau' in Delhi, aligned to the ASC in Rangoon. Sipalo soon established an 'African Liberation Committee' in Cairo, and with an office in Kampala, to facilitate pan-African institutionalisation.<sup>107</sup> Sipalo used his bases in Delhi and Cairo to connect African nationalists to Soviet and Chinese diplomats. He travelled widely, working with the IUSY, whose 1956 colonialism conference he attended in Prague, with a stop in London on the way, on behalf of the All-India African Students Federation. Through these links, Sipalo travelled to Bombay for the ASC, which had long opposed the Central African Federation, against which Sipalo fought, as an anti-colonial test case. Afro-Asia comprised a tangle of strands in Sipalo's global web of connections to expedite Zambian independence as he returned to Lusaka and the executive of the Northern Rhodesian African National Congress in 1957.<sup>108</sup>

With mounting Cold War paranoia, colonial governments restricted African access to institutions such as ASC, despite British Labour Party insistence that African participation in international socialism was the best means to hem in communism.<sup>109</sup>

---

<sup>102</sup>H. Adi, "African Political Thinkers, Pan-Africanism and the Politics of Exile, c.1850–1970," *Immigrants & Minorities* 30, no. 2–3 (2012): 281.

<sup>103</sup>ACBNL, no. 16 (1955): 1–4.

<sup>104</sup>TNA: FCO/141/6887: Profile of Joseph Murumbi, September 1957.

<sup>105</sup>Gordon, *On Becoming Alijah*: 278; 291–292 & TNA: FCO/141/17938: Stephen Mhando.

<sup>106</sup>Abou-El-Fadl in this issue.

<sup>107</sup>For Sipalo's movements and schemes, see I. Milford *Harnessing the Wind: East and Central African activists and anti-colonial cultures in a decolonising world, 1952-64* (PhD thesis, European University Institute, 2019): 77-85

<sup>108</sup>TNA: CO/936/352: R. Armitage, Nyasaland to Secretary of State for Colonies, 2 November 1956.

Sipalo was expelled from the NRANC in September 1957 by Harry Nkumbula and, with Kenneth Kaunda, formed the breakaway and more radical Zambia African National Congress, later UNIP.

<sup>109</sup>See F. Brockway, *African Socialism* (London: The Bodley Head, 1963).

Brockway was particularly vocal, imploring the Colonial Office to return the confiscated passport of Paulo Muwanga, youth president of the Uganda National Congress, former student in India, and an invitee to the ASC Bombay conference and IUSY gatherings in Vienna and Tampere, Finland, in 1956.<sup>110</sup> Uganda's Governor refused, citing Muwanga's alleged links to Russian agents through Sipalo in Delhi and Cairo. Brockway further protested the denial of passports for Nkumbula and Kaunda, and T.D.T. Banda of the Nyasaland African Congress, for Bombay. In the *Guardian*, Brockway argued that president of the Uganda National Congress Ignatius Musazi had been permitted to attend the 1953 ASC Rangoon gathering and was now an upstanding member of the Uganda Legislative Council.<sup>111</sup>

Muwanga wrote at length to sympathetic IUSY leaders, insisting that attendance at IUSY camps remained the only way he could speedily learn the nuances of branch organization to grow Uganda's youth movement for independence.<sup>112</sup> Muwanga's chief correspondent was Menahem Bargil, IUSY Joint Secretary General, the Israeli socialist who had accompanied Jim Markham on the fact-finding tour of Southeast Asia in July 1954. Bargil also tapped Murumbi for contacts for the IUSY 1957 Africa visit, recollecting IUSY fraternal delegations at ASC conferences.<sup>113</sup> Despite Asian and African criticisms of weak European socialist commitment to decolonization, Sipalo and Murumbi entrepreneurially navigated overlapping, and sometimes conflicted, networks of anti-colonial solidarity to advocate and help fund their liberation movements.

The character of Afro-Asianism morphed into the late 1950s as livelier and more discordant African, Asian and broader geopolitical environments emerged with accelerating decolonization and tightening Cold War. The establishment of the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Organisation (AAPSO) in Cairo in 1957 created a significant platform, closer to home for African nationalists, for this pacier and more radical Afro-Asian connection. Nasser donated a bespoke building in Cairo for freedom movements to work cheek-by-jowl. The inaugural AAPSO conference in 1957 and Afro-Asian Youth Conference in 1959, both in Cairo, attracted keen attention in sub-Saharan Africa. Tom Mboya and Arwings Kodhek in Kenya pushed members of their Nairobi Convention Peoples' Party and Nairobi African District Congress towards Egypt. Like invitees from Zanzibar, the British denied passage on the false grounds that AAPSO was a 'communist front' in hoc to the Soviet Union, even though Mboya stressed that his delegates specifically intended to denounce the attending Soviets in Cairo.<sup>114</sup> Some 8000 Zanzibaris welcomed back their 'Cairo heroes' at a mass rally in December 1957.<sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>110</sup>Muwanga was arrested for sedition for an article in the Ugandan paper, *Emambya Fsaze*.

<sup>111</sup>"No passport," *Manchester Guardian*, 11 December 1956; TNA: CO/936/352: Summary of letter from Muwanga to Brockway, 15 November 1956.

<sup>112</sup>IISH: IUSY Box 1357, Uganda: Paul Muwanga to Menahem Bargil, IUSY Secretariat, 16 June 1956; Bargil to Muwanga, 20 September 1956.

<sup>113</sup>For more details see I. Milford, "More than a Cold War scholarship: East-Central African anticolonial activists, the International Union of Socialist Youth, and the evasion of the colonial state (1955–65)." *Stichproben: The Vienna Journal of African Studies* 34 (2018).

<sup>114</sup>"Banned delegates," *Colonial Times* (Nairobi), 9 January 1958.

<sup>115</sup>"Zanzibar Delegates to Cairo Turn Back," *East African Standard* (Nairobi), 23 December 1957.



Control of movement was partial. Networks of African student-activists spread across the world dictated that colonial states could not shut everyone out of anti-imperial internationalism. Indeed, African students played on British disquiet to secure Afro-Asian patronage. John Kamwithi and George Sedda, Kenyan residents in Kampala, Uganda, and former students in Perugia, Italy, 'escaped' the British through Sudan to join AAPSO.<sup>116</sup> From their adopted home in Cairo, they translated their polemics against 'settler barbarism' into idioms comprehensible to international audiences.<sup>117</sup> At the 1959 Afro-Asian Youth Conference, Sedda called for a UN resolution to investigate British war crimes against Mau Mau. There was some truth to British assessments that Kamwithi and Sedda were maverick exiles, estranged from mainstream East African politics.<sup>118</sup> When they attended the 1958 All-African People's Conference (AAPC) in Accra as AAPSO representatives, Nkrumah's selection for AAPC Chairman, Tom Mboya, rejected them as agents of Nasserite manipulation as competition between Ghana and United Arab Republic for leadership of pan-African community rumbled.<sup>119</sup> Nevertheless, AAPSO represented an important platform on which to agitate for pragmatic African self-determination in similar fashion to the ASC before. Munu Sipalo worked Nehru's Delhi, Nasser's Cairo and the IUSY's Prague simultaneously in 1956. Tom Mboya dipped into AAPSO alongside the Indian scholarship committee in Kenya and AAPC in 1958. African nationalists expediently phased in and out of such competing institutions as they probed internationalist opportunity for specific, local ends.

The strapline anti-colonial issues at the 1957 AAPSO conference in Cairo remained Algeria, South Africa and, of course, Palestine. The more fine-grained resolutions pertained to injustices in the global economy such as regulating exchange rates to bolster trade within the Afro-Asian bloc.<sup>120</sup> A range of specialist AAPSO gatherings – the Afro-Asian Economic Conference (Cairo, 1959) or the Afro-Asian Jurists' Conference (Conakry, 1962) – occurred on the fringes of central AAPSO meetings to debate the practicalities of freedom. At the third AAPSO conference in Tanganyika in 1963, Joseph Murumbi, now Treasurer of the Kenyan African National Union, briefly lauded the political achievements of anti-colonialism in East Africa as its three nations won independence. He directed more of his attention towards pointed criticism of the new European Common Market, which 'underlined pernicious heritage of colonial economy' and 'neocolonialist menace' in preventing African access to European markets. He advocated closer Afro-Asian trade, specialist regional technical committees and sharing economic planners across Afro-Asia and Latin America.<sup>121</sup> As the geographies of African internationalism shifted towards the pan-African world into the late-1950s, Afro-Asian networks continued to provide

---

<sup>116</sup>"Kenya Man goes to Cairo," *Sunday Post* (Nairobi), 29 December 1957.

<sup>117</sup>TNA: FCO/141/6734: Makerere Students' Political Association Minutes, c. April 1957.

<sup>118</sup>TNA: FCO/141/6734: The Afro-Asian Movement as it affects Kenya, January to May 1959.

<sup>119</sup>TNA: FCO 141/7064: Report on All-Africa People's Conference, December 1958; Vitalis, "The midnight ride of Kwame Nkrumah."

<sup>120</sup>*Report of Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, Cairo* (Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House, 1958), 238–246.

<sup>121</sup>J. Murumbi, "Kenya's Economic Problems: Need for Establishing New Contacts," *Afro-Asian Bulletin* 5, no. 5–8 (1963): 5–9.

early independent African states with means to gird themselves against the palpable threats of neocolonialism.

## <H1>CONCLUSION: ACCRA

<T-NOIND>Deep fissures formed in the Afro-Asian community. In 1958, Subimal Dutt, senior Indian diplomat at Bandung, expressed support for the AAPC but noted 'it is hoped that the emergence of an African personality would not come in the way of Asian–African cooperation'.<sup>122</sup> At the 1963 AAPSO conference in Moshi, Tanganyika, Nyerere celebrated historical solidarity, but stressed the 'different roads to independence and different routes to reach the one goal of economic and social well-being . . . each country must work out these things for itself'.<sup>123</sup> Estrangement set in between now independent African nations and tutelary Asian leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement, established in 1961. The apparent reserve of India on the liberation of Lusophone Africa contrasted sharply with forthright Chinese and Cuban action.<sup>124</sup>

The 1960s witnessed a more acrimonious decolonizing world. Disagreements on the leadership, nature and method of anti-colonialism split emerging pan-African institutional formation. Nyerere and Nkrumah disagreed on the pacing, scale and sequencing of pan-African engineering.<sup>125</sup> Nkrumah's Accra lacked zeal for Zimbabwean freedom fighters, who called for bolder interventions to address the junction of settler colonialism and Cold War in southern Africa.<sup>126</sup> At the 1965 Winneba AAPSO conference in Ghana, Nkrumah expressed embarrassment at Indo-Pakistani conflict over Kashmir and Indonesian opposition to the creation of Malaysia (*Konfrontasi*, 1963–1966) within a supposed fraternity. A lukewarm attempt to hold a second Bandung-scale Africa-Asia conference in Algiers in 1965 stalled amidst the chaos of Ben Bella's overthrow as first president of Algeria by his former ally Houari Boumédiène. Nkrumah's own deposition in 1966, following a coup staged while he was abroad for a diplomatic meeting with Ho Chi Minh, underlined the extent of domestic and international fragmentation. A second generation of leaders sought to contain the dialogical transnational connections that had undermined colonial states.<sup>127</sup> By the late 1960s, the range of internationalisms that nourished liberation struggles in the 1950s became interpreted as neocolonialist peril in numerous African states. Introverted nationalisms turned away from the networks described in this article. More militant Afro-Asian solidarities unfurled in more heated Cold War conditions.

---

<sup>122</sup>NMML: Subimal Dutt papers s. no. 86: 'Asian-African Cooperation – Retrospect and Prospect'.

<sup>123</sup>*Report of Third Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference, Moshi, February 1963* (Cairo: AAPSO, 1963), 21.

<sup>124</sup>McCann, "From Diaspora to Third Worldism": 273–276.

<sup>125</sup>C. Chachage, "African Unity: Feeling with Nkrumah, Thinking with Nyerere," *Pambazuka News*, 9 April 2009.

<sup>126</sup>J.S. Ahlman, "Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa the Eclipse of a decolonizing Africa," *Kronos*, 37 (2011).

<sup>127</sup>J. Byrne, *Mecca of Revolution Algeria, Decolonization, and the Third World Order* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

The late careers of the African sojourners to Asia exemplify the disaggregation of paths forward. In 1964, Markham became the first managing editor of Tanzania's new newspaper, *The Nationalist*. This was a pan-African partnership to train local journalists and, consistent with his work in Burma, deepen the interpersonal bonds of pan-African community. In 1966, Benjamin Mkapa (later Tanzanian president) replaced Markham as Ghana–Tanzania relations deteriorated and Nyerere insisted that a Tanzanian must head the nationalist paper of record. Tanzania's Stephen Mhando, who attended the 1956 ASC Bombay conference, worked with Markham on *The Nationalist* before moving to the foreign service as Soviet liaison given his experience in the Eastern bloc.<sup>128</sup> As Tanzania's internationalism tilted towards cooperation with China in the late 1960s, Nyerere ostracized Mhando. In 1963, Murumbi returned to Nairobi from his nine-year London exile. He became minister of foreign affairs in 1964 and Kenya's second vice-president in 1966 after the expulsion of Oginga Odinga from KANU by Kenyatta and Mboya. Murumbi served for only nine months, grieving the assassination of his friend Pio Pinto and disillusioned with the authoritarian turn of the Kenyatta regime. He returned to Britain, briefly took an executive job at Rothman's cigarette company, and retired to become a prolific collector of African art.<sup>129</sup>

The 1950s was a more open, permissive era when African freedom fighters traversed blurred state/non-state Afro-Asian, European, American and pan-African institutions.<sup>130</sup> They navigated overlapping dialogical internationalisms, osmotic at their edges. This latitude afforded experimental space and precedent to imagine freedom at an abstract level and, in the same thought, plan the Africanist specificities of its content. The very appeal of socialism was as much its internationalism as the nuance of its spectral ideologies. Intense bursts of connection at anti-colonial conferences from Rangoon to Cairo cemented relations, sustained at distance through regular correspondence, print and radio output.<sup>131</sup> Gatherings afforded opportunities to network intimately. This was especially important for the large numbers of local participants, otherwise disconnected from Afro-Asian institutional life, who dominated attendance lists of the conferences. Personal bonds bound these affective communities. Emotional connections and human relationships mattered in ways missed or dismissed in most existing scholarship on decolonization and the Cold War.<sup>132</sup> Murumbi's friendships with Pant, Pinto and Brockway or Markham's relationships with U Hla Aung and Padmore sustained thicker lines of affinity than created through a common reading of *Socialist Asia*. New travel routes facilitated the interpersonal connections of the 'Bandung moment'. In 1953, U Hla Aung visited Lusaka and Kumasi on his way to the UN in

---

<sup>128</sup>Mhando had worked as a Swahili teacher in the German Democratic Republic. I am grateful to George Roberts for directing me to this case.

<sup>129</sup>K. Kyle, *The Politics of the Independence of Kenya* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1999), 238; A. Thurston, *A Path Not Taken – The Story of Joseph Murumbi* (Nairobi: Franciscan Kolbe Press, 2015).

<sup>130</sup>G. McCann, "Possibility and peril: Trade unionism, African Cold War and the global strands of Kenyan decolonisation, 1937-65," *Journal of Social History* (forthcoming 2019).

<sup>131</sup>J.R. Brennan, "Radio Cairo and Decolonization of East Africa, 1953–64," in *Making a World after Empire*, 173–195.

<sup>132</sup>See Stolte Leow and Raza in this issue; P. Gupta, C.J. Lee, M.J. Moorman, S. Shukla, "Editors' Introduction," *Radical History Review*, 131 (2018).

New York. Murumbi stopped off in Cairo en route to London. Mobility and internationalist affinity gave agency. This necessitated clever navigation as colonial states fought doggedly to police unstable borders as empire crumbled. Such mobile, and often young, activists also had to negotiate the constraints, power asymmetries and limitations of the anti-colonial international institutions with which they liaised. But, in the 1950s, it was through such interpersonal connections and experiments across the world 'that the global politics of the day permeated into the everyday politics and informed state-formation' in Africa.<sup>133</sup> Witnessing the failures of Burmese statehood shaped Markham's designs for Ghana.

India's universities, the ASC and AAPSO were discrete institutions for their patrons. But, for mobile African activists they were obviously linked; a network of enmeshed institutional opportunities to translate the solidarity of transnational communities of affinity into actual liberation. Munu Sipalo studied in Delhi, set up in Cairo and travelled to the ASC Bombay conference in 1956 to bolster his Zambia African National Congress. Sipalo liaised with Paulo Muwanga of Uganda, who corresponded with Fenner Brockway and Israel's Menahem Bargil of the IUSY. Bargil had travelled with Markham to Malaya in 1954 and asked Murumbi in London for help to plan the 1957 IUSY tour of Africa. African nationalists simultaneously exploited Nasser's AAPSO and Israel's Afro-Asian Institute for Labour Studies in the late 1950s. African leaders skillfully phased in and out of entangled international institutions to build their post-colonialisms, sidelining geopolitical competition or hierarchy, as far as possible, in the pursuit of their goals. Such journeys married global politics with the need to develop tangible skills for post-colonial statehood. Murumbi's request for Indian studentships for East Africans or Markham's use of the ASC as a pathway to Israeli development assistance for Ghana were means to critique empire, but also to define the form of the independent future. The engineer was the anti-colonial hero for the president of the African Students' of Israel Association in 1964. Anti-colonial politics was development and vice versa.

These institutional spaces of decolonizing connection were, in part, zones of foreign policy strategy for the big 'third worldist' statesmen like Nehru or Nasser. For the Africans followed here, the networks of affinity below and across states in the 'Bandung moment' did not have to be about a grab for world power or leadership of the post-colonial order. These networks presented something more locally useable. The Gold Coast delegates theatrically sporting their *kente* on the Bandung stage (Fig. 3 Fig. 3) sat alongside the besuited Markham in a backroom office explaining the need for rapid African industrialization for a Japanese newspaper (Fig. 2). The *Afro* in Afro-Asian solidarity demanded something pragmatic and urgent over the ethereal and geopolitical from the 'Bandung spirit'.

In Rangoon and Bandung, Markham saw first-hand Asian modes of communal comportment, the intricacies of transnational administration and the parameters of ideological possibility across ethnicity, place and nation. He assessed the pan-African playing field and useable strands of pan-Asian example. In the late 1950s, Accra

---

<sup>133</sup>Branch. "Political traffic": 830.

emerged as a premier hub of the pan-African world, the final resting place of Du Bois. On his return from Asia, Markham laid the organizational groundwork for the Bureau of African Affairs, the government department that generated the densest paper trail of the Ghanaian state and organized the landmark AAPC.<sup>134</sup> This formed part of a wider decolonial “‘fetish of organisation” apparent in development discourses [which] did not derive solely from ideology but, rather, a blend of ideological principles, colonial experiences, and transnational conversation’.<sup>135</sup> Markham’s central role in administering the daily affairs of the ASC translated into a bureaucratically and technocratically attuned pan-Africanism at home. Afro-Asianism of the early 1950s informed the pan-Africanism of the late decade. Supranational community provided ‘a constitutive part of the contested nation-state-making process’ in Africa.<sup>136</sup>

The Bandung era crumbled into the 1960–1970s under the pressures of Cold War, geoeconomic shock and insurmountable differences of nationalist orientation across the ‘third world’. And yet, looking back from the disappointments of post-colonialism, we should not dwell entirely on the withering of diverse internationalist projects after the 1950s in Asia and Africa. As Gary Wilder urges, we should ‘identify in them a vitality that could inspire and expand the range of political possibilities’.<sup>137</sup> Jim Markham of the Gold Coast composing the first *Anti Colonial Bureau News Letter* in Rangoon in June 1954, embodied, for a time, such thick decolonial possibilities.

---

<sup>134</sup>J.S. Ahlman, “Managing the Pan-African Workplace: Discipline, Ideology, and the Cultural Politics of the Ghanaian Bureau of African Affairs, 1959–66,” *Ghana Studies* 15 (2012): 366–367.

<sup>135</sup>L. James, “‘Essential things like typewriters’: West African and Caribbean trade unionism and the dialogues of decolonisation,” *Journal of Social History* (forthcoming, 2019).

<sup>136</sup>C. Vaughan, ‘The Politics of Regionalism and Federation in East Africa, 1958-1946,’ *The Historical Journal*, (first view online, 2018): 1

<sup>137</sup>Wilder, *Freedom Time*: 199.