Introduction

On 18–24 April 1955, delegates from twenty-nine states attended the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, Indonesia—from Asia: Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Ceylon, People’s Republic of China (PRC), India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and Yemen; and from Africa: Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gold Coast, Liberia, Libya, and Sudan. In 1955, almost all countries in Asia had attained independence, but most of Africa was still colonized by European states. Bandung was part of the wave of an unprecedented number of peoples across the world fighting against vestiges of European imperialism. The Bandung Conference laid the political, economic, cultural, and legal foundations for the so-called Spirit of Bandung and what became the Third World project. Bandung was a coming together of leaders of countries whose combined population made up approximately two-thirds of the world. The US government tried to prevent Bandung, and the Soviet government tried to coopt it; however, the conference did not strictly operate within a First World versus Second World political vector. The five organizing states—the Colombo Powers—exemplified the different positions held by different parties at the conference. India, Burma, and Indonesia were socialist but neutral (“non-aligned”), whereas Ceylon and Pakistan were anticommunist and pro-West. Among the Bandung delegates, none took a pro-Soviet position as such, but China and North Vietnam were Communist states with complicated alliances with the USSR. Japan, a former empire and Axis power, was anomalous. Even though Asian states instigated Bandung, movements in Africa took in the spirit of Bandung with gusto. They continued to push for and assert their independence with their 1958 Declaration of the First Conference of Independent African States (from a conference in Accra, Ghana). Bandung marked the moment when the global decolonization and the advent of newly independent countries changed international law. It also evidenced a belief held at the time that cultures, civilizations, and countries from all over the world, and not just Europe, had always played a historical role in the development of international law. The Bandung Conference will help legal historians, students, and practitioners understand key concepts such as decolonization, self-determination, and sovereignty. It also provides context for important international legal events such as the New International Economic Order, Bretton Woods Conference and institutions, and the UN system. Moreover, it offers insight into the origins and operation of principal fields of international law such as human rights, law of the sea, and international economic law.

Conference Proceedings

Despite tensions and disagreements, the conference was a moment when the majority of the world faced a number of political reconfigurations and possible futures. When reading the different texts derived from the conference, one should look for the different positions held at Bandung. A strong contingent at Bandung was socialist and neutral/non-aligned, which included delegates from Burma, Egypt, India, and Indonesia. Many delegates were anticommunist and pro-West, such as those from Ceylon, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, Philippines, and Lebanon. China and North Vietnam were Communist but with an ambiguous relationship with the USSR. And Japan, a former empire and defeated Axis power, was anomalous—before the Second World War, it was a major imperial power, and afterward it was occupied and politically transformed by the United States (1945–1952). The best introduction to Bandung is the Final Communiqué found in Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung, which is the product of
the compromises made at Bandung (cited under Transcripts, Speeches, and Documents). The conference was divided into Political, Economic, and Cultural Committees. Accordingly, the Communiqué outlined a series of principles under the following headings: Economic Co-operation, Cultural Co-operation, Human Rights and Self-Determination, Problems of Dependent Peoples, Other Problems (which identified specific existing colonial cases), and Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation. It concluded with ten principles (Dasa Sila), which were meant to conform with the UN Charter. The Political Committee was the principal committee and was where the Communiqué was negotiated and drafted. Texts in Firsthand Accounts by Official Delegates are quasi-official perspectives written in the style of diplomatic memoir and study. Students and researchers alike will be interested. Abdulgani 1964 and Jansen 1966 are some of the most popular accounts (both cited under Firsthand Accounts by Official Delegates). Firsthand Accounts by Attendees are also very engaging; Wright 1956 and Kahin 1956 are widely read and cited.

Transcripts, Speeches, and Documents

The Final Communiqué is readily available in many formats in print and online, but the most authoritative copy is in Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung. The opening speeches and other speeches made throughout the conference were not perfunctory. They are often referenced as primary sources from the conference and are useful in understanding how different and competing positions were put forward by national delegates. The most contentious issue was over how to define imperialism. With these documents in mind, one can therefore understand the politics behind the compromise that was reached with the Final Communiqué. Other introductory speeches can be found in Selected Documents of the Bandung Conference and "President Sukarno Opening Speech at, the Bandung Conference, 1955, Indonesia." It is then worth reading some of the texts from Firsthand Accounts by Official Delegates and Firsthand Accounts by Attendees since they offer different narratives to the conference proceedings. Poplai 1955 provides insight into how some of the factual information was organized going into the conference. Bandung+60 includes the African-Asian Conference Bulletin that was the official conference pamphlet. More advanced researchers may want to consult sources such as Nehru 1955, Press Releases and Statements Regarding the Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955, and Wilson Center Digital Archive.

A complete and verbatim record of the public and open parts of the conference. This includes opening statements, closing statements, and Final Communiqué with accompanying Basic Documents. Any understanding of Bandung must begin with this collection.

Includes Nehru’s closing speech and Final Communiqué, which can be found in Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung. But also includes Nehru’s speech to the Lok Sabha (lower house of the Indian Parliament) on 30 April 1955.

Publication prepared by the Asian Relations Organization as a handbook for the conference. Provides an example of how issues were framed going into the conference. The handbook includes a profile for each of the participating countries, a list of key documents that led up to the conference, and statistical tables.

Twenty different pamphlets that include press releases and draft reports available through interlibrary loan from Stanford University.


Includes some of the speeches found in Asia-Africa Speaks 1955. There is a translation of Premier Chou En-Lai’s supplementary speech on 19 April 1955 that is slightly different than the one found in Asia-Africa Speaks 1955. It also includes Chou En-Lai’s statement to the Political Committee as published in the New York Times.

Sukarno. President Sukarno Opening Speech at, the Bandung Conference, 1955, Indonesia.

Sukarno’s speech is one of the commonly referenced speeches from the conference. Even though the transcription is readily available in publications and online, it is worth viewing this excerpt from his speech as recorded on film; it captures Sukarno’s dramatic delivery and provides shots of different world leaders.


Website publically shares some Bandung primary source material in honor of the conference’s sixtieth anniversary. The most important contribution are pdf copies of the African-Asian Conference Bulletin, which was produced by conference secretariat staff and published by the Indonesian Ministry of Information; it was issued in the lead-up, on a daily basis during the conference, and ended with a postconference follow-up issue. Also includes a short list of online official documents and a short, brief annotated list of recent academic sources.

Wilson Center Digital Archive.

An online collection of approximately one hundred documents relating to the conference. Most of the documents have been translated into English and include reports, meeting minutes, correspondence, and other official items. The focus is on Zhou Enlai, Premier of China.

Firsthand Accounts by Official Delegates

As with all diplomatic memoirs and studies, one must read these with a critical eye. The memoirs’ tone ranges from the celebratory Abdulgani 1964 to the critical Jansen 1966. Malik 1955 and Romulo 1956 were pro-West works, while Nehru 2001 was a neutralist work. Within India, Appadorai 1955 presented Bandung as a political success but provided no new ideas; Jansen 1966 presented the conference as a political failure with some innovative ideas. Hassouna 1955 is a reminder that Arab nationalism was tied to Bandung in complex ways. Menezes 1956 is a key text representing one particular and influential Brazilian perspective on Bandung.


Written by an Indonesian diplomat and public servant who served as the conference secretary-general. One of the most widely referenced official first-hand accounts. He focuses on the ideational and political implications of the conference. Also includes a decade’s worth of Abdulgani’s public speeches on Bandung.

Written by the Indian member of the joint secretariat set up for the conference. Provides an overview of the origins, events, and implications of Bandung. He notes that there were no new ideas at Bandung, but it was unique in its ability to bring a diverse group of countries together with a coherent agenda.


Report submitted by the secretary-general of the League of Arab States to the Arab League Council. Thus, it is an example of an interpretation of the conference provided to a pan-Arabist political body. Provides a detailed account of the conference and includes a near-complete list of delegates.


One of the extensive studies of its time and most cited works on Bandung. Jansen was a reporter and diplomat who represented India at Bandung. Provides an extremely detailed account of the conferences that led to Bandung, and those that followed. Critical of the myth surrounding the Spirit of Bandung; this critique appears in new forms (see Vitalis 2013, cited under Critical Historiographies).


Malik was a philosopher, academic, and diplomat who represented Lebanon at the conference. In this Progressive Christian lecture series, Malik situates the Bandung Conference within a broader philosophical discussion of the concept of “peaceful coexistence.” Malik provides an anticommunist perspective. Also provides insight into how decisions were made at the conference.


A rare example of a Latin American perspective. This text (in Portuguese) is based on Menezes’s theories of race and his experiences as Brazil’s official observer at the Bandung Conference. He advocated that Brazil should capitalize upon its mixed-racial heritage and lead the West in Afro-Asian relations. Menezes was also a lawyer.


Nehru was the first prime minister of India. This collection includes Nehru’s correspondences and speeches during the time leading up to and during the Bandung Conference. Much of the material is not published elsewhere.


Romulo led the Philippines’ delegation to the Bandung Conference. His account of Bandung is aimed at explaining it to a US audience in favorable terms. Includes speeches found in *Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung* (cited under Transcripts, Speeches, and Documents). Book also includes Romulo’s official reply to Nehru before the Political Committee on 23 April 1955.
Firsthand Accounts by Attendees

These accounts are written by people who attended the conference in their personal and professional capacity, and not as national delegates. There is an incredibly wide range of perspectives. Wright 1956, from a transnational race-relations perspective, and Kahin 1956, from a political science perspective, are the most widely cited. Roberts and Foulcher 2016 is a collection of historical texts that provides intercultural context to Wright’s travels to Bandung from the perspective of Indonesian writers. Pauer 1955 is also from a political science view. Higgins and Pauker 1955 is an economic study. Jack 1955 is a factual report written by a peace activist.


This text provides one of the few economic studies of the conference. Higgins was a development economist from Australia, and Pauker was a political scientist and historian from the United States.


Jack was a Unitarian Universalist minister and early activist for peace, disarmament, racial equality, and social justice. He provides a favorable, factual report of the conference. Also, an engaging account of how the government of Indonesia logistically prepared for the conference.


One of the most popular and influential accounts of the conference. Kahin was a political scientist and historian from the United States. His account focuses on geopolitical and diplomatic implications of the conference. This book includes not only public speeches by Sukarno, Chou, and Nehru, as found in Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung (cited under Transcripts, Speeches, and Documents), but also a speech by Nehru before the conference Political Committee.


An early interpretation of what the conference achieved in geopolitical terms by an academic. Pauker works through different theories behind the respective national governments’ motivations and is reluctant to draw out a single, coherent agenda from the conference.


Focuses on the travel of Richard Wright who wrote the influential account of Bandung, The Color Curtain (Wright 1956). Collects a number of historical documents from Indonesian archives that capture different perspectives on Wright and his Indonesian experiences and observations from the point of view of Indonesian writers in the years between 1951 and 2005. The book translates these Indonesian sources into English and provides an introduction to each source. The introductory essay provides a concise, current, and critical historiographical overview of Bandung and Wright.
The influence of this book cannot be understated. Wright, a novelist from the United States, wrote one of the most optimistic accounts of the conference. He also connected Bandung to racial struggles within the United States.

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**Bandung as a Performance and on Film**

There is a wealth of visual media in the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia and the Nehru Memorial Museum & Library. This remains underexamined. For a brief, online glimpse of some of the newsreels, one can view Critical Past and British Pathé’s Asian/African Conference in Bandung. There are different ways people have begun to examine Bandung visual aesthetics and politics. In Shimazu 2014, diplomatic public appearances are understood as staged performances. Finnane 2010 suggests that narrative films made about the conference are akin to historical archival material. Bandung was not only explored in film, but according to *The Story of Film*, it also may have redefined cinema itself on a global scale.

**British Pathé. “Asian/African Conference in Bandung (1955).”**

Newsreel that characterizes conference delegates in terms of pro- or anti-West.


Film critic and historian Mark Cousins provides a global history of cinema. Only briefly mentions Bandung in his global history of cinema (within the first ten minutes of Episode 6)—but to Cousins, Bandung is a key moment that frees up filmmakers in Africa and Asia to express themselves in new, dynamic, and modern ways.

**Critical Past.**

Five short clips from archival footage highlighting Indonesia’s preparation and role in the conference.


Suggests that narrative films made about the conference can be treated as putting forward their own particular historical perspectives.

**National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia. Konfrensi Asia Afrika.**

This is a twelve-minute video promoting the Asian-African Conference Archives held by the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia. It was made to promote the archives to be included in UNESCO’s Memory of the World register. The archives contain 1178 pages of text, 565 photographic archives, and seven film reels.


A collection of photos, newspaper clips, and descriptive text chronicling the conference with an emphasis on Nehru’s...

One of the first accounts of the conference that focuses on the political implications of the aesthetics of the conference, including the choices made for conference preparation and delegates’ public appearances.

Histories and Historiographies

Bandung, in complex ways, led to the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961, the 1962 Cairo Economic Conference, and the 1966 Tricontinental Conference. While all these conferences were Bandung offshoots, each also had its own unique geopolitical agenda and ideology. It is common for commentators to conflate Bandung with the Non-Aligned Movement. However, works in New Historical Approaches and Critical Historiographies have corrected that conflation. In the future, more studies of Bandung should take full advantage of what the Asian-African Conference Archives, held by the National Archives of the Republic of Indonesia, has to offer. Also, very few accounts of Bandung draw on multiple archives—Amphai 2007 (cited under Bandung from the Periphery) being a notable exception. The historiography of Bandung is just as important as the history of the events surrounding the conference. Bandung’s historiography is one way in which people debate over what the Third World project means and whether Third Worldism is relevant. Mackie 2005 and Prashad 2007 (both cited under New Historical Approaches) situate Bandung as the culmination of the long road to freedom and independence of the newly created Asian and African states. Pauker 1965 (cited under Early Studies) tells the story of failure and irreconcilable ideological division. Choucri 1969 (cited under Early Studies) and Tan and Acharya 2008, McDougall and Finnane 2010, and Lee 2010 (all cited under New Historical Approaches) eschew measuring success and failure and instead work out a complex account of a coherent, albeit multilayered, Third World political posture. New Historical Approaches and Critical Historiographies will be of interest to students and researchers alike. These texts can be read as introductions to Bandung or as an ongoing conversation and debate over how Bandung should be studied. From Early Studies, Pauker 1965 and Jansen 1966 are the most widely cited. Bandung from the Periphery examines Bandung from the perspective of parts of the world that were not central to or directly involved in the conference, such as Brazil, Japan, the United States, the United Kingdom, and USSR; there is much more research to be done in this regard. Texts in Critical Historiographies review recent historical studies and provide suggestions of how work should progress. This is best for more advanced researchers.

New Historical Approaches

Texts are best read in the order in which they are published. By reading the texts in chronological order, scholars can read the historiography as an ongoing conversation and debate over how Bandung should be studied—especially in light of Critical Historiographies. Mackie 2005 is the best place to start to gain a detailed and accessible introduction to the conference. Prashad 2007 is a good place to start to understand how Bandung was situated in the broader Third World project. *Radical History Review* sets the trend for new approaches but is not recommended to newcomers to the topic. Following suit, Tan and Acharya 2008, McDougall and Finnane 2010, and Lee 2010 are extensive collections covering a wide range of perspectives on the conference. Claudio 2015 critically engages with these texts, especially Lee 2010, and finds that most new accounts have emphasized the anti-West rhetoric at Bandung; the author emphasizes the radical anticommunist aspect of Bandung. Rey 2014 focuses on Arab perspectives and brings nuanced insights in Bandung’s ideational agendas.

Focuses on recovering Ramulo’s intellectual contribution to the Third World project, with an emphasis on liberal, anticommunist view of world order.


Most ambitious collection to date. Situates Bandung within a broader Afro-Asian political milieu and postcolonial struggle for sovereignty. It also includes a number of historical styles and techniques. And it examines the conference from different points of time. Introductory essay by Lee engages with fundamental questions of history and historiography.


One of the best introductions to the conference. Includes an excellent introductory bibliography. Most uniquely, it beautifully interprets the aesthetic of the time through archival photographs printed on high-quality paper.


Despite being a short introduction, this book covers a wide array of styles, perspectives, and interpretations. Moreover, it draws from a large number of archives and provides a very useful bibliography. It captures, if not celebrates, the growing methodological and theoretical eclecticism growing around Bandung.


A widely cited book. Bandung is situated within the broader Third World project and is only one chapter among eighteen chapters. Provides an excellent, accessible introduction to Bandung because it situates it within a wide sense of space of time, showing continuities and discontinuities.


The Forum section comprises an introduction and three articles dedicated to the fate of nationalism at and after Bandung. Examines Bandung from the perspective of Santha Rama Rau (an Indian writer), Carolos Ramulo (the head of the Filipino delegation at Bandung), and Lorrain Hansberry (an American writer and activist).


Draws from archival materials and dynamically outlines how the Arab world related to Bandung. While not exhaustive on the issue, this article provides insight to how Arab nationalist projects were defined by Bandung. Also considers the Arab world as a microcosm of Bandung politics.

Engages with Bandung’s historiography and legacy. Sets the standard for how Bandung should be studied and understood as an ambiguous, though relevant and important, moment in global politics. The collection has a regional bent and predominantly examines Bandung from an Asian perspective. Provides insightful historical details from a number of archives.

Bandung from the Periphery

Bandung was unified by Asian and African states’ commitment against imperialism. Latin American countries had a complicated relationship with Bandung since most of those states achieved their independence over a century earlier; Menezes 1956 provides a uniquely Brazilian perspective that addresses race. Ampiah 2007 highlights how categories of imperial and postcolonial were further complicated by the fact that delegates from Japan, a formal imperial power, attended. Ampiah 2007 also examines the United States and United Kingdom and springboards from Tarling 1992, Fraser 2003, and Jones 2005. See also Early Studies. Allison 1988 and Hargreaves 1993 provide a Soviet perspective, which is still an understudied viewpoint.


Primarily focuses on the Non-Aligned Movement, but explicitly addresses Bandung in parts. One of the few texts that provides insight into how the USSR had a complicated relationship with Bandung, and later the Non-Aligned Movement. Also highlights the USSR’s role within the complex relationship between Bandung and the Non-Aligned Movement.


One of the few multiaxial works. Employs a global perspective where Bandung is the center, Japan is at the periphery, and the United States and United Kingdom are formally excluded but profoundly affected by the center. Includes a very good historiographical introduction.


Provides accounts of Bandung drawing from historical archives and the perspective of key American actors. Examines the intersection of race relations within the United States, how Bandung impacted race relations within the United States, and US foreign policy in general. Provides further insight into Charles Malik’s relationship with Dulles.


A short essay about how the Communist International (Comintern) was key to the creation of the League Against Imperialism in 1927. The article makes no reference to Bandung itself, but the League Against Imperialism was an inspiration for Bandung, and where many Bandung leaders originally met.

Continues along the line of Fraser 2003, but with a focus on how US racial assumptions about Asian peoples informed the US government response to pan-Asianism.


This text (in Portuguese) is based on Menezes's theories of race and his experiences as representing Brazil at the conference as an official observer. Menezes was a Brazilian lawyer and career diplomat. He characterized Brazil as a Western power that should play a mediating role with Africa and Asia. He advocated that Brazil should capitalize upon its mixed-racial heritage and lead the West in its relation with Afro-Asian countries.


Continues the line of work by Fraser 2003 and Jones 2005, but with a more global and historiographical claim. To Parker, if one examines the Cold War through concepts of race, a new periodization arises.


One of the earliest accounts of Bandung from the perspective of the British government and its worldview. This article draws extensively from historical archives.

**Early Studies**

Bandung provides insight into various methodological debates in the various social sciences over how international politics should be studied and reported. Emerson 1960 is an example of how imperial historians took a more global history perspective. African Bibliographic Center 1968 is a bibliography that provides a list of works by Western scholars and commentators and their response to the rise of newly independent countries after Bandung. But most early studies were by political scientists and international relations scholars. Conte 1965, Guitard 1961, O’Brien 1965, and Pauker 1965 are still popular accounts. Jansen 1966 is one of the most widely cited. Farajallah 1963 and Queuille 1965 are more orthodox diplomatic histories. Choucri 1969 employs empirical methods.


While the title purports to focus on Afro-Asian states, it focuses on African states. This short bibliography provides a social, political, and economic perspective on postcolonial countries in Africa. Most authors, news articles, and journals cited are Western.


Seeks to define a coherent Afro-Asian political posture. Uses an empirical style of analysis to study the national government policy statements, national leader’s perception of Cold War politics, and overt examples of interstate conflict and cooperation between particular Third World states and the West and Communist states, respectively.

Well researched and written in French. A detailed and dynamic account of the conference. Conte was a highly regarded journalist, historian, and politician.


Represents an example of how imperial historians adjusted to a postimperial world (what we now may call global history). Of particular interest to international jurists because of its focus on self-determination, nationhood, and new state inclusion into the international community.


Captures how the Bandung agenda was articulated and developed through the United Nations. In French.


One of the best texts that studies and captures the Spirit of Bandung. Provides a detailed history of the conference, situating its origins in 1927 in Brussels at the first conference of the League Against Imperialism. Written in French by a political scientist. Concludes that Bandung was a political failure but had profound symbolic effects.


One of the most cited works on Bandung. Provides an extremely detailed, firsthand account of the conferences that led to Bandung, and those that followed. Critical of the myth surrounding the Spirit of Bandung; this critique appears in new forms (see Vitalis 2013, cited under Critical Historiographies).


An early example of how international lawyers and political scientists worked together to understand the implications of new nations. A collection of four articles. Predominantly written from the perspective of Western states’ Cold War geopolitical concerns and intra-UN institutional politics.


Heavy with a Cold War perspective. Also focuses on national leaders and inter–Third World tensions. Bandung is assessed as a failure for not having a formal follow-up conference premised upon Afro-Asian solidarity.


A diplomatic history of the conference in French. Queuille was a journalist.
Critical Historiographies

Sally Wood and Robert Vitalis are both dissatisfied with recent historical studies (see Wood 2012 and Vitalis 2013). Both call for studies that are more archive based. Shimazu 2014 provides a pithy review of the literature and brings a novel methodological perspective to studying Bandung. Roberts and Foulcher 2016 includes an introduction that provides a clear, concise, and critical historiographical overview of the conference.


One of the most innovative texts on Bandung. Focuses on the travels of Richard Wright who wrote the influential account of Bandung, The Color Curtain (Wright 1956, cited in Firsthand Accounts by Attendees). Collects a number of historical documents from Indonesian archives that capture Wright’s Indonesian experiences from the point of view of Indonesian writers in the years between 1951 and 2005. The book translates these Indonesian sources into English and provides an introduction to each source. Historicizes The Color Curtain with the aim to invigorate and disrupt common narratives in transnational American and African-American studies, postcolonial studies, and Afro-Asian studies.


This article provides a generous reading of the historiography with a unique intervention. It focuses on the political implications of the aesthetics of the conference including the choices made for conference preparation and delegates’ public appearances.


Scathing critique of contemporary understandings of Bandung. Extensive review of texts found in Firsthand Accounts by Official Delegates and Firsthand Accounts by Attendees. Attempts to undo the mythmaking surrounding Bandung.


A review essay of Lee 2010 and McDougall and Finnane 2010 (both cited under New Historical Approaches) criticizing the collections for not clearly connecting historical events to the conference and only vaguely describing its legacy. Calls for a comprehensive history of the conference.

Continuing Bandung’s Political Legacies

These sources take the conference as an intellectual and political launching point to focus on contemporary issues. Official Documents lists the series of texts where African and Asian leaders renewed their commitment to each other in commemoration of the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversaries of Bandung. Arguably, the most important event of Bandung’s sixtieth anniversary was not the formal political conference, but the large proliferation of editorials, blog entries, and scholarship that emerged in light of the commemoration. Scholarly Engagement with Contemporary Politics captures a sample of how scholars used Bandung’s legacy to engage in contemporary political debates through a variety of media and forums. It is worth reading all these sources alongside the legal literature that addresses the same dynamic between past and present in Contemporary Legal Literature (1996–Early 21st Century).
Official Documents

Bandung’s fiftieth anniversary was marked by the 22–24 April 2005 Asian-African Summit held in Indonesia. African and Asian leaders renewed their commitment to each other in terms of strategic relationship. This is reflected in the three documents of the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP): Declaration on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership (NAASP), Joint Ministerial Statement on the New Asian African Strategic Partnership Plan of Action, and Joint Asian African Leaders’ Statement on Tsunami, Earthquake and Other Natural Disasters. These documents are a marked stylistic and political departure from the 1955 Final Communiqué (found in Asia-Africa Speaks from Bandung, cited in Transcripts, Speeches, and Documents), which framed matters in terms of anti-imperialism and Third World solidarity. On 22–24 April 2015 in Bandung, national delegates and civil society leaders attended the Commemoration of the Sixtieth Anniversary of the 1955 Asian-African Conference. Delegates at the 2015 conference adopted three documents: the Bandung Message, Reinvigorating the NAASP, and the Declaration on Palestine (available from the Bandung Spirit website, under Archives). Again, anti-imperialism concepts were dropped and “South-South cooperation” language was used instead.

Archives. Bandung Spirit.

The Archives section of the Bandung Spirit website provides the three documents adopted at the Sixtieth Anniversary: the Bandung Message 2015, the Declaration on Reinvigorating NAASP, and the Declaration on Palestine.


The Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs website has compiled the major documents from the 2005 Asian-African Summit, including the Declaration on the New Asian African Strategic Partnership (NAASP); the Joint Ministerial Statement on the New Asian African Strategic Partnership Plan of Action; and the Joint Asian African Leaders’ Statement on Tsunami, Earthquake and Other Natural Disasters.

Scholarly Engagement with Contemporary Politics

Scholars use Bandung’s legacy to engage in contemporary political debates through a variety of media and forums. Bandung: Journal of the Global South is a new multidisciplinary journal dedicated to such an approach. Assie-Lumumba 2015 (an academic essay), Bandung+60 (a website), and Anderson 2015 (a blog entry) are good introductions. Many of the workshops, conferences, and publications generated in light of the sixtieth anniversary are catalogued in the Bandung Spirit website, which captures the global interest in Bandung. Inter-Asia Cultural Studies and Australian Journal of International Affairs are standard special issues of academic journals. Muchie 2015 (a polemic for a nonprofit organization newsletter) and The Heat discusses the Asian-African Conference (a television program) are examples of how academics deploy references to Bandung in more popular forums. There are very few, if any, examples of legal academics referencing Bandung in nonacademic forums.


An excellent, short, and accessible introduction to the conference for novices to the subject. Concludes with an argument that one must understand Bandung to understand that Western governments are still suspicious of South-South collaboration. Published on the blog of the Centre for Imperial and Global History at the History Department, University of Exeter.

Situates historical Pan-Africanist politics within the context of contemporary South-South politics. Pan-Africanism is taken to include the African continent and diaspora that resulted from transatlantic enslavement. Focuses on W. E. B. du Bois and Kwame Nkrumah as examples of leaders who embraced both Pan-Africanism and African-Asian solidarity (even though they were not able to attend Bandung).

_Bandung: Journal of the Global South_. 2014–.

Multidisciplinary journal created in 2014, inspired by the “spirit of Bandung.” Includes a focus on Latin American peoples along with African and Asian. Full articles available online.

_Bandung Spirit._

Excellent introductory online source. Bandung Spirit is a network of civil society organizations and scholars that was initiated in 2005. The Bandung+60 Declaration articulates the network’s thrust. Website provides a list of multidisciplinary conferences that were held in 2015 in light of the sixtieth anniversary. Also lists titles under the Bandung Spirit Book Series and Bandung Spirit Audiovisual Series.


A thirty-minute television series, _The Heat_, where Anand Naidoo, a journalist, interviews the following four experts on Bandung’s legacy in the early 21st century: Liu Youfa, Jusuf Wanandi, William Gumede, and Amitav Acharya. _The Heat_ is a program on China Central Television (CCTV) America, which is one of the channels produced by the state television broadcaster of the People’s Republic of China.

Kuan-Hsing Chen, ed. _Special Issue: Bandung/Third World 60 Years. Inter-Asia Cultural Studies_ 17.1 (2016).

A wide-ranging collection of papers from multiple disciplinary and methodological perspectives. The emphasis is on how an understanding of Bandung affects understanding of politics in the early 21st century. The collection comprises a geographically broad and multiscalar sense of politics and covers a large scope of topics ranging from social movements to UN projects. Journal issue is a follow up to a fiftieth anniversary commemoration, _Inter-Asia Cultural Studies_ 6 (2005): 471–630.


An example of how Bandung’s legacy is evoked in the early 21st century by academics and political activists as part of an effort to reshape international political structures. Published online on _Pambazuka News_, a multilingual online newsletter published by Fahmu. Fahmu is a Pan-Africanist not-for-profit organization formed in 1997 and purports to serve the needs of progressive organizations and social movements that protect human rights.


Special issue examining Bandung’s history and legacy. International relations scholars address topics such as Bandung’s broad global impact, historical manifestations of South-South cooperation, contemporary domestic Indonesian politics, and contemporary Indo-Australian politics.
Website publically shares some Bandung primary-source material in honor of the conference's sixtieth anniversary. Also includes a short list of online official documents and a short, brief annotated list of recent academic sources.

**Historical Legal Literature**

Up until recently (see Eslava, et al. 2016 in Bandung in the Early 21st Century), jurists have rarely studied the conference itself or its implications in great detail. However, the conference profoundly changed and challenged international law and international legal scholarship. The way that legal scholars have engaged with Bandung has been directly correlated with the ebbs and flows of Third World political projects. Therefore, one way to read legal literature on Bandung is as a historiography of the Third World project from the perspective of international law. Legal literature can be divided into two eras: Rise of Newly Independent Countries, 1955–1974 and the Development State and International Institutions, 1972–1995. Literature from the first era focused on two themes: how global decolonization and the advent of newly independent countries changes international law; and how Third World cultures, civilizations, and countries had always played a historical role in the development of international law. The second era focused in topics such as law of the sea, economic development, human rights, and international institutions’ relationship to international law and global policy. These categories are not definitive; one should instead treat them as heuristic and historiographical aids.


Few jurists have examined Bandung as a specific object of study, yet Bandung transformed legal literature. Abi-Saab 1963 is the best place to start. The author articulates two themes addressed to two different audiences—the West and the Third World: (1) for the West, he argues that the advent of a large number of new states challenges all the doctrines and principles that constitute international law; and (2) for the Third World, he argues that international does not have to be understood as strictly a product of Christian Europe, but rather one can see international law is a historical product of all the world’s civilization. During the first few decades after Bandung, the focus of international legal literature was on newly independent countries (NICs) and their role in international law. International jurists either from or sympathetic to the NICs radically challenged and reconstructed key international legal concepts such as sovereignty, jurisdiction, sources of international law, equity, and state responsibility. In the early 21st century, Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) scholars use this literature as a historical launching point for contemporary scholarship (see Third World Approaches to International Law). Abi-Saab 1963 is a bibliography that scholars may want to initially consult (United Nations Library 1983, cited under the Development State and International Institutions, 1972–1995, builds upon this work). It is worth reading almost anything by pioneering international law scholars from the Third World such as Georges Abi-Saab, R. P. Anand, Mohammed Bedjaoui, F. Garcia-Amador, and Taslim O. Elias. Anand 1962 and Anand 1972 (cited under the Development State and International Institutions, 1972–1995) capture some of the big thinking of the time. Udokang 1971 is useful to consult as a late survey of the literature. Bokor-Szegő 1970 was commonly referenced by jurists, but over time seems to have been forgotten in contemporary literature. Several Western scholars have been sympathetic to the Third World’s position and made important contributions to this body of scholarship. These include scholars such as C. H. Alexandrowicz, Richard Falk, Nico Schrijver, and P. J. I. M. de Waart. Falk 1966 and Alexandrowicz 1968 are both texts from the Hague Academy of International Law that capture the two major trends of the time. Students and researchers may want to start here. Falk 1966 is a good introductory text for students and academics on how NICs were thought to change international law. Alexandrowicz 1968 takes a more historical perspective and highlights the contributions that African and Asian nations have always made to international law.


A bibliographic essay. Provides an early agenda for transforming international law to serve universal needs. Focuses on investment law, domestic jurisdiction, and use of force. Calls for an international law infused with social justice to challenge racial
and economic inequality between states.

A historical study of how African and Asian societies, and not just European ones, have historically always been central to the development of international law.

Exemplifies a Bandungian perspective on international law. Articulates how Asian-African countries do not reject international law. They instead call for a gradual, but pervasive, reform of international law to undo its imperial tendencies. Anand also responds to assumptions about Asian culture and values.

A key text of the time, which is rarely referenced in contemporary literature. Includes a study of the right self-determination; characterizes the Soviet Union as one the oldest advocates of the right to self-determination. Aligns with Soviet Union’s trend for supporting liberation movements against the West; see Hargreaves 1993 (cited under Bandung from the Periphery).

Written by an Egyptian law professor and politician who would later become the secretary-general of the UN. Examines five “currents” within the Afro-Asian Movement: Asianism, Islam, Arabism, Africanism, and Marxism. A sweeping study of ideational and diplomatic history. Notes the tensions within and among the currents.

A widely referenced text. Thoroughly studies how the advent of news states has transformed international legal doctrine and practice.

Surveys how new states have changed the doctrinal and theoretical implications of international law. Notable for its extensive references and the fact that it was written right before the decline of the Third World project.

The Development State and International Institutions, 1972–1995
The two themes of the previous decades continued during this era—namely how global decolonization changes international law and how Third World civilizations had always played a historical role in the development of international law. This section...
focuses on new points of emphasis of that time: law of the sea, economic development, human rights, and international institutions’ relationship to international law and global policy. Many jurists from the time of *Rise of Newly Independent Countries, 1955–1974* continued writing during this era (see Anand 1972). But new voices arose such as B. S. Chimni, M. Sornorajah, Kabir-ur-Rahman Khan, R. Khan, and Ibrahim Shihata. Snyder and Sathirarthai 1987 and United Nations Library 1983 provide a representative collection of these writers from the Third World and other sympathetic perspectives that students and researchers alike should consult. United Nations Library 1983 takes Bandung at its moment of departure and builds upon the work of Abi-Saab 1963 (cited under *Rise of Newly Independent Countries, 1955–1974*). In contrast, Tamanaha 1995 is an example of a legal bibliography that focuses on the Third World in a way that is not significantly influenced by Bandung; with this counterexample, scholars can therefore appreciate how Bandung influenced international legal writing and understandings of the Third World. Masud 1984 provides a summary of the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee. This committee was a direct product of Bandung. Park 1987 describes the Third World in institutional and legal terms, and (briefly) references Bandung as a foundational moment. Neoh 1991–1992 examines Chinese foreign policy and relies on Bandung history to explain the present. Sucharitkul 1986–1987 studies how Bandung instigated change in human rights. Aside from the Non-Aligned Movement, the United Nations General Assembly 1974 was one of the most significant post-Bandung Third World challenges to international law and warrants a bibliography unto itself.


Based on a series of lectures in 1970. Example of how international lawyers concerned with newly independent countries or the Third World, were turning much of their attention to questions of economic development.


Begins with a short introduction to the work of the committee. Surveys more recent agenda: law of the sea, exclusive economic zones, protection of marine environment, mutual judicial assistance, trade law, and regional industrial cooperation. Good to consult before researching the committee’s reports and sessions.


Analyzes China’s perspective and relationship with Hong Kong against the backdrop of the Chinese government’s foreign relations policies, including those derived from Bandung. Written in anticipation of sovereignty over Hong Kong being transferred from the United Kingdom to the People’s Republic of China in 1997.


Describes the Third World in institutional and legal terms. Treats the Third World project as the same as the Non-Aligned Movement. Even though Park considers Bandung as a predecessor to NAM, acknowledges that not all Bandung delegates were neutral.


Many articles in this collection are widely referenced. Collection continues and advances themes from *Rise of Newly Independent Countries, 1955–1974* but with new emphasis on international institutions, economic development, global media...


Surveys how human rights has changed over the years. Notes how Bandung promoted and changed human rights law.


Focus on Third World and developing country legal literature (1975–1994). Very few entries mention colonialism, and "Colonialism" is only a two-page entry (out of 256 pages). Emphasis not only on international law, but also domestic legal reform of developing countries. Contrast to Snyder and Sathirarthai 1987.


The Declaration defined the "New International Economic Order." Should be read along with the Programme for Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, May 1, 1974, Res. 3202 (S-VI) Understood at the time as a continuation of Bandung. This was a Third World call for global redistribution of national wealth and power. Students and researchers should consult these resolutions to understand core international law debates of the time.


A multilingual bibliography that takes Bandung as its moment of departure. An authoritative reference.

Contemporary Legal Literature (1996–Early 21st Century)

Bandung arises in three general ways in contemporary legal literature. Texts in Bandung in the Early 21st Century treat Bandung as the history that one must know to understand the present; this is similar to the nonlegal studies in Continuing Bandung’s Political Legacies. Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) literature often sets itself as critically engaging and continuing the work of Bandung-inspired scholarship since the mid-20th century. Post-Bandung scholarship is part of TWAIL literature, but with an emphasis on moving past Bandung’s limitations.

Bandung in the Early 21st Century

of Bandung (see also Masud 1984, cited under the Development State and International Institutions, 1972–1995). Very little work has deeply studied the history of this organization. Burke 2006, by a historian, uncovers new ideas about the role of human rights at the conference.

A concise contemporary survey on the topic by one of the leading international lawyers on the topic. Provides a historical and political context to international law.

In a small but key part of the article, Anghie describes a Bandung-based understanding of sovereignty. He then contrasts it to a pre-Bandung understanding of classical sovereignty and a post-Bandung concept of democratic sovereignty.

Explores the place of human rights at Bandung with an emphasis on Charles Malik (see Malik 1955 in Firsthand Accounts by Official Delegates). Provides a rare account of how some Third World delegates embraced a human rights agenda. Burke also has an essay on the topic in McDougall and Finnane 2010 in New Historical Approaches.

Traces contemporary political and legal issues in international economic law to Bandung.

Traces contemporary regional tensions in Southeast Asia to Bandung.

A collection comprised of thirty-nine authors examining Bandung’s legacy and uncovering new historical understandings from a wide variety of perspectives and methods. A number of authors point to a future for international law grounded in new critical understandings of Bandung. Prologue by Georges Abi-Saab.

Provides an account of Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization as an institutional outcome of Bandung Conference and
manifestation of Asian-African solidarity that the conference had envisaged.

Assesses human rights laws and policies of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) against human rights at Bandung.

**Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL)**

TWAIL is a movement of international legal scholars that began in 1996. It is inspired by the decolonization movements that occurred in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. Mutua 2000 and Rajagopal 2012 emphasize how TWAIL is inspired by Bandung. Anghie and Chimni 2003 focuses more on how TWAIL is situated alongside the Bandung-inspired era of Rise of Newly Independent Countries, 1955–1974. Rajagopal 1998–1999 highlights how Bandung also limits a contemporary Third World legal agenda. Gathii 2011 is a good bibliographic entry point into TWAIL literature; while not all TWAIL literature is necessarily relevant to scholars interested in Bandung, all Bandung literature is of interest to all TWAIL scholars. TWAIL literature is relevant to practitioners, students, and theorists of international law interested in how Bandung has inspired contemporary law, more than those looking to delve historically into the conference itself.

A seminal piece that provides historical, ideational, and political background to TWAIL. No mention of Bandung, but explicitly looks to Bandung-inspired Rise of Newly Independent Countries, 1955–1974 literature as the precursor to TWAIL.

No mention of Bandung as such. But provides an introductory bibliography to TWAIL.

One of the most widely referenced TWAIL texts. Considers Bandung as the “symbolic birthplace” of TWAIL. Provides a short history of TWAIL and outlines its agenda.

Describes how the domestic concerns and intra–Third World politics of Bandung manifested into institutional and legal projects. Also identifies how Bandung politics limited the Third World project. Commonly referenced to explain how the term “Third World” may be used in contemporary ways.

A short history of TWAIL. Notes how TWAIL is indebted to the Spirit of Bandung. Assesses human rights laws and policies of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) against human rights at Bandung.

Post-Bandung

A small but influential number of scholars make reference to Bandung, if only to critically push the international legal agenda past the conference. Bhatia 2012 builds upon Rajagopal 1998–1999; both argue that the concept of the Third World is constantly changing. The works also consider how the concept limits the anti-imperial project. Bhatia 2012 notes that the Third World often excludes ideas and interests from indigenous communities. Buchanan 2008 puts forward a post-Bandung agenda that emphasizes resistance. Eslava, et al. 2016 is the most extensive legal examination of Bandung to date. All the listed texts listed in this section would also fit as part of Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL).


Even though there is only a very brief reference to Bandung, Bhatia engages with Prashad 2007 (New Historical Approaches) and in effect outlines a post-Bandung agenda. He calls for a more concerted effort in ensuring that Indigenous legal theory and traditions play a central role in Third World Approaches to International Law.


This is a critical engagement with TWAIL. Even though there is only a very brief reference to Bandung, Buchanan considers questions of resistance within the context of a post-Bandung legal agenda.


A collection comprised of thirty-nine authors examining Bandung’s legacy and uncovering new historical understandings from a wide variety of perspectives and methods. A number of authors point to a future for international law grounded in new critical understandings of Bandung. Prologue by Georges Abi-Saab.


Describes how the domestic concerns and intra-Third World politics of Bandung manifested into institutional and legal projects. Also identifies how Bandung politics limited the Third World project.