

A Reflection on the Bandung Conference in the Era of Liberal Globalization*

With the theme of “GLOBAL-
AFRICA, GLOBAL-ASIA:
Africa and Asia in the Age of
Globalization”, Africa and Asia have descended on the Binghamton University Campus and on the Institute of Global Cultural Studies. We have been invited to witness this timely meeting of two continents and with all their complexities, their philosophical, political, social, cultural and economic implications to our lives and beyond. Before I elaborate on this speech, which Professor Seifudein Adem and Professor Edward Kannyo allowed me to deliver in about twenty minutes, this grandiose event would not have been possible without the commitment and the organization of a group of scholars which deserves many thanks:

- Professor Edward Kannyo, President of the New York State African Studies Association;
- Professor Seifudein Adem, the Organizing Committee chair and the host of the Conference, Professor Lisa Yun, and Professor Michael O. West, Co-sponsors;
- Members of the Board of the New York State African Studies Association;
- Professor Locksley Edmondson, a Board Member, the introducer;

I cannot complete this list of the names of individuals and members of various committees which made this event possible without finalizing it, within the African traditions of respect, with a word of gratitude to the Distinguished and Honorable Mwalimu Mzee Ali Mazrui, whose blessing and inspiration must be felt in our work, in this place and the world over. In my tradition, Mzee is the equivalence of wisdom. It comes with responsibility and high expectations.

Distinguished scholars and Honorable Guest and Participants;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Friends and Colleagues,

When Professor Edward Kannyo called me on the telephone to inform me that I had been nominated and selected for the New York State African Studies Distinguished Africanist Award for 2010, I

Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

paused for a few seconds without knowing exactly how to react. But I thanked him and I added that this award is dedicated to the African people, the world over, without whom this recognition would not have been possible. Furthermore, he added: another winner is professor N'Dri Assie-Lumumba.

In any case, here we are to reflect and celebrate, at the same time, on the complexity of the relationship, in a holistic manner, between Africa and Asia, their peoples, their histories, their cultures and traditions, their economies, and their politics.

Let me start by saying that it is with a profound humility and an immense gratitude that I accept this Distinguished Africanist Award for 2010;

The world is at a crossroad of the meeting of cultural and civilization multitudes toward a more complex world system. The new movement contains more elements and voices of multiculturalism than what seems to be suggested by thinkers who support the thesis of the hegemonic domination of one culture. Understanding how these meetings have been taking place and the dynamics of cultures themselves is central to rethinking and projecting a better tomorrow.

Globalization is a tangible and functional phenomenon, as it manifests itself in the dynamics of international political economy, the quests for universal democratic values, universalization of the Internet and Google, etc. However, this globalization is not functioning as a monolithic force. It is dynamics shaped by multitudes of cultures. Furthermore, at the cultural level, we are still struggling to understand how the above factors, for instance, have been affecting or affected by specific national and regional cultures in positive manners. This is the context in which I will address the issues about the Bandung Conference.

What are the Origins, Main Objectives, and General Background of the Bandung Conference?

Since the 1990s, there has been the rise of the Global Social Forum (GSF) with the coalition of progressive groups from different social, environmental and intellectual backgrounds all over the world. Its role, as an umbrella of a resistance movement against neo-liberal globalization and its reformist policies and agenda, has been to influence or to disturb the meetings of the boards of directors of the global institutions on behalf of the poor people, the poor economies, and poor countries. In the long run, the ultimate claim of this movement is to search for an alternative system of governance with a high dose of participatory management of social and human resources, and a strong basis for equal distribution of global resources. The majority of the poor people are located in Africa.

This new movement did motivate this author to revisit the meanings of the meeting of the Bandung Conference. Furthermore, because Japan finally participated in this conference as an invited political actor; and because upon the ideology of this conference, the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) was born, it is necessary to examine the evolution of this conference and see if it has influenced, directly or indirectly by action and intention, Japan-Africa's relations.

What did the Bandung Conference in 1955 specifically mean or represent for African countries and people that were at the time still mostly colonized by the European powers and for the Asian countries and people, who were politically independent from the same powers, though a few of them were still facing serious political instability because of the international and regional power struggles? What were the main agenda items of this conference? What specific role did Japan play in it? Finally, has the Bandung Conference succeeded in influencing, directly or indirectly, African-Japanese relations in some positive and significant ways during and after the end of bipolarity?

Although this speech does not specifically address all the above questions in a systemic or scientific manner, a general discussion on the historical significance of the conference helps locate its main objectives and strategies within the context of the imperatives of the international bipolarity of the world system. I capture its main objectives, identify major elements of the grand ideological foundation of the conference, if any, and describe the conference's policy implications for Japan and Africa.

One of the main issues raised in this chapter is about the "political vision" embodied in the declarations of the conference. The question of "political vision" also implies the existence of an ideology or ideological principle, or norms. However, historical facts testify that based on various political locations and historical backgrounds of the participants, the Bandung Conference could not be intended to produce a consensual political ideology, which would have been incorporated into the national party politics of any nation-state. The diverse voices of the participants and the advocates of the conference's ideals should transcend any national ideology basis in their actions against the imperialist nature of the world system as perceived and defined in the 20th century. Whether or not in reality, the above assumption could possibly be translated into national political actions in mobilizing the people and the states without creating any strong transcontinental ideological basis, is part of my problematic. However, it is sufficient to say that the conference aimed at creating a collective consciousness and a common platform based on the nature of the existing international political economy. What is the philosophical foundation of that consciousness?

Historically, the Western powers created the world system ideologically. As such, the struggles against those powers logically should start by deconstructing that ideology. These powers tend to react to and/or appreciate better the actions that are ideologically based than those which are not. It is so because in general with an analysis of an ideological framework, actions of a social group, a political party or an individual are more discernable, and thus, predictable.

Major cultural, socio-economic and political differences among the states represented were the factors which made the

ideological foundation of their public speeches difficult to reconcile with the common agenda of the forum. But the emerged critics of the world system from the delegates can be considered by themselves to be ideologically framed phenomena as well as the embodiment of the futurism that was projected during and after the conference. As argued elsewhere: "One cannot fully or comprehensively understand the dynamics of the nation-states, the policies, politics, and their international relations without linking them theoretically and empirically to their ideological base. ... the Nation-state is essentially an ideological construct and a self-motivating entity" (Lumumba-Kasongo 2005:152). Although it would be difficult to systematically demonstrate that the non-alignment has been a common accepted ideology among the participants of the conference, it is also equally difficult, based on historical facts and the nature of alliances that took place after the conference, to argue persuasively that it was not an ideologically based forum.

The agenda for holding an Asian-African Conference was gradually negotiated among its organizers on the initiative of Ali Mohammed of Pakistan. The vision was not shared by all at once. It is not clear what interests he had in Africa and what concrete factors motivated him to start this initiative. There was no collective regional interest in Africa at the time. As George McTurnan Kahin stated:

Indonesia's idea originating primarily with Prime Minister Ali Sastroamidjojo. At first his proposal was to invite only the Afro-Asian group within the United Nations, and it was with this in mind that he introduced the idea to the prime ministers of Burma, Ceylon, India, and Pakistan at their meeting in Colombo at the end of April 1954. Initially only Pakistan's Mohammed Ali was enthusiastic; Ceylon's Sir John Kotelawala was willing to go along but India's Jawaharlal Nehru and Burma's U Nu, while both nodding polite approval of the idea, were skeptical of the feasibility and value of holding such a conference. Not until his trip to New Delhi in late September 1954 did Sastroamidjojo, Win Nehru's full acceptance of his proposal (1956:2).

Thus, *le fait accompli*, from 18 to 25 April 1955, the Prime Ministers of the group called five Colombo powers, namely, Burma (Myanmar), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Indonesia, India and Pakistan organized

a meeting in Bandung, Indonesia, to discuss the themes and problems of economic co-operation, human rights, self-determination, the problems of dependent people, and the promotion of peace (Ampiah 1997:39). Colombo is the capital city of Sri Lanka. Egypt was also an active member of the organizing committee located outside of Asia. This conference was a historic meeting in which political leaders and foreign ministers of 29 Asian and African countries gathered on the initiative of the leaders of the Third World at that time, including Premier Chou En-lai (China), President Achmed Sukarno (Indonesia), Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (India), Prime Minister Mohammed Ali of Pakistan, Prime Minister U Nu of Myanmar, and Sir John Kotelawala of Sri Lanka. Who were specifically invited and why? The above organizers agreed that the conference should have a broad geographic basis as Homer Jack described:

All the countries in Asia and Africa, which have independent governments should be invited. However, "minor variations and modifications of this basic principle" were made and the invitations were limited to 25 specific countries as follows: Afghanistan, Cambodia, Central African Federation, China (not Formosa), Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Viet-nam (North), Viet-nam (South) and Yemen. It was further stated that "acceptance of the invitation by any one country would in no way involve or even imply any change in its view of the status of any other country" and the Prime Ministers also emphasized that "the form of government and the way of life of any country in no way be subjected to interference by another". They were certain striking omissions from the list of countries invited: North Korea, South Korea, Nationalist China on Taiwan (Formosa), Australia, New Zealand, Russia (which is at least in part of Asia), Israel and the Union of South Africa. While the basis for these omissions were politically obvious, there were never any official reasons given (1955:2-3).

There were more than 2,000 delegates, journalists and observers who attended the meeting. The African region had the smallest number of delegates from Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast (Ghana), Liberia, Libya and Sudan. The Egyptian delega-

tion was led by Col. Gamal Abdel Nasser. That of Gold Coast/Ghana (only 3 members) was led by Kojo Bastio, Minister of the State.

The conference is therefore recognized as a symbol of unity and *rapprochement* amongst the Asian and African States. It took place in the middle of Cold War tensions between the Soviet Union, the United States and the People's Republic of China, and the continuous march of Western colonial powers in the countries within the Global South, despite the rise of the various forms of nationalist and popular resistance to Western imperialism.

For many, this conference historically became the cornerstone of the African-Asian solidarity, despite the reality of the economic and political domination from the Global North and the structural weaknesses of the countries and states in the Global South, especially in Africa. Since the 1950s, regular African-Asian summits have been contributing to revive the spirit of Bandung and encourage the creation of a new partnership between African and Asian states and countries.

The fiftieth year anniversary of the Bandung Conference was celebrated in the Asian-African Summit 2005 and the Commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the Asian-African Conference 1955 on April 20-24, 2005 in Bandung and Jakarta, Indonesia under the leadership of President Megawati Sukarnoputri and the African President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa. The theme of the conference was "Invigorating the Bandung Spirit: Working toward a New Asian-African Strategic Partnership". Japan was the only industrialized country that was formally invited to the Conference. As a bridge between the conference and the G8 Process, it holds a special important position. The meetings of the preparation for this anniversary were held in Indonesia (Bandung) in August 2003 and South Africa (Durban) in August 2004.

In relation to what Bandung has historically represented, it is perhaps correct to argue that it would have been expected that major international events would have been organized by the United Nations for the celebration of this occasion as well as other mini-national conferences at the regional and national levels. The demands for such celebrations were not totally absent among African and Asian scholars and their research agendas. For instance, many African and Asian scholars ex-

pressed directly to me, as the Editor-in-Chief of the African and Asian Journal published by Brill in Leiden, the Netherlands, the need to organize some of important conferences on the Bandung Conference. However, by lack of financial resources, I only encouraged scholars who contacted him to organize seminars in their own institutions.

Has this major event been, to a large extent, forgotten in the euphoria of post-Cold War liberal politics and globalization? Many people, including this author, have thought that it would be necessary to re-think this conference in the context of permanent struggles in Africa to search for new paradigms of development – as the old ones have been in, most cases, clearly deficient or inappropriate more so in Africa than in Asia.

An attempt to answer some of the questions posed above requires an interpretation and an understanding of political history in the light of national and international empirical facts. The Bandung Conference was essentially an international event. As part of international relations' paradigms, it can be examined as being part of the nation-states' projects in Africa and Asia. Pragmatism of international imperatives also may require that we make a deductive reasoning out of the dominant patterns of relationship among the states that participated in the conference and those which were yet to be born. The deductive analysis from the general rules helps relate the effects of the Bandung Conference to local national issues.

African and Asian delegates did not go to Bandung with the same agendas and expectations. The ways these nation-states were going to gain their independence, their political location in international relations, the level of their socio-economic development and the level and quality of the struggles toward the independence are some factors that influence the discourse that took place in the Bandung Conference and beyond. But participants had a commitment to have common resolutions.

As already indicated, this conference occurred at a period of decolonization in Asia. Although the movements of decolonization had gathered some important momentum in some African countries, most of them were still firmly under the yoke of the European colonialism.

Burma (Myanmar) gained its independence in 1948, Ceylon (Sri Lanka) in 1948 and Indonesia proclaimed independence earlier on 17 August 1945 but it took 4 years of diplomatic negotiations and armed resistance against the Dutch to recognize its independence on 27 December 1949. India won its independence in 1947 with non-violence but there was a bloody struggle between the Muslims and Hindus which was instigated, inspired and supported partially by the divide and rule principle of the British colonial political strategy. Pakistan separated from India by the British signing a peace treaty with India in 1947. Thus, British colonial administration was forced to abandon its former colonies of India, Burma and Ceylon after a combination of armed struggles and negotiations.

There were all together 29 nation-states represented at the conference. In addition to the Prime Ministers who were the conveners, foreign ministers and many delegates from African colonized countries and many parts of Asia also joined the conference. The conference was well popularized and publicized. In that year, in Africa, only Egypt, Ethiopia and Liberia were independent countries.

Liberia gained its independence from the American Colonization Society in 1847. Egypt gained its independence in 1922 from the United Kingdom, and Ethiopia was never formally colonized by the European powers (though it became a neo-colonial state), despite the Italian invasion of 1930 by Mussolini. Mussolini's invasion was supported by Japan, although Japan had previously good relations with the imperial Ethiopian power. But the "Northern province of Ethiopia", Asmara was firmly colonized by Italy. It is necessary to link this general background to the main objectives of the Conference, as Ampiah stated:

The conference was organized to promote the highest aspirations of the peoples of Asia and Africa; that is, positive life chances for the disadvantaged nations of the international community. These ambitions were to be further channeled into an articulate and coherent 'third force' in a world supposedly frozen into two camps by the Cold War. ...The one underlying theme that ran through the economic, cultural, and political objectives of the conference was a sense among the members, irrespective of their ideological orientation, that they

would not be trapped with their experiences as 'dependents' or appendages of colonialism. This was clearly expressed in the conference's universal declaration that 'colonialism in all its manifestations is an evil which should speedily be brought to an end.' Essentially, the spirit of the conference hinged on the determination of the member states to preserve their newly won freedoms and to reach out for more through their persistent opposition to colonialism and imperialism, as well as through a systematic attempt to advance the economic well-being of the people they represented, thereby questioning the essence of the UN (Ampiah op. cit.:39-40).

Although Japan became occupied by the American and allied forces, it was an imperial power in Asia not long back before the conference. In addition, the delegates talked about a 'third way' while Japan was already located in the 'first way' associated with capitalism led by the United States. Thus, it is clear that Japanese delegates had some difficulties locating themselves in the discourse of the conference.

Despite the reluctance to accept the invitation, the Japanese delegates attended the conference after being persuaded by the United States to do so. It was in the interest of Japan to have it represented in a conference that was going to talk about a new Asia. "The proposal of the invitation was made by Pakistan with support of Ceylon, but also a certain amount of contention from others" (Ampiah op. cit.:41). As a result, in a strange or awkward way, Japan came back to Asia through the implementation of many dimensions of the Bandung Conference, as Kitagawa indicated:

Invitation of Japan to the Bandung Conference was a product of international political dynamism in Asia. This conference is widely known as the arena of the union of newly independent Asian and African countries that hoisted the flag of anti-colonialism. In reality, this conference was strongly coloured by the Cold War system in which Asian countries of liberal camp defended against offensive move by communist or neutral countries like India and China. India tries to call China to the conference. On the contrary Pakistan, who was in the liberal camp and opposed to India, schemed to invite Japan, an important figure as anti-communist, in

order to put a check on the India-China leadership in this conference, Japan tries to survive this difficult situation by the passive political stance but her existence itself had already become an important part of international politics regardless {of} her intentions (2006:3).

The Japanese delegation was led by Tatsunosuke Takasaki, who was a Minister of the State and the Director-General of Economic Counsel Board. Japan has been operating within the orbit of the Western world, but it also made an "unspoken" commitment to the Afro-Asian group, as articulated in this Bandung Conference. Japanese commitment to the conference's declaration may determine, to a certain extent, how Japan has defined and dealt with Africa later. Obviously, as a former colonial power, Japanese delegation's position was not comfortable. But, geo-politics' interests and those of world politics must be reconciled.

As a nation-state *par excellent*, an auto-centered political entity in terms of its interests, Japan desired to renew ties with Asia in trade areas and also to become a member of the United Nations in 1956. And it must correct its past mistakes as Kweku Ampiah indicated:

Most importantly, Takasaki's speech at the conference contained an element of apology to Japan's neighbours for the atrocities Japan committed against them: 'In World War II, Japan, I regret to say, inflicted damages upon her neighbours.' And he tried, obviously as instructed, to use the occasion to assure them that Japan had 'no intentions of repeating its past vicious foreign policy.' Japan has reestablished democracy, having learned her lesson at immense cost (op. cit.:43).

This speech did not have any immediate impact in Africa because most countries in Africa were still under colonization in the 1950s. However, since the 1970s, the situation started to change.

It should be also emphasized that in Asia at large, the political situation was still very tense, volatil and extremely complex at the time of the conference as C. P. Fitzgerald, who also attended the conference also, wrote:

From north to south there are four major trouble areas in the Far East: Korea, Formosa, Indochina, and Malaya. The Korea problem has been solved – or shelved – in manner highly

unsatisfactory to both parties in Korea, yet in all probability for a long time to come. Formosa remains acute, Indochina threatens renewed danger, Malaya smolders on. In each case, behind the immediate local conflict is the factor that makes these troubles significant for the world at large, growing power of China and her alliance with Russia. The West has wished to impose settlements of these issues which took no account of China, and the attempts has failed everywhere failed; for where settlements or partial solutions have been achieved it has been in each case necessary to abandon the pretense that China does not exist and come to term with Peking. The example of Bandung, where China was accepted, and where useful negotiation between China and her inimical southern neighbors proved, cannot in the future be ignored (1955:114).

The rise of the communist movement in Malaya was fully supported by China. Most of the communists were born in the mainland. China had both Russia and Japan in its political mind and its definition of security. Britain did not admit that a "foreign Asian power" could have a strong influence in its former colony (op. cit.:116).

In addition to the above matters, the issue of security of Japan in the region was also important for Japan and its sponsor and mentor, the United States. The conference took place in the real hot international political atmosphere of the Cold War politics. Its imperatives and implications were part of the debate. The Afro-Asian coalition was looking for the new definition and location of Africa and Asia in world system. The issue of anti-colonialism was also central, as its sentiment was the foundation of the Afro-Asian alliance, as Seifudein Adem stated:

Invitation of Japan to the Bandung Conference was a product of international political dynamism in Asia. This Conference is widely known as the arena of the union of newly independent Asian and African countries that hoisted the flag of anti-colonialism. In reality this conference was strongly coloured by the Cold War system in which Asian countries of liberal camp defended against offensive move by communist or neutral countries like India and China (2003:3).

In Japan itself, it also should be noted that in the same year of the conference, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) consolidated its power in becoming what is known as the 1955 System of Japan. It was called so in reference to the year in which the LDP was created from a merger of right-of-center political parties (Maswood et al. 2000:164). A new strong political machine, which subsequently ruled the country for more than three decades, did also shape its perceptions of Bandung in ideological and pragmatic terms.

Japan became an active participant in the Bandung Conference in 1955, which promoted solidarity in developmental policy and political decisions among the countries in the Global South (African and Asian) through the emerging non-alignment movement. This grouping later constituted the foundation of the group of 77 in the United Nations. As Samir Amin stated: "If I define Bandung as the dominant characteristic of the second phase of post war period, it is not from any "third worldist" predilection, but because the world system was organized around the emergence of the Third World" (1994:14).

The Conference offered a new departing ideological definition about the existing capitalist system and its main agency, the state. It would be necessary to look at how Japan-Africa's relations may reflect political struggles within the spirit of the Afro-Asian alliances and how these alliances could influence the orbit of power, as Samir Amin indicated:

The real obstacle to the United States hegemony came from the Afro-Asian national liberation movement. The countries in these regions were determined to throw off the colonial yoke of the nineteenth-century. Imperialism has never been able to make the social and political compromises necessary to install stable powers operating to its advantage in the country of the capitalist periphery (1994:28).

Non-Alignment Foundation of the Conference

The Bandung Conference has generally been recognized as a forum in which its political actors initiated the motion of the Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) from an Afro-Asian perspective. In my point of view, this conference was, in terms of its ideological and policy claims, and its international relations' implications, perhaps the

single most important Afro-Asian Conference in the 20th century.

Within the United Nations, the Group of 77 was formed to pursue nonalignment as a way of consolidating strong ties among the states, which were either formally colonized by the Western powers or those with economic and political characteristics of the Global South. The G77 countries are a group of more than a hundred less industrialized countries, which set up as a counter-lobby to developed G7 countries (Adams 2001:89). As of 2001, the group was constituted of 128 countries.

The establishment of the Non-alignment Movement in 1961 was intended to begin the process of actualizing solidarity and cooperation among all nation-states, which were willing to join a block of interests called the Global South. For instance, on the principle of "ideological neutrality" and cooperation, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed on August 8, 1967 by the representatives of Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines and Malaysia in order to deal with the sub-regional economic and political issues within the spirit of finding a common ground to address them. It was declared its non-alignment position in 1971.

As a movement, the non-alignment idea dominated the political discourse in the United Nations in the 1970s with some episodic eruption in the United Nations General Assembly in the 1980s. However, toward the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, despite the continuous visibility of the so-called Group of 77 in the United Nations, with the rigid implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and the so-called International Monetary Fund (IMF) stabilization programmes and their social consequences in the Global South, and the abrupt end of the Soviet Union and its satellite states, the flame of the movement started to weaken significantly. However, with the rise of global social forum, toward the end of the 1990s, the movement has risen again, this time with different agendas. It should also be mentioned that although the movement is well known internationally, there have been fewer empirical or historical research projects developed in the academic and research units on the policy and political implications of the Bandung Conference than what one would expect, given its historical importance.

The Conference was held when the colonial alignments were gradually breaking down in some parts of Asia. However, the United States, China and Russia were struggling to re-establish and/or maintain their interests in the region, while the colonial alignments were being redefined in South America, especially with the United States' neo-colonial domination and control in the sub-continent within a framework of "in my backyard policy reasoning" and when also, in Africa, the ideologies of colonial alignments with their regional nuances, were still too strong in most countries.

In the 1950s, many popular and social movements against colonial policies and politics in Africa were expanding and in some cases consolidating themselves despite the brutal actions and policies associated with the post-war colonial powers. At the same time, reformist colonial state policies, for instance, the French and British policies of gradualism as an approach to the political independence had started to be implemented. The discourse on transition politics had started with the exception of the Belgian administration, which believed in extending colonial administration for a longer period of time because of the lack of preparedness and readiness.

Furthermore, C. P. Fitzgerald indicated in 1955 that the atmosphere produced at Bandung was one of relaxation of tension. The controversial questions were put aside, and the conference did in fact "seek common ground and found it in the unanimous condemnation of colonialism in all its manifestations" (op. cit.:113).

In addition to nationalism, what were other important objectives pursued in the conference? The conference created a new possibility, new arena, for Japan to deal with—the fear of socialism in the region. The spirit of nationalism associated with the Conference engendered new dynamics between Japan and China. It should be noted that China was very influential to all over South East Asia, partially because of the nature of its revolution, namely people's revolution, and partially also because of the existence of extensively scattered Chinese Diaspora. Most of these Chinese groups were obviously not Maoists or Marxists, but they had a strong cultural nationalism, which made them attached to the mainland. China came to the conference with attitudes and strategies not to antagonize anyone or

show moral and intellectual arrogance, which generally is associated with any revolutionary socialism and its superiority complex. According to C. P. Fitzgerald, paraphrasing Chou En-lai (Zhou Enlai)'s keynote speech:

The Chinese Delegation has come here to seek unity and not to quarrel....There is no need at this Conference to publicize one's ideology and the political system of one's country....The Chinese Delegation has come here to seek common ground, not to create divergence (Ibid.).

This conciliatory perspective was more of a strategy for the Chinese leaders to gain the trust in Asia and Africa than a reflection of a process of giving up their socialism. In Africa, as indicated earlier, popular and social movements on the one hand, and reforms originated from the colonial African states on the other, were advancing different agendas: namely decolonization, independence, and the politics of "immorality" of, and/or the maintenance of quasi status quo within, the state by elements of the emerging African political elite.

In the decade of the 1950s, several African countries gained their nominal independence namely, Libya (1951), Sudan (1956), Morocco (1956) and Tunisia (1956). In the same period, the war of liberation was being waged in Algeria. In 1957, Ghana gained independence from Great Britain in the euphoria of pan-Africanism of Kwame Nkrumah with a strong cooperation of Nasser of Egypt who also was articulating pan-Africanism and pan-Arabism. The case of Ghana was highly popularized – partially because of Kwame Nkrumah's charisma and his pan-African perspective on Africa and also because Ghana was the first country to gain independence in Sub-Saharan Africa.

A brief *détour* is necessary to point out the importance of Ghana in the initial Japan-Africa's relations. The views about, and/or on, Africa as defined by the Japanese newspapers in the 1950s were very much fragmented for one to gain any systematic understanding of the problems colonial Africa was facing (Kitagawa op.cit.). However, with the independence of Ghana, and other countries later in the 1960s, Japan started to define its relationship with Africa differently, though it also

followed the British and American diplomatic paths. This issue is expanded in the section on Japanese foreign policy. The beginning of the Japanese relations with Africa started gradually in the 1950s in South Africa – then slowly they expanded to the independent countries following the political prism of the United States.

Although the Bandung Conference took place at a period of serious political tensions in Asia and the unpredictable acceleration of popular and social movements toward decolonization in most parts of Africa, it also produced achievements as C. P. Fitzgerald noted:

Unity, agreement, and common resolutions were therefore achieved on a number of more or less abstract questions, such as colonialism, human rights, the promotion of world peace, racial discrimination; but the major problems of Asia were not touched upon in the public sessions of the conference, nor in Committees. How far have these matters have been discussed in the many private lunches, dinners, and other meetings, is, of course unknown. Bandung created a feeling of fellowship of goodwill; it provided, the opportunity for a new departure, or it was used as a convenient occasion to announce a new policy. But the goodwill must meet hard problems, the new departure must find a way round major obstacles, and the new policy must try to resolve difficulties, which the old policies only aggravated (op.cit.:114).

The leadership of the conference was divided between India, which had adopted its liberal democracy model, Indonesia, which had articulated its nationalism under Sukarno, and China with its communist revolutionary dogmas. However, it should be noted that Zhou Enlai of China displayed a moderate and conciliatory attitude that tended to quiet fears of some anticommunist delegates concerning China's intentions. The outcome of this conference set up a motion that consolidated the relationship between Africa and Asia through the NAM.

Final Declared Resolutions

Despite cultural, ideological, historical and political differences among the delegates, a ten-point "declaration on promotion of world peace and cooperation" was

adopted, which included the following principles:

1. Respect for fundamental human rights and principles of the charter of the United Nations;
2. Respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations;
3. Recognition of the equality of all races and of the equality of all nations large and small;
4. Abstention from intervention or interference in the internal affairs of another country;
5. Respect of the Right of each nation to defend itself, singly or collectively, in conformity with the charter of the United Nations;
6. (a) Abstention from the use of arrangements of collective defence to serve any particular interests of big power;
(b) Abstention by any country from exerting pressures on other countries;
7. Refraining from acts or threats of aggression or the use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any country;
8. Settlement of all international disputes by peaceful means, such as negotiation, conciliation, arbitration or judicial settlement as well as other peaceful means of the parties' own choice, in conformity with the charter of the United Nations;
9. Promotion of mutual interests and cooperation;
10. Respect for justice and international obligation (Jayaprakash 2005 and Jack 1955:28).

Other points of the final resolutions include: economic cooperation (trade affairs and nuclear energy), cultural cooperation, human rights and self-determination, problems of dependent people, other problems such as the existing tension in the Middle East, and the promotion of a world of peace and cooperation. To actualize these resolutions into the policy arena, the state system was firmly valorized, regional cooperation was encouraged and supported, and the principles articulating human dignity were promoted. On the one hand, statism was going to maintain many dimensions of status quo in the world of the states, and on the other hand, the concepts of cooperation and solidarity, and the values of human rights were intended to advance political and economic reforms.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's speech in the concluding session embodies the core thoughts reflected in the listed resolutions above and final principles adopted. Thus, it is necessary to recapture a few short excerpts for the purpose of this work. As he articulated:

So, we all came with own perspectives, with our problems, each one considering his own problems the most important in the world, but, at the same time, trying to understand the big problems of the world, as also the big problems of Asia and Africa; trying somehow to fit our problems into this larger context, because, in the ultimate analysis, all our problems, however important they may be, cannot be kept apart from these larger problems and can hardly be solved unless these larger problems are settled. ... We are determined in this new phase of Asia and Africa to make good. We are, primarily not to be dominated in any way by any other country or continent. ... It is time to bring happiness and prosperity to our people and to discard all the age-old shackles that have tied us not only politically but economically—to those you might call shackles of colonialism—and also shackles of our making. ... I know we directed such criticism ourselves because we thought that it was not the resolutions that would solve the problems that face us today, but that only our practices and actions would bring success to our aims and ideals. ... Well, if there is anything that Asia wants to tell the World, it is this: "no yes-men" in Asia, I hope, nor in Africa... But in the future we shall only co-operate as equals; there is no friendship when nations are not equal, when one has to obey the other and when one dominates the other... I wish to speak no ill of anybody. In Asia, all of us have many faults as countries, as individuals. Our past history shows that, Nevertheless, I say that Europe has been in the past a continent full of conflicts, full of trouble, full of hatred, and their conflicts continue and we have been dragged into their wars because we were tied to their chariot wheels. ... Are we copies of Europeans or Americans or Russians? What are we? We are Asians and Africans. We are nothing else (Government of India 1955:5-11).

Nationalism, self-determination, anti-colonialism and anti-imperialism, and the spirit of cooperation were emphasized in

this talk. The position of Japan in the new projected international and regional relations was difficult to very clearly read. Japan was still strongly aligned to the United States politics (Japan became the closest ally of the United States after 1952), foreign relations and their international relations. It did not adhere to the ideas of non-alignment. In fact, it was antagonistic to this movement. But at the same time, Japan was obliged to work with countries, which have adopted the non-alignment as their policy guidelines in international relations. NAM implies some kinds of "ideological neutrality" within the international power struggles that characterized post world politics. However, considered as a "third way", in a world that was dominated by two other ways, non-alignment became clearly a new ideological symbolism (or an ideological umbrella) that was more important than a simple strategy. While most of these countries claimed for non-ideological commitment at the top (international level), at the national level, most of them had ideological positions, which also shaped their foreign policies and politics.

Given the nature of the Japanese political economy, its place in international political economy and its hidden political ambitions, it did not have any choice but to dialogue and also develop strategies for conducting businesses with other conference participants. The Japanese chief representative in the conference, Mr. Takasaki Tatsunosuke, emphasized that Japan had interest in (1) international peace; (2) economic cooperation; and (3) cultural exchange (Ampiah op. cit.:43). In this regard, Japan has been consistent in its international relations.

To conclude, it is necessary to recapture the most important elements that are related to the claims and ideas of the Bandung Conference. These points are reflected in the grand ideas of the political leaders in Asia and Africa. The leaders of China, led by Zhou Enlai, articulated socialism not *à la Moscou* and peaceful relations, those of India led by Prime Minister Nehru expressed liberalism, nationalism and non-violence, those of Indonesia led by President Sukarno articulated nationalism and decolonization, and the emerging leaders in many African countries were pushing for decolonization agenda with different strategies among which later nationalism, panAfricanism, or accommodationism became the most

prominent. The opposition against colonialism, neocolonialism or any imperialistic based kind of policies was probably the most important single consensual position that unified various interests, mobilized human spirit in envisioning a new and better world system. Could this opposition be forcefully managed and actualized without any concrete and well-defined ideology?

The final speeches and the declarations made cannot escape the evaluation from an ideological canon of geo-political location of the participants. Broadly, non-alignment was *de facto* an "ideological alignment" of the countries, which were structurally facing similar problems within a bigger framework, oppressed by similar forces and subjected to the same global rules of the games.

The Bandung Conference provided an avenue to discuss structural problems of the world and project how their impact in Asia and Africa was felt. It gave hope through cooperation and struggle against all forms of oppressive colonial forces. However, it failed to address the question of the structures of the Asian and African states and their relations to the international political economy. Nor did it deal adequately with the issue of the nature of the ideologies of the states in Asia and Africa. Thus, although the symptoms of the problems were well defined, it did not sufficiently clarify what kind of political societies to be created, based on what kind of national ideologies, as a result of the declarations and final resolutions of the conference.

The spirit of the Afro-Asian solidarity and cooperation rooted in the Bandung Conference has had various interpretations over the past four decades. It has been an instrument of power consolidation by both leftist and rightist African political leaders.

It should be noted that the Bandung Conference projected, for the first time, the consciousness of Third Worldism. The term third world was first used as a political category at this conference. The conference's main figures – Nehru (India), Nasser (Egypt), Zhou Enlai (China) – were already in power. This consciousness led to the movement of global solidarity among the countries located in the Global South. This was a big achievement then. However, within the current global economy, is this movement still relevant?

Finally, between 1956 and 1973, the non-alignment solidly emerged within the United Nations system as a new solidarity group among the countries in the Global South. The solid participation of Africans in its conferences is an indicator of how African states adopted this movement as part of their national agenda. For instance, in every single conference whether it was in Belgrade in 1961, Cairo in 1964, Lusaka, in 1973, or Havana in 1983, the African delegates constituted almost half of the total number of the delegates (Ebodé 1999:82). In the last conference of the members of the non-alignment in September 1989 in Belgrade, it was clear the movement was losing its fuel as a result of internal conflicts and the force of polarization of the Cold War era.

In the last summit of the NAM held in Cairo in Egypt in July 2009, President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was elected as the President of the movement. Indeed, his election reflects the lack of seriousness and commitment among its members to consolidate the movement's momentum in order to deal effectively with the marginalization of its members in the functioning and political hierarchy of the world system. Most members of the NAM, especially those located in Africa, suffer from the deepening of the impoverishment in their conditions, which is partially caused by the contradictory actions and political philosophy of the forces and agencies of the 'disaster capitalism.' Mubarak is the strongest ally of the United States, the champion of this type of capitalism, as it was reiterated through the current financial and economic crisis.

With the rise of China and India in their particular triangular relationship with the European Union and the United States, does the spirit of Afro-Asian solidarity

matter any longer? Does Japan, the second largest economy in the world, in a new competitive world economy, need the spirit of Bandung? We should also pursue, within the solidarity beyond the Bandung, the studies (historically and culturally) of the presence of Africans in Asia which I have started to investigate.

Note

- * Being a text of the speech delivered as recipient of the 2010 Distinguished Africanist Award. The speech is based on a chapter entitled 'The Bandung Conference (1955): Ideology of Non-Alignment and Pragmatism of Afro-Asian Alliances' in my book, *Japan and African Relations*, New York: Palmgrave-MacMillan, 2010.

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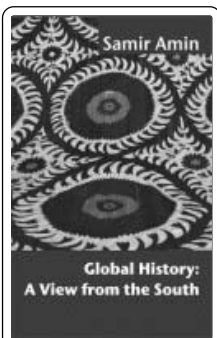
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Global History: A View from the South

Samir Amin



Responding to the need to take a fresh look at world history, hitherto dominated by Eurocentric ideologues and historians in their attempt to justify the nature and character of modern capitalism, Samir Amin looks in this book at the ancient world system and how it has influenced the development of the modern world. He also analyses the origin and nature of modern globalisation and the challenges it presents in achieving socialism. Amin examines the role played by Central Asia in determining the course of world history as well as the different roads taken by Europe and China. The book looks closely at a theme that has been primordial to his contribution to political and economic thought: the question of unequal development. This is a refreshing and creative work that is necessary reading for anyone wanting to understand the real process of history.