

A missing peace: The Asia-Pacific Peace Conference in Beijing, 1952 and the emotional making of Third World internationalism

Abstract

This paper recovers the largely forgotten Asia-Pacific Peace Conference which took place in Beijing in October 1952, and elaborates what has been lost in its forgetting. Moving beyond the traditional focus on the diplomatic ‘summitry’ of Bandung and non-alignment, it insists on reading back into diplomatic histories the emotive and affective dimensions of Third World internationalism in the 1950s, and for the expansion of our idea of the political to encompass them. Turning to peace expressions in Southeast Asia, it argues not only for the inadequacy of Cold War labels like ‘communist’ and ‘front’ to understanding these mobilities, but also that we cannot understand the broad popular appeal of the ‘Bandung spirit’ and later Afro-Asianisms without attempting to take account of the realms of affect and emotion in underpinning and driving them to expression in the contested international spaces of the early Cold War.

Keywords: Emotions, affect, Third World, Cold War, Global South; popular protest, peace movements, Asia, pan-Asianism, Southeast Asia, China

A tale of five absences

On 6 June 1952, the last day of a planning conference to organize a peace conference in Beijing later that year, a huge mural appeared in the conference hall. It was not Chinese, but Mexican: a monochrome copy of a new painting by the famously radical artist Diego Rivera (1886-1957), entitled *Pesadilla de guerra, sueño de paz*: The Nightmare of War, and the Dream of Peace. A Mexican mural in China was not out of place, however, in the internationalized space in which it was displayed. Rivera's painting presided over a great oval table around which were arrayed peace delegates from over twenty countries, their placemats adorned with multilingual namecards and national flags, and it looked opposite to the more famous piece of peace iconography: Picasso's dove.¹

The story of this painting is fraught with absences.

For one, the painting has itself long since vanished, mysteriously: both copy and original. All that remains are colour reproductions, and a handful of photographs of it which are either partial, or catch the mural mid-creation (Fig. 1).²

Secondly, the world it depicts has also vanished into the mists of the past: one which, under Sino-Soviet leadership, sought to build anti-war solidarities across the wartorn Pacific in critique of the atrocities of Korea and the threat of a third World War. The painting features a street scene in Mexico City, with ordinary people congregating in front of two murals. On the right, a faceless military persecutes civilians with Asian features, evoking the ongoing wars

1 For a detailed observer account see D. D. Kosambi, 'For Peace in Asia & the Pacific, Peace in the World', *Bulletin of the Preparatory Committee for the Peace Conference of the Asian and Pacific Regions*, no. 11, 6 August 1952, 1-4, henceforth *Bulletin*. This report circulated wide in the Indian press; see 'Prof Kosambi Lauds Peace Conference', 7 August 1952, CREST no. CIA-RDP78-02771R000500570009-3. All CREST files were accessed from the CIA Electronic Reading Room <<http://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom>>. Copies of the *Bulletin* are in W. E. B. DuBois Papers, MS 312, Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst <<http://credo.library.umass.edu/view/collection/mums312>>.

2 Mary Coffey, *How a Revolutionary Art Became Official Culture: Murals, Museums, and the Mexican State* (Durham, 2013), 56-60. My thanks to Mary Coffey for clarifications by email, 2 May 2017. I describe the painting's disappearance in [author redacted], 'The Art of Peace in the Early Cold War', *Afro-Asian Visions* <<https://tinyurl.com/theartofpeace>>

in Vietnam, Malaya and Korea, while a Soviet soldier is crucified beneath a sky dominated by the dreaded nuclear cloud. Flames engulf the background, and are extinguished in the mural on the left. There, we find Mao and Stalin offering a peace treaty across the Pacific to the shrunken caricatures of Great Britain, France, and the United States. Below the murals, copies of the Stockholm Appeal, a signature campaign initiated in 1950 by French communist physicist Frédéric Joliot-Curie, are being handed out and signed, notably by Frida Kahlo, renowned artist and Rivera's lover. These images capture, crucially, a world as yet unsullied by the Soviet invasions of Poland and Hungary in 1956, which had a catastrophic impact on the unity of the world peace movement.³

Fig. 1 *Untitled photograph*, Juan Guzmán, 1951.

Thirdly: the Chinese conference to which this painting somehow made its way across the world, and the mass peace movements surrounding it, have also been largely forgotten.⁴ The Asia-Pacific Peace Conference (APC) was convened between 2-12 October 1952 in Beijing, amidst rising concerns over wars of aggression in Asia, and an unsatisfactory postwar peace with Japan.⁵ Organized by the China Peace Council (CPC),⁶ a loose subsidiary of the Soviet-dominated World Peace Council (WPC), it addressed itself to the most pressing regional questions of the day for Asia: the rearmament of Japan and an escalating American

3 On the hemorrhaging of WPC support by European peace groups after 1956, see Lawrence Wittner, *One World or None: A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement through 1953*, vol. 1 (Stanford: SUP, 1993), 94-7.

4 Accounts of Chinese diplomatic activity rarely mention this conference or only in the passing, en route to more 'important' diplomatic endeavours at Geneva and Bandung. See e.g. Gregg Brazinsky, *Winning the Third World* (Durham: UNC Press, 2017), 76-77; Hans Van de Ven, *China At War* (Cambridge: HUP, 2018). Amy King marks it as the start of Chinese efforts to advance an alternative vision for the East Asian economic order; see Amy King, *China–Japan Relations After World War Two* (Cambridge: CUP, 2016), 82-86. One of the fuller accounts, focused on New Zealand peace activist Rewi Alley, can be found in Anne-Marie Brady, *Friend of China: The Myth of Rewi Alley* (London: Routledge, 2003), ch. 7.

5 On the postwar peace, see Hans Van de Ven, 'The 1952 Treaty of Peace between China and Japan,' in *Negotiating China's Destiny in World War II*, ed. Van de Ven et al (Stanford: SUP, 2014), 220-44.

6 *Zhongguo baowei shijie heping dahui quanguo weiyuanhui*, abbreviated *He da*.

militarism many perceived at work in ongoing wars in Korea, Vietnam and Malaya;⁷ the failures of the UN; the threat of biological and atomic warfare; but also questions concerning cultural exchange, national independence and women's rights.⁸ It drew together over 470 peace activists and observers representing nearly 50 countries. By far the largest Asian contingents hailed from South and Southeast Asia (98 and 89 delegates respectively, excluding unofficial or unlisted observers). These are worth comparing to the number of delegates from Northeast Asia (35), where many (particularly Japanese) were prevented from attending, and to the suspiciously low number of delegates from the Soviet Union (9). There were also, curiously for the age, over a hundred from Latin America, including Chile, Colombia and Mexico, the latter from whence was borne the Rivera copy in the hands of Mexican philosopher-logician Eli de Gortari.⁹ Their presence defies conventional historical trajectories of Third World internationalism, which typically trace the inclusion of Latin America to the Tricontinental in Havana, 1966; the APC thus suggests a different lineage, one that has received too little attention to date.¹⁰

Fourth: the WPC itself has also largely vanished from histories of world peace movements, from whose Euro-American historiography the APC is also absent.¹¹ An organization widely perceived to be little more than an arm of Soviet foreign policy, the WPC has a scant

7 For a contemporary Chinese interpretation of the Malayan war as part of anti-American struggle, see Bing Hua, *Mei-Di qinlüe zhong de Malaiya* (Beijing, 1951).

8 *Bulletin of the Peace Conference of the Asian and Pacific Regions* (Peking, 1952); henceforth *APC Bulletin*. The preparatory documentation is in Yenching library: *Yazhou ji Taipingyang quyü Heping Huiyi Choubei Huiyi* (Beijing: Shijiezhishi chubanshe, 1952).

9 Ke Qin, 'Moxige heping zhanshi—Huajia Liweila', *Shijie zhishi* (July, 1952).

10 Han Xu notes the 'xishui changliu, wenbu qianjin' (A steady trickle makes steady progress) principle characterizing China's diplomatic approach to newly-independent Latin American countries; see 'Mao Zedong de minjian waijiao sixiang he zhongyao juece,' in *Mao Zedong waijiao sixiang yanjiu*, ed. Pei Jianzheng (Beijing: Shijiezhishi, 1994), 56. Analysis of Latin American involvement is beyond my expertise and will not be attempted here. On the Tricontinental see Reza, this issue.

11 Indicatively, April Carter, *Peace Movements: International Protest and World Politics Since 1945* (London, 1992); Wittner, *One World*; Gertrude Bussey and Margaret Tims, *Pioneers for Peace: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-1965* (London, 1980). There is no discussion of the APC in the above.

historiography which tends to adopt either a critical or vindictory register.¹² Undoubtedly, it was structurally deformed through its association with Soviet foreign policy; as Günter Wernicke points out, ‘there is no doubt that the inherent tendency of the communist parties to monopolize political power, and to exclude, if not discredit and persecute, people of other opinions, set a fatal stamp on the work of the communist-dominated World Peace Council.’¹³ And yet it should be possible also to recognize that, like many macrostructures of Cold War geopolitics, the motivations and agendas of both the Chinese organizers of the APC as well as its attendees were by no means reducible to Soviet foreign policy. The WPC’s activities outside Europe have been the substantive subject of investigation only by Patrick Iber, on Latin America.¹⁴ Case studies of the WPC are virtually nonexistent for Asia; a full institutional accounting of the WPC has yet to be written, if indeed it ever can be. To this end, in recovering the APC from obscurity, I also recover a case study of how the WPC functioned in Asia.¹⁵ As elaborated below, it offered a framework for sub-diplomatic encounters and mobilities in a world not yet comprised of uncontested sovereign nation-states, particularly in organizing conferences. Stephen Legge and Jake Hodder characterize conferences as ‘convergence spaces’—‘enmeshed in wider geographies of travel, mobility and circulation which sustain “the international” as a political and social construction,’ as well as for ‘encounters...between those whose political trajectories may otherwise be vastly dissimilar.’¹⁶ There is value, I suggest, in peering closely into spaces created by WPC activity in Asia, to examine what kind of internationalism they produced, and how this forces a reckoning of what precisely the ‘global Cold War’ meant *in situ*.

12 For vindictory accounts, see Günter Wernicke, ‘The Communist-Led World Council of Peace and Western Peace Movements,’ *Peace and Change* 23:3 (1998), 265-311; Geoffrey Roberts, ‘Averting Armageddon,’ in *Oxford Handbook of the History of Communism*, ed. Stephen Smith (Oxford, 2013).

13 Wernicke, ‘The Communist-Led World Council of Peace,’ 298.

14 Patrick Iber, *Neither Peace Nor Freedom: The Cultural Cold War in Latin America* (Cambridge: HUP, 2015).

15 Others in this issue touch on the WPC in India (Stolte) and Egypt (Abou-el-Fadl).

16 Jake Hodder, et al., ‘Introduction: Historical Geographies of Internationalism, 1900-1950,’ *Political Geography* 49 (2015), 41; Jake Hodder, ‘Conferencing the International At the World Pacifist Meeting, 1949,’ *Political Geography* 49 (2015): 40-50.

A final, fifth absence in this story is what I identify as a ‘missing peace’ in the making of Third World internationalism in the Cold War. This article contends that ‘peace’ was a political idea with widespread purchase in Third World internationalism: that it has been ignored in high diplomatic accounts of the Cold War, and more perniciously labelled as ‘communist’, but that it nonetheless gave shape to broader agendas and actions—among them the idea of peaceful coexistence, non-alignment, anti-colonialism and elements of mass popular Afro-Asianism—which were sustained in multivocal forms beyond the Cold War rupture of 1956. I suggest, therefore, that peace movements in Asia are best understood as part of a broader response to the Cold War in a decolonial context. As I discuss below, they also visibilize an emotive mode of internationalist engagement that, in trying to understand the full dimensions of Afro-Asianism, we ought not ignore.

In accounting for these absences, this paper offers two historiographical interventions.

The first, in asking why there is a ‘missing Asian peace’ in histories of peace movements, calls for an unmaking of hegemonic conceptions of the notion of peace. As one scholar put it, ‘much of what could be considered peace activism in [Southeast Asia] has been absorbed into democracy movements, separatist movements or the broader movement for human rights’, and that analyses of peace movements ‘maintain their Northern perspective...that conflicts which are of greatest concern to people in the North are the main targets of the international peace movement.’¹⁷ In the early Cold War, the principal target of peace activity by Western activists was nuclear disarmament; the absence of Third World disarmament groups has been taken to denote ‘the non-existence of a peace movement’.¹⁸ Yet disarmament was only one of many demands made by Asian peace movements, alongside self-determination, dignity, liberation, and others arising from conditions of underdevelopment; they might thus consist in ‘a struggle for basic rights that the peace movement in the West has long since taken for

17 Thushara Dibley, ‘Activism and Aid: Shaping the Peace Movement in Timor-Leste,’ in *Social Activism in Southeast Asia*, ed. Michele Ford (London: Routledge, 2012), 140.

18 Chris Smith, ‘Disarmament, Peace Movements and the Third World,’ *Third World quarterly* 6:4 (1984), 906.

granted.¹⁹ The African-American civil rights activist W. E. B. DuBois, recognized this: for him, ‘peace was not the absence of conflict, but the realization of social justice and human equality, which would make war unnecessary.’²⁰ Thus peace in a decolonial context was conceivable in DuBoisian terms: the absence of imperialist aggression and militarism, the achievement of national self-determination, the realization of social justice and racial equality.²¹ In recovering the APC and the political sentiments it embodied, we might thus begin to push back against ‘global North’ conceptions of peace movements to reconstitute anti-colonial Afro-Asianism itself as one of the largest peace movements in history.

The second intervention concerns the role of emotion in the international expression of peace activity in Asia. How might we account for the relative obscurity in Cold War scholarship of the APC, compared to China’s well-elaborated roles at Geneva and Bandung?²² In part, this may be because it was an ‘unofficial’ and non-diplomatic conference; it featured no Zhou Enlais, Nehrus or Sukarnos, but instead schoolteachers, monks, lawyers, economists, historians, musicians, and others not normally classified as ‘diplomats’. Among them was a significant cohort of women, roughly one third of the participants.²³ This is significant for a Cold War historiography that suffers from a narrowly male, ‘high diplomatic’ focus and is in desperate need of subalternizing. Newer Cold War scholarship is beginning to shift beyond accounts of superpower conflict to ask, instead, how the Cold War encompassed a wider variety of agendas than bloc politics recognized, what surprising solidarities it permitted

19 *Ibid.* See also Roland Burke, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights* (Philadelphia: UPenn Press, 2010).

20 Manning Marable, ‘Peace and Black Liberation: The Contributions of W.E.B. DuBois,’ *Science & Society* 47:4 (1983), 397-98.

21 Günter Wernicke makes this point differently: ‘In the Marxist understanding...peace and socialism are inextricably linked, since socialism sets out to replace that very imperialist system which inevitably breeds war.’ Wernicke, ‘World Council of Peace,’ 267.

22 On these, Chen Jian, *Mao’s China and the Cold War* (Durham: UNC Press, 2001).

23 On how narrowly-conceived notions of international diplomacy tend to exclude women’s diplomatic activities, see Gillian Youngs, ‘Feminist International Relations: A Contradiction in Terms?’ *International Affairs* 80:1 (2004), 75-87; Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: UC Press, 1989); Cynthia Cockburn, *War, Women’s Activism and Feminist Analysis* (London: Zed Books, 2007).

beneath a hegemonic geopolitics, and more ambitiously but rarely, how this era was actually experienced, remembered, enacted, and *felt* by ordinary people.²⁴

This might give us another clue as to why the APC has been largely forgotten. The conference is often said to have had no ‘concrete’ outcomes (in the narrow geopolitical sense of the term). Neither, we might say, did Bandung. But, as Chris Lee suggests, the most momentous result from Bandung may have been ‘the *feeling* of political possibility presented through this first occasion of “Third World” solidarity’.²⁵ We might say the same of Beijing in 1952. The APC undoubtedly had a long-term impact in promoting the idea of ‘peaceful coexistence’ expressed at Bandung; it shaped the non-aligned movement, helped convince Third World leaders about China’s successes, and won friends and sympathizers for an internationally isolated PRC.²⁶ But as I show, the APC was also a monumentally emotive affair, opening new possibilities in an international space for solidarity and mobility, and for the expression and granting of alternative forms of social justice. This makes it of a piece with other expressions of popular Third World internationalism collected in this special issue, many of which have been eclipsed by the diplomatic salience of Bandung in narratives of the Third World. Their forgetting may be due to an aversion to the explanatory power of emotions in histories of internationalism, long a field dominated by diplomatic, legal and intellectual historians who ‘deal with emotion only incidentally’.²⁷

24 On this shift, see Odd Arne Westad, ‘The Cold War and the International History of the Twentieth Century,’ in *The Cambridge History of the Cold War*, vol. 1, ed. Melvyn Leffler and Odd Arne Westad (Cambridge: CUP, 2011). On unexpected encounters, see e.g. Heather Goodall, ‘Uneasy Comrades: Tuk Subianto, Elliot V. Elliott and the Cold War,’ *Indonesia and the Malay World* 40:117 (2012): 209-30. Studies of the Cold War highlighting experiences of ordinary people include Masuda Hajimu, *Cold War Crucible: The Korean Conflict and the Postwar World* (Cambridge: HUP, 2015); Heonik Kwon, *Ghosts of War in Vietnam* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008); Christina Klein, *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945-1961* (Berkeley: UC Press, 2003).

25 Christopher Lee, ed. *Making a World After Empire: The Bandung Moment and Its Political Afterlives* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2010), 15.

26 Van de Ven, *China At War*, 269. See also Lee, *Making a World After Empire*, 11.

27 Roland Burke, ‘Emotional Diplomacy and Human Rights At the United Nations,’ *Human rights quarterly* 39:2 (2017), 276. Useful works on the history of emotions in international diplomacy are Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, ‘Fear No More: Emotions

What is at stake in forgetting the emotive dimensions of Third World internationalism? As Mark Bradley has suggested in his study of human rights in America, ‘historians...more easily articulate the imagined physicality of geopolitics than the structure of feeling, and yet the historical present is often understood affectively before it is perceived in other ways.’²⁸ We should not need reminding, in our era of global populist resurgence, how a proper accounting of the realm of affect—‘independent of...and prior to ideology’—might tell us something important about the tendency to overvalue ‘the role of reason and rationality in politics’, resulting in ‘too disembodied an account of the ways in which people actually form their political opinions and judgments.’²⁹ The era under consideration here, too—roughly speaking, the first half of the twentieth century as a precursor to the decolonial age—was monumentally emotional, comprising a continuous history of moments in which revolutionary action fused easily with internationalist demands for peace. In China, anti-war and anti-Japanese feeling amplified popular dismay at the descent into militant warlordism, driving thousands to protest against the Treaty of Versailles in 1919; Chinese communists allied this discontent to an anti-imperialist project elaborated globally by the Comintern throughout the 1920s and 30s. In Southeast Asia, the period immediately following WWII overflowed with revolutionary utopianisms, captured as much by impassioned arguments for colonial freedoms as by an abhorrence, and fatigue, for war. Such sentiments are elusive, discernible at best, as Neta Crawford counsels, through inquiring into ‘practices of representation, narrative, gestures, and other ways of communicating feelings and beliefs.’³⁰

and World Politics,’ *Review of International Studies* 34, supp. 1 (2008): 115-35; Neta Crawford, ‘The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships,’ *International security* 24, no. 4 (2000): 116–56. My thanks to Lucy Delap for these suggestions.

28 Mark Bradley, *The World Reimagined: Americans and Human Rights in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: CUP, 2016). On structures of feeling, see Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: OUP, 1977), 128-35. A useful distinction between affect and emotion is provided by Eric Shouse, ‘Feeling, Emotion, Affect,’ *M/C Journal* 8, 6 (2005) <<http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0512/03-shouse.php>>.

29 Ruth Leys, ‘The Turn to Affect: A Critique,’ *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (2011), 436.

30 Crawford, ‘Passion of World Politics,’ 118, 125; Bleiker and Hutchison, ‘Emotions and World Politics,’ 129.

Emotion, then, might be best understood as representation or performance: it is ‘the projection/display of a feeling....we broadcast emotion to the world’.³¹ Here, its omission from diplomatic history has been explored by Roland Burke, who shows how US diplomacy in the UN, an institution he calls a ‘global symbolic theatre’, fundamentally neglected emotion as an ‘evanescent, intangible aspect’ of human rights debates.³² He shows how much more the performative ‘emotional diplomacy’ of human rights mattered than ‘elegant legalism or specialist wisdom’; and yet how cynical US officials were about the ‘unreasonable enthusiasm’ of Third World delegations for human rights that appeared ‘motivated by deep emotional convictions rather than by the political considerations which are in evidence elsewhere in the assembly.’ It is revealing that those who counselled engaging with emotions, like interim UN ambassador Philip Jessup, were often suspected of having ‘unusual affinity to the communist cause’: a dangerous disposition in the McCarthyist era.³³ As this special issue suggests, the 1950s was also a time when various aspiring ‘anti-imperial metropolises’,³⁴ such as the sort Beijing was undoubtedly trying to be, could position themselves in the unformed interstices of Cold War blocs to offer a space for the articulation of varied non- and even anti-state visions. These contested international spaces became the target realms of Afro-Asianism, claimed by a parade of alternative ‘global symbolic theatres’ less averse to the strategic performance of emotional internationalism: Delhi, Cairo, Accra, Addis Ababa, Havana—and, as I outline below, Beijing.

To recover the emotional dimensions of Third World internationalism, I use the case of the Asia-Pacific Peace conference to explore how the PRC made use of the WPC to host a global and emotive ‘symbolic theatre’ of its own, and how a close reading into peace activisms in Southeast Asia reveal a popular politics oriented to the international in ways that valued,

31 Shouse, ‘Feeling.’

32 Burke, ‘Emotional Diplomacy.’ On the UN as a political space for discourses of internationalism, see Mark Mazower, *Governing the World* (London: Allen Lane, 2012); Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia, 2013).

33 Burke, ‘Emotional Diplomacy,’ 283-4.

34 Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis* (Cambridge: CUP, 2015).

rather than denigrated, the strategic importance of performing this politics emotionally. I discuss, in the first section, a background of the WPC and the range of ‘subaltern’ mobilities it facilitated which converged in Beijing in 1952. In the second section, I turn to the ways in which the conference in Beijing created a space for the legitimate representation of emotions on an international stage. In the third section, I try to discern the emergence of a ‘structure of feeling’ around ideas and expressions of peace in Southeast Asia which connected the popular, mass and local (the space of Afro-Asianism), rather than diplomatic, sovereign national, and *male* (the space of Bandung non-alignment), to the international. In all, I suggest that peace as an emotive, anti-imperialist political idea was a crucial linkage in the development of more popular forms of internationalist Afro-Asianism beyond the high diplomatic summitry of Bandung.

A peace conference for Asia? The WPC as a framework for mobility

The organization which would become the WPC was a product of early Cold War boundaries. It was created in the wake of the two World Congresses of Partisans of Peace in 1949 and 1950, whose international attendees were forced into parallel conferences on one side or another of the iron curtain, depending on travel permits: Paris and Sheffield on the one hand, and Prague and Warsaw on the other.³⁵ Though there were Asian delegations present, these early conferences had hitherto dealt with primarily European questions of postwar peace, largely the question of German remilitarization.³⁶ In the aftermath of this split, and also due to the outbreak of the Korean War in June 1950, the first meeting of the new WPC, held in Berlin in February 1951, saw a decisive widening of its remit of consideration to problems concerning Asia.³⁷ In particular, it called for a plebiscite on the

35 For an overview, Carter, *Peace Movements*.

36 A large delegation from China was sent to the Paris conference; see ‘China delegation to the World Peace Conference in Paris,’ 9 January 1950, CREST doc. CIA-RDP82-00457R003900700001-5.

37 On these see Department of External Affairs, Canberra, ‘The Peace Movement’, July

question of the remilitarization of Japan, and went on to stress that a ‘regional conference of “friends of peace”’ ought to be convened ‘in order to dispel the serious danger of war in the Far East.’³⁸

Over the next five years, many international conferences were convened under the auspices of the WPC. In the year the APC and its preparatory conference took place, 1952, the WPC was involved in organizing a range of other conferences at which various delegates who ended up at the APC can also be found in attendance, ‘conference-hopping’ from one to the other: the Moscow Economic Conference (MEC) (3-12 April), the International Conference in Defence of Children in Vienna (12-16 April), the Third Extraordinary Session of the WPC in Berlin, dealing with germ warfare in Korea (1-6 July), and the Congress of Peoples for Peace in Vienna (12-19 December). To take one example of such ‘conference-hopping’: of the Burmese delegation to the Preparatory Conference in June 1952, two of them, U Hla and Thakin Lu Aye, travelled straight to Beijing from the MEC, while one of the unofficial Burmese observers, Daw Khin Hla (President of the All-Burma Women’s Freedom League), travelled to Beijing from the Vienna Children’s conference.³⁹

As Francisca de Haan has cautioned for the Women’s International Democratic Federation (WIDF), rather than seeing such individuals ‘in a rigid Cold War framework or through a homogenized, anti-communist lens, *mobility* seem a keyword for understanding them.’⁴⁰

1952, A1838, 3004/13/10, Singapore National Archives (SNA).

38 ‘Soviet Reactions to US-Sponsored Japanese Treaty’, 23 March 1951, CIA CREST doc. CIA-RDP79R01012A000400040003-9. China was not first choice for the Asia-Pacific installment of this peace conference; the original proposal was for ‘the convention of a conference *in India* of the Asiatic and Pacific countries which is to deal with the struggle against Japan’s rearmament....’ See ‘Text of the Eight Resolutions (26 Feb),’ 7 March 1951, CIA information report, CREST doc CIA-RDP78-04864A000200010009-9. Italics mine.

39 ‘Security Liaison Office Report on Communism in Burma, Apr-Jun 1952,’ 9 July 1952, TNA FO 371/101004.

40 Francisca de Haan, ‘Eugénie Cotton, Pak Chong-Ae, and Claudia Jones: Rethinking Transnational Feminism and International Politics,’ *Journal of Women’s History* 25, 4 (2013), 180. De Haan and others have recovered much of the global story of the WIDF; see Francisca de Haan, ‘Continuing Cold War Paradigms in Western Historiography of Transnational Women’s Organisations: The Case of the WIDF,’ *Women’s History Review* 19:4 (2010), 547-73; Katharine McGregor, ‘Indonesian Women, the WIDF and the Struggle

Though undoubtedly financed by WPC, I am mindful of the observation by Patrick Iber on the relationship between finances and fronts: that while ‘the peace movement in Latin America obtained a bit of “Moscow bronze”... Moscow gold was elusive’, and that ‘the period of intense peace activities does not coincide with one of financial support of Latin American Communism from Moscow’.⁴¹ It is probably impossible, and certainly beyond the remit of this article, to trace WPC finances in sponsoring the various junkets that dispatched these conference hoppers across the world. But it is not inconceivable that they were more than Soviet fronts; doing so would seem to divest them entirely of motivational agencies of their own. This is especially so given that those who converged in Beijing were not diplomats in the narrow sense of the term, but rather groups of people frequently left out of a ‘summitry’ approach to international conferencing.⁴² The British barrister D. N. Pritt (1887-1972), famous for his globe-trotting legal defense of decolonial activists from Kenya and Ghana to Singapore, who also served as President of the WPC-affiliated British Peace Committee, identified such people as ‘professional workers’ and essential links in the peace front: ‘doctors, lawyers...artists, musicians, writers, university and school-teachers, ministers...[who] exert an influence out of all proportion to their numbers.’⁴³ It is these groups—I call them, elsewhere, subaltern internationalists—who are frequently left out of stories about Third World internationalism, but who were most empowered by new possibilities of movement in the early Cold War.⁴⁴ For them, the WPC offered a framework for transnational movement and facilitated new connections in a shifting international space. In what follows, I try to elaborate some of the many agendas and political trajectories that converged in Beijing under WPC auspices.

In the case of the APC, trade unionists formed a major component of the delegations, and of

for “Women’s Rights”, 1946-1965,’ *Indonesia and the Malay World* 40, 117 (2012), 193-208.

41 Iber, *Neither Peace Nor Freedom*, 79.

42 On summitry versus ‘other conferences’, see Hodder, ‘Conferencing’.

43 D. N. Pritt, ‘Professional Workers: Essential link in the Peace Front,’ *World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) bulletin*, 5 November 1950, in TNA FO 1110/549.

44 See [author redacted] (forthcoming in *Journal of Social History*).

the organizational energies behind local peace movements.⁴⁵ There was a strong unionist showing from the dominions, including Canadian fisherman Elgin Neish and Australian labour organizer Ernest Thornton. John Burns, President of the Fire Brigades Union, was the only British TUC member to make it to Beijing, and was compelled on his return to spend the following month defending himself to union leadership.⁴⁶ Delegates from the Western bloc, harassed for their participation in ‘fellow-traveller’ activities, were united in reckoning the absurdity of their countries’ abstention from East-West trade, which was connected to the desire for world peace, but also arose from pragmatic concerns. As Neish put it, ‘if we don’t trade with these people soon, they will be in a position where they won’t need to trade with us at all.’⁴⁷

Many at the APC were not ‘state actors’, though in this era such a distinction is hard to draw, particularly for Asian trade unionists, who, in their navigation of the perilous shoals of Cold War hegemonies, could fall in and out of power, and back again, with the turn of a restive cabinet. To give one example: Krishna Vaikunthavasan, the former General-Secretary of the Government Clerical Service Union, leader of the Ceylonese delegation to the APC and a trade unionist, was expunged from Ceylonese government service in August 1950 after he publicly accused the government of being responsible for killing the Tamil trade union ‘martyr’ V. Kandasamy in 1947. As he reflects in his memoir, ‘if I had not been unjustly dismissed, I might have continued plodding on as a poor clerk, and Peking and Moscow would not have even entered my dreams!’⁴⁸ But at Beijing, Vaikunthavasan occupied the

45 The first international conference held by the PRC was a WFTU-sponsored Asian-Australasian Trade Union Conference in November 1949, whose principal organizer Liu Ningyi, Vice-Chairman of ACFL, also organized the APC. The announcement on 21 March specified that ‘delegates to [the APC] should come mainly from trade unions.’ Liu Ningyi, *Lishi Huiyi* (Beijing: Renmin ribao chubanshe, 1996).

46 On Neish, Benjamin Isitt, ‘Fellow Traveller: A British Columbia Fisherman Writes Home From the Eastern Bloc,’ *Labour/Le Travail* 63 (2009), 123-24. On Burns, see correspondence with Vincent Tewson in MSS.292/906.57/3, Records of the Trades Union Congress, Warwick University Modern Records Center (MRC).

47 Isitt, ‘Fellow Traveller’, 123-24.

48 K. Vaikunthavasan, ‘Three Months in New China and Soviet Union’, 17-18, unpublished mss., 12 January 1953, in J. D. Bernal, Box 10, Bernal Papers.

same status as Ceylonese state officials: both he and Susantha Fonsenka (deputy leader of the Ceylon Trade Mission to Peking) were invited by Guo Moruo to a dinner celebrating the conclusion of the Ceylon-China Rice-Rubber Agreement, whose negotiations were, not coincidentally, being conducted at the same time.⁴⁹ Vaikunthavasan writes: ‘I could see a twinkle in Senanayake’s eyes as they fell on mine. They seemed to say, “Oh, you too are here!” Well, I too was there, in Peking, as a representative of...the common people of Ceylon who want better conditions of living, freedom and peace. And trade relations, too.’⁵⁰ In addition, then, to the matter of rice and the thrill of travel to China (two dominant themes of his memoir) the APC also provided a redemption of status and prestige in the international arena which Vaikunthavasan had lost nationally.

Women delegates also featured at the APC. Many were affiliated with the WIDF, and already acquainted with each other. For example, in 1947 Talitha Gerlach led a fact-finding mission to India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Malaya and Indonesia investigating the status of women and children, and worked with women who eventually attended the APC. In 1951, the WIDF delegation investigating Korean war atrocities included British writer Monica Felton and North Korean feminist Pak Chong-Ae, both APC delegates.⁵¹ In their understanding of peace, women delegates at the APC juxtaposed a wide range of concerns about the effect of war on innocents with specific national oppressions against the rights of women. And Song Qingling, in her keynote speech, elaborated the longer anti-imperialist lineage of these concerns. The APC, she explained, was the second of China’s international peace conferences; the first, held in Shanghai in 1933 in the foreboding shadow of Japan’s invasion of Manchuria, was enacted under far more constrained circumstances. With League Against

49 Trade deals were one of the most concrete ‘outcomes’ of the APC for China; in the two weeks after the APC, aside from the Ceylon deal, the PRC also signed a Sino-Mongolian agreement on economic and cultural cooperation, as well as a China-Chile trade agreement—the first concluded by China and a Latin-American Country, and signed by Lu Shuchang and Christian Casanova, who was the Chilean APC delegate. On the embargo, see Shu Guang Zhang, *Economic Cold War* (Stanford: SUP, 2001).

50 Vaikunthavasan, ‘Three Months’, 17-18, 38.

51 See *We Accuse! Report of the Commission of the WIDF in Korea, 16-27 May 1951* (Berlin: WIDF, 1951).

Imperialism delegates prevented from openly participating by the ‘reactionary government, backed by the imperialist powers’, this peace conference was held in ‘strictest secrecy’ in ‘a dreary and desolate building in a Shanghai factory district’ in which delegates sat on the floor to discuss peace and anti-imperialism, ‘practically in whispers’.⁵² These multiple logics of international work are not well served by the language of fronts, especially so for women at the APC, whose speeches pressed beyond ‘single-issue’ feminist agendas to advocate anti-colonial nationalism, social justice and even an anti-pacifist revolutionary militarism.⁵³

The WPC also framed mobilities for Chinese *waishi* personnel, who, faced with China’s precarious geopolitical position in the early 1950s, made good use of them for people-to-people diplomacy in service of foreign policy aims.⁵⁴ One example is Chen Hansheng, whose foreign policy work illustrates how the internationally-isolated PRC connected questions of trade, peace and Afro-Asianism across Cold War boundaries.⁵⁵ Chen was a US-trained economist and high-level official of the Chinese delegation. In the new PRC, he served many roles connected with the WPC: a member of both the WPC and CPC, he also served as the vice-President of the Committee for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT), founded in the aftermath of the MEC.⁵⁶ Under Zhou Enlai’s direction, Chen helped leverage WPC networks to get around Japan’s non-recognition of the PRC. He arranged, with an unofficial Japanese trade delegation comprising three Japanese MPs, the first private trade agreement between China and Japan, worth around £30 million.⁵⁷ This delegation, comprising the WIDF feminist politician Tomi Kora, along with Hoashi Kei and Miyakoshi Kisuke, attended the

52 See ‘Opening speech of Soong Ching Ling,’ *APC Bulletin*, no. 1, 3 October 1952.

53 On the challenge posed by socialist feminisms to ‘single-issue’ ‘Western feminism’, see de Haan, ‘Rethinking Transnational Feminism.’

54 *Waishi* work is addressed in Brady, *Friend of China*. On China’s fragile international position in the early 1950s see Shen Zhihua and Li Danhui, *After Learning to One Side* (Washington D.C., 2011).

55 See Chen Hansheng, *Si ge shidai de wo: Chen Hansheng Huiyi Lu* (Beijing: Zhongguo wenshi chubanshe, 1988), 98-115.

56 On the relationship between the MEC, CCPIT and APC, see Minutes to file FZ 1016/18, *Peking Peace Conference*, 19 November 1952-19 January 1953, TNA FO 371/101222.

57 Mayumi Itoh, *The Making of China’s Peace With Japan* (London: Springer, 2017), 15-16.

MEC, and on Chen's invitation, 'conference hopped' to Beijing in June 1952. There, apart from signing the trade agreement, they also added their names to the declaration of the Preparatory Conference for the APC (Fig. 2).

Through his attendances at WPC conferences in Berlin, Delhi in April 1955, Helsinki in June 1955 and Stockholm in April 1956, Chen also cultivated strong relationships with Indian contacts moving between these conferences.⁵⁸ Among them were Gyan Chand, the Indian economist who travelled from the MEC to Beijing in June; Romesh Chandra, later president of the WPC; and Rameshwari Nehru, whom he met for the first time in Delhi in April 1955, and again at AAPSO.⁵⁹ Chand, Nehru and Chen later collaborated on the editorial board of the *Asia-Africa Review*, the official organ of the Asian Solidarity Committee (ASC) formed by Rameshwari Nehru after the Delhi peace conference, and whose remit was expanded to include Africa after 1956.⁶⁰ Chen Hansheng, as well as Liu Ningyi, thus form a direct link between the APC and China's later deepening of its Afro-Asian ambitions.

Fig 2. Delegate signatures.⁶¹

***Wuxi* diplomacy: Staging emotive internationalism in Beijing**

Among the strongest appeals of the WPC in Asia in the early 1950s was its trenchant critique of the UN. Many found convincing its charge that the UN reneged its role as universal peacebroker by declaring the PRC the principal aggressor in the Korean War. Conversely, others feared the Soviet Union would withdraw from the UN, and that the WPC was trying to set itself up as an instrument capable of 'solving the imbroglio in the Far East, where the

58 See Chen, *Si ge shidai*, 103-4, 113-15.

59 For Chen's impression of Indian WPC members including Rameshwari Nehru, see Chen, *Si ge shidai*, 108. Gyan Chand's wife, Anasuyabai Chand, was also a WIDF member.

60 'Asian Solidarity Committee', n. d., c. 1957, CREST doc. CIA-RDP78-00915R000700150017-0. See Lewis, Stolte and Abou-el-Fadl, this issue.

61 Enclosure in *Choubei Huiyi*, 42. Photograph by author.

United Nations have failed to find a solution.’⁶² The PRC gained much from this critique. China remained central to Nehru’s foreign policy in the early 1950s; in 1954, he insisted that ‘the international unrest for the past four years from the Korean conflict to the chaos in Southeast Asia boils down to not letting the PRC into the UN.’⁶³ In Southeast Asia, British consuls cautioned the Foreign Office: ‘any change in Chinese representation in the United Nations [was] a matter for most careful consideration’ and that ‘account would have to be taken of the Chinese attitude towards the settlement of outstanding issues in the Far East’.⁶⁴

Though frequently overlooked in accounts of Chinese diplomacy owing to its ‘non-governmental’ nature, the APC was an important testing ground for Chinese foreign relations, especially in arbitrating ‘outstanding issues in the Far East’. Indeed we might see it as an attempt by the PRC to create an ‘alternative United Nations’ as the stage on which it would enact its leadership, signalling its move away from the earlier idea of an ‘Asian Cominform’.⁶⁵ I suggest here that its willingness to stage this leadership in an explicitly emotional register contributed to, rather than detracted from, its plausibility as a regional leader. Zhou Enlai, acutely tuned to the theatrics of diplomacy, distinguished between ‘reason’ and ‘emotion’ in what was considered ‘proper’ diplomatic practice.⁶⁶ At an address

62 ‘Proposals for action to counter Soviet manoeuvre in creating body of World Peace Council which could claim to have moral superiority to United Nations Organization,’ 26-27 February 1951, TNA FO 1110/453.

63 Though this rhetoric did not easily translate into action: see Yang Huei Pang, ‘Helpful Allies, Interfering Neighbours: World Opinion and China in the 1950s,’ *Modern Asian Studies* 49, no. 1 (2015), 218; Nabarun Roy, ‘Why Nehru Supported PRC’s Admission to the Security Council,’ *International History Review* (2017), 1-21.

64 James Reston, ‘Seating of Red China in U. N. Major Southeast Asia Issue’, *New York Times*, 22 August 1953, TNA FO 371/107010. See also letters regarding this article from Siamese, Indonesian and Burmese consulates to the Foreign Office, 7 November, 6 November and 28 October 1953 respectively.

65 This language is used at the September meetings in Moscow, in which Stalin suggests that China ‘take initiative in creating a continental or regional UN’; see ‘Minutes of conversation between Stalin and Zhou Enlai,’ 19 September 1952, Wilson Digital Archive, doc. 111247, trans. Danny Rozas and Kathryn Weathersby, <<http://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/111247>>. On the ‘Asian Cominform’, see Shen Zhihua and Yafeng Xia, ‘Leadership transfer in the Asian revolution: Mao Zedong and the Asian Cominform,’ *Cold War History*, 14:2 (2014), 195–213.

66 On Zhou’s theatrical understanding of diplomacy, see Li Yueran, *Waijiao wutaishang de Xin Zhongguo lingxiu* (Beijing: Jiefangjun chubanshe, 1989), 55-68. See also Naoko

to the Chinese delegation to Geneva in 1954, prior to their departure, he distinguished between *wuxi* (military-themed opera) and *wenxi* (civil opera), characterizing the upcoming Chinese role at Geneva as performing *wenxi*, contrasting it to the experience China already had with performing *wuxi* on the domestic scene, which he called ‘coarse stage performances’ (*ye taizi wu*). ‘A *wenxi* contains within it *wuxi* themes,’ he said, ‘but it is ultimately a formal, regular stage performance.’ At Geneva, there would be ‘several brother nations (*xiongdi guojia*)...[so] we must perform harmoniously with them, with measure and method (*yao you banyan*)...It is the first time we are performing the *wenxi*, and we must do it in accordance with all that we have learned thus far.’⁶⁷ But in this model *wenxi* and *wuxi* were connected and complementary, unlike ‘reason’ and ‘emotion’. Geneva, was the performance of diplomatic peace as *wenxi*, while presumably, the APC was the performance of popular peace as *wuxi*.⁶⁸ How, then, did this work in practice?

Reading accounts of the APC, it is striking the extent to which almost every participant and observer touched on what Lionel Lamb, Consul at Peking, called the ‘deliberately heightened emotional atmosphere’ of the week’s proceedings.⁶⁹ The conference format featured a daily parade of pre-drafted speeches read out from the podium and given in simultaneous translation to delegates. Text versions were circulated at the end of each day, which prompted one delegate, American illustrator Anita Willcox, to remark: ‘No use in taking notes as we get the speeches complete the next day.’⁷⁰ Instead, she produced doodles of nearly every delegate she saw (Fig. 3), and appears to have been largely bored by proceedings. What stayed with her were three things: the journey to Beijing, the backchannel discussions with

Shimazu, ‘Diplomacy as Theatre: Staging the Bandung Conference of 1955,’ *Modern Asian Studies* 48:1 (2014), 225-52.

67 *Zhou Enlai nianpu*, 20 April 1954, 361.

68 The debate over whether Geneva represented a continuation or a departure from the PRC’s revolutionary policy is addressed elsewhere and is not the subject of this essay, which examines impressions of the APC; see Chen Jian, ‘The “Bandung Discourse” in China’s Early Cold War Experience,’ *Chinese Historical Review* 15:2 (2008): 207-40.

69 Letter from Lionel Lamb to Foreign Office, 6 November 1952, TNA FO 1110/529. Hereafter ‘Lamb Report’.

70 Diary of Anita Willcox, Box 2, in Papers of Anita Parkhurst Willcox, MC 830, Schlesinger Library, Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University. Henceforth ‘Willcox diary’.

delegates outside the formal structures of the conference, and the spectacle of the conference itself. Apart from lavish opening and closing ceremonies, carefully orchestrated instances of gifting were built into the programme; speeches were far from the solemn affairs of UN proceedings, but rather embodied, emotive affairs. Willcox recalled: '[After each speech] there is a presentation of flowers and gifts from one delegation to another...then the band in back strikes up...everybody embraces everybody with kisses on both cheeks, and handshaking...'⁷¹ Less impressed, Lamb remarked with palpable acidity on these 'carefully contrived incidents...apparently less nauseating to those participating in them than to those reading them...Quite a lot of stage management must have been necessary to arrange [these] apparently spontaneous "interludes".'⁷²

Fig 3. Anita Willcox's sketches of the APC.

The entire city of Beijing, too, was staged for the conference, as well as for the annual Double Tenth celebrations; little was visible, in those two weeks, of the violence the party was inflicting at the time on its designated internal enemies through the 'suppression of counterrevolutionaries', Land Reform and the Three Anti-/Five Anti- campaigns. Instead, mass mobilization was harnessed to the task of public relations. Beggars and hawkers were cleaned off the streets; official buildings were spruced up; some foreign missionaries even suggested that 'Chinese people were given European clothes and shoes to wear' for the duration of the conference.⁷³ The event displayed 'all the Chinese sense of theater'.⁷⁴ Balloons, paper flowers and floats thronged the streets; thousands of live peace doves were released into the skies.⁷⁵ Delegates were greeted and garlanded at the airports, and roomed at a new Peace Hotel—nine storeys, modern plumbing, dial telephones in each room, elevators, a barber shop—which had been designed by the master architect Yang Yanbao, and

71 Willcox Diary, 16 Oct 1952.

72 'Lamb Report'.

73 'Coming of Peace Delegates Causes Peking Change of Face,' in China Missionary Newsletter 64 (10 October 1952), TNA FO 371/105336.

74 Humphrey Trevelyan, *Worlds Apart* (London: Macmillan, 1971), 112.

75 Isitt, 'Fellow Traveller,' 121.

rumoured to have been erected in a matter of days.⁷⁶ At the closing rally, delegates marched through ‘an avenue of cheering, flower-waving youths’ who ‘stood in such a formation that they spelled out the word PEACE in Chinese’.⁷⁷ ‘Our Chinese hosts,’ Willcox concluded, ‘have proven themselves superlative masters of heartwarming staging of dramatic moments.’⁷⁸

Perhaps most dramatic was the theatrical reconciliation of India and Pakistan. In the summer, the Pakistan delegation expressed dissatisfaction during the preparatory conference that the Korean War, British actions in Malaya, and French actions in Indochina were to be addressed at the APC in light of their unsatisfactory treatment at the UN, but not the problem of Kashmir. Learning of this, Lamb predicted gleefully to the Foreign Office that the introduction of Kashmir would throw a spanner in the works: ‘the resultant fireworks might...weaken Asian solidarity and divert some of the baleful attention of the delegates from their pet refrain of “foreign imperialistic aggression in South East Asia” to potentially explosive elements in their own midst.’⁷⁹

But to his surprise, his assessment turned out to be wrong. ‘Even if the projection of this topic into the conference proceedings had been intended to embarrass the Indian delegates,’ Lamb later wrote, ‘the result was on the contrary to create an emotional and sensational scene of Indian-Pakistan rapprochement.’⁸⁰ This ritualized spectacle between the two heads of delegation, Pir Manki Sharif and Saifuddin Kitchlew, was presided over by Guo Moruo (Fig. 4). A joint Indo-Pakistan declaration on Kashmir was read out by Louis Wheaton, a black labour leader later prosecuted for ‘un-American activities’.⁸¹ Delegates ‘cheered, clapped,

76 See description in ‘Economic and Military Situation in China...as observed by a delegate to the Asian and Pacific Peace Conference’, 22 June 1953, CREST doc. CIA-RDP80-00810A001300320009-3.

77 Vaikunthavasan, ‘Three months’.

78 Willcox diary.

79 Lamb to Scott, 19 June 1952, TNA DO 35/6594.

80 Lamb to Scott, 16 October 1952, TNA DO 35/6594.

81 Testimony of Louis Wheaton, 24 May 1956, House of Un-American Activities, 4379-98

beat the tables, stood on chairs to see the signing, and the two delegations...hugged and kissed.⁸² Sharif and Kitchlew exchanged extravagant, symbolic gifts: Kitchlew offered a Kashmiri lacquerbox to Sharif, along with Chinese silk embroidered with a view of the Summer Palace, 'in remembrance of Peking where the delegates had met'; Sharif placed a gold cap on Kitchlew's head, 'it being a custom in Punjab to make such a presentation to one considered as a brother', followed by the presentation of a carved Chinese box. Women from both delegations showered the other with petals. A silk banner with 'Long live peace' in English, Chinese and Urdu was presented to Guo Moruo, and Kitchlew and Sharif then placed their garlands around his neck, as though anointing the arbiter of a hitherto impossible peace. As delegates streamed from the stage, arm-in-arm, hugging, kissing and swamped in cheering crowds, an Indian delegate was extracted from the ranks, and tossed into the air.⁸³

Fig. 4 Kitchlew, Sharif, Wheaton and Guo (obscured).

That China acted as diplomatic mediators at both Geneva and Bandung as well as here, in 1952, illustrates the operational continuities in early PRC work of staging itself as an arbitrator of the region. This was a feature of Chinese diplomacy: as Liu Ningyi put it, in international work 'everyone is watching China...every gift exchange, every delegate's statement, every guest received...conveys the entire nation's attitude.'⁸⁴ The rapprochement had been carefully engineered; observers noted that 'the two delegations [of India and Pakistan] were not so close when they arrived in Peking', but by the end both 'appeared to be on very good terms with the Chinese.'⁸⁵ By taking on the Kashmir conflict in an international forum alongside the Korean, Indochinese and Malayan wars, the APC underscored a China-centered conception of anti-imperialism, and gave weight to its claim to serve the work of Asian peacemaking more effectively than the UN. The Indo-Pakistan declaration contains,

82 Willcox diary.

83 Lamb to Scott, 16 October 1952, TNA DO 35/6594.

84 Liu, *Lishi*, 47.

85 'CIA information report', 22 June 1953, CREST doc. CIA-RDP80-00810A001300320009-3.

indeed, a trenchant criticism of the UN:

We view with concern the manner in which the supposed efforts of the commissions and representatives appointed by the United Nations to solve the Kashmir question resulted in a serious widening of the gulf between our two countries. The unmistakable purpose of the Anglo-American powers in the Kashmir dispute is to intensify Indo-Pakistan conflict with a view to making both countries subservient to them.⁸⁶

The groundwork for this reconciliation was achieved through WPC networks, likely through a Hui Muslim by the name of Da Pusheng. A native of Liuhe county, Jiangsu, Da travelled widely in the Middle East, India and Southeast Asia before the war, and occupied important positions under both the GMD and the CCP as an intermediary for Islamic religious groups. On 8 August 1952, Da departed Beijing with a 16-man delegation, bound on hajj for Mecca via Singapore, Karachi, and Saudi Arabia. They never reached Mecca; instead, denied onward visas by the Saudi Embassy, they were forced to spend ‘a very substantial amount of time’ in Karachi instead. There, the delegation was received by various individuals and associations in Pakistan—including, intelligence officials noted with chagrin, the Saudi ambassador himself, as well as Hatim Alavi of the Pakistan-China Friendship Association. Thus ‘the pilgrims turned their stay in Pakistan to good account.’ The consul suspected, finally, that the intention had never been to go to Mecca at all.⁸⁷ Da stayed in Pakistan for over two months, and did not attend the peace conference. However, the key individual he met, who hosted Da and his delegation at a reception in Lahore, was none other than Muhammad Iftikharuddin of the Pakistan branch of the WPC. Travelling with his collaborator on the Pakistan Times and fellow member of the liberal non-aligned Azad Pakistan Party, Shaukat Hayat Khan, Iftikharuddin arrived in Beijing as the Pakistan delegate to the APC, just in time to open the second day’s plenary session on 3 October.

Like the truth of germ warfare allegations, the geopolitical longevity of the Indo-Pakistan declaration was beside the point. Rather it was China’s performative management of this

86 India-Pakistan declaration, 16 October 1952, in TNA DO 35/6594.

87 See correspondence of 23 October and 29 November 1952, File FC 1786/3 ‘Proposed visit of Chinese Islamic delegation to Mecca’, TNA FO 371/99367.

intractable dispute that underscored its claim to regional leadership, and to the APC as a ‘symbolic theatre’ for alternative diplomacy. Lamb later noted that the Pakistani delegation was ‘not really communist...two or three of them...are millionnaires, one of whom even chartered a plane at his own expense for the journey to Hong Kong.’ They were rather, he concluded, seeking an alternative outlet for dissatisfaction against their own governments.⁸⁸ WPC networks enabled the operationalization of such sentiments at Beijing. This is what may have made it, and other popular conferences of the era, so attractive to the Asian/Afro-Asian actors who used them to express a wider range of internationalist solidarities than high diplomatic non-alignment.⁸⁹ In a decolonial world in which geopolitical borders were still fluid, these ‘alternative outlets’ connected people at different levels—from the grassroots and local to the cosmopolitan and international—but also, because of their ‘non-governmental’ nature, ‘leapfrogging’ the level of the still-contested nation-state.⁹⁰ This space, which Beijing so adeptly canvassed in emotional register, was undoubtedly one of expanded political possibility. It enabled, for instance, a young schoolteacher and communist fighter from Malaya, Zeng Xuehong, to perform on the international stage as a national delegate from an as-yet unrecognized country, and to have her anti-colonial liberation struggle acknowledged in an ‘official’ embrace by British delegate Monica Felton (Fig. 5).

Fig. 5 Malayan delegate Zeng Xuehong embraces British delegate Monica Felton.

Affective politics: Mobilizing peace in Southeast Asia

What sentiments were being ‘operationalized’ in Beijing in October 1952? They were not, I suggest, best understood as ‘communist’. We need to pay attention to ‘the way that political attitudes and statements are [conditioned by] bodily reactions that do not simply reproduce

88 Lamb to Scott, 16 October 1952, TNA DO 35/6594.

89 David Wilson suggests the importance of both the ‘operational’ and the ‘sentimental’ in Thai peace work; see his ‘China, Thailand and the Spirit of Bandung (Part I),’ *China Quarterly* 30 (1967), 157.

90 On leapfrogging see Stolte, this volume.

the trace of a political intention and cannot be wholly recuperated within an ideological regime of truth.’ In this section I show how popular concepts of peace are less well captured by ‘communist’ ideology, and better appreciated as ideological effects produced by non-ideological means; that, *pace* Raymond Williams, we must attend to ‘meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt.’⁹¹ The mobilization of thousands of ordinary Asians in the name of ‘peace’ affirms the formation of a new ‘structure of feeling’: one which, ‘although emergent or pre-emergent...does not have to await definition, classification, or rationalization before [it exerts] pressures and set[s] effective limits on experience and on action.’⁹² In this section I trace some of these emergent expressions in Southeast Asian media, and, while recognizing the elusive nature of such an affective politics, suggest its central importance in mobilizing ordinary people emotively to the space of the international.

The early 1950s in Asia witnessed an overarching mood that conflated anti-Americanism and anti-war sentiments, largely owing to widespread disgust over the Korean War and fears of Japanese rearmament. J. D. Bernal, in his report to the WPC Bureau in January 1951, marked this specifically: ‘Everywhere there is disgust and contempt for the American Army, for MacArthur in particular, and...for America in general...Naturally it is felt most strongly in countries which have already suffered from the unthinking inhumanities and humiliations inflicted by civilised white men on their yellow or black “inferiors”.’⁹³ Disgust was compounded by charges of American use of biological warfare, which, whether true or not, had an electrifying effect on the popular imagination.⁹⁴ Many believed America’s warmongering disqualified it from world leadership. As Philippine Bandung delegate Carlos Romulo said: ‘The Americans are so obfuscated by their fear of communism they cannot

91 Nigel Thrift, ‘Intensities of Feeling: Towards a Spatial Politics of Affect,’ *Series B, Human Geography* 86, no. 1 (2004), 64.

92 Williams, *Marxism*, 132.

93 J. D. Bernal, ‘Report to the Bureau of the WPC Meeting,’ January 1951, Box 3, Bernal Papers.

94 Scholarly consensus on germ warfare is that it was fabricated. See Chen Shiwei, ‘History of Three Mobilizations: A Reexamination of the Chinese Biological Warfare Allegations,’ *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, 16:3 (2009), 213- 247.

think straight...[it is] a form of national hysteria...shown by the ease with which they are swayed by demagogues who rise in popular favour by exploiting communism as a national issue. How can we follow the leadership of a nation so unsure of itself?'⁹⁵

Such moods can be traced clearly in Southeast Asian papers influenced by the world call to peace. One example is the Sino-Thai newspaper, *Quanminbao* (QMB), established in October 1945, which was central to the peace movement of the early 1950s, the largest mass movement in Thailand since the end of the Second World War.⁹⁶ The world peace movement had come to Thailand via the Stockholm Peace Appeal and Xinhua reports of its implementation in China circulated widely in Sino-Thai media such as *Kanmaung*, *Siang Thai*, and *Quanminbao*. Local signature campaigns emerged across Thailand by the end of October 1950. A Thai Peace Committee was established in April 1951, and several of its members later served as delegates to the APC, including Pattani MP Jaroen Suepsaeng, and journalist Kulap Saipradit.⁹⁷ The key issue energizing the Thai peace campaign was the government's decision to support American troops in Korea, which 'touched a responsive nerve in a Thai public unhappy with such interference in the affairs of another Asian state.'⁹⁸ At the TPC's first public rally against the Korean War, attended by around 800 people, Sino-Thai journalist and APC delegate Zheng Guangsheng (Suri Thongwanit), stoked public emotion with his speeches: 'The public wants peace and does not desire war now. (Clapping and shouting: Yes!) The fight for peace is right (Clapping). If the government accuses us of being communists, we are not afraid of being communists. (Clapping)...When the people want peace, the ruling class desires war. This is a dictatorship! (Yes!)'⁹⁹

95 Carlos Romulo, *The Meaning of Bandung* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 1956), 43.

96 *Yidangnian: Jinian Taiguo 'Quanminbao' Chuangkan 50 Zhounian* (Beijing: Zhongguo huaqiao chubanshe, 1994), henceforth *Yidangnian*. Also Craig Reynolds, *Thai Radical Discourse* (Ithaca: SEAP, 1987), 27-29; Kasian Tejapira, *Commodifying Marxism: The Formation of Modern Thai Radical Culture, 1927-1958* (Kyoto, 2001).

97 Katsuyuki Takahashi, 'The Peace Movement in Thailand After the Second World War', unpublished PhD diss., Waseda University, 2005, 5-7.

98 Reynolds, *Thai Radical Discourse*, 27.

99 Takahashi, 'Peace Movement,' 8.

During the height of the peace movement in 1950-52, the QMB was filled with new aesthetic formations around the idea of peace, linking individual self-expression to an internationally-oriented social consciousness. News of peace activities, as well as its visual cultures, were syndicated from Chinese media, featuring famous Chinese cartoonists like Zhang Ding (Fig. 6) and Zhang Leping, whose cartoons resonated with Thai readers critiquing American-dominated conceptions of the international.

Fig 6. Zhang Ding, ‘Zouzhe rikou qinlüe Yazhou de laolu’, *Quanminbao*, 28 November 1950.¹⁰⁰

Original songs and poems written for the Thai campaigns also illustrated how peace became locally embedded. Some were composed for recitation in Chaozhou *fangyan*, the majority topolect of the Sino-Thai community.¹⁰¹ Others translated poems originally written in Thai into Chinese.¹⁰² Still others took a leaf out of the satirical peace cartoons syndicated from mainland Chinese and struck a more idiosyncratic tone: ‘They’ve puffed out their braggery, coughed up their lies / They take the UN flag and try to cover up their shame, but they can’t hide their ugly faces... Atomic pencils, atomic raincoats, atomic belts / Atomic bags, atomic paper / Atomic armies, atomic eggs / Atomic, atomic, atomic / Hang it all up and prod it a bit / In the end it’s a bag of shit.’¹⁰³ The tone of these poems, alongside the QMB’s increasingly vocal calls for an anti-American cultural boycott, led to the arrest and deportation of editor Cai Zhihong and publisher Wu Jianzhong in January 1951.¹⁰⁴

100 This image depicts an embalmed American officer walking toward ‘The Asian Continent’ beside a skeleton dressed in Nazi garb, symbolizing Japan. A UN flag flutters from the skeleton’s bayonet, while overhead, war-planes accompany the march Asia-ward. The image mocks the banner of peacefulness under which Americans purport to be approaching Asia.

101 These frequently used X (denoting America) to avoid censorship; for example, Hu Qi, ‘Kan ni X-di ji ge tou’ *QMB* 14 December 1950; Chuan Gong, ‘Fan-X Chaoyin xiao gequ’, *QMB* 24 Dec 1950; ‘Chaozhou fangyan: X-di shengxiang ge’, *QMB* 21 January 1951.

102 Translations from Thai include ‘Xuduo shou tuanjie qi liliang,’ *QMB* 19 December 1950, ‘Heping! Heping! Heping!’, *QMB* 12 December 1950.

103 Sha Pin, ‘Yuanzi huose’, *QMB* 28 January 1951.

104 *Yidangnian*, 324-26.

The QMB articulated alternative geographies of solidarity alongside its critique of the American international, through regional reporting that fuelled a feeling of common cause in peace.¹⁰⁵ Sukarno's trip to the Philippines in January 1951 occasioned a series of articles calling for developing Southeast Asia's struggle against imperialism and featured reports of worker strikes in Burma.¹⁰⁶ Features from Malayan correspondents republished in the QMB called for sympathies among Thai Chinese, detailing with emotion the destruction of Chinese culture and education at the hands of colonial authorities in Malaya and Indonesia.¹⁰⁷ Editorials advocated fraternal feelings between Thailand, Vietnam and Korea.¹⁰⁸ Meanwhile, Q&A columns kept readers' eyes on the global picture, explaining the work of the WPC in preventing nuclear war.¹⁰⁹ One article addressed the affective question directly: 'On what feelings are our peace signatures based?' Answers ranged from sympathetic solidarity with Dutch and French mothers who lost sons and jobs to the Indonesian and Indochinese wars, to a scholar's horror at the loss in wartime of thousands of centuries' worth of art and civilization.¹¹⁰

These question columns demonstrate how different scales of solidarity were at play in the popular imagination, captured by peace as a set of lived values. The Stockholm signature campaigns are disregarded as propaganda without recognizing the way in which they were often appropriated for other purposes. Even within the USSR, as Timothy Johnston shows, local peace meetings were 'transformed' by their participants into 'a platform to articulate...personal grief,' and were often just 'dominated by those who had lost loved ones during the war.' In reading citizens' peace letters and speeches, he shows how these were

105 'Dongnanya heping yundong pengbo,' QMB 17 November 1950.

106 'Sukanuo zai Feiguo huishang yanjiang', QMB 1 January 1951.

107 'Yinni jixu dapu huaqiao', QMB 15 February 1951; 'Malaiya huaqiao jiaoyu zaoshou pohai,' QMB 15 February 1951.

108 'Taiguo, Yuenan he Chaoxian,' QMB 18 February 1951.

109 Columns include 'Da Duzhe Wen' and 'Wen da'. 'Shijie heda changweihui jieshao', QMB 3 November 1950; 'Guanyu yuanzidan de wen da', QMB 16 November 1950; 'Lianheguo yi bei X-di caozong', QMB 17 November 1950; 'Yuanzidan weishenme bu neng jueding zhanzheng de shengfu?' QMB 18 November 1950.

110 'Women heping qianming shi jiyu shenme ganxiang?' QMB, 19 November 1950.

much less about Soviet foreign policy objectives than they were about, as one woman put it, wanting to go to a Peace Congress to ‘pour out a cry from a suffering mother’s heart.’¹¹¹

These affective dynamics are also evident in Southeast Asian contexts, but sought to ‘pour out’ a different set of emotions. In Indonesia, peace iconography found its way naturally into the Indonesian Communist Party affiliated Lembaga Kebudayaan Rakyat, the Institute for the People’s Culture, which adopted as its logo the *burung merpati* (dove pigeon), holding a flower in its beak with the stem made up of the slogan ‘Seni kita untuk perdamaian dunia’ (our art is for world peace).¹¹² Yet peace was more than iconography: it was expressed and enacted by bodies. Activisms in the cosmopolitan city of Medan attest to its embedded affects.¹¹³ There, peace captured the imagination so thoroughly that a protestant minister remarked that he was presiding over weddings whose brides and grooms insisted on using peace banners as decoration.¹¹⁴ The Medan peace committee (MPC) was especially active, organizing peace-related ‘cultural nights’ that became mini-spectacles themselves. In September, on the eve of the APC, it held a cultural evening featuring a theatrical re-enactment of Dostoevsky adapted by Lekra playwright Bakri Siregar, and poetry readings, including a poem by Nazim Hikmet, Turkish poet and APC delegate. The venue ‘was filled so much to bursting that people were forced to spill outside.’ Revealingly, the slogan of choice was: ‘Kutuklah perang kuman!’ (Down with germ warfare); the petition garnered 500 signatures.¹¹⁵ Jahja Jacob, MPC chair, had already served 6 months’ imprisonment earlier

111 Timothy Johnston, ‘Peace or Pacifism? The Soviet “Struggle for Peace in All the World”, 1948-54,’ *Slavonic and East European Review* 86:2 (2008), 270-79.

112 Simon Soon, ‘What is Left of Art? The Spatio-Visual Practice of Political Art in Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines, 1950s-1970s’, unpublished PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2015, 122. My thanks to Simon for sharing his dissertation. On Lekra, Keith Foulcher, *Social Commitment in Literature and the Arts* (Clayton: Monash University, 1986).

113 On Medan as an unusually cosmopolitan Indonesian city, see Marije Plomp, ‘The Capital of Pulp Fiction and Other Capitals: Cultural Life in Medan, 1950-1958,’ in *Heirs to World Culture: Being Indonesian 1950-1965*, ed. Jennifer Lindsay and Maya Liem (Leiden: KITLV, 2012).

114 Reverend Uktolseja, in APC Bulletin 4, 17 August 1952.

115 Jahja Jacob, ‘Sembojan Amerika “perang adalah perdamaian”,’ *Harian Rakjat* (HR), 3 October 1952; Dharmawaty, ‘Kabar dari Medan’, *HR* 22 November 1952. My thanks to

that year for publishing seditious articles. His speech lambasted America for interfering in other countries' affairs and waging war with violence and germs, and pleaded for the importance of peace for *ummat manusia* (mankind).¹¹⁶ Cheers erupted; blue badges with dove iconography were passed around.

The charge of outside interference was especially powerful when it intersected with affective qualities of peace activism. One clear example was the outcry against the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) and other collective security arrangements, like ANZUS. Widely perceived as an arm of American militarism in the region, SEATO generated waves of indignation across Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia as well as in India, where it outraged activists who could not even name the individual countries of SEATO.¹¹⁷ SEATO also occasioned the publication of an infamous editorial, 'Aggression in Asia,' in the left-wing Singaporean student periodical, *Fajar*, in May 1954. This provoked a swift response; the entire editorial board was arrested and charged with sedition.¹¹⁸ The *Fajar* case has not been explicitly connected with a 'peace movement', but the offending editorial imbibes the language of peace and anti-imperialism that characterises writings of the early Cold War era.

'We need,' the editorial writes,

peace and freedom. The solidarity of Asia is the solidarity of the suppressed...Our sympathies are with all people like us who are thirsting for peace and freedom. We are therefore comrades, of the African struggling for the most elementary human rights, of the Indo-Chinese fighting for his freedom.... Our country is to fight in wars over whose making it will not have any say....We are to be the allies of petit [sic] fascists like Syngman Rhee, Chiang Kaishek and Phibun Songgram....we would rather stand with Republican India, Republican China, Republican Burma and their allies in Asia and Africa.¹¹⁹

Many US state officials were dismissive about reactions to SEATO. Memoranda to the State Department commented on the 'strong emotional appeal' to Filipinos of the question of

Chiara Formichi, Carole Atkinson and Jeff Peterson for access to the *HR*.

116 Jacob, 'Sembojan Amerika'. On his arrest, see Savingram from L. H. Dismore to Foreign Office, 31 January 1952, TNA FO 371/101088.

117 My thanks to Carolien Stolte for this point.

118 See Loh Kah Seng, et al., *The University Socialist Club and the Contest for Malaya* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2013). Incidentally it also caused the aforementioned British peace activist D. N. Pritt to leap, halfway across the world, to their defense.

119 'Aggression in Asia', *Fajar*, 10 May 1954.

military bases in the Philippines; on Burmese ‘emotional nationalism...suspicious of any larger power, especially one associated with memories of white man’s past colonial domination’. Emotions attributed to Third World leaders were epithetic: for instance, John Foster Dulles disapproving of Nehru’s ‘strong emotions’ regarding the inclusion of Pakistan in SEATO, or the description of Sihanouk as ‘unpredictable, flighty, emotional, and often absent.’¹²⁰ More astute officials recognized the shortcomings of military pacts: that any gains made by ‘teaming up’ with other Western powers in Asia would not ‘offset the resentment we shall arouse among the Asians themselves.’¹²¹ Others acknowledged: ‘Although in American eyes no problem stands out more prominently than the threat of Communist aggression...to the leaders and peoples of [Southeast Asia] [this] is of no more than secondary concern...their interests and emotions are centered on...“colonialism”, “nationalism” and “neutralism”.’¹²²

These were precisely the emotions that sought performance on the international stage: any stage which offered space for peoples dissatisfied with what their governments were doing in their name. What UN forum would have received a ‘nobody’ delegate such as Umi Sardjono? Sardjono was the Vice-Chair of the Indonesian women’s group Gerwis; attending one international conference after another, she demanded that profits enjoyed by Royal Shell and Unilever in Indonesia be diverted into food, clothing and housing for women. The APC was only one of her conference-hops across the world between 1952 to 1953; catching ocean liners and trains instead of more expensive airplanes, she wove her way from Beijing to another WPC conference in Vienna in December 1952, where she delivered over 17,000

120 See, respectively: Memo to Secretary of State, 12 February 1955, *Foreign Relations of the United States* (FRUS), *Southeast Asia 1955-57*, 563, and Telegram from Philippine Embassy to State, 7 March 1956, *ibid.*, 637; ‘Outline Plan of Operations With Respect to Burma’, 27 February 1957, *ibid.*, 90; Telegram to State, New Delhi, 10 March 1956, *ibid.*, 7, 66, 307-8; Telegram from Thai Embassy to State, 9 September 1957, *ibid.*, 931.

121 Memo to Asst. Secretary of State, 21 Jan 1953, *FRUS East Asia and the Pacific, 1952-1954*, 260-1.

122 Walter Robertson, in Russell Fifield, *The Diplomacy of Southeast Asia, 1945-1958* (New York: Harpers, 1958), 74.

Indonesian signatures in support of peace, before continuing to Copenhagen.¹²³ Two years later she was at Bandung, but as a mere civilian (and a woman), she simply watched the making of diplomatic, masculine Third Worldism from afar.

Masuda Hajimu, in his study of popular Japanese reactions to the outbreak of the Korean War, examines student and peace movements and argues persuasively that the so-called ‘Yoshida doctrine’ was formulated in a grudging dialogue between state politics and ordinary people moved to public sentiment.¹²⁴ In other words, we can see where emotions matter when we examine how power reacts to them. And it is clear that peace-related mobilities in Southeast Asia elicited violent responses that seem almost out of proportion to the scale of their threat. Communist peace conferences came under scrutiny, not so much for their ideologies as for the mobilities they seemed to foster. In July 1952, the foreign office declared that ‘HMG intention is that international organizations connected with the World Peace Movement should be forced, so far as possible, to hold their conferences behind the iron curtain.’¹²⁵ But this proved abortive, and provoked instead a reluctant reckoning about the inherent contradictions in travel control policies that distinguished between colonial subjects and metropolitan citizens: ‘if the Govt is to be responsible for controlling their citizens...the first step is for HMG to show the way by being willing to act against...UK citizens.’¹²⁶

Other reactions were more overtly violent. In the lead-up to the APC, the Phibun government had already begun a crackdown on the QMB’s activities, and the newspaper did not survive the mass arrests of 10 November 1952. A later crackdown in 1958, after a period of increased cultural traffic between the PRC and Thailand, put the final seal on ‘Washington’s Southeast

123 See McGregor, ‘Indonesian Women,’ 196-97.

124 Masuda Hajimu, ‘Fear of World War III: Social Politics of Japan’s Rearmament and Peace Movements, 1950—3,’ *Journal of Contemporary History* 47, no. 3 (2012): 551-71.

125 Des. PR 103/63, 2 July 1952, cited in Malcolm MacDonald to Foreign Office, 1 January 1953, TNA CO 968/262

126 Minute to file ‘Control of travel to Communist Peace Conferences’, 22 April 1953, TNA CO 968/262.

Asia'.¹²⁷ In Malaya, having noted 'considerable increase in references to "peace" in captured documents lately,'¹²⁸ deportation of Chinese Malaysians suspected of communist sympathies peaked in this period: the number of Emergency deportees between 1948-1953 was almost 25,000 in British sources, and well over 35,000 in Chinese sources.¹²⁹ Authorities implemented a sly policy of encouraging visits to the Chinese mainland but refusing re-entry permits, thus enacting a kind of default deportation.¹³⁰ Much of this points to the ironic triumph of postcolonial national-statism, which won the sovereign right to designate, and suppress, internal enemies. The Malayan revolutionary war is symptomatic: having appeared aspirationally at the APC as part of a great anti-imperialist axis stretching from Korea through Indochina to Malaya—an axis which lay at the heart of the Chinese conception of a postwar world order—it had, by the time of Bandung, deflated into a domestic insurgency-in-exile. Later regional imaginaries of Southeast Asia, such as those found at Bandung, and later ASEAN, were 'Washingtonian' ones: they hinged precisely on countries like Thailand and Malaysia, whose participation 'represented in regional terms not so much a collection of non-communist states as a group of regimes that had bested what we must call...for lack of better terminology, more progressive, alternative forces within their own polities.'¹³¹

Conclusion: Manifold dreams of peace

Why did ordinary people engage with the many contested spaces of the international in such numbers and with such passion? This is, in the end, a central question of Afro-Asianism, at

127 David Wilson, 'China, Thailand and the Spirit of Bandung (Part II),' *The China Quarterly* 31 (1967), 158; Michael Montesano, 'Bandung 1955 and Washington's Southeast Asia,' in *Bandung Revisited*, ed. See Seng Tan and Amitav Acharya (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008).

128 G. T. de Morgan, Meeting of 41st meeting JIPC, 7 August 1952, TNA FO 1110/499

129 Compare 'Paper laid before the Federal Legislative Council: Detention and Deportation during the Emergency in the Federation of Malaya,' 1953, TNA CO 1022/132 with Beijing guiguo huaqiao lianyihui, ed. *Kangyi Yingdi pohai Malaiya huaqiao* (Beijing, 1951), pp. 11, 21.

130 Also suggested for Chinese from Indonesia, see Jakarta Embassy to Foreign Office, 6 November 1953, TNA FO 101/107010.

131 Montesano, 'Washington's Southeast Asia,' 207-08.

least if we push beyond its purely diplomatic incarnation as ‘non-alignment’. Why, in the 1950s, did Asians (and later Africans) bring their bodies and energies to events and causes beyond their realm of immediate concern? Widening our lens on Bandung—backwards to Beijing, and forwards to Cairo, Havana and other people’s conferences of the Afro-Asian 1950s and 60s—it is clear that we cannot continue to disregard the role of emotion in moving and forging much more popular, broader forms of solidarities across the Afro-Asian world. The peace movements in Asia were massive movements against wars of aggression in Korea, Indochina and Malaya, given form by WPC networks, but animated by a ‘feeling’ of global justice that suffered ideological diminution at the hands of Cold War cynicism. Those who were moved by it sought outlets for expression, jostling to make pilgrimages to emergent sites for the performance of these emotive internationalisms that had the potential to knit the postwar world together along new, thrilling lines. Those who recognized its enormous potential sought to capture its spirit, most memorably Sukarno himself:

War would not only mean a threat to our independence, it may mean the end of civilization.... What can we do? ... We can inject the voice of reason into world affairs. We can mobilize all the spiritual, all the moral, all the political strength of Asia and Africa on the side of peace. Yes, we! We, the peoples of Asia and Africa, 1.4 billion strong, far more than half the human population in the world, we can mobilize what I have called the Moral Violence of Nations in favour of peace.

Something important is lost in our understanding of these heady, early Cold War years, and of the broader era of which it is a part, if we refuse to take these emotions seriously: both their affective as well as strategic expressions. We need to recognize, *contra* global North conceptions of peace, that Asian peace movements were variegated, social phenomena of a decolonial age, whose full understanding requires us to widen our conception of the political, to recognize the ways in which they constitute a diverse set of responses to fissures in the developing Cold War. These become visible only when we look beneath the thin froth of elite diplomacy to the sea of subaltern mobilities that comprise the missing realms of decolonial internationalism. And in appraising mass popular movements of Afro-Asianism in the 1950s, we must also unburden ourselves of Cold War languages of ‘fronts’ and ‘stooges’: they do

disservice to those who rejected ‘the nightmare of war’, and ‘dreamed of peace’ at precisely a time when the rise of new nations, new sovereignties, new global institutions and a new world order seemed to place such dreams, however temporarily, within reach.