Endorsements

This book covers the significance of the Bandung Conference through a sophisticated set of narratives, counternarratives, and appraisals about the conference. Notwithstanding the goal of many contributors to show its long-lasting impact, the volume also includes the tragic story of frustrated aims, such as the decolonizing of the modern economy, the revealing absence of Latin American states, or the dark side of nationalist-socialist projects upon gender politics. Most importantly, the book is a moving contribution to utopian thinking, a ray of hope for those of us who “want to be allowed to dream alternative futures.”

– Helena Maria Alviar Garcia, Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá

There is a thread that runs from the “Third World” to the “Global South,” from anti-imperialist struggles to the World Social Forum, from decolonization to the contemporary polycentric world. This genealogical thread is suffused with the “Spirit of Bandung,” a spirit of resistance to the imperious West, of negotiated understandings of the law, of critical and autonomous intellectual thought. As this lucid, engaging and engaged collection shows, the legacy of Bandung continues to be central not only to the former Third World, but to the entire globe.

– Arturo Escobar, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Until now, there has been no authoritative re-telling of the history of international law that de-centers the Westphalian myth. Taking Bandung as its inspiration, this book critically engages the third world’s resistance to the Global North and examines the silences, blind spots, and the underbelly of its decolonizing nationalism in re-writing and re-configuring mainstream accounts of the history of international law as well as its operative logics and normative commitments.

– James Gathii, Loyola University, Chicago and Trade Policy Centre in Africa (TRAPCA), Arusha
The intellectual and political history of the world is being rewritten by historians of law. This terrific collection shows how. Law provides a red thread: as a repository of dreams, a tool of dominion and resistance, a doorway to understanding what political economy has been, might have been, and might yet be. The editors have convened the most innovative international legal scholars writing today in a multiyear conversation. The result is a testament to the power of global research collaboration. Each essay is a delight: methodologically creative, full of intriguing facts and fascinating reflections on the practice and potential for a truly global history.

– David Kennedy, Harvard University

It is hard to imagine a more important historical project today. Looking backwards and forwards from 1955, the essays in this volume illuminate the projects of third world intellectuals, diplomats, and lawyers to transform politics and priorities in the international system. Never have the institutional projects that constitute the history of “third-worldism” been told at this depth. Never has there been an equally global perspective on those projects. The quality and range of these essays provides an unprecedented opening to thinking about the possibilities and limits of international law as an instrument of solidarity and global change. This is not only a hugely important work; it is also a powerful political intervention in present globalization debates.

– Martti Koskenniemi, University of Helsinki

For some time now, the Bandung Conference is regarded as an event whose significance has come to pass along with the spirit of anti-imperial resistance it once symbolized. This book challenges such an assessment not only by revisiting the contested history of the conference but by analyzing its legacy for a rethinking of the international legal order, its past and present.

– Saba Mahmood, University of California, Berkeley

This highly anticipated collection is a major contribution to global history and histories of international law. In asking how we should understand the relationship of Bandung to the politics of the present, its authors offer a compelling account of the possibilities for solidarity and resistance that have been inherited along with the contemporary international legal order. They show us that the debate over the meaning of Bandung began before the conference was over, and that the struggle to realise its potential continues to play out. The publication of this book is an important moment in that struggle.

– Anne Orford, University of Melbourne

The era of Bandung is over, and its spirit has dissipated. But that does not mean that the history that was made there is no longer relevant or that the spirit cannot be conjured to unimaginable feats in our present day. Bandung, Global History, and International Law mines that old history for nuggets that might inform our mapless present.

– Vijay Prashad, Trinity College, Hartford
In 1955 a conference was held in Bandung, Indonesia that was attended by representatives of twenty-nine nations. Against the backdrop of crumbling European colonies, Asian and African leaders forged a new alliance and established anti-imperial principles for a new world order. The conference captured the popular imagination across the Global South. Bandung’s significance as a counterpoint to the dominant world order was both an act of collective imagination and a practical political project for decolonization that inspired a range of social movements, diplomatic efforts, institutional experiments, and heterodox visions of the history and future of the world. This book explores what the spirit of Bandung has meant to people across the world over the past decades and what it means today. Scholars from a wide range of fields show how, despite the complicated legacy of the conference, international law was never the same after Bandung.

Luis Eslava is Senior Lecturer in International Law and Co-Director of the Centre for Critical International Law at Kent Law School. He is also a Senior Fellow at Melbourne Law School, International Professor at Universidad Externado de Colombia, and core faculty member of the Institute for Global Law and Policy, Harvard Law School. He is the author of Local Space, Global Life: The Everyday Operation of International Law and Development (2015) and the co-editor, with Liliana Obregón and René Ureña, of Imperialismo y Derecho Internacional. He is an active member of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) network. He is originally from Colombia.

Michael Fakhri teaches in the areas of international economic law, law and development, and food and agriculture. His research interests include Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL), international legal history, and legal accounts of imperialism. He has given talks at Harvard Law School, Princeton University, Brown University, Cornell University, London School of Economics, University of Cambridge, the American University of Beirut, and the American University in Cairo. He is the author of Sugar and the Making of International Law. He is originally from Lebanon.

Vasuki Nesiah teaches human rights, legal, and social theory at NYU. She is also core faculty at the Institute for Global Law and Policy at Harvard Law School. She has published widely on the history and politics of human rights, humanitarianism, international criminal law, international feminisms, and colonial legal history. A founding member of Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL), she continues as an active participant in this network. She serves on the international editorial committees of Feminist Legal Studies and the London Review of International Law. She is originally from Sri Lanka.
Bandung, Global History, and International Law

CRITICAL PASTS AND PENDING FUTURES

Edited by

LUIS ESLAVA
University of Kent

MICHAEL FAKHRI
University of Oregon

VASUKI NESIAH
New York University

Foreword by JUSTICE GEORGES ABI-SAAB
Epilogue by PROFESSOR PARTHA CHATTERJEE
“what remains from yesterday is still ours – but the color of the sky has changed”

The Speech of the Red Indian
Mahmoud Darwish

We dedicate this book to our parents and our children. For all three of us the Bandung project is a claiming of our political ancestry; it is an inheritance that is intertwined with our personal ancestry, parents who make up the Bandung generation, and children who will inherit and re-make that legacy.

It is in that spirit that we dedicate this with love to our parents, Esther Arcila and Carlos Eslava, Joe Fakhri and Ragheda Fakhri, Anita Nesiah and Devanesan Nesiah, and to our beloved children, Martin Eslava and Tomas Eslava, Zain Romano, Arjini Kumari Nawal, and Sanjeevi Kumari Nuhumal.
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Partha Chatterjee

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Figure 8.1  The Five Principle No-s for a New Pancasila. EVA International (2014). Courtesy Iswanto Hartono and Raqs Media Collective.
Contributors

Abi-Saab, Georges
Georges Abi-Saab is Emeritus Professor of International Law, Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva; Honorary Professor, Cairo University Faculty of Law; Member of the Institute of International Law; and winner of the 2013 Hague Prize. Born in Cairo, he studied law, economics, and politics at the Universities of Cairo, Paris, Michigan, Harvard, Cambridge, and Geneva. He held numerous visiting professorships including at Harvard, New York University, and Universities of Tunis, Jordan, and the West Indies. He served as judge ad hoc twice on the International Court of Justice; judge on the Appeals Chamber of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda; Chairman of the Appellate Body of the World Trade Organization; as well as on numerous other international tribunals. He was counsel and advocate for several governments before the ICJ. He has authored numerous books and articles, as well as two courses at the Hague Academy of International Law, including most famously his General Course of Public International Law in 1987.

Aboueldahab, Noha
Noha Aboueldahab is a Visiting Fellow at the Brookings Doha Center. Since 2003, she has worked on international law, human rights and development issues at various United Nations agencies and NGOs in New York, Lebanon, and Qatar. She is the author of *Transitional Justice and the Prosecution of Political Leaders in the Arab Region* (2017), in which she challenges mainstream transitional justice practice and scholarship using original material from interviews she conducted in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and Yemen between 2012 and 2017. She is originally from Egypt.
xvi Contributors

Ahmed, Aziza
Aziza Ahmed is Professor of Law at Northeastern University School of Law. She writes on global health, criminal law, human rights, and feminist legal theory. She recently published “Medical Evidence and Expertise in Abortion Jurisprudence” in the American Journal of Law and Medicine and “Trafficked?: AIDS, Criminal Law, and the Politics of Measurement” in the University of Miami Law Review. Prior to joining the faculty at Northeastern, Professor Ahmed was a Women’s Law and Public Policy Fellow at the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS.

Anghie, Antony
Antony Anghie is a Professor at the National University of Singapore Faculty of Law and Professor of Law at the S. J. Quinney School of Law, University of Utah. He has written on various public and private international law topics including the history and theory of international law, international economic law, globalization, human rights law, and the use of force. He is a member of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) network of scholars. He is the author of Imperialism, Sovereignty and the Making of International Law (2005). He serves on the editorial and advisory boards of various journals and was recently appointed an executive editor of the Asian Journal of International Law.

Chatterjee, Partha
Partha Chatterjee was educated at Presidency College, Calcutta, and the University of Rochester. After teaching for more than three decades in Calcutta, he is currently Professor of Anthropology and South Asian Studies at Columbia University, New York, and Honorary Professor, Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. Among his books are Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World (1986), The Nation and Its Fragments (1993), The Politics of the Governed (2004), and The Black Hole of Empire (2012).

Chen, Yifeng
Chen Yifeng is an Associate Professor at Peking University Law School, as well as a docent in international law, University of Helsinki. He is also Assistant Director of the Peking University Institute of International Law. Prof. Chen’s fields of interest include legal theory, labor law, international law, and international organizations.

Chimni, B. S.
B. S. Chimni is Professor of International Law, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has served as Vice Chancellor of the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences,
Contributors

Kolkata (2004–2006). He has been a visiting professor at Brown University and University of Tokyo. He has also held visiting positions at Harvard Law School, University of Cambridge, University of Minnesota, and York University. He is an associate member of Institut de Droit International. His central research interest is to elaborate in association with a group of like-minded scholars a critical Third World Approach to International Law (TWAIL). He is the editor-in-chief of the Indian Journal of International Law. His latest publication is the second edition of the book International Law and World Order: A Critique of Contemporary Approaches (Cambridge University Press, 2017).

Choudhury, Cyra Akila
Cyra Akila Choudhury is Professor of Law at Florida International University College of Law in Miami. She has a JD (cum laude) and LLM from George-town University Law Center and an MA in Comparative Politics from Columbia University. She earned her Bachelor’s in Political Science from The College of Wooster where she won the Frank Miller Prize in Comparative Politics, was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, and graduated second in her class. Prior to joining the FIU faculty, Choudhury worked for The National Academies advising the federal government on international labor standards as well as for Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer. She returned to Georgetown Law Center as the Future Law Professor Fellow in 2005. Choudhury’s expertise is in international and comparative law and gender, subjectivity and feminist legal theory, and the socio-legal effects of national security law and the War on Terror.

Dirar, Luwam
Luwam Dirar is a Research Associate at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs of Harvard University. Luwam is also a JSD Candidate at Cornell Law School. Luwam’s interests include international law, human rights, and North-South relations.

Eslava, Luis
Luis Eslava is Senior Lecturer in International Law and Co-Director of the Centre for Critical International Law at Kent Law School, Senior Fellow at Melbourne Law School, and International Professor at Universidad Externado de Colombia. He is also core faculty of the Institute for Global Law and Policy, Harvard Law School. He works in the areas of international legal theory and history, anthropology of international law, public law, and law and development. He is the author of Local Space, Global Life: The Everyday Operation of International Law and Development (2015) and the coeditor of Imperialismo y Derecho Internacional (2016), with Liliana Obregón and René Urueña. Eslava is an active member of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) network. He is originally from Colombia.
Contributors

Esmeir, Samera
Samera Esmeir is an Associate Professor in the Department of Rhetoric at University of California, Berkeley. She is the author of Juridical Humanity: A Colonial History (2012) and is currently working on a book that is a theoretical and historical investigation of the nineteenth-century rise of the international as a new signifier of the world.

Fakhri, Michael
Michael Fakhri is an Associate Professor at the University of Oregon School of Law, where he is also the codirector of the Food Resiliency Project. He is also core faculty of the Institute for Global Law and Policy, Harvard Law School. Fakhri is the author of Sugar and the Making of International Trade Law (2014). He is an active member of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) network. He is originally from Lebanon.

Farley, Anthony
Anthony Paul Farley is the Matthews Distinguished Professor of Jurisprudence at Albany Law School. He was the Lassiter Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Kentucky College of Law and the Andrew Jefferson Endowed Chair at Texas Southern University’s Thurgood Marshall School of Law in 2014–2015, the Haywood Burns Chair in Civil Rights at CUNY School of Law in 2006–2007, and, before Albany, tenured professor at Boston College Law School. He was elected to the American Law Institute in 2017. His work has appeared in Hip Hop and the Law (2015), After the Storm: Black Intellectuals Explore the Meaning of Hurricane Katrina (2007), Cultural Analysis, Cultural Studies & the Law (2003), Crossroads, Directions and a New Critical Race Theory (2002), and Black Men on Race, Gender & Sexuality (1999). He has also published in the Yale Journal of Law & Humanities, the NYU Review of Law & Social Change, the Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal, the Michigan Journal of Race & Law, Law & Literature, the Berkeley Journal of African American Law & Policy, and the Columbia Journal of Race & Law. Farley is a graduate of Harvard Law School and the University of Virginia.

Faundez, Julio
Julio Faundez is Professor of Law (emeritus) at Warwick University. His main research interests are international economic law and law and development. He has written extensively on law and democracy, legal and judicial reform, and has evaluated legal reform projects for the World Bank, the DFID, and the Inter-American Development Bank. He has advised several national agencies and international institutions, including the DFID (UK), the ILO, UNDP, UNCTAD, IADB, and the World Bank. He acted as counsel for the Republic of Namibia in the Case Concerning Kasikili/Sedudu Island (International Court of Justice, 1999) and for the Republic of Chile in the Maritime
Contributors

Dispute with Perú (International Court of Justice, 2014). He is editor of the book series *Law, Development and Globalization* published by Routledge and was founding editor of *The Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*.

**Gassama, Ibrahim**

Ibrahim J. Gassama is the Frank Nash Professor of Law at the University of Oregon School of Law. Gassama is a native of Sierra Leone and a graduate of Harvard Law School. Prior to joining the legal academy, he practiced law in New York and worked at TransAfrica, the African-American human rights lobby, to change U.S. foreign policy toward Africa and the Caribbean. He helped coordinate the Free South Africa Movement in the United States, including Nelson Mandela’s first visit to the country. He also helped manage the training and deployment of foreign observers to South Africa’s first democratic elections in 1994. Professor Gassama has consulted on various human rights and international economic issues including Caribbean banana export to Europe, political disputes and economic stagnation in Haiti, and racial discrimination in the Cuban justice system. He teaches and writes about international law.

**Gupta, Priya**

Priya S. Gupta is Professor and Faculty Director of the General LLM Program at Southwestern Law School, where she teaches Property, Public International Law, Law & Development, and Race & the Law. Prior to joining Southwestern, she was Assistant Professor and (founding) Co-Director of the Centre for Women, Law, & Social Change at the Jindal Global Law School in Delhi NCR, India. Her research is in property and economic development from critical and postcolonial perspectives. In particular, her recent scholarship explores how racial disparities have been written into the laws and spatial structures of the single-family house in suburban United States and the conceptions of legitimate property, modernity, and citizenship that inform the governance of urban land in India.

**Hearman, Vannessa**

Vannessa Hearman is a lecturer in Indonesian Studies at Charles Darwin University and a historian of Southeast Asia. Her research interests include the 1965–66 anticommunist violence in Indonesia and Indonesian transnational activism during the Sukarno era (1949–66). Her research has been published in several books and journals including *Indonesia, South East Asia Research*, and *Critical Asian Studies*.

**Kang’ara, Sylvia**

Sylvia Wairimu Kang’ara is the founding Dean of Riara Law School, Kenya, and an Associate Professor of Law. She is an advocate of the High Court of Kenya. Her current research is on critical histories of international law, legal issues of transcontinental infrastructure development, and transnational
lawyering. Before joining the faculty of the University of Washington School of Law, Seattle, she was an international legal associate at White & Case, LLP, New York. She has written on African marriage law reform and comparative property law. She studied at Harvard Law School and the University of Nairobi.

Kanwar, Vik
Vik Kanwar is Associate Director of International Programs at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles and formerly Associate Professor of Law at Jindal Global Law School, near New Delhi. He is the cofounder of the Winter School on Art/Law, founding Executive Director of the Centre on Public Law and Jurisprudence (CPLJ), and Faculty Convener of the Critical Theory Workshop. In his teaching, writing, and curatorial projects, Professor Kanwar conceptualizes law as an expression of normativity, coercion, culture, and value.

Kapur, Ratna
Ratna Kapur teaches Global Studies and Human Rights with the Faculty of Law, Symbiosis International University. She is currently a Visiting Professor of Law at Queen Mary University of London, and also a Senior Faculty with the Institute of Global Law and Policy, Harvard Law School. Kapur is a member of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) network and actively works on issues of gender, the protection of the rights of religious and sexual minorities and migrant worker’s rights from a postcolonial perspective. Kapur has written and published extensively on postcolonial and feminist legal theory, human rights, as well as on secularism, religion, and the Hindu Right. Her book publications include Erotic Justice: Law and the New Politics of Postcolonialism (2005) and Secularism’s Last Sight? Hinduutva and the (Mis)Rule of Law (2001). She is a co-editor of the forthcoming special issues on Gender and the Rise of the Global Rights, Signs: Journal of Women and Culture. Her forthcoming book is Gender, Alterity, and Human Rights: Freedom in a Fishbowl (Edward Elgar Press, Spring 2018).

Khan, Adil Hasan
Adil Hasan Khan is a McKenzie Fellow at Melbourne Law School. He completed his PhD in International Studies, with a specialization in International Law and a minor in Anthropology and Sociology of Development, at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID) in Geneva. His doctoral dissertation, titled Inheriting Persona: Narrating the Conduct of Third World International Lawyers, narrates the conduct of two generations of Third World international lawyers in their struggles to reimagine, re-found, and alternatively authorize international law, and identifies the defining struggle of the third world in international law as being over temporal transmissions or inheritance. He was Residential

LaForgia, Rebecca
Dr. Rebecca LaForgia earned an LLB (Hons) at Adelaide University, LLM at Cambridge University, and PhD at Flinders University. LaForgia is a senior lecturer at Adelaide University School of Law. She is a co-convener of International Law. LaForgia was also part of an inaugural team at Adelaide Law School to offer a Massive Online Course on Cyberwar, Surveillance and Security. LaForgia’s research explores law and narratives. She has completed a number of submissions and oral testimony on trade agreements and the need for these agreements to contain ongoing, open, and meaningful information flow. Her most recent submission was to the Australian Joint Standing Committee on Treaties on the China Australia Free Trade Agreement.

Mamlyuk, Boris
Boris N. Mamlyuk is Associate Professor of Law at the University of Memphis, School of Law (USA). His research focuses generally on Russian approaches to international law and global governance from a historical perspective.

McGregor, Katharine
Associate Professor Katharine McGregor is a historian of Southeast Asia with special interests in the topics of history, memory, violence, and transnational political history. She currently is an Australian Research Council Future Fellow for the Project Confronting Historical Justice in Indonesia: Memory and Transnational Human Rights Activism, School of Historical and Philosophical Studies, Melbourne University.

Mickelson, Karin
Karin Mickelson is Associate Professor at the Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia. Her research has focused on the South-North dimension of international environmental law, and she has been involved in TWAIL since the late 1990s. Recent publications include “The Stockholm Conference and the Creation of the South-North-Divide in International Environmental Law and Policy,” published in International Environmental Law and the Global South (2015), and “International Law as a War against Nature?: Reflections on the Ambivalence of International Environmental Law” in International Law and Its Discontents (2015).

Natarajan, Usha
Usha Natarajan is Assistant Professor of International Law and Associate Director of the Center for Migration and Refugee Studies at the American University in Cairo. Her research is interdisciplinary, utilizing third-world and postcolonial approaches to international law for an interrelated understanding
of the relationship between law and issues of development, migration, environment, and conflict, globally and in the Arab region. Prior to academia, she worked with international organizations including UNDP, UNESCO, and the World Bank. She has a PhD from the Australian National University, MA from the United Nations University for Peace, and LLB and BA from Monash University.

Nesiah, Vasuki
Vasuki Nesiah is Associate Professor of Practice in the Gallatin School at NYU where she teaches human rights and social and legal theory. She is Academic Director of the Gallatin Human Rights Initiative. She is also core faculty in Harvard Law School’s Institute for Global Law and Policy (IGLP) and Senior Fellow at Melbourne Law School. She has published widely on the history and politics of human rights, humanitarianism, international criminal law, international feminisms and colonial legal history. Her recent essays have been published in the *Journal of International Criminal Justice*, *Philosophy Today* and the *Oxford Handbook of International Legal Theory*. She serves on the international editorial boards of various journals, including *Feminist Legal Studies* and the *London Review of International Law*. Nesiah is one of the founding members of Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) and continues as an active participant in this network. She is originally from Sri Lanka.

Obregón, Liliana
Liliana Obregón is Professor and Director of the International Law LL.M at the University of los Andes in Bogotá, Colombia. She holds a law degree from the same university, an M.A from SAIS, Johns Hopkins University and an SJD from Harvard University. She writes on history and theory of international law. Her current project examines the historiography of the discipline through the work of several nineteenth century lawyers. Her most recent publications include *Imperialismo y Derecho Internacional* (co-edited with Rene Urueña and Luis Eslava), “Martti Koskenniemi’s Critique of Eurocentrism in International Law,” and “The Third World Judges: Neutrality, Bias or Activism at the PCIJ and the ICJ?.” In 2016–2017 she was the Santo Domingo Visiting Scholar at the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies and at Global History program of the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University. She has also been a research fellow at the University of Helsinki, the Max Planck Institute in Frankfurt and Heidelberg, Stanford University, and the University of Wisconsin. She is an active participant in the IGLP, TWAIL and Latin American Society of International Law networks and events.
Oklopcic, Zoran

Zoran Oklopcic teaches at the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University. He focuses on the vocabulary of peoplehood in the context of state formation at the intersection of three disciplines: constitutional theory, normative political theory, and international law. He has published on the metamorphosis of self-determination in the post–Cold War context; the concept of territorial rights in the context of theories of secession; and the inadequacy of the concept of constituent power of the people in the (semi-)periphery. He was MacCormick Visiting Fellow at the University of Edinburgh School of Law (2013), Junior Faculty at Harvard Law School’s Institute for Global Law and Policy in Doha, Qatar, Visiting Researcher at the Department of Political Sciences Universitat de Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, and Global Research Fellow at the NYU School of Law.

Oegroseno, Arif Havas


Okafor, Obiora

Obiora Okafor has experience as is the York Research Chair in International and Transnational Legal Studies at the Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, Toronto Canada. He also served as the Chairperson of the United Nations Human Rights Council Advisory Committee, Geneva, Switzerland; and as the Gani Fawehinmi Distinguished Chair in Human Rights Law at the Nigerian Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, Abuja, Nigeria. He is an active member of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) Network. Okafor earned a PhD, LLM at University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada and an LLM, LLB (Hons) at University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Nigeria. He is originally from Nigeria.
Contributors

Özsu, Umut
Umut Özsu is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Law and Legal Studies at Carleton University. His research interests include public international law, the history and theory of international law, law and development, international human rights law, and international refugee law. He is the author of Formalizing Displacement: International Law and Population Transfers (2015). He is currently at work on a second book, Completing Humanity: The International Law of Decolonization.

Pahuja, Sundhya
Sundhya Pahuja is Professor of Law and Director of the Institute for International Law and the Humanities at the University of Melbourne. Her work engages with the history, political economy, and theory of international law, particularly with respect to the relationship between North and South. She holds visiting chairs at SOAS and Birkbeck at the University of London and is a Programme Advisor to the Institute for Global Law and Policy at the Harvard Law School.

Parfitt, Rose Sydney
Rose Sydney Parfitt is a Lecturer in Law at Kent Law School. She is currently based at Melbourne Law School, where she holds an ARC (Australian Research Council) Discovery Early Career Research Award. She is interested in the history and theory of international law, focusing in particular on critical historiography and art theory, and on the concept of international personality. Her current project examines the relationship between fascism and international law. She has taught or teaches at the Institute for Global Law & Policy (Harvard Law School), the American University in Cairo, SOAS (University of London), the LSE (University of London), the Erik Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights (Helsinki University), and Los Andes University, Colombia, among others.

Peevers, Charlotte
Charlotte Peevers is a Lecturer in International Law at the University of Glasgow and has previously been a postdoctoral research fellow at the Program on Science, Technology and Society, Harvard Kennedy School, and Lecturer in Law at the University of Technology Sydney. She is trained in history and law and is the author of The Politics of Justifying Force: the Suez Crisis, the Iraq War, and International Law (2013).

Petersson, Fredrik
Fredrik Petersson is Lecturer in General History, and Associate Professor of Colonial and Postcolonial Global History at Åbo Akademi University (ÅA).
Contributors

He received his doctoral degree in history at ÅA, and his 2013 dissertation was entitled “We Are Neither Visionaries Nor Utopian Dreamers”: Willi Münzenberg, the League Against Imperialism, and the Comintern 1925–1933. His current research focuses on twentieth-century anticolonialism and the transnational experiences of individuals and organizations. He is a founding member of the Global History Laboratory at ÅA. Former research projects are: “International Radical Solidarity” and “Radical Spaces, Global Communities, and Embedded Articulations.” His other affiliations include the Russian State University for the Humanities (RGGU, Moscow), Stockholm University, and Swedish Defense College, Stockholm.

Rasulov, Akbar
Akbar Rasulov is Senior Lecturer in Public International Law at the University of Glasgow.

Reynolds, John
Dr. John Reynolds is a lecturer in international law at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. Reynolds’s primary research interests lie in the fields of colonial legal history, the political economy of international law, and the operation of law in states of emergency, conflict, and crisis. Recent publications include Empire, Emergency and International Law (2017); “Anti-Colonial Legalities: Paradigms, Tactics & Strategy,” published in the Palestine Yearbook of International Law; and “Apartheid, International Law, and the Occupied Palestinian Territory,” published in the European Journal of International Law.

Saberi, Hengameh
Hengameh Saberi is Associate Professor at Osgoode Hall Law School, with areas of interest ranging from international law, international legal theory and history, and jurisprudence to disability law and human rights, epistemology, political theory, and Islamic political and legal thought. She has previously pursued these interests at the University of Tehran, McGill University, Harvard University, Brown University, The University of Tennessee, and Boston University.

Samour, Nahed
Nahed Samour is a Postdoc Researcher at the Eric Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights, Helsinki University, and at Humboldt University, Berlin. Since 2015, she was Junior Faculty at Harvard Law School, Institute for Global Policy and Law. Samour has studied law and Islamic
Contributors

studies at the universities of Bonn, Birzeit, London (SOAS), Humboldt University Berlin, Harvard, and Damascus, and was a doctoral fellow at the International Max Planck Research School for Comparative Legal History, Frankfurt/Main. Her work focuses on Islamic law, public law, and the history of international law.

Sandoval Trigo, Germán Medardo
Germán Medardo Sandoval Trigo is a Professor at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM) Law School, where he teaches Philosophy of Law and Legal Sociology. His main research focuses on the decolonization of law, epistemologies of the South and Third World Approaches to International Law. He has taught in the Human Rights Law Masters programme at Universidad Iberoamericana and he is actively involved in research projects at the Institute for Global Law and Policy at Harvard Law School and the Centro de Estudos Sociais in Coimbra, Portugal. He holds a Master of Laws degree from the UNAM Law School and a PhD from UNAM Legal Research Institute.

Sayed, Hani
Hani Sayed is Associate Professor and Department Chair at the Department of Law at the American University in Cairo. He received a Licence en Droit from the Faculty of Law at Damascus University, a DES in International Relations from the Graduate Institute of International Studies at the HEI in Université de Genève, and an SJD from Harvard Law School. He teaches and writes on a diverse set of topics in international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, law and development, international economic law, global governance, and legal theory.

Shahabuddin, Mohammad
Mohammad Shahabuddin is a Senior Lecturer in law at the University of Birmingham. His research focuses on the postcolonial critique of the concept of ethnicity and its role in the making of international law. He is the author of Ethnicity and International Law: Histories, Politics and Practices (2016). Prior to joining Birmingham, he served at Keele University as a lecturer in law, at Yokohama National University as a visiting professor of international law, and at Jahangirnagar University as the founding chair of its Department of Law and Justice. He holds a PhD in law from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.

Taha, Mai
Mai Taha is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Law at the American University in Cairo. Previously, she was a postdoctoral fellow at the Institute
for Global Law and Policy, Harvard University (2015–2016). She was also a Visiting Assistant Professor and Catalyst Fellow at Osgoode Hall Law School, York University (2014–2015). She received her doctorate in law from the University of Toronto. Her research broadly explores the historical relationship between international law, empire, and capital. She received her LLM from the University of Toronto and her MA in International Human Rights Law from the American University in Cairo. She worked at the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, and as a legal adviser for refugees at Africa and Middle East Refugee Assistance (AMERA) in Cairo.

Veçoso, Fabia Fernandes Carvalho

Fabia Fernandes Carvalho Veçoso is a postdoctoral fellow with the Laureate Program in International Law at Melbourne Law School. Her project focuses on the emergence of the principle of non-intervention in Latin America, exploring the movement of Pan-Americanism and the related continental debates promoted by international lawyers and politicians between the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Prior to joining Melbourne Law School, she was Assistant Professor of International Relations at the Federal University of São Paulo. She completed her PhD at the University of São Paulo Law School in 2012, debating the case law of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights on amnesties. Previously she was a Doctoral Visiting Research Fellow at the Erik Castrén Institute of International Law and Human Rights at the University of Helsinki. Her research and teaching interests are focused on the theory and history of international law, regionalism and Latin America, and international human rights law. Fabia earned her LLB and LLM from the University of São Paulo Law School.
Foreword

At the beginning was the Bandung Conference. For those who were there at the creation – Nehru, Cho-en-Lai, Sukarno, Nasser, among others – it was a defining moment; a moment of self-awareness and recognition that they were the witnesses and agents of the advent of a new and potentially potent force on the world scene.

The Bandung Conference heralded the birth of a coalition of variable geometry and shifting focus over time. It started as the Afro-Asian Movement (basically newly independent nations of non-European stock and culture); leading, in the early 1960s, to “the Non-Aligned Movement” (including a European state, Yugoslavia, and focusing on an independent posture in the Cold War); then, in 1964 at the first UNCTAD, to the “Group of 77” (adjoining the Latin American states who share the same economic predicament and political sensitivity – a group of more than 130 members at present).

These different movements or groups have kept formally their separate existence. But they are in fact concentric (or intersecting) circles, with the same hard-core but varying at the margins. They represent, at the intergovernmental level, what is currently referred to in the literature as the Third World or Global South. Their members share by and large the same grievances and claims: the grievance of colonial past and exploitation, and of actual marginalization; and a claim for greater equality and equity, as well as for effective participation in global decision-making.

Their choice arenas for voicing these grievances and claims have been those of international organizations, particularly the UN family, where the rules of parliamentary diplomacy provided them with an ideal forum and allowed them to draw the advantage of their numbers. The dialectics they triggered in those arenas and beyond, over the rules of the game (i.e., the rules of international law that govern international relations) as well as on the substantive issues that constitute the objects of these relations (economic,
**Foreword**

political, cultural, or otherwise), are sometimes referred to as the North-South confrontation. A confrontation that can be portrayed as a psychodrama that is still being written, its successive acts and scenes continuously shifting focus and venue with the eruption of international crises and the emergence of new sources of tension or concern in the international public consciousness.¹

But it all started in Bandung.

Georges Abi-Saab

¹ For an exposition of this “psychodrama” about the content and horizons of international law that followed Bandung, see Georges Abi-Saab, “The Third World Intellectual in Praxis: Confrontation, Participation, or Operation behind Enemy Lines?” (2016) 37 Third World Quarterly 1957.
Acknowledgments

A book such as this is a testimony to the kindness and intellectual commitment of many. For this reason, we want to thank, first, all the contributors and fellow travelers who shared their views about Bandung and its many worlds and histories here. This project was only possible because it was a collective adventure forged by solidarity and trust in the value of our shared initiative to revisit our pasts and imagine alternative futures.

We are grateful for the financial support that we received for this project from the Institute for Global Law and Policy (IGLP) at Harvard Law School, Kent Law School, the Gallatin School of Individualized Study at New York University, the Oregon Humanities Center, and the University of Oregon School of Law.

We are deeply indebted to Esther Sherman and Sarah Rutledge for crucial editorial and logistical assistance. We are also grateful to John Berger and everyone at Cambridge University Press for their enduring support.

We owe an immense amount of thanks to Usha Natarajan, John Reynolds, Amar Bhatia, and Sujith Xavier – the organizers of the Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) Conference held at the American University in Cairo in February 2015. They provided the Bandung project crucially important space to discuss, debate, and develop the chapters. This was the first time we took the project public, and a meeting with many generations of TWAILers was an especially salutary space to discuss Bandung.

We are particularly grateful to David Kennedy for providing the Bandung project a stimulating venue for an author workshop at IGLP’s 2014 Heterodox Traditions: Global Law and Policy Conference at Harvard Law School. This meeting gave us a valuable opportunity to workshop a number of chapters early in the project and develop a collective sense of the path we were taking. Our thanks to Kristen Verdeaux and her administrative team for all the logistical support in helping us convene that meeting.

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Acknowledgments

We are honored to have Georges Abi-Saab opening the book, and Partha Chatterjee closing it. Readers will find that this book is inspired by and indebted to their work.

Finally, we are incredibly grateful for the love and patience of each other’s growing, transforming, and flourishing families. They have generously lent us to the project for long calls, editorial meetings, and author workshops; they have been kind hosts, needed distractions, and sounding boards to the editorial collective. The personal has co-mingled with the political (and professional) in the best ways possible here.

We write in our introduction that alliances can be profoundly transformative. Working on this project together has been profoundly affirming of the joys of scholarly comradeship.

The Editors