

Bipasha Bhattacharyya
University of Cambridge, United Kingdom

Hindujo and the Sindhwads Belgian Esperantists on India

Abstract: The creation of “novel forms of mobility and interaction on a non-territorial scale” becomes a historical problem while tracing the trajectories of the international auxiliary language Esperanto. This paper interrogates this problem through an engagement with the movements and circles of Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad. Between 1930-1934, she and her husband used their Brussels-based Esperanto journal *Hindujo* as the organizational center of a network to facilitate Indian anti-colonial efforts. A reading of the periodical, and of Indian and Belgian intelligence files, shows a range of specific affiliations and varying degrees of mobility that includes associations to the Belgian journalist Roger Lievens’ “Ligue Pro-Hindoue”, a confluence of “Greater India”-isms, and Aryanisms. Tracing the activities of the Sindhwads thus provides a window to both Indian anti-colonialism and Esperanto. It allows us to re-conceptualize Indian anti-colonialism, and some of its legacies that are only visible from beyond the confines of South Asian archives. Simultaneously it allows us to view Esperanto not merely as a Movement, but also as a series of movement(s) of ideas both eluding and representing regional and thematic nodes.

Keywords: Anti-colonialism; Aryanisms; Esperanto; Greater India; Indians abroad; language ideology

1 Introduction

On the 1st of September 1945, a day after Emperor Hirohito of Japan’s formal surrender ended the Second World War, the fifty-nine-year-old Indian businessman and Esperanto speaker Shivram Sindhwad wrote the first of many letters to Lord Pethick Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, seeking repatriation to India from Brussels for him and his wife, Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad.¹ Although the terms of bargaining fluctuated over the course of these letters and often seemed rather bizarre — in one letter he claimed to be able to provide information on how cocaine and revolvers were smug-

1 All Esperanto and French sources have been translated into English by me, unless otherwise indicated.

gled into Calcutta between 1925 and 1927 – Sindhwad’s polygot abilities were a constant strand of emphasis, and one he believed would make him of use to the Indian State. That these polygot abilities were not as valuable to the Indian State as Sindhwad had believed, can be gleaned from a letter dated 13th September 1945 by the civil servant (and subsequent Commonwealth Secretary of India) S. N. Dutt, to the India Office. He wrote:

So far as Mr. Sindhwad’s request for an appointment in India is concerned, we are unfortunately unable to access his qualifications for any vacancies which are known to us. It would however, appear that Mr. Sindhwad is not very young and ... although he seems to have a knowledge of several languages, our Department here does not feel that that is sufficient material to go on. (India Office Records, London, IOR/L/PJ/7/3125).

This declaration of his irrelevance is significant in its disregard for the importance of language skills on account of the time at which it occurs: a time when the British colonial state was planning its own attempted orderly dissolution. The transitional and impending rearrangements for India would soon confront the question of whether to reorder India into neat, linguistically legible provinces. The declaration of Esperanto as irrelevant to the British State of course has a longer history. In a July 1926 House of Commons Sitting, for instance, Sir Harry Brittain’s reply to an appeal for adding Esperanto as an International Labour Office official language is sardonic. He asks the House: “Is my hon. Friend aware that those who learn this language find it extremely difficult to discover anyone to whom to talk?” (Hansard 1926)

This article, however, concerns itself less with the premise of Esperanto being (ir)relevant to the British colonial state in India, and more with the particular interventions of a German-Indian-Belgian family whose insistence on Esperanto being relevant to Indian anti-colonialism is a unique and untapped episode in the global history of Esperanto. Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad, Shivram’s wife, becomes the most important in this regard and also leaves the most extensive paper trails, on account of her attempts to create the periodical *Hindujo* in Belgium in the 1930s, ostensibly as a way to organize Indian anti-colonial resistance in Europe. Her attempts are short-lived and fail to inspire the kind of consciousness for Esperanto with respect to Indian anti-colonialism that she had hoped for. Her efforts however, do make their way second-hand to the Third International Conference on India (September 1933), organized by Edmond Privat, another campaigner for Indian independence, a central figure in histories of Esperanto, and in many other strands of resistance that lack intensive study in Anglophone

worlds.² Sindhwad was thus at least partially successful in deriving legitimacy from, or at least being taken seriously by, individuals and organisations also claiming to work for the cause of Indian anti-colonialism in the inter-war years, and who were associated with the organization and attempted spread of Esperanto. Along with surveying what she was trying to do, therefore, it is also important to identify who these people were, and what their networks looked like, and in effect, the ways in which Sindhwad was defining anti-colonialism, both first hand as well as second hand, i.e. through the networks that she drew upon.

Much of what Sindhwad was saying and doing is not legible without a brief understanding of the ways in which Esperanto existed in the Indian subcontinent. I begin with a brief outline of Esperanto's trajectories in India. Secondly, I outline the activities of Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad, her writing in Esperanto on Indian anti-colonialism, and the networks in which she finds herself. Through these two lines of enquiry I ask what Esperanto could do for the Indian anti-colonial cause, and the Indian anti-colonial cause for Esperanto.

2 Esperanto in India: a brief history

In order to understand the ways in which Esperanto worked in the Indian subcontinent, it is important to grapple with the connection of Esperanto, or more broadly, the connection of ideas of constructed languages, to ideas of Empire. As Andrew Large reminds us, "the establishment of commercial and religious relations with the Far East, India, the West Indies and the Americas" – processes that were early precursors to the formal creation of colonies in these regions – "highlighted the obvious weakness of Latin as a universal rather than a pan-European language" (Large 1985, 6; see also Gordin 2015, 35). Esperanto, which was no doubt informed by Latin's fall from grace during the Enlightenment (Waquet 2001, 257-271; Haskell and Feros Ruys 2010), was formed in the late nineteenth century within what was in effect a Russian colony: its beginnings in Belostok Oblast can thus be situated within narratives of "history from below", as a moment guided by a Litvak man's attempts at using a constructed language to challenge the absence of social mobility within a Russian Empire floundering from the consequences of the Pale of Settlement (O'Keefe 2021, 52-134).

In contrast, Esperanto's early twentieth-century appearance in the Indian subcontinent suggests a more top-down narrative, and at least initially, one

2 Privat's neglect within Anglophone filters is not entirely mirrored in French and Esperanto filters. In French, see Petignat (1982), Rebetez (1986), Farrokh (1991), Houlmann (2005). In Esperanto, see Chmielik (1994), Gacond (1989).

restricted primarily to Europeans. A 1912 Report on Greater Britain Esperanto societies in *La Brita Esperantisto* (The British Esperantist) for instance, spoke warmly of hopes of success for the new “Esperanto Society of Calcutta”. This new society would not be restricted to European membership, unlike its predecessor organization, and would be “open to all, irrespective of race, colour, rank or creed” (Anonymous July 1912, 125).

Esperanto’s early promoters in British India included Rupert Falkland Vaughan, Singapore-born British metallurgist, Esperantist, and founder of the Kolar Gold Fields Esperanto group in the gold mining region of Kolar, Karnataka, India. It included the British geologist C. S. Middlemiss, Assistant Superintendent of the Geological Survey of India, Secretary of the Calcutta Esperanto Society, and an Esperantist whose interests in “Esperanto as the International Scientific Language” ran parallel to his attempts to create a new form of musical notation (Fermor 1945, 265-266). They included British geologist and palaeontologist G. E. Pilgrim, the first European to visit the tribal confederations of Trucial Oman, the first geologist to visit Bahrain island “where he discovered a dome structure, the knowledge of which resulted in the present oil exploitation there” (Lewis 1944, 105), as well as one of three of the first Esperantists to attend a world congress (the Second Congress at Geneva, 1906) from British India (Universala Kongreso... 1906, 22). They included Agnes de Selincourt, British missionary, Esperantist and paragon for women’s education in India, founder of the Missionary Settlement for University Women in Bombay, founding Principal of the Lady Muir Memorial College in Allahabad, and eldest sister of one Ernest de Sélincourt (editor of William and Dorothy Wordsworth, and teacher of Virginia Woolf) (Anonymous 1917, 87). They included the British geologist Sir Henry Hubert Hayden. Hayden was a founding member of the Indian Science Congress. His deployment of Esperanto included its use as a semi-code language in correspondence with Calcutta while on duty in Afghanistan (Fermor 1945, 266).

While these trajectories are intriguing in that they display the eclectic range of people attracted to Esperanto in British India, they remain individual trajectories that do not achieve a significant collective momentum and therefore do little to display efforts at consolidating an Esperanto movement in British India. This process of consolidation was attempted for the first time by Colonel John Pollen. An Esperantist, civil servant, lawyer, and one of three members of the “Trio por la Tria” of the Third Esperanto World Congress held in Cambridge in 1907, Pollen was largely responsible for the organized development of Esperanto in British India, through attempts to “indigenize” Esperanto in order to make it legible and worthy of consideration by the early twentieth century Indian intelligentsia (Pollen 1907).

During a 1907 Esperanto lecture in Godhra, Gujarat, for instance, Pollen declares himself empathetically to be a *swadeshi-ist* (the term “swadeshi” literally translating to “of one’s own country”), referring to a collection of ideas on self-reliant economic and social development that formed a movement of resistance to the British colonial administration’s partition of the old province of Bengal in 1905 (Sarkar 1989, 43-100). Esperanto, according to Pollen, was *Swadeshi*, and Zamenhof an Eastern man (Anonymous 1907, 6). Pollen also emphasized the existent Esperanto-like quality of the “Hindustani” or Urdu language, a language developed in the *urd*, or military camps for the very purpose of being used as a pan-India language from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Pollen’s need to domesticate Esperanto through a usage of Indian anti-colonial vocabulary represented an attempt to dissuade his audience from an identification of Esperanto as foreign within colonial Indian contexts.

Perhaps Pollen’s greatest contribution to Esperanto in British India was the interest in Esperanto that he was able to generate amongst rulers of Indian Princely States, which translated into generous donations to the Third Esperanto World Congress at Cambridge. One of these rulers, the Maharaja Khengarji III, would serve as India’s representative to the League of Nations Esperanto sessions; India, the only non-independent state to have its own League seat, would sign a resolution in favour of Esperanto as a global school language in both 1920 and 1921, a resolution that was ultimately vetoed by Gabriel Hanotaux, the delegate for France (Forster 1982, 169-188; Lins 2017, 47-62). Esperanto’s success at being recognized as a telegraph-able language at the League of Nations also impacted India (India Office Records, IOR/L/PJ/6/1789, File 642: Feb-Sep 1922; National Archives of India, Home_Political_NA_1934_NA_F-64, PR_000003034547). Colonel Pollen’s untimely and mysterious death through disappearance on the Isle of Man in 1923, led to an ebbing of a burgeoning Esperanto movement in British India (Anonymous 1923, 98).

Thus, if Esperanto’s beginnings in late nineteenth-century imperial Russia were marked by a challenge to the constraints of Empire, in contrast, Esperanto’s efforts at existence in a different imperial context in early twentieth century British India were brought about by individuals working towards the codification and consolidation of Empire. While some of these efforts were more serious and long-drawn-out such as that of Colonel Pollen’s, others amounted to little more than a parlour amusement, a social club in a colony far away from home, an amusement that eventually all but faded by the mid 1920s. It was in this ebbing arena of involvement that Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad’s efforts emerged, with a change in audience and in geography: instead of inspiring interest in Esperanto among inhabitants of

British India, Sindhwaad, who lived in Belgium and was connected to India by marriage, attempted to mobilize the European Esperanto community for the cause of India's independence from British rule, and therefore with a focus on India (during a time when this concept was taking shape and was variously defined) as opposed to British India. What networks did she draw upon? What were her aims?

3 Erna Rieckmann Sindhwaad: a Belgian-Indian Esperantist

The name Erna Rieckmann Sindhwaad is in and of itself an asymmetrical one, with the Sindhwaad clearly tying her to a specific region in North-West India, and the Rieckmann clearly separating her from it. Although her activities as an Esperantist have hitherto remained virtually unknown to us, her work within non-Esperanto registers seemed to have propelled her to near-celebrity status. Born in Bremen in 1887, Sindhwaad worked as a teacher across a wide geography – in Bremen, Thuringia, the Altmark, and Paris. In October 1914, she entered the Hamburg School Service. From 1919 to 1921 she was an Independent Social Democratic Party of Germany (USPD) member of the Hamburg Parliament, making her one of only two USPD successful female candidates, as well as one of the first seventeen female MPs to have been elected to the Hamburg Parliament after suffrage was won in 1918 (Bake and Reimers 2003, 196; Büttner 1994, 146).³

Between 1930 and 1933, Sindhwaad's extensive translated Esperanto publications in *Flandra Esperantisto* (The Flemish Esperantist) all led in some form to Gandhi or to ideas of Gandhi,⁴ ranging from excerpts of his autobiography, *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* (Sindhwaad 1930, 106-109), to Gandhi's letters from Yerawda prison to the children of his ashram in Sabarmati (Sindhwaad 1932, 81), to a letter entitled "Kion Hindujo deziras" (What India Wants) drafted by Gandhi's personal secretary Mahadev Desai (Sindhwaad 1933, 88-89). Beyond the sphere of Gandhi translations, Sindhwaad also made original contributions to *Flandra Esperantisto* on the

3 To date, there has been very little work done on these women in Anglophone academia networks. Evans (1976) remains the only in-depth study. One hopes that a Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung project, titled "The Introduction of Women's Suffrage in Germany and Its Consequences" and begun in 2017 under Hedwig Richter, will shed more light on these extraordinary lives.

4 That her fascination to Gandhi can be traced back to the late 20s, is evident in the publication of an article titled "Die Kinderheirat in Indien" (Child Marriage in India) by Mahatma Gandhi on 27th September 1926 in Sindhwaad's German translation in *Die Kameradin unserer Frauen und Mädchen* (Our Wives' and Girls' Comrade), a "female voice" segment of the Zürich Volksbuchhandlung (People's Bookstore) based journal *Der Republikaner* (The Republican). See Gandhi (1926).

subject of Indian anti-colonialism. In a March 1932 essay entitled “Esperanto kaj Hindujo” (Esperanto and India), she compares Esperanto words and numbers to Hindustani and Gujarati, which yield, in her opinion, astounding similarities:

Esperanto estas grava afero por Hindujo. Ĝis nun nia kara help-lingvo estas preskaŭ nekonata en ĉi tiu lando. La gvidantoj de la nacia movado postulas, ke ĉiu Hindo lernu la Hindustanan; certe la Hindustana ludas gravan rolon kiel interkomprenilo en Hindujo mem, sed estas tamen senutila por interrilato kun ne-Hindaj landoj. La Hindoj ne scias, ke fakte ekzistas bonega neŭtrala lingvo por internaciaj rilatoj: Esperanto, laŭ mia opinio pli facile lernebla por Hindoj ol por aliaj Aziaj popoloj, ekzemple la Japanoj. La parenceco inter Hindaj kaj Eŭropaj lingvoj montriĝas, jen miraklo, eĉ en Esperanto, kvankam d-ro Zamenhof ne konis iun ajn Hindan lingvon. En la Hindustana kaj Guĝerata lingvoj la demandrelativoj komenciĝas preskaŭ ĉiuj kun k. Ankaŭ la nombroj montras parencecon... Sed por interesigi Hindujojn pri Esperanto estas nepre necese ke la esperantistaro interesiĝu pri Hindujo, pri ĝia batalo por libereco kaj bonvenu la Hindajn popolojn kiel sendependajn kaj egalrajtajn... D-ro Privat salutis Gandhi en Marseille; li estas pacifisto kaj fervore subtenas la ideon de neperforteco. Sed li ĝis nun ne konigis al la esperantistaro la grandiozan neperfortecan batalon en Hindujo. Kaŭze de granda nescio, okazis ofte, ke mia edzo estis ofendata en Eŭropo kaj en Esperantujo. Ia eminenta esperantisto iam invitis lin en sia hejmo kaj dum interparolado substrekis, ke Eŭropanoj estas superaj al Hindoj, kvankam li neniam estis en Hindujo! (Sindhwad 1932, 142-143)

(Esperanto is an important issue for India. Until now, our beloved auxiliary language is almost unknown in this country. The leaders of the national movement demand that every Indian learn Hindustani; certainly Hindustani plays an important role as a means of communication in India itself, but it is simultaneously useless for relations with non-Indian countries. Many Indians do not know that there is in fact an excellent neutral language for international relations: Esperanto, in my opinion, is easier for Indians to learn than for other Asian peoples, such as the Japanese. The kinship between Indian and European languages – specifically in Esperanto – strikes one to be almost a miracle – in spite of Dr. Zamenhof not knowing any Indian language. In the Hindustani and Gujarati languages the interrogatives almost all begin with “k”, just like Esperanto. The numbers also show kinship. ... But in order to make India interested in Esperanto, it is absolutely necessary, that the Esperantists should be interested in India, in its struggle for freedom, and in welcoming the Indian people as independent and equal... Dr. [Edmond] Privat

greeted Gandhi in Marseille; he is a pacifist and strongly supports the idea of non-violence. But so far he has not disclosed to the Esperanto community the great non-violent struggle in India. Due to great ignorance, it often happened that my husband [Shivram Sindhwad] was offended in Europe and in Esperanto-lands. An eminent Esperantist once invited him to his home and during a conversation emphasized that they were Europeans – superior to Indians – although he had never been in India!)

Sindhwad thus, in contrast to Pollen’s usage of indigenous qualifiers for Esperanto, emphasises Esperanto as a way for colonial India to speak to wider contexts, to become “internationalized”. In “Esperanto kaj Hindujo” she draws upon Swiss-American Esperantist Joseph R. Scherer’s touristic account of his concurrent Indian travels as an example of Esperantists unwilling to engage with Esperanto and India in serious contexts (Scherer 1933). These views echo S.A.T. founder Eugène Lanti’s own views on Esperanto’s treatment by Esperantists. Merely a year before Sindhwad herself, in an essay titled “Se Lenin estus esperantisto” (If Lenin Had Been an Esperantist), Lanti wrote:

Laŭ mi ... ĝenerale la esperantistoj mem ne sufiĉe konscias pri la gravo de la ilo, kiun ili uzas. Estus eĉ pli ĝuste diri, rilate al kelkaj: per kiu ili kvazaŭ ludas. Ja, por granda nombro da esperantistoj la partopreno en nia movado estas ia ludo, ia modo, kiujn ili forlasas, tuj kiam logas ilin alia modo. (Lanti 1931, 33-34; see also Karlander 2024, 17-23)

(In my opinion ... in general Esperantists themselves are not sufficiently aware of the importance of the tool they use. Indeed, for a large number of Esperantists, participation in our movement is a kind of game, a kind of fashion, which they abandon as soon as another fashion attracts them.)

Sindhwad’s recognition of the absence of, and subsequent emphasis on the need to make good on Esperanto’s claim to universality, specifically with respect to the Indian cause, becomes her language of legitimation, to borrow Quentin Skinner’s phrase (Skinner 1988). Her ardent appeal for Esperanto’s usefulness resembles the efforts of Japanese Esperantist and Taiwanese anti-colonial activist Sister Yamaguchi Koshizu. Shivram Sindhwad’s experiences of “European superiority” find echoes in Koshizu’s paraphrase of a Japanese police officer, in an essay written a decade before Sindhwad’s. In a passage that emphasizes the different meanings of Esperanto for a colonized people, she writes:

In general it is important to understand that the meaning is different when a Japanese does something from when a Taiwanese does it. ...

There is no doubt that Japanese people choose Esperanto only because they believe it to be a common international language for the world, a language symbolizing future peace for humankind, or a way of respecting one's own national language. But the situation changes completely if it has to do with Taiwanese. They are interested in this world language not simply as one people in the world: their learning Esperanto implies complete rejection of the Japanese language. Language and thought are intimately related, so rejection of the Japanese language signifies total repudiation of Japan. Japan's colonial policy is completely unable to tolerate such traitors. (Lins 2017, 72-73; see also Heylen 2012, 152-155)

Sindhwad's need to build on what in her opinion was a near-nonexistent engagement of Esperantists with the cause of Indian anti-colonialism, led her to create *Hindujo* (India), a short-lived Esperanto periodical first published in November 1933, and of which only two issues seem to have survived. These issues contain an eclectic range of materials, from biographical sketches of lesser-known Indian anti-colonialists, to notes on important developments in the Indian struggle against anti-colonialism, to writing from correspondents and requests for new correspondence. At face value, therefore, Sindhwad's journal *Hindujo* seems to be an anthology of material in Esperanto aiming to educate Europeans who could and would read in Esperanto on the worthy struggles of the Indian anti-colonial movement in the 1930s. Can anything more be gleaned from a closer reading? Here the concepts of Esperanto as "Platzhalter" within Sindhwad's *Hindujo* – as a vessel that makes certain strands inconspicuous – as well as Esperanto's Platzhalters – the network in which Sindhwad's periodical thrives – becomes relevant. What may seem to be a noble attempt at anti-colonial organisation in an international language had stronger associations with more parochial strands of debate than one would think.

4 Sindhwad's network: Esperanto as Platzhalter, Esperanto's Platzhalters

The first instance of this "digging deep exercise" with respect to Sindhwad's network has to do with nomenclature, i.e. with the name *Hindujo* itself. As Esperanto-users we can identify that Zamenhof's choice of this name for the Indian subcontinent had less to do with its direct translation, that is "the abode of the Hindus", and more to do with his desire to avoid homonyms. With the *ind* form having already been delegated to mean "worthy" – such as *memorinda* (worthy of memory) – Zamenhof was drawn to *Hind*, and therefore *hindoj* (Indians), and *Hindujo* (India).

Zamenhof's scholastic illocution did not however, in this case, morph into widespread perlocution. Even if Zamenhof used *Hindujo*, literally meaning "the abode of the Hindus", as the Esperanto name for India in order to avoid homonyms, it is clear that some Esperanto users were troubled by the implications of the literal meaning. For instance, a 9th August 1906 report in the *Indian Daily News* on the "Esperanto Society of India" emphasized the consideration its members would be paying to the issue of "an authoritative ruling as to the correct Esperanto equivalent for India, now generally written *Hindujo* ... literally mean[ing] a place where Hindus reside ... a change to *Indio* is sought, *Indio* being also an Esperanto equivalent for India" (Anonymous 1906a, 23). However, an excerpt from an October 1906 report from one H. H. H. of Srinagar, published in *La Brita Esperantisto*, asserted that:

Hindujo is the accepted name for India. It is in strict conformity with the principles of the language and no question of alteration is likely to be entertained. (Anonymous 1906b, 115-116)

The very need to indicate that *Hindujo* is in accordance with Esperanto principles of nomenclature is indicative of the existence of voices resisting a different, possibly more literal kind of indication gleaned from the word, as is evident from the previous citation. In spite of these protests against *Hindujo*'s literal meaning, much of the anticipated parochialism of the name would show itself by the time Sindhwa'd's periodical was started. For example, the India travel notes of one Dr. Martin Hürliman, published in the January 1929 issue of *La Vegetarano* (The Vegetarian) contain more than one instance of a capitalized *Hindoj* to denote Indian and Hindu as identified with each other counterposed against *mahometanoj* in the lower case, used to denote Muslims (Hürliman 1929, 4).

Was Sindhwa'd's *Hindujo* therefore, merely a name without implications? A closer engagement with the members of the *Hindujo* network speaks to the contrary. For example, one of Sindhwa'd's correspondents in the April 1934 issue of *Hindujo* was the Indian Professor Lanka Sundaram of Andhra University. While he uses Sindhwa'd's platform in order to rail at the unfairness of India's absence of a voice in the League of Nations in spite of having to pay over 200,000 English pounds for membership, he simultaneously finds himself in contact with and praised by a movement known as "Greater India" (Bayly 2004; Zabarskaitė 2022). In broad terms, this was a parochial, right wing, reverse-colonial movement that began in late nineteenth century British India and which continues in altered forms into the present. Its adherents, through numerous, often pseudo-scientific filters – archaeological, art historical, linguistic, political, to name a few – insist on

the existence of an ancient Hindu empire with India as the centre, and most South and South East Asian countries as colonies. Lanka Sundaram's interventions on this parochial movement can be traced both directly through his own work, as well as indirectly through an emphasis on his trajectories at the hands of Greater India enthusiasts. With respect to his own work, it must be highlighted that his 1933 intervention, "Indians Overseas: A Study in Economic Sociology", heavily draws upon this "Indian colonial system" in discussions on immigration policies. He also praises India's presence and participation at the International Conference on Emigration and Immigration in Mussolini's Rome in 1924:

The International Conference on Emigration and Immigration, held at Rome in 1924, has considerably strengthened our hands as one of its resolutions, to which India was a party, sanctified the contractual rights of immigrants wherever they are. (Sundaram 1933, 17)

A mere eight months prior to Sindhwad's reference to correspondence with Lanka Sundaram, he appears in Benarsidas Chaturvedi's "Indians Abroad". Dr. Lanka Sundaram, who is declared to have just returned from his journey to Malaya, Siam and Indo-China, ends a long tract on the conditions of Indian labourers in Malaya with the following passage:

India had neglected her sons. ... What they need[ed] was incessant agitation and not mere petitioning. In every possible manner – culturally, politically and economically – Indians must keep a tight grip upon their nationals abroad and if this was done, the lecturer has no doubt that in a decade, the Indians overseas could be considered as the foreign legion of India, prepared to defend their mother country at all times. By giving attention to this important problem, they would not only be raising the status of Indians abroad but also heighten the prestige of India. The Indians abroad deserved their gratitude and love and the lecturer hoped that these would be forthcoming in an abundant measure. (Chaturvedi 1933, 221-222)

To these assertions, Chaturvedi himself adds the following post-script:

We shall eagerly await for the memorandum of Dr. Lanka Sundaram. ... Occasional visits of educated and cultured Indians like Dr. Lanka Sundaram will prove useful in bringing about closer relations between India and Greater India. (Chaturvedi 1933, 221-222)

For Chaturvedi, this upholding of Lanka Sundaram's travels as exemplary of the reach of the concept of Greater India would come simultaneously to his elucidation on the possibilities of creating Indian colonies in East Africa and Brazil within a regular column on "Indians Abroad" in the Calcutta

based periodical *The Modern Review* (Chaturvedi 1928a,b). Greater India, a movement born out of Indian anti-colonial efforts, thus successfully reproduced the language of colonialism that it claimed, in theory, to combat.

By far the most sustaining amongst Sindhwad's *Hindujo* network's participants – and the perpetuator of certain communal parochialisms – was the Belgian journalist and self-proclaimed Indian anti-colonial activist Roger Lievens. Very little is known about Lievens' early life other than that he was a correspondent for *L'Indépendant* in Nice, as well as a secretary to the Austrian Theosophist Count Prozor. In the 1930s, Lievens created his own transnational organization, called "La Ligue Pro Hindoue", an organization that at least initially received the support of the Belgian senator and Nobel Peace Prize winner Henri La Fontaine, and the Belgian polymath and self-declared pacifist Paul Otlet within their "Mundaneum" institution – an organization aiming to create a repository for all the world's knowledge, catalogued through the Universal Decimal System (Gaspari 2002; Van Ackeer and Somsen 2012). Lievens first appears within the pages of *Hindujo* as a participant of a Paul Otlet-organized "India Day" at Le Palais Mondial (Mondpalaco) in Brussels, the headquarters of Mundaneum.

In many ways this tri-lingual – Esperanto, Flemish, French – weeklong symposium was a meeting of "heretics and renegades" (Deutscher 1969). The Belgian archeologist Simone Corbiau, who would subsequently be denounced and blocked from working in India on account of allegedly "receiving money for secret service work", based on the "propensity for visiting Border Posts" (Shaheen and Khan 2020, 170-173), spoke at length on the recently-discovered Indian archeological sites of Harappa and Mohenjo-daro as indicative of "the past of a hard-working, intelligent, highly developed people" (Sindhwad 1934, 100). Musharaff Moulamia Khan, the sufi sitarist and one of the "Royal Musicians of Hindusthan" (Khan 1932; Orlov 1992, 81, 393) played sitar along with the Belgian violinist Vanine, and spoke at length on Sufism within India. Sindhwad and Lievens spoke on Esperanto and on accelerating Indian economic progress, with special emphasis on Gandhi's *Khadi* model, which required all servants of the Indian independence struggle to spin their own yarn and weave their own cloth for their personal needs, as a moral imperative rather than as a commercial venture:

Ĵaŭde vespere estis dediĉata al la ekonomiaj kaj politikaj problemoj de Hindujo. La diversaj parolintoj montris la malbenitan influon de fremda administrado kaj ĉiuj kore deziras baldaŭan liberecon por Hindujo. Okaze de la esperanta parolado pri "Khadi" la 19-an de Novembro, Esperantistoj de ĉiuj Bruselaj grupoj kaj eĉ ne-Bruselanoj ĉeestis. Diversaj

aŭskultantoj ne-esperantistoj esprimis deziron lerni Esperanton kaj aĉetis malgrandan lerno-libron. Kelkaj el ili multon komprenis el la parolado. "Khadi" estas la manfilita kaj manŝpinita ŝtofo kaj ludas gravan rolon en la ekonomia vivo de Hindujo. Anstataŭ elspezi monon eksterlande aĉetante fremdlandajn ŝtofojn — pere de Khadi, la mono restas en la lando. Pere de revivigo de ŝpinrado Gandhiji donas laboron al la plej malriĉaj, plej mizeraj Hindaj familioj. (Sindhwad 1934, 100)

(Thursday evening was devoted to the economic and political problems of India. The various speakers pointed out the cursed influence of foreign administration and all heartily wished eternal freedom for India. On the occasion of the Esperanto speech on "Khadi" on November 19th, Esperantists from all Brussels groups and even non-Brussels residents were present. Various non-Esperanto listeners expressed a desire to learn Esperanto and bought a small learning book. Some of them understood much from the speeches. "Khadi" is the hand-made and hand-spun fabric and plays an important role in the economic life of India. Instead of spending money abroad buying foreign fabrics, through "Khadi", the money stays in the country. By reviving the spinning wheel, Gandhiji gave work to the poorest, most miserable Indian families.)

Lievens' self-declared interest in organizing for Indian anti-colonialism makes him the subject of Belgian and Indian political intelligence files from 1932-1933. With respect to the Belgian intelligence file, it is curious to note that while the file is titled "Ligue Pro Hindoue" and begins with a need to create a folder on Lievens on the 16th of November 1932, the contents of the file are almost entirely on the activities of Sindhwad, who is declared in these files to have been Lievens' "correspondent secretary" and the recipient of "20% of the donations that supporters and members send to the Brussels section", although not paid a salary. In this file, the fact that Sindhwad is "very educated, knows German, French, English, Flemish and a little Indian [sic], is a member of several international mutual aid leagues, among others the 'Lingvo Internationale Esperanto [sic]'", and involved with an organization whose mission is "to make known the economic conditions of India and the cause for which the Hindus claim freedom" is declared to be evidence of her being "considered very dangerous from a national point of view" and in necessity of expulsion from Belgium (State Archives in Belgium, BE-A0541_007368_007129_DUT: 1114, 6-7).

That Lievens was self-declaredly attempting a process of organizing for Indian anti-colonialism, a process to which Sindhwad was a major contributor, is therefore clear. And yet, many of Lievens' interventions inform us of his choosing a specific side within debates on Indian anti-colonialism, and in effect, highlight the Hindu in *Hindujo* with unmistakable clarity. Con-

sider the following excerpt from a lecture Lievens gave in Liège in May 1932, reproduced second-hand in the Indian Political Intelligence file on the Ligue, in which he explains the difference between “Indian” and “Hindu”:

Il est vrai que les Hindous ont obtenu quelques représentants au parlement de Westminster, quelques-uns aux conseils provinciaux, etc. mais en général leurs droits ont été méconnus à tel point qu’il en est résulté la fondation du Congrès National par Gandhi où Mussaulmans, etc. et intouchables se retrouvent ... Pourquoi ne pas s’occuper des Musulmans? Ceux-ci sont organisés; ils ne sont pas à plaindre. Le conférencier attire notre attention sur la beauté de l’histoire de l’Inde et ce depuis les Aryens sous le règne de Rama; sur les merveilles d’architecture et de littérature, la Ramayana, Rabindranath Tagore etc. (India Office Records, IPI-15 L/P&J/12/447; File 498/1932, 9-12)

(It is true that the Hindus obtained some representatives in the Parliament of Westminster, some in the provincial councils, etc. but in general their rights were disregarded to such an extent that it resulted in the founding of the National Congress by Gandhi where Mussaulmans [sic], and untouchables also found themselves ... Why does this not include the Muslims? Why does all this not engage the Muslims? Well they are organized, and they are not to be pitied. The speakers draw our attention to the beauty of the history of India since the Aryans under the reign of Rama; on the marvels of architecture and literature, the Ramayana, Rabindranath Tagore etc.)

This rhetoric of “Aryanisms” in the same strand as the category of the Hindu, used interchangeably for India, becomes a defining line for Lievens. In the editorial August 1932 edition of *L’Inde*, the French journal edited by Lievens, he again emphasizes that the “Ligue Pro-Hindoue” was “founded [for]... the awakening of oppressed Asia, mother of civilisation and cradle of our Aryan race” (State Archives in Belgium, BE-A0541_007368_007129_DUT: 1114, 16).⁵ In the June-July 1933 edition of *L’Inde*, an article titled “Bouddha contra Intelligence Service” celebrating the trajectories of Nazi collaborator, Buddhist abbot in China, and self-proclaimed Dalai Lama, Trebitsch-Lincoln (Lampe and Szenasi 1961; Wasserstein 1988) ends with the following line: “We can only wish him every success in the spiritual and anti-imperialist mission he assumes” (Mundaneum Centre d’archives Mons, HLF 125/3, 105).⁶ In the same issue, an article titled “Les langues dans l’Inde” states that Sanskrit is a Germanic language, and (with a shaky

5 “La Ligue Pro Hindoue a été fondée ... constatant ... le réveil de l’Asie opprimée, mère de la civilisation et berceau de notre race aryenne.”

6 “Nous ne pouvons que lui souhaiter tous succès dans la mission d’ordre spirituel et anti-impérialiste qu’il assume.”

basis in academic knowledge even for that time) that most Indian languages are dialects of Hindi (Mundaneum Centre d'archives Mons, HLF 125/3, 102). In all issues of *Hindujo* and *L'Inde* and in all of the progress reports on the workings of the Ligue, now housed in the Mundaneum archive in Mons, Belgium, only the workings of the right-wing Hindu Mahasabha, along with the Indian National Congress are reported. Never is the Muslim League an organisation that is deemed as anti-colonial or as even worth reporting on. In Lievens' editorial for *L'Inde*, he compares the plight of German Jews under the Nazi regime to the plight of Indians under Viceroy Willingdon, and insists that the Indian case is more severe:

Il y avait 600,000 Juifs en Allemagne. Il ya 350,000,000 d'Indiens soumis aux "Ordonnances" de Lord Willingdon. De plus, le majorité des Juifs n'était pas Allemands alors que les Indiens sont les fils de leur propre mère-patrie. Je ne dis pas ceci pour excuser le mouvement anti-sémite, mais pour poser en parallèle la situation Indienne trop ignorée du grand public et qui devrait soulever beaucoup plus d'indignation dans le monde que les mesures anti-israélites! (Mundaneum Centre d'archives Mons, HLF 125/3, 110)

(There were 600,000 Jews in Germany. There are 350,000,000 Indians forced to submit to the ordinances of Lord Willingdon. The majority of German Jews were not Germans, but the Indians are the sons of their true motherland. I do not say this to excuse the anti-semitic movement, but only to provide a parallel with the Indian situation which has been greatly ignored by the general public and which should arouse much more indignation in the world than the anti-Israelite measures!)

Lievens echoes the Indian far-right voices that he is fond of citing, albeit before the Indian far right truly came into its own. Far right activist M. S. Golwalkar would go on to write in a 1938 book called *We or Our Nationhood Defined* that "Germany has also shown how well-nigh impossible it is for Races and cultures, having differences going to the root, to be assimilated into one united whole, a good lesson for us in Hindusthan to learn and profit by" (Zachariah 2014, 90).

It is probably because of Lievens' language of legitimation that he garners a certain degree of suspicion from individuals claiming to be on the other side of these debates. On the 20th of January 1932, the Esperantist and avid spokesperson on Gandhi and Indian anti-colonialism Edmond Privat wrote to Senator Henri La Fontaine warning him of Lievens' propensity for misuse of the funds he both received from La Fontaine as well as claimed to be gathering for the cause of Indian anti-colonialism (Mundaneum Centre d'archives Mons, HLF 125/2, 14-15). As early as the 18th of April 1927,

Indian anti-colonial activist and subsequently first Prime Minister of India Jawaharlal Nehru's letter to Indian-American writer Raja Rao on Lievens ends with the following lines: "I do not think much need be expected of him. You can send him some pamphlets or literature but in no event should you send him [...] any money." (Nehru 1988, 323-324)

In some respects however, Lievens is more difficult to categorize with respect to the veracity of his intentions of working for Indian anti-colonialism. The Indian Political Intelligence Files on the Ligue for instance, speak of Lievens' close association with one V. Srinivasa Raghava Acharya, the editor of the Madras-based Gandhian periodical *The Indian India*. This association apparently was not just limited to consensual declaration of affiliation. Lievens was declared to have "had himself appointed correspondent of that paper, with power to collect subscriptions, donations and legacies, and to deduct 25% from such sums for his own expenses". *The Indian India*, a "formerly unobjectionable" periodical "devoted to banking, agriculture, economics, co-operation, insurance and philosophy" (India Office Records, IPI-15 L/P&J/12/447; File 498/1932, 23-24) ran from December 1930 to July 1931. Its scheduled re-appearance in June 1932 did not happen, and the journal was declared instead to have been terminated. Lievens' own periodical, *L'Inde*, begins publication from the August of 1932. It is therefore reasonable to assert that Lievens was using his India-centric publication to speak on ideas of India that were failing at the time to evade the colonial censor. Lievens' (mis?)qualification as an "ex-militant communist" (Mundaneum Centre d'archives Mons, HLF 125/3, 25) during Henri La Fontaine's investigation of the charges brought against him also opens up possibilities of Lievens straddling the debate on neutrality vs aggression as the best method for international humanitarianism, represented by La Fontaine's collaborator Romain Rolland, and by French novelist and communist Henri Barbusse respectively (Fisher 1988; Conquest 2001).

Both Sindhwad and Lievens were operating with the help of a large illustrious network of individuals interested in the cause of anti-colonialism. During a lecture given on 11th October 1932 at La Salle de la Grande Harmonie in Brussels in favour of the release of the conscientious objector Simöens, Sindhwad shared the floor with well-known representatives of internationalisms and universalisms at the time: with Senator Henri La Fontaine of the Belgian Esperanto Society and of Nobel Peace Prize fame: with Ernest Tanrez (better known by his pseudonym "Ernestan"), Italian anarchist and pacifist; with Frans Wittemans, celebrated Theosophist, founder of the Universal League for Universal Peace, and personal friend of Jiddu Krishnamurti, as well as with the Belgian lawyer and key Secours Rouge International figure, Pierre Vermeyleen. Both the Belgian and Indian intelli-

gence files and the proceedings of the Lige detailed in La Fontaine's personal papers cite Lievens' founding branch in Liège as one of many branches envisaged. Beyond La Fontaine's and Otle's support, Lievens was in correspondence with the Theosophist and painter Jean Delville, who would facilitate the creation of a Brussels section of the Lige. The Paris Section was to be established with the help of pacifist Henri Demont (Gide 1921).

The Lige's proceedings would be covered by a number of Belgian and French periodicals, including *La Wallonie*, *l'Express*, *Le Journal*. The Lige also declared affiliation to a number of India societies, including "Les Amis de Gandhi", Paris, headed by Louise Guyesse of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom,⁷ "Les Amis de Gandhi" (Geneva), "Les Amis de l'Inde" (Paris), "The International Buddhist Mission" (Burma), "The India To-Morrow" (Calcutta), "The Indian India" (Madras), the "Friends of India Society", the "India League" (London) and the "Indiens Venner" (Copenhagen) headed by the anti-fascist activist and journalist Ellen Nielsen Hørup. This association to Hørup perhaps gained the *Lige Pro-Hindoue* a place at the Edmond-Privat-chaired Third International Conference on India, held on 19th September 1933 in Geneva. The first instalment of these conferences was formulated by Hørup. An excerpt from Lievens' contribution to the conference report, printed in the November 1933 issue of *Hindujo* in Esperanto, reads as follows:

The Belgian Pro-Hindu League, whose president is Mr. Roger Lievens, sent its report. The group has held about 15 lectures in Belgium, issued pamphlets, gathered material concerning the history of India, and opened a library; in a room of Palais Mondial in Brussels. It announces a "Semaine de l'Inde" in November 1933, etc. It puts stress on the importance of a regular and better documentation, and the necessity of a monthly review in Europe, in four languages (French, English, German and Esperanto). (National Archives of India, Home_Political_NA_1933_NA_F-168, PR_000003034098,11)

5 Conclusions

Both Sindhwad and Lievens, like many of Esperanto's early spokespersons in the Indian subcontinent, possessed trajectories that are difficult to trace after a certain point. Following the Third International Conference on India in the September of 1933, Lievens appears in French and Italian publications from 1937 to 1942 as "the venerable Vasukyananda Roger Lievens, the Belgian writer and chief of the Buddhist Center for Europe" (Anony-

7 Gandhi's Paris lectures in 1931 are on the basis of an invitation received from Guyesse. See Bussey and Tims (1980).

mous 1936, 8), as an invited speaker on subjects ranging from “War in Asia” (Anonymous 1942, 2) to “The mysterious and martyred India”. Sindhwad’s Esperanto writings on and beyond India continued to appear in brief forms in *Flandra Esperantisto* throughout the 1930s. In July 1937, for instance, she writes a cleverly disguised parable about a “magical motorcycle”, an unstoppable “modern machine” (Sindhwad 1937, 9-10). The same year, the German *Oberkommando des Heeres* (High Command of the Army) would come up with the rudiments for what would become the Zündapp KS 750, otherwise known as the *Blitzkrieg* bike (Garson 2017).

Sindhwad’s *Hindujo* and the wide eclectic network it inspired, remains a unique episode of an attempt to view Esperanto not merely as a British Indian colonial pastime, but as a tool to facilitate Indian anti-colonialism. Some of the connections drawn upon, especially with regards to Lievens, force us to remember that an international language can very well be used to national ends. Esperanto, an international language, a unique example of globality in the twentieth century, was also being deployed from various parts of the globe. Reading Sindhwad’s attempts therefore speaks for the need to contextualize Esperanto within its centers of use, for the need to see Esperanto not merely linguistically or sociologically, but as a historical phenomenon with diverse uses and consequences.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Probal Dasgupta, Christopher Gledhill, Klaus Schubert and Geoffrey Greatrex for engaging closely with the prose and ideas that this article contains. Benjamin Zachariah read several drafts and engaged in many crucial conversations. Brigid O’Keeffe’s energy is infectious; her encouragement and critical comments have greatly helped in the development of many of the arguments of this piece. Bernhard Struck, Guilherme Fians, Pascal Dubourg Glatigny, Dennis Eckert and all members of the EHESS-led “Esperanto Paradigme III” conference (5th-6th July 2023) deserve special mention as the first forum for some of the ideas that became this article. Roland Rotsaert, Marc Vanden Bempt and Joost Vander Bauwhede at the erstwhile Esperanto-Fondaĵo Cesar Vanbiervliet (Kortrijk, Belgium), Stephanie Manfroid at the Mundaneum Archive (Mons, Belgium), and Bernhard Tuider at the Austrian National Library provided invaluable help in the procurement of archival sources.

References

Unpublished archival sources

India Office Records, British Library, London:

S. N. Dutt to B. R. Curson 15th May 1945-7th Feb 1946, 5301/215. In "S. N. Sindhwad", IOR/L/PJ/7/3125.

"Teaching of Esperanto in India: Government of India response to a League of Nations enquiry", IOR/L/PJ/6/1789, File 642 : Feb-Sep 1922.

"Belgium: Ligue pro-Hindoue of Liège, and its sponsor Roger Lievens", IPI-15 : Other 'Country' Files, 1921-1949, L/P&J/12/447; File 498/1932.

Mundaneum Centre d'archives, Mons, Belgium:

"Comité international pour l'Inde (Genève): correspondance, circulaires, périodique", Les papiers personnels Henri La Fontaine, HLF 125/2.

"Ligue Pro-Hindoue: correspondance, tracts, périodique", Les papiers personnels Henri La Fontaine, HLF 125/3.

National Archives of India:

"Resolutions Passed at the Third International Conference on India Held in Geneva During Sept 1933, Question of Starting Counter-Propaganda Together the False Attacks on the British Administration in India", Home_Political_NA_1933_NA_F-168, PR_000003034098.

"Amendment to the Indian Telegraph Rules", National Archives of India, Home_Political_NA_1934_NA_F-64, PR_000003034547.

State Archives in Belgium (Het Rijksarchief in België):

"Ligue pro-Hindoue. 1932. 1944-1961, 1 omslag, 1114", A. litieke "dossiers", het archief van de Gerechtelijke politie bij het parket van de procureur des Konings van Brussel, 1921-1976 , BE-A0541_007368_007129_DUT.

Published Sources

All URLs were checked in April 2024.

Anonymous. 1906a. "Esperanto Society." Overland Summary. In *Indian Daily News* 9th August 1906: 23.

Anonymous. 1906b. "Answers to Correspondents." *La Brita Esperantisto* 2, issue 22 (October 1906): 115-116.

Anonymous. 1907. "Esperanto Lecture at Godhra." *The Bombay Gazette* 13th May 1907: 6.

Anonymous. 1912. "India." *La Brita Esperantisto* 8, issue 91 (July 1912): 125.

Anonymous. 1917. "Agnes de Selincourt." *La Brita Esperantisto* 13, issue 154 (October 1917): 87.

- Anonymous. 1923. "John Pollen." *La Brita Esperantisto* 19, issue 221 (August 1923): 98.
- Anonymous. 1936. "Kwang Hsi, le Bouddha vivant viendra, en 1937, porter à Paris son message aux peuples d'Occident." *Le Journal* 23rd April 1936: 8.
- Anonymous. 1942. "Conferenze." *L'Italie nouvelle: journal hebdomadaire, politique, littéraire et artistique* issue 2 (24th June 1942).
- Bake, Rita and Brita Reimers. 2003. *So lebten sie! Spazieren auf den Wegen von Frauen in Hamburgs Alt- und Neustadt*. Hamburg: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung.
- Bayly, Susan. 2004. "Imagining 'Greater India': French and Indian Visions of Colonialism in the Indic Mode." *Modern Asian Studies* 38, issue 3: 703-744.
- Bussey, Gertrude and Margaret Tims. 1980. *Pioneers for Peace: Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1915-65*. London: Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, British Section.
- Büttner, Ursula. 1994. *Politischer Neubeginn in schwieriger Zeit. Wahl und Arbeit der ersten demokratischen Bürgerschaft Hamburgs 1919-21*. Hamburg: Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung.
- Chaturvedi, Benarsidas. 1928a. "The East African Indian National Congress." *Indians Abroad, The Modern Review* 43, issue 2: 229-231.
- Chaturvedi, Benarsidas. 1928b. "Chhota Imperialists." *Indians Abroad, The Modern Review* 43, issue 3: 356-357.
- Chaturvedi, Benarsidas. 1933. "Dr. Lanka Sundaram's Observations." *Indians Abroad, The Modern Review* 54, issue 8: 221-222.
- Chmielik, Thomasz. 1994. "Edmond Privat: Kial, kiam, kien, kiel." In *Premier colloque d'interlinguistique: CDELI La Chaux-de-Fonds*, edited by Tazio Carlevaro. Bellinzona: Hans Dubois.
- Conquest, Robert. 2001. *Reflections of a Ravaged Century*. New York: W. W. Norton.
- Deutscher, Isaac. 1969. *Heretics and Renegades and Other Essays*. First Paperback Edition. London: Jonathan Cape.
- Evans, Richard J. 1976. *The Feminist Movement in Germany, 1894-1933*. London: Sage Studies in 20th Century History.
- Farrokh, Mohammad. 1991. *La pensée et l'action d'Edmond Privat (1889-1962): contribution à l'histoire des idées politiques en Suisse*. Berne: Lang.
- Fermor, L. L. 1945. "Charles Stewart Middlemiss. 1859-1945." *Obituary Notices of Fellows of the Royal Society* 5, issue 14: 263-286.
- Fisher, David James. 1988. *Romain Rolland and the Politics of Intellectual Engagement*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Forster, Peter G. 1982. *The Esperanto Movement*. The Hague: Mouton.

- Gacond, Claude. 1989. "Private kun Edmond Privat." *Esperanto* 82, issue 7-8: 121-123.
- Gandhi, Mahatma. 1926. "Die Kinderheirat in Indien." *Die Kameradin unserer Frauen und Mädchen* 2, issue 20, 27th September 1926, translated by Erna Riekmann Sindhwad. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bd6t5593951w/f5.image.r=Erna%20Sindhwad?rk=64378;0#>
- Gaspari, Oscar. 2002. "Cities against States? Hopes, Dreams and Shortcomings of the European Municipal Movement, 1900-1960." *Contemporary European History* 11, issue 4: 597-621.
- Garson, Paul. 2017. *Two Wheeled Blitzkrieg*. Stroud: Amberley.
- Gide, Ch. 1921. [Review of Pour supprimer ce crime: la guerre, et sauver la France de sa situation financière, by H. Demont]. *Revue d'économie Politique* 35, issue 5: 646-647.
- Gordin, Michael D. 2015. *Scientific Babel: How Science Was Done before and after Global English*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- [Hansard]. 1926. *Hansard House of Commons*. 20th Century House of Commons Hansard Sessional Papers. Fifth Series. Vol. 198. Sitting of Monday 26th July 1926. "Esperanto."
- Haskell, Yasmin and Juanita Feros Ruys, eds. 2010. *Latinity and Alterity in the Early Modern Period*. Tempe, AZ: Brepols.
- Heylen, Ann. 2012. *Japanese Models, Chinese Culture and the Dilemma of Taiwanese Language Reform*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Houlmann, Emmanuelle. 2005. *Edmond Privat et l'espéranto. Son engagement en faveur d'une langue pour la paix (1903-1931)*. Mémoire de Licence (Phd Thesis). Fribourg: Université de Fribourg.
- Hürlihan, Martin. 1929. "Hindujo." *La Vegetarano* XII, issue 1 (January 1929): 4. https://ia803003.us.archive.org/14/items/vegetarano_1929_j12_n1_jan/vegetarano_1929_j12_n1_jan.pdf.
- Karlander, David. 2024. "Up from Babel: On the (r)evolutionary linguistic thought of Eugène Lanti." *Language & Communication* 96: 13-25. <https://pdf.sciencedirectassets.com/271827/1-s2.0-S0271530924X00038/1-s2.0-S0271530924000120/main.pdf>.
- Khan, Musharaff Moulamia. 1932. *Pages in the Life of a Sufi. Reflections and Reminiscences*. London: Rider & Company.
- Lampe, David and Laszlo Szenasi. 1961. *The Self-made Villain: A Biography of I. T. Trebitsch Lincoln*. London: Cassell.
- Lanti, Eugène. 1931. "Se Lenin estus esperantisto." En *Vortoj de Kamarado E. Lanti*, 33-34. Leipzig: S.A.T. Eldona Fako Kooperativa. <http://data.onb.ac.at/dtl/8886462> (25.03.2024)
- Large, Andrew. 1985. *The Artificial Language Movement*. Oxford: Blackwell.

- Lewis, G. E. 1944. "Guy E. Pilgrim, 1875-1943." *American Journal of Science* 242, issue 2: 105-106. <https://doi.org/10.2475/ajs.242.2.105>.
- Lins, Ulrich. 2017. *Dangerous Language*. Vol. 1: *Esperanto under Hitler and Stalin*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Nehru, Jawaharlal. 1988. *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*. Reprint. New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation.
- O'Keeffe, Brigid. 2021. *Esperanto and Languages of Internationalism in Revolutionary Russia*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Orlov, Genrikh. 1992. *Tree of Music*. St. Petersburg: Frager.
- Petignat, Yves. 1982. *Il était une fois Edmond Privat, l'Inde et Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi: contribution au classement et à l'analyse d'un secteur des archives d'un journaliste genevois*. La Chaux-de-Fonds: chez l'auteur.
- Pollen, John. 1907. *The Why and the Wherefore of Esperanto*. London: W. Speaight.
- Rebetez, Anne-Valérie. 1986. *Le Mahatma Gandhi, Edmond Privat et les problèmes de la souveraineté indienne (1931-1932)*. Neuchâtel: chez l'auteur.
- Sarkar, Sumit. 1989. *Modern India 1885-1947*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Scherer, Joseph R. 1933. *Ĉirkaŭ la mondon kun la verda stelo*. Köln: Heroldo de Esperanto.
- Shaheen, Ifqut and Rafiullah Khan. 2020. "In Pursuit of Pre-/Protohistory: Simone Corbiau's Unsuccessful Archaeological Expedition to the North-West Frontier Province of British India." *South Asian Studies* 36, issue 2: 166-176.
- Sindhwad, Erna Rieckmann. 1930. "La rakonto de miaj spertoj pri vero de M. K. Gandhi." *Flandra Esperantisto*, issue January: 106-109.
- Sindhwad, Erna Rieckmann. 1932. "Esperanto kaj Hindujo." *Flandra Esperantisto*, issue March: 142-143.
- Sindhwad, Erna Rieckmann. 1932. "Letero de Mahatma Ghandhi." *Flandra Esperantisto*, issue November: 81.
- Sindhwad, Erna Rieckmann. 1933. "Kion Hindujo deziras." *Flandra Esperantisto*, issue December: 88-89.
- Sindhwad, Erna Rieckmann. 1934. "Hinda ekzpozicio en la Mondpalaco Bruselo". *Flandra Esperantisto*, issue January: 99-101.
- Sindhwad, Erna Rieckmann. 1937. "Por komencantoj." *Flandra Esperantisto*, issue July: 9-10.
- Skinner, Quentin. 1988. "Language and Social Change." In *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and his Critics*, edited by James Tully. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 119-132.
- Universala Kongreso de Esperanto. 1906. Nomaro de la kongresanoj: kun ĝenevaj adresoj. Genève: Universala Kongreso de Esperanto 2. <http://data.onb.ac.at/rec/AC12616248>.

- Van Acker, Wouter and Geert Somsen. 2012. "A Tale of Two World Capitals – the Internationalisms of Pieter Eijkman and Paul Otlet." *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire/Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Filologie en Geschiedenis* 90, issue 4: 1389-1409.
- Wasserstein, Bernard. 1988. "The Secret Lives of Trebitsch Lincoln." New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Waquet, Françoise. 2001. *Latin or the Empire of a Sign: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries*. London: Verso.
- Zabarskaitė, Jolita. 2022. "Greater India" and the Indian Expansionist Imagination, c. 1885-1965: The Rise and Decline of the Idea of a Lost Hindu Empire. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Zachariah, Benjamin. 2014. "A Voluntary Gleichschaltung? Perspectives from India towards a non-Eurocentric Understanding of Fascism." *Journal of Transcultural Studies* 5, issue 2: 63-100.

About the author

Bipasha Bhattacharyya is a third-year PhD Student (Department of History) as well as Trinity College's Prince of Wales Student. She was a Prize Research Student in the year 2022 at the Centre for History and Economics, Cambridge, and continues to be actively engaged in its proceedings. She convened the Faculty of History's World History Workshop for the academic year 2022-2023. Her research aims to speak on constructed languages, language politics and pedagogy through an attempt to historicize Esperanto and the search for an International auxiliary language within and beyond South Asia. She is also currently attempting to situate the unpublished 1960s correspondence of American Esperantist Ina Tillman with a Siberian Esperantist whose familial connections date back to Leo Tolstoy's own late-nineteenth-century Esperanto-friendly publishing firm, Posrednik.

Pri la aŭtoro

Bipasha Bhattacharyya estas triajara doktora studento (Fako de Historio) kaj laŭreato de la fonduso Prince of Wales ĉe Trinity College, Kembriĝo. Ŝi estis esplorstudenta laŭreato dum la jaro 2022 ĉe la Centro por Historio kaj Ekonomiko, Kembriĝo, kaj daŭre estas aktive engaĝita en ĝiaj agadoj. Ŝi organizis la atelieron de la Historia Fakultato pri Mondhistorio dum la akademia jaro 2022-2023. Ŝia esploro celas krei dialogon pri konstruitaj lingvoj, lingvopolitiko kaj pedagogio per provo historiigi Esperanton kaj la serĉon de Internacia helplingvo en kaj ekster Suda Azio. Ŝi aktuale provas

situigi la neeldonitajn 1960ajn korespondaĵojn de usona esperantistino Ina Tillman kun Siberia esperantisto, kies familiaj ligoj fontas en la por-esperanisma eldonejo Posrednik, firmao posedata de Lev Tolstoj fine de la deknaŭa jarcento.

Sur l’auteur

Bipasha Bhattacharyya est doctorante en troisième année de ses études (Faculté d’histoire) ainsi que lauréate d’une bourse Prince of Wales, Trinity College, Cambridge. Elle a été étudiante de recherche primée en 2022 au Centre d’histoire et d’économie de Cambridge et continue de participer activement à ses travaux. Elle a organisé l’atelier d’histoire mondiale de la Faculté d’histoire pour l’année universitaire 2022-2023. Ses travaux visent à entamer une discussion sur les langues construites, la politique linguistique et la pédagogie à travers une tentative d’historicisation de l’espéranto et la recherche d’une langue auxiliaire internationale en Asie du Sud et au-delà. Elle tente actuellement de situer les correspondances inédites des années 1960 de l’espérantiste américaine Ina Tillman avec un Espérantiste sibérien dont les liens familiaux remontent à la maison d’édition pro-espérantiste de Léon Tolstoï à la fin du XIXe siècle, Posrednik.

“Hinduĵo” kaj la geedzoj Sindhwad: belgaj esperantistoj pri “Barato”

Resumo: La kreado de “novaj formoj de moviĝeblo kaj interago je neteritoria skalo” fariĝas historia problemo, kiam oni spuras la trajektoriojn de la internacia helplingvo Esperanto. Ĉi tiu artikolo pridemandas tiun problemon per engaĝiĝo kun la moviĝoj kaj renkontiĝoj de Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad. Inter 1930 kaj 1934 ŝi kaj ŝia edzo uzis sian Bruselan Esperanto-revuon *Hinduĵo* kiel la organizan centron de reto por faciligi hindajn kontraŭkoloniajn klopodojn. Legado de la periodaĵo, kaj de hindaj kaj belgaj spiondosieroj, montras gamon da specifaj renkontoj kaj ŝanĝiĝantajn gradojn da moviĝeblo, kiuj inkludas rilatojn kun la “Ligue Pro-Hindoue” de la belga ĵurnalisto Roger Lievens, kunfluejo de ismoj pri “Granda Hindio” kaj de Arjanismoj. La geedzoj Sindhwad plurfoje revenis al la figuro de Gandhi por serĉi legitimecon por sia propra flegado de ideoj kaj retoj, ofte en rekta konflikto kun la vizioj de Gandhi aŭ de publikaj versioj de Gandhi. Eksploatado de li kiel protekta signifanto ironie okazis samtempe, kiam malakceptis Gandhi mem Esperanton kiel markon de internaciismo kaj konkursanton de la progreso de naciismoj. Spuri la agadojn de la geedzoj Sindhwad tiel ebligas rigardon kaj al hinda kontraŭkoloniismo kaj al Esperanto. Ĝi permesas al ni rekonceptigi hinda kontraŭkoloniismon, kaj kelkajn el ĝiaj sordidaj heredaĵoj, kiuj estas videblaj nur de preter la limoj de sud-aziaj arkivoj. Samtempe ĝi perme-

sas al ni rigardi Esperanton ne nur kiel Movadon, sed ankaŭ kiel movadojn de ideoj, kiuj kaj evitas kaj reprezentas nodojn regionajn kaj temajn.

Ŝlosilvortoj: arjanismoj; Esperanto; Granda Barato; hindoj eksterlandaj; kontraŭkoloniismo; lingva ideologio

“Hindujo” et le couple Sindhwad: des espérantistes belges sur l’Inde

Résumé: La création de “nouvelles formes de mobilité et d’interaction à une échelle non territoriale” devient un problème historique, lorsqu’on tente de retracer les trajectoires de la langue auxiliaire internationale espéranto. Cet article interroge ce problème à travers un engagement avec les déplacements et les rencontres d’Erna Rieckmann Sindhwad. Entre 1930 et 1934, elle et son mari ont utilisé leur journal bruxellois en espéranto *Hindujo* comme centre organisationnel d’un réseau pour faciliter les efforts anticoloniaux indiens. Une lecture du périodique et des dossiers de renseignement indiens et belges montre une série d’affiliations spécifiques et divers degrés de mobilité qui incluent des associations à la “Ligue Pro-Hindoue” du journaliste belge Roger Lievens, une confluence de doctrines en faveur de la “Grande Inde” ainsi que des aryanismes. Les Sindhwad sont constamment revenus sur la figure de Gandhi pour rechercher de la légitimité, lors de la cultivation de leurs idées et de leurs réseaux, souvent en conflit direct avec les positions de Gandhi ou les versions publiques de Gandhi. Son utilisation comme signifiant protecteur correspond ironiquement à un moment où Gandhi lui-même rejette l’espéranto en tant que garant de l’internationalisme en concurrence avec le progrès des nationalismes. Retracer les activités des Sindhwad offre ainsi un regard à la fois sur l’anticolonialisme indien et sur l’espéranto. Cela nous permet de reconceptualiser l’anticolonialisme indien et certains de ses héritages sordides qui ne sont visibles qu’au-delà des limites des archives sud-asiatiques. Simultanément, cela nous permet de voir l’espéranto non seulement comme un “Mouvement”, mais aussi comme des mouvements d’idées, lesquelles éludent et représentent à la fois des nœuds régionaux et thématiques.

Mots-clés: anticolonialisme; aryanismes; Espéranto; Grande Inde; Indiens de l’étranger; idéologie linguistique