

*Chapter 4*

## OF EXPECTATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

South Asian Perspectives on World War I, the World,  
and the Subcontinent, 1918–2018

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Every Republic Day, a parade is held at the center of power in New Delhi, starting at Rashtrapati Bhavan and moving along Rajpath, making its way past and around the India Gate.<sup>1</sup> The parade is the highlight of the three-day-long celebrations of India's independence and its constitution, which took effect on 26 January 1950. The parade showcases India's cultural and social heritage as well as its military strength. Thus, the cityscape built under British colonial rule to reflect the splendor of the Raj has been claimed and transformed to represent independent India's constitutional grounding. Of the aforementioned buildings, the India Gate at the eastern end of Rajpath is the starting point for this chapter: initially named the All India War Memorial, the India Gate was designed by one of the empire's most prominent architects, Edwin Lutyens.<sup>2</sup> Work began in 1921, and after a decade, the memorial was dedicated in a ceremony conducted by the then-vice-roy to commemorate the more than 70,000 soldiers of the Indian armies who died in World War I.<sup>3</sup> Additionally, the names of 13,516 further soldiers who died at the North-West Frontier and in the Third Anglo-Afghan War of 1919 are inscribed on the arch and the foundations of the India Gate.<sup>4</sup> The India Gate is built in a neoclassical style free of religious ephemera.

In postcolonial India, the India Gate perhaps best symbolizes the intricate fabric of colonial and postcolonial commemoration of war—and the struggle for independence—in what was British India and is now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. After the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, in connection with Bangladesh becoming its own state, the Amar Jawan Jyoti (the flame of the immortal soldier) was added underneath the India Gate. It commemorates unidentified Indian soldiers who died fighting for India. Thus, the India Gate together with the Amar Jawan Jyoti arguably combine colonial and postcolonial public expressions of mourning for members of the Indian colonial and postcolonial army. At the same time, the India Gate and Amar Jawan Jyoti reflect the very different wars in which the subcontinent was involved in the twentieth century.

I argue that World War I, as seen from a South Asian perspective, was a colonial rather than a global war, and was perceived as potentially offering a better position for negotiating increased Indian participation in ruling the country after the war. Although much support for the war was couched in the language of voluntary aid to London, it seems doubtful that there was a choice to be made. In fact, the British colonial government mobilized not only men but also resources in cash and kind, rather purposefully, making their demands more palatable to the Indian population by promising an avenue to self-government for the years after the war.

This chapter explores the ways in which World War I features in commemorative practices as well as in Indian (and South Asian) collective memory. Secondly, it discusses the historiography on World War I, taking, whenever possible, a South Asian perspective.<sup>5</sup> In a third section, it outlines current research trends and commemorative practices.

### **World War I in Indian and South Asian Commemorative Practice**

Apart from the India Gate in Delhi, several memorials dedicated to the memory of Indian soldiers fighting in World War I are situated in India, and a few are scattered across the world. In India, nearly all prominent memorials dedicated to the memory of Indian soldiers and seamen who lost their lives during World War I are located in the capitals of the erstwhile presidencies of British India, namely, Chennai (then Madras), Kolkata (then Calcutta), and Mumbai (then Bombay)—most of the memorials being “small and austere.”<sup>6</sup>

The Bombay Memorial is housed in the Sailor’s Home on Thana Road, not far from the port, and commemorates the sailors of both world wars.

These sailors provided the necessary skills to ship materials required for the war between India and Europe. Bombay was the major port and hub for shipping men and material between India and the battlefields in Europe, Mesopotamia, and Africa.

Similarly, the Kolkata Lascar Memorial on the riverbank of the Hoogly commemorates Indian sailors, whereas the Glorious Dead Cenotaph on the northern edge of the Maidan appears to have been dedicated to the memory of British soldiers in the Indian army during World War I. It is built following the example of the cenotaph in London. The names on the plaques are exclusively English ones, and in 1959 the plaques were removed and brought to nearby St. John's Church, where they can be seen today. To this day, a Christian service is held at St. John's Church in combination with a wreath-laying ceremony at the Glorious Dead Cenotaph, organized and led by the British high commissioner to remember the—white—British soldiers to whom the cenotaph is dedicated. The 49th Bengalis Memorial on College Square just a couple of miles away pays tribute to the dead Bengali soldiers of World War I. The white marble pillar is, however, frequently submerged by the bustling activity on the square. Each of the three memorials is dedicated to a different race or section of society, and the distinct ceremonies held until now illustrate the segregation of the colonial army on the grounds of race and class during the war.

In Chennai, the Victory Memorial was originally built in 1933 to commemorate Indian soldiers who fell during World War I. It is located in the southern vicinity of Fort St. George at a roundabout marking the beginning of Marina Beach. Over the course of the twentieth century, inscriptions paying tribute to soldiers who died in World War II, the Indo-Pakistani Wars of 1947–48, 1965, and 1971, the 1962 Sino-Indian War, and the 1999 Kargil War were added to the main memorial or the little pillars surrounding it. The original engraving on the foundation of the memorial reads, "To the memory of all those from the Madras Presidency who lost their lives in the service of the British Crown." After independence, it was changed and now states, "To the service of the nation," with "and post-independence martyrs" added to the inscription on another line. Arguably, the transformation of the dedication on the Victory Memorial represents not only the transformation of the country from a colony within the British Empire to an independent nation-state but also the transformation of a colonial people moving on from referencing the king emperor to acknowledging their fellow citizens for their services in the army.

There are hardly any memorials relating to World War I in Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka. In Karachi, a memorial engraved with the

names of soldiers who fought and died in World War I is located in the Karachi War Cemetery. Similarly, a section of the Protestant Cemetery known as Gorā Qabristān in Rawalpindi is dedicated to the graves of soldiers of the 1914–18 war.<sup>7</sup> In Bangladesh, building an independent nation in 1971 dominates any historical narrative. The Jatiyo Sriti Shoudho (National Martyrs Memorial) in Savar and the recently inaugurated Liberation War Memorial in Tripura play a central role in public commemorative practice: the country does not have a memorial dedicated to the soldiers of World War I.<sup>8</sup> A cenotaph was built in Colombo in the 1920s, now dedicated to the dead soldiers of both world wars. Rana Wiru Commemoration Day, also known as Remembrance Day, in Sri Lanka is on 18 May and commemorates the end of the civil war in Sri Lanka in 2009. The official ceremonies on the day are held at the National War Memorial in Colombo, where the dead of all wars since World War I are remembered.

Outside the subcontinent, war memorials for Indian combatants and noncombatants were erected in various European locations, for instance in Brighton in the United Kingdom<sup>9</sup> and in Neuve-Chapelle in France.<sup>10</sup> In the Middle East, a memorial has been erected in Basra in Iraq on which Indian soldiers are now named after the memorial was relocated and rebuilt after the Iraq war.<sup>11</sup>

This brief overview of the existing memorials dedicated to the dead of World War I in India or connected to the memory of Indian Expeditionary Forces who fought in theaters of war in Europe, the Middle East, and Africa illustrates that within India, the major memorials have undergone various transformations over the past century. For instance, both the India Gate in New Delhi and the Victory Memorial in Chennai commemorate not only soldiers who fell during World War I but also their comrades who did not return from later wars.

Particularly with respect to the India Gate, the imbuing of the memorial with a new meaning is obvious: away from the demonstration of imperial power and India's subordinate role within the empire toward becoming a reference point for independent India as an integral part of the parades surrounding the celebrations of 15 August. Commemorative practice and collective memory have been transformed, and imaginations and enactments have shifted from an imperial, colonial context to a post-colonial, independent, and national one. Not only has the Indian state taken up the site as a central marker for the nation's narrative of independence, but New Delhi's and India's citizens also congregate around India Gate in order to voice and present their demands. The Victory Memorial in Chennai underwent a similar transformation. In addition, the inscriptions on its marble and stone structure were updated: the inscription at

the Victory Memorial's foundation now dedicates it to soldiers of "the nation," erasing the reference to "the British Crown."

Significantly, there are hardly any commemorative events that honor only the soldiers and seamen of World War I—perhaps because it is seen as a colonial war that was imposed on India. In fact, India was declared to be at war with Germany by London—without consulting Indian opinions and perspectives on this major step.<sup>12</sup> Although support for the war effort was given aplenty, the focus was on achieving responsible government and, perhaps, even independence.

The bombardment of oil tanks, harbor buildings, and anchored ships in the Chennai (then Madras) harbor by the SMS *Emden* in September 1914 seems to be much more present in the imagination of current Chennaiites than the existence of the Victory Memorial. Madras was the only Indian city to be bombarded during World War I. On the one hand, the presence of the event is reflected in the annual commemoration ceremony that takes place at the commemorative plaque on the eastern wall of the civil high court, in which Chempakaraman Pillai is also commemorated. He was a Tamilian, born in Kerala, and lived in Germany. Apparently, he was on board the *Emden* as the ship's surgeon.<sup>13</sup> The former chief minister of Tamilnadu, M. Karunanidhi,<sup>14</sup> erected a statue for Chempakaraman Pillai, projecting him as a brave soldier in the struggle against British oppressors. This underlines the perception of World War I as being part and parcel of the freedom struggle. On the other hand, the brief bombardment of Madras harbor is present in the use of the word "emden" in the Tamil and Malayalam languages; it denotes a strong, bold person, taking on a challenge.<sup>15</sup>

The analysis of the war memorials in Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, and Chennai show that they and their meaning were transformed—not forgotten. Rather, there were relatively few World War I memorials in India from the start, and the ones that were put up were generally built by the imperial rulers to serve, firstly, the praise of empire and, secondly, the commemoration of dead British and Indian soldiers. Moreover, memorials and the way in which nonwhite soldiers were remembered varied across the empire, with some memorials bearing the names of Indian soldiers, others not, and none of African soldiers.<sup>16</sup> I argue that the colonial and imperial overtones of creating these war memorials, especially the India Gate, reflect the perception that World War I was indeed a colonial war, perhaps global in geographical terms, but certainly colonial in how it was executed and in what it meant for the Indian population. Corresponding to this notion is the engagement of the local population with the memorials: the Victory Memorial in Chennai hardly plays a role in the lives of Chennaiites and is rarely visited—in contrast to memorials dedicated to

politicians such as M. G. Ramachandran and C. N. Annadurai,<sup>17</sup> which were built in a style reminiscent of the Arc de Triomphe in Paris and are located in proximity to the Victory Memorial along Marina Beach. The latter are highly valued by the local population and are visited in veneration akin to the veneration demonstrated in temples, mosques, and churches: shoes are removed before entering the space surrounding the memorials, donations are made, and festivals frame ritualistic events at the memorials. Remarkably, Mary Hancock's book-length discussion on *The Politics of Heritage from Madras to Chennai* does not mention the Victory Memorial once, an implicit suggestion that neither in the past nor in the present does World War I play a role in the Tamil memoryscape.<sup>18</sup> The India Gate, apart from being incorporated into independent India's celebrations of the Republic, has become a favorite spot to enjoy summer evenings with friends or have a picnic or an ice cream, and has also turned into a sought-after tourist location where pictures and selfies are taken. Thus, the integration of the India Gate in the urban landscape of New Delhi has taken quite a different trajectory from the one originally planned.

### Historiography of World War I Relating to India/South Asia

In the past decade, which witnessed the centenary of World War I, engagement and research relating to commemorative practice as well as social and cultural aspects of the war mushroomed and produced a much larger output than the decades before. Despite this, the research literature on India—or South Asia—and World War I comprises a comparatively small body of work, particularly when considering the vast field of historical, sociological, anthropological, and other studies relating to the subcontinent's path to independence, emergence of three nation-states, and sociocultural and economic trajectory over the past seventy years. The following overview of the historiography on literature relating to the role of India and Indians during World War I attempts to include, whenever possible, South Asian perspectives. At the time of the war, two-thirds of the subcontinent was under direct British colonial administration, and one-third was under the rule of Indian princes whose reign was controlled by British residents at their courts. Goa, Daman, and Diu belonged to the Portuguese Empire, and the French had possessions along the southeastern and southwestern Indian coasts.<sup>19</sup>

Between 1918 and today, the writing about India's role in the war has transformed profoundly with respect to thematic and methodological approaches. It can be divided into three phases. Roughly, the first phase

includes the immediate years after the war until Indian and Pakistani Independence in 1947; the second phase covers the first four decades or so of the postcolonial nation-state until the mid-nineties; and the third encompasses the last two decades, post-liberalization up until the current day. In these three phases, different themes and concerns characterized investigations and historical research into the involvement and role of Indians in World War I. Broadly speaking, the main question posed by writers in the pre-independence phase was “why” and “for whom” World War I was fought, while many scholars of the second, post-independence phase turned to the question of “how” the war was conducted, and scholars of the current, post-liberalization phase finally engaged with “who” battled the war—the combatants and noncombatants—as well as the experiences they made over the course of World War I. Some themes, however, cannot be exclusively allocated to one phase or the other, but bridge them or occur in waves throughout the past hundred years.

In the first phase (1914–47), research and writing on World War I was characterized by an imperial and colonial perspective. It saw Indian soldiers as being part of the imperial effort to win the war, with an emphasis on doing so first on the battlefields of Europe and subsequently in Africa and the Middle East. Individual soldiers and their experiences, perceptions, and imaginations were less of a concern for authors; the focus was firmly on military aspects of the war. Focal topics were the various campaigns and actions of the war, the recruitment process, and the deployment of the Indian Expeditionary Forces to France and Belgium in 1914 and Mesopotamia in 1915, as well as to other theaters of war in Africa and the Middle East throughout the war years. Some of the memorials dedicated to the combatants and noncombatants of the British colonies were built and inaugurated in the two decades after the war (see above).

In the second phase, from around 1947 to the mid-1990s, World War I arguably became less of an interest to historians as questions and research into the struggle for independence and nation-building took center stage, and the war was seen as one of the contributing factors to advancing potential self-government in India. This is reflected in many histories of India that discuss important twentieth-century events: within the larger historical context, World War I receives little attention, often being relegated to a couple of paragraphs or a couple of pages, or not even featuring in the chronology.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the effects of World War I were mostly seen in conjunction with its political results, notably the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1917, the passing of the Rowlatt Act, which continued martial law throughout British India, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in Amritsar in 1919, and the resulting noncooperation movement under the leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi as well as the independence

movement.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, the rise of Indian businesses during and after the war and the home-rule movements received attention. Commemoration ceremonies were limited, and the original intention of some memorials was transformed as previously mentioned with respect to the India Gate and the Victory Memorial.

The third phase, from the mid-1990s, is characterized by an increased interest in World War I in the run-up to the centenary commemorations around the world. In India, this period has also seen growing engagement on the part of the state. The past two decades have generated studies exploring social, cultural, and medical aspects of the war. Perhaps the most significant theme that has been taken up is the attempt to write Indian soldiers and seamen—their voices, experiences, and perceptions—back into the story. This was made possible after hidden sources such as letters, sound archives, photographs, and material objects belonging to or created by Indian soldiers were unearthed and provided the basis for new perspectives on sociocultural dimensions.

Looking at the historiography on South Asia and World War I through a broad thematic lens, the major groups can be summarized under military, diplomatic-political, and sociocultural history—and most importantly, subaltern perspectives.

## Military History

“If any troops are to leave this country for active warfare in Europe, let Indian as well as British soldiers be sent without distinction of race and creed to serve side by side in defence of our united cause.”<sup>22</sup>

It has been highlighted by several scholars that monographs and shorter studies exploring the role of the Indian Army within the British Empire generally constitute only a comparatively small field of research. Nevertheless, they are too many to be discussed comprehensively and in detail in this section on military history, which limits itself to the most important publications through the pre-independence, post-independence, and post-1990s phases.

Contemporary studies of World War I and of the following years up to the late 1940s tend to engage with the vast assistance given by India to the empire, its contributions in terms of men, material, and money—assistance that went far beyond military support. During World War I, Indian soldiers were sent to Europe to fight for the colonial emperor’s cause for the first time in the history of the British Empire. Until then, they had only been perceived as a colonial army, with their three main responsibil-



ities firmly placed in the territories of the colonies: they were employed to guard the internal security in India, maintain the northwestern frontier of India, and act as an imperial reserve for potential invasions from Afghanistan or Russia. The majority of soldiers came from the Punjab, belonged to the mid-peasantry, and earned their livelihood by soldiering in the army for five to seven years. They had received hardly any education, and were thus deemed less of a threat to English “superiority” than educated Indians.<sup>23</sup> Both recruitment and employment of Indian soldiers by the British colonial government featured layers of inherent and more overt variations of racism: the Indian population was categorized into different communities, soldiers being recruited only from what were perceived to be the “martial races,” and a fear existed of changing the power balance through having Indian soldiers serve in Europe. However, at the juncture of declaring war on Germany in 1914, Indian combatants and noncombatants were deemed essential to the British war effort and deployed in all theaters of the war. It needs to be borne in mind that the Indian army was an army put together by the British colonial government. Officers and other commanding positions were firmly held in British hands, with colonial Indian subjects allowed to become common soldiers, including lower-ranking officers. The command structure followed a clear and racially biased hierarchy, with social norms of a colonial society replicated in the army.<sup>24</sup>

Looking at studies published in the pre-independence historiographical phase, differences in approach become apparent rather quickly: even if they focus on detailing the numbers and figures of the Indian contributions to the war on all levels, contrasting perspectives on how these were perceived become obvious. Shortly after the war, in 1919, Mukat Bhargava published an extensive study on World War I. It is a detailed four-hundred-page account of the contributions of India and Indians to the British war effort. Enumerating and listing these contributions resulted only partially in the desired overall acknowledgment of how crucial they were for the British. In his preface, claiming to represent the views of Indians, Bhargava states his concerns about how little the sacrifices of the Indian population were acknowledged—or how they were even disguised—in the years after the war:

The idea of compiling a readable volume which could enable India and the world at large to estimate and appreciate at its full worth the invaluable assistance rendered by this country to the British Empire when the latter was face to face with a crisis of the greatest nature suggested itself to me when certain influential persons both here and in England were making an organized attempt to belittle India's services in order to serve their own

selfish objects or those of their parties—an attempt, alas, which has not yet been abandoned altogether. These people forget, perhaps deliberately, that had India not come in the rescue of the Empire when the latter's fate hung in a balance, so to say, . . . the history of the war would have been written in a different tune.<sup>25</sup>

Bhargava's volume considers in detail how all sections of the Indian population as well as Indian rulers of the princely states gave, as requested by the British colonial state, their lives, money, material, and expertise in huge numbers. According to Bhargava, they perceived this as an opportunity to achieve concessions by the colonial state toward responsible government or independence—after all, Britain was defending democracy and liberty in Europe and, thus, should grant equality in political terms, i.e. hand over government to Indians to “become a fair partnership beneficial to both parties, that it will someday represent brotherhood, not subjection and exploitation.”<sup>26</sup> However, despite some measures taken that inched toward self-government, such as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in 1917, the expectations of achieving “swaraj within one year”<sup>27</sup> were not to be fulfilled.

A rather different tone is taken by the report of the government of India, published four years after Bhargava's. It opens with a quotation from Lord Hardinge's message to the secretary of state in September 1914 detailing how Indians of all classes, including Indian students studying in London, offered whatever they could in terms of resources, finances, and their own manpower to support the British in the war—out of “eager loyalty.”<sup>28</sup> Indian contributions are presented in detail, examples of which are given here: by the end of December 1919, 1.44 million Indian combatants and noncombatants were enlisted for service; 184,350 animals were sent overseas; medical personnel sourced and recruited for service; the Indian Munitions Board was set up and large amounts of material produced in Indian industries—worth 18 million pounds Sterling—shipped to the various theaters of war; food including wheat worth 40 million pounds Sterling was exported to Britain; and, by the end of 1919–20, the handsome sum of 146.2 million pounds Sterling was paid to the British government in London to finance further war needs.<sup>29</sup> Despite the impressive—and at times self-denying—support given by Indian individuals in terms of donations and taxes, and by the princely states, the perception or expectation of Indian individuals and politicians of how the relationship between Britain and India might be shaped after the war were belied. Instead, India was still perceived as “poor and backward.”<sup>30</sup>

Merewether and Smith's account of the sufferings of the Indian corps in France argues that they made the decisive difference in turning the

war in Britain's favor: "It would be truer to say that the Indian and British Regiments which together composed the Indian Army Corps in their turn saved the Empire."<sup>31</sup> Despite the recognition of the substantial efforts of the Indian army, Merewether and Smith stress the skills of the British officers: writing about the dead of the various battles, the names of British officers and brief summaries of their deeds are narrated, whereas Indians are not named with only the number of the dead mentioned—except for when Indians survived in exceptional circumstances, like Khudadad Khan, who received the Victoria Cross.<sup>32</sup>

From the few studies written on World War I and India during the pre-independence period, it appears that they depict rather different attitudes: some writers show the tendency to see World War I from the point of view of—admittedly educated—Indians, expecting "equal partnership" with the British and aspiring to self-government. Other authors depict the war from the standpoint of British officers or the British colonial government.

Military historians of the post-independence period focused on the army—its organization, recruitment, and equipment. Little attention, however, was given to how Indian soldiers experienced service. Although Donovan Jackson's *India's Army* was published five years ahead of independence, it falls within the overall characteristics of this phase of production. It is a regiment-by-regiment description of the Indian army with some background information on how the army was created by the British in India. James Edmonds intends "to show the main features of what happened" in World War I, thus offering a rather conventional account of the war's battles with a strong focus on the Western Front—perhaps not a surprising perspective as he worked for the British army all his life.<sup>33</sup> Shyam Narain Saxena focuses on the role of the Indian army during World War I from the perspective of an Indian sepoy, claiming to write equally "for the professional soldier, for the historian and for the general reader." He argues that Indian soldiers were professionals but that they were not trained well enough or equipped adequately.<sup>34</sup> S. D. Pradhan outlines how much the Indian army was transformed during the World War, and Ian Leask contends that the Indian army's expansion was particularly useful as it allowed the reinforcement of British troops in Europe.<sup>35</sup> In a later study, S. D. Pradhan details the Indian army's engagement in East Africa, suggesting that this campaign was one of the most interesting of World War I, that soldiers' morale contributed more toward success than tactics, and that the Indian army played a significant role.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, Jeffrey Greenhut argues that the Indian army was not suited to fighting in the theaters of war in Europe, Africa, and the Middle East for a variety of reasons. The reasons offered range from claiming that Indian

soldiers—sepoys—were only able to cope with direct frontier battles<sup>37</sup> to asserting that sepoys did not contribute to the war effort in the trenches to the expected level, as they left the scene through abundant acts of self-mutilation and desertion.

More recent publications, of the postliberalization phase, paint a more precise picture of the situation that members of the Indian army found themselves in: their weapons were two to three generations out of date, or they needed to quickly get used to new weapons handed out to them; their clothing was not sufficient for the cold European autumn and winter; and their overall equipment was inferior. Moreover, they had to get acclimatized to unfamiliar weather conditions and to an unknown landscape, as they were thousands of miles away from home—often without proper nutrition. The lack of a joint commanding structure across the British and Indian armies, with gaps in communication between London and the British colonial government of India, with factionalism and discord among British officers in the various Indian Expeditionary Forces, and with more general difficulties in leading a multinational heterogeneous army in which officers and soldiers did not necessarily know each other are discussed in the work of Ross Anderson, Nikolas Gardner, S. D. Pradhan, and Geoffrey Till.<sup>38</sup>

Scholars of the postliberalization phase, among them Pradeep Barua, Gordon Corrigan, Kaushik Roy, and others, produced studies that highlight and substantiate the massive effort Indian combatants and non-combatants made. They emphasize the laudable and respectable ways in which the Indian army reacted to the challenges encountered in the battlefields of Europe, Africa, and the Middle East.<sup>39</sup>

## Political and Economic History

“If we Indians bring back to India the flag of victory which we have helped to win for our King George, we shall have proved our fitness and will be entitled to self-government.”<sup>40</sup>

From the beginning of the war, the hope of “earning” responsible government or dominion status was held by many Indians. The above quote shows that the notion of fighting alongside the British in Europe and thus proving to have the—imagined—required qualities to take responsibility for governing India independently circulated widely at the time. The hope and vision for self-government was underlined by Woodrow Wilson’s fourteen-point program, which he presented in his speech of 8 January 1918 and declared as essential to future world peace.<sup>41</sup> This

view is represented in the writings of several contemporaries of the pre-independence phase, collected in a volume focused on speeches, opinions, and statements leaning toward political assertions, as well as attempts to contextualize the war and the efforts of India to support the British. It features extracts of speeches by prominent political figures at the time, such as Annie Besant (1857–1933), leader of the Home Rule League and staunch believer in India being given self-government after the war; Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1844–1920); and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869–1948), who returned to India in 1915 after nearly twenty years in South Africa.<sup>42</sup> In combination with resolutions of the Imperial War Conference, political statements and speeches were also compiled by a few other contemporaries.<sup>43</sup> During the 1920s, a series at Oxford University Press brought together small volumes that engaged with Christianity and the war, including one by an author who asked whether the British were worth fighting for, another by one who discussed the role of women in the war, and a third by one exploring questions of race. One of them argued that the war would only have an effect on educated Indians and hardly any effect at all on the vast majority of the population.<sup>44</sup> These examples illustrate by and large the evaluation of political effects on the war by contemporaries at the time, thus reflecting scholarly interpretations of the pre-independence phase.

The aspirations and expectations of Indians both in India and in East Africa, which arose from Wilson's fourteen-point program with its promise of self-determination, were bitterly disappointed, as the president of the East African Indian National Congress expressed in a speech made in 1920:

With the end of that long and terrible struggle in the victory of the Allied arms we looked for recognition in practice throughout the Empire of those principles which were so loftily proclaimed by British statesmen when our aid and sympathy were sought. Alas, the disillusionment has been great. We have seen how in our motherland the pledges made . . . were ruthlessly broken. . . . And now we have seen, in our own case, the failure to redeem the promises made, to live up to the pledges and to accord us the rights which are so indubitably ours.<sup>45</sup>

The “Wilsonian moment” was a brief and rather restricted one indeed, and “the principle of self-determination was honored in Paris more in the breach.” However, no single government, including the British colonial one, could deny the legitimacy of the claims to self-determination after Wilson's speech.<sup>46</sup>

As mentioned earlier, India did not only send its men, sepoys, and laborers to the war, it also supported the British and their Allies by sup-

plying them with tons of material and a significant amount of money. In 1917, the Indian Munitions Board was set up in order to coordinate the logistics and organization of the military and other supplies that needed sending to the theaters of war, as well as to oversee the production of the material requested and to ensure that an infrastructure, mainly railways, was put in place to ferry goods between production sites and ports. Apart from listing the figures for material and monetary contributions to the war effort, the literature of the pre-independence phase remains more or less silent on the effects of World War I on India's overall economy in its aftermath.<sup>47</sup> According to one author, the wartime expansion of the Indian industry particularly in comparison to the agricultural sector was impressive, and would in his view continue in the years to come—that is, the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>48</sup> In contrast, other authors writing more recently emphasize that both agriculture and industry suffered during World War I due to the lack of skilled labor. Prices for goods in India increased, which was acutely felt by the population who had to pay much more for essentials, such as oil and salt, than in the prewar years.<sup>49</sup>

In the second, post-independence phase, the political and economic history of India zoomed into focus: scholars focused on the establishment of the Indian nation-state, with much work concentrating on the Five-Year Plans, the Green Revolution, the reorganization of the states in India, which was completed only in 1956, the incorporation of French and Portuguese India into the Republic of India, internal challenges such as consolidating structures that would ensure the smooth working of the world's largest democracy, and finding specific strategies to denote India's position in the world as an independent nation, free of the former colonial power.

Various debates on which moments in Indian history should be seen as watershed moments can be observed for the post-independence phase. Some scholars have argued that World War I could indeed be seen as a turning point in the movement for independence. The so-called August Declaration, announcing the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms in 1917, has been seen as such a moment, even though the constitutional reforms were implemented only in 1919.<sup>50</sup> Censorship of public opinion in India, legalized in the Defence of India Regulations Act of 1915 and used in the quelling of the Ghadar movement of 1915, did not end when World War I came to a close; it was continued through the Rowlatt Act of 1919, which allowed the British colonial government to employ the same restrictive measures on the freedom of speech and writing even in peacetime—despite the granted constitutional reforms—and to do so indefinitely.<sup>51</sup> Indian politicians and so-called revolutionaries reacted in different ways; perhaps the most visible campaign was Gandhi's first satyagraha cam-

paign and the civil disobedience movement that protested against the continuation of war regulations in peacetime India. The killing of many peaceful civilian protesters at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in 1919, and the disillusionment of many returning Indian sepoy to India, added to the popularity of Gandhi's campaigns.

During the post-independence phase, economic effects of World War I were taken up by a few scholars, for instance Krishan Saini. He argues that the trade pattern changed profoundly, that India's postwar trade was restricted by the rupee being bound to the pound, and, finally, that the British colonial government did not actively encourage and protect Indian industries after the war.<sup>52</sup> Studies engaging with the economic history of India usually do not specifically consider World War I; more frequently, they are structured around different industries, trade, and financial arrangements.<sup>53</sup> In his extensive paper, Morris D. Morris highlights how the industry in India transformed profoundly from a raw-material-exporting industry to one that manufactured large amounts of jute, cotton, and iron and steel. For instance, by 1918, 80 percent of the exports was manufactured jute, whereas before the war, raw jute was exported; the production of steel and iron at TISCO's grew by a factor of six. Partly, this development was triggered by the side effects of World War I: the competition of foreign companies in India weakened, while, at the same time, the demand within the country rose sharply. In addition, India had become the supply center for the British army and their allied operations despite the shortage of skilled labor. The interwar period saw continued industrial development.<sup>54</sup> Dietmar Rothermund analyzes the circumstances and consequences of the Great Depression in India, comparing India's pre- and postwar economic situation and considering the dependence on the British economy in his study of interlinked economic and political history for the 1920s and 1930s.<sup>55</sup>

Overall, the literature on India and its history in the post-independence phase concentrated on documenting, analyzing, and interpreting the struggle for independence and the first decades of the nation-building process, including the massive push toward industrialization and the green revolution. Both world wars were understood in that context, and seen for the negotiating powers they offered Indian politicians to elicit concessions from the British colonial government, which shifted and twisted until finally agreeing to Indian independence in the 1940s—under the pressure of being highly indebted to India financially and not able to pay off these debts.

In the post-liberalization phase, the focus of research shifted toward analyzing people's perspectives in more detail, as well as how they perceived larger political events and economic developments. This shift is

most pronounced in studies dealing with sociocultural aspects of the war and will be explored in the following section.

### Sociocultural History

“Don’t you go but stay and do your work. . . . That [black pepper] which I brought with me has all been finished and some more has been sent. . . . The leaves of the tree are falling. Think about this.”<sup>56</sup>

Rozina Visram’s groundbreaking paper on “The First World War and the Indian Soldiers,” published in 1989, toward the end of the post-independence phase, opens a window to the perspectives of Indians who fought in the war.<sup>57</sup> This hitherto underresearched field of Indian perceptions of India and its role in World War I only took off in the post-liberalization phase with numerous scholars exploring sociocultural aspects of the war.

The quest to get to know, understand, and analyze Indian sepoys’ perspectives on World War I was taken up by Susan VanKoski with her publication exploring sepoys’ letters, and by David Omissi reprinting and contextualizing their letters in *Indian Voices of the Great War*.<sup>58</sup> Both authors reflect on the several layers of mediation those letters went through, and the new information provided in these letters by Indian soldiers that allow a few glimpses into their experiences and reflections. Glimpses, as the letters are mediated at several stages: the majority of them were dictated to scribes who wrote them down in Gurmukhi, Punjabi, or other Indian languages, then translated to English by the censor’s office. Knowing that their letters would be read out loud at home, senders might have also restricted themselves in what they dictated. Thus, what is available to the reader today are the censored extracts of letters mediated by scribes and translation, which were potentially self-censored. Nevertheless, through them we attain insights into Indian soldiers’ experiences of the war; their perceptions of the people, landscape, and weather in Europe; their enquiries about home; and their observations of cultivation, education, and interactions in France. In the letters, England and France are described sometimes in more favorable ways, sometimes less so: England is mentioned as “worth seeing” and the arts being “a credit to them,” but as being rainy.<sup>59</sup> France is portrayed as “the home of beauty,” the “women of this country are women like the good fairies,” and the soldiers feel well treated. At the same time, France is perceived as “weak in spiritual morality.”<sup>60</sup>

The letters also reflect, to some extent, the experience of the day-to-day routine of World War I, the value system and religious affiliation of



Indian sepoy, but they mostly remain silent on the larger political context of India in World War I, the French army, and British officers. One letter reports that “it is very hard to endure the bombs. . . . It will be difficult for anyone to survive and come back safe and sound from the war. . . . There is no confidence of survival. The bullets and cannon-balls come down like snow.”<sup>61</sup> The reality of the war hit the soldiers hard; some described it as a “devil’s war” or as “the ending of the world,” comparing it to the war depicted in the Mahabharata.<sup>62</sup> In trying to comprehend and inform families and friends at home about the many dead, some letter writers resort to metaphors: “men are dying like maggots” or fall like “leaves off a tree.”<sup>63</sup> Others, but fewer in number, glorify the war in their letters and see it as a noble duty to fight the cause of the king.<sup>64</sup> Yet others add their religious feelings to their description of the battle, asking for grace and imploring the need to repent: “God grant us grace, for grace is needed. Oh God, we repent! Oh God, we repent!”<sup>65</sup>

In some instances, it is obvious that letter writers intended to circumvent censorship, but this did not deter the majority of letter writers from warning relatives and friends not to enlist in the army as the quote at the beginning of this section illustrates, in which the term “black pepper” stands for Indians, the term “red pepper” for the British. This metaphor comes up time and again, especially when writers wish to express some form of judgment. For instance, Indian soldiers are seen as stronger than British soldiers: “Black pepper is very pungent, and the red pepper is not so strong. This is a secret, but you are a wise man.” Furthermore, soldiers observe and report that “the red pepper is little used and the black more.”<sup>66</sup>

Despite the mediated nature of the letters, they are invaluable in that they convey the lived experience of Indian soldiers, their expectations and aspirations, their views on events, which would otherwise not be accessible. They provide one of the few bodies of sources that allow insights into subaltern, nonwhite perspectives, along with the recordings of voices of Indian prisoners of war kept at Humboldt University at Berlin and material objects kept in various museums scattered around the globe. Moreover, some private papers and diaries are held in Indian archives.<sup>67</sup> One such diary has been partly published and analyzed: the diary of Amar Singh of Jaipur, which shows the in-between position of an Indian officer in the colonial Indian army, who on the one hand was part of the commanding structure and on the other hand could only get so far in the hierarchy of the British-commanded and racially prejudiced army, and who had to implement colonial policies even when he did not agree with them.<sup>68</sup> Another Sikh soldier conveyed his experiences in Europe, comparing the civilized behavior of the French with the condescending atti-

tude of British colleagues and officers: “We came to know that the British had no respect for the Indians. They regarded us as their servants.”<sup>69</sup>

Attitudes of superiority combined with anxieties relating to the “intermingling” of races, particularly the idea that Indians could court British white women, triggered various policies from Whitehall to ensure that, for instance, wounded Indian soldiers would not be cared for by British nurses. Indian soldiers’ movements were restricted and clear distinctions and divisions established to segregate the wounded soldiers from the surrounding communities in order to prevent any potential mutual attraction. Philippa Levine argues that “racism was functionally necessary to the stability of imperial rule.”<sup>70</sup> In contrast, the freedom of movement of soldiers from the white dominions was not restricted.

This notion appears in current research, for instance in Santanu Das’s argument that “Indian soldiers have been doubly marginalized: by Indian nationalist history . . . and by the grand narrative of the war which still remains largely Eurocentric.”<sup>71</sup> Although the debate has widened and has become more inclusive of the multiracial, multilinguistic, and multireligious nature of the combatants and noncombatants fighting for the European empires during World War I, some scholars still focus on the European parts of the army, hardly taking into account the crucial presence of Indian sepoys, African askaris, and other colonial subjects, relegating their presence to a couple of sentences or referring to a couple of publications, and to the effects of the war on Europe rather than on the different continents of the globe and their multifaceted relationships with each other. One such monograph, published as recently as 2017, consciously engages exclusively with the “British Army proper” and mentions the imperial forces, including the Indian army, only in the margins. In conclusion, the authors emphasize “that the British Army was the single most important component of the British Empire’s immense war effort.”<sup>72</sup> At the center of Radhika Singha’s paper on the labor corps are the noncombatants who were crucial to the war endeavor. They numbered 563,369 out of the approximately 1.44 million Indians who were sent overseas.<sup>73</sup> Singha analyzes how the great demand for manpower changed the way in which the British colonial government recruited noncombatants, finally turning to prisoners and sending them to the labor corps in Mesopotamia. In her case study, Singha highlights how previous norms were set aside by the British colonial government in order to bring unskilled laborers, including those from prisons, to work in the labor corps.<sup>74</sup> Ravi Ahuja, Heike Liebau, and others investigate the experiences of South Asian prisoners of war in the German POW camps around Berlin, and how their presence was used by German anthropologists to make large-scale audiovisual documentations and observations to use in their scholarly work.<sup>75</sup> Another

bottom-up perspective is offered by Gajendra Singh, who explores the in-between worlds of Indian soldiers.<sup>76</sup> Tan Tai-Yong analyzes the ways in which recruitment in Indian districts was undertaken, demonstrating the tightening of regulations and increasing control of the local population by the colonial administration.<sup>77</sup>

After the lack of medical care led to dwindling morale in the winter of 1914/1915, treating the wounded soldiers became one of the major considerations for Whitehall. Their manpower was crucial to the war effort, and another crisis could not be afforded. Medical services thus became central to government policies, significant for the population, and crucial for keeping up morale among soldiers, whether British or Indian. Returning rehabilitated soldiers to the theaters of the war became, according to Mark Harrison, ever more efficient through a “well-oiled medical machine.”<sup>78</sup> Indians were distributed across several hospitals in Britain, of which the pavilion in Brighton is probably the most well-known. The wartime medical care delivered to Indian soldiers in Britain—which is acknowledged in several soldiers’ letters—contrasted with the minimal investment in healthcare for the Indian population on the subcontinent.<sup>79</sup>

Overall, this overview demonstrates that the focus of research was almost entirely on military history in the pre-independence phase, that the emphasis of the post-independence phase was on the creation of the new Indian nation-state, with World War I and its commemoration receding into the background, and that in the current post-liberalization phase, sociocultural studies take center stage with the aim of understanding who took part in the battles, making formerly silenced voices heard, and analyzing their experiences of the war.

## Current Research Trends and Commemorative Culture

Since 2014, the beginning of the centenary of World War I, a host of literature has appeared that engages with the conflict and India’s role in it. These publications, which could be termed “centenary publications,” relate to military, economic, political, and sociocultural aspects of World War I or provide overviews. They follow earlier publications that appeared at anniversaries, most noticeably in 1968 and 1978, the fiftieth and sixtieth anniversaries of the end of the war, and consider the war’s effects on India.

Recent surveys include the *Cambridge History of the First World War*, edited by Jay Winter, and the *1914-1918-online International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, which claims to be “the most comprehensive encyclopedia of the First World War” put together by “the largest network

of First World War researchers worldwide with participants in more than 50 countries.<sup>80</sup> The *Cambridge History* offers insights on Asia's role, with India being investigated alongside China, Japan, and Vietnam, whereas the online encyclopedia provides several entries, for instance on the Indian labor corps by Radhika Singha, on sepoy letters by David Omissi, and others. The *Routledge Studies in First World War History* are mostly concerned with the military aspect of the war. The majority of its volumes offer perspectives on European rather than any other experiences and memories of World War I.<sup>81</sup>

Of the recent publications relating to military history, George Morton-Jack's stands out as a thorough study, analyzing the structure of the Indian army before the war as well as the accomplishments of the Indian Expeditionary Force (IEF) A on the Western Front, with a limited comparison to the IEFB, IEF C, and the IEF D's performance in East Africa and Mesopotamia. Morton-Jack contends that the positive evaluation of the Indian soldiers' achievements by contemporary officers such as James Willcocks at the Western Front are seeing "something of a revival."<sup>82</sup> A few other centenary publications, mostly edited volumes, investigate the war from thematic or regional perspectives, and either weave India's role in, or feature single chapters on India and what the war meant for the country in terms of providing material, men, and money to the war effort.<sup>83</sup> In one of his recent articles, Santanu Das suggests that the centrality of written texts needs to be overcome and other kinds of sources, be they visual, oral, or material, need to be taken into account. His current research is situated at the interface of academic and public understandings of history, taking the demand for the exploration of a wide array of sources seriously.<sup>84</sup>

Another strand of centenary publications consists of books by amateur historians and writers who present their interpretations of World War I events and its effects on the Indian population, and who engage with the commemorations in one way or another. Amarinder Singh, a retired officer of the Indian army, describes the contributions and the suffering of Indian soldiers during World War I. Similarly, Major General Ian Cardozo presents an account of the war, followed by individual portraits of the Indian soldiers who received the Victoria Cross. Both dedicate their work to the Indian soldiers of the war.<sup>85</sup> Collections of photographs document Indians in the war and the memorials to Indian soldiers around the world.<sup>86</sup> Shrabani Basu's *For King and Another Country* spells out the distance Indians felt at the mentioning of World War I and the perception of it being a European war. She portrays the perspectives of Indian soldiers based on their letters, diaries, and other documents.<sup>87</sup>

Official commemorative culture in India includes discussions on establishing a National War Museum; the submission deadline for the ar-

chitectural competition closed on 12 October 2017 with 268 proposals having been submitted. The process can be followed on the government's websites.<sup>88</sup> Recently, an Indian delegation inaugurated a new memorial to Indian soldiers in Haifa.<sup>89</sup> Not only the Indian government but also the Commonwealth War Graves Commission intends to make the sacrifice of Indians during World War I more visible, even if this policy is not publicly promoted. Nevertheless, the CWGC decided to name Indians and others on memorials. For instance, their names were engraved on the new Basra memorial that was rebuilt after it had been destroyed during the Iraq war. However, no memorial currently exists that carries names of African combatants or noncombatants, as their names were not recorded. Michèle Barrett argues that, instead of “projecting an *appearance* of equality,” an open discussion on this issue would be more honest and fruitful.<sup>90</sup> In the successor states to British India—India, Pakistan, Bangladesh—the commemoration of World War I happens on a modest level.

This chapter has illustrated that World War I was a European and colonial war. As Hew Strachan notes, at the time it was known as the Great European War, a designation that is not in use anymore.<sup>91</sup> As the main European players in the war had colonies, these were drawn into the conflict, thus extending the war geographically to many regions of the globe. The implications of the war for the colonies were different from those imagined by the Indian population: their expectations and aspirations to achieve self-government were deeply disappointed; notwithstanding the Wilsonian moment, the claims to self-government by non-European regions were dismissed. Instead, the British and French empires were strengthened through the redistribution of German colonies and the mandates taken on through the newly created League of Nations.

I would like to conclude by emphasizing the three main points made throughout this chapter: firstly, World War I was a colonial war in terms of asymmetric power relationships: the colonies were forced into war by the metropolises. Secondly, the commemoration of the war, both its material culture and its social practice, were transformed: they have become much more about the present and the future than about the past. Last but not least, scholarship on India's role in World War I has undergone a major transformation over the past century, with ample research fields still to be investigated.

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ory, and Migration in a Globalizing World: *The Goan Experience, 1890–1980* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2014); *From Contact to Conquest: Transition to British Rule in Malabar, 1790–1805* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), and *The Prospect of Global History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016 and 2019, coedited with James Belich, John Darwin, and Chris Wickham).

## Notes

1. The title of this chapter is inspired by Rozina Visram's groundbreaking article on engaging with South Asian perspectives of World War I, where she writes, "The war raised many expectations and aroused many aspirations." Rozina Visram, "The First World War and the Indian Soldiers," *Indo-British Review: A Journal of History* 16, no. 2 (1989): 25. In the present chapter, literature published on World War I in languages other than English, French, and German could unfortunately not be considered. I am grateful to Christina Hofmann, Claire Phillips, Georg Berkemer, and Aparajith Ramnath for their valuable comments and support.
2. Edwin Lutyens (1869–1944), architect of New Delhi together with Herbert Baker, designed over sixty war memorials across the empire, including the one in Delhi.
3. 10 February 1921: laying of the foundation stone; 12 February 1931: inauguration of the memorial. The third Anglo-Afghan War lasted from 6 May to 8 August 1919.
4. Philip Davies, *The Penguin Guide to the Monuments of India*, vol. 2: *Islamic, Rajput, European* (London: Penguin, 1989), 139. Of the named soldiers, 959 came from the United Kingdom and one from Australia. Commonwealth War Graves Commission, retrieved 31 December 2017 from [https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-war-dead/results/?cemetery=DELHI%20percent20MEMORIAL%20percent20\(INDIA%20percent20GATE](https://www.cwgc.org/find/find-war-dead/results/?cemetery=DELHI%20percent20MEMORIAL%20percent20(INDIA%20percent20GATE).
5. Most of the literature on World War I and South Asia focuses on India. Not much is available on Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka. They belonged to the political entity of British India until their independence a few decades after World War I. Frequently, World War I is not even mentioned in survey histories; see, for instance, Christophe Jaffrelot, ed., *Le Pakistan* (Paris: Fayard, 2000); M. R. Kazimi, *A Concise History of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2009); Srinath Raghavan, *1971: A Global History of the Creation of Bangladesh* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013); Willem van Schendel, *History of Bangladesh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Patrick Peebles, *The History of Sri Lanka* (Westport, CO: Greenwood Press, 2006); K. M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka* (London: C. Hurst & Company, 1981).
6. Neelima Jeychandran, "Representing and Reconstructing Memories of the World Wars in India," in *RIHA Journal: Journal of the International Association of Research Institutes in the History of Art* 0170 (2017): 1.
7. "Karachi 1914–1918, War Memorial" and "Rawalpindi War Cemetery," Commonwealth War Grave Commission, retrieved 13 January 2018 from <https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/144300/KARACHI%20percent201914-1918%20percent20WAR%20percent20MEMORIAL>; <https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/92012/rawalpindi-war-cemetery/>.

8. "Jatiyo Sriti Soudho," The Polynational War Memorial, retrieved 13 January 2018 from <http://www.war-memorial.net/Jatiyo-Sriti-Soudho-1.294>; Shilajit Kar Bhomik, "Bangladesh Liberation War Memorial in Tripura to Be Inaugurated in November," 30 October 2017, retrieved 13 January 2018 from <http://www.dhakatribune.com/world/south-asia/2017/10/30/bangladesh-liberation-memorial-tripura/>.
9. Tim Barringer, "An Architecture of Imperial Ambivalence: The Patcham Chattri," in *The Great War and the British Empire. Culture and Society*, ed. Michael J. K. Walsh and Varnava Andrekos (London: Routledge, 2017), 215–48; David A. Johnson and Nicole F. Gilbertson, "Commemorations of Imperial Sacrifice at Home and Abroad: British Memorials of the Great War," *History Teacher* 43, no. 4 (2010): 563–84; David A. Johnson, "The Great War's Impact on Imperial Delhi: Commemorating War-time Sacrifice in the Colonial Built Environment," in *The Great War and the British Empire. Culture and Society*, ed. Michael J. Walsh and Varnava Andrekos (London: Routledge, 2017), 249–63.
10. Stanley Rice, *Neuwe Chapelle: India's Memorial in France 1914–1918* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927); Michèle Barrett, "Subalterns at War: First World War Colonial Forces and the Politics of the Imperial War Graves Commission," in *Can the Subaltern Speak? Reflections on the History of an Idea*, ed. Rosalind C. Morris (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 156–76. Indian combatants and noncombatants are also buried in the cemeteries of Mazargues, Neuville-Sous-Montreuil, and Avette, as well as in Forli in Italy.
11. Leila Tarazi Fawaz, *A Land of Aching Hearts: The Middle East in the Great War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).
12. For instance, see Thomas R. Metcalf and Barbara D. Metcalf, *A Concise History of India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 161–64.
13. Chempakaraman Pillai was born in Tiruvananthapuram in 1891 and died in Berlin in 1934. He went to Europe in the 1910s, moving between Switzerland and Germany. However, there is no evidence for Chempakaraman's presence on the Emden or his role during the bombardment of Madras.
14. M. Karunanidhi (1924–2018) was chief minister of Tamilnadu several times: 1969–76, 1989–91, 1996–2001, 2006–11.
15. S. Muthiah, *Madras Rediscovered: A Historical Guide to Looking Around, Supplemented with Tales of "Once upon a City"* (Chennai: EastWest, 2008), 285; "Emden, the Raider," *Frontline*, 20 August 2014. The Emden even made it into some letters of sepoys in 1914, in which they remark on the losses of the British: David Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War: Soldiers' Letters, 1914–1918* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999), 25–26.
16. Michèle Barrett, "Afterword: Death and the Afterlife; Britain's Colonies and Dominions," in *Race, Empire and First World War Writing*, ed. Santanu Das (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 301–20.
17. M. G. Ramachandran (1917–87), chief minister of Tamilnadu 1977–87; C. N. Annadurai (1890–1969), founder of the DMK and chief minister of Tamilnadu 1967–69.
18. Mary Hancock, *The Politics of Heritage from Madras to Chennai* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008).
19. The five French possessions sent soldiers to join the British-Indian army in France. They disembarked in Marseilles in late 1914. Chantal Antier-Renaud and Christian Le Corre, *Les soldats des colonies dans la Première Guerre mondiale* (Rennes: Editions Ouest-France, 2008), 30.
20. Hermann Kulke and Dietmar Rothermund, *A History of India*, 6th ed. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); Metcalf and Metcalf, *Concise History of India*; Michael Mann,

- Geschichte Indiens vom 18. bis zum 21. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2005); Burton Stein, *A History of India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998); Sugata Bose and Ayesha Jalal, *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004); D. R. Sardesai, *India: The Definitive History* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2008).
21. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms were intended to provide the first step toward Indians partaking in the administration of British India. Its most prominent feature was the introduction of dyarchy, with the central government in Delhi remaining firmly under British control and some responsibilities in provincial governments being transferred to Indian ministers, such as agriculture and education. Law and order were reserved for British governors. The Rowlatt Act was passed on 18 March 1919. On 13 April 1919, a peaceful gathering protesting the Rowlatt Act took place in the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. A British general decided to disperse the people by opening fire on them, killing 370 and wounding many more, making it the worst massacre during the time of British colonial rule. On the request of G. K. Gokhale (1866–1915), Gandhi (1869–1948) returned to India in 1915 from South Africa via England.
  22. *Lahore Tribune*, quoted in Visram, “First World War and the Indian Soldiers,” 17.
  23. Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*; Susan VanKoski, “Letters Home, 1915–1916: Punjabi Soldiers Reflect on War and Life in Europe and their Meanings for Home and Self,” *International Journal of Punjab Studies* 2, no. 1 (1995): 43–63; see also John H. Morrow, “The Imperial Framework,” in Jay Winter, ed., *Cambridge History of the First World War*, vol. 1: *Global War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 406–7. Although the British government came around to employing Indian sepoy in Europe, they ensured that African askaris remained in Africa (they brought only African labor battalions to Europe). For more information on the concept of “martial races,” see Peter Robb, ed., *The Concept of Race in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995); Heather Streets, *Martial Races: The Military, Race and Masculinity in British Imperial Cultures, 1857–1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).
  24. The centrality of the Punjab for the Indian army and vice versa is discussed in Rajit K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab* (Delhi: Permanent Black, 2003).
  25. M. B. L. Bhargava, *India’s Services in the War* (Allahabad: Standard Press, 1919), iii. Other Indian authors at the time echoed Bhargava’s tenor, for instance, Bhupendranath Basu, who at the outbreak of the war stated, “India . . . claimed to hold an equal position with other parts of the Empire.” In Bhupendranath Basu, *Why India Is Heart and Soul with Britain in This War* (London: Macmillan, 1914), 8.
  26. Bhargava, *India’s Services in the War*, 35–36.
  27. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, “Swaraj within one Year,” *Young India*, 22 September 1920.
  28. *India’s Contribution to the Great War* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1923), 61–65.
  29. *Ibid.*, 78–80, 107, 146, chapter 4 on finances.
  30. The donations by Indian princes was estimated at a little more than 5 million pounds Sterling. See *ibid.*, 167. Quotation on 166.
  31. John Walter Beresford Merewether and Frederick Smith, *The Indian Corps in France* (London: John Murray, 1918), vii. See also James Willcocks, *With the Indians in France* (London: Constable and Company Ltd., 1920); E. W. C. Sandes, *The Military Engineer in India*, 2 vols. (Chatham: Institution of Royal Engineers, 1933–35), chapters 13 and 14.



32. See Merewether and Smith, *Indian Corps in France*, 39.
33. Donovan Jackson, *India's Army* (London: S. Low, Marston & Co., 1942); James E. Edmonds, *A Short History of World War I* (New York: Greenwood Publishers, 1968).
34. Shyam Narain Saxena, *Role of Indian Army in the First World War* (Delhi: Bhavna Prakashan, 1987), citation on xi and 147.
35. S. D. Pradhan, "Indian Army and the First World War," in *India and World War I*, ed. Dewitt C. Ellinwood and S. D. Pradhan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978), 49–67; Ian D. Leask, *The Expansion of the Indian Army during the Great War* (MPhil diss., University of London, 1989).
36. S. D. Pradhan, *Indian Army in East Africa* (New Delhi: National Book Organisation, 1991).
37. Jeffrey Greenhut, "The Imperial Reserve: The Indian Corps on the Western Front, 1914–1915," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 12, no. 1 (1983): 54–73.
38. Ross Anderson, "The Battle of Tanga, 2–5 November 1914," *War in History* 8 (2001): 294–322; Ross Anderson, "Logistics of the Indian Expeditionary Force D in Mesopotamia: 1914–1918," in *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars*, ed. Roy Kaushik (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 105–44; Nikolas Gardner, "Command in Crisis: The British Expeditionary Force and the Forest of Mormal, August 1914," *War & Society* 16, no. 2 (1998): 13–32; Nikolas Gardner, "Morale of the Indian Army in the Mesopotamia Campaign, 1914–1917," in *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars*, ed. Roy Kaushik (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 393–417; Nikolas Gardner, *Command and the British Expeditionary Force in 1914* (PhD thesis, University of Calgary, 2000); Pradhan, *Indian Army in East Africa*, op. cit.; Geoffrey Till, "The Gallipoli Campaign: Command Performances," in Gary Sheffield and Geoffrey Till (eds.), *The Challenges of High Command: the British Experience* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 34–56.
39. Barua Pradeep, *The State at War in South Asia* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); Gordon Corrigan, *Sepoys in the Trenches* (Stroud: Spellmount, 2006); Roy Kaushik, "From Defeat to Victory: Logistics of the Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914–1918," in *First World War Studies* 1, no. 1 (2010): 35–55; Roy Kaushik, ed., *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden: Brill, 2012); see also Aravind Ganachari, "First World War: Purchasing Indian Loyalties; Imperial Policy of Recruitment and 'Rewards,'" *Economic and Political Weekly* 40, no. 8 (2005): 779–88.
40. Mahomed Hasan to Sowar Raja Khan Zaman Khan (Muslim Rajput, 38th CIH, France), 26 August 1916, quoted in Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*, 228. This letter seems to be written by an educated combatant and is an exception in the way it relates to the larger political context of the time.
41. Address of the president of the United States, delivered at a Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress, 8 January 1918 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1918). See particularly 6: "A free, open-minded, and absolutely impartial adjustment of all colonial claims, based upon a strict observance of the principle that determining all such questions of sovereignty the interests of the populations concerned must have equal weight with the equitable claims with the government whose title is to be determined."
42. G. A. Natesan, *The Indian Review War Book: All about the War* (Madras: G. A. Natesan & Co., 1915).
43. Arthur Berriedale Keith, *Speeches and Documents on Indian Policy, 1750–1921*, vol. 2 (London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1922); *Speeches of Indian Princes on the World War* (Allahabad: The Compiler, 1919).
44. John Matthai, *India and the War* (London: Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1915), 3–4.

45. President's Speech, East African Indian National Congress 1920, Kenya National Archives MAC/EAI/28/1. Alibhai Mulla Jeevanjee (1856–1936) was president at the time. He had given large sums to the British war effort; moreover, Indians fought in the King's African Rifles and as part of the Indian Expeditionary Forces B and C.
46. Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 5, 217.
47. See for instance Dhananjaya Ramachandra Gadgil, *The Industrial Evolution of India in Recent Times* (London: Milford, 1924).
48. S. G. Panandikar, *Some Aspects of the Economic Consequences of the War for India* (Bombay: D. B. Taraporevala, Sons & Co., 1921).
49. Michelle McAlpin, "Price Movements and Fluctuations in Economic Activity (1869–1947)," in *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2: 1757–1970, ed. Dharma Kumar (Hyderabad: Orient Longman with Cambridge University Press, 1982), 879. Combining economic and political aspects is Budheswar Pati, *India and the First World War* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1996).
50. Hugh Tinker, "India in the First World War and After," *Journal of Contemporary History* 3, no. 4 (1968), 88–107; Judith Brown, "War and the Colonial Relationship: Britain, India and the War of 1914–18," *India and World War I*, ed. Dewitt C. Ellinwood and S. D. Pradhan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978), 19–47.
51. Gerald N. Barrier, "Ruling India: Coercion and Propaganda in British India during the First World War," *India and World War I*, ed. Dewitt C. Ellinwood and S. D. Pradhan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978), 75–108.
52. Krishan G. Saini, "The Economic Aspects of India's Participation in the First World War," in *India and World War I*, ed. Dewitt C. Ellinwood and S. D. Pradhan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978), 141–76.
53. For instance Kumar, *Cambridge Economic History of India*; Amiya K Bagchi, *Private Investment in India, 1900–1939* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972); B. R. Tomlinson, *The Economy of Modern India 1860–1970*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
54. Morris D. Morris, "The Growth of Large-Scale Industry to 1947," in Kumar, *Cambridge Economic History of India*, 553–676.
55. Dietmar Rothermund, *India in the Great Depression 1929–1939* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1992).
56. Lance Naik Ram Carup Singh (Rajput, Ninth Bhopal Infantry) to Lance Naik Dobi Singh (Sixteenth Rajputs, Calcutta), May 1915, quoted in Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*, 65. Toward the later years of the war, recruitment was sometimes enforced rather than voluntary (see *ibid.*, 16).
57. Visram, "First World War and Indian Soldiers"; Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History* (London: Pluto Press, 2002), chapter 6.
58. VanKoski, "Letters Home"; Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*.
59. Subedar-Major [Sardar Bahadur Gagan] (Sixth Jats, 50) to a friend (India), Brighton Hospital, [early January 1915?], quoted in Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*, 27; a wounded Sikh to his brother (Amritsar District, Punjab), England, 15 January 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 28; Bugler Mousa Ram (Jat, 107th Pioneers) to Naik Dabi Shahai Jat (121st Pioneers, Jhansi District, UP), Kitchener's Indian Hospital Brighton, 2 April 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 49; Sub-Assistant Surgeon Naragen Moreshiver Pundit (Maratha) to D. M. Pundit (Sangola, Shorapur District, Bombay), Bournemouth, 27 April 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 57.
60. L. R. to a friend (India), Rouen Camp, 22 March 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 45; a Sikh sepoy to Gurun Ditta Mal (Depot, Forty-Seventh Sikhs, Fatehgarh, Farrukhabad

- District, UP), [probably Forty-Seventh Sikhs, France], 12 May 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 60; an Afridi Pathan to his brother (Fifty-Fifth Rifles, India), Fifty-Seventh Rifles, France, 27 June 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 72.
61. A Garhwali to his father [Thirty-Ninth Garhwali Rifles?], France, 14 January 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 27–28.
  62. A Sikh to his father (Punjab), England, 20 February 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 39; a wounded Punjabi Rajput to his to a relative, England, 29 January 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 32.
  63. A wounded Sikh to his brother (Amritsar District, Punjab), England, 21 January 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 31; Rifleman Amar Singh Rawat (Garhwal Rifles) to Dayaram Jhapliyal (Garhwal District, UP), Kitchener's Indian Hospital, 1 April 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 48.
  64. A wounded Garhwali Subedar to a friend (India), England, 21 February 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 39.
  65. Amir Khan (Punjabi Muslim) to his brother Lance Naik Khan Zaman (Eighty-Fourth Rifles, Rawalpindi District, Punjab), 129th [Baluchis], France, 18 March 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 43.
  66. Bugler Mousa Ram (Jat, 107th Pioneers) to Naik Dabi Shahai Jat (121st Pioneers, Jhansi District, UP), Kitchener's Indian Hospital Brighton, 2 April 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 49; Sepoy Mansa Ram (107th Pioneers) to Guard Ramshwar or Divisankar (GIP Railway, Station Seepri, Jhansi, UP), Kitchener's Indian Hospital Brighton, April 1915, quoted in *ibid.*, 58.
  67. Jürgen Mahrenholz, "Ethnographic Audio Recordings in German Prisoner of War Camps during the First World War," in *World War One: Five Continents in Flanders*, ed. Dominiek Dendooven and Piet Chielens (Ypres: Lanno, 2008), 161–66; Franziska Roy, Heike Liebau, and Ravi Ahuja, eds., *When the War Began We Heard of Several Kings: South Asian Prisoners in World War I Germany* (New Delhi: Social Science Press, 2011); collections at the Nehru Museum and Memorial Library (Teen Murti Bhavan).
  68. Dewitt C. Ellinwood, ed., *Between Two Worlds: A Rajput Officer in the Indian Army, 1905–21; Based on the Diary of Amar Singh of Jaipur* (Lanham, MD: Hamilton Books, 2005). See also Susanne H. Rudolph, Lloyd I. Rudolph, and Mohan Singh Kanota, eds., *Reversing the Gaze: Amar Singh's Diary; A Colonial Subject's Narrative of Imperial India* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002), see also Santanu Das, *Race, Empire and First World War Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 70–89.
  69. Interview with a Sikh soldier in S. D. Pradhan, "The Sikh Soldier in the First World War," in *India and World War I*, ed. Dewitt C. Ellinwood and S. D. Pradhan (New Delhi: Manohar, 1978), 224.
  70. See Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*; Visram, "First World War and the Indian Soldiers," 21–22; Philippa Levine, "Battle Colors: Race, Sex, and Colonial Soldierly in World War I," *Journal of Women's History* 9, no. 4 (1998): 104–30, 105. See also Gregory Martin, "The Influence of Racial Attitudes on British Policy towards India during the First World War," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 14, no. 2 (1986): 91–113.
  71. Santanu Das, "Imperialism, Nationalism and the First World War in India," in *Finding Common Ground: New Directions in First World War Studies*, ed. Jennifer Keene and Michael Neiberg (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 68. This marginalization is apparent in many publications; one of the more recent ones subsuming the contributions of Indian combatants and noncombatants under a section titled "Europe" is Morrow, "Imperial Framework."

72. Ian Beckett, Timothy Bowman and Mark Connelly, *The British Army and the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 6.
73. *India's Contribution to the Great War*, 79.
74. Radhika Singha, "Finding Labor from India for the War in Iraq: The Jail Porter and Labor Corps, 1916–1920," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 2 (2007): 412–45.
75. Ravi Ahuja, "The Corrosiveness of Comparison: Reverberations of Indian Wartime Experiences in German Prison Camps (1915–1919)," in *The World in World Wars: Experiences, Perceptions and Perspectives from Africa and Asia*, ed. Heike Liebau, Katrin Bromber, Britta Lange, Dyala Hamzah, and Ravi Ahuja (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 131–66; for experiences of Indian POWs in Germany, see also various articles in Roy, Liebau, and Ahuja, *When the War Began*.
76. Gajendra Singh, *The Testimonies of Indian Soldiers and the Two World Wars: Between Self and Sepoy* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).
77. Tan Tai-Yong, *The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab 1849–1947* (New Delhi: Sage, 2005).
78. Mark Harrison, *The Medical War: British Military Medicine in the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11, 13, 295; Mark Harrison, "Disease, Discipline and Dissent: The Indian Army in France and England, 1914–1915," in *Medicine and Modern Warfare*, ed. Roger Cooter, Mark Harrison, and Steve Sturdy (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 185–203.
79. The majority of letters describe hospitals and care in Britain in a positive light, with the odd writer complaining about conditions in hospitals: Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War*, 38, 54, 59, 61, 62, 79; Samiksha Sehrawat, *Colonial Medical Care in North India: Gender, State, and Society, c. 1840–1920* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013).
80. Jay Winter (ed.), *Cambridge History of the First World War*, vol. I: *Global War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, eds., *1914-1918-online: International Online-Encyclopedia of the First World War*, retrieved 19 October 2017 from <http://www.1914-1918-online.net/>.
81. John Bourne, ed., *Routledge Studies in First World War History* (London: Routledge, 2018).
82. George Morton-Jack, *The Indian Army on the Western Front: India's Expeditionary Force to France and Belgium in the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 27.
83. Ashley Jackson, ed., *The British Empire and the First World War* (London: Routledge, 2015); James Kitchen, *The British Imperial Army in the Middle East: Morale and Military Identity in the Sinai and Palestine Campaigns, 1916–18* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); Xu Guoqi, *Asia and the Great War: A Shared History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Helmut Bley and Anorthe Kremers, eds., *The World during the First World War* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2014).
84. Santanu Das, "Reframing Life/War 'Writing': Objects, Letters and Songs of Indian Soldiers, 1914–1918," in *Writing War, Writing Lives*, ed. Kate McLoughlin, Lara Feigel, and Nancy Martin (London: Routledge, 2017), 47–70; see also Das's AHRC project "From Bombay to the Western Front: Indian Sepoys in Europe in the First World War," retrieved 10 January 2018 from <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/newsevents/news/frombombaytothewesternfront/>; HERA project, "Cultural Exchange in a Time of Global Conflict: Colonials, Neutrals and Belligerents in the First World War" retrieved 10 January 2018 from <http://www.cegcproject.eu/>.

85. Amarinder Singh, *Honour and Fidelity: India's Military Contribution to the Great War 1914–1918* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2014); Ian Cardozo, *The Bravest of the Brave: The Extraordinary Story of Indian VCs of World War I* (New Delhi: Bloomsbury, 2016); see also Harjeet Singh, *India's Contribution to the Great War* (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2014).
86. Rana Chhina, *India and the First World War 1914–1918* (New Delhi: Centre for Armed Historical Research United Service Institution of India, 2014); Rana Chhina, *Last Post: Indian War Memorials around the World* (New Delhi: Centre for Armed Historical Research United Service Institution of India, 2014); Vedica Kant, *India and the First World War: "If I Die Here, Who Will Remember Me?"* (New Delhi: Roli Books, 2014).
87. Shrabani Basu, *For King and Another Country: Indian Soldiers on the Western Front 1914–18* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).
88. "Global Architectural Competition for Indian National War Museum," retrieved 10 January 2018 from <https://www.mygov.in/task/global-architectural-competition-indian-national-war-museum/>.
89. Fadi Eyadat, "On 'Haifa Day,' India Salutes WWI Troops," *Haaretz*, 24 September 2010, retrieved 10 January 2018 from <https://www.haaretz.com/on-haifa-day-india-salutes-wwi-troops-1.315380>.
90. Barrett, "Afterword," 317.
91. Hew Strachan, *The First World War: A New Illustrated History* (London: Simon & Schuster, 2003), 67.

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