

Japanese Migrants and the A. K. Hasheem Company at Colombo: Tourists, Pan-Asianists, and Immigration to Brazil

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In the early 20th century, during the golden age of the ocean liner, present-day Colombo in Sri Lanka was synonymous with India. It was at this port, while on their trip to Europe or immigrating to Brazil, that most Japanese passengers met and interacted with Indians for the first time. Based on surviving records of many Japanese passengers and novelists who wrote about Colombo, they were particularly intrigued by A. K. Hasheem, a popular jeweller and travel agent who spoke fluent Japanese. Hasheem's staff had made a strong impression on Japanese passengers, for whom travelling abroad was a rare opportunity, and who were (as yet) not proficient foreign languages and knew very little about foreign countries. Among other things, in the early to mid-20th century, at a time when Japan's relations with Britain were shifting from friendship to hostility, exaggerated anecdotes were imagined and circulated as 'pro-Japanese Indians'. Legend has it that Brazilian tea originated from tea seeds that Hasheem's staff stole from the Lipton plantation, in a show of solidarity with the Japanese-Brazilian challenge to the British-dominant tea market. In this presentation, I will focus on the previously neglected travel agent in Colombo as a source of information and what it represented in Japanese records.

This presentation is loosely based on the following papers.

Yorimitsu Hashimoto, "Two Faces of A. K. Hasheem in Colombo: Intelligent Tourist Agents Navigating the Waves of Anglo-Japanese Relations" in Peter Hajdu, Xiaohong Zhang (eds), *Literatures of the World and the Future of Comparative Literature* (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming)

橋本順光「コロombo港のハシーム商会：洋行客とブラジル移民のアジア主義幻想を映した宝石商」、
『2021年度 大学研究助成 アジア歴史研究報告書』(2022)

<https://hdl.handle.net/11094/88478> (Open access)

橋本順光「インドの代名詞コロombo—デッキバセンジャーとハシーム商会」、橋本順光・鈴木禎宏（編著）『欧州航路の文化誌 寄港地を読み解く』（青弓社、2017）第4章

<https://www.seikyusha.co.jp/bd/isbn/9784787220691/>