

Transliteration Scheme

For Urdu words, I have used for the most part the system of G. C. Narang in *Urdu: Readings in Literary Urdu Prose* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). For Hindi words I have used the system of Rupert Snell and Simon Weightman in *Teach Yourself Hindi* (London: Random House, 1989). Where places, personal names, and terms have a commonly-used English spelling (e.g., Varanasi, Shyam Sundar Das, and Nagari) I have not used diacriticals.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

We do not clearly understand what you Europeans mean by the term Hindi, for there are hundreds of dialects, all in our opinion equally entitled to the name, and there is here no standard as there is in Sanskrit.¹

The Hindi movement in nineteenth century north India provides an interesting and extremely complex example of the relationships between language, religion, and nationalism. No scholar of modern Indian history would dispute the assertion that language and religion have had an enormous influence on the development of nationalism in South Asia. The creation of Pakistan in 1947, the inauguration of linguistic states in India in 1955, the anti-Hindi agitation in South India in 1965, the emergence of a Punjabi Suba in 1966, the independence of Bangladesh in 1971—these and many other similar events testify to the great importance of these two symbols in recent times. To understand the contemporary manifestations of language and religion, however, one needs to study their earlier expressions by those Indians who used them as the central symbols of competing nationalisms. The Hindi movement of the nineteenth century, copiously documented but little studied outside India, furnishes an excellent opportunity to examine an important aspect of the development of Hindu nationalism in north India.

Theoretical Background

Many scholars have exercised their ingenuity in attempts to create a satisfactory conceptual framework for the pervasive phenomenon of nationalism. One of the most instructive of these attempts appears in the writings of Karl Deutsch, especially his *Nationalism and Social Communication*, where he sets forth the idea of a 'people' as a large group characterized by a complementarity of social communication. This complementarity means that members of the group can communicate more effectively over a wider range of subjects with each other than with outsiders. A people struggling to gain control over the behavior of its members becomes a 'nationality' which in turn becomes a 'nation' once this control has been added to the previously existing cohesiveness and shared symbols.²

Deutsch offers a number of analytical concepts to determine whether widely diverging cultural and linguistic traditions within a single political framework will result in the formation of one or more than one nationality or nation. 'Social mobilization', a process of change occurring in areas undergoing modernization, brings increasing numbers of the more isolated portions of the population into an ever denser 'net of social communication'. This 'mobilized population' includes literates, newspaper readers, people residing in cities and towns, people in non-agricultural occupations, and others. 'Assimilation', another process of change, brings different peoples within the same political system into the same network of social communication, while the opposite process, 'differentiation', separates peoples into different networks. When the rate of social mobilization outstrips that of assimilation, differentiation results; when the rate of assimilation keeps ahead of that of social mobilization, the former proceeds apace. Various features hasten or retard the process of assimilation: the different rates at which different peoples are mobilized, the proportion of the population which is assimilated into this or that cultural tradition, the degree of similarity of linguistic and cultural habits, the frequency of contacts between different peoples, and the scale of material rewards for assimilation.³

The general nature of these concepts makes them applicable to a wide range of historical cases, but only a few scholars have attempted to apply them systematically to the development of nationalism in India, where extraordinary cultural and linguistic diversity occurs within a single political system. The most thorough-going attempt to date is Paul Brass's *Language, Religion and Politics in North India*, in which the author applies Deutsch's theories to three cases. In the first of these he deals with the Maithili language movement of northern Bihar, in the second and third with the more complex issues of Urdu and the Muslim community in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and of Punjabi and the Sikh and Hindu communities in the Punjab. Discussion of the Hindi movement occurs throughout the work as a necessary counterpoint to the other three movements.⁴

While Brass accepts the basic approach of Deutsch, he makes a number of additions and modifications. Since his theoretical framework provides the analytical basis of this study, we will examine it with some care. Like Deutsch, he posits three levels of groups, an 'ethnic group', a 'community', and a 'nation' or 'nationality'. The first term, defined as any group of individuals with some objective characteristics⁵ in common, also refers to groups whose members do not necessarily give any

subjective importance to their objective distinctness. The second term refers to an ethnic group whose members have developed an awareness of their common identity and seek to define group boundaries. The third term refers to a community which makes political demands with a significant degree of success. The focus of Brass's work lies in the relationships between these three levels of groups: how do objective differences among ethnic groups become transformed into the subjective awareness of communities, and then into 'symbolic referents for political demands'? In short, how do ethnic groups change into communities, and then into nationalities?⁶

Brass seeks the answer to this fundamental question through four 'categories' of questions. The first deals with the importance of objective differences between ethnic groups. Language and religion, two of the most important 'objective' criteria, themselves show great variation. Moreover, neither is 'given' since either can be altered for political purposes. Of the two, religion has proved a more important 'line of cleavage' in north India than language. The second category concerns internal values and internal processes of change in groups. Here the author emphasizes the construction of myths of 'internal value creation', and the role of elites as that segment of a group which takes the lead in attaching value to symbols of group identity. The third category has to do with inter-group relations. Brass asserts that the perception of uneven rates of social change between different groups stimulates the development of group consciousness. Hence the existence of another different or potentially different group is essential. He adds two modifications to Deutsch's fundamental theory: first, for assimilation to proceed, there must be not just the capacity to communicate but also the willingness, and second, political organization and government policy often play decisive roles in shaping inter-group relations and group consciousness. The fourth and final category relates to political action. Here we learn that elite consciousness precedes mass consciousness and that political organization bridges the gap between the two. Political leaders and parties have an independent role in shaping the social environment.⁷

Brass emphasizes three major themes which he combines into the central argument of his book. First, objective characteristics or 'givens' such as language or religion are *not* givens and can be altered. Second, political elites choose one symbol as primary and strive to bring other symbols into line. This process, which the author labels 'multi-symbol congruence', is the book's central concept. Finally, political organizations

do not merely reflect or transmit group consciousness, they also shape it by the deliberate manipulation of symbols. Ethnic groups change into communities and then into nationalities through the efforts of political elites who choose a decisive cultural symbol and manoeuvre other symbols into congruence. Political conflict can induce cleavages as well as reflect them, and objective characteristics can be changed during this process. In north India, Brass argues, political elites have selected religion as the primary symbol and have exerted themselves to make language and other symbols congruent.⁸

Two stages mark this process of transformation. In the first, ethnic groups become subjectively conscious communities. An elite takes the lead, attaches value to certain objective characteristics, defines group boundaries, creates and communicates a myth, especially to the socially mobilizing elements of the group. This stage requires four essential components: the elite, the socially mobilizing population, another group or groups from whom the first can be differentiated, and a 'pool of symbols' suitable for differentiation. In the second stage, communities become nationalities through articulating and acquiring political rights for themselves. Although political demands can be made and even conceded before a group becomes cohesive, 'the only proof of the existence of a nationality is the achievement and maintenance of group rights through political activity and political achievement'.⁹

Historical Background

Few nations present a spectacle of greater linguistic diversity than India. To those only casually acquainted with her, modern India must seem a veritable jungle of languages, and authoritative sources reinforce this impression. The massive *Linguistic Survey of India* listed 179 languages, the 1921 Census of India showed 188, and the distinguished Indian linguist, S. K. Chatterji rounded the figure off to 180.¹⁰ If one looks more closely, however, these apparently overwhelming numbers shrink to manageable proportions. The really significant languages are about a dozen and include the vast majority of India's population. The four major languages of the Dravidian language family of South India—Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam—along with the eight major languages of the Indo-European family of north India—Hindi, Urdu, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriya, Punjabi, and Assamese—accounted for 93 per cent of the 1981 population of India.¹¹ From this perspective India's linguistic diversity seems not particularly remarkable for a continent-sized nation; Europe west of Russia, roughly comparable in

size and population, includes more than twenty different nations using more than twenty major languages.

This comparison draws attention to a remarkable fact. Faced with continental-scale language problems, India has adopted an unusual solution. Unlike most other modern nations, she has chosen to draw many of her internal political boundaries on the basis of language. Of the more than twenty states included in the Republic of India in 1990, ten comprising approximately 55 per cent of the 1991 population acquired their present borders for mainly linguistic reasons.¹² The great majority of the population in each of these states speaks one language, and in most cases the majority of the speakers of that language live in that state.¹³ Moreover, each of the twelve languages listed above—with the exception of Urdu¹⁴—is the chief (and official) language of at least one major state, and every major state has one major language.

The idea of political units based on language appeared as early as 1921 when the Indian National Congress accepted the principle of linguistic provinces. The Congress periodically reaffirmed its commitment to this principle thenceforward, and as a result, shortly after independence the Government of India appointed a Linguistic Provinces Commission to study the question of establishing linguistic states. In December 1948 the Commission unanimously concluded that the formation of such states was 'not in the larger interests of the Indian nation'.¹⁵ Clearly adopting an assimilationist view of nation-building, the Commission warned that the demand for linguistic states would 'bring into existence provinces with a sub-national bias at a time when nationalism is yet in its infancy'.¹⁶ Popular agitation, however, eventually forced Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to agree to the formation of a Telugu-speaking state, Andhra Pradesh, in 1952, and to appoint a States Reorganization Commission in 1953 to resolve the issue. Within a few years of the Commission's report in 1955, most of the existing linguistic states had come into being, and India, willy nilly, found herself far down the road towards a multi-nationalism.

The development of linguistic states has been partially countered by the gradual growth of a national language, Hindi. This language serves as the official medium of local government and also (with regional variations) as the language of the vast majority of the population in a large block of north Indian states, namely, Rajasthan, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Bihar. These six states, with approximately 42 per cent of India's total population in 1991, give Hindi a commanding position, since no other language can claim more

than 8 per cent of the population. Hindi's only serious rival has been English, which, although spoken as a mother tongue by only a tiny fraction of the population and as a second language by a somewhat larger number, still retains the prestige acquired under British rule and boasts the advantage of being the communication medium of an all-India elite.

Nationalist support for some form of Hindi as the national language predated the founding in 1885 of the Indian National Congress itself. In 1882, Babu Syamcharan Ganguli predicted in *The Calcutta Review* that a language he called 'Hindustani' which took the form of Urdu among Muslims and Hindi among Hindus would eventually become the lingua franca of India.¹⁷ By the early twentieth century the use of Hindi as the national language had begun to be proposed by national leaders. By 1925 Mahatma Gandhi had persuaded the Congress to accept as its official language a 'Hindustani' similar to that espoused by Ganguli. Nationalist opposition to English continued to grow, and by 1947 the need for an all-India official language to replace English had become widely accepted by Indian patriots. Accordingly, the Constitution of India included a provision that the official language of the Union should continue to be English for a period of fifteen years until 1965, when Hindi would replace it in most areas of official life.¹⁸ During this period the Government of India was to promote the use of Hindi in order to gradually replace English.

Anti-Hindi feeling had existed for some time in non-Hindi-speaking areas of India, however, particularly in Bengal and Tamil Nadu, where what some called 'Hindi imperialism' was resented. Many non-Hindi-speakers felt that Hindi's proposed role as sole official language would give Hindi speakers an unfair advantage in the competition for government employment. The Official Languages Act of 1963 intensified the controversy by giving Hindi the status of 'official language' and English the status of 'associate or additional official language'. Hindi advocates protested against what they considered to be the postponement of Hindi becoming the sole official language, while English supporters objected to the permissive rather than mandatory continuance of English. Widespread violence in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh marked the elevation of Hindi to the status of official language in January 1965.¹⁹

The Official Languages (Amendment) Act of 1968 strengthened the existing duality by not only stating (as did the 1963 Act) that English *might* continue to be used for all those official purposes for which it had

been used previously, but also by adding a list of specific purposes for which English *would* continue to be used. Moreover, the 1968 Act gave non-Hindi areas veto power over any displacement of English in this list and did not declare any time limit by which Hindi should become the sole official language. This situation has remained essentially unchanged to the present. Both English and Hindi share the position of official language, 'one *de facto* and the other *de jure* but hopeful of becoming *de facto* eventually, even though without any certain deadline'.²⁰

The most vocal support for Hindi has come from the Hindi-speaking areas of the north, particularly from India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh. Much of the intensity of the Hindi movement has come from attitudes shaped during the long struggle of Hindi with Urdu, the chief rival for an alternative indigenous national language for more than three-quarters of a century before India's independence. Before Hindi supporters could launch their language on the high seas of national affairs in the twentieth century, they had to engage in a lengthy and often bitter struggle to keep it afloat in the more sheltered waters of provincial politics. While the Hindi movement in the nineteenth century sprawled across several areas of British India, including the Punjab, the Central Provinces, and Bihar, it reached the greatest intensity in the United Provinces (present-day Uttar Pradesh).²¹ Here, more than anywhere else, the process of the identification of language and religion envisaged in the 'multi-symbol congruence' of Brass dominated provincial language politics.

Linguistic and Social Background

To understand the Hindi movement of the nineteenth century, one must first become acquainted with some of the linguistic and social characteristics of the Hindi-speaking area. Language maps of India often show a single large area labelled 'Hindi' stretching across much of northern India, suggesting a homogeneous linguistic region. Such an image would be highly misleading, however, since this area displays immense diversity. One American linguist, John Gumperz, has characterized the internal complexities of the Hindi area by distinguishing three strata of speech. The first lies at the village level, where local dialects form a continuous chain from one end of the Hindi area to the other and beyond. While speakers from widely separated points along this linguistic continuum would have great difficulty in making themselves understood to each other, those from adjacent points would not.²²

The second stratum, that of 'regional standards', overlies the first.

These regional standards occur in relatively homogeneous forms over large areas, and some of them possess literary traditions of several centuries. In Bihar, for example, three such standards, usually included under the rubric of Hindi, exist: Maithili, Magahi, and Bhojpuri. In Uttar Pradesh, the focus of our interest, four have importance: Bhojpuri in the eastern, Avadhi in the central, Braj Bhasha in the southwestern, and Khari Boli in the northwestern districts. Each of these has large numbers of speakers: the 1901 Census, the last to list such figures, showed that they included about 95 per cent of the population of the province.²³ Some of these languages—Maithili, Avadhi, Braj Bhasha, and Khari Boli—have literary traditions of several centuries, while others—Bhojpuri and Magahi—have rich oral folk literatures. Similar regional standards exist in other parts of the Hindi area. Villagers use these to talk with merchants in nearby trading centres and with villagers from other areas. Small town residents use them as their mother tongue, while both educated and uneducated city dwellers use them at home or among friends.²⁴

The third speech stratum, that of the 'standard' or 'Hindi-Urdu' overlies the first two. The various styles of this stratum serve as the mother tongue of only a minority of city residents; for most of those who speak it, the standard is a second or third speech variety. Historically this stratum originated in the Khari Boli regional standard area, and all of its styles share this common grammatical basis. Language scholars usually designate its two major divisions as Hindi and Urdu, though some argue these should be considered two different languages on political and cultural—not linguistic—grounds.²⁵ Aside from unimportant grammatical variations, vocabulary and script constitute the principal differences between the two. The most formal level of Hindi, sometimes referred to as 'high Hindi', uses a vocabulary saturated with Sanskrit, while the corresponding level of Urdu, sometimes called 'high Urdu', draws heavily on Persian and Arabic. On this level the two come close to mutual unintelligibility. Other less formal levels of Hindi and Urdu approach complete mutual intelligibility, the main difference being the script employed.

The Urdu script, a modified version of the Persian script, itself a modified version of the Arabic script, and the Nagari or Devanagari script usually used for Hindi make very contrasting visual impressions. The Urdu script flows across the page from right to left in graceful curves and loops accentuated by long connecting lines, while the Nagari marches from left to right in chunky blocks accompanied by a nearly

continuous horizontal line above each word. While a consonantal principle in which vowels receive only secondary importance at best underlies the Urdu script, a syllabic principle in which both vowels and consonants receive nearly equal treatment underlies the Nagari. Each script has strong links with the sacred languages of different religions. Most of the Sanskrit texts of Hinduism appear in Nagari, while most versions of the Koran use the Arabic script. This connection of script and language reinforces the tendency for Persian and Arabic words to flow into Urdu, and Sanskrit words into Hindi.

Hindi and Urdu also look to different literary pasts. Historians of the literatures of both claim traditions of several centuries. Those of Hindi include most of the literature written in Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, and other regional standards before the full development of Khari Boli Hindi literature in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Those of Urdu include the literature of Dakani (a regional variety of Urdu used in medieval central India) as well as the later-developing Urdu of northern India. Moreover, while Hindi turns to Sanskrit literature for many literary forms, Urdu draws inspiration from Persian and Arabic forms.

Urdu's association with Persian links this variety of the standard with a political past of Muslim dominance. From the founding of the Delhi Sultanate in the thirteenth century until the decline of the Mughal Empire in the eighteenth century, much of north India came under continuous Muslim rule. Even after British hegemony in the late eighteenth century, Muslim kingdoms continued to exist in this area; the most notable of these, Oudh, did not become part of British India until 1856. Along with the lengthy continuity of Muslim supremacy went the even lengthier continuity of the official language, Persian. Throughout the period of Muslim dominance Persian remained the pre-eminent language of administration in north India. Long after the power and prestige of its imperial patrons had declined, Persian's own prestige endured. Nearly eighty years after the battle of Plassey established the rule of the East India Company in Bengal in 1757, Persian still remained the official language of administration. Even after this status was lost, Persian remained a popular subject of study in parts of north India up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

When the Government of India replaced Persian in 1837, its surrogate Urdu (also known as Hindustani) provided linguistic continuity in much of Persian's former domain. Urdu kept some of the grammatical forms, much of the vocabulary, and the script of its more illustrious predecessor. Some writers of 'high Urdu' as one observer noted, carried

the use of Persian words to 'almost incredible extremes' so that one could find 'whole sentences in which the only Indian thing is the grammar, and with nothing but Persian words from beginning to end'.²⁶ The same observer contended that Hindus, not Muslims, had created this highly Persianized language. Employed in the Muslim administration and familiar with Persian, they had created Urdu by using the Persian script for their vernacular and introducing Persian words in place of their own.²⁷ Whatever the truth of this contention, it points to the undisputed fact that in much of nineteenth century north India those familiar with Urdu and Persian included both Hindus and Muslims. Even by the middle of the century, the process of multi-symbol congruence which identified Hindus with Hindi and Muslims with Urdu had not begun in earnest.

Three Hindu communities had particularly strong ties with Urdu and Persian, namely, Kayasths, Kashmiri Brahmans, and Khatri. While other Hindu communities also studied Urdu and Persian, these three were the most disproportionately represented among Urdu users in terms of their numbers in the general population. The Kayasths, known for their attachment to literary occupations, government service, and Islamic culture, were the most numerous of the three.²⁸ In the United Provinces, the principal centre of the Hindi movement, the bulk of this community lived in the eastern portion of the province. Kashmiri Brahmans, coming from an area famed for Sanskrit learning, included some of the social and political elite of north India, the Nehrus of Allahabad being the best-known. Khatri, who had proved equally adept in trade and government service in the Punjab, were spread all over north India, and some could even be found as far afield as Central Asia. In the United Provinces during the second half of the nineteenth century the largest concentrations of this community lived in Banaras and Allahabad. Two of the three—Kayasths and Khatri—could claim relatively high status among their fellow Hindus, while the third—Kashmiri Brahmans—ranked among the very highest of Brahman castes. The linguistic predilections of these communities rested on the assumption that one could share the Urdu-Persian cultural tradition with the Muslim community without jeopardizing one's status as a Hindu.²⁹

The Hindi movement, however, began to challenge this assumption in the latter half of the century. Led by Hindu caste groups whose close association with Sanskrit and Hindi learning handicapped them in the increasing competition for government service, the essence of the movement lay in efforts to *differentiate* Hindi from Urdu and to make

Hindi a symbol of Hindu culture. Seen in this light, the Hindi movement formed part of a much broader process of the heightening of communal awareness in pre-independence India, a transformation of ethnic groups into communities and nationalities which culminated in the birth of Pakistan in 1947. The Hindi movement not only expressed but also reinforced this awareness.

Recent Studies

Several scholars have dealt with various aspects of the relationships of language, religion, and politics in north India during the nineteenth century. Jurgen Lütt's *Hindu Nationalism in Uttar Pradesh 1867-1900*³⁰ discusses the development of a sense of common identity among Hindus in nineteenth century Uttar Pradesh. He deals with several aspects of this process including the cow protection movement, the Hindi movement, and the lives and thought of several leading Hindus. The largest single portion of his work presents a detailed study of the political and social thought of Bharatendu Harishchandra (1850-85) of Banaras, generally considered to be the earliest major writer of modern Hindi literature. Lütt's study covers much of the intellectual history of Hindu nationalism in the province, and devotes some attention to the political and cultural rivalries between Hindus and Muslims. His work gives little or no space to other important aspects of Hindu nationalism and the Hindi movement, however, such as Hindu-Muslim competition for government service, the role of voluntary associations in giving organizational expression to linguistic rivalries, the comparative development of Hindi and Urdu publications, the place of Hindi and Urdu in the educational system, and the relevant aspects of British language policy in neighbouring provinces.

Another relatively recent study by a German scholar, Kerrin Dittmer's *Die Indischen Muslims and die Hindi-Urdu-Kontroverse in den United Provinces*,³¹ contains a considerable amount of material on the Hindi-Urdu controversy in the United Provinces. Dittmer's work, unlike Lütt's, focuses on the Muslim community of UP and covers both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This study provides a valuable supplement to Lütt's through focusing more sharply on one of several areas of Hindu-Muslim relations, and by giving more space to the role of voluntary language associations and the place of Hindi and Urdu in the educational system. Dittmer's account of Hyderabad as a centre of patronage for Urdu is particularly useful. Yet Dittmer's study, like Lütt's, pays little or no attention to the comparative development of

Hindi and Urdu publications, gives only sketchy accounts of Hindu-Muslim competition for government service and British language policy in neighbouring provinces, and fails to mention the challenges from within the Hindu cultural tradition—Braj Bhasha and the Kaithi script—faced by Hindi and the Nagari script. Moreover, the author's description of the voluntary organizations lacks careful analysis of their structure, leadership, membership and finances.

A work by an Indian scholar, Jyotirindra Das Gupta's *Language Conflict and National Development*,³² deals chiefly with the language problems of India since independence, though giving some space to a discussion of the origins and development of the Hindi movement. After setting forth the theoretical background of the role of language in national development and giving a general description of the linguistic situation in contemporary India, Das Gupta turns to survey the rise of voluntary language organizations and their politics in pre-independence India. His discussion of nineteenth century language politics, unlike Lütt's and Dittmer's, relies mostly on secondary works. After analysing post-independence language politics, he presents a detailed description of several major Hindi and Urdu language associations, giving brief accounts of their origins and development, and more detailed analysis of their organizational structure, leadership, and finances. Das Gupta gives greater emphasis to the economic rivalries of Hindus and Muslims and attempts more analysis of language associations than either Lütt or Dittmer. Since his chief concern centres on twentieth century language politics, however, he too passes over many complexities of the Hindi movement of the nineteenth century.

Another work by an Indian scholar, Amrit Rai's *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi*,³³ focuses chiefly on the history of Hindi and Urdu up to the early eighteenth century, with some discussion of the implications of their relationship for subsequent events in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The heart of Rai's thesis lies in two assertions: first, prior to the decline of the Mughal empire, a common language known as Hindi or Hindavi united many Hindus and Muslims over wide areas of north and central India; second, during this decline the nature of Hindi/Hindavi changed by the deliberate removal of Sanskrit and Sanskrit-derived words and the addition of Persian and Arabic words. The divisive consequences of this 'reform', he contends, helped lead to the partition of British India and still plagues the subcontinent today. Rai presents a detailed and convincing analysis of the linguistic evidence, including copious samples

from numerous texts. Since he gives his attention mainly to pre-British India, however, he also must perforce present a much less detailed picture of many facets of the later Hindi movement.

The Present Study

This study differs from those described above in two major ways. First, I focus on the Hindi movement in nineteenth century north India and attempt to deal with all the relevant aspects of the movement, especially those ignored or only superficially dealt with in the previous studies. Thus I include detailed analyses of the comparative development of Hindi and Urdu publications, of the rôle of different languages and scripts in both indigenous and British educational institutions, of government language policy in education and administration in neighbouring provinces as well as in UP, of challenges to the dominance of Khari Boli Hindi and the Nagari script from Braj Bhasha and the Kaithi script, of voluntary language organizations, and of several other issues. Second, I try to systematically apply some of the theories of Karl Deutsch as modified by Paul Brass to the Hindi movement without sacrificing factual materials or analytical insights which do not fit neatly into their framework.

Although this study deals with the Hindi movement throughout north India, Uttar Pradesh receives the bulk of the attention for several reasons. First, the Hindi movement originated and remained centred in this province. Here were founded the two most important voluntary organizations for the promotion of the Hindi language and the Nagari script, namely, the Nagari Pracharini Sabha of Banaras (1893) and the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan of Allahabad (1910). Second, during the nineteenth century the movement reached its greatest intensity in UP. To the west in the Punjab, the dominant position of Urdu remained practically undisputed during our period. To the south in the Central Provinces and to the east in Bihar, the Nagari script won victories two or three decades before the turn of the century. In UP, however, the struggle continued to the end of the century, marked by a significant political victory in 1900 when the provincial government issued a directive declaring Hindi and the Nagari script equal to Urdu and the Urdu script in the courts and offices. Finally, the bulk of the sources concern the UP as a direct consequence of the two preceding reasons.

In dealing with a movement characterized by strong partisan feelings, one needs to become aware not only of the biases of one's sources but also of one's own biases. Perhaps the most important bias comes from

knowing how things turned out, in this case the ultimate triumph of Hindi over Urdu, an outcome by no means obvious to the opposing partisans of the nineteenth century. This bias may well have led me to give greater importance to certain events which contemporary observers might have disregarded, and less importance to other events which they might have emphasized.

Another bias might appear to come from the use of a greater number of Hindi as compared to Urdu sources, from which a critic might well argue that a pro-Hindi perspective becomes a near-certainty. In rebuttal, I would point out that the great majority of the non-English sources for the Hindi movement *are* in Hindi. Moreover, the extensive sources in English include several which ably present the viewpoint of Urdu supporters. Lastly, I would argue that to understand the Hindi movement, one must attempt to see the process through the eyes of Hindi supporters, something best accomplished through using the sources in the language in which they customarily expressed themselves.

Yet another bias stems from the fact that I am a foreigner in India, and no foreigner, a critic might maintain, can hope to approach the detailed and intimate knowledge possessed by Indian scholars in dealing with the manifold complexities of Indian languages and literatures. True, few foreigners can hope to compete with Indians in mastery of Indian languages, and no foreigner can hope to compete with them in the intuitive understanding of the social and cultural context of these languages. Such shortcomings seem to inevitably dilute foreigners' understanding of what they study and unconsciously distort their judgments. While admitting the validity of such criticism, I would counter by asserting that the very shortcomings cited can become important assets. Thus, foreign scholars do not share the biases of Indian scholars. They bring viewpoints which, although subject to other biases, allow them to see and interpret events differently from Indian scholars. I would also argue that foreigners can more easily reach a more impartial position because they are more removed from the personal vested interests and influences of environment and education which give Indians both their superior intuitive understanding and their greater likelihood of unconscious bias.

Our imaginary critic might ask one last question: if we grant that foreigners may have certain advantages in reaching a more impartial standpoint, does this not mean that they become at the same time more neutral, more indifferent? To this I would reply with two statements. First, no scholar, whether foreign or Indian, can ever be completely

impartial. All of us, by virtue of being born in a certain place at a certain time, of being a certain sex or a certain age, of being educated in a certain way, etc., etc., must necessarily possess various largely unconscious habits of perception and interpretation of whatever we experience.²⁴ None of us can more than partially free ourselves from these inescapable sources of bias. Second, to attempt to become impartial does not necessarily mean to become neutral or indifferent. To be impartial means to weigh the evidence as even-handedly as possible before taking some definite stand, while to be neutral or indifferent means *not* taking a definite stand. I beg the reader's indulgence for first attempting to present the evidence before explicitly presenting a viewpoint in my conclusion.

Main Themes and Precis

The principal thesis of this book is that the Hindi movement of nineteenth century north India expressed a Hindu nationalism whose essence lay in the denial of existing assimilation to cultural traditions associated with Muslim rule and the affirmation of potential differentiation from these traditions. In this the Hindi movement overlapped with other expressions of Hindu nationalism such as the cow protection agitation in eastern UP in the 1890s, Tilak's revival of Hindu festivals in Maharashtra, and the growth of the Arya Samaj in the Punjab and other provinces of north India. In other words, one can view the Hindi movement as part of a process of multi-symbol congruence in which Hindu supporters of Hindi strove to transform the existing equations of Urdu = Muslim + Hindu and Hindi = Hindu + Muslim into Urdu = Muslim and Hindi = Hindu. In the twentieth century this process resulted in the coining of slogans such as 'Hindi, Hindu, Hindustan', a three-fold assertion of the identity of language, religion, and motherland.

This thesis needs qualification, however, for the major 'objective characteristics' of language and religion display considerable diversity. To begin with, some Hindus supported Hindi, while others opposed Hindi and promoted Urdu. Still other Hindus gave only lukewarm encouragement to Hindi, and the great majority remained uninvolved. Similarly, some Muslims supported Urdu, a very few supported Hindi, while many showed little concern. Moreover, Hindi included not only Khari Boli but also other literary dialects, and Urdu incorporated competing styles. Thus the Hindi movement consisted of certain groups of Hindus advocating a certain kind of Hindi asserting their differences from certain Muslims and attempting to impose their views on other

Hindus. Advocates of Khari Boli Hindi encountered opposition not only from Muslims, but also from other Hindus who had vested interests in Urdu and Persian or strong attachments to the literary traditions of other regional standards. Similarly advocates of the Nagari script faced a challenge not only from the Urdu script but also from the Kaithi script, a cursive version of the Nagari widely used in eastern UP and Bihar.

This study also suggests that the growth of the government's vernacular educational system in both Hindi and Urdu played a crucial role in the mobilization of those groups of Hindus who took the lead in the Hindi movement. The same groups who traditionally studied Hindi and Sanskrit in indigenous schools before the spread of government education continued their linguistic loyalties in the new system and eventually furnished much of the membership of the voluntary language organizations which espoused the cause of Hindi. Finding themselves in a linguistically bifurcated *educational* system whose main purpose lay in qualifying thousands of students for government service, but also in an *administrative* system which favoured one of the two vernacular mediums of education, Urdu, these groups naturally supported a movement which aimed at a rectification of this imbalance among other things. In Brass's terms, the perception of uneven rates of social change between different groups stimulated the development of group consciousness.

Economic motives alone, however, cannot explain the mobilization of Hindi supporters, for while the Hindi movement had strong anti-Muslim overtones, many of the Urdu-speaking elite who monopolized government service were Hindus. Cultural and emotional attitudes towards language, script, and literary traditions had as much importance as economic rivalry, for they furnished the channels through which this rivalry could be expressed. The promoters of Hindi engaged in Brass's process of 'internal value creation' by creating myths of the antiquity of Hindi and by attaching value to Hindi as a symbol of group identity.

For some of the most important leaders of the Hindi movement, cultural and emotional attitudes proved far more important than any personal economic gain to be realized through the government's potential adoption of Hindi and Nagari. Such attitudes led to the anti-Muslim aspects of the movement, for Hindi and the Nagari script, and Urdu and the Urdu script looked to different religious and historical traditions which had often clashed. Those who looked to the past glories of Hindi literature simultaneously looked to the splendour of periods of Hindu rule in which Muslims acted as invaders and villains. In other words, to

revive Hindi literature meant to revive the communal rivalries expressed therein.

Throughout the nineteenth century government played an important but inconsistent role, which added to linguistic and communal rivalry, especially in UP. First, while some government policies encouraged and patronized both Hindi and Urdu as two distinct entities, others sought to minimize the difference, while still others favoured Urdu. On the one hand, government helped to create and maintain two separate vernacular linguistic traditions, and on the other hand, thwarted the prospects of one of them. Moreover, British perceptions of 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' as the two fundamental divisions of Indian society,³ despite the manifest diversity of these 'objective characteristics' intensified communal rivalries. These perceptions served to weaken what Hindus and Muslims perceived themselves to have in common, and to strengthen what the two perceived as differences. In short, government aided the process of the identification of language and religion, i.e., the process of multi-symbol congruence. Persistent support of Urdu went hand-in-glove with government's special interest in maintaining the loyalty of Muslims. Where Muslims were numerous or influential—Punjab and UP—Urdu remained entrenched until independence; where they were not—Bihar and the Central Provinces—Hindi and the Nagari script replaced Urdu. Lastly, government, which held the power to grant or withhold recognition and patronage, served as the final arbiter to whom both Urdu and Hindi supporters appealed. Language agitators attempted to influence key officials through meetings, petitions with hundreds or thousands of signatures, delegations, letters, books and pamphlets. These officials could balance the claims of the contending parties, or throw their weight to one side or the other.

We can view the Hindi movement as a reactive force to contradictions in government policy, a force channelled through already existing cultural patterns. We can also see the movement as an active force to which government and the defenders of Urdu reacted. Both interpretations have merit, nor does one exclude the other. In either case, the supporters of Hindi needed some form of organization to transmit their aims to the literate public. (The rural masses were left almost entirely untouched by the Hindi-Urdu controversy.) During the latter part of the nineteenth century the Hindi press and a number of voluntary associations provided the necessary organization. Since newspapers and associations often had ephemeral existences and numerous other concerns besides Hindi, the movement lacked continuity for most of

this period, flaring up and dying down as circumstances shifted. With the founding of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha (Society for the Promotion of Nagari)³⁶ in 1893, the first important (and still existing) organization devoted exclusively to the progress of Hindi and the Nagari script, the movement gained greater force and stability. A few years later in 1900, Hindi advocates won their first major victory when the government of UP officially recognized Hindi and the Nagari script as equal to Urdu in the provincial courts and offices. Members of the Nagari Pracharini Sabha had much to do with this success.

At first glance, the course of the Hindi movement in the nineteenth century seems to fit the sequence of transformation from ethnic group to community to nationality posited by Brass. Before the 1860s no Hindi movement existed, as contemporary statements make clear, although the efforts of vernacular authors and the establishment of a linguistically bifurcated vernacular education system had created the potential for differentiation between Hindi and Urdu. During the 1860s the first statements identifying Hindi with Hindus and Urdu with Muslims appeared, and the process of developing an awareness of a common identity on the basis of language and religion began. This process continued during the rest of the century, and by 1900 the movement had won a major political victory. At this point, then, we should arrive at a Hindi-speaking Hindu nationality, for 'a community becomes a nationality . . . when it makes political demands and achieves a significant measure of success by its own efforts.'³⁷

But the complexities of the linguistic situation and the composition of the community which won the victory conditioned the nature of the success. In brief, the political victory of those groups of Hindus who composed the 'community' behind the Hindi movement was vitiated by the open or tacit opposition of other groups of Hindus who continued to value the Urdu-Persian tradition for economic and cultural reasons. Hindi's supporters had failed to make the entire educated Hindu community identify itself with Hindi. Moreover, they faced challenges from another literary dialect (Braj Bhasha) and another script (Kaithi), both from within the Hindu cultural tradition. Khari Boli Hindi, then, was only one of several competing linguistic traditions and involved only part of even the educated Hindu community. Hence to speak of a Hindi-speaking Hindu nationality in 1900 would be premature, despite an apparently major political victory. This victory proved hollow precisely because advocates of Khari Boli Hindi could not speak for the entire Hindu community or even its educated portion. In short, the

community behind the Hindi movement cannot be said to have become a nationality in Brass's sense by 1900. This community was rather a small portion of a much larger body of Hindus, a portion attempting to convert other Hindus to a particular idea of Hindu nationality, the congruence of language and religion.

In the remainder of this study, I examine the development of the Hindi movement by presenting the relevant cultural, political, and economic background and then turning to a detailed history of the movement itself, using but not bound by the theoretical framework offered by Deutsch and Brass. Chapter II analyses the development and expansion of the printing of books and periodicals in UP, traces certain aspects of the history of Hindi and Urdu literature from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century, and discusses the challenge posed by Braj Bhasha. Chapter III outlines the essential features of government language policy in several provinces of north India through most of the nineteenth century, demonstrates the important and contradictory role of government in laying part of the necessary groundwork for and shaping the development of the Hindi movement, and analyses the claims of Kaithi. Chapter IV deals with the character of both indigenous and governmental educational systems in terms of languages studied, the social background of the students, and the relationship of education to employment, especially government employment. This chapter also argues that the social origins of the Hindi movement can be determined by comparing patterns of membership in educational systems and in voluntary Hindi associations. Chapter V describes and analyses the history of the Hindi movement from the initial controversies of the 1860s to the government decision of 1900 favouring Hindi and the Nagari script, while Chapter VI provides a summary and conclusion. The organization of this study is thus both chronological and topical, each succeeding chapter beginning its narrative and analysis at a later date than the preceding chapter and dealing with a different aspect of the subject. All through the study my principal concern focuses on describing and analysing the process by which some Hindus strove to bring 'Hindi' and 'Hindu' into congruence.

NOTES

1. *NWP Educ Rpt*, 1846-47, p. 32. Spoken in 1847 by a Hindu student of Sanskrit at Benares College to Dr Ballantyne, Principal of the English Department. See the section of Chapter IV entitled 'Attitudes towards the Vernaculars'.

2. Karl Deutsch, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, 2nd edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1966) pp. 96–105.
3. Karl Deutsch, 'Social Mobilization and Political Development', *The American Political Science Review*, LV, 3 (September 1961), p. 493, *passim*; Deutsch, *Nationalism*, pp. 120–2, 125–6, 137–42, 156–63.
4. Paul Brass, *Language, Religion and Politics in North India* (London, 1974).
5. These objective characteristics refer to such things as language, culture, territory, diet, dress, etc. rather than to any role in a societal division of labour. Brass, *Language*, p. 8.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 22.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 23–43.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 28, 45–6.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 44–5.
10. S. K. Chatterji, *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*, 2nd edition (Calcutta, 1960), pp. 141–2.
11. The inclusion of languages under various rubrics, especially 'Hindi', has varied from census to census, and hence no figure can be exact. In the 1971 Census, for example, Bhojpuri, Magadhi, Chhattisgarhi, and Maithili (making up 6.1% of the total population) which previous censuses lumped under Hindi, were listed separately. Hindi, which was given 28.1% in this census, could thus be expanded up to 34.2%. Language figures from the 1991 Census were not available at the time of writing, but there is no reason to believe they would be significantly different in terms of percentages.
12. These ten (and the majority language of each) are: Andhra Pradesh (Telugu), Assam (Assamese), Gujarat (Gujarati), Karnataka (Kannada), Kerala (Malayalam), Maharashtra (Marathi), Orissa (Oriya), Punjab (Punjabi), Tamil Nadu (Tamil), and West Bengal (Bengali).
13. The chief exception is Bengali, the major language of both West Bengal and the independent nation of Bangladesh.
14. In 1989 Urdu became an additional official language in Uttar Pradesh. 1990 *Britannica Book of the Year* (Chicago, 1990), p. 449. Urdu has long been the official language of Pakistan.
15. *Report of the Linguistic Provinces Commission 1948* (New Delhi, 1948), p. 34.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
17. Syamcharan Ganguli, 'Hindi, Hindustani and the Behar Dialects', *The Calcutta Review*, LXXV, 1882, p. 25.
18. *Report of the Official Language Commission 1955* (New Delhi, 1957), pp. 105–31, 378–83.
19. B. R. Nayar, *National Communication and Language Policy in India* (New York, 1969), pp. 106–13.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
21. The region of northern India known as the North-Western Provinces and Oudh came into existence over a period of more than 80 years through five major and several minor territorial acquisitions. During the Governor-Generalship of Warren Hastings, the ruler of Oudh, Asaf-ud-Daulah, was forced in 1775 to surrender areas under his feudatory, the Raja of Banaras. The next two additions came in rapid succession: in 1801 Governor General Wellesley forced the ruler

of Oudh to cede nearly half the remainder of his kingdom; and in 1803 English victories in the second Anglo-Maratha War brought large tracts from the Maratha prince Sindhia. The fourth gain came at the end of the Nepal War in 1816 when the British obtained the hill districts bordering on Nepal and Tibet.

Until 1834 all of this region came under the jurisdiction of the government of the Presidency of Bengal. In that year a new Presidency of Agra came into existence on a level with the three older Presidencies of Bengal, Bombay, and Madras. Two years later the new Presidency was demoted to the North-Western Provinces under the rule of a Lieutenant-Governor. The new province kept the same name and most of the same territory for a little more than forty years. Upon its inauguration, the North-Western Provinces (NWP) included the Delhi Territories (the city and district of Delhi, and several districts of what was to become the Punjab), Ajmer (a princely state of Rajputana), and the Saugor and Nerbudda territories (areas in the hilly plateau region of central India). Fourteen years later Merwara (another princely state in Rajputana) was added. In subsequent years each of these additions was incorporated into other jurisdictions: after 1857 the Delhi Territories went to the new province of the Punjab, in 1861 the Saugor and Nerbudda territories became part of the Central Provinces, and by 1871 Ajmer and Merwara had come under the supervision of the Government of India. 1840 and 1853 saw other minor additions to the south-western portion of the North-Western Provinces.

In 1856 came the fifth major territorial increase with the annexation of Oudh. The North-Western Provinces continued to be administered by a Lieutenant-Governor, while Oudh was governed by a Chief Commissioner. In 1877 the two provinces were completely amalgamated with the new name of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh and the separate offices of Lieutenant-Governor and Chief Commissioner combined into one. In 1902 the province was renamed the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh (or simply the United Provinces) and kept this name until independence in 1947 when it became Uttar Pradesh. C. Collin Davies, *An Historical Atlas of the Indian Peninsula*, 2nd edition (Oxford, 1959), pp. 52–5, 58–61, 66–7, 72–3; Douglas Dewar, *A Handbook to the English Pre-Mutiny Records in the Government Record Rooms of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh* (n.p., [c. 1919]), p. 484; *The Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Volume XXIV, New Edition (Oxford, 1908), pp. 158–9; R. C. Majumdar et al., *An Advanced History of India*, 2nd edition (London, 1963), pp. 694, 705–6, 720–1, 722–3.

22. John J. Gumperz, 'Language Problems in the Rural Development of North India', *Journal of Asian Studies*, XVI, 2 (February, 1957), pp. 252–4; John J. Gumperz, 'Dialect Differences and Social Stratification in a North Indian Village', *American Anthropologist*, LX, 4 (August, 1958), pp. 668–82; Gerald Kelley, 'The Status of Hindi as a Lingua Franca', in William Bright, editor, *Sociolinguistics* (The Hague, 1966), pp. 299–308.
23. *Census of India, 1901, Volume XVI, Part I*, pp. 179, 183. In calculating this percentage, 'Urdu or Hindostani' was taken to equal Khari Boli, both 'Braj' and 'Kaunaujia' were taken to equal Braj Bhasha, and 'Bagheli' was included in 'Awadhi'. See Sir George Abraham Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India* (Calcutta, 1903–28), Volume VI, p. 1 and Volume IX, p. 1.

24. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey*, V, p. 46; VI, pp. 12, 19; IX, pp. 47-8, 74-5, 83; Gumperz, 'Language Problems', p. 82; Gumperz, 'Some remarks on Regional and Social Language Differences in India', in *Introduction to the Civilization of India* (Chicago, 1957), p. 33; John J. Gumperz and C. M. Naim, 'Formal and Informal Standards in the Hindi Regional Language Area', in Charles A. Ferguson and John J. Gumperz, editors, *Linguistic Diversity in South Asia: Studies in Regional, Social and Functional Variation*, *International Journal of American Linguistics*, XXVI, 3 (1960), p. 95; Ashok R. Kelkar, *Studies in Hindi-Urdu* (Poona, 1968), chart facing p. 16.
25. See, for example, Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi, 1984), pp. 287-9.
26. Grierson, *Linguistic Survey of India*, IX, Part 1, p. 45.
27. *Ibid.*
28. See Karen B. Leonard, *The Kayasths of Hyderabad City*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1969.
29. *Census of India, 1911, Volume XV, Part I*, pp. 255, 273; William Crooke, *Tribes and Castes of the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh*, Volume III (Calcutta, 1906), pp. 184, 213-16, 264-7, 274-7; Kelkar, *Studies in Hindi-Urdu*, p. 9; Percival Spear, editor, *The Oxford History of India*, 3rd edition (Oxford, 1958), p. 195.
30. Jurgen Lütt, *Hindu-Nationalismus in Uttar Pradesh 1867-1900* (Stuttgart, 1970).
31. Kerrin Dittmer, *Die Indischen Muslims und die Hindi-Urdu Kontroverse in den United Provinces* (Wiesbaden, 1972).
32. Jyotirindra Das Gupta, *Language Conflict and National Development* (Berkeley, 1970).
33. Amrit Rai, *A House Divided: The Origin and Development of Hindi/Hindavi* (Delhi: 1984).
34. In this regard see the writings of the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall, especially chapters 3 and 4 of his *Beyond Culture* (Garden City, 1977). Hall argues that 'once learned, behavior patterns . . . habitual responses . . . [and] ways of interacting gradually sink below the surface of the mind and, like the admiral of a submerged submarine fleet, control from the depths' (p. 42).
35. See Francis Robinson, *Separatism among Indian Muslims* (Cambridge, 1974), p. 98.
36. During our period, 'Nagari' when used by Hindi supporters, often had the meaning of both Hindi and the Nagari script used to write it. Hence the name of the Sabha implies a concern with both language and script. Shri Ray Krishna Das, Interview, April 6, 1972, Banaras.
37. Brass, *Language*, pp. 8-9.

The Development of Differentiation

It is my opinion that Hindi and Urdu are two very different languages. The Hindus of this country speak Hindi, while Muslims and those Hindus who have studied Persian speak Urdu. Sanskrit words abound in Hindi as Arabic and Persian words abound in Urdu. There is no necessity to use Arabic and Persian words in speaking Hindi, nor do I call that language Hindi which is filled with Persian and Arabic words.¹

Introduction

Long before the beginning of the Hindi movement in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the ingredients existed for the differentiation of Khari Boli into the two distinct entities of Urdu and Hindi: the Urdu and Nagari scripts, and two differing sources for higher vocabulary, the classical languages of Persian and Arabic, and Sanskrit. From one point of view, the Hindi-Urdu controversy could be traced back to the medieval Muslim invasions of India and the resulting Indo-Persian linguistic synthesis which came to be known as Urdu. Another point of view appears in a recent study by an Indian scholar, who argues that the excessive Persianization of what he calls Hindi/Hindavi, formerly the common literary language of Hindus and Muslims, in the eighteenth century led to the dramatic linguistic and literary split between Hindi and Urdu.² From still another point of view one could claim that the first important expression of differentiation between Hindi and Urdu took place in Fort William College in the first years of the nineteenth century. Here, with the encouragement of some of the officials and instructors, two distinct prose styles, both based on Khari Boli, began to develop though their identification with separate religious traditions lay decades in the future. The rapid expansion of publishing and journalism later in the century strengthened the existing differentiation between Hindi and Urdu, and made impossible any assimilation between the two.

Similar ingredients for differentiation existed within the Hindi tradition long before the start of the Hindi movement. In the realm of poetry, the regional standard Braj Bhasha overshadowed Khari Boli until well into the twentieth century. Little poetry of any consequence appeared in Khari Boli until the 1880s, nor did this tradition reach respectability